

Lifelines

Red Ribbon Ride Raises \$30,000 for APO!

Inside this issue:

Red Ribbon Ride	1
Positive Force plans Awareness activities	1
Notes from Executive Director Lynne	2
Haute Cuisine Cookbooks	2
Welcome Dr. Adams And Desiree Voyles	3
Red Ribbon Ride Sponsors	3
New Members of APO Board	3

APO will close at 2:30 on Thursday Afternoon July 3rd and all day Friday July 4th.

Due to an employee retreat, the office will be closed all day on Friday August 1st.

After a very rainy spring, APO was once again blessed with a gorgeous day for our 5th annual Red Ribbon Ride.

United Healthcare got the ball rolling this year with an incredible \$5,000 donation, while New Belgium Brewing Company and Galloway Station rallied together again to help bring the ride to the community. Klaus Grienke, owner of Galloway Station Bar and Grill, provided the venue and the delicious food for all 400 participants, while Brad Smith of Major Brands and New Belgium Brewing Company provided the Fat Tire Beer and plenty of giveaways.

The event went off without a hitch and fun was had by all. We would like to thank all of our sponsors and cyclists for coming together to make this event truly exceptional.

While the day is about cycling and fun, it is also about raising money and awareness for those infected and affected by HIV/AIDS. To date the Ozarks Red Ribbon Ride has raised an amazing \$100,000 in just five years! Because of the money raised at the bike ride we can continue to provide services to those in need in Southwest Missouri.



Cyclists preparing for the 50 mile ride

A POSITIVE FORCE— Prevention & Care Working Together

Positive Force, a group representing the Ryan White Consortia and the HIV Prevention group has been meeting monthly since June of 2007. The group successfully sponsored local training for community partners/providers in Lebanon on April 29. Over 50 attended the training and were updated on HIV Prevention activities and the latest in treatment news. Three more of these updates are scheduled this year in three other cities in rural Southwest Missouri.

Another program sponsored by the group are Positive Living Seminars for HIV positive individuals and their support persons. The four part program is currently being presented in Joplin and will go on the road to other areas soon.

Positive Force is open to prevention and care providers, APO Clients and community partners..

The group meets the first Friday of each month but the date of the July meeting will be announced since the first Friday falls on the Fourth Of July. Call Caryn (827-6052) for more info.

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Becki Hearon

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Notes from Lynne

By Lynne Meyerkord, Executive Director

Hello and I hope you are all enjoying the summer. Some exciting events have occurred during the last several months as we work to fulfill our mission to provide medical care and outreach information in southwest Missouri.

Our Outreach and Linkage-to-Care team (previously known as Prevention and Education) has been very busy providing a number of services at community events, including HIV information and condom distribution at the St. Patty's Day pub crawl; HIV testing and the sharing of prevention information at the night club Latin Vibe; and most recently, testing over 80 folks at the Pridefest celebration held on June 22nd. For the first time, APO was able to provide Gonorrhea and Chlamydia testing at Pride thanks to a urine-based test that is now available. I applaud all those who made the choice to get tested and I encourage those of you that need to be tested to take charge of your health. HIV/AIDS is still a big deal, (just ask someone who has been infected for several years) and it is a preventable disease. The keys to stopping the spread of HIV/AIDS are reducing risky behaviors and early treatment for those infected.

In order to further the goal of getting people into treatment as early as possible after infection, our linkage-to-care program is in full swing. The staff of this program work very closely with Missouri Department of Health employees, physician offices, and hospitals in order to get individuals newly diagnosed with HIV/AIDS established with medical treatment as soon as possible. This involves frequent contact and doing whatever is necessary in order to assist a person in accessing care. Early results are very promising and this service certainly fills a gap.

I'm happy to report that our grant funding remains stable. We continue to need pantry supplies and donations. This is a very difficult financial time for most of us, and this makes me all the more grateful for the support of the Red Ribbon Ride. When economic times are tough, agencies like APO usually suffer, so thanks to all our business and private donors who remain committed to those living with HIV/AIDS in the Ozarks.

We have had several staff changes and program changes over the past several months. I would like to welcome those new to APO and wish those well who have departed. One thing is a constant, and that is change.

Thanks so much,

Lynne

Copies of Haute Cuisine Still Available

Copies of APO's highly successful cookbook, *Haute Cuisine* are still available at the APO office for \$29.95. Sales of the cookbook have exceeded APO's expectations. The cookbook celebrates legendary cooking of the past 40 years and includes recipes from some of Springfield's finest chefs who have shared some their favorites. Without their support, the book would never have been published. In addition, the book is illustrated with art of the very highest caliber from among the finest area artists and reflects a variety of styles and includes works by several different generations of artists.

Many thanks to APO Board members Bucky Bowman for developing the cookbook and Clarissa French for her editing expertise.

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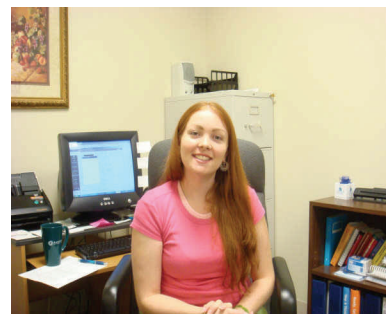
Welcome Dr. Adams and Desiree Voyles

Welcome to **Desiree Voyles**, the new APO phlebotomist. Desiree has ten years experience in drawing blood from working in an emergency room setting and other health care locations.

Dr. Steven Adams, M.D. has joined the APO clinic team. He will begin seeing patients for Primary Care at

APO after following Dr. Gerecht for a brief period. Dr. Adams will be at APO part time and will continue to work as an Urgent Care Doctor at Cox Walnut Lawn. Dr. Adams has served on the board at APO and was the most recent past president.

Helen Oke-Thomas will continue in her capacity as nurse practitioner and Dr. Adams will be coordinating care



Desiree Voyles

wi

Red Ribbon Ride Sponsors

Thanks to the following sponsors of APO's Red Ribbon Ride. We could not have done it without your support:

Diamond Sponsor: United Health Care

Platinum Sponsors— Abbott Pharmaceuticals, Grove Pharmacy & Spa, Partyworks Catering, St Johns, Big Fish Screen Printing, New Belgium Brewing, Regi Martin, Attorney at Law, Galloway Station Bar and Grill, O'Reilly Auto Parts, Roche.

Gold Sponsors—Cox Health System, Healthcare Strategic Initiatives, Sun-

shine Realtors LLC, Aaron's Plumbing Services, Gilead Sciences, Medicine Shop, Sygna Technology LLC, Alle-giant Air, Gillenwaters Developers, Meridian Title.

Silver Sponsors—Carol & Charles Agster, Convey Studios, Flame, Betsy McQueary DDS, Mama Jean's Natural Market.

Bronze— Big Time Results, Love Insurance, PFG Middendorf, Springfield

Grocers. Panera Bread, Starbucks.

Space doesn't allow us to thank the other sponsors who so generously donated gifts for prizes or to thank those volunteers who gave of their time to help run the bike ride.

Welcome Mildred Rutan, Steve Waddell and Jean Hensley to APO's Board of Directors!

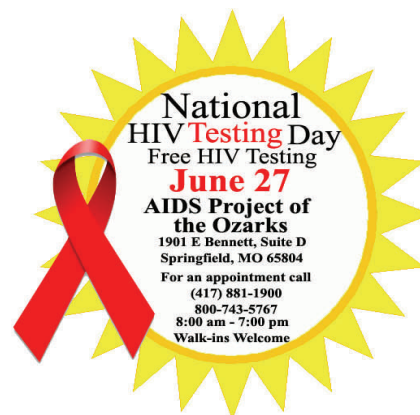
Counseling and Testing

APO is the leading agency for HIV testing in Southwest Missouri. This means that we often have to test away from the office.

This year we celebrated various awareness days with press conferences and off site testing.

During June APO will be testing at Pridefest at the GLO Center. For the first time we will offer urine testing for Gonorrhea and Chlamydia in addition to blood testing for HIV and Syphilis.

APO now has walk-in testing from 9-4 daily. No appointment necessary!



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WE NEED YOUR SUPPORT!

AIDS Project of the Ozarks has been at the front line in the fight against HIV/AIDS since 1985-when reliable information about the disease and its treatment was nearly impossible to obtain. All of APO's services to clients and the public, including brochures, publications, testing and education programs are provided FREE of charge.

YOU CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE! Contributions from our supporters are vitally important and needed to help ensure APO is able to continue providing the same high quality services to our community.

I asked, "Why doesn't somebody do something?" then I realized I was somebody.

Enclosed is my: Donation Annual membership dues of \$15

My donation is in honor of: _____

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Complete and mail to AIDS Project of the Ozarks 1901 E Bennett, Suite D, * Springfield, MO 65804*

All contributions are tax deductible. All services to clients are provided without charge and in strict confidence. APO's mailing list is kept confidential