

POSITIVE REACTION

OCTOBER 2006

DIGGING UP THE ROOTS OF AIDS

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BY: CHARLIE GRINDLE	

The September 19th *New York Times* OP-ED Column of Nicholas D. Kristof, entitled *The Deep Roots of AIDS*, explores the past, present, and future of the disease. It begins in Cameroon, the African country where it is widely believed that 70 years ago a mutant strain of simian immunodeficiency virus jumped from a chimpanzee to a man who butchered the sick monkey. From there, the virus followed the human host to Kinshasa, Congo and then ultimately spread to the entire world.

Kristof cuts to Cameroon at present, where the Nttomba family is suffering after the death of Pascal who was the sole earner in a household of 20. The Nttombas had been

prosperous enough to have all their children in school, but without Pascal, the family will rapidly decline as the children leave school for work. Because access to testing is only available to the well off in Cameroon and so many other nations, Pascal did not know he had AIDS, and even after his death, none of his family members have been tested. Kristof argues that today, while “the hardest-hit countries in southern Africa are doing a bit better against AIDS, others in the middle range like Cameroon or India haven’t woken up to the severity of the problem”. He goes on to stress the need for a more aggressive approach to HIV testing efforts around the world.

Citing the statistic that each day 14,000 more people will be infected with the disease, he argues that the biggest obstacle to slowing the spread of HIV is that “90 percent of those with HIV worldwide don’t know it and you can’t begin to tackle the disease when no one knows who has it”. While there are downsides to habitual testing, Kristof advocates that people in “high-prevalence countries” such as Cameroon, should be tested on a routine basis. If more aggressive testing were coupled with President Bush’s program against AIDS already in place, Kristof hopes that AIDS can be stopped from needlessly killing 8,000 people a day.

HIV/AIDS: FACT OR FICTION

Sharing food or dishes with someone who is HIV positive does not put you at risk of becoming infected.

FACT: HIV is not transmitted through casual contact, so it is impossible to get it through sharing a glass, fork, etc.

HIV HEART CIRCLE UPDATE



The HIV Heart Circle is scheduled to begin this month on

Wednesday, October 18th from 6-7:30 pm. This group will meet at the FPC offices in Portland.

For those of you who are not familiar with the Heart Circle,

it is a spiritual group based on self-discovery and community building. Within this group it is important that everyone feels safe so that they are comfortable taking the risks involved with sharing different pieces of their lives. The HIV Heart Circle will be a time limited group, meaning that it will last only 6-8 weeks, de-

pending on the schedules of the members. Also, this will be a closed group, which means that once the group begins they will not be taking new members. So if you are interested in joining this group please contact your case manager as soon as possible so that you can be added to the list.

Community Events Corner

-Portland Stage Company (Pay What You Can Community Nights)
Tues. Oct. 17th 7:30pm, Over The Tavern
Tues. Oct. 31st 7:30pm, Two Rooms

-Portland Players (Outreach Night, Suggested Donation but basically free)
Thurs. Oct. 27th 7:30pm
The Passion of Dracula

-MECA's Institute of Contemporary Art
Always free! Wed-Sun open 11am-5pm, Thurs open until 7, on the 1st Fri of every month open until 8pm
Running until Oct. 22nd
exhibition entitled--From Baja to Bar Harbor: Transnational Contemporary Art

Portland Public Library has tons of free events:
Tues. Oct. 3rd: Musically Speaking, a lecture with staff from the Portland Symphony Orchestra about Viennese Idylls

Tues. Oct. 3rd and Tues. Oct. 17 from 6-7:30: Let's Talk About It, a book discussion group

Thurs. Oct. 19th from 12:15 to 1:15pm: Ruby Slippers Motivational Life Workshop: Saying What's Hard To Say

For more information or if you are interested in attending any of the plays please contact Gretchen @ 774-6877 x111 at least a day before the event.

NEWS FROM POSITIVE HEALTH CARE

HIV testing might be getting easier, but is that necessarily a good thing? The CDC released new guidelines for HIV testing in September that call for all adolescents and adults to be routinely tested for HIV infection in hospitals, clinics, and doctors' offices. The most controversial part of the recommendation is that patients would no longer have to sign a special consent form and get extensive pre-test counseling before their HIV test. The point is to make HIV testing a routine part of medical care. Some believe this would lessen the stigma associated with HIV/AIDS and at the same time increase the number of people being tested. Advocates for the change point out that almost everything about

HIV/AIDS has changed drastically since the start of the epidemic except our approach to testing and prevention. Could this be why the number of new infections annually in the U.S. has not declined in fifteen years? Forty percent of infected people are diagnosed when their infection is already at an advanced stage, and 250,000 Americans who are HIV infected don't know it. With facts like these, it's hard to argue against taking our testing procedures and prevention work in a new direction. However, other activists and professionals in the HIV/AIDS field argue that the pre-test counseling is essential for behavior change and that the new guidelines will result in people being tested

without their knowledge. Even though consent must still be obtained under the new guidelines, some people are concerned that the opt-out scenario puts too much responsibility on the patient, and that we should continue to take extra care in ensuring that patients understand the impact of taking an HIV test. Staff from Positive Health Care heard some interesting presentations and debate about this topic at the annual Ryan White Conference in August. It will be interesting to see if traditional doctor offices in Maine implement the new guidelines, and to what extent the state of Maine's testing policies change as a result of the new recommendations.

SURVEY SAYS IT

As a result of the recent support group survey, FPC has decided to start an informal once a month community night. These nights will take place on the third Tuesday of the month from 6-8pm. Several different types of events

have been suggested, such as movie nights, poker/card games, and potlucks. If you have an idea for a theme please call Mary Martha at 774-6877 x116. This month's community night will be a Mexican dinner. Feel

free to bring whatever you want to contribute to the meal or just show up. We are still collecting data so if you have not yet filled out a support group survey and would like to please talk to your case manager.

**STAFF SPOT LIGHT
SARA PANELLA, PROGRAM SUPPORT SPECIALIST**

Originally attracted to FPC by its mission statement and the variety of programs that are offered, Sara Panella joined the Peabody team this summer. Sara grew up in central New York and is a graduate of Syracuse University. She provides support to all agency programs and is involved in the processing and distribution of financial assistance. Sara has also enjoyed participating in outreach and educa-

tional opportunities. When asked her thoughts on how to breakdown the stigma associated with HIV, Sara responded, "Education, education, education." After being asked who her role model is Sara replied, "I had the opportunity to meet author & performance artist, Kate Bornstein earlier this year and she was instantly my new role model. Her performance art and written works are empow-

ering and inspiring. I really appreciated her views on personal evolution and the encouragement of questioning our self-identity." And after much deliberation, Sara chose Magnolia as her favorite film. She said there were lots of different (well-acted) characters who are all interconnected. We are excited to have this interesting and informed women as part of the FPC staff.

INFO BITS

Outreach resource of the Month:

Need a helping hand? Give Bea Jones at Anytime Services a call at 800-782-1474. This is a group of women in southern Maine who are willing to help with at variety of task. This group comes recommended by a client who is already using this group for transportation.

The Circus is coming to town!

FPC has access to some reduced cost tickets to the Ringling Bros. & Barnum and Bailey Circus on Saturday, October 14 at 3pm at the Civic Center in Portland. The cost of tickets is \$5. If you are interested please get Gretchen your

money by 5pm Wednesday, October 4th. If you would like to get more information Gretchen can be reached at 774-6877 x111 or gjohnson@peabodycenter.org.

Want to raise money for FPC while searching the internet?:

Yes, it is possible! By using www.goodsearch.com and choosing to support Frannie Peabody Center you could earn the agency donations every time you search the web.

State HIV Conference: Will be held October 15&16 in Augusta. Final deadline for overnight accommodations will be October 4th. For more information or to

receive a registration form contact Mary Martha @774-6877 x116.

Enjoy Sporting Events? If you are interested in going to the Portland Pirates hockey games this season please let Gretchen know so that she can assist you in getting free tickets. Gretchen can be reached at 774-6877 x111 or gjohnson@peabodycenter.org.

Interested in joining a list serve that is set up to provide mutual support for those living with HIV in York and Cumberland Counties. If so please contact Mary Martha to be added at 774-6877 x116 or mmgantt@peabodycenter.org.



The Ticket Connection Program of FPC is raffling off a pair of tickets to see the Portland Stage company's performance of *Over the Tavern*. This plays runs from Sept. 26th to Oct. 22. It is a comedy about growing up Catholic in the 1950's. If you are interested in being entered into the drawing you must submit your name and best way to reach to Gretchen @ 774-6877 x111 by Wednesday Oct. 11th at 3pm.

OCTOBER 2006

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
1	2	3 Computer Time 9-11am	4 Apps. Due for HIV Conf.	5	6 Computer Time 2-4pm	7
8	9 Men's Discussion Group	10 Computer Time 9-11am	11 Raffle Drawing for Over the Tavern tick-	12	13 Computer Time 2-4pm	14
15 HIV Conf.	16 Trans Support Group HIV Conf.	17 Computer Time 9-11am Community Night 6-8 pm	18 HIV Heart Circle 6-7:30pm	19	20 Computer Time 2-4pm	21
22	23 Men's Discussion Group	24 Computer Time 9-11am	25 HIV Heart Circle 6-7:30 pm	26	27 Computer Time 2-4pm	28
29	30 Trans Support Group	31 Halloween Computer Time 9-11am				

- Trans Support Group to meet Mondays in October at 7pm at the People's Free Space-144 Cumberland Ave., Portland.
- **October 3rd** - Free internet access at 335 Valley St. 9-11am (for more info see pg 4)
- **October 4th** - Applications due for overnight accommodations at the state HIV conference. Please make sure to mark transportation assistance if that is needed.
- **October 9th** - Men's Discussion Group will be held at 49 Oak Street from 6-8 Pm. For more info contact Elmer@ 871-0216.
- **October 11th** - Raffle drawing for a pair of tickets to Portland Stage Company's production of *Over the Tavern*, For more info please see ad above.
- **October 15& 16th** - Advancing Maine's HIV Prevention and Care Conference.
- **October 17th** - Community Night 6-8pm at FPC (see pg2).
- **October 18th** - HIV Heart Circle begins 6-7:30 (see pg 1).
- **October 23rd** - Men's Discussion Group (see Oct. 9th).



FRANNIE PEABODY CENTER

comprehensive HIV & AIDS services

Check us out on the web

www.peabodycenter.org

Frannie Peabody Center

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Portland, Maine 04102

Phone: 207/774-6877

Fax: 207/879-0761

Email: info@peabodycenter.org

NEED A PLACE TO
CHECK YOUR EMAIL OR
SURF THE WEB?



The Frannie Peabody Center will be providing free computer access to clients on Tuesdays from 9-11am and on Fridays from 2-4 pm. For more information please feel free to call Mary Martha @774-6877 x116.

The Frannie Peabody Center is committed to compassionate care for the community infected with and affected by HIV and AIDS in Maine. The Peabody Center helps the community face and fight the realities of the disease by providing prevention education and direct services, including housing, information, education, advocacy, and counseling services. The Peabody Center treats the whole person with dignity, care and compassion.

POSITIVE THOUGHTS

BY: CHARLIE GRINDLE

Greetings! I hope you all have your sweaters ready; it's officially fall. Grocery stores are putting out their recipes for pumpkin pie and apple crisp, and city gardening crews are doing the final work on our lovely gardens. If April is the cruelest month, September must be the most desperate. Watching the endless stream of traffic leaving Maine on a Sunday afternoon makes you realize that people are having their last bit of summer fun, and want it to last as long as possible. It's the time when students are seeking housing for the school year, some single people are looking for someone to spend the winter with, and possibly longer. And let's not forget those

who are homeless and trying to figure out the best way to stay warm for the winter. I'm just about ready to start cleaning the windows and putting in the storms. That reminds me how lucky I am to have a warm place to live, and friends who are close. May the same be true for you.

At a ritual workshop last weekend, I stayed in my tent for the last time this year; I have a habit of sitting in my camp chair in whatever field I'm in, having a glass of wine, and staring up at the stars. As I was wondering which constellation I was looking at, and thinking that someday I'll be out there with the stars, a moth flew

between me and the stars. This was a gentle reminder that for now, I am earthbound, and need to be doing my work here. There is much to be done; caring for the earth by recycling, turning off lights, and saving water, and by caring for the people around me who are my family, natural and chosen, and community. And I need to remind myself to take care of myself too, so that I am able to do what I can to make the world a better place. I hope that you are being good to yourselves, with a surprise treat, or a visit to a spot that holds a special meaning for you.

Wishing you health, laughter, and love, Charlie

Cindi's EASY Chicken Cordon Bleu

Ingredients:

4 to 6 boneless, skinless chicken breasts (the smaller breasts work the best)

4 to 6 slices thinly sliced ham

4 to 6 slices of swiss cheese

1 cup heavy cream, whipped stiffly

salt and pepper

Directions:

Place chicken breasts in a baking dish. Use a dish small enough to place breasts closely together. Sprinkle with salt and pepper. Wrap each breast with a slice of ham, tucking sides under breast. Wrap cheese around each breast in the same way. Spread the whipped cream over all. Bake in 350 degree oven for 1 hour.