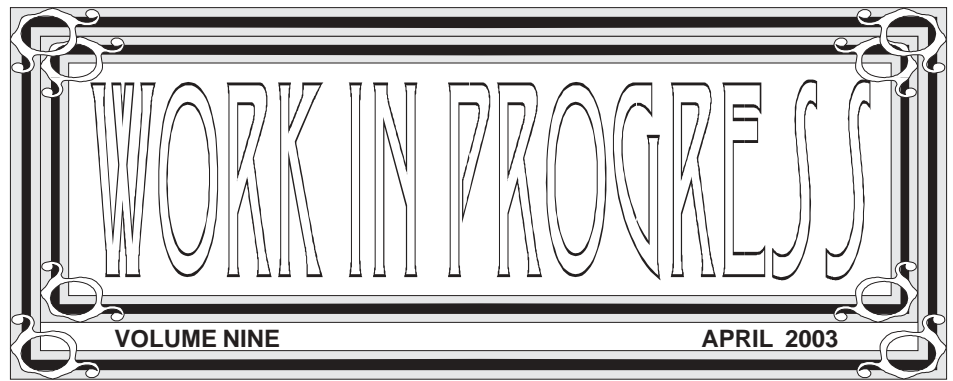


Time well spent

by Mike Bunyard

It's one of the themes of the HIV Resource Center web page www.hivroseburg.org. For Mary and I it means going up to the Douglas County Jail twice a month and making HIV information available to those who are interested. As Mary is fond of saying: "I don't care if you came here today just to get out of your cell.

If you go away with just a little more understanding of HIV and AIDS then I'm happy." And that is usually how it begins. We take turns talking to the inmates. We have different styles and different life experiences to draw on, but when we leave we know that their questions about how HIV is transmitted and more importantly, how it is prevented have been answered. We are still refining the way we present this information. Deputy Julie Buell has been a tremendous help in facilitating our efforts. The staff at the jail all get an **A** as far as I'm concerned. It isn't easy taking care of the needs of the folks who are there. They do their jobs with compassion and understanding, in a very professional manner. Just a few weeks ago, Deputy Buell asked us to come up and make a presentation to a group about hepatitis C. Mary deferred to me (I am 7 years post liver transplant due to HCV), and I had the opportunity to talk about my experiences, and share what I know. Judging from the feedback I got I'd say the information was well received. Hopefully, they learned a few things about reducing the harm they do to themselves and others. **Time will tell!**



State of the Office

by Billy Russo

By now we're all aware of the State's budget shortfalls and the devastating effect they are having on State funded programs. We haven't been affected directly, small outfits such as ours, rarely receive those operating funds; however, we're suffering indirectly.

Loss of medical benefits has taxed our case management program (See Lynn's article). Mental health and chemical dependency services have been eliminated by the State. We rely heavily on agencies providing these services to promote health among our caseload. About half of our HIV clients participate in mental health and/or chemical dependency programs. They suffer when these services are jeopardized.

To make matters worse the budget cutbacks have resulted in private funders being deluged with proposals from programs that were once funded by the State. These private grant makers were hit hard by the declining economy and have fewer dollars to distribute than in previous years. There are more programs fighting for fewer dollars, and we are all suffering the consequences.

We have also experienced a decline in donations and participation in our local fundraisers. While fundraising represents less than 5 percent of our income, it supports basic administration and general expenses.

In the first three quarters of this fiscal year (July-June) our net income was down \$25,000. During the same period last year it was up \$1,600. This significant loss has forced us to make major changes to remain solvent. We have to reduce our spending by almost \$3,000 a month!

Most staff salaries are tied to Federal grants that are not immediately affected. Grant writer and office manager have been cut. While eliminating these positions reduces our deficit by \$2,000 monthly, these measures are stopgap. Without a grant writer new grants go undeveloped and management of current grants fall on the executive director who will also be responsible for office management.

Our operating budget for this year is about \$220,000. Shortfalls during the first nine months has practically wiped out all the surplus we acquired in the late 1990s through two generous bequests.

Case Management Update

by Lynn Sterchi

This winter a number of our clients were faced with the news that their prescription medication would not be covered. First, in January the clients enrolled in the Medicare Medically Needy Spend-down Program were notified that they were responsible for paying for their meds. The clients and I launched into the process of enrolling in the pharmaceutical company's patient assistance programs. Initially, this was easier said than done. I had never done anything like this and was a bit overwhelmed. After a bit of thinking about how to organize the project ahead, I got started. The clients had to be very actively involved in the process and are now in charge of tracking their program. First we listed the medications they were taking – usually 5-7, then determined the manufacturer, then enrolled in the patient assistance program. Each pharmaceutical company has a different program and different criteria which caused an occasional scramble. Many kudos go to the people working in the patient assistance programs, to the nurses and med techs at the doctor's offices, and various Roseburg pharmacies as they were very helpful, courteous, and supportive. Just when I felt we had waded through the worst of our challenge, OHP standard withdrew their prescription coverage. Fortunately, that was short lived but several more clients went through the process mentioned above.



In mid March we were notified that the state had “found” money to support the OHP program. In addition CareAssist was allocated moneys to cover HIV meds until June 30. After that the Medically Needy Spenddown program is history. I do not know how long the pharmaceutical companies will continue their support. I am thinking most are long term but I do not know that.

The implications of these shutdowns are many. The initial shock is staggering to the person who receives a letter that states their necessary meds will not be covered. The continuing paper work and tracking is cumbersome and time consuming. Many clients around the state were tempted to give up and I have been told that some did. I can not imagine how people who are not receiving services through an active and supportive agency can navigate this system and maintain all that is involved.

I would also ask the state and it's citizens to contemplate how much money, time, and energy was wasted on the shutdown of the OHP benefits. What did it cost throughout the state to manage the clients involved? And then they “found” the money. Where was the money hiding as they were closing this portion of the program? Needless to say, our clients and I are skeptical of what the state has to offer and how long any one program will last.

As a result of the new co-pays and loss of services, the needs of our clients have increased. Several times clients have expressed concern for their ability to buy food, clothing, and maintain a roof over their head. We do not have any money designated for food assistance. Clients are referred to food banks and soup kitchens. It seems everyone must dig deeper for gas money and this has also put an additional burden on many families. I must compliment our clients for facing this crisis with some very positive and sometimes humorous ways of coping. We certainly have experienced stress, but we are doing our best to get by in these very trying times.

**And a big thank you to Dr. Dennis Ihara
for his kind and generous donation
to the HIV Resource Center.
Our heartfelt thanks, Mike, Billy,
Mary and Lynn.**

**Roseburg Risk Reduction
mike@hivroseburg.org**

Spaghetti Dinner

by Gail Walker

Douglas County AIDS Council's 4th annual spaghetti dinner took place March 7th at the Moose lodge with a St. Patrick's day theme. The event was marked by festoons of green and white decorations as well as entertainment by Celtic musicians Jack and Flo Shively, and Joe and Kathy Ross. Mike Fieldmen, Director of Umpqua Community Action Network, joined in.

Master of Ceremonies Jim Ross, 'JR,' assisted by Mike Bunyard and Geoff Alexander, kept the evening running smoothly as guests enthusiastically consumed Billy Russo's 'famous' spaghetti sauce. Mrs. Helen Scott Carlson, a dedicated DCAC volunteer for over a decade, received the 'volunteer of the year' award.



The highlight of the event was the auction of a delicious box of Clancy's homemade cookies, which sold for \$50.00. The happy winner immediately opened the box and began selling them for a dollar each.

It also afforded a wonderful opportunity for clients to enjoy a good time. DCAC would like to thank the various area businesses and individuals who donated the door prizes, which were a major factor in the evening's success.

Thanks also goes to our major sponsors, Adcock Heating Center, bbg marketing, BJ's Texaco, Ken Clark Insurance

Agency, Roseburg Dairy Queen, Harvard Dental Group, Harvard Optical Laboratories, Gregory Hazerbedian, Mercy Medical Center, Salomon Smith Barney, Companion Animal Clinic and Neal Walker. We are very grateful to the Moose Lodge for their help setting tables, cooking, serving and clean up.



Finally, a special thank you to all the volunteers and our planning committee members: Ronnie Yancey, Mary Greise, Gail Walker, Sandy Marcell, JR, Dee Lester, Flo Shively, and Lynn Sterchi. The spaghetti dinner netted \$1,578 after expenses.



Live in Reedsport

HIV testing and needle exchange at the Family Resource Center in Reedsport! I've had these dates, March 28 and 29, on my desktop planner since early February. I came over with Mary at the end of January to help out with testing in Coos Bay and Reedsport. While we were here I took some time and visited with Carlyne, talking about the center and what they do and the NEX program in Roseburg and what I do. I suppose the passion I feel about the work must have got her thinking. Things slowed down here and I went out to Mary's car to have a rest, it would be my turn to drive home. Next thing I know Mary is coming out to the car and asking me in her excited way, "Do you want to start NEX at the Family Resource Center"? A few details and a couple of months later here I am.

We stopped in at the Reedsport Police Department on the way over and introduced ourselves to Bob Gross, chief of police. He is a friendly, outgoing man. Just the kind of person you would picture at the chief of the RPD. We talked for a short time, me about NEX as a means to prevent the spread of blood-borne disease, and he about the importance of reaching our youth before they've had a chance to start injecting drugs. He told me that he frankly felt that NEX encouraged injection drug use. I told him that most research came to the opposite conclusion. I left it at that. He told me that he would not interfere with my efforts and I believe he is a man of his word. I'm still naïve enough to believe we can work together, I hope I stay that way. He and I agreed on two things, the spread of HIV and other blood-borne disease must be stopped and the importance of presenting accurate information to our youth. This is an alliance I can live with.

Testing here has gone pretty slow. Just as we're getting ready to pack up for the night a woman comes in to test and goes with Mary. When she finishes testing Mary brings her in and introduces her to me. We talk for a while and she tells me she's been using for a couple of years. She says she also collects used syringes and her mom disposes of them for her. We talk a little more and I ask her if she'd like to exchange the ones she has now for some clean rigs (syringes). She's up for that so she goes home, fetches the rigs and one of her partners who comes in and tests while we do our first exchange. I give her 50 rigs, some supplies, a couple of sharps containers, a couple of fitpaks (personal sharps), literature and some Safe Injection kits. Her partner comes in and I set her up with a SI kit. So now it's the 3 of us, I'm talking to her about secondaries and what they do for me. A secondary is usually someone in the injecting drug using community who does exchanges for me with their friends or peers. They provide information and supplies where I might not be able to. And they multiply the work I'm able to do 10 fold at least. She seems interested so we talk a bit more and then she takes off. After she's gone Mary and I pack up and go off to eat and find a place to stay for the night. I realize I haven't made arrangements to connect with my prospective secondary beyond giving her my number here at the HIV Resource Center. Oh well.



Mike Bunyard

So guess who shows up next morning? With another of her friends to test! She had split the rigs I gave her with her partner from last night and made up her 25 into kits. I gave her 10 more SI kits, and another 50 rigs. I got her phone number and address and we'll get together again when her test results come back. I asked her if she'd mind doing a day walking around Reedsport and putting up flyers and she said, "OK".

As Bill would say, "It's all good".

THE CORNER

respectfully for e e cummings

The old man walks hesitantly through
the silent relics of his life.
His steps proclaim his perception.

He has decided the terrain.
He alone has fashioned the landscape.
The opinions of others have no bearing on his creation.

He ponders if this is how it really is supposed to be.
He wonders if this is how it really is.

Are things the way they are because of a judgement?
Would they be the same if he didn't judge?

Like the tree falling in the forest with no-one to hear;
is his life the way it is, only because he sees it that way?

Suddenly there is the sound of one small bird singing,
and a thousand stars continue dancing.

O

Look Inside



Neil Westen

Inside
A Spot? A Place? A Location?
Unnamed, Uncharted, Unfathomable.
There. Where? There!
Non Explainable, Non Illustrateable
Non Corporeal, Only Demonstrateable
No amount of Searching will find it.
Only affection displays it's Truth.
Only LOVE proves it's Existence.

HIV RESOURCE CENTER

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Roseburg, Or. 97470
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Fax: 541-440-9665
Web: www.hivroseburg.org
Email: mary@hivroseburg.org

Women at Risk

Good News: The contract for the Women at Risk program has been renewed for another year. For those of you who are reading our newsletter for the first time, the Women at Risk program was created to serve the needs of women affected by and at risk of HIV. We provide services in Coos, Curry, and Douglas counties through presentations, counseling, and HIV testing. We target high risk populations and give information to prevent high risk behaviors such as needle sharing and having unprotected sex.

Women need to know more about how they can be infected, and should get tested for HIV if they think there is any chance they have been exposed. This is especially true for pregnant women. If they test positive for HIV, they can take steps to reduce the risk of infecting their babies.

If you have questions about HIV call me at 541-440-2761, Monday through Friday 9am-3pm. You can also leave a message on my voice mail (if you call after or before regular hours) and I will get back to you ASAP.

From May 2002 through February 2003 we have given 61 presentations to various women's groups, schools, alternative schools, alcohol and drug treatment programs, and the jail. These presentations reached 597 women and 132 women received counseling and were tested with the Ora-Sure HIV test.

We are reaching Women at Risk in all three counties!

Remember: It's What You Do, Not Who You Are, That Makes the Difference.

Mary Murphy/Outreach Women at Risk

Donations

play an important part in sustaining the work of the HIV Resource Center

Please make your donation to:

HIV Resource Center
832 NW Highland Street
Roseburg, OR 97470



Mary Murphy

AROUND THE CORNER

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Douglas County AIDS Counsel Board Meeting: July 17th at 11:00 A.M.

Gay Men's HIV Support Group: every
Tuesday 6–7 P.M.

Gay Men's Potluck: last Friday of each month,
5–8 P.M.

Lesbian Potluck: second Saturday of each
month, 6:30–9 P.M.

HIV TESTING is always available at the HIV
Resource Center Monday through Friday, 9 to 3,
or by appointment outside business hours.

IMPORTANT NOTICE

IF YOU WISH YOUR COPY
OF THE JULY
NEWSLETTER TO COME
TO YOUR E-MAIL ADDRESS

SEND YOUR E-MAIL
ADDRESS TO:

Mike Bunyard
mike@hivroseburg.org

DCAC

***832 N W HIGHLAND STREET
ROSEBURG, OR 97470***

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