

Coloring Outside the Lines

The Director's Desk

Recently I read an insightful poem by Joe Elmore entitled "Coloring Outside the Lines." A portion reads "some lines are important for structure and order, and are, thus, honored with a heart disciplined by love ... those with eyes to see may discover the freedom to look beyond lines and expand the limits of their own coloring." RAIN is looking beyond the lines with concerned and caring eyes as the needs of people living with HIV/AIDS change, as the people living with HIV/AIDS change. A long-time RAIN client graciously agreed to share about his journey for this article.

David requested a RAIN Team in 1995 when he had been hospitalized for pneumocystis carinii pneumonia (PCP) and felt that his partner would need help caring for him. David was on oxygen at home and was quite sick for some time. The RAIN Team brought food, helped clean the house, and sat with him. When David improved, unfortunately his partner became ill, and the Team was there for them both. The Team was great support when David's partner died in 1996, visiting David nearly every day. Taking a combination of three antiretrovirals for over a year, exercising, and having a close relationship with RAIN Team members is what David credits with his good health.

When I asked David what he thinks of the future, he admitted that he doesn't dwell on his thoughts of the future because that often causes him to think of the loss of his partner. He does want his Team and others to know that the Team has made living with HIV more tolerable. He proudly related that half of his Team are good cooks and the other half know where

the good delis are! David's Team recently took on a second client but he said that hasn't changed a thing about his relationship with them. I asked if it felt like the Team had just opened their hearts a little wider in order to help someone else and he thought that was a good way to think of it.

Our goal at RAIN is to connect people living with HIV/AIDS and volunteers in ways that are mutually satisfying. RAIN Coordinators try very hard to determine if a RAIN Team can provide the type of help that is needed. There are times when it doesn't seem reasonable to ask volunteers to get involved due to substance abuse or safety issues. Where to draw the line is difficult to determine; team dynamics such as skills and leadership play a crucial part. As we rejoice with David and his Team over his wellness, we struggle with how to serve people living with HIV/AIDS who are hearing impaired, or are Spanish speaking, are homeless or have chronic mental illness. How should RAIN expand its limits and when should we "color outside the lines?"

"Imagine thinking you are 29 and going to die, then awakening at 43 to realize you are going to live" said author Andrew Sullivan on National Public Radio (NPR) today in an interview about his book "Love Undetectable: Notes on Friendship, Sex and Survival." Sounds like a good read.



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RAIN Oklahoma is a Member of
AIDS National Interfaith Network (ANIN)
&
National Minority AIDS Council (NMAC)

Wesley T. Wise, Editor



News From The West

Wesley United Methodist Church in Shawnee hosted RAIN training August 14 & 15. The new "Shawnee Trust" team is eagerly awaiting their first client assignment.

Training was also held at St. Monica Catholic Parish in Edmond October 2 & 3.

RAIN will sponsor the annual World AIDS Day Candlelight Memorial Service on Tuesday, December 1 at St. Patrick Catholic Church in OKC. The service is open to the community and will be followed by a reception. Persons wishing to send in a slide of a loved one who died from AIDS for the "Seeing Their Faces" portion of the service may call the OKC RAIN office for details.

- Joan R. Foreman

News From The Southwest

My first RAIN Team training took place on August 29 & 30 in Lawton at Great Plains Metropolitan Community Church with eleven persons attending. We welcome this team to our RAIN Team family!

The Second annual AIDS Walk in Lawton was a great success, as was the Native American HIV/AIDS Conference at Cameron University.

- Victor Cutnose



Calendar

October 25 - OKC AIDS Walk
 October 26 - OKC RAIN Team Rep meeting
 November 16 - Tulsa Team Rep meeting
 November 23 - OKC Team Rep meeting
 December 1 - OKC World AIDS Day Candlelight Mem. Svc.



Update: August 1998

Educational Activity: Eight presentations to 93 people.

Total February 1990 through August 1998: 1,319 programs to 58,217 people.

RAIN Team Activity: Sixty-seven (36 Western OK, 23 Eastern OK, 6 Southwest OK, 2 South Central OK) RAIN Teams consisting of approximately 800 people are operating in Oklahoma.

These teams have served 434 HIV-infected individuals, their families and care givers. Fifty-five clients are being served currently.

RAIN Volunteers logged 1,000 hours in August 1998.

(For more detailed information including complete statistics, visit our web page at connections.oklahomanet.net/rain)



In Memoriam

Muskogee Interfaith Team
Steven

OKC Epworth UMC Blue Team
Stephen

Norman McFarlin UMC
Elisha

OKC Linwood United Methodist
Daniel

**OKC Varsity Team,
First Unitarian**
Neal

**Stillwater First Christian /
Norman St. Michael's Episcopal**
Johnny

Former Nichols Hills UMC Team
Glen

WANTED! Candidates for RAIN's Board of Directors

Individuals with equal measures of heart, head and sense who will commit to guiding and supporting RAIN into the next century. The Class of 2001 will join the Board January 20, 1999 and serve through 2001. The Board meets on the third Wednesday of January, March, May, July, September and November, at 1:00 p.m. in Oklahoma City. Special skills sought include Finance, Medical, Legal, Spiritual and Technology. RAIN seeks diversity on its Board - geographic, religious, cultural, racial, sexual orientation, and HIV status. Please contact Pam Cross at 800-324-7246 by Nov. 6 for consideration or for more information.

Notice Of Open Position

A part-time Associate Coordinator position is now open in the Oklahoma City area.

Major responsibilities of this position include volunteer recruitment & training, client intakes, on-going support of RAIN teams, and community educational programs.

The successful candidate will be highly motivated and sensitive to the needs of individuals and families affected by HIV/AIDS. Knowledge and experience in HIV/AIDS education, working with volunteers, and working within faith communities is preferred. Dependable transportation is essential. Other needed skills include public speaking ability, good written/oral communication skills, and self-direction.

The deadline for application is November 9.

Interested persons should send a resume and cover letter to: RAIN Oklahoma, 1601 N. Drexel Blvd, Oklahoma City OK 73107.



Donations

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MONTHLY SUPPORTERS

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Carol Woods • First Presbyterian Church of Edmond •

MEMORIALS

Johnny Anderson by J.T. Moore • Ray Brown on his birthday
7/13 by Jeannine Iles • J.B. Chenoweth & Randy Hurst by Billie Hurst
Gasaway • Randy Hurst on his 43rd Birthday July 4 by Billie Hurst
Gasaway • Neal Lacey by Bill & Bea Martin; Bill & Georgine Jackson;
Dean Smith; Elaine Fransen; Vonita Unruh • Stephen May by Warren &
Margaret May • Christopher Millard by Martin & Helen Lemmons •
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Yvonne Allen •

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PARTIES WITH A PURPOSE

Village United Methodist Church Rain Team Party • Edmond
Southern Hills Christian (DOC) Rain Team Party • Curtis Oshel's
Birthday Party • Fran Barton (Grace United Methodist Church) Party
• United Methodist Church of the Servant RAIN Team Party •

HIV AIDS ACTION INITIATIVE

OKC Community Foundation

FUND RAISERS

Tom & Yvonne Allen's Sapulpa Picnic Fund Raiser



Wish List

Tulsa Office: Two small trash cans, paper
shredder, paper cutter.

OKC Office: Paper shredder.

All Offices: Small set of tools



1998 Holiday Ornament Arrives

You can support RAIN's vital programs through the purchase of our collector's edition holiday ornament. This year's design feature a symbol of love...the guardian angel. Intertwined with the angel is a red ribbon representing the international symbol of AIDS awareness. This collector's edition ornament is solid brass with a 24 kt. Gold finish and brightly colored enamels.

Proceeds from ornament sales help RAIN Oklahoma continue its mission of education and service. The price is only \$15.00 (tax included). Quantities are limited. VISA & MasterCard accepted. To order, call 405.947.3434. Outside the OKC metro area call 800.324.7246.

Dance To Benefit Rain

"Sunny Side of the Street" is the name of the event planned by David Martin for November 14. A dance performance, competition and silent auction will held at the OKC Swing Dance Club, 4361 NW 50th. Doors open at 5:00 PM, general dancing at 5:30, with the show starting at 6:00.

Ticket prices are \$15.00 for reserved seats, \$10.00 for general seating. Hors d'oeuvres will be served. For general seating tickets call RAIN at 405-947-3434; for reserved seating call David Martin at 858-0520 or OKC Swing Club at 943-1950.

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I understand RAIN Oklahoma is a non-profit organization and my contribution is tax deductible. My canceled check will serve as my receipt. (Please check here if you prefer to remain anonymous and do not want to receive RAIN newsletters and mailings.)

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