



NPAPATF-PERSPECTIVES e-Perspectives

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Dear Susan,

Welcome to **e-Perspectives!**

Welcome to **e-Perspectives**, a monthly e-newsletter that highlights current and upcoming Pittsburgh AIDS Task Force events, accomplishments and programs, as well as national and international HIV/AIDS information. Through **e-Perspectives**, we keep you posted on all that PATF does to improve the health and quality of life for people living with HIV/AIDS in southwestern Pennsylvania. A sincere thank-you for your support and interest in PATF.

Have questions or comments about **e-Perspectives**? Please contact editor Susan Orr at sorr@patf.org or 412-345-0596.

Actor Alan Cumming to headline 25th Annual Benefit **Save the date!**



Tony Award-winner Alan Cumming will perform his one-man show as part of PATF's 25th Annual Benefit with Pittsburgh Public Theater on Wednesday, March 16, 2011, at the O'Reilly Theater. **Click on the graphic to see more.**

Cumming is known for being beyond eclectic. He was an award-winning Hamlet, and he had his own talk show. He shot a video portrait with Robert Wilson, and recorded a duet with Liza Minnelli. He made films back-to-back with Stanley Kubrick and the Spice Girls. He wrote a *Sunday Times* best-selling novel, and has an award-winning signature fragrance. He has played Dionysus, the Devil, the Pope and was shot by Herb Ritts for *Vanity Fair* as Pan. He was a teleporting Superhero, a Lee Jeans model and hosted "Saturday Night Live." He is an Independent Spirit award-winning producer and National Board of Review award-winning director. He has sung at Carnegie Hall, the Hollywood Bowl, the London Palladium and the Sydney Opera House. He was named Icon of Scotland in 2005. He designed wallpaper. He was the voice of Black

Beauty and a Smurf. He has just released his debut album. He isn't nearly done yet.

Alan Cumming (www.alancumming.com) trained at the Royal Scottish Academy of Music and Drama. After leaving the Academy, he found himself celebrated in his homeland for both his television work and his stand-up comedy. He went on to work with the Royal Shakespeare Company and the Royal National Theatre, where he won an Olivier award.

In 1998, "Cabaret" opened on Broadway and Alan was instantly embraced by New York City and heralded for his stunning performance as the Emcee. He won the Tony, Drama Desk, Outer Critics' Circle, Theatre World, New York Press, FANY and New York Public Advocate's awards for his work. He was recently made an O.B.E. (Officer of the British Empire) in the 2009 Queen's Birthday Honours' List.

PATF's Annual Benefit also will include a cocktail reception, a dessert party and presentation of the Kerry Stoner Award to Broadway Cares/Equity Fights AIDS. For information, visit www.patf.org or call 412-345-0593.

Pittsburgh steps up to commemorate PATF's 25th Anniversary, World AIDS Day

Dec. 1 efforts brought region-wide impact

Thanks to the many people throughout the region who commemorated PATF's 25th anniversary by attending our Dec. 1 luncheon and participating in World AIDS Day events throughout that week.

About 150 people attended PATF's luncheon, which featured Marty St. Clair, one of the researchers who discovered the impact of AZT on the HIV virus, and Dr. Ron Stall from the University of Pittsburgh.

(Pittsburgh) RED events included Mayor Luke Ravenstahl's press conference; "Red Plate Specials" at restaurants, bakeries and bars throughout the city, which helped raise funds and awareness; confidential HIV testing; Highmark turning the blue spire of Fifth Avenue Place to red; displays of the AIDS Memorial Quilt -- also known as The Names Project -- at numerous locations throughout Pittsburgh during that week; a candlelight vigil in Oakland, followed by the annual memorial service at Heinz Memorial Chapel. (See below Memorial Service presentation by Persad staffer Rig Rush.) This marked the second year that organizations throughout Pittsburgh have joined forces to promote HIV/AIDS awareness in conjunction with World AIDS Day. Nearly 30 organizations participated in this year's (Pittsburgh) RED campaign, an offshoot of the international One Campaign.

Visit www.pittsburghred.org for more information.

Click [here](#) to see photos from the mayoral press conference, candlelight vigil, and much more.

One man's perceptions of HIV/AIDS

Rig Rush's presentation at memorial service

The following is a reflection offered by Rig Rush, prevention specialist for the M2M Project, at the annual World AIDS Day Memorial Service, which took place at Heinz Chapel. A staunch supporter of HIV prevention efforts, Rush appeared on the cover of City Paper, the week prior to World AIDS Day.

"The greatest trick the Devil ever pulled was convincing the world he didn't exist."

This sinister quote, taken from the film "The Usual Suspects," starring Kevin Spacey, can be connected to our community.

As I stand here in front of you, it resonates within me when I think of the mentality of most of us in this city in regards to HIV.

In spite of tangible evidence, sadly, most of us still act as if doesn't exist...

It's not my problem...

It won't happen to me...

I'm a good person...

We've said it all to ourselves to create an illusion of security. But why?

Close your eyes... I want you to envision what an HIV-positive person looks like...

When you have that vision, open your eyes. Keep that image of them in the front of your mind. See their face...

I'm willing to bet that some of you probably couldn't picture one.

I'm also guessing that the majority of you failed to picture someone that looks exactly like you. Surprised?!

A potential HIV-positive person looks exactly like you... We all get trapped into thinking that HIV doesn't concern us but, in reality, everyone is affected by this virus.

I'm tired of the stigma and silence and ambivalence....the bigotry. The low self-esteem. This dog-eat-dog mentality. In the midst of all these labels and bias, people are still suffering. Still dying. There are even those who are unaware... and even sadder... those who don't care. Grab the hands of the people to your right and left. Hold them. Feel them... They love just like you do. They know loss just like you. They hurt, cry and matter. JUST LIKE YOU DO!

It doesn't matter who's gay. Who's straight. Which god they pray to. Feel them.

Sometimes all we need is to be touched to remind us we are still living. Feel them.

They may be positive. They may be negative. They may not know. It doesn't matter.

In honor of those whom we've lost..

and in respect to those whom we will eventually say goodbye to...

We must reconcile and unite.

Know your status.

We must protect those who are negative and love those who are positive. We must motivate those who haven't yet been tested.

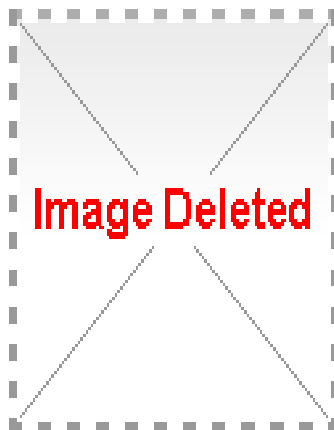
We cannot continue to suffer in the bliss of our own ignorance. Testing is free. Support is free. Medication in our city is free.

Frederick Buechner, an American writer and theologian, once wrote, "The life I touch for good or ill, will touch another life, and that in turn another, until who knows where the trembling stops or in what far place my touch will be felt." Your capacity to touch, even now, may be affecting the person next to you... A simple touch can possess the power to heal...

I will continue to exercise my capacity to promote HIV awareness, motivate people to understand the importance of knowing their status and try to inspire those around me to acknowledge and respect those around them regardless of HIV status, race, sexual orientation and gender. I will do what I can to strengthen my community.

Together, now, we touch and agree and unite. We are a community. We are affected. And we represent the change we want to see.

"The greatest trick the Devil ever pulled was convincing the world he didn't exist."



Save the date!
February gospel concert to highlight renowned performers

The second annual National Black HIV/AIDS Awareness Concert will take place Sunday, Feb. 6, 4-6 p.m., at Homewood AME Zion Church, 724 North Homewood Ave.

The free event will feature the Pittsburgh Gospel Choir and Mt. Ararat Baptist Church Mass Choir. The concert is in observance of National Black HIV/AIDS Awareness Day.



Chevron provides support to HIV/AIDS

See how one international company supports HIV/AIDS outreach, via providing HIV education, testing and treatment programs around the world: [Click on the graphic for more information.](#)

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