

The Common Thread

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The Newsletter for *FIGHTING AIDS CONTINUOUSLY TOGETHER*

Fall-Winter Edition ~ 2008

www.factlv.org

**P.O. BOX 1028
ALLENTOWN, PA 18105**

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SUN SHINES ON FACT SUMMER GAMES 2008!!!

The FACT Summer Games 2008, held on Sunday, September 7, 2008, at Rainbow Mountain Resort in the Pocono's welcomed a crowd of near 500 people in spite of torrential downpours from the tropical storm that came through eastern Pennsylvania during the weekend! Sunday morning we awoke to bright sunshine and dry ground as volunteers frantically made ready the grounds and decorations for the attendees and teams who began arriving at 11 a.m. Throughout the day everyone was entertained by various acts and performances by area celebrities. Great food and opportunities to bid on items from a silent auction as well as a called auction also added to the excitement of the day. Free HIV testing was also available. Six blocks of panels from the AIDS Memorial Quilt were on display. This year's display contained many panels of loved ones from our own community. Although several requested panels were not available this year, a request will be made for them again in early March 2009 to ensure a better chance of

receiving them in time for The FACT Summer Games 2009. If you would like to request a panel for next year please notify Lou James at LJFD1997@aol.com or call him at FACT, 610-820-5519. Of course the focus of the day was on the teams participating in the events organized by the co-chairs of the Games. When the events were over, Diamonz Bar in Bethlehem won first place, The Stonewall in Allentown won second place and Metropolitan Community Church of the Lehigh Valley won third place! A big thank you also goes out to Olivia Hart and her performers who held a special event prior to the Games at Rainbow Mountain, that raised \$1571.50. This year the Games raised \$15000. If you would like to be on a team next year, contact FACT. We have businesses and individuals who may be able to sponsor you!

An evening of Summer Elegance a great success!

An Evening of Summer Elegance" FACT house party, was held July 13, 2008, hosted by Robert Burton and Harry Abel at their home in Bethlehem. Although a sudden summer thunderstorm moved the party indoors, a great time was had by all in attendance as we dined on London Broil in Au Jus, Chicken, vegetables, Salads, Desserts, soft drinks, wine and beer. \$2400.00 was raised! Thank you to Bob and Harry for opening your home and your hard work in making this event such a great success!

Halloween Benefit at Lee Gribben's on Main

Lee Gribben's on Main, owners Lee Gribben's and Manny Gonzalez, located at 194 Main Street in Emmaus, sponsored its 2nd Halloween Party to benefit FACT. The event took place on October 29, 2008. Hosted by Dame Betty and Pearl Gates. The event raised \$350. for FACT.

~FACT LEHIGH VALLEY~ AIDS WALK 2008

FACT Lehigh Valley AIDS Walk, took place on October 5, 2008, beginning in the Bethlehem Rose Garden at Eighth Avenue. \$14000. was raised this year as over 100 people walked the 5 kilometer course. Candida's Bar in Allentown was recognized for raising the most money as a group as they raised \$2100. Orasure was recognized for its corporate donation of \$5000. Walkers were invited to take a red carnation, donated by the Long Funeral Home in Bethlehem, in memory of those who had lost the battle with HIV/AIDS. The money raised by FACT AIDS Walk in addition to helping FACT, helps the area HIV/AIDS Service agencies in their work with those whom they care for.

FACT BINGO AT PRIDE!!!

On August 17, 2008 PRIDE in the Park was held in Cedar Beach Park in Allentown and once again FACT offered a fun filled day of BINGO! We thank everyone who stopped by our tent for a game of bingo! We raised \$300.

Cowboys and Disco Divas Invade the Brew Works!

On November 16, 2008, FACT joined forces with the Liberty Gay Rodeo Association to sponsor the event, Cowboys and Disco Divas! Approximately \$1700. was raised! Hosted by the Allentown Brew Works, the event consisted of two floors of Music and fun. Two fifty/fifty raffles were held as well as drink specials, food and a choice of microbrews all for an admission of \$10.00! The event was a great success. Another event similar to this one will be planned for the spring!

FACT Holds Annual Meeting and Board Elections

On November 17, 2008, FACT Held the annual membership meeting and board elections. During the meeting, the 2009 budget was approved and a review of the high and low points of the year were discussed. Elected to the executive board for 2009 was Brian Marks – President, Robert Burton, Vice President, Lou James, Secretary, Bryon Reynolds, Treasurer. Elected to two year terms of office on the board of directors was: Amy Smart, Joe Armato, Chris Banco, Chris Criswell, Shawn Deppen, Saja Dingler, Daniel Friedman, Edward Gumina, Carl Mancino and Skip Sheetz. William Drolet, David Moyer and Christian Smith also continue on the board with year remaining on their terms of office. FACT is always looking for new people to serve on the board. If you are interested in becoming involved with FACT as a member of the board, please contact the FACT office at 610-820-5519.

The 22nd Annual Snowball

The 22nd annual FACT Snowball was held on December 7, 2008 at the Holiday Inn, ninth and Hamilton Streets, Allentown. The event raised \$13,000. and 130 people attended. The Snowball has always been an event that promotes friendship and is the time we recognize and honor those who have demonstrated their dedication to FACT and those infected with or affected by HIV/AIDS. The winner of this year's President's Award given to Treatment Trends Inc. – Keenan House for their dedication to FACT and for providing volunteers over the years to the FACT Lehigh Valley AIDS Walk. The Rainbow Award was given to Durell Shellhammer, who over the years has donated his time and provided a place to FACT for fund raisers like Bingo. Carl Mancino, was awarded the Lifetime Achievement Award for his many years of dedicated service to FACT as an officer and board member. This year, AIDS Activity Office, AIDS Services Center, Latinos for Healthy Communities as well as FACT received Grants from the proceeds of The AIDS Walk. FACT wishes to thank everyone who made the event such a great success and especially all of those who made contributions to the Silent Auction. Without these donations, the Snowball would never be as successful as it has been these many years.

PA Diversity Network Honors Dave Moyer

FACT board member, educator and fixture at the Allentown Health Bureau, David Moyer, was honored by the PA Diversity Network on June 17, 2008. He received the award for providing health services to the GBLT community. The presentation took place at the Allentown Brew Works. As many of you know, Dave has been a pillar of the community when it comes to providing health information and testing for sexuality transmitted diseases and for educating the community at large in disease prevention. Dave also arranges and coordinates the free HIV testing at many FACT events. FACT is honored to have Dave as a member of our board!

Where Does The Money Go?

In the last 6 months FACT has paid out over \$13000 in contingency request. These requests have come for assistance with purchasing medications, rent assistance, heating and utility assistance, insurance payments, eye glasses and dental help, and assistance for paying for several funerals. As our economy gets worse, FACT expects that requests for help will continue to increase. FACT is the agency of last resort for these people. Requests come to FACT only after the service agency they are working with has exhausted all other avenues for help. At that time a request is sent to FACT and the request is usually granted. If you would like to make a general contribution to FACT or wish to specify what

your individual contribution should be earmarked for, please send your check to FACT with a note as to what you would like to see done with your donation.

Membership Renewals for 2009 are due!

Your 2009 membership renewal will be due January 1, 2009! FACT values you as a member and we hope you will renew for the coming year. A renewal postcard will be mailed very soon. If you do not receive yours or you have moved, please call FACT at 610-820-5519 and let us know. We will make sure you are mailed a membership renewal card. By continuing as a member of FACT you not only help us continue helping those infected with or by HIV/AIDS, but you also insure that you will be kept informed of our events and other information. Remember your contributions are tax deductible.

How Can I help FACT??

There are many ways you can help FACT. As you can see, FACT continues to host and sponsor many fundraising events to raise money to Help those infected with or affected by HIV/AIDS. These activities require many volunteers to help us set up, run and clean up. We are always looking for volunteers to help in situation like this. If you would like to volunteer to help at an event just talk to a FACT Board member or call the FACT Office or email us at the address in our letter head. It is only with your help that we are able to accomplish the work we must get done to make these events successful.

Another way to help FACT is by hosting a FACT House Party. All that is requested is that FACT be notified of the event and what it will consist of. A Fact House Party does not need to be anything elaborate. Sometimes, just a simple fishbowl placed for attendees to place a donation or a set minimum donation is all that is needed. More elaborate events are also welcome! All you need is a little imagination! Holiday time or summer barbeques are great times to hold a house party as well! Remember, the money you raise for FACT may help to put food on the table, assist someone with a rent payment or pay for a life sustaining medication of someone infected/affected by HIV/AIDS Please contact FACT for further

information or questions on how to hold a house party.

2008 in Summary

As 2008 draws to a close, FACT realizes that the economy and changes in employment and needs of those who come to FACT for assistance affect all of us. Many of you are having difficulty financially and contributions to charities like FACT might be less than you might have made in the past. FACT understands your position. All we ask is that you continue to remember us and be as generous as you are able. To date, FACT has provided over \$45,000. in contingency requests to people of all ages from infancy to senior individuals infected with or affected by HIV AIDS. The people who come to FACT are truly in need and FACT will continue in it's mission, therefore your support is so very important, especially now. Remember, FACT is an all volunteer organization. We receive no state or federal funding. All money that FACT raises is through events we sponsor or host and from contributions from people like you. We thank you for your past generosity.

Our Mission Statement

FACT is an organization of concerned people committed to raising money to assist individuals and families affected by HIV, the virus that causes AIDS, and to conquer the HIV/AIDS crisis within the Lehigh Valley and surrounding communities. FACT identifies, supports and monitors programs that provide direct and educational services within the communities. FACT's mission is to alleviate suffering and reduce the spread of HIV/AIDS and to provide an improved quality of life to those affected by HIV/AIDS.

UP COMING EVENTS!

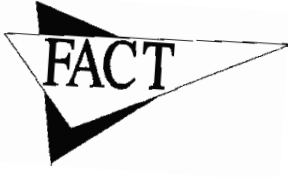
March 2009 ~ FACT BINGO

September 2009 ~ FACT Summer Games

December 2009 ~ Snowball

Watch your mail and our website for more exciting events!

FACT is a registered not-for-profit 501(c)3 organization. The official registration and financial information for Fighting AIDS Continuously Together may be obtained from the Pennsylvania Department of State by calling toll free (within PA) 1-800-732-0999. Registration does not imply endorsement.



P.O. Box 1028
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Watch for our Upcoming Events



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