2023 Top HIV News Stories

In 2023, POZ readers were drawn to memorials, Latino advocacy, HIV crime laws, love stories and obituaries of AIDS advocates.

December 26, 2023 By Trent Straube and Ian Anderson

As a new year approaches and we reflect on the past 12 months, a look at the most popular HIV news headlines of 2023 reveals that POZ readers were drawn to a topic that has never dominated our year-end lists before: obituaries.

In previous years, a few obituaries of AIDS advocates would appear among the top stories, but in 2023, a total of five made the 20 most-read news items, including the top two spots: The item that garnered the most page views was a July obituary for Stephen Pieters, the gay minister living with AIDS who was interviewed by evangelical icon Tammy Faye Bakker in a 1985 segment of her show Tammy's House Party (that groundbreaking moment was recreated in the 2021 Oscar-winning film The Eyes of Tammy Faye, starring Jessica Chastain). The second most-viewed HIV news article was the obit for epidemiologist Stephaun Elite Wallace, PhD, a Black scientist, social justice advocate and house ballroom legend whose work addressed HIV and COVID-19 health disparities, notably among African-American and LGBTQ populations.

Perhaps it's no surprise that obituaries are of high interest. These remembrances of advocates offer profiles of courage and inspiration and glimpses of history and communities, all while illustrating the progress we've made (and the challenges that remain) in the fight against HIV. For example, if you read the combined obituary for Mary Lucey and Nancy Jean MacNeil—who died within hours of each other—you will learn about ACT UP Los Angeles and the unique obstacles faced by women and prisoners living with HIV.

Similarly, other popular articles in 2023 focused on past eras of the AIDS epidemic, such as the No. 7 story, "A Look Back: Eazy-E's Death and a 1995 Hip-Hop Concert for HIV Causes," the No. 14 spot's "Adam Lambert Stars in Historical AIDS Drama 'Fairyland,' Says It Resonates Today" and No. 19's "Magic Johnson Did NOT Contract HIV From a Hepatitis Vaccine." Then there's the somewhat salacious controversy at the heart of the No. 9 item: "Does This Proposed AIDS Memorial Look Like a Giant You-Know-What?"

But POZ readers also focused on the here and now. Latino issues took precedence with "Latinos in Georgia See Rising HIV Rates While Other Groups See Declines [VIDEO]" and "Listen to Latino LGBTQ Love Stories That Raise HIV Awareness" at No. 3 and No. 5, respectively.

Our year-end list also includes evergreen topics such as HIV criminalization ("Watch the 'HIV Is Not a Crime' Commercial"), AIDS walks and HIV clinics ("HIV Headlines Two Big Events During One Week in Chicago [VIDEOS]") and HIV Testing ("Urging the CDC to Recommend HIV Testing for People 65 and Older"). Awareness days, federal budgets, injection drug use, LGBTQ homeless youth and spotlights on HIV-related video series round out the list.

In case you're wondering whether we've overlooked stories about CRISPR gene therapy, HIV vaccine trials or folks who were cured of HIV, well, we didn't forget them, and neither did our readers. Those topics appear in POZ's year-end list "Top HIV Science Stories of 2023."

The 20 POZ HIV News Stories that received the most page views in 2023 are:

1. R.I.P. Stephen Pieters, a Gay Minister With AIDS Interviewed by Tammy Faye Bakker
Posted: July 18

2. R.I.P. Stephaun Elite Wallace, PhD, HIV Scientist and House Ballroom Legend
Posted: August 8

3. Latinos in Georgia See Rising HIV Rates While Other Groups See Declines [VIDEO]
Posted: April 28

4. R.I.P. David Sanford, Reporter With AIDS Who Wrote His Own Obit in 1995
Posted: February 3

5. Listen to Latino LGBTQ Love Stories That Raise HIV Awareness
Posted: October 10

6. R.I.P. Lesbian AIDS Activists Mary Lucey and Nancy Jean MacNeil
Posted: February 17

7. A Look Back: Eazy-E's Death and a 1995 Hip-Hop Concert for HIV Causes
Posted: February 24

8. Watch a Preview From Day With(out) Art 2023's "Everyone I Know Is Sick"
Posted: November 24

9. Does This Proposed AIDS Memorial Look Like a Giant You-Know-What?
Posted: September 22

10. Urging the CDC to Recommend HIV Testing for People 65 and Older
Posted: June 20

11. Hopeful HIV and Hepatitis News in Biden's Proposed 2024 Budget
Posted: March 17

12. Ali Forney Center for Homeless LGBTQ Youth Opens an HQ Near NYC's GMHC
Posted: October 19

13. HIV Advocates Inspire in "The Cure Chronicles" [VIDEOS]
Posted: January 20

14. Adam Lambert Stars in Historical AIDS Drama "Fairyland," Says It Resonates Today
Posted: March 3

15. HIV Vaccine Awareness Day 2023
Posted: May 18

16. Overdose Deaths Involving Buprenorphine Did Not Proportionally Increase With New Flexibilities in Prescribing
Posted: January 28

17. R.I.P. Ronnie Grace, an LGBTQ and HIV Advocate in Milwaukee
Posted: November 14

18. HIV Headlines Two Big Events During One Week in Chicago [VIDEOS]
Posted: October 6

19. Magic Johnson Did NOT Contract HIV From a Hepatitis Vaccine
Posted: January 17

20. Watch the "HIV Is Not a Crime" Commercial
Posted: January 10

© 2026 Smart + Strong All Rights Reserved.