Mailbox

June 1, 2005

SAINT VALENTINE'S LIVES!

POZ's online personals do a great service for positive people ["You've Got Love," February/March 2005]. They helped me finally find the right man. We planned to meet in the beginning of April but couldn't wait and met at the end of March. We found we have even more in common than we thought. I live in St. Joseph, Missouri, and he lives in St. Ann. We agree that the saints are watching out for us. Thank you for making the site free. It's not always easy to access personals sites on a fixed income. Good luck to everyone trying out this service. Hopefully you,too, will find the right match.

Craig Fowler
St. Joseph, Missouri

THE FRAUD SQUAD

"Doin' the Hustle" [February/March 2005] exaggerates the problem of HIVers illegally selling their Medicaid-subsidized meds on the street.It was reminiscent of sensationalized exposés on "welfare mothers" that incorrectly implied that tens of thousands of people were cheating the system. Congressional representatives could use this article as an excuse to reduce or not increase ADAP funding.

It's true that the fraud exists. But the people who really pay the price are those who shorten their life spans by selling their meds. The fundamental problem is that people on the lowest economic rung are forced to make these untenable choices.

Dennis deLeon
President, Latino Commission on AIDS
New York City

DRIVER'S ED

I support HIVer Tom Donohue's putting his face on a highway billboard to educate the public about the virus ["Hey, What's Your Sign?," February/March 2005]. I resent that his neighboring ASO and its director, Brian Bluth, don't support him. How can an effective AIDS organization not understand that people need education from all sorts of HIVers? Why don't they put their money where their mouth is and put up a billboard of their own? If Bluth wants to continue receiving the donations that pay his paycheck, he should support Mr. Donohue's attempt to promote community awareness.

Kenneth Vergonet
Omaha, Nebraska

I'M GONNA TELL

Your disclosure advice should clarify that sometimes it benefits an employee to disclose in the workplace ["Legal Eye," February/March 2005]. If an employee's HIV status is unknown, he or she cannot claim discrimination. In the late '80s, I was often late to my job as a paralegal after a morning managing harsh med side effects. I was fired. I revealed my HIV status to defend myself, but it fell on deaf ears. Ironically, this law firm had been the first to sue under New York City's disability-discrimination law. Perhaps if I had disclosed in writing, they would not have fired me to avoid a similar suit.

Mike Davis
Riegelsville, Pennsylvania

BRINGING UP THE REAR

After POZ published an article about my company's pads, which make lipodystrophy-affected butts look better, February became the highest-selling month in company history ["Booty Call," February/March 2005]. Because of the increased business, we can now develop a women's line and a waterproof line.

I met Butt for You's founder, Ken Christman, in the hospital. Luckily for me, HIV drugs worked, and I made a great recovery, but due to lipo, I left my butt behind! So I started working for Ken. He passed away last spring and left his company to his sister and me. We are working hard to keep his dream alive.

Jack Timlock
Managing Director, Butt for You
Toronto

QUIT BEACHIN'

Cancel my subscription until you stop running the obscene Reyataz ad featuring a cell-phone call from buddies at the beach [February/March 2005]. I am on Reyataz and four other HIV meds and am offended by the notion that "life's a beach with HIV." But a far greater offense is the flagrant disregard for the millions of people with HIV who don't have cell phones, jobs that allow them to head off to the beach, medical insurance or money to pay for HIV meds. It's disgusting to see millions of advertising dollars wasted while millions are dying without any medication. I will not read any future issues until these ads stop appearing in what I used to think was a useful and trustworthy magazine.

Jim Ross
San Diego

POZ responds: Yours isn't the only response we got about this "talking" ad—and our guess is the folks who make Reyataz heard about it, too. We understand the advertiser won't be running the ad

again.

Correction: Due to a printing error in our April issue, the “April Showers” byline of Jack Kaplan, Edgewood, New Mexico, was omitted.

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http://beta.docker.poz.com/article/Mailbox-148-4828