S.O.S.—April 1996

The epidemic's evolved in the past two years -- and so has POZ

April 1, 1996 By Sean Strub

There was little hope in the battle against AIDS when I founded *POZ* two years ago. Treatment advances were announced with less frequency, activists were disillusioned and the broader public's attention was no longer riveted on the epidemic. As a person with AIDS, I felt forgotten and abandoned by the various communities of which I am part.

Today that has changed. There is very real good news on the treatment front, that's for sure. But more important is the growing recognition, led by people with HIV themselves, that our lives are not over when we are handed an HIV diagnosis. Our lives continue full of life, excitement, hope and expectation of tomorrows.

We face special challenges because of the virus we carry. But every life, in every corner of the earth, faces challenges of one type or another. Whether it is life-threatening illness, disability, racism, sexism, religious intolerance or homophobia, life is about challenges. Having HIV is tough. But it's a lot easier if you fight back and make sure you enjoy living. Every day.

With this, our second anniversary issue of *POZ*, I am proud to introduce Obie award-winning playwright David Drake as our new editor-in-chief. David has been my activist conscience, personal hero and friend for many years. You might know him as a performer, onstage in *The Night Larry Kramer Kissed Me* and *Pageant*, in the films *Philadelphia* and *Longtime Companion* and on television in *Law & Order* and *New York Undercover*.

I am elated that he has joined *POZ* and I can't wait to see his understanding of the epidemic and his vision of our future reflected in our pages. The next few months, as David puts his imprint on the magazine and we increase our publishing schedule to monthly, are going to be exciting.

Mark your calendar for May 31 and June 1. Those are the dates of the first national *POZ* Life Expo, a quality-of-life consumer expo for those impacted by HIV. To be held at the Javits Center in New York City, the expo will have 200 exhibitors, 40 panel presentations (produced by the National Minority AIDS Council) and social events. And it's all free. Call 800.883.2163, extension 240, for information.

Enjoy *POZ*!

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