He Planned a Bug Chaser Party as an HIV Fundraiser. Really.

What could possibly go wrong?

February 4, 2021 By Mark S. King

Have you heard the one about the gay porn dude who tried to produce a Palm Springs event for this October that he called the “Poz Pride Fest” (which is in no way associated with POZ magazine or POZ.com) to raise money for HIV groups and it would include a “Chaser’s JAMboree!” sex party where HIV negative guys could meet their HIV positive dream date for some friendly transmission?

Wait! I’m not done! And then the gay resort venue discovered these plans and dropped the event like a hot potato and the porn guy organizer posted a cancellation notice that makes himself out to be Mother Teresa, railing against “adversaries” in the HIV community while continuing to solicit donations to the HIV groups by providing a PayPal account that happens to be managed by him?

I apologize if you are trying to digest a meal.

Gay porn actor Tim Tyler has an online profile describing himself as a “successful bug chaser (1999).” Yeah, the erotic pursuit of HIV is a thing. I won’t bother shaming people who have taboo fantasies. Sexuality is mysterious and complex, and readers of mine know that I do not judge people’s fantasy lives.

The line gets drawn, though, when someone schedules a time and place to turn a dark fantasy into the HIV version of a super spreader event. For those who presume that people living with HIV are all undetectable and unable to transmit HIV through sexual contact (“U=U”), the latest CDC estimates state that only 65% of people living with HIV in the U.S. are undetectable – a number that has, gratefully, risen over the years. But I don’t care much for those odds in the context of a bugchasing soiree.

Anyway, Tyler had the bright idea to host the “Poz Pride Fest” and promote it as a weekend of community building, naughty meet-and-greets, and even educational speakers (although no speakers were ever announced). But Tyler is also very conversant on his social media pages on the thrill of pursuing HIV infection, suggesting he takes as much pride in chasing the virus as he does living with it.

On the event website, which has now been largely dismantled, there were “adult” events listed that included the “Chaser’s JAMboree!” where colored hankies would be helpfully provided to

denote “chasers” from “gifters.

If only someone had taken a screenshot of that event page before it was removed. Oh, wait.

The Twitter account for the event goes a step further, posting a survey asking how many people are attending Poz Pride Fest as “chasers” vs. “gifters” (posted just before the event was moved from May to October, because of COVID and how much the event cares about your health). The chasers won out, for those of you keeping score at home. One commenter enthused that the event would be “a chaser’s paradise."

Gosh, I wish someone had grabbed a screenshot of that before Tyler deleted the Twitter account. Oh. Wait.

It’s not so much the heat but the temerity, to coin a phrase. When this writer contacted the gay resort promoted as the “official venue,” it took the resort owner about two minutes of sitting speechless at his laptop before he cancelled the rooms Tyler had reserved and denounced any association with the event.

That’s when Tyler scrubbed most of the event website, leaving a cancellation statement so filled with self-serving platitudes it would make the angels weep. And by angels, I mean the dead men and women lost to AIDS who are up there flipping the finger at this tone-deaf act of exploitation.

Important to find a silver lining to this unfortunate setback,” Tyler poetically muses in his statement, “I find comfort in knowing our desire to live with pride is now on the minds of our adversaries. Hopefully, the HIV/AIDS community shall one day have the ability to stand strong in unity and pride, knowing such an opportunity would not exist without experiencing failed attempts such as ours."

He’s a trailblazer, people. Learning to crawl so the rest of us can run. To the nearest toilet.

And that would conclude this misbegotten tragicomedy, if it weren’t for one more tiny detail Tyler leaves on the table.

He still wants money for the HIV charities. Although none of the three organizations report knowing anything about the event and claim no association with it, Tyler is still inviting donations, either to be made directly to the charities or, get this, to be deposited into the event’s PayPal account. The PayPal account Tyler manages.

"All online contributions are held in a Poz Pride Fest PayPal account then distributed evenly,” Tyler writes on the donations page. Uh huh.

I have never needed a hot shower more in my entire life.

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http://beta.docker.poz.com/blog/planned-bug-chaser-party-hiv-fundraiser-really