



The Network

JUNE 2014

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Derek Sisting

AIDS/LifeCycle - Coming to SLO on June 4th!



Photo Credit: AIDS Life/Cycle

"It's a life-changing ride - not a race - through some of

California's most beautiful countryside." -aidslifecycle.org,

The AIDS/LifeCycle is a seven-day bike ride from San Francisco to Los Angeles.

It benefits the L.A. Gay & Lesbian Center and San Francisco AIDS Foundation and "is designed to advance their shared interest to reduce new HIV infections and improve the quality of life for people living with HIV/AIDS."

This important event is one of our favorites! We are proud to

be a part of it and are eager to support the riders during their seven day trek.

As the cyclists come through our beautiful county, we provide a stop for lunch, rest, and cheers!

On **Wednesday, June 4th**, riders will be traveling from Paso Robles down Highway One, and will be stopping at Cuesta College to grab something to eat and take much needed break.

The vibe is always amazing, and we would love to have you there!

It's not too late to volunteer!

We are still looking for people to help serve and sell lunches, to promote the fundraiser, and, of course, encourage the riders!

Volunteer shifts are available:

- 8-11 am
- 10:30am-1 pm
- 12:30-3pm

Contact Karla at 805-781-3660 and let us know if you and/or your group want to join us!



Derek Sisting: New Hep C Health Counselor

By Derek Sisting



In the 8 years I have called SLO home, I have been incredibly fortunate to have served at the ASN.

I first became involved with the ASN through Fusion. I was 17, fresh out of the closet and looking to mix and mingle. As a

new member, I found that I was more comfortable with myself as a young gay man and would meet many of my future best friends during that time.

I began volunteering for ASN events, and my eagerness to serve lead to a coordinator position.

Within a couple years, I was hired as a paid program supervisor.

This building is practically my home and the staff is like family. I've shared many major milestones with the people in this building, from celebrating my 18th birthday, to getting my driver's license and turning 25.

I look forward to this new position with the SLO Hep C Project and celebrating a few more milestones with my family and friends along the way.

AIDS Memorial Grove



The Steve Weiss AIDS Living Memorial Grove, located in El Chorro Regional Park, provides our community with a beautiful living memorial in remembrance of the men, women, and children who have died from AIDS, and in support of those who live with this devastating disease every day.

The Grove is a place for grief, for remembrance,

for hope, and for renewal. It is a place to stroll, to meditate, or to gather.

It provides a learning tool for adults and children, provoking discussion on HIV/AIDS, awareness, loss, and the power of community and love.

Created with native plants and trees, gardeners are also encouraged to learn more about California plant life during their visit.

The Grove, as life itself,

grows and changes with the cycles of nature; planting and maintaining the Grove provides a healing experience.

If you would like to purchase a stone on behalf of a community member who has passed away from AIDS, or if you would like to donate to our native healing plant garden, please contact us at 805-781-3660.

For more information, visit www.asn.org/memorial.php.

“...Most of our clients depend on the Food Pantry, making generous donations from organizations like GleanSLO so incredibly meaningful.”

Thank You GleanSLO!

As the sole organization in San Luis Obispo County that provides support for people living with HIV/AIDS and hepatitis C, we have a big responsibility to the people we serve. Not only do we want to support our clients medically and financially, but in as many other ways as possible.

The donated fresh fruits and veggies from GleanSLO are a great supplement to our Food Pantry, and they help provide

the nutrition our clients need to stay healthy.

We are so excited to benefit from GleanSLO's mission, and it's such a treat to add fresh and local produce to our most utilized resource.

We're looking forward to our future and working with GleanSLO!

If you would like to donate to our Food Pantry, or would like to hold a special food drive for

us give us a call at 805-781-3660!

We'd love to help set it up and find you volunteers!

Our Pantry could always use some bulking up, particularly canned items (like vegetables and soup), dry goods (like pasta and oatmeal), toiletries (like shampoo and soap), and cans of Ensure.

Visit ASN.org for more details on how you can help!

Drive Thru BBQ, a Success!

We'd like to send out a BIG thank you to everyone who joined us for our Tri-Tip BBQ Fundraiser last month!

We were able to raise over \$2,500, which means a whole month's worth of supplies for our Food Pantry!

Special thanks go to Matt, Claire, and Lauren, the hugely generous

owner and staff over at Old San Luis BBQ (<http://oldsanluisbbq.com/>) for the absolutely delicious and HUGE portions of tri-tip, corn, baked beans, and garlic bread in each meal.

And a very special thank you goes out to our incredible volunteers, without whom this event would not have been possible, or as much fun!

We'll see you again next time!



ACA Update: Special Enrollment Period for COBRA Users

Beginning Thursday, May 15, Covered California will launch a special-enrollment period for people who have COBRA health insurance and would like to switch to an exchange plan.

COBRA, or the Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act, gives workers and their families who lose their health benefits the right to continue their health insurance provided by their group health plan for a limited period of time.

However, qualifying individuals may still be required to pay for up to 102% of

the premium, which often adds up to quite a bit of money.

Fortunately, people who have health coverage through COBRA are now eligible to shop for and buy coverage through Covered California **from May 15 through July 15, 2014.**

This is great news to COBRA users, who, until recently, could not apply for health insurance with the possible subsidies and cost share programs through the Affordable Care Act.

For more information, visit Covered California's COBRA FAQ page:

<https://www.coveredca.com/faqs/cobra/>.

Or, give our amazing certified enrollment counselors a call at 805-781-3660!

Affordable Care Act
UPDATE



Did You Know?: The ASN & Community Education

The ASN is proud to provide clients, community members, and medical service providers every education opportunity possible.

For example, we were fortunate to welcome Neva Chaupette, Psy. D., the Project Director of a mobile medical clinic in LA that provides free and comprehensive HIV, hepatitis C, and STD services to substance abusers. Dr. Chaupette has worked in this field

since 1988, and was gracious enough to spend her afternoon giving a high quality and informative presentation on the connections between HIV/AIDS, Hep C, substance abuse, and mental health.

Though Dr. Chaupette's training was open to clients, we offer other opportunities specifically for SLO's medical service providers.

Terry Comer, the ASN's HIV Health

Counselor, has planned and held trainings for local doctors, nurses, and other medical service providers, in an effort to educate and update them on topics like new treatment options and prevention.

These educational opportunities help to ensure that people in SLO who are living with HIV/AIDS or hepatitis C are offered the very best possible care.

Your support and the support of local community members and businesses are vital to our continuing ability to provide comprehensive services to our growing number of clients. There are many ways that you can make a generous donation!

- **Money:** ALL MONEY DONATED TO THE ASN IS TAX DEDUCTIBLE & REMAINS IN THIS COMMUNITY to help SLO County residents in their struggle with HIV/AIDS and/or Hep C.
- **Time:** One of the most important ways our community supports this agency is through the gift of time. Our Volunteer Program creates opportunities to directly assist clients and staff!
- **Food:** ASN's Food Party is always in need of the basics. If you would like to hold a food drive, or donate food directly, we have a list of suggestions for you!

You will make a difference! Contact us, or visit ASN.org, for more details!

You Can
Make a
Difference!



Mailing Address:
 P.O. Box 12158
 San Luis Obispo, CA 93406

Physical Address:
 1320 Nipomo St.
 San Luis Obispo, CA 93401

Phone: 805-781-3660
 800-491-9141
 Fax: 805-781-3664

The San Luis Obispo County AIDS Support Network remains the sole community-based, non-profit organization in this county that provides supportive services to residents living with HIV disease & AIDS, and their families and friends.

The SLO Hep C Project is dedicated to meeting the needs of people living with hepatitis C and increasing public awareness through educational outreach in SLO County.

The agency strives to improve the quality of life and independence of its clients by providing support on an individual basis.

Learn more at ASN.org & SLOHepC.org

Upcoming Events & Opportunities!

We are proud to offer our community a wide variety of **volunteer opportunities**. You're sure to find one that's perfect for you!

Front Desk Volunteer:

Our front desk volunteers are the back bone of the office. They direct phone calls, greet incoming clients, help with distributing food from our pantry, and overall help to keep us sane! We love, LOVE, our front desk volunteers!

Direct Client Services:

There is always a need for a variety of services, including companionship, meal delivery & preparation, housekeeping, gardening, transportation for medical visits or groceries, pet care, and other invaluable services.

Contact us for more details!



Upcoming Events:

SAVE THE DATE! November 1st, 2014

Saturday, Nov. 1st is the 23rd Annual Walk for Life!

*It's not too early to start planning your team, getting your strategies ready for fundraising, or even asking your family, friends, or organization if they'll match what you raise to double your goal! **Keep an eye for more information as we get closer to November!***

Eat Out, Save Lives

What is your favorite restaurant in SLO County?

We are searching for potential restaurants throughout the county to participate in our upcoming fundraiser event!

Restaurants who want to participate will donate a portion of their profits to support the ASN's Food

Pantry Program.

Call us today and tell us your favorite restaurants!

For more information, visit www.ASN.org