

# Positively Palm Beach



Treasure Coast Health Council, Inc., 4152 West Blue Heron Blvd., Suite 228, Riviera Beach, Florida, 33404

## Activist Laments AIDS' Race Divide

Volume 12: 9/10

March/April 2007

By Antigone Barton  
Palm Beach Post Staff Writer  
Wednesday, February 07, 2007

As the regional minority AIDS coordinator for Palm Beach County and the Treasure Coast, Lorenzo Robertson has been talking about AIDS for the past two years. He has been living with the virus for the past 10.

Diagnosed when he was 34, he allows he was lucky to be among the first to benefit from the drug cocktails that turned the virus from a nearly always fatal illness to a chronic and often manageable disease.

He is relaxed, energetic and amused by irony, but pensive when he examines why, after 26 years, the virus, which continues to claim new victims daily, is the leading cause of death for black men and women between 25 and 44.

He finds multiple opportunities to confront the question because two counties under his auspices,

Palm Beach County and St. Lucie County, have the widest disparities in the state in their rates with which the epidemic has hit black residents harder than white residents.

"Why are we letting this happen?" he asks local leaders he invites to community meetings, residents who come to the meetings, and as he goes door to door, as he will today, National Black HIV/AIDS Awareness Day, in Fort Pierce, where the rate of HIV among black residents is the highest in the state.

His hunt for answers has led him to two projects he hopes to complete by spring: an anthology in which area residents affected by HIV will tell their stories, and a documentary examining the role of black

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# Look Who's Talkin'

Mary Piper Kannel  
Quality Improvement, Prevention and Hospital Care  
Coordinator

Before I began working in the HIV/AIDS arena much of my work was overseas. I spent a decade living out of the country. I lived in the Middle East where I taught English as a second language. At one point we were living in Iran. My family had to evacuate just days before the Shah beat a hasty retreat into exile. I also lived in the Caribbean, where my husband and I founded the first high school on the island of Providenciales, Turks & Caicos Islands, British West Indies. We returned to my home state, Florida in 1989.

At this time I began working in the HIV/AIDS arena. I started out as a case manager at the Comprehensive AIDS Program (CAP). I began assuming increasing responsibility as CAP grew to meet the increasing needs of the community. I was then promoted to be the area coordinator for the

## Living with HIV/AIDS in Palm Beach County reported through 2006:


Black: 4,542  
White: 1,698  
Hispanic: (all races) 758  
Native American: 1  
Asian: 9  
Pacific Island: 9  
Multi-race: 56  
Men who have sex with men: 1,746  
Men who have sex with men and inject drugs: 145  
Injection-drug use: 554  
Heterosexual contact: 3,387

Source: Florida Department of Health, Bureau of HIV/AIDS  
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Belle Glade CAP office for several years. Then I went back to the West Palm Beach CAP office when I became Director of Client Services in 1997.

In 2002, I left CAP and dedicated the following year to spend time with my family. I remained involved in the HIV/AIDS arena, as a member of the CARE Council. In 2003, I accepted my current position with the Palm Beach County Health Department, working in Quality Improvement, Prevention and Hospital Care Coordination. I continue to be involved with the CARE Council as well as numerous committees. Another very rewarding part of my job is providing services for a teen support group with HIV/AIDS two Wednesday evenings a month. Sundays are dedicated to teaching Sunday school at my church. Every remaining moment is dedicated to my husband, children and grandchildren.

The persistent thread in my history is a demonstrated commitment to making my community a better place, whether in the Middle East, the West Indies, or Palm Beach County. Placing value on family, faith and service has served me well and benefited those whose lives I have influenced. ■



**Positively Palm Beach**  
is a Monthly Publication of the  
Treasure Coast Health Council  
4152 West Blue Heron Blvd., Suite 229  
Riviera Beach, Florida 33404  
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**Positively Palm Beach** is funded by a grant from The State of Florida, Department of Health.

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churches in coming to terms with homophobia to open discussions that will help communities battle the HIV epidemic.

He hopes those who participate in the book also will form the foundation of a speakers bureau that will send them into communities where their messages either have not been heard or have been ignored.

He hopes the documentary will inspire black church leaders to search their own souls and "become more proactive" as they face the epidemic's impact on their communities.

In the process, he hopes to confront how church-fostered homophobia has hindered discussions that could prevent HIV transmission.

"I never had issues with the church personally," said Robertson, who is gay. "But I have heard the stories of people who have, and I have heard homophobic sermons. And I have thought, there are young kids hearing this, some of whom are coming to terms with their own sexuality. What does it do to them, and the feelings that they have, to be told homosexuals are going to hell? Why is it when you think about people who are gay, that's all they become? I'm a man, I'm an uncle, I'm a son."

Robertson says that he has no reason to believe homophobia is more prevalent in black churches than in white. And he knows that not everyone goes to church.

"But someone in the family does," he said. "In the black community, we are heavily dependent

on churches for information. If the ministers start looking at homosexuality from a different perspective ... I think the community would then look at HIV and AIDS from a different perspective."

In one of the first segments of the documentary taped Tuesday night, Robertson interviewed Bishop Lewis White, whose United Deliverance Resource Center in West Palm Beach has taken the lead in fighting HIV across the county for eight years. The center takes HIV tests, condoms and education to communities from Belle Glade to Riviera Beach on a converted school bus that he mortgaged his home to buy.

The group's staff of 10, which tested about 1,400 people last year, has been lauded by health officials for its success in finding people who have the virus.

In addition, he recently bought a secondhand moving van that will become a traveling billboard, painted with blunt messages, and testing center.

White says he was taught that homosexuality was a sin but learned he had to think past that to do his work.

"I had to look beyond some of the hang-ups I was taught, and when I look at a person I see a person," he said Tuesday afternoon.

"You can't help anybody if you aren't willing to help everybody," White said. "I know some of my brothers in the ministry don't see it the way I see it, but until more churches see it that way, we

**Activist Laments** continued on page 7

## County health facility opens in Riviera Beach

By Antigone Barton  
Palm Beach Post Staff Writer  
Friday, January 19, 2007

RIVIERA BEACH — The clean lines of block letters spelling out Palm Beach County Health Department across a beige boxy building at Blue Heron Boulevard and Garden Road herald a new era of accessible care for those who need it most, health officials said Thursday.

The building, and the specialty services for communicable diseases offered inside, more than replace what the county offered in a now-vacant building on Broadway near the Port of Palm Beach, Palm Beach County Health Director Dr. Jean Malecki said.

The new center - housed in a former bank building which became a health center, with the help of a \$2 million upgrade - will be easier to find, easier to use, and offer more privacy and targeted services for thousands of area residents and immigrant refugees whose health is threatened by barriers to care as well as by hepatitis, tuberculosis and sexually transmitted diseases including HIV, Malecki said.

While the center officially opened Thursday, it has received a growing number of patients since late fall, a health department staff member said.

In addition to clinic and lab services, the building houses a health care district funded pharmacy that supplies free medication and case management services.

"The population is diverse, the patients diverse, and the staff who works here is diverse," said Florida Bureau of HIV/AIDS head Tom Liberti.

He congratulated county health staffers on recent local drops in disease rates - a more than 30 percent drop in new AIDS cases, a 43 percent drop in new HIV cases among black women and

girls, and a 93 percent drop in the number of infants born with congenital syphilis.

Still, he said, gaps stemming from economic, social and language barriers continue to surface.

While Liberti said Florida has the largest and most successful HIV testing program in the nation, the virus continues to affect black residents overwhelmingly more than white, with Palm Beach County showing the second widest gap between the impact of the disease on black residents and white.

It was to address those disparities that Palm Beach County Commission Chairwoman Addie



Greene has urged the health department to open a more accessible clinic than "that building under the bridge," as she referred to the now defunct Broadway center.

As she hailed the opening of the new center, she also revealed that she last week completed treatment for breast cancer.

She stressed the importance of free mammograms that will be offered in a mobile van that will visit the center. ■

**March**

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
26 6:30 p.m. NA Meeting Compass 7:30 p.m. Quilting Bee Compass	27 3 pm-6 pm FREE HIV Testing Compass	28 6:30 p.m. HIV+ Support Group New Hope 1 <sup>st</sup> Community Church 500 Gulfstream Blvd. Ste 101 Delray Beach 561-721-0842	29 6:00 p.m. Circle of Hope HIV+ Women 629 5 <sup>th</sup> St, WPB 5pm-9pm FREE HIV Testing Compass 7:30 p.m. BrothasSpeakSupport Group Compass 8:00 p.m. Positive Living Support Group Compass	30

**April**

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
2 6:30 p.m. NA Meeting Compass 7:30 p.m. Quilting Bee Compass	3 10:30 a.m. Planning Committee*  3 pm-6 pm FREE HIV Testing Compass	4 6:30 p.m. HIV+ Support Group New Hope 1 <sup>st</sup> Community Church 500 Gulfstream Blvd. Ste 101 Delray Beach 561-721-0842	5 6:00 p.m. Circle of Hope HIV+ Women 629 5 <sup>th</sup> St, WPB 5pm-9pm FREE HIV Testing Compass 7:30 p.m. BrothasSpeakSupport Group Compass 8:00 p.m. Positive Living Support Group Compass	6
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16 6:30 p.m. NA Meeting Compass 7:30 p.m. Quilting Bee Compass	17 3 pm-6 pm FREE HIV Testing Compass	18 6:30 p.m. HIV+ Support Group New Hope 1 <sup>st</sup> Community Church 500 Gulfstream Blvd. Ste 101 Delray Beach 561-721-0842	19 11:30 a.m. Client Education Series Compass 6:00 p.m. Circle of Hope HIV+ Women 629 5 <sup>th</sup> St, WPB 7:30 p.m. BrothasSpeakSupport Group Compass 8:00 p.m. Positive Living Support Group Compass 5pm-9pm FREE HIV Testing Compass	20
23 6:30 p.m. NA Meeting Compass 7:30 p.m. Quilting Bee Compass	24 2:00 p.m. Executive Committee* 3:00 p.m. Priorities and Allocations Committee* 3 pm-6 pm FREE HIV Testing Compass	25 6:30 p.m. HIV+ Support Group New Hope 1 <sup>st</sup> Community Church 500 Gulfstream Blvd. Ste 101 Delray Beach 561-721-0842	26 11:30 a.m. Client Education Series Compass 6:00 p.m. Circle of Hope HIV+ Women 629 5 <sup>th</sup> St, WPB 7:30 p.m. BrothasSpeakSupport Group Compass 8:00 p.m. Positive Living Support Group Compass 5pm-9pm FREE HIV Testing Compass	27
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\*Treasure Coast Health Council, 4152 West Blue Heron Blvd. Ste 228, Riviera Beach. All meetings are subject to change.  
Please see [www.carecouncil.org](http://www.carecouncil.org) or call 844-4430 ext. 28.

**HOTLINES**

A.G. Holley State Hospital TB Hotline .....	1-800-482-4636
CDC Info Hotline .....	1-800-232-4636
Crisis Line (Center Line).....	211
Drug Abuse Hotline.....	662-4357
Florida HIV/AIDS Hotline .....	1-800-352-2437
Gay and Lesbian Hotline.....	1-888-843-4564
Medicare Hotline .....	1-800-638-6833
National Deaf AIDS Line.....	1-800-AIDS-TTY
Project Inform Treatment Hotline.....	1-800-822-7422
STD Hotline.....	1-800-227-8922

**EDUCATION/INFORMATION**

Accessible Life Saving Education for at Risk Teens (ALERT) .....	966-4288
American Foundation for AIDS Research (AMFAR) .....	1-800-392-6327
CDC HIV/AIDS Treatment Information .....	1-800-448-0440
Children with AIDS Project of America.....	1-602-973-4319
Children's Case Management Org., Inc.....	804-9441
Clinical Trials Information.....	1-800-Trials-A
Farmworker Coordinating Council of PBC .....	533-7227
Florida AIDS Action Council.....	1-800-779-4898
Glades Health Initiative, Ind.....	996-0500
National Minority AIDS Council .....	1-202-483-6622
PBC Health Department .....	540-1300
PBC HIV CARE Council.....	844-4430
Red Cross, American .....	833-7711
Senior HIV Intervention Project (SHIP) .....	586-4843

**HIV/AIDS TESTING**

Compass, Inc*.....	533-9699
Comprehensive AIDS Program (CAP)	
West Palm Beach* .....	472-2466
Delray Beach*.....	274-6400
Riviera Beach*.....	844-1019
Belle Glade*.....	996-7059
Glades Health Initiative, Inc.....	996-0500
Drug Abuse Treatment Association (DATA).....	844-3556
Hope House of the Palm Beaches, Inc.....	697-2600
PBC Health Department	
West Palm Beach Health Center .....	514-5465
Delray Beach Health Center.....	274-3105
Lantana Health Center .....	547-6805
C.L. Brumback Health Center.....	996-1625
Planned Parenthood of GMPBTC	
West Palm Beach.....	683-0302
Lake Worth.....	641-0300
Riviera Beach Family Resource Center.....	840-1888
True Fast Ministries .....	659-4500
United Deliverance Resource Center*.....	659-7988
*Rapid HIV Testing Available	

**DENTAL CLINICS**

C.L. Brumback Health Center.....	996-1636
Delray Beach Health Center .....	274-3111
Riviera Beach Health Center at 45 <sup>th</sup> Street.....	541-5306
West Palm Beach Health Center .....	514-5310

**PHARMACIES**

Department of Health	
Belle Glade.....	996-1637
Delray Beach .....	274-3107
Riviera Beach .....	804-7940
West Palm Beach.....	514-5380
Commcare Pharmacy .....	615-0564
BioScrip Specialty Pharmacy (Spanish speaking).....	683-0001

**HIV/AIDS SERVICE AGENCIES**

Comprehensive AIDS Program, Inc. (CAP)	
West Palm Beach.....	472-2466
Belle Glade .....	996-7059
Delray Beach .....	274-6400
Riviera Beach.....	844-1266
Pahokee.....	924-7773
Care Resource	
Coral Gables.....	1-305-667-9296
Fort Lauderdale.....	1-954-567-7141
Miami.....	1-305-573-5411
Compass.....	533-9699
Youth Line .....	533-9699
Children's Place at Home Safe, Inc.	
North/Central Palm Beach County .....	832-6185
Southern Palm Beach Count7 .....	995-0490
Farmworker Coordinating Council of PBC.....	533-7227
Florida Lighthouse .....	499-1442
Gratitude Guild, Inc.....	833-6826
HIV Pastoral Care.....	1-305-858-4649
Hope House of the Palm Beaches.....	697-2600
Hospice By the Sea.....	395-5031
Hospice of Palm Beach.....	848-5200
Integrated Healthcare Systems.....	586-7404
Latin American Immigrants & Refugee Org.....	966-4515
Legal Aid Society of Palm Beach County.....	655-8944
Palm Beach County Home .....	842-6111
Palm Beach Research Center .....	689-0606
Planned Parenthood .....	848-6300
Oakwood Center .....	844-9741
Social Security Administration .....	722-1213
Treasure Coast Health Council, Inc.....	844-4220

**INFECTIOUS DISEASE PHYSICIANS**

<u>Central County</u>	
Riviera Beach Health Center	
Manochehr Khojasteh, MD.....	804-7900
Celeste Li, MD .....	804-7900
Private Physicians	
Kleper de Almeida, MD (Spanish Speaking) .....	967-0101
Kenneth Ness, MD.....	655-8388
Olayemi O. Osiyemi, MD.....	832-6770
Donald Watren, MD.....	655-9660
Larry Bush, MD .....	967-0101
<u>Northern County</u>	
Infectious Disease Associates- Leslie Diaz, MD.....	776-8300
<u>Southern County</u>	
Infectious Disease Consultants .....	499-1442
Hamed A. Komaiha, MD	
Jose C. Villalba, MD	
Jaroslav F. Ondrusek, MD	
Cesar A. Randich, MD	
Melvin S. Kohan, MD	
Delray Beach Health Center	
Snehprabha Samant, MD .....	274-3178
Guadalupe Medical Center (Spanish Speaking).....	642-0768
Cardenas Julio, MD	
<u>Western County</u>	
Lyonel Jean Baptiste, MD .....	992-9216
Juan Carlos Rondon, MD .....	924-7788

**PRIMARY MEDICAL CARE**

VA Medical Center (for veterans only).....	422-7522
Palm Beach County Health Department	
Riviera Beach Health Center .....	804-7900
C.L. Brumback Health Center (Belle Glade).....	996-1600
Delray Beach Health Center .....	274-3100
West Palm Beach Health Center (pediatrics).....	514-5300

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are going to continue to have a problem."

To participate in the *Silence is Death* documentary or anthology, call Robertson at (561) 722-8876.

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## **The Times They Are A-Changing**

*New directions in HIV therapy*

Keith Henry, MD

Excerpts from Positively Aware January/February 2007

Due to continued interest/investment from industry and the efforts of a cadre of clinical researchers and interested patients/activists, the overall effectiveness of antiretroviral therapy continues to steadily improve. We may now be on the cusp of the all-time high water mark for antiviral therapy (ART) with the anticipated approval of more new HIV drugs active against new or old targets than we may ever see again (i.e., integrase inhibitors, maturation inhibitors, and CCR5 antagonists).

The biggest problems in our society relating to HIV treatment are a lack of awareness of HIV status (persons still unaware of their HIV-positive status) and lack of access for HIV-positive persons to skilled teams of HIV-care specialists with adequate resources (including provision of ART medications and funds to adequately compensate clinic staff). The public health efforts to decrease the rate of new HIV infections in the U.S. have generally been a failure, which is one reason for the new broad HIV testing recommendations.

To me the most important and under-utilized intervention to prevent HIV infection is ART. Recent studies have suggested that use of effective ART in discordant couples or in HIV-positive pregnant women can be 98-99% effective at prevention of HIV infection to their baby. If all HIV-positive persons in a society could be identified and put on effective ART, we ought to quickly shut down the HIV/AIDS epidemic and soon realize a return on the upfront investment as new infections and future costs are averted (could average \$1,000,000 per lifetime per patient).

The biggest challenge posed by these evolving concepts is how to expand resources and services to properly care for increased numbers of newly identified HIV-positive patients (from expanded testing) who are likely to be started on ART more aggressively for both clinical and public health reasons. Such a shift in treatment philosophy will require more resources upfront, resulting in improved clinical outcomes and large savings through averted disease and new infections. The current HIV caseload is stretching resources thin even before a surge in new cases identified from expanded testing or more aggressive treatment thresholds. I am worried that although we have the tools to dramatically turn the tide against HIV/AIDS, as a society we lack the will and foresight to translate what we have learned into action. ■

*Keith Henry, MD, is director of the HIV Program at Hennepin County Medical Center, St. Paul Ramsey Department of Health, and Professor of Medicine at the University of Minnesota, Minneapolis.*

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## Almond-Crusted Catalan Chicken

- 1 cut-up broiler-fryer chicken, skinned
- 1/4 cup mayonnaise
- 3 garlic cloves, finely minced
- 2 tablespoons fresh orange juice
- 2 teaspoons freshly grated orange peel
- 2 teaspoons honey
- 1/4 teaspoon cinnamon, divided use
- 3/4 teaspoon salt, divided use
- 1/2 teaspoon pepper, divided use
- 1 cup fine dry plain breadcrumbs
- 1/2 cut sliced almonds
- 3 tablespoons olive oil

In large mixing bowl, make marinade by mixing together mayonnaise, garlic, orange juice, orange peel, honey, 1/8 teaspoon of the cinnamon, 1/4 teaspoon of the salt and 1/4 teaspoon of the pepper. Add chicken, turning to coat. Cover and refrigerate 1 hour, occasionally spooning marinade over chicken. In pie pan, mix together remaining 1/2 teaspoon cinnamon, breadcrumbs, almonds and olive oil. Bake, stirring occasionally, in 350F oven about 15 minutes or until golden brown. Remove chicken from marinade and roll, one piece at a time, in breadcrumb mixture. Place chicken in single layer in lightly greased shallow baking pan. Bake in 350F oven about 1 hour or until crisp and brown and fork can be inserted in chicken with ease. Makes 4 servings.

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