

*Matthew 25  
AIDS  
Services  
educates,  
supports,  
and treats  
those  
infected and  
affected by  
HIV/AIDS*

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Henderson, KY 42420  
270-826-0200

100 Washington Ave.  
Evansville, IN 47713  
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1600 Breckenridge  
Owensboro, KY  
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Helmwood Plaza  
Elizabethtown, KY  
42701  
270-860-4443

www.matthew25clinic.org  
1-877-428-1231

# Matthew 25 Notes

Fall 2008

## Notes from the Administrator - Shared Strength.

**"Nobody, but nobody, can make it out here alone." Maya Angelou**

I bring greetings to you after spending 5 days in Washington, DC for the Ryan White HIV/AIDS conference a few weeks ago. I learned many things to bring back home to Matthew 25 to improve, accent, stretch and balance the continued surge of this virus. To think of 56,000 new infections in our country each year on flat federal dollars and no National HIV/AIDS plan is frankly, pretty frightening.

That said I am keenly aware of the safety and power you feel being with 3000 people who share your fears and your passion! So I come home empowered and energized to find ways to cut cost and increase funding while at the same time continuing to care for the ever increasing number of clients we serve.

This conference which occurs every two years received it's name in honor of Ryan White, the young teenage champion from Terra Haute, Indiana who advocated for legislation establishing a committed funding stream for this disease before he himself died from AIDS.

Ryan's mother has

been in attendance all 5 times I have attended this conference. I am always moved to tears when I hear



her speak. I feel the energy and commitment pour out from this woman who lost her child and still manages to stay committed to the fight. How easy it would have been to retreat, to vanish, to forget. She talks about the strength she receives from staying involved with the Ryan White community.

I often feel like we providers are conduits, given the opportunity to bring this energy and this strength back to our community, the board, staff, volunteers, supporters, but mostly to the clients we serve.

Years of practice have shown me how easy it can be for our clients to retreat, to vanish, to forget about having this virus... until they develop AIDS.

But the majority of them don't retreat. They

don't vanish, nor do they forget. They provide strength to others. Including me. Their stories and commitment to staying alive every day, all 365 of them a year awes me.

I suspect this conduit we providers have the honor of being flows in both directions. Those of us who work with persons living with HIV/AIDS gain strength from our patients and we take their stories with us to Washington DC and anywhere else we travel.

Back and forth, to and fro we energize one another to keep on keeping on. We do this in AIDS Walks, support groups, World AIDS Day events, clinic appointments, rural food delivery, board meetings, answering the phone, volunteering, doing a test. Well, really everything we do! And we do it with SHARED STRENGTH, never having to do it alone.

Thanks be to God for this HIV/AIDS energizing community. Together we face our fears to make a difference everyday, all 365 of them.

Peace & Blessings

Cyndee Burton

## Simon Evening of Giving

Purchase your ticket now for Simon Evening of Giving at Eastland Mall on November 23rd. Receive special savings from retailers and enjoy entertainment and lots of free give aways and prizes. Tickets are \$10 and Matthew 25 gets \$7 for each ticket sold! Call 826-0200/877-428-1231 or stop by our office.



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**Don't forget to use Goodsearch for all your internet searches and Goodshop for your Holiday Shopping!**

## You Made a Difference! 2008 AIDS Awareness Walk

This year's AIDS Awareness Walk was once again an incredible success raising over \$15,000. Thank you to all our participants! The Notorious Steppaz put on an incredible performance once again. Music by Andrea Wirth and Warren Batts entertained everyone afterwards. We even had a surprise visit by a talented, animal balloon making clown! Thanks everyone for coming out and enjoying the beautiful weather and supporting a great cause.

### The M25 Knitsters

The Matthew 25 knitsters have been hard at work. So many people in the community have been helping with our knitting project. To date we have 112 scarves made. Only 239 more and each of our clients will receive a handmade scarf for Christmas.

A special thanks to LaTasha Dixon and her friend Keith, Tonya, Barb, Oz, Janie, Sue, and E-O for all your knitting. Jan has committed to a scarf a week and challenged her church members to

### Mock Client Experience by Alli Willingham, Summer Intern

There was pressure behind the walls, as if the earth was about to shatter. With tremors, the walls crept in as I sat in the exam room, feeling numbed. As Denny continued talking, the walls shook harder, moved faster, but only toward me. The room was closing in, and my breath caught in my throat. I was HIV-positive and listening to Denny's run-down of what steps I would take as a new client, all the appointments and tests needed, and what would happen to my unborn child.

I found myself asking questions to which I knew the textbook

responses—"Will my baby be born HIV-positive?" "Am I going to die?"—questions I'd been trained to answer, but now pounded in my brain, fresh.

Gradually, one inhalation at a time, the trembling eased.

Although completely staged—a mock client process used as part of my training for my summer internship—this had felt *real*. What calmed me, what kept the walls from closing in, was having those common fears about HIV eased, and seeing the support available, like medicine, treatment, housing assistance, dental care, spiritual counseling,

and a food pantry.

I had stepped out of an impending earthquake and into the house of a nurturing family.

That's Matthew 25 to employees and clients—a family determined not to let the walls close in. In the years I volunteered before my internship, I always said that nowhere in Henderson could one find a building filled with so many *good* people. After being in a client's shoes, I know how true that was, and how proud I should be to have worked here.

### Presenting Sponsor

Judy's Jar

### Platinum Sponsors

Gilead Sciences, Inc.

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### Gold Sponsors

Tibotec Roche

### Silver Sponsors

Faught & Jones Someplace Else

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Tropicana Casinos & Resorts

## Long Days and Short Years by Lesi Nelson

Fall always signals a profound change for me but it seems more drastic this year, perhaps because there are so many changes in my household. My oldest son returned to St. Louis for his junior year of college but an internship in New Hampshire kept him away from home the entire summer. A new girlfriend occupies most of his thoughts and time so I feel a real transition in our relationship. My middle daughter left for her freshman year at University of Missouri and her departure indicated another life shift. The youngest had a transformation of her own—she turned 16 and has her first car!!! All these changes leave poor mom feeling a bit old and out of sorts.

The house stays cleaner, the food bill dropped, and there are two fewer people to share household tasks. What I notice most is the stillness—the phone rings less, the

washer runs less, and the tv is on less. There are more times I'm home alone. When they were all toddlers, it seemed I was never alone and I lived for the times I could run to the grocery store by myself or have 15 minutes in the bathtub without someone knocking on the door. Now I always go the store by myself and I can take an hour long bath with no interruptions. The things I often longed for are coming true—they are becoming adults and making more decisions on their own. As much as I want this for them and know it's best for their future, it does leave a certain emptiness inside me.

Trace Adkins has a song called "Then They Do" which depicts the way I feel. He sings about wanting children to grow up, wanting them to find happiness. He sings of all the soccer games, the

PTA meetings, and carpools. And finally he sings of wanting all their dreams to come true—and then they do! As the seasons continue to change, my youngest will go off to college, my oldest could marry this girl he's seeing, and the middle one will continue to rely on me less and less for advice. I know that's the way it's supposed to be...I know I have raised them to spread their wings and move away from mom and have their own life. I just didn't know they would do it so soon!!! Remember, the days can be long but the years are short...



## IRIS by Brenda Kreiger, R.N.

When people have HIV and a low CD4 count, they may get infections in their body their immune system does not recognize as a problem or may recognize but does not have the ability to fight. This happens because the few cells the person has fighting infections are busy, and the infections take the opportunity to sneak in and set up. Because the body is not recognizing or fighting the infections the person may not have any symptoms of infection such as fever, swollen lymph nodes, and achiness. When these clients start taking medication for their HIV, the medication will decrease the amount of HIV in the body. This allows the CD4 cells to increase and the clients' immune

system improves. At this point the immune system is suddenly not so busy and able to look around. The hidden infection is now seen and the immune system attacks. When this



happens, those symptoms of infection not seen before show up. Suddenly the client may be feeling bad, have a fever, ache all over, and may also be experiencing the symptoms of the particular disease contracted such as

a rash or lung congestion. This effect of the immune system kicking in and causing the client to feel sick even though his/her HIV viral load is decreasing is called immune reconstitution inflammatory syndrome or IRIS. It is important to notify your healthcare provider of any symptoms you are experiencing after a medication start or change. Especially before you decide to quit the medication because you think you cannot tolerate it. What you are feeling may not be directly caused by the new medication, and if your infection is treated, your symptoms may go away. Always communicate with your healthcare provider.

Don't forget to bring your Quality Stamps from Sureway to Matthew 25. Since the program began Sureway has provided us with over \$400 for our Quality Stamps. Thanks everyone and keep them coming!

## Case Management by Sheila Matthews

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New directives have been added to Ryan White HIV/AIDS Treatment Modernization Act of 2006. The area of case management is undergoing changes moving towards a more medical approach as compared to the supportive approach used in the past. As we adjust our policy and practices to encompass these new services we ask for your patience and understanding.

The Health Resources and Services Administration sees the need for more comprehensive assessments of all clients in care. They want to ensure assessments include housing stability, mental illness, substance use and/or abuse and recent medical care for HIV or other medical problems. They

want nutrition and adherence to become more important to everyone including care coordinators and HIV providers. This may mean consumers will see care coordinators requesting different things than they may have in the past.

Matthew 25 Clinic has always screened and either treated or referred for these needs. However, most of the screenings were part of the first clinic visit. In order for Matthew 25 to meet the new directives, we will be doing more “up front work” by care coordinators in preparation for first clinic visits. It’s hard to think about taking HIV medication when you don’t have a place to live or don’t care whether you live or die.

These problems may need to be addressed sooner and if they can be resolved prior to the clinic visit, it can enhance and expedite the care received.

This new information gathering will be integrated within our clinic and not repeated at every visit. Sharing information is a useful way to not duplicate paperwork and procedures, such as labs and immunizations. In our efforts to institute these procedures, we need your cooperation in making sure all paperwork is completed and release of information authorizations are updated at all new provider offices. This helps expedite our search for past care and records and helps us avoid duplication of services.

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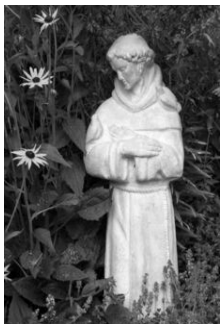
## The Triple A Club: Awareness – Advocacy – Ambassadorship By Dennis Myers, FNP

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Just recently I had the privilege, duty and honor to testify in open court on behalf of an HIV positive mother who was trying to keep her family together. She wanted to adopt her two nieces and two nephews. The problem was the foster care system based the majority of its’ case for not allowing her to adopt them on the fact she AND her husband are HIV positive. I was called upon as an HIV expert to justify why she could. The County’s case was based on a significant amount of erroneous and antiquated data and notions about persons living with HIV, the least of which that HIV persons would “die sooner than later and therefore not be around to take care of the kids.” I do not have the space to discuss their notions about “transmission.”

Folks are AWARE HIV still exists but have not remained current on the progress made in controlling HIV, which brings me to the word

ADVOCACY. Daniel Webster says Advocacy is where one “pleads for a cause”; “speaks on behalf of someone”. I spent two hours on the hot seat testifying about the current science of HIV, its affects and its ramifications. I gave “expert” testimony based upon 7 years of caring for and about my HIV positive brethren. Daniel also says an AMBASSADOR



is a “special representative, on a special diplomatic mission”. An “ambassador extraordinaire” (look it up) was St. Francis of Assisi. He was the #1 advocate for the poor while he lived as well as their #1 ambassador while he pleaded their plight before the rich, much like the staff of Matthew 25. As he served his mission he noted to his critics

“that the poor would always be with them”. Well, much to the chagrin of those around us, my HIV positive brethren are not going away either.

The world’s indifference to this plight grows as the concept that HIV is an “exceptional disease” needing exceptional attention diminishes. Membership in HIV’s “Triple A Club” continues to age, tire and shrink. They remain no less dedicated. They just need a new “Ambassador Extraordinaire”. They need you to advocate your “positivity”. You are the largest contingent in this Triple A Club. Yes, I know what I ask. When you display the heart to continue taking your HAART you set an extraordinary example for the next HIV positive person. When you survive, the cause of HIV is celebrated and the World takes note. Make friends with an HIV negative person and advocate your survivorship out of joy, not fear!

## Judy's Jar

Once again Judy's Jar reached it's goal of raising \$2,000 for the Annual AIDS Awareness Walk. Thanks so much to each of you for filling your star banks and returning them to Matthew 25. This is a continuous fundraiser, so if you have a star bank at your home or office you can still bring it in.

For anyone who doesn't know about Judy's Jar, here's how it works:

1. Pick up a star bank
2. Fill it with change
3. Return to Matthew 25
4. Start with # 1

## It's time to play!!

### Matthew 25 Scavenger Hunt

Join Matthew 25 for a fun day with family and friends. Look for odd and funny items around Henderson County—and win. Gather your friends and create teams up to four people. The day of the hunt receive your list of items and rules. Meet back at Audubon Mill Park by 2 p.m. with your items. The group with the most points wins!

\* Grand prize is 1/2 of proceeds received the day of the event up to \$200.

**Saturday  
October 18th**

**10 a.m.—2 p.m.**

**Audubon Mill Park  
Henderson, KY**

**\$5 entry fee per person**



r  positive

r negative

knowing your HIV status is one of the best ways you can be healthy

take charge, take control, and  take the test

*20 minutes from now, you could know*

make the time

to  take the time

contact Matthew 25 AIDS Services, Inc. @ (877) 428-1231

## Matthew 25 Wish List

### Clinic Needs:

postage stamps  
paper towels  
copy paper  
disinfectant cleaning wipes  
**heavy duty shredder**  
2 loads of gravel for driveway  
Alarm clocks for clients  
(medicine reminder)

### Zack's Kitchen:

household cleaning supplies  
paper bags  
cereal  
crackers  
shampoo  
toilet paper  
paper towels  
can meat (tuna, chicken)

**I wish to assist in your mission by contributing \$\_\_\_\_\_ to support the work of HIV/AIDS prevention, education, and support.**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Daytime phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email address: \_\_\_\_\_

In honor /memory of \_\_\_\_\_

I would like my contribution designated to

- Matthew 25 services and programs
- Memorial Garden fund
- Zack's Kitchen
- Matthew 25 Foundation
- Please apply this donation where it is most needed

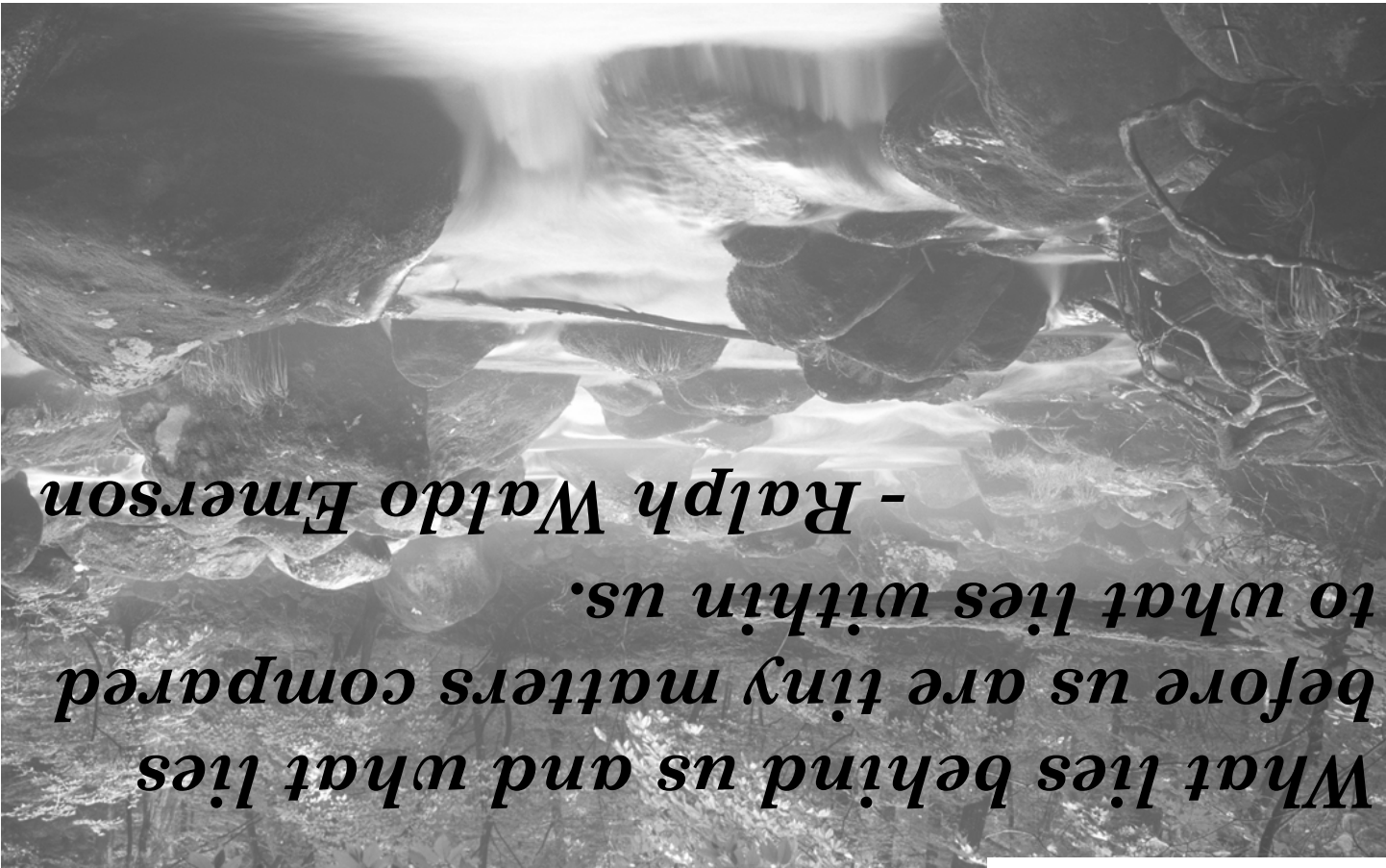
Other Opportunities

- I wish to be contacted about available services for myself or someone I love.
- I wish to be contacted about volunteer Opportunities/ Gifts of Grace.
- I wish to be added to the mailing list of Matthew 25 AIDS Services.
- I wish to be contacted about your capital campaign.

Matthew 25 can now accept credit cards

Call for more information or donate online at [www.matthew25clinic.org](http://www.matthew25clinic.org)

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