

## In Memoriam



**Chuck Grochmal**  
1952 - 1990

Chuck Grochmal died February 3<sup>rd</sup>. He was an AIDS activist and a founding member of AIDS ACTION NOW!. He called himself a "media slut" because of his unrelenting efforts, both in print and on TV, at promoting the interests of people living with AIDS. Contrary to what many people thought, this wasn't an ego trip for Chuck. He had a very strong sense of propriety that forced him to make sure that people and organizations were acting in the best interests of those they purported to serve. This sometimes annoyed others, but his efforts were principled, and often did a great deal of good.

His complaints, for example, were responsible for the installation of the chair lift at the ACT building. As a representative of AIDS ACTION NOW!, he got Canadian AIDS researchers to agree to having an open compassionate arm as a part of all clinical trials almost a year before ACT UP New York negotiated the parallel-track system with the FDA. Besides writing his widely read column for *Xtra!*, he also did desktop publishing for AAN!. He produced the first design for this newsletter, and later produced two widely read AAN! publications, "Treatment AIDS" and "Testing AIDS". He computerized AAN!'s mailing list. Last fall he was elected to another term on the steering committee. Shortly afterwards, he was also elected to the board of Casey House. With his death, people living with AIDS lost a dedicated AIDS activist.

**George Smith**

## In Memoriam

**Nathaniel Pier**  
1952 - 1989

Nathaniel Pier, M.D., one of the strongest advocates for faster development of AIDS treatments in the USA, died of AIDS complications on December 27, 1989.

Dr. Pier, who had a large AIDS practice in New York City, was also a founder of the Community Research Initiative, a model organization for conducting clinical trials outside of the usual research centres, through the help of practicing physicians.

AIDS ACTION NOW! and ACT invited Dr. Pier to come to speak in Toronto in September, 1988 (We reported on this in issue 3 of *AIDS ACTION NEWS!*) At that meeting, he described the withholding of aerosolized pentamidine for PCP prevention in PLWA's as "malpractice" on the part of physicians.

Pier also stressed the need for doctors to take an overall clinical view of their patients, taking into account their history, lifestyle, and physical condition. He advocated for holistic approaches where appropriate, and underlined the need for AIDS physicians to keep up-to-date with the latest developments and treatments.

Supporting AAN!'s fight against double-blind placebo tests, he advocated the alternative idea of a national treatment registry which would enable doctors and patients to pool the results of a wide range of treatment strategies. He also called on governments and the medical profession to recognize the "catastrophic rights" of patients who are in life-threatening circumstances and to take immediate action to streamline the implementation of new drugs and treatments.

"After five years of being on the front lines, my heartfelt feeling is that the top priority for people with AIDS and people who care about AIDS is to demand access to experimental therapies to try to save their lives," said Pier in an interview published in *AIDS Treatment News* August 12, 1988.

**Bernard Courte**