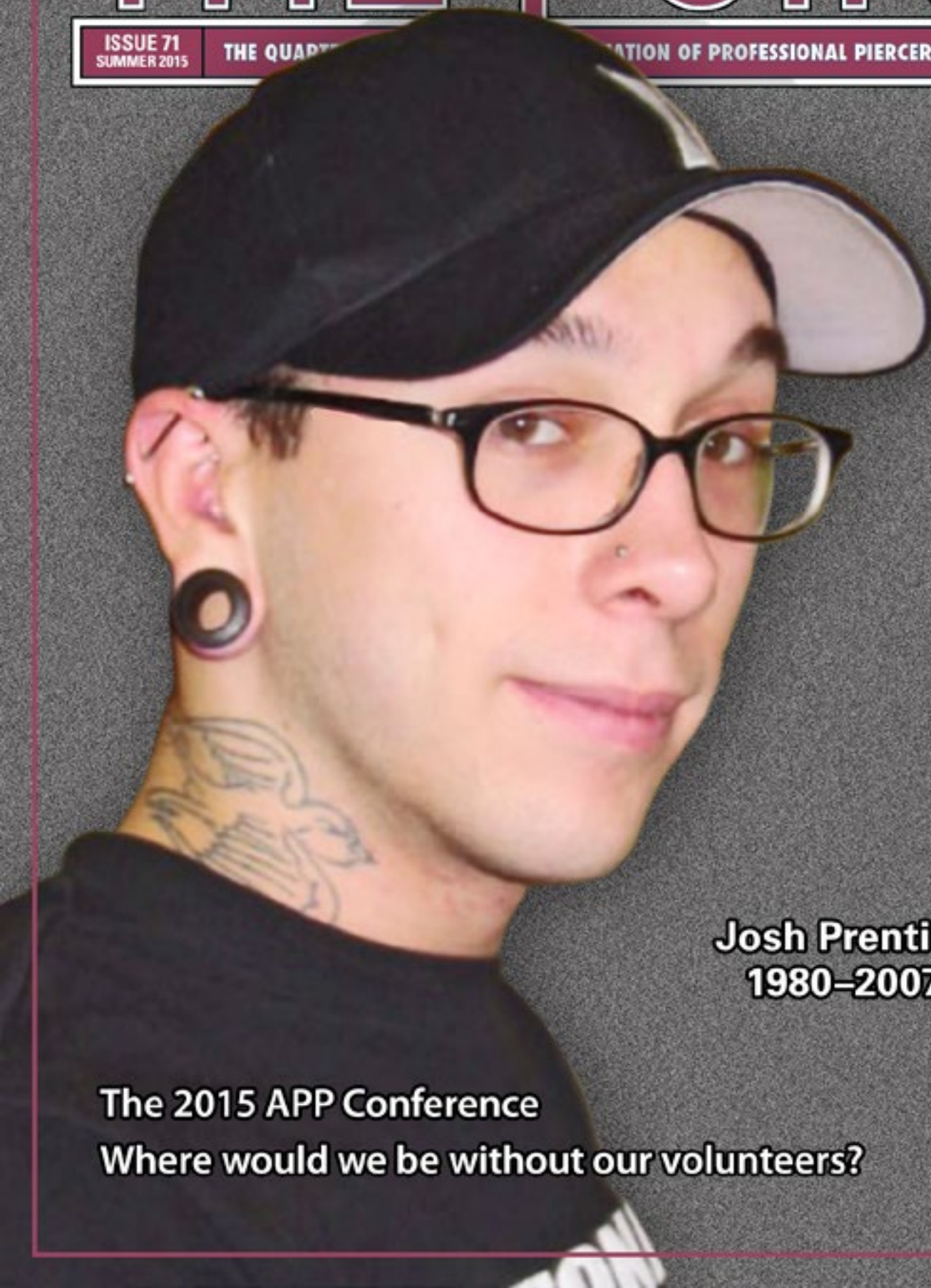


THE POINT

ISSUE 71
SUMMER 2015

THE QUARTER

ATION OF PROFESSIONAL PIERCERS



Josh Prentice
1980–2007

The 2015 APP Conference

Where would we be without our volunteers?

ANATOMETAL®



THE FIRST NAME IN BODY JEWELRY



IMPLANT GRADE TITANIUM - IMPLANT GRADE STAINLESS STEEL
SOLID 18K GOLD - NIOBIUM
ALL OF OUR PRODUCTS ARE HAND-CRAFTED IN THE USA

Introducing Statim.
The world's fastest autoclave from start to sterile.



Six minute cycle. Fully removable chamber. Extremely gentle. Single use water.

Statim 2000 Benefits

- + Ultra Fast 6 minute unwrapped cycle
- + Exceptional instrument turnover
- + Reduced instrument investment
- + Sterilize up to 8x faster than a traditional 'round chamber' style autoclave
- + Easy to use and maintain
- + Compact and reliable

Expert training and support included

- + Brian Skellie, Exclusive dealer for Body Artists

Call 404-494-0378 for sales and service of SciCan products

In the USA

In Europe

www.statim.us | www.piercers.com

THE POINT

THE QUARTERLY JOURNAL OF THE ASSOCIATION OF PROFESSIONAL PIERCERS

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Brian Skellie—President

Cody Vaughn—Vice-President

Bethrah Szumski—Secretary

Paul King—Treasurer

Christopher Glunt—Medical Liaison

Ash Misako—Outreach Coordinator

Miro Hernandez—Public Relations Director

Steve Joyner—Legislation Liaison

Jef Saunders—Membership Liaison

ADMINISTRATOR

Caitlin McDiarmid

EDITORIAL STAFF

Managing Editor of Design & Layout—Jim Ward

Managing Editor of Content & Archives—Kendra Jane Berndt

Managing Editor of Content & Statistics—Marina Pecorino

Contributing Editor—Elayne Angel

ADVERTISING

info@safepiercing.org

Front Cover: Josh Prentice

ASSOCIATION OF PROFESSIONAL PIERCERS

1.888.888.1APP • safepiercing.org • info@safepiercing.org

Donations to *The Point* are always appreciated.

Learn the Art, Skills & Magic of
Body Piercing & Branding
at

Fakir Intensives
in San Francisco



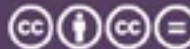
A State of California Registered
Career Training School
Code #4102431

Basic & Advanced Body Piercing
Basic Body Branding
info at www.fakir.org

The Association of Professional Piercers is a California-based, international non-profit organization dedicated to the dissemination of vital health and safety information about body piercing to piercers, health care professionals, legislators, and the general public.

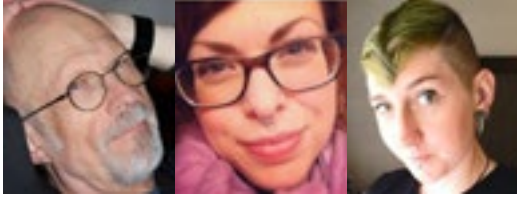
Material submitted for publication is subject to editing. Submissions should be sent via email to editor@safepiercing.org.

The Point is not responsible for claims made by our advertisers. However, we reserve the right to reject advertising that is unsuitable for our publication.



Unless stated otherwise, content of this issue of *The Point* is licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-No Derivative Works License. To view a copy of this license, visit <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/3.0/>

FROM THE EDITORS



**JIM WARD
KENDRA BERNDT
MARINA PECORINO**
The Point Editors

• Jim Ward

“Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it’s the only thing that has.”

—Margaret Mead

Thinking back to the early days of the APP, I have to marvel at how far the organization has come, but what is really amazing is that it made it into existence at all.

When *Modern Primitives* hit the bookstores in 1989, body modification, and particularly body piercing, hit the big time. Studios began popping up overnight like fungi after a spring rain. Few, if any, of the owners had any actual training or experience, and the competition was fierce. Rivalries were intense. There was little common ground.

The following is from my book *Running the Gauntlet*: “In 1994 the State of California was poised to pass legislation (Assembly Bill 3787) that would regulate body piercing, tattooing, and permanent cosmetics. A handful of piercers from several studios began to network and strategize how best to assure that these forms of body modification were not outlawed. Those who met at the Gauntlet corporate office for those early meetings included Raelyn Gallina, several representatives from Body Manipulations, Nomad, and Primeval Body in L.A. Along with some of his students, including Idexa, Fakir also attended. The office was full. As the pending legislation

grew closer to passing, a group got together and drove to Sacramento. Michaela spoke on behalf of the industry during one of the hearings for the bill. She also did a number of television interviews. The bill ultimately failed thanks to lobbying by the ear-piercing gun manufacturers. However, this did not end the threats to the industry, and the need for a professional organization to deal with them.”

The APP was the organization that sprang from this need. A handful of rivals managed to set aside their differences and come together for their common good. Even though there are still differences, the APP has been able to grow and thrive. When a group of people work together for the common good, it’s amazing what they can accomplish. Happy 20th Anniversary!

• Kendra Jane Berndt

“We make a living by what we get, but we make a life by what we give.”

—Winston Churchill

In our last issue we looked at where the APP came from and the trends we have seen over the past 20 years. In this issue we continue to celebrate this milestone by honouring some of the piercers and their accompanying volunteer work that helped grow the APP and the body piercing industry in a responsible and educated manner to what it is today.

al-tru-ism

'altroō,izəm/

noun

noun: **altruism**

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

PRESIDENT’S CORNER—7

SURVIVAL TIPS FOR CONFERENCE—9

THE MENTOR PROGRAM—10

SERVICE—11

CORP. SPONSOR VOLUNTEERING—12

GIVING BACK —13

VOLUNTEERING FOR THE APP—15

THANK YOU, BETHRAH—16

MEET THE NEW APP SECRETARY—17

PROCESS OF CHOOSING CLASSES—18

AL D. SOWERS—19

IN THE OFFICE—21

HELP SAVE SAILOR SID—23

ENVIRONMENTAL CRITERIA UPDATE—25

1. the belief in or practice of disinterested and selfless concern for the well-being of others.

2. “some may choose to work with vulnerable elderly people out of altruism”

• Zoology

• behavior of an animal that benefits another at its own expense.

The idea of altruism or selflessness is the principle or practice of concern for the welfare of others. For many cultures it is the foundation for traditional viewpoints and it makes up core aspects of various religious traditions and secular worldviews. The concept of putting others before oneself has had a long history in philosophical and ethical thought, being the basis for more than one or two scientific debates. The term itself was originally coined in the 19th century by the sociologist and philosopher of science, Auguste Comte, and

is often a major topic of debate for psychologists, evolutionary biologists, and ethologists.

Before I was a piercer I was a scientist. I studied animal biology, meaning I studied the ideas and concepts of altruism at great length. I was fascinated by the science behind the idea of giving. If we look at altruism in the context of biological organisms, it can be defined as an individual performing an action which is at a cost to themselves (e.g., pleasure and quality of life, time, probability of survival or reproduction), but benefits, either directly or indirectly, another third-party individual, without the expectation of reciprocity or compensation for that action. However, there have been many studies which have observed the effects of volunteerism (as a form of altruism) on happiness and health. These studies have consistently found a strong connection between volunteerism and a person's well being and state of mind.

This means that when we give our time and our knowledge, we feel better and there is a good chance we are happier than if we didn't volunteer. This will be my fifth Conference. I have been a volunteer since my first, both for Conference and the APP as a whole. These experiences have indeed made my life better! I was awarded the Al D. Scholarship in 2010 (we will talk more about Al D. further into this issue); it was here that I met an entire group of truly altruistic people. People that give freely of their time, their resources, and so much more to better the piercing industry as a whole. This once-a-year opportunity to give back is an amazing boost to my well being. It is a chance for me to recharge, so much so I now volunteer year round. However, it is incredibly important to point out that I am merely a single nut or cog, a tiny piece of a much bigger machine. There are just too many



Conference Volunteer Group 2012—Banquet Dinner

people to name that all work towards a common goal and the betterment of our entire industry. Without the hundreds of hours that are devoted each year the APP would only be a fraction of what it is today.

I count the days until our Conference begins and I am able to give back to a community that has given me so much. I can feel the anticipation building in not only myself but in my colleagues and I honestly feel the buzz this year is bigger than ever. So, I will take this moment before the chaos and craziness that is Conference sets in to say thank you! Thank you, to each and every one of the volunteers that help this organization, our Conference, and our industry.

• Marina Pecorino

My first experience at Conference was in 2012 as a love volunteer. I waited until my fourth year as a piercer to attend. I was intimidated by the amount of knowledge available and concerned that my foundation was not yet firm enough to grasp it all. What a mistake. Looking back, I wish I had attended Conference as soon and as often as possible. The experience really has changed my life in ways that I can't explain, most of which are not ways that I would have expected.

Being an introvert, I'm not fully at ease in situations involving a multitude of strangers. This had also been a deterrent when thinking about attending. In an attempt to force myself out of my shell during that first year, I asked Caitlin McDiarmid if there was anything I could do to help. That's where it all began.

As a love volunteer, I had fewer structured responsibilities, but there was still plenty to be done and we all worked together to make it happen. In the weeks leading up to Conference, I became *Facebook* friends with many of the other volunteers as we helped Caitlin prepare. Thanks to modern technology, I had a bit of exposure to all the friendly faces from across the world I would soon meet. I began to feel a bit more connected with the community. Previously, I stayed on the outskirts and isolated, having the expectation that I wasn't "cool enough" to take part. It's almost funny how, within a community comprised largely of shy, awkward, weirdos, I felt like I was too shy, awkward, and weird.

The accepting atmosphere exuded by everyone at Conference quickly changed my mind. Don't get me wrong, I still barely spoke during that entire week and spent most of my

—continued on page 29

“Essential reading...”*

RUNNING THE GAUNTLET

An Intimate History of the Modern Body Piercing Movement by Jim Ward

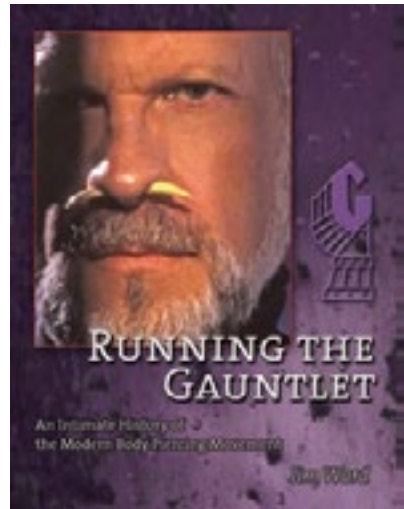
In this revealing autobiography, Jim Ward, considered by many to be the father of the modern piercing industry, tells the engaging and candid story of discovering his own fascination with body piercing, his founding of Gauntlet, the world's first body piercing studio, and how he transformed a personal fetish and backroom, amateur pursuit into a respected profession and spearheaded a world-wide social phenomenon.

Essential reading for everyone with an interest in body piercing; you, your shop staff, and your customers will treasure this book.

For more information and to order a copy of *Running the Gauntlet* signed especially for you by the author, visit runningthegauntlet-book.com. Also available wholesale and retail at safepiercing.org/publications/running-the-gauntlet.

- **Deluxe, large-format, both hard and soft cover**
 - Over 180 pages
 - More than 250 photos, over half of them in color!

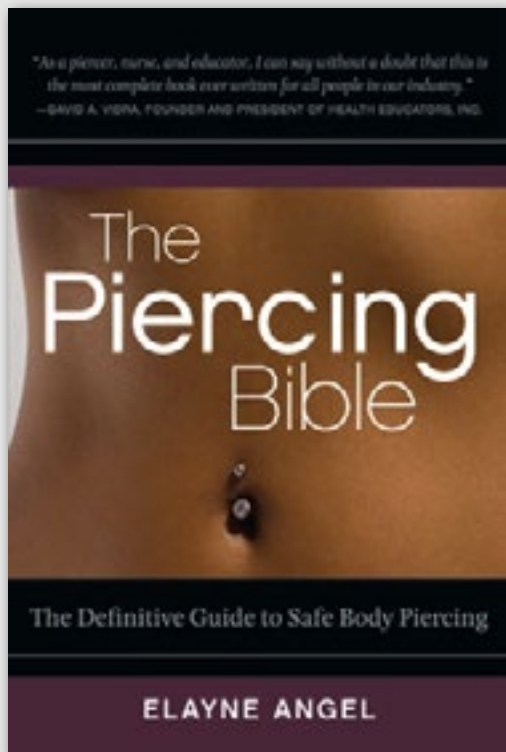
WWW.RUNNINGTHEGAUNTLET-BOOK.COM



*

“Essential reading for anyone who wants to understand how modern body piercing arrived at the place it currently occupies.”

JAMES WEBER, Former President
Association of Professional Piercers



WHOLESALE ORDERS NOW AVAILABLE THROUGH THE APP!

THE PIERCING BIBLE

THE DEFINITIVE GUIDE TO SAFE BODY PIERCING

by Elayne Angel

This one-of-a-kind comprehensive resource covers everything piercers and piercees need to know about the subject. Piercing pioneer and authority Elayne Angel shares her exhaustive knowledge about piercing techniques, jewelry, placements, aftercare, troubleshooting, and more.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR - ELAYNE ANGEL has been a professional piercer for more than 20 years and has performed over 40,000 piercings. She was awarded the President's Lifetime Achievement Award by the Association of Professional Piercers in 2006 and is a contributing writer for *PAIN* Magazine. She lives in Mérida, Mexico. Visit www.piercingbible.com for more information.

Available for wholesale or retail purchase through the APP office: 1 (888) 888-1APP or APP website: www.safepiercing.org

A portion of the proceeds from each sale goes to the APP.

To sell *The Piercing Bible* in your studio, place a "retailer order" with the publisher: email NewAccount@randomhouse.com or call 800.733.3000, ext. 86384

\$20.00

PAPERBACK
6 X 9 INCHES
PHOTOS & ILLUSTRATIONS
308 PAGES

ISBN: 978-1-58091-193-1

PRESIDENT'S CORNER



BRIAN SKELLIE
APP President



In an organization comprised of exceptional participants who have gladly offered countless hours of work and traveled across the planet to share their ardor for safe body adornment, it is the privilege and great pleasure of the President each year to shine a light upon one who has exemplified our mission. To offer a special award in esteem of the outstanding contributions of this volunteer is equally to recognize the potential we all have to achieve the goals set forth by our Association.

In a field of iconoclasts, in which we must each be self reliant during our daily procedures, some of our fellow piercers have demonstrated proficiency at organizing and working together for the benefit of our community.

In a time where our colleagues have researched, debated, and negotiated fair regulations to respect and protect their fellow piercers and body artists, there are certain among us who excel at diplomacy and bringing forward our purpose. These individuals are honoured with the President's award. We have showcased the winners of this



Jim Ward and Michaela Grey at the Conference banquet, 2005

award in several previous issues of *The Point*, starting with Issue 26 in 2003 (pg 3-5) as well as in 2009 with Issue 48 (pg 2-3)

Since 2009, when the sitting president [James Weber](#) presented to Raelyn Gallina, we have had five new honorees, including yours truly in 2014.

- [2010 Danny Yerna, presented by Jim Weber](#)
- [2011 Allen Falkner, presented by Jim Weber](#)
- [2012 Steve Joyner, presented by Elayne Angel](#)
- [2013 Sarah Wooten, presented by Elayne Angel](#)
- [2014 Brian Skellie, presented by Elayne Angel](#)

Before the existence of the President's award, the Jack Yount Me-

morial Certificate of Recognition for Promoting Excellence in Professional Piercing was dedicated to Michaela Grey, Founder of the APP, as a special award chosen by the appointed Board in 1998. This can be recalled as a time when people who had worked alongside her felt a need to show respect for her efforts in coalescing the Association, and as a nod to the gentle persuasion towards exploration and excellence [Jack Yount](#) had shared with us.

"He passed away in Hospital in Copenhagen Denmark on July 15, 1995 at the age of 68."

Michaela Grey was again recognized in 2005 with a special Lifetime Achievement award from a subsequent APP Board, for her contributions to our industry. ©

TAWAPA



tawapa.com info@tawapa.com 213-765-8921

PROFESSIONAL PROGRAM
INSURANCE BROKERAGE

INSURING THE BODY PIERCING
INDUSTRY FOR



415.475.4300
TATTOO-INS.COM

Novato, California 94949
CA LIC #OB17238 / CA LIC #OH27235



- BODY PIERCING SHOPS
- INDEPENDENT CONTRACTORS
- SURFACE PIERCING
- MINOR PIERCING
- MASTER PIERCER
- GUEST PIERCERS
- DERMAL ANCHORING
- TATTOO SHOPS
- MINOR TATTOOING
- TATTOO REMOVAL
- COMMUNICABLE DISEASE
- SEXUAL ABUSE
- APPRENTICESHIP
- CONVENTIONS
- MOBILE UNITS
- PROFESSIONAL LIABILITY
- PROPERTY COVERAGE
- LANDLORD ENDORSEMENT
- SIGNS / GLASS / FLASH

SURVIVAL TIPS FOR CONFERENCE

The APP Board of Directors and Administrator, along with the Conference Staff, Volunteers and Mentors want you to have an exceptional experience. If there are any questions we can answer or concerns we can address, please do not hesitate to contact us.

What to bring to Conference:

- **Lip and skin moisturizers**—

Bring multiples, so you have something with you at all times. Even if you don't usually need these items, you will in Las Vegas. It's dry in the desert and even drier in the hotel.

- **Comfy shoes with pain relief insoles**—

There may be times when you want relief from your nice shoes. We suggest bringing multiple pairs so the sore spots are in different places. You will log a lot of miles in Vegas, especially with our split floorplan this year.

- **Medications and vitamins**—

If you generally have need for these types of items, pain relievers, allergy pills, and the like can make a world of difference when you need it most. Make sure to bring enough of these to get you through the week and a couple of extra days just in case. Taking vitamins *in advance* of Conference will improve your chances of staying healthy during Conference, so don't delay!

- **Water bottle**—Snazzy APP bottles are available for purchase at the merch booth! Staying hydrated is key to having a good experience; Las Vegas is a desert. Water dispensers are provided throughout the conference area, please use them!

- **Deodorant**—If you are a wearer of such things, this is the time to use it. Conference is busy with long days and lots of networking. Smelling good is a great step toward a great first impression.

- **Something to throw on when it gets cold**—You'll want to stay comfortable while attending classes and socializing. The hotel and casino can get especially cold in the wee hours.

- **Outfits aplenty**—Bring enough outfits to get through the week and maybe a couple of extra. You will be experiencing some pretty long days with lots of activity. Some people find it necessary or more comfortable to change midday. You may also want different outfits for different activities: classes, networking meetups, exercise, special events, etc. Also, don't forget that accidents happen, so it's never a bad idea to have a spare in case of spills.

- **Formal wear and costumes**—If you like dressing up for special events, or just in general, make sure to bring accessories. Banquet Dinner is a great place to strut your stuff and show off your style/sense of humor.

- **Swimsuit, sunblock, and sunglasses**—You'll want to look your best and stay protected while enjoying the hot tubs and pool. There may also be other occasions to escape the hotel into the great, bright outdoors. If your sunglasses are expensive, make sure to hold onto them!

- **Cell phone and charger**—Especially during a week of networking, it's important to stay con-

nected. Plus, you'll want to make use of the [*sweet new app*](#) to check your schedule, look at maps, and get updates! Don't be surprised if your battery needs more charging than when you're home.

- **Phone numbers**—In case of emergencies or a misplaced phone, having a list of contacts in your wallet can be a lifesaver. Don't forget to add some of your newfound conference besties to this list during the week.

- **Business cards and portfolio**—This is a great place to network and share. You will meet a lot of people and business cards will help you keep in touch after Conference. Having a copy of your portfolio or photos on your laptop/phone ready to show can leave a lasting impression while networking.

- **Emergency funds/capabilities**—You shouldn't bring every credit card you have, but unexpected things may happen and it's best to be prepared. Make sure to keep your emergency stash separate from your carrying money.

- **Personal comfort items**—If you have a preference for certain things to make your day a little brighter—especially things you wouldn't feel comfortable borrowing or may be difficult to find—bring them along. The hotel will provide you with towels, basic shampoo/soap, iron/ironing board, and a hair dryer. Most of the time you can find basic, common items by visiting shops in and around the hotel,

—continued on page 29

THE MENTOR TEAM



**ASH MISAKO, APRIL THOMAS,
KENDRA JANE BERNDT, BILLY WOOD**
The Mentor Team

“When I first started attending Conference I was pretty intimidated. It was a conference full of strangers, and worse yet it was strangers who probably knew more than me. Now that I’ve attended Conference numerous times I know that people just genuinely want to share and learn together, so now I feel relaxed among my peers. I started the mentor program as a way to show new attendees early on that we are all part of the same team. Pair new people with ones who started out just as nervous, and help them enjoy the week a little easier.” ~ Ryan Ouellette, Founder of the Mentor Program

“I remember my first Conference and it was overwhelming. I was lucky to have some friends help me get along. Now that I have been to a few Conferences, I am happy to be that friend. It’s a ‘pay it forward’ kind of thing and I hope people who have benefitted from the program in the past consider helping out someone who might be wearing their old shoes.”

—April Thomas, mentor team 2015

The Mentor Program is an amazing system started by Ryan Ouellette. We hope that we are building small Conference families that can work together as a group and lean on each other for support. We have seen great progress and have had wonderful feedback. We look forward to continuing this program for many years to come.

Is this your first year attending the APP Conference and Exposition? Do you have questions that you would like answered? Do you need



help selecting your classes, or would you simply like to have a friend before you get to Vegas? The APP mentor program is here to help! If you are a first or second year attendee and would like some assistance from a mentor chosen specifically for you, please email mentor@safepiercing.org with your name, telephone number, and contact email address and MENTEE in the subject line. There is no deadline for signup, but the earlier you enroll the more you will get out of the program. We are excited that you are coming this year and cannot wait to meet you!

Our mentors are experienced conference goers that want to ensure that the new faces at Conference have the best time possible. They are there to answer questions, remind you to drink your water and get some sleep. They are also there to support if you

become overwhelmed, need a little reassurance or just advice on where to get the best chicken and waffles or vegan donuts. We use information collected to best match mentors with mentees based on similar interests, areas of knowledge, and similar schedule needs. Our goal is create a mentor family. We do this by grouping three or four mentees to a mentor based on a survey we conduct. This group can then use each other for support, reference, and a stepping stone to Conference as a whole.

We sincerely want each and every one of our new attendees to get the most out of Conference and hope the support that the mentor program offers makes this possible.

If you have any questions about the mentor program, becoming a mentor, or being a mentee at Confer-

—continued on page 29

SERVICE



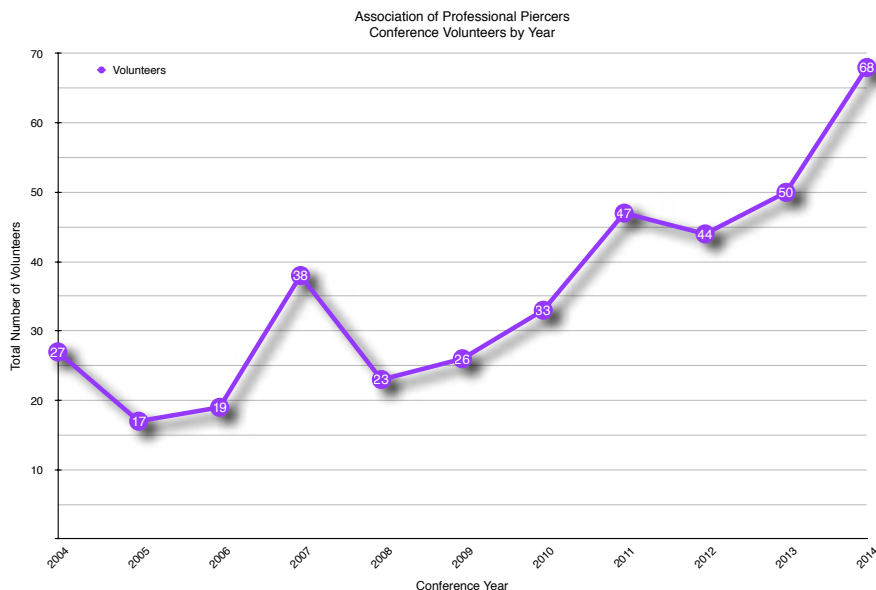
CAITLIN MCDIARMID
APP Administrator

*I slept and dreamt that life was joy.
I awoke and saw that life was service.
I acted and behold, service was joy.*
— Rabindranath Tagore

One of the greatest gifts given to me over the last 13 years has been the gift of mentoring. There's something about having a grown man or woman, someone who isn't your own child or student, tell you that you were instrumental in them learning, growing, changing, or reaching a new goal. I wasn't good at it when I started with the APP. I was more than bad at it. But I continued just the same, tried to learn from my own mentor, Paul King; and tried to work on myself. I'm still not perfect, but the work and success of the volunteers continues to reflect my efforts back to me.

In 2007, at an emotionally laden Banquet Dinner, I talked about the transformative power of service. Back then I didn't write down my speeches in advance so those exact words are lost. I know I spoke too long – we all did that year. But I wanted to try and get across to the audience – to our Attendees – the joys of service. The APP after all relies on volunteers from the top down.

Our Board Members are volunteers; our committee members are volunteers; our conference workers are volunteers (some minimally compensated). There are few of us who are compensated for certain jobs, but generally go far above the call of duty and are still volunteers



for the Association.

From approximately 20 conference volunteers in 2003 (that includes the Board who worked the merch booth and classroom doors that year) to approximately 70 in 2015. As the Conference has grown our team dynamic has developed. As the fun we all were having showed our volunteer group has expanded.

The community of conference volunteers have become more than friends; they have become a family. Through service and working alongside each other we have formed bonds, which means that we send each other letters (real letters!) and cookies in the mail. We reach out to each other when we are going through rough times or experiencing great joys. We share opportunities in the industry – who's hiring/who's not. We celebrate when another volunteer becomes a Member and when a new

volunteer joins the group. Through service to the organization and the Conference I've watched these young women and men grow up, mature, have relationships, change relationships, get jobs, travel, open shops, serve as committee members, and even as Board Members.

Many of the conference volunteers also serve in other capacities for the Association and the event. They often volunteer in their communities as well. Service brings a joy to life that I don't think can be found elsewhere. This year I am encouraging the most experienced volunteers to start mentoring the newer volunteers. They have earned their place in this process. It is the next step of service work.

I watch every year as a group of volunteers, all decidedly different from one another, interact and work
—continued on page 29

VOLUNTEERING AS A CORPORATE SPONSOR



BADUR RAMJI
Owner of PunkMedics

“From what we get, we can make a living; what we give, however, makes a life.”

—Arthur Ashe

I sometimes joke that I am not only the oldest apprentice but have also had the longest piercing apprenticeship in the industry. Though I’ve been a part of the modification community for a very long time, I have never officially become a piercer. Instead I have used my love of body modifications, learning, and research to improve both my knowledge and the products I have developed specifically for our industry. After ten years of developing aftercare products I can still say I am #foreverlearning.

My first Conference was in 2006 and, like most first timers, I was amazed at how large and organized the modification community was. That year I took some classes, slept very little, and spent a lot of time catching up with old friends I had originally met through BME. I arrived as a person wanting to build relationships and network so I could better market my products to the industry.

In 2009 I became a corporate sponsor of the APP. Sponsorship is a great opportunity for businesses trying to break into the market. However, for me it was a way to become further involved with the Association and show my support. I continued to attend Conference and by doing so learned more about the APP as an association. I also became better acquainted with its dedicated staff, the

Board, and the volunteers that were involved in making everything work.

I saw our community and Conference evolve as my company and products evolved. When I became a vendor and began to interact with the volunteers, I saw so many people dedicated to bettering our community. In 2012 I took a break from being a vendor and instead signed up as a volunteer. I realized that this would be a wonderful opportunity to give back and become even more involved. I did not yet realize how much I would get from that experience. In 2013 I continued volunteering and retired from being a direct vendor. I wanted to give back to the volunteers that worked hard and thank them for helping.

The goal has always been to support the Association, help it grow, be a part of the community I love, get involved, and help others see the success I have seen. I’ve always wanted to give back, but feel that I have gotten more than I’ve given by volunteering. I’ve gained new skills and knowledge about the industry, but also about what is wanted from me as a business. I found that giving others your time brings you interesting and challenging opportunities that might not come along otherwise. I’ve developed and grown as a person. Volunteering has forced me to interact with others, getting me out of my introverted bubble and giving me a new perspective. I’ve gained a better understanding of the body modification community and what drives us to be who we are. The



passion this community has constantly helps me grow and reminds me why I continue to stay involved. Most importantly volunteering and sponsoring Conference has allowed me to make significant and positive change in people’s lives.

The APP and the body modification community have supported me for ten years. I hope I can spend the next ten years supporting them by continuing to volunteer and finding new ways to give back each year. I hope that on the 30th anniversary I can look back and see I’ve had a positive influence on the community and have helped it grow. ☺

No one who achieves success does so without acknowledging the help of others. The wise and confident acknowledge this help with gratitude.

—Author Unknown

GIVING BACK IN YOUR OWN COMMUNITY



JESSE VILLEMARE

Thrive Studios

Let's talk about sex! Do you remember those talks back in high school? Well, times are now shifting and some proactive schools are seeking more knowledge about the safe practices of tattooing and body piercing to add to their educational speeches for students. In 2010 I was approached by my local Public Health inspectors about teaming up and working together to help develop a short seminar that could be presented to students between grades 7-12. Our mission was to provide a class that the kids would easily enjoy, absorb, and share within their peer groups. I was proud to be a part of this project and happily obliged.

As a piercer of almost 15 years, I've seen the number of teens getting body modifications growing each year. I've also seen an increase of poorly done self piercing and tattooing, and an influx of younger teens practicing body art on each other. With the substantial growth of social media and *YouTube*, I believe we've all seen similar increases of poorly executed body art in our communities.

Let's face it; body art isn't going away anytime soon. If anything, it's growing at an alarming rate and if you look around the hallways in schools, it's common to see body piercings and the occasional tattoo. When body art is on the rise, so are the potential risks of bloodborne pathogens such as Hepatitis B, Hepatitis C, HIV and skin infections such as MRSA. Just like "Safe Sex Education" was controversial at one time, now it's time we start educating our younger gen-



APP Conference and Exposition 2002

eration about the risks involved with body art. Each time I'm invited to a school to guest speak, I'm shocked to see the number of students that will admit to piercing themselves or each other. Many kids do not realize that the same diseases that are spread by unsafe sex can also be spread by unsafe body art practices.

As an owner of a reputable tattoo and piercing studio in Cambridge, Ontario, Canada and also an educator within the body art community, I have had the privilege to partner with the Wellington-Dufferin-Guelph Public Health Inspectors and another local piercer, to put together a 60-90 minute presentation aimed at youth in grades 7-12. This presentation has been presented to hundreds of students throughout the school years since 2010. While

we do not promote nor encourage students to get tattoos and piercings, this presentation promotes safety and education to help guide students into making the correct decisions if they choose to get any body art in the future. It's extremely rewarding to discuss with students after the presentation how we helped them realize that not all tattoo and piercing establishments are the same. It also helps them realize the greater risks of getting tattooed or pierced at a friend's house, or within a party environment.

With minimal regulations surrounding the body art industry, it's also an eye opening presentation for the teachers within the room. We'll discuss how many people believe that every tattoo artist or piercer has

—continued on page 30

BodyArtPro

Modern Aftercare

- Simple
- Easy To Use
- Effective



PICK UP THE PHONE AND CALL

Do you sell body modification products, jewelry, equipment, etc...
This is where you need to be.

Pain magazine goes to every shop and studio* in the US.

* call now if your a new shop or artist and start receiving Pain Magazine today.

Pain magazine is here to **help you!**
**Call now to see how we
can help you grow.**



505 275 6049

www.painmag.com

VOLUNTEERING FOR THE APP



JULIE TAYLOR
APP Outreach Committee



Conference Volunteer Group 2013 —photo by Julie Taylor

The Outreach Committee is responsible for connecting with the public about safe piercing. The committee coordinates APP Member volunteers to attend pre-selected national health conferences throughout the year. It also provides advice and materials such as a PowerPoint presentation, brochures, and postcards, to assist piercers in performing outreach in their own areas. If you would like help to do outreach at an event such as a conference or convention where you live, or if you would like information on how to get your foot in the door at a hospital or school, please contact outreach@safepiercing.org.

The Outreach Committee currently consists of Ash Misako (Board Member), Laura Jane (Chair), April Thomas, Lou Quino, and myself.

Outreach is important to me because it is through doing outreach that I built a community of educated consumers and my own business at the same time. No matter where you live, people can learn to choose a safe piercing experience. The APP's brochures and other resources were instrumental in spreading that message here in my tiny province on Canada's east coast.

Living in a more remote area, volunteering with the APP has given me the opportunity to work with other piercers from around the world toward a common goal. This common goal is one that requires constant and consistent work. The brochures can't do the work by themselves! As an organization with a mission of education, I believe our members have a responsibility not just for distri-

bution of information to the public, but for keeping that information up-to-date, and sharing it with piercers, health professionals, legislators and others. There's lots of work to do!

To that end, the APP has a survey to assess the skill sets and availability of members who wish to volunteer. If you are interested in volunteering, please email me at volunteer@safepiercing.org, for a link to the survey. Our committees are particularly looking for those with graphic design and marketing backgrounds, as well as those who have a good eye for quality content and maintaining presence on social media networks. Please note that the volunteer survey is not for conference volunteers. If you are interested in volunteering for Conference please contact Caitlin at info@safepiercing.org. ©

THANK YOU, BETHRAH!



ELAYNE ANGEL

Author of The Piercing Bible

Bethrah Szumski has been one of the most active, involved, and productive APP Members in the organization's twenty-year history. The Association of Professional Piercers would like to publicly recognize Bethrah for her dedication and service, and to express our deepest gratitude for all of her hard work as she steps down from her long-held post as secretary. She is also stepping down from her positions as chair and member of the Conference Committee.

Her tireless efforts and many accomplishments are truly too copious to list. But a brief summary is in order.

Bethrah has served multiple voluntary terms of service on the Board of Directors as secretary and also as president. She founded the indispensable Conference Committee. She is also an ongoing member of the Conference Curriculum, the Oversight Committee and Members Retreat subcommittees.

Bethrah has a phenomenal skill set, which she has so generously shared with our group. The APP has benefited greatly from her expert organizational abilities, which she utilized to create and maintain accurate records of the group's history. She remains tasked with maintaining the corporate record for the Oversight Committee. Bethrah has applied her talents in negotiation to critical dealings with hotels and unions. Her verbal strength and public speaking flair have been put to great use throughout her work on behalf of

the organization.

Bethrah first became a member of the APP in 1996. Just two years later she was appointed to the position of secretary. She then instituted the Association's first elections and in 1999 was duly elected to that position. Bethrah served a full three-year term during which (among other things) she reviewed applications for membership from piercers around the world, giving her an expert eye for appropriate studio set-up.

She was then elected president in 2002 and served an additional three-year term in that position. She is deservedly credited with having played a key role in stabilizing the organization. Bethrah was the deserving recipient of the very first President's Award, as an acknowledgement of appreciation. She was voted Hardest Working Piercer in 2005.

During her tenure with the APP she organized multiple U.S. conferences and several in Europe. Her conference duties at various points have included contract negotiation, attendee registration, promotion, literature distribution, event scheduling, vendor relations and floor-plan, and hotel and union relations, just to name a few. She has also been an instructor for numerous educational classes and seminars for piercers, healthcare providers, and legislators, teaching courses in the U.S., Holland, Italy, Germany, and Mexico.

Following a three-year hiatus, in May of 2008, Bethrah returned to service as secretary on the Association of Professional Piercers' Board



of Directors. Notably, she restructured the Association's annual conference planning by establishing the Conference Committee.

Following the APP Conference in 2010, Bethrah stepped down from her Board position and was appointed by the other Directors to the position of secretary as an officer, rather than as a member of the Board. She continued to serve until the position was recently handed off to Aaron Pollack of Flying Tiger Body Art in Auburn, Alabama.

As Aaron stated, he has some "big shoes to fill," taking over for Bethrah, but we are confident that he will do a great job given his conscientious attitude and the ongoing support that has been generously offered by Bethrah.

Thank you *so much*, Bethrah, for all that you have done for the Association and the field of professional body piercing. Your hard work has literally changed the landscape of our industry and forever impacted the strength, efficiency, and effectiveness of the organization. ©

APP'S NEW SECRETARY



AARON POLLACK
Flying Tiger Tattoo

Hello *Point* Readers! I am honored to have been selected as the incoming secretary for the APP. I will be taking over the role Bethrah Szumski has been in for quite some time, this means I have quite the shoes to fill. I am excited for the challenge and humbled by the opportunity to work for our Members. I have been piercing since 2006. I currently work at Flying Tiger Body Art in Auburn, Alabama (War Eagle!). I attended the Fakir Intensives and my first Conference was in 2009. In 2013 I fulfilled a career goal of becoming an APP Member. Shortly after becoming a Member, I started volunteering for the Media Committee, and became chair of that committee in December.

I would like to thank Bethrah for all her hard work over the years. Shadowing her has shown me that the secretary position is a large task, but she has been excellent in preparing me for this new role. This is an exciting time for the APP, and I am looking forward to working with the Association in this new capacity. ☺

BODYART SOLUTIONS

Prepare Protect Preserve Your Body Art

Extensively tested during FDA validated cGMP Manufacturing.

Independent Lab tests for:
Stability Microbiology Bioburden





Your On-line Phone Book

Piercing Shops, Piercers and Suppliers
Tattoo Studios, Artists and Suppliers
Permanent Cosmetic Salons, Cosmetologists and Suppliers

tattoodirectory.com

Display Your Location Information and Business Card Today
For only a few cents a day

Now Updating Listings and Taking New Listings

Your Portal To The Future Now

PO Box 15893 Newport Beach CA 92659 tattoodirectory@sbcglobal.net

THE PROCESS OF CHOOSING CONFERENCE CLASSES



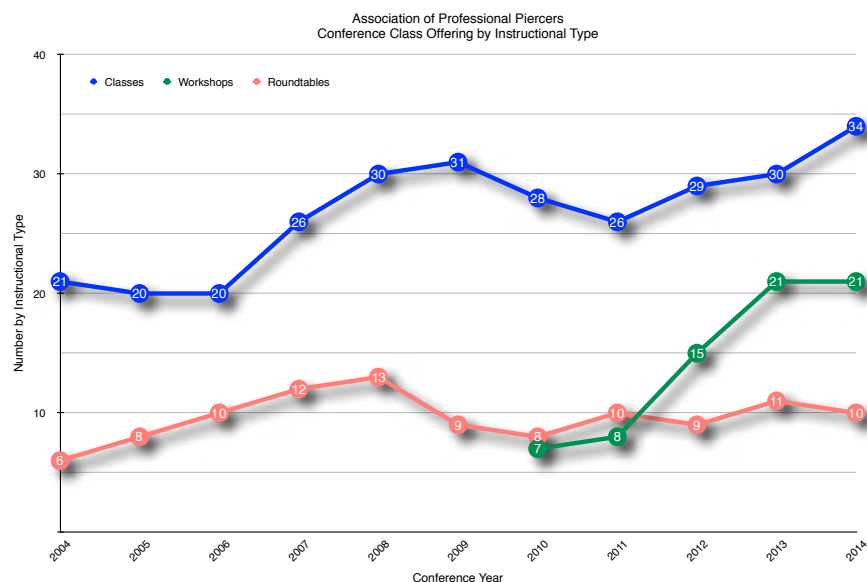
JOHN JOHNSON
Owner of New Flower Studio

Editor's note: This is John Johnson's response when asked to explain what is involved when deciding what classes are offered and what instructors will lead them. Our goal was to provide attendees with behind-the-scenes information about the classes they attend.

The short answer is the nine person Conference Committee creates a suggested curriculum for each Conference. This curriculum gets presented to the Board who approves it or requests changes.

The longer version is more like this: After Conference, the committee starts its round of meetings for the next year. Many things are discussed, classes and instructors are a major topic. Each of us on the committee have ideas about what is needed and what can be improved. Those ideas are all put into a list. We used to get only a few class suggestions each year, but now that Conference has grown so much over the most recent years we have more proposals submitted than we know what to do with. Some people suggest classes they would like to take. Others suggest classes they want to teach. When similar topics are proposed by multiple people, the ideas are combined. This is often how multiple people present a course at Conference.

We have core classes that we offer every year like Anatomy, Medical Risk, BBP, Initial Size and Style, etc. These are fundamental subjects and will always be offered. But any courses that are introduced as an initial offering, may rotated in and out of the schedule every few years, and are selected based on their relevance to the industry at the time, or the number



of years since they've been offered.

Many years ago, before committees were in place the way they are now, the Board of Directors did all conference planning and most of the instructing. The Association has grown so much and has so many things like outreach and legislation work, it isn't practical for them to do everything. Fortunately, 19 years of conference planning has given us an effective system that includes a strong and consistent conference staff.

The instructors are selected based on being known experts on the topic they teach, and after 20 years we have a long list of reliable presenters who can be used in their regular spots and inserted where needed. But the industry grows and there are always trailblazing piercers who make their mark and get the opportunity to teach at Conference. When their classes are well done and well received by the attendees they have

opportunities to return. Some people will be asked to present but not feel comfortable doing so; public speaking isn't easy. Sometimes people teach for the first time and decide they don't want to do it again. Instructors have an obligation to present information that can be both useful and understood by the attendees. A course isn't useful if the learner can't take the information home and use it in their studio. So public speaking rule #1 is to know your audience. Also, the content must be in the context of the current piercing environment and the APP's mission. The APP has printed literature like the *Procedure Manual* and several brochures. An instructor must not present any material that directly contradicts the current positions of the Association. Piercers work very differently and diversity is appreciated. This is why many classes with

—continued on 30

AL D. SOWERS—THE MAN BEHIND THE SCHOLARSHIP



SHORTY CALMA

Member, Ink and Pistons



Editor's Note: In order to write this article Shorty spoke to Al's colleagues and friends. This article was possible in part to the verbal contributions of Gale Shub of Body Circle, Michaela Grey and David Vidra.

The annual APP Conference and Expo is something that piercers from all over the world look forward to throughout each year. For many it's the highlight of their year. A time filled with camaraderie between like-minded individuals, catching up with old friends, and making new ones. This is a time of focused learning, with knowledge being shared around the clock, for six solid days, class after class of information, plus the invaluable time at the bar late into the evening. For some less fortunate individuals, the idea of attending Conference is only a pipe dream. But to a small handful of deserving individuals, one man's legacy has made this pipe dream a reality.

Al D. Sowers is a man often men-

tioned by many, but very few know more than a detail or two. Who is he? What did he do that was so deserving of having a scholarship named after him? What did he do to inspire the generations of piercers that he preceded?

Al started his piercing career before piercing was a thing in North America. There is little information available about where he started or who taught him. He was very involved in Seattle's gay/leather scene in the '80s, as were other pioneers of the industry. Al also played an important role in the early days of body jewelry, being one of the go-to piercers for Tom and Gale of Body Circle Designs. He helped to perfect basic designs and create some new ones. In the early '90s, Michaela Grey and Jim Ward began Gauntlet's body piercing seminars teaching body piercing fundamentals to

those that wanted to learn. It was in 1993 that Al signed up for Gauntlet's advanced piercing seminar and met a man named David Vidra. Al and David clicked immediately and became very close, both personally and professionally.

At the same time, many in the community saw a need to come together and organize piercers, addressing new legislation and creating a formal set of standards for our fledgling industry to follow. In 1994 the APP was officially formed. In October of 1995 Al became its first official business member and David became the second. Together Al and David set out to not only help bring piercing to the mainstream and make it a profitable business, but also to make it as safe as possible. Al helped to create and evolve the APP's minimum standards. He pushed to make the proper steril-



Board dinner in Atlanta after meeting at Piercing Experience, 1998



Meeting in New Zealand

ization (autoclaving) of jewelry and tools a minimum requirement. He also suggested that jewelry should always be run in a clean ultrasonic prior to sterilization to remove any manufacturing debris.

In addition to helping set standards he quickly became part of the Board for the APP, serving as secretary for a short time and spearheading local and international outreach. Al and David were known for their ability to think outside of the box and willingness to buck the system in the name of safety. They were always pushing to raise the bar and create the safest possible procedure for the client.

Al was passionate about the necessity for sharing knowledge. He believed that in order for piercers to be successful, they should be appropriately educated and that education should be industry specific. It was that passion which pushed Al to become one of the first industry specific OSHA bloodborne pathogen instructors in Seattle where he also began teaching his own piercing seminars. Along with his local teaching, Al helped developed some of the core curriculum that would be

presented at the annual APP Conference. He also traveled to Europe to help with the piercing movement that was beginning to explode there and teach bloodborne pathogen and infection control procedures.

Al continued working in the industry for many more years, continually pushing to raise standards and mentoring many young piercers. In 2000 he finally retired due to declining health issues and sadly passed in February of 2001. Al's passion

for education is the reason the Association of Professional Piercers decided to honor his memory with a scholarship. This scholarship gives less fortunate but deserving piercers the opportunity to attend Conference, where they can learn and understand new concepts and techniques specific to the piercing industry. Continuing education is a necessity for our industry and if there is any one thing we can learn from Al it is to never settle. Always strive to learn more.

“Body Circle Designs was founded in 1991 by Tom Finch and Gale Shub, making simple, high-quality, hand-crafted body jewelry for piercers in the Seattle area. The focus was on using only the highest quality surgical steel, simple but beautiful design, and hand-polishing each piece to a flawless mirror finish. Cheap piercing jewelry, poorly made caused too many problems, such as rejection. But quality jewelry was hard to find back then. By working with skilled and experienced piercers such as Fakir, Al D. Sowers and Elayne Angel, we perfected the classic styles of body piercing jewelry and developed many new and innovative designs.” <http://www.bodycircle.com> ©



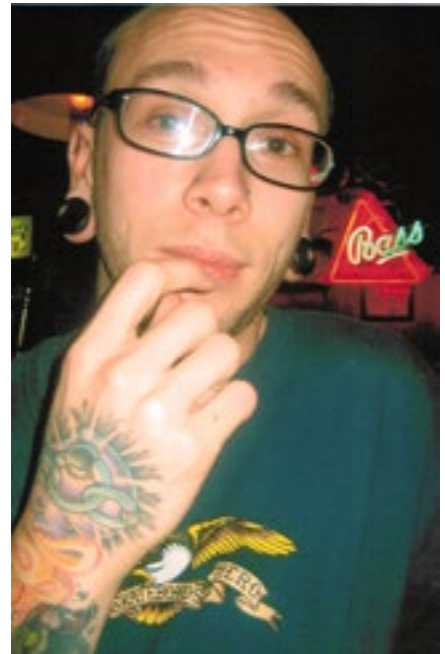
First meeting of the short-lived European APP in London

IN THE OFFICE—JOSH PRENTICE



CAITLIN MCDIARMID
APP Administrator

“I began by getting pierced in a shop in Alabama and becoming friends with the people working there. I worked as receptionist for a short stint before being offered an apprenticeship. I have been enthusiastic about the art of piercing ever since. During my apprenticeship I learned the fundamentals, like disease prevention and basic technique, but was left to learn a lot on my own. By networking with my peers in the profession I have become a pretty well rounded piercer. I’m now a proud member of the APP, and look forward to keeping with standards and promoting health and safety to the piercing industry as long as I’m involved, and will always advocate for the industry that has allowed me to make a profession of something that I truly love.”—Josh Prentice



The lack of emotional security of our American young people is due, I believe, to their isolation from the larger family unit. No two people—no mere father and mother—as I have often said, are enough to provide emotional security for a child. He needs to feel himself one in a world of kinfolk, persons of variety in age and temperament, and yet allied to himself by an indissoluble bond which he cannot break if he could, for nature has welded him into it before he was born.”

—Pearl S. Buck

“Our differences are apparent during meetings and discussions about the business of the Association—we see that clearly. However, our love for each other far surpasses any conflicts or differing opinions.

This reality was driven home by the loss of Josh Prentice while we were in Atlanta. Josh volunteered at the Conference the last three years. I only knew him at Conference, only knew

him as one of “my” volunteers. I only spent three weeks with him — but he was family and so I grieve for him like I would for family. We all do. We came together, sobbed and mourned upon the news of his death. We worked as best we could on the tasks at hand. Wept during breaks and wept after we were adjourned. We supported each other as best we could. We reached out to our loved ones—our other family members—and let them know we loved them and pleaded with them to be safe in their actions.”

—The Point Issue 39/Spring 2007

Caitlin McDiarmid; “In the Office.”

Iwrote that article just a month or so after we lost Josh. And it’s true, I didn’t know him very well or for very long. I think Josh’s death made me realize the impact of relationships—the impact of one single human connection can have. The fact that his death occurred at the same time we were holding a

Board meeting in Atlanta also had its own impact. For me it was a serious reminder that ultimately this Association is built on those personal connections, those personal relationships we have—as colleagues, as mentors/students, instructors/attendees, vendor/customer, Board/members... and human to human. It made sense to me to have Bethrah included in this article, someone who knew Josh way better than I did. “Josh Prentice was a remarkable young man. He quit school at the age of 16 to support his family after his father became disabled. After working a handful of different jobs his sister and brother-in-law encouraged him to pursue a piercing apprenticeship. He was hesitant at first but once he made the decision to pursue piercing as a career there was no stopping him.



From the beginning he worked diligently to expand his skill level and knowledge base. In 2004 he attended his first APP Conference with us and shortly after came to work in the Atlanta location of Virtue & Vice. When the piercing portion moved two doors down in 2005, Josh's previous work experience was a true blessing. He pretty much knew how to do everything construction related. Separate from his in-shop time Josh was a brilliant networker. He was in regular contact with piercers all over the country. He was constantly gaining insight, information and new techniques.

On a personal note Josh was a truly loyal friend. He was supportive during some of the crappiest times of my life. He was funny, sweet, sarcastic, brave, and warm. I have this strong memory of him prancing around the counter with his arms open to hug me for no apparent reason at all, smiling his big goofy smile. Even all these

years later, there are barely words to describe the empty place he left behind.

I think he would be quietly proud of his legacy. The recognition of those who hold it all up through their hard work and dedication. Those who are unassuming and don't behave with entitlement. Those who say 'yes' to the grunt work and actually show up and do it. That's who he was, a beautiful example of all of those things."

—Bethrah Szumski

Bethrah brought me to tears last year when she mentioned that Josh's mother had spoken to her and thanked us all for remembering and honoring her son in the way that we do every year at Conference.

As the years go on, there are more and more people in our industry who never knew Josh or worked with him at the Conference. When I established the Volunteer Award in 2008 (first awarded in 2009) it was simply that I wanted to honor outstanding volunteers for their work and I wanted everyone to remember Josh, who to me epitomized that every single person makes a difference. They make a difference in their lives and the lives of others.

In 2009 I honored both Ed Chavarria and Tiana McGuire. I had wanted to give the award starting in 2008 and had just not put my ducks in a row to get it established. So I made up for it by the double award. I joked when it was first awarded that I knew Josh would have laughed at me for giving a big Lucite obelisk in his name, so I made the awards more personal; less fussy. Over the years, I have honored John C. Johnson (2010), David Kelso (2011), Gus Diamond (2012), Luis Garcia (2013), and Ryan Ouellette (2014). I believe I made good choices and that Josh, if here, would agree. Then he probably would have made a joke about why hadn't he gotten the award yet, saying something like "I mean it has my name on it."

When I think of Josh, the loss of him reminds me to reach out and really find out how people are doing in their lives. The memories of my interactions with Josh remind me to be genuine, give with the whole of my heart, smile more, and when I make a mistake say I'm sorry and move on. Small lessons, but important ones.

The Conference after Josh passed, some of his friends gathered around an empty area next to the Splash Bar in the Riviera Hotel's Casino. We gathered in a circle with glasses in hand and made a toast to Josh, many of us pouring a bit of our drinks on the floor in his honor. At that very moment all the lights went out in the casino. True story.

We miss you Josh. But we won't forget. And I hope long after I am gone from the organization, someone will still be passing on these simple undeniable words: Every single person can make a difference. ©

REMEMBERING JOSH PRENTICE



RYAN OUELLETE AND GUS DIAMOND



I remember Josh Prentice being a busy bee at Conference. He always seemed to be helping someone with something. He was kind and never gave anyone the brush off. He really wanted to be part of a team. Admittedly we weren't more than acquaintances, but I hope I can live up to the standard he set for volunteers within the APP. I am very proud to have received a token of appreciation named in his honor.

Every year when Caitlin McDiarmid makes her tear-filled speeches I am moved by her passion. If there was a "hardest working person in the APP" award she would win it every year. So to be chosen for this award by her makes it twice as special to me. It seems that every year she picks someone very important to her both personally and professionally, so when she started her speech last year, my stomach dropped as I quickly figured out who she was talking about. I like praise as much as anyone with an Instagram page but hearing her heartfelt words really had an impact on me. The feeling of receiving this award from Caitlin, someone who is very important in my life, is very hard to express in words. She is a friend and a colleague, and to know that she cared about the volunteer work I had

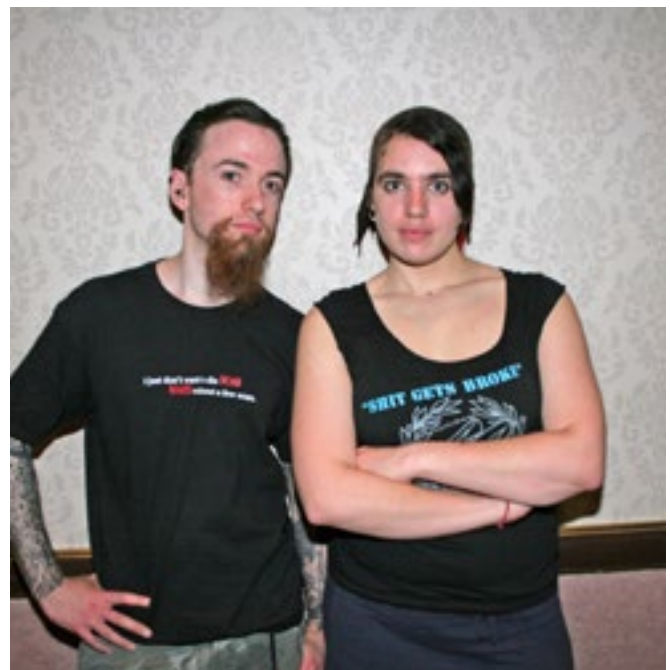
done for the APP means more than I will ever be able to fully describe. Like a total goof I had to wade through a sea of the people I respect with tear-filled eyes to try and say thank you. I hope Caitlin could fully appreciate how amazingly awkward and appreciative I felt.

With every day I volunteer for the APP, every person I harass with a half formed idea, every deadline I barely make, and every issue I hammer into the ground with my opinions, I hope to make Josh and Caitlin proud. I guess I'm not allowed to slack off anymore.

—Ryan Ouellette

I am one of the few attendees that can say I have been to every Conference. That being said it has been an honor to volunteer for the APP Conference for more than the past ten years. To be awarded the Josh Prentice Volunteer Award is simply the cherry on top of an already great sundae. It means that for all the years I have been helping, I've been doing something right. I look forward to volunteering for many years to come, each year welcoming new recipients to the club. ☺

—Gus Diamond



Ryan Ouellette and Tiana McGuire

HELP SAVE SAILOR SID!



PAUL KING

Committee Chairperson & APP Treasurer



Over Memorial Day Weekend, the Leather Archives & Museum (LA&M), with cooperation from the Association of Professional Piercer's Body Piercing Archive (APP, BPA) launched a month-long fundraising campaign for the preservation of piercing pioneer Sailor Sid's archive.

Through our joined efforts, the project will achieve:

1. Creation of an online exhibit.

This project will put an im-

mense amount of "paper only" photographs, films and documents online, available for research and casual use.

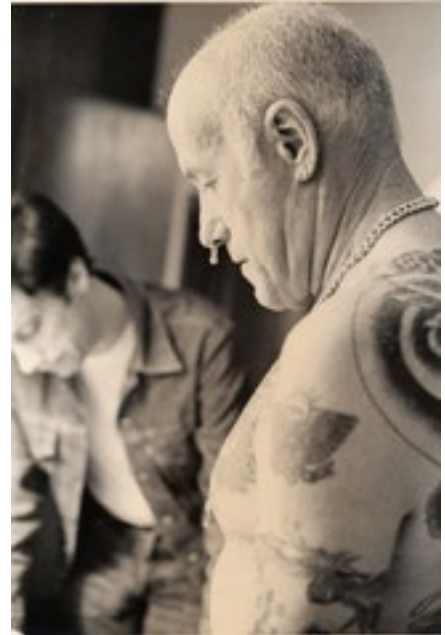
2. Preservation and conservation of important history.

The Sailor Sid collection at the LA&M is currently in a fragile physical state. Many hours of carefully removing photographs from harmful photo pages and cataloging papers will be required to keep this collection available for generations to come.

3. Digitization. Photographs, films, letters to and from Sailor Sid and other records will be digitized using archival quality scanners. The project will also allow for reel films to be sent to digital facilities to make them available online.

Recognizing the urgency for saving this fragile historical piercing collection, the APP's Board of Directors has committed to assisting LA&M in this common cause. This support includes a generous matching grant of up to \$5,000. While the archival work, digitization, and exhibit creation will be conducted by the LA&M, the amazing resources in Sailor Sid's collection will benefit leather and piercing aficionados alike. By joining forces, the LA&M and APP are both excited to see this collection come to life as well as be protected for future generations.

About Sailor Sid...



—photo courtesy of Leather Archives and Museum

Sid Diller, better known as "Sailor Sid," got his first tattoos and piercings while serving in the Coast Guard during World War II. Famous for his extensive genital piercings (reportedly over 100 in the penis and scrotum), Sid worked predominantly on gay men, mainly from his Silver Anchor studio in Ft. Lauderdale, Florida. Sailor Sid did it all: Prince Alberts, ampallangs and apadravyas, frenums, lorums, and any other part of the male anatomy.

When Sailor Sid passed away in 1990, his collection of personal papers and effects related to his piercing career were entrusted to Jim Ward, founder of the original piercing studio, Gauntlet. Ward donated the collection to LA&M in 1997, where it has remained in climate-controlled storage ever since, largely inaccessible due to lack of processing



—photo courtesy of Leather Archives and Museum



resources.

The collection itself is extraordinary in its scope. Sid kept meticulous records of his piercing work, documenting his procedures with hundreds of Polaroid photos, many identified with time, place, and subject neatly typed on labels. In a testament to Sid's seemingly endless creativity, these pictures are stored in hand-made "binders," crafted by Sid out of wood, string, bolts, and wingnuts. In addition to the photographs, the collection includes pages of his personal correspondence (Sid was a tireless letter-writer), various magazine and newspaper clippings on the history of piercing from publications as diverse as *The New York Times*, *National Geographic*, and *Fetish Times*, piercing instructions, 8mm films from his travels, floppy disks, slides, and even comic strips he saved.

But the collection is in urgent need of protection. Based on a cursory inspection of the collection, it has already become clear that there are some pressing preservation concerns due to its age:

- Homemade photo albums are an impressive display of ingenuity, but they aren't the best option for long-term storage and preservation.
- Yellowing newspaper articles and correspondences

need to be photocopied

- Photographs need to be transferred to archival quality sleeves
- Digitization of the 8mm films is an increasing concern due to their delicate condition.
- Importantly, the collection remains unprocessed and uncatalogued. The accessibility of the collection is extremely limited.

Info about the LA&M:

The Mission of the Leather Archives & Museum is: "The compilation, preservation and maintenance of leather lifestyle and related lifestyles [including but not limited to the Gay and Lesbian communities], history, archives and memorabilia for historical, educational and research purposes."

The Leather Archives & Museum is a library, museum and archives pertaining to leather, fetishism, sadomasochism, and alternative sexual culture and practices.

The museum is located in Chicago's Rogers Park neighborhood on the far north side of the city. The 10,000 sq. foot facility houses a collection containing original erotic art from artists as diverse as muralist Dom Orejudos (who worked under the name Etienne), Robert Bishop, Tom of Finland, and Robert Mapplethorpe and artifacts from individuals, groups, sex clubs and events, such as The Mineshaft in NYC, Fakir Musafar, and San Francisco's legendary Catacombs, just to name a few. Other features of the museum include:

- Eight exhibition galleries
- The 164-seat Etienne auditorium
- The Leather SINS Screening Room
- A 600 sq. foot reading library to house the research collections (published books, magazines, scholarly publications, films and electronic resources)
- A 1,425 sq. foot climate controlled storage space for archival contents (unpublished papers and records from notable activists, artists, businesses, and organizations)

The institution was founded in the early 1990's with the motto, "Located in Chicago and serving the world". Today, LA&M's programs continue to uphold this dictum by making collections available outside of Chicago through social networking, digitization, traveling exhibitions, and loaned exhibitions. Social media also plays an integral role in LA&M's outreach, with a combined audience of over 20,000 followers though its presence on *Facebook*, *Twitter*, *Tumblr*, *Flickr*, *Pinterest*, *FetLife*, and *YouTube*, or through the website www.leatherarchives.org

LA&M's Jakob VanLammeren (Archivist/Collections Librarian) holds a Master's in Library and Information Science with a focus in Archives from Dominican University. Since being hired full-time in July 2013, Jakob —has established priorities, completed the arranging and describing, and/or managed the completion for over a dozen collections; developed, revised and created written procedures for archival processing and work plans; created catalog records, provided ongoing supervision and management of volunteers and interns, and given tours and presentations to student groups and/or organizations. ©

—article co-authored by Leather Archives & Museum and Body Piercing Archive



—photo by Jim Ward

HELP SAVE SAILOR SID!

To make an Indiegogo donation,
visit <http://igg.me/at/sailor-sid-LAM>.

**Leather Archives & Museum
Sailor Sid Crowdfunding Plan**

**Goal : \$5,500 through fundraising campaign
Plus: up to \$5,000 matched by APP**

**Every dollar helps towards our common goal
of saving our community's history.**



—photos by Jim Ward



—photos by Doug Matloy

ENVIRONMENTAL CRITERIA UPDATE

Dear APP Members,

The Association of Professional Piercers Membership Committee and Board of Directors thanks you for being a part of our organization. In response to overwhelming demand from our members, we have made significant strides in updating our membership requirements. To ensure all of our members are operating at the current minimum standards, we are requiring that all current members who have a video walk through and environmental criteria older than two years provide an updated video walk through and submit updated environmental criteria. If you are receiving this letter, your video walk through and environmental criteria are older than two years as of December 31, 2015.

These updates should be submitted no later than January 1st, 2016. There will be no video processing fee with digital or hard copy submissions.

You can upload all your completed forms, signed pages, photos of your autoclave(s), scans or photos of your documentation, and everything else to Google Drive as a single Google document or PDF (Google Drive is the preferred method). Upload the video to YouTube (www.youtube.com/upload), set to unlisted, and Creative Commons license. (Go to info and settings, then choose advanced settings, then Creative Commons license.) Next, copy the link to your video, paste it into the document you created, then share the completed application with media@safepiercing.org or email.

Pre-Application Processing Checklist:

- Application Form
- Copy of current CPR certificate

- Copy of current First Aid certificate
- Copy of current Bloodborne Pathogens training certificate
- A narrated unedited 360 degree video of your shop
- Photograph of all autoclaves with Make, Model, and Serial Number
- Copy of two most recent spore tests from each autoclave
- Copies of piercing aftercare sheets
- Copy of Business License
- Copy of shop/personal business card
- An example of advertising
- Copy of certificate of Liability Insurance (if applicable)
- Copy of jewelry invoices from last 90 days

Pre-submission video checklist:

Pre-Video Checklist

- Show the front of shop
- Show the back of the shop too.
- Required: Videos must be shot in LANDSCAPE view, not portrait.
- Required: No cuts or editing in the video
- Go through every drawer and closet in the shop.
- Tattoo stations may be omitted.

Front Counter

- A non-porous front counter that can be disinfected
- Disinfectant products behind counter
- Gloves behind counter
- Bags or cups for contaminated customer jewelry
- Suggested: signage asking clients not to touch jewelry
- Suggested: a thoroughly organized, neat counter and desk area

Sterilization Room

- Non-porous flooring
- Clear separation between dirty and clean
- An ultrasonic or instrument washer for piercing tools
- An employees only sign
- Does your autoclave meet requirements?
- Is your clean up room totally contained?
- "No handwashing in dirty room" sign
- Suggested: A clean jewelry ultrasonic or steam cleaner or both
- Suggested: HEPA filter

Hand washing Area

- Is it in the studio, or a separate employee handwashing area? (bathrooms and sterilization room sinks are not acceptable)
- Hands free paper towels (single hand)
- Suggested: hands free faucet (infrared or foot pedal)
- Suggested: hands free soap (infrared)

Piercing Room

- Sharps Container wall mount and placed correctly
- A Biohazard tool tray
- Lidded trash cans, foot operated or infrared
- Is your piercing studio private, with minimum 8 foot walls?
- Do you have an appropriate (non-porous, massage/dental/medical style) piercing table
- Is your artwork framed, non-porous and easily disinfectable?
- Is your storage sealed, disinfectable and appropriate?
- Suggested: HEPA filter
- Suggested: Sterile Gloves for piercing procedures

Bathroom

- Is the bathroom clean, with an operational toilet and sink?
- Are there appropriate handwashing products in the bathroom?
- There must be no piercing related items in bathroom storage.
- Suggested: A sign that asks clients not to touch or change their jewelry in the bathroom.

The Membership Committee is available to anyone who needs any assistance in any way, shape or form. Please do not hesitate to contact us with any questions (members@safepiercing.org).

THE APP OFFICERS & BOARD OF DIRECTORS:

- Brian Skellie—President
- Cody Vaughn—Vice President
- Paul King—Treasurer
- Bethrah Szumski—Secretary
- Jef Saunders—Membership Liaison
- Steve Joyner—Legislation Liaison
- Christopher Glunt—Medical Liaison
- Ash Misako—Outreach Coordinator
- Miro Hernandez—Public Relations

Editorials

—continued from page 5

meals alone, but I was a lot more at ease than I ever expected to be. Having the structure and encouragement of the 2012 volunteer group was an incredible experience, and without this experience, my life would be in a drastically different place right now.

My original intention when I asked to volunteer was to distract myself from my insecurities. Unexpectedly, I also gained vital experience, life-long friends, and a closer connection to an extraordinary organization and community. I am inspired by the people that join forces to make the Association of Professional Piercers what it is. The level of dedication I have witnessed in my relatively short time of involvement is incredible. The sense of fulfillment from volunteering and taking part in such a project, as we all collaborate to spread the safe piercing message, has forever changed me.

This year will mark my second conference attendance (unfortunately, life interfered during 2013 and 2014) and my fourth year as a volunteer. For a while now, I've been counting down the days until Conference. I am in the process of mentally preparing myself to be more outgoing and not miss out on all the amazing hugs and support that are so plentiful during that one week. If our

paths cross, please don't hesitate to say hello, especially if you're a first year attendee! I also encourage new attendees to take full advantage of the mentor program, especially if you're shy, awkward, and weird. This program is a great way to feel less alone and overwhelmed during a week filled with so many new faces, lessons, and experiences. And I hear that if you're in search of the best chicken and waffles around, these amazing people can point you in the right direction. ☺

Survival Tips

—continued from page 9

but they will likely be expensive and selection will be limited. If you are particular, don't forget them.

- **Snacks**—Things in Las Vegas can be expensive and eating between events, classes, and socializing isn't always easy to fit into your schedule. Having a supply of on-the-go snacks that don't require refrigeration or preparation can make your week less stressed. We have changed the schedule to accommodate more breaks, but sometimes there is just no time for a sit down meal.

Las Vegas can be a bit like the Bermuda Triangle. With all the activity and controlled chaos, it can be easy to lose track of stuff. **If it will break your heart to lose it, leave it at home.** ☺

Mentor Program

—continued from page 10

ence, please do not hesitate to contact anyone on the mentor team. The 2015 Mentor Team consists of Ash Misako, April Thomas, Billy Wood, and Kendra Jane.

"I felt so honoured to become part of this program because I remember my first Conference. I was terrified. I latched on to someone that I considered a mentor and didn't leave their side. I hope that anyone coming for the first time has the opportunity to have someone near them that is looking out for them. No one should feel like an outsider their first year." ☺

—Ash Misako,
Outreach Coordinator

Service

—continued from page 11

together on a variety of tasks and come out the other side friends and colleagues. It's a magical process and by the end we are all in tears saying our goodbyes. I've watched people from a variety of religious backgrounds, genders, sexual orientations, economic levels, cultures, piercing skill level, anxiety levels, social abilities, and ages – all let



Conference Volunteer Group 2014

things which could have caused barriers become bridges.

I have never had a volunteer walk away from the experience unchanged. Service is transformative. Attending the Conference is transformative. Combine the two and it's amazing.

We shouldn't get to have all the fun. While our team has grown over the years, we are always looking for new volunteers. If you can't volunteer during Conference, think about doing so in your community; whether as a piercer educating students in schools about safe piercing or as a food shelf worker. Do something, get involved for the greater good. Absolutely positively – everyone can make a difference. ☺

Giving Back

—continued from page 13

to have some sort of formal training and have a “licence” to practice, however this is usually not the case. Many are shocked to find out that, in most places, little or no education is required to start tattooing or piercing on the general public. We discuss key topics such as what to look for, and what to ask, if they decide to visit a tattoo and piercing studio. Other topics include dealing with peer pressure, recognizing and understanding the differences between a reputable, inspected studio as opposed to a non-inspected studio, and understanding the role of the Public Health Inspectors. We'll discuss the subject of infections, diseases, the possible challenges of future job placement, sterilization standards, and even show some images of poorly done body art in order to spark an open discussion with students. The key focus is to emphasize the importance of doing proper research before making the decision of getting a tattoo or piercing. Through education provided by experts in our field, our goal is to decrease the health risks involved with getting body modifications. Students will

leave the presentation with a much clearer view on how to protect themselves and their peers.

I encourage you to present a similar course outline to your local health unit and the surrounding schools. If you're passionate about the future of our industry, then I suggest teaming up with others that show similar interests, get involved in your community, and start educating our youth. Let's work together to make the future a little safer for the next generation of body art enthusiasts! ☺

—Jesse Villemaire

Thrive Studios

Cambridge Ontario, Canada

Instagram: [@thrivinjesse](https://www.instagram.com/thrivinjesse)

www.thrivestudios.ca

www.progressivementorship.com

Classes

—continued from 18

different instructors can be so great, because different opinions or strategies are offered. But we still need to present information that aligns with the APP's available materials.

For the months leading up to Conference, instructors are hard at work developing outlines for their course. What will they offer this year? What can they leave out? We review the previous years' handouts and slideshows. We review the material other past instructors used. We make calls to colleagues to ask their opinions. We look for ways to make the information useful and up-to-date, without being the same course as the previous year. When we include new instructors to the lineup we add fresh ideas and that's sometimes all it takes.

All of this comes together to create the schedule of classes that you see at Conference each year. ☺

FINE BODY JEWELRY



Welcome to the new Leroi.com

SHOP ONLINE 24/7

- Wholesale customers only
- Fully secure e-commerce site
- Products added daily
- Shop 24/7



GAUGES

16g

LENGTH/DIAMETER

1/4"

MATERIALS

14K Yellow Gold

ADD TO CART

10% OFF for all APP members



WWW.LEROI.COM

Phone: 1.888.298.7766 Fax: 315.402.2136

H₂Ocean[®]

First In First Aid™

VISIT US
AT THE APP
CONVENTION
JUNE 7-12,
2015

Patented Sea Salt Saline

BODY PIERCING AFTERCARE WITH OR WITHOUT ENZYMES

#premiumbodypiercingaftercare

INGREDIENT LIST

SEA SALT
PURIFIED WATER
LYSOZYME
SODIUM CITRATE



- All Natural Ingredients
- Enzymatic Formula
- Safe for All Body Piercings
- Contains 82 Trace Minerals



- Bag on Valve
- 360° Sprayer
- Remains Sterile
- 5 Year Shelf Life

INGREDIENT LIST

SEA SALT
PURIFIED WATER



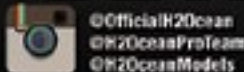
- Vegan Friendly
- Gluten Free
- Preservative Free
- 0.9% Sea Salt Saline

CORPORATE SPONSOR

CORPORATE SPONSOR OF **APP** SINCE 2001



DON'T BE AFTERCARELESS

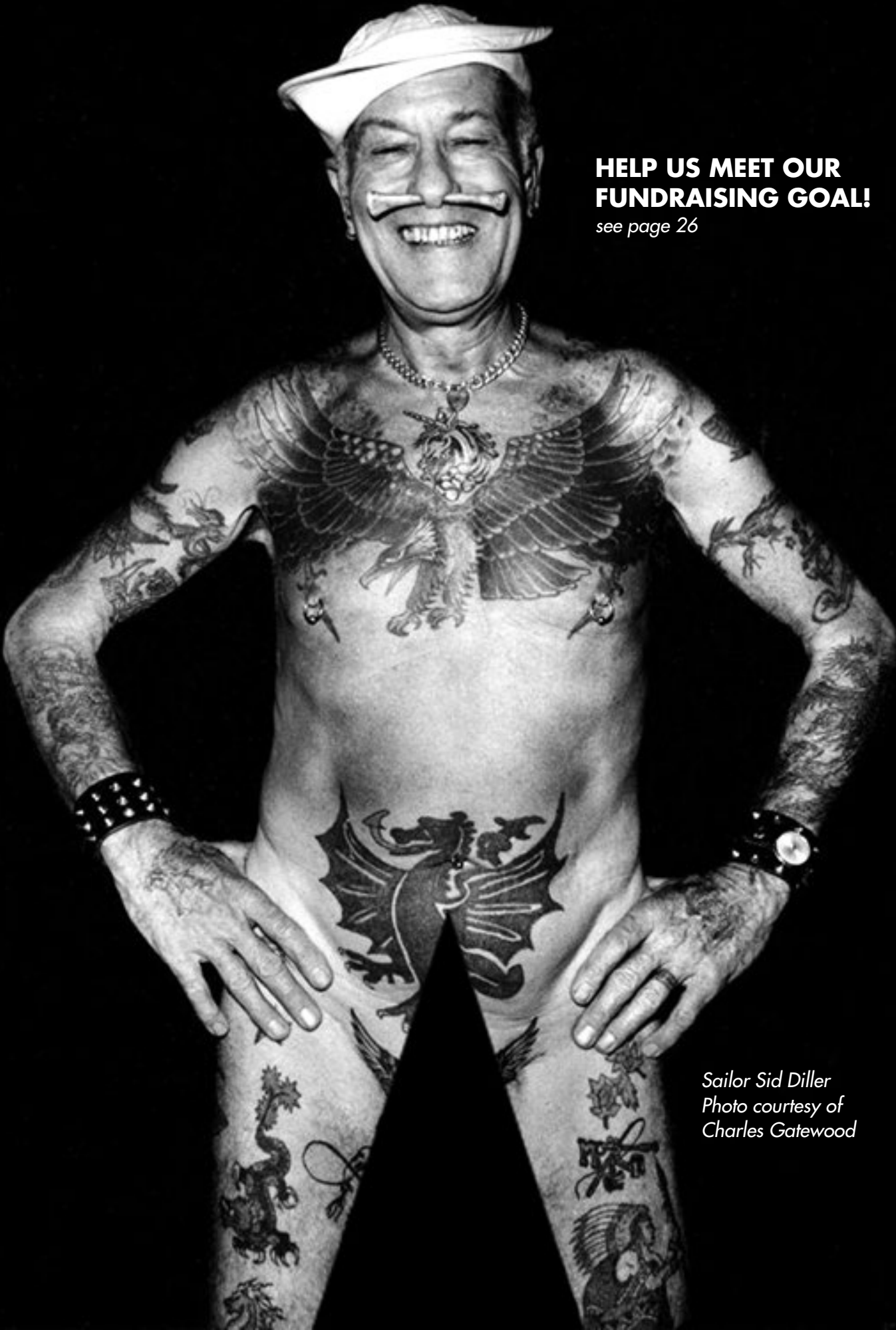


WWW.H2OCEAN.COM

1.866.420.2326

©2015 H2OCEAN, INC. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.





**HELP US MEET OUR
FUNDRAISING GOAL!**

see page 26

*Sailor Sid Diller
Photo courtesy of
Charles Gatewood*