

THE POINT

The Official Newsletter of
The Association of Professional Piercers
Fall, 2004 • Issue 30

APP AT THE AMERICAN COLLEGE HEALTH ASSOCIATION'S ANNUAL CONFERENCE



Medical Coordinator Elayne Angel staffing the APP table.



Reginald Fennell, acting ACHA President with Elayne.

The American College Health Association (ACHA) is the principal advocate and leadership organization for College and University Health centers. The association provides advocacy, education, communications, products, and services, as well as promoting research and culturally competent practices.

The APP was invited to be at the Conference by Reginald Fennell, Ph.D., CHES, then acting President of ACHA. This year it was held in New Orleans. He made a special stop at our booth at the APHA Conference (American Public Health Association) last November to make sure we would be there.

Over 1700 people attended the Conference. The APP was represented by Elayne Angel (Medical Liaison, Newsletter Editor, & Board Member) and Caitlin McDiarmid (Administrative Assistant). We displayed the new APP "travel" booth for the first time. We received quite a few compliments on the slick, black booth, even from other vendors.

The APP booth was extremely popular, even when traffic flow in the Expo area was low. The overwhelming response from Attendees was "we need this information"—they fully admitted that they see a lot of troubled piercings and often have no idea of what to do or what to tell the piercee. Everyone who approached the booth left with one of each of the brochures. Many who stopped by took forms for subscriptions to *The POINT* and/or copies of the newsletter, and most took Elayne's APP and/or studio business card. Almost everyone who approached

the table took the time to listen to us talk about the Association, the printed materials, or jewelry. Elayne's display of "good" and "bad" jewelry was a conversation piece and people were amazed at how much valuable information they received in our brief presentation.

We had the handful of "groupies" who dragged friends over, or who hung out in their spare moments. We had many people ask if we could attend or send representation to the affiliate meetings (conferences) around the U.S. Any APP member who may be interested in representing the APP at one of these conferences, please contact us. It is good fun, and a much needed community service.

Overall, our attendance at ACHA reinforced the notion that College and University Health Offices are in need of our information and assistance in dealing with their pierced patients/students. Many College Health Offices are starting to be proactive and provide educational presentations on Body Art to their students. The outreach done at ACHA was invaluable and we hope the APP will continue to be very involved with providing the members of ACHA with good information and resources upon which they can draw. ❖

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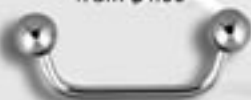
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President's Corner

I would like to pass along a little tip for those of you who are finding yourselves overwhelmed with your workload.

First a little personal history: I initially took office as a Director six years ago; I co-own and manage two Tattoo and Piercing studios, I am a wife, I am the mother of a teenage child, and I am also active in service to my local community. These duties combined amount to between 70 and 80 work hours per week. In fact, up until three years ago, during every single trip I took I received a call from the studio to solve problems, like workers couldn't find toner for the copier, or they ran out of gauze. By the close of 2000 the wear was definitely creating a negative impact on all aspects of my life. After receiving feedback from friends and family I sought to improve my situation.

The first thing I did was take an inventory of my studio duties and delegate a large portion of them to responsible senior employees. This meant no more vacation calls about gauze! The next thing I did was hire cleaners to come to my house every two weeks. This freed me to keep things tidy with less effort. I even did a little decorating. The last and most important thing I did was get a personal assistant. My saving grace (that's what I call her) also attends school, so a part time job with flexible hours worked well for her. We found that 10-20 hours a week was perfect. As a personal assistant she dealt with pretty much anything I needed done, whether that was getting the car's emissions test or organizing the bills. I found myself being a manager rather than a micro-manager and it's great.

For those of you more sane workers out there these tactics may be old news. For me, however, it has been a revolutionary change. At any rate, if you're like me and missed Life Skills 101 while going to Hyper-Achiever School, you may find these ideas useful. ❖

—Bethra Szumski



THE POINT

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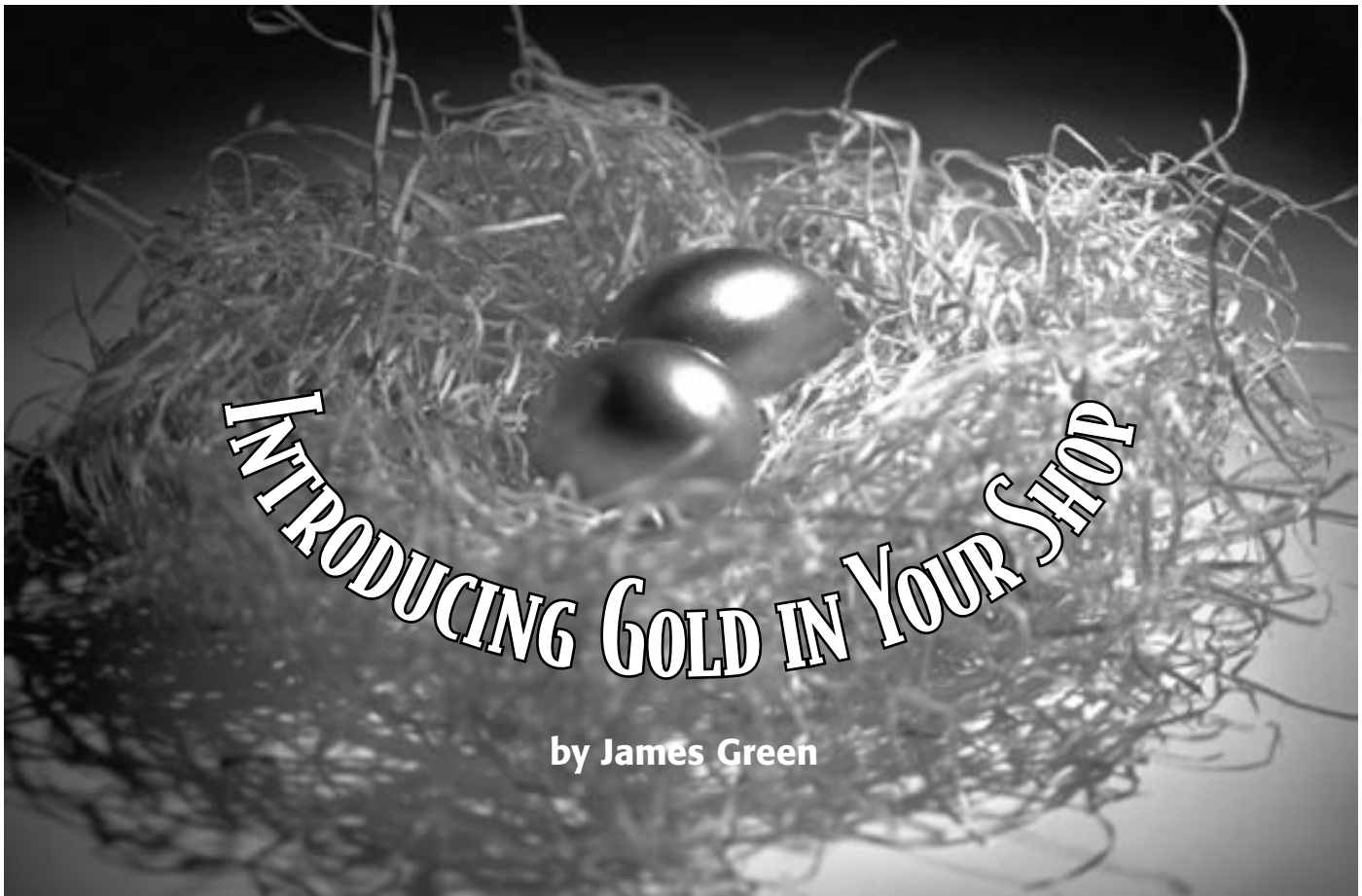
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INTRODUCING GOLD IN YOUR SHOP

by James Green

Carrying a selection of gold jewelry in your store can increase your bottom line and enhance the image your customers have of you. A well thought out plan of what to carry and a goal to attain a selection of gold jewelry is the key. I have written about this before in an article titled Selling Gold Jewelry. This time I contacted a few of my customers to get their perspectives and suggestions on specific items a store should start out carrying.

The three people I contacted represent what I consider a diverse sampling of locations. The first is the small town of Joshua Tree, California. With a population of 4,000 it is a quiet desert community with a National Park for a back yard. The main industries are a military base, and tourism. The second is located in Salem, Oregon. With a population of 137,000 it is the capital of Oregon, though it isn't the largest city in the state. San Francisco is the last on the list. A major metropolitan area with a population of 776,000, this store is located in the Castro district. Although your location may be vastly different from any of those listed above, the input I received from them is very consistent. You should carefully consider your clientele, however don't make the mistake of underestimating them. Young people grow older and incomes increase. Mothers accompany their children and sometimes consider getting pierced as well. If your inventory is geared toward inexpensive, low-end merchandise you will never be able to sell up no matter how many catalogs you have.

Brenda called me a few years back on the recommenda-

tion of a friend. She and her husband Ricky operate a tattoo and piercing shop in Joshua Tree, California. Although they are in a small town they apparently have a lot of competition. Brenda wanted to set herself apart from the other stores by offering gold jewelry, and started with a small order to see how it went. As she started out selling gold, each time she ordered from me, something new would be added in addition to replacements for what she sold. Brenda now has a good idea of what sells and what doesn't. She told me, "Nostril screws are a good seller and they aren't that expensive to carry. Having a variety helps; the more the better. CZ's are my best sellers but the other stones add variety." She went on to say "I would encourage a good selection of rings from 20 gauge to 14 gauge.

Start with the smaller gauges and work your way up. As you sell, order a few extra for back up." When I asked her if selling gold has made a difference she replied, "Now I'm known as the place to go for gold, and if they want quality jewelry they come here. I can't compete with the Circle K down the street selling junk and I don't want to. A while back I was discouraged because of the competition, but I'm glad didn't jump on the 'junk bandwagon.' Besides that stuff just gives you a bad rap when people have problems with it." In closing Brenda offered this bit of advice, "Know your customers and their demographics. If it isn't selling, I can't use it."

Jori and her husband Troy have a piercing shop in Salem, Oregon. Jori contacted me because she had seen

If your inventory is geared toward inexpensive, low-end merchandise you will never be able to sell up no matter how many catalogs you have.

cabochon nostril screws on my web site and was unable to find them anywhere else. She had obviously been selling gold and knew what she wanted. When I contacted her regarding this article she offered this advice: "Keep it simple. My best sellers are 16 gauge, 3/8" captives; you can use them for a number of piercings. I also carry 14 gauge in 3/8" and 7/16" and I have a good selection of gold navel jewelry. I found when mothers come in with their daughters all of a sudden they see something they could wear. If I didn't have the jewelry, they would never have had their navels pierced. They don't move quickly, but having them sets me apart from the other shops." Like Brenda, Jori says her store is known as the place to go for gold jewelry because most shops don't carry it, and it has enhanced her reputation.

Bob and his wife Lizel run a piercing and tattoo shop in the Castro district of San Francisco. I have known Bob since I first started manufacturing body piercing jewelry in 1994. In his typical non-stop style he offered the following suggestions: "Definitely carry gold. I would start with 1.5mm gold ball nostril screws and CZ nostril screws since they are big sellers. Captives of course, for sure 18 and 16 gauge but I would get the 18 gauge with the ball soldered on one side. They are a little tricky at first but once you get accustomed to them they are much easier than dealing with a small captive ball. In 14 gauge I would carry 7/16" and 1/2". We use only curved barbells for navels and I would suggest carrying at least one CZ and a small selection of gem ends to replace the ball if the customer wants to, or to use for labrets. I also like the opal navel jewelry and trillion CZs which look great with the light on them. Bottom line is gold enhances your image and it should be a basic for every shop. I have my gold case in the front so it's the first thing people see when they come into the store." As you can probably tell Bob is enthusiastic about selling gold and that's probably why he does such a good job of it.

The one common thread all of these people share is a desire to set their stores apart from the crowd. I know they all like to wear gold themselves and consider it an important addition to their stores. When you have done an initial piercing you may want to show the customer what they can upgrade to later, be it a captive gem that will replace a stainless steel ball, or a gem end for a navel or labret. As I've said before, If you don't have it, you can't sell it. Start small if you have to and continue to add to your inventory. With a little patience and good planning you can carry gold. If you think gold is expensive and unnecessary you will pass that judgment on to your customers and they will look for the shop that can make them feel good about buying a quality piece of jewelry. ❖

James is the owner of Clayton Limited Editions, a manufacturer of gold body piercing jewelry. You can reach James at www.claytonlimited.com



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PRESIDENT: Bethra Szumski

Over the course of the last year I finalized all relevant contracts for both the Amsterdam and Las Vegas Conferences. Further, I provided administrative support as well as taught classes during both educational events.

Along with other board members I coordinated a meeting of European-based Associations during the Amsterdam Conference.

I reviewed the APP Corporate bylaws to ensure current and future compliance.

I attended and presided over all board meetings.

I worked closely with the board to bring spending to the bare minimum in order to insure a viable budget for 2005.

VICE PRESIDENT: Jason King

I've spent extensive time doing scientific research related to the piercing industry. The primary focus of my research has been on materials used for piercing jewelry including steel and titanium, and also glass (see article in this issue, page 14.) My studies have been in relation to biocompatibility of these materials for wear in body piercings. I have contributed articles to *The POINT* containing this valuable information to assist in informing the piercing community and improving safety.

I also created the new t-shirt designs that were released at the APP Conference.

SECRETARY: Crystal Sims

My second year in the position of Secretary of the Association of Professional Piercers has involved the following:

- Attending board meetings and taking minutes that become public record and are made available upon request.
- Processing membership applications, which involves reviewing studios from around the world and giving suggestions to help piercers improve their level of health and safety awareness.
- Serving as the direct supervisor to the APP's Administrative Assistant, Caitlin McDiarmid, who in all honesty needs very little supervising, as her initiative and organizational skills are astounding to say the least!
- Contributing articles to *The POINT*. This year, I have been focusing on Employee Management in my writing.
- Teaching classes at our annual conference including Studio Set-up, Employee Management and Bloodborne Pathogens.

I have been very fortunate this year in that I have an employee, Chrissy Shull, who I have been able to train to assist me with my secretarial duties. She is now helping

with the processing of membership applications and she is dealing with "imposters" (people claiming to be APP members who are not). She is enjoying the experience because she hopes to be a board member one day, and I am so grateful for the help because it has allowed me the time to open a second business (something I could not have done otherwise). The entire staff of Evolution have been so supportive and willing to take on extra tasks around the studio since I began dedicating my time to the APP. They make the work that I do possible, and I appreciate them very much!

CFO and TREASURER: Paul King

We had two years of heavy financial outreach with the APP conferences in Europe, so a large part of 2003 was devoted to reexamining all our expenses and having everyone pitch in to reduce costs. The good news is it worked!

Example of reduction in expenses from 2002 to 2003: Conference Expenses and the Point down 18.8%; Employee and Professional Services Expenses down 39%; Board Meeting Expenses down 51.5%; General Expenses (includes Reproduction, Postage, Travel etc.) down 90.9%. Total Reduction in Costs from 2002 to 2003 was 40.1%.

Having completed our commitment to the European piercing community, we have now freed up greater human and financial resources for American outreach. This is going to be an exciting and important year. The APP is financially strong and the 2004 Conference was a huge success, putting the organization in a great position to move forward with outreach in the U.S. on a grander scale.

In the past year, I was able to personally participate in Outreach at the Legislation level—something I encourage the members to do in their local areas.

In California, towards the end of 2003 the state health regulators decided to re-address the Piercing, Tattooing and Cosmetic Tattooing laws again. Remember, it was this law that seeded the founding of the APP. Until now the only laws on the books stated that if the state of California did not come up with regulations then it was up to the individual counties to sort it out for themselves. Of course most did not. So the state regulators invited the APP to attend their brainstorming session at the capital, in Sacramento. It went brilliantly! I distributed manuals and pamphlets to all the regulators. Veterans Sky Renfro and Steve Joyner were in attendance as well. By the end of the meeting it was obvious that the legislators valued our contributions. Everyone seemed highly motivated and on the same page. It was very exciting.

Unfortunately due to the budget crisis, the entire project has been pigeon-holed indefinitely.

Don't forget to vote!

OUTREACH COORDINATOR: Megg Mass

As Outreach Coordinator, a daily aspect of my job is answering questions and helping to provide APP pamphlets, or APP member piercers to health fairs, colleges and public events. (Contact us to get on the speaker list!) I speak to the press a lot, particularly whenever body art makes the mainstream news. I particularly focus on trying to educate parents and professionals who work with young people, because the ripple effect will carry our message further.

The Public Service Announcement radio ad campaign grew out of this wide-reaching approach. (Please help us by distributing in your area--it's free advertising!) I have been working on brand recognition for the APP name, and getting us the privileges and legitimacy awarded other non-profit health advocacy groups.

The majority of my APP volunteering goes towards coordinating our legislation efforts. This includes helping piercers in this country and abroad with printed material and strategies, and serving as a resource for legislators who need information, evidence and precedents. I also edit proposed laws and gather research needed to improve them. The past year has seen much action on this front, with most outcomes in our favor, although many of the biggest decisions were tabled until next year. If your area is not yet regulated, expect it within the next two years and be proactive now.

INTERNATIONAL LIAISON: Alicia Cardenas

I have been around the world reaching out to the international community. I went to the Amsterdam Conference in November, where I met with the other six Piercer's Associations that are in place in Europe. I attended and lectured at an amazing informal meeting of piercers in Mexico City. Over 50 piercers attended. Also, I disseminated information at tattoo conventions throughout the year with the help of my staff. On a personal note Twisted Sol welcomed Esiah Söl Nickels into the world.

MEDICAL COORDINATOR: Elayne Angel

I have been in contact with a variety of medical professionals from around the country. I have consulted with them on behalf of those making inquiries to the APP that require professional medical input. I've also been in contact with a piercing-friendly doctor who is writing articles for *The POINT* (Thank you, Doctor Culbertson and Dr. Wodka!)

I have undertaken a number of public speaking engagements about body piercing, including to the Louisiana Organ Procurement Association (LOPA) and Association of peri-Operative Registered Nurses (AORN).

I've been busy, as content editor, working on four issues of *The POINT* each year. I've written several piercing techniques articles, which had never appeared in the publication previously. I've spent a lot of time and energy preparing for the classes that I teach at the APP Conference, especially Basic Techniques for Non-Members, and also Customer Service and Marketing.

In recent times, I've also taken on the additional duties of Webmaster for the APP web site. ❖

"IN THE OFFICE OF THE APP"

Caitlin McDiarmid

info@safepiercing.org

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The office was quite busy during this period preparing and mailing the following:

- Seminar Certificates from Conference (if you haven't received yours and you turned in a card for class credit, please contact me)
- Thank you letters to our vendors and our speakers
- Requested handouts
- Membership Certificates
- Final Dues reminders
- Member notification of End of Year Financial Reports

Other projects completed:

- Issue #29 of *The POINT* was distributed
- Post-Conference Accounting and Statistics have been finalized
- The American College Health Association Annual Conference was attended (see article this issue)
- PSA's were reproduced and distributed to those who requested them at Conference

What APP members are talking about:

- APP Public Service Announcements
- BBP, CPR, & First Aid Certification requirements
- Suggestions for 2005 Conference

What piercees are talking about:

- Reduction of scarring, discoloration, and 'bumps' on their healing piercings
- Appropriate jewelry materials for initial piercings
- Surface piercings

What the board is up to:

- Rewrites of the Aftercare Brochures
- Updating the Procedure Manual
- Preparation for NALBOH, ASHA, and APHA Conferences
- Board Meeting Agenda
- Conference in Review

Metal Detectors

INFORMATION TO SHARE WITH YOUR CLIENTS

One of the most common questions I encounter, not far behind, "does it hurt?" is the popular inquiry, "does body jewelry set off a metal detector?" I tell people that I have about 40 piercings, and wearing high quality jewelry I do not set off the metal detector.

That said, if there is something else in my attire that sets off the walk-through equipment, and I end up getting "wanded" that is a bit of a different story. The hand-held wand-style metal detectors, when run directly over my nipple rings and others, will emit the little tell-tale beep. When this happens, the security officer sometimes does not take my word that I am sporting nipple and genital jewelry. She will take me into a little room nearby and have me show her. On a day when I knew the metal snaps on my pants were setting off the detector, I simply walked up and said, "My body is filled with metal. Why don't we go into the little room and I'll show you." This pro-active stance helped get me through the process more quickly. And besides, I'm not shy.

At this point, the majority of airport and other security personnel have some familiarity with body jewelry, and this certainly won't prevent you from traveling. But be aware that you may need to play "show and tell" with a security agent of your same gender. I believe most piercees appear to be concerned about traveling companions, either family or business, learning something that may be preferred kept confidential. This is the area that could prove troublesome if you do get "wanded."

Of course, metal detectors are designed and used to locate dangerous objects such as weapons. The devices can be adjusted for sensitivity, depending on the level of security that is needed. Metal detectors can be set to identify a very small quantity of metal. In brief, the way metal detectors work is that they emit an electro-magnetic field that flows until it comes across something metallic. Depending on the size and type of metal, the object disrupts the flow of the field, and the detector makes an audible signal.

When the device is at a setting that is too sensitive, it results in too many false alarms. Therefore, in most situations, they aren't set at the highest possible level.

If the body jewelry is not of a high quality, there is a chance of setting off a metal detector. Or if the jewelry is present in unusual quantity, that can also result in the dreaded "beep." Of course, if you are in a situation in which it would be completely unacceptable to be "discovered" then using a non-metallic alternative such as Tygon or PTFE could prevent a confrontation with the security personnel over your piercings. As always, be mindful that removing jewelry completely, even for short periods of

time can result in shrinkage or closure of your piercings, including older, healed piercings.

For a more complete explanation of how metal detectors work, science nerds read on. Much appreciation to www.howstuffworks.com:

"Almost all airport metal detectors are based on pulse induction (PI). Typical PI systems use a coil of wire on one side of the arch as the transmitter and receiver. This technology sends powerful, short bursts (pulses) of current through the coil of wire. Each pulse generates a brief magnetic field. When the pulse ends, the magnetic field reverses polarity and collapses very suddenly, resulting in a sharp electrical spike. This spike lasts a few microseconds (millionths of a second) and causes another current to run through the coil. This subsequent current is called the reflected pulse and lasts only about 30 microseconds. Another pulse is then sent and the process repeats. A typical PI-based metal detector sends about 100 pulses per second, but the number can vary greatly based on the manufacturer and model, ranging from about 25 pulses per second to over 1,000.

If a metal object passes through the metal detector, the pulse creates an opposite magnetic field in the object. When the pulse's magnetic field collapses, causing the reflected pulse, the magnetic field of the object makes it take longer for the reflected pulse to completely disappear. This process works something like echoes: If you yell in a room with only a few hard surfaces, you probably hear only a very brief echo, or you may not hear one at all. But if you yell into a room with a lot of hard surfaces, the echo lasts longer. In a PI metal detector, the magnetic fields from target objects add their "echo" to the reflected pulse, making it last a fraction longer than it would without them.

The sampling circuit sends the tiny, weak signals that it monitors to a device called an integrator. The integrator reads the signals from the sampling circuit, amplifying and converting them to direct current (DC). The DC's voltage is connected to an audio circuit, where it is changed into a tone that the metal detector uses to indicate that a target object has been found. If an item is found, you are asked to remove any metal objects from your person and step through again. If the metal detector continues to indicate the presence of metal, the attendant uses a handheld detector, based on the same PI technology, to isolate the cause.

Many of the newer metal detectors on the market are multi-zone. This means that they have multiple transmit and receive coils, each one at a different height. Basically, it's like having several metal detectors in a single unit." ❖



***This man
is watching
YOU!***

BEWARE

of Posting "ADULT" Piercing Content on Web Sites

The adult entertainment industry is under siege by Attorney General John

Ashcroft and President George W. Bush. And for any piercer who owns a web site that shows photos or video of genital piercings being performed, there is a possibility of falling under the statutes imposed upon the adult entertainment industry.

There may be some interpretation needed to make the leap from pornography to piercing, but I personally don't want to take any chances. The language of the law shows that it COULD apply to what is on my website because I post video of piercings (including genital piercings) being performed.

The language of the law covers "anyone in the image, at the time it was made, touching anyone's genitals, including their own, with anything, whether you can see it or not, or any S&M activity." Lawyers could conceivably decide that body piercing falls under this description.

Piercers are all in the habit of checking ID for piercing. But if you post graphic photos or video, there are much more specific guidelines you may want to follow to avoid breaking the law.

The labeling and record-keeping law, 18 U.S.C. §2257, mandates specific record keeping for the IDs and requires explicit images be associated with a disclosure about the custodian of records concerning the age of the models/performers. Ostensibly the law has the lofty aim of preventing child pornography, but changes are afoot clearly having nothing to do with that.

The original regulations date back to the "Child Protection and Obscenity Enforcement Act of 1988" which was updated in 1992. Department of Justice ("DOJ") has released proposed modifications concerning the labeling and record-keeping law, 18 U.S.C. §2257, indicating that inspections and enforcement actions are imminent.

When a statute authorizes a commission or department to promulgate regulations—and they materially all have regulatory authority in many areas—the procedure is that proposed regulations are published in the Federal Register, specifying a period for public comment. After the public-comment period expires, usually a few months, the commission or department supposedly reviews and considers all of the comments, modifies the proposed regulation to the extent that merit is found in any

***by Elayne Angel
Rings of Desire
New Orleans***

—continued on page 17

Studio Review

by Crystal Sims

Business Name: Rings of Desire, Inc.

Year Established: 1993

Owner: Elayne Angel

Business Address: 1128 Decatur Street
New Orleans, Louisiana 70116

Business Phone: 504-524-6147

Fax: 504-529-2366

Website: www.ringsofdesire.com

Number of Employees: 3
(Pre- 9/11 it was 6!)



Rings of Desire

Crystal Sims: *What is your business philosophy?*

Elayne Angel: It is all about customer service! This is hugely important. I TRULY want to satisfy my customers. Actually, I want to MORE than satisfy them: I want to WOW them with a wonderful experience. That, and I feel it is vital to conduct business "by the book."

CS: *Why did you choose this business over another type of business?*

EA: Actually, I DO own another busi-

ness, which I opened in 1998. My other shop is a "Small Store for Dinky Dogs" called Chi-wa-wa Ga-ga. I get to dress up little dogs. It is so much fun and it makes my customers happy to have a truly niche specialty store to serve their needs. I've gone into these businesses on the basis of my personal passions. I feel so fortunate to work in two fields that thrill and excite me!

CS: *What motivates you to succeed besides the desire to make money?*

EA: I guess I can admit to an innate drive for excellence. The piercing business is an appropriate focus for my perfectionist tendencies. And, having been among the first in this industry, I feel it is my responsibility to be a good role model.

CS: *What successes in the past year are you most proud of accomplishing?*

EA: I'm very proud of turning out four issues of *The POINT* per year!

CS: *What do you offer that the competition doesn't?*

EA: EXPERIENCE. We do have the most experienced piercers in the area. Bryan Civello has been piercing for me for over 10 years, and Pat Roig has been piercing for me for over 8 years. And, of course, I've been at it since the 1980's. We offer a great selection of internally threaded jewelry, and you can't find that locally. In our area, we are the only body art studio that doesn't do tattoos. Though, we do offer Body Etching, which is a form of precision scarification that I pioneered.

CS: *What have been the most important keys to your success?*

EA: A professional attitude, a passionate focus on customer service, and stringent ethics all have a positive impact. Also having awesome employees who work hard and do a great job sure helps. Being organized, keeping proper records, and doing business by the book are very important. Shameless promotion helps too. I give out business cards at EVERY opportunity.

CS: *What is your company's greatest challenge?*

EA: Educating consumers, and making sure they understand why they should pay for quality jewelry and services.

CS: *What words of wisdom would you offer to someone starting their own business?*

EA: Make sure you LOVE what you are doing, because it is going to take a whole lot of your time and energy!

CS: *What is your favorite saying or quotation?*

EA: "Never underestimate the power of positive thinking!"

CS: *Anything else you would like to add?*

EA: Two things: Even though I've had my studio for over 10 years, we are still always looking to grow, improve, and work towards making Rings of Desire the best it can be! And, in closing I want to publicly thank Jim Ward for giving me a chance those many years ago; it changed my life! ❖



Clockwise from the opposite page: The store entry; the waiting area; a well-appointed piercing room; a view of the shop interior.





HAPPY & PRODUCTIVE EMPLOYEES

**by Crystal Sims
Evolution Body Piercing**

Welcome to Part 3 of the Employee Management Series. In Parts 1 and 2 we discussed interviewing and hiring a new employee, new hire paperwork and training. In this issue, we will explore the art of keeping employees happy and productive.

New employees are often filled with enthusiasm and a strong desire to do well. This can fade with time if you, as an owner or manager, don't cultivate it. Using the techniques described here you will be able to keep your staff happy and operating at their best!

Motivating Your Staff

In 1949, surveys were conducted to determine what employees wanted most. Managers assumed that money and job security would be at the top of the list, but they were wrong. The number one thing employees wanted was to feel appreciated. Number two was to feel included and "in on things." Surveys repeated in the 1990's yielded similar results; for most employees, money is not as important as feeling involved and appreciated.

Remember this the next time you think your employees are slacking off. It's very tempting to point at everything that has not been done to your satisfaction and place blame, but you will get better results by praising what has been done right. Employees who see that their accom-

plishments are noticed and appreciated want to accomplish more. Employees who feel their work is never good enough won't like coming to work, and in the words of Homer Simpson, "If you don't like your job you don't strike, you just go in and do it half-assed. It's the American way."

Here are just few ways to make sure your employees stay happy and productive:

1. Get their input as often as possible. Not only will this make them feel involved, but you will gain the benefit of their knowledge and ideas.
2. Give them praise for the things that you want to see them to do more. I might add that this is twice as effective if someone else is around to hear it. When giving praise, remember to be timely and specific. "You do a great job" is not nearly as effective as, "You did a great job of handling that customer's complaint; she came in very upset and left smiling. That was fabulous." Also, when giving praise, avoid the temptation to follow it with the word "but." When you say, "Great job on cleaning the bathroom, but you forgot to clean the break room" you've just effectively canceled the praise. Instead, try "The bathroom looks great, thanks for doing such a great job in there!" and then smile and BITE YOUR TONGUE. You may just find they will be inspired to do more cleaning without having to ask at all. If not, you can ask him or her to clean the break room later, or you could add "clean the break room" on the "to do" list in the store notebook (a management tool discussed below).
3. Tell your customers how great your employees are. This empowers your employees and lets your clients know they are in good hands.

4. Reward them. You might take them out to dinner to celebrate an accomplishment. Reward years of service with a plaque or other keepsake. Consider stocking the break room refrigerator before you go out of town so the people who are picking up slack have something they really like to eat (and by the way, just knowing what they like to eat shows you pay attention to them, and that is a compliment in itself.) It is important to know that rewards based on an employee's interests and desires can prove far more meaningful and will be appreciated more than monetary rewards. I've seen a plaque bring an employee to tears. I've seen a \$200 Christmas gift (given in place of a \$200 Christmas bonus) have the same effect. No employee that I know of ever cried over \$200 cash. Find out what it is that your employee really wants, then find a good reason to give it to them.

Using Duty Checklists

I happen to believe that checklists of things to do can be one of the most helpful tools in the workplace. For one thing, it's a proven fact that you get a shot of endorphins every time you check something off a to-do list (which is why some of us write down things we have already done just so we can check them off). In addition, it is a good way for you, as a manager, to establish what you expect and to help others to remember it.

There are many ways to use checklists, so you may have to experiment a little to find out what works best in your studio. Different types of checklists employed at our studio are as follows:

- A standard AM/PM CHECKLIST includes things that get done daily at such as turning on/off the open sign, checking the voicemail, wiping down the procedure room, waiting area, restroom, etc.
- A MASTER TASK LIST of weekly/monthly duties is displayed on a board in the office. This would include items that do not get done daily, but need to be remembered on a schedule such as cleaning inside drawers, checking sterilization dates on instruments and needles, running spore tests and cleaning cycles for the autoclaves, etc.
- A STORE NOTEBOOK (or date-book, kept in the office near the MASTER TASK LIST) is used by the staff to make a daily list of what they plan to accomplish. This gives employees the ability to choose the days on which they complete the tasks on the master task list, and it empowers them to come up with their own ideas for things to do. As a manager, it can be helpful to review past pages of the notebook to see when the last time specific tasks were completed, and which employees are contributing the most (if you're looking for a reason to reward them).

In the past we did not use a store notebook, instead we had a separate checklist for weekly and monthly duties. I prefer the store notebook because in addition to serving as a "to do list," it can be used for phone messages, notes about special orders, or anything else that might

otherwise end up on little pieces of paper (a personal pet peeve—they get lost!) Since we have it dated, it is a great place to record time-specific reminders.

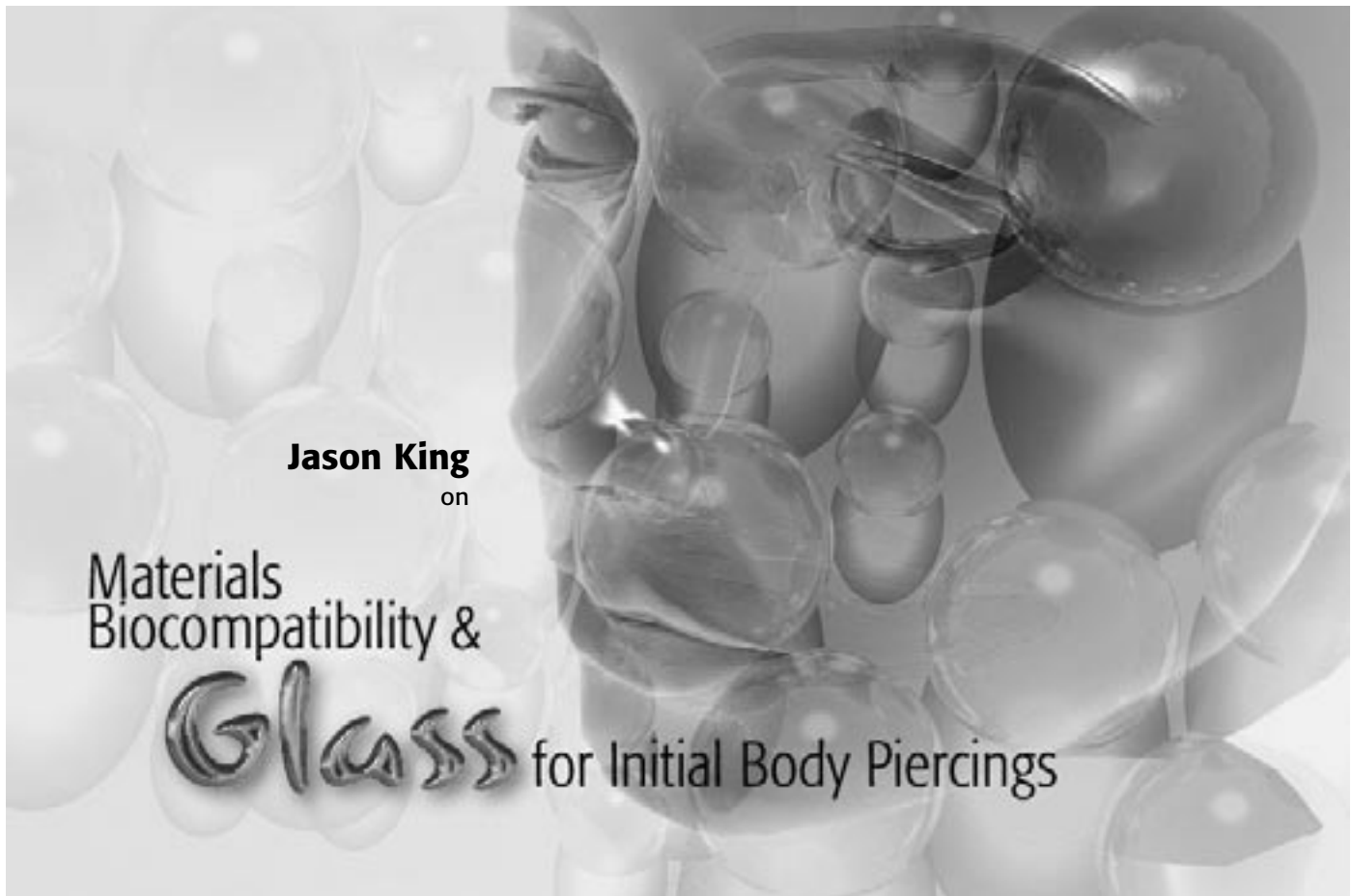
When assigning projects, you will often get the best results when you give employees a goal, certain guidelines to follow, and then let them surprise you. While some people do well with step-by-step instructions on how to do each task, others are stifled by it. As a manager, it is important to offer guidance to those who need it while allowing others the space to impress you with their creativity!

Holding Monthly Meetings

Another crucial management technique is gathering everyone together once a month for a meeting. Because we are in an industry that is growing and changing rapidly, meetings are a great time to offer ongoing training and ensure that everyone is on the same page. It also serves as an opportunity to gather input from the staff, and to let them announce or discuss anything that is important to them. In a meeting, you have everyone together to offer praise for specific accomplishments. If need be, you can give reminders or make requests if there is an area that need improvement in your studio. Just keep in mind that your suggestions will be more effective if you have also given your staff encouragement and recognition.

In the next issue of "The Point," we will continue to explore management techniques with the "Employee Performance Appraisal." We will discuss how to appropriately use this as a developmental tool, and how to create your own so that it reflects what is important to you and your business. ❖





Jason King
on

Materials
Biocompatibility &

Glass for Initial Body Piercings

A current subject of debate in the piercing industry is the suitability of glass for initial piercings. Glass is a difficult subject to master simply because there are thousands of varieties of glass, and many of those have hundreds of sub-varieties. For the sake of this article we will simplify into two basic categories: hard glass and soft glass. More specifically, when we talk about hard glass we mean borosilicate glass and quartz glass, and when we refer to soft glass we mean soda-lime glass.

The most heated disagreement in the glass argument centers on the question of biocompatibility. Within the piercing community we most often use materials found in the "Medical Devices" section of the ASTM or the ISO, with the exceptions of Gold, Platinum, and Niobium.

Gold has been placed on the APP's list of initial piercing materials because it has been used successfully in piercings for literally thousands of years. There are examples of the use of Gold in dental applications as far back as the Etruscans in the 7th century B.C., who used gold wire to hold substitute teeth in place. In many ways it is the original 'implant material.'

Platinum and pure Niobium do not have ASTM standards, however they are used daily in the body as implant casings, pacemaker electrodes, implantable stents, and dental pins.¹ Further, Niobium is found in the alloys of many of the ASTM approved "medical devices" materials.

It is arguable that Gold and Platinum do not have ASTM or ISO implant standards due to the high cost of the material. Since these materials are so expensive to use, manu-

facturers will commonly use cheaper metals or alloys instead thus driving down the demand for these materials as implant components. Combined with their problem-free use for decades as implants, this eliminated the need for the ASTM and ISO committees to spend time designating implant standards for these materials.

Even though Gold, Platinum, and Niobium do not have implant standards, they do have history of extensive biocompatibility testing that reinforces the fact these materials are truly biocompatible.

There are several common standards for biocompatibility testing; the FDA Blue Book Memorandum #G95-1, and the ASTM has a battery of suggested tests, but the standard used most often is the ISO 10993.

- 10993-1: "Guidance on Selection of Tests."
- 10993-2: "Animal Welfare Requirements."
- 10993-3: "Tests for Genotoxicity, Carcinogenicity, and Reproductive Toxicity."
- 10993-4: "Selection of Tests for Interactions with Blood."
- 10993-5: "Tests for Cytotoxicity—In Vitro Methods."
- 10993-6: "Tests for Local Effects after Implantation."
- 10993-7: "Ethylene Oxide Sterilization Residuals."
- 10993-8: *No title assigned.*
- 10993-9: "Degradation of Materials Related to Biological Testing."
- 10993-10: "Tests for Irritation and Sensitization."
- 10993-11: "Tests for Systemic Toxicity."
- 10993-12: "Sample Preparation and Reference Materials."

In the first section of ISO 10993 "Guidance on Selection of Tests" it states: "in the selection of materials to be used

in device manufacture, the first consideration should be **fitness for purpose** having regard to the characteristics and properties of the material, which include chemical, toxicological, physical, electrical, morphological, and mechanical properties.”

It is very easy to argue that glass does not meet the criteria of what is clearly identified as one of the first steps to overall evaluation. Due to the tendency for glass to break under force, the assertion that glass is not fit for the purpose of initial piercing seems obvious. It is important to note at this point that the APP is a **piercing** organization; we as an organization do not have a stance on the practices of “dermal punching” or “implanting.” Consequently, we are referring to initial piercings, usually of size 10g or smaller. Due to fragility glass that is 10 gauge or smaller may not hold up to everyday wear, therefore it does not show **fitness for purpose**.

There are three medical uses for glass:

1. Glass ionomer cement used in dentistry, which performed poorly on cytotoxicity tests 10993-5.
2. “Bioactive glass” which does not share the same chemical composition as soda-lime, borosilicate or quartz glasses, and actually binds to bone and tissue. (For more information on bioglass see *Developments in Biocompatible Glass Compositions* by David C. Greenspan).
3. Micro spheres known by the product name TheraSphere. TheraSpheres are tiny non-biodegradable glass balls used to deliver chemotherapy drugs directly into the liver. In TheraSphere’s application for *Humanitarian Device Exemption* it is stated “biocompatibility was not tested directly for TheraSphere but is inferred from extensive studies done with glass fiber...these studies found very low pulmonary toxicity.” In other words biocompatibility was inferred from fiberglass inhalation studies, and the burden of proving long-term safety was mitigated due to the fatal nature of liver cancer.

What is a Humanitarian Device Exemption (HDE)?

A HDE enables the use of potentially life-saving devices faster than the traditional FDA approval process. A device manufacturer must submit an exemption application to the FDA that includes a description of the product, available non-clinical and clinical evaluation data, and experience with the product. FDA will approve an exemption only if the manufacturer proves that the device is safe (“will not expose patients to an unreasonable or significant risk of illness or injury”) and that it has PROBABLE BENEFIT (“**probable benefit to health from using the device outweighs the risk of injury or illness from its use**”) in the intended patient population.

When certain death is the only outcome for liver cancer, the benefits of TheraSpheres outweigh the risk of injury or illness from the use of the glass drug-delivery system.

All of this related research leads us to the lack of accessible biocompatibility studies done on all other glasses. In an effort to find Biocompatibility tests done on borosilicate and quartz glasses I spoke with Andy Lagotte of Schott glass. Schott glass is one of three producers of borosilicate glass, worldwide. For over 100 years, Schott has been one of the most respected glass producers and researchers.

Mr. Lagotte stated that to his knowledge biocompatibility testing had not been done on either borosilicate or

quartz glass, because there is no application for putting these glasses in the body; therefore there was no demand for these tests. Many glass jewelry manufacturers have assumed that their products are biocompatible due to glass’s tendency to be chemically stable. While chemical stability is certainly an important part of biocompatibility, it is not the only defining characteristic of biocompatibility. The main problem is that when technical data sheets say that something is resistant to chemical attack what are they comparing it to? Without standardized testing being done we have no way to relate that information with other things. For example, borosilicate glass is known for its temperature resistance; meaning that you can take it out of a freezer and put it into an oven (like a Pyrex casserole dish) and not worry about it shattering. However, if you were comparing Pyrex to just about any kind of steel, Pyrex would have, comparatively, very poor temperature resistance. We would never worry about steel shattering from such a minor change in temperature, where as 150 degrees C becomes a danger point for Pyrex if it is not heated or cooled uniformly. So, if we are saying that borosilicate or quartz glasses are chemically stable, do we mean compared to other glasses or do we mean compared to a recognized standard?

Based on the available literature, the APP cannot endorse the use of any glass types for initial piercing due to the lack of fitness for purpose, and the lack of biocompatibility information. Within the available literature there are several points that are troubling about the suitability of glass for fresh piercings.

1. Due to the almost limitless number of potential glass compositions, testing would have to be done on each individual type.
2. Most of the sources used did mention that leaching occurred, but did not quantify the amount of extractables or the potential health risk these extractables may pose.
3. In the patent information for bioactive glass (United States Patent: 5,074,916) it states, “**Conventional glasses also tend to be difficult to mix to homogeneity, a criterion that holds great importance for quality control of materials intended for implantation in to the body. This is due to the relatively large grain size of the glass precursors, which generally measure approximately 10 to 1000 microns in diameter. It is difficult to obtain “molecular scale” mixing, i.e., homogeneity at the molecular level, using ordinary mixing techniques, such as stirring of the relatively viscous silicate melts.**” Additionally in another patent held by bioactive glass (United States Patent: 6,274,159) it refers to “**the formation of the fibrous scar tissue capsule normally associated with the implantation of silicone materials.**” This patent does not however define “fibrous scar tissue” as either a good or bad condition, or quantify the amount of scarring involved.

Due to the dearth of historical support, relative fragility of glass 10 gauge and thinner, and a lack of documentation on biocompatibility, glass cannot be suggested for use in fresh piercings at this time. ❖

(Footnotes)

¹ Internet search: “Heraeus Holding GmbH”—“medical components” section—product catalog.

Piercing Infections

ARE ORAL ANTIBIOTICS ALWAYS THE ANSWER?

Rich Wodka, M.D., FAAFP

I'm going to weigh in as a "piercing friendly" residency-trained and certified family physician, specializing in addiction medicine and dealing with people in recovery and a fair number with stable HIV disease.

By way of background, I'm also "ink friendly" as well as piercing friendly, and I proudly own a few of each. In addition I've performed a few hundred piercings, and observed and/or treated over a thousand piercing complications (not all of which include infections). I'm proud to say that my local piercers are APP professionals at HALO Precision Piercing/Tucson, Arizona.

Any time the skin barrier is broken there is a possibility of infection. Generally this is secondary to the most common surface area bacteria, which include Staph and Strep species. Why is this important? Because proper skin preparation from both the point of view of the piercer and the client are CRITICAL in avoiding infection.

Good hand washing and piercing site preparation are first and foremost the prevention for infection in any wound care. I've heard the arguments back and forth about chloroxylenol (Provon, et. al) and Chlorohexadine Gluconate (Hibiclens), or Povidone Iodine (Betadine) or Benzalkonium Chloride (a million brand names) on and on and on. I personally like a "sudsing/foaming" antibacterial wash, so I lean toward Provon. (though there are quite a few of these that don't leave a residue). The debate will continue, and I want no part of it. Please know that ALL such agents have excellent bacteria reduction effects, and more hospitals use Betadine followed by Hibiclens for surgical scrub. "Pick your favorite."

The basic steps in treating wound infection include cleaning the wound, draining infected material, and applying heat to promote circulation and stimulate the body's immune response. Antibiotics are used depending on the location and severity of the infection. I'm NOT a fan of systemic (oral) antibiotics except in the most severe cases (such as an immunocompromised patient), but much more on that later.

The most common major infections that result from piercing are due to improper post piercing care, most often from not following the professional piercers instruction on piercing care and general hygiene.

Cleaning and drainage generally involve irrigating the wound with a saline solution and removing debris--dead tissue, pus, dirt or other foreign material. In the case of

an infected piercing, this is occasionally interpreted by a health care provider to mean removing the jewelry.

It is helpful if the client understands and is able to discuss with the physician that the jewelry should remain in place to act as a drain. If the jewelry is too large to allow adequate drainage, it could be replaced with a smaller size by a piercing professional.

Moist heat is best for promoting healing of an infected piercing, and here the standard aftercare instruction

of warm sea salt solutions applied to the area

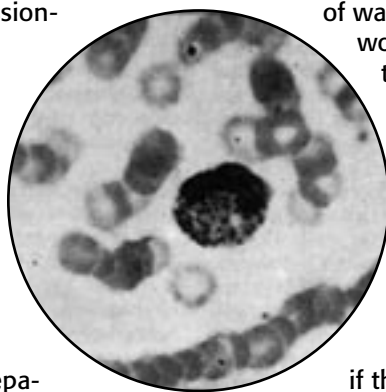
would still be appropriate. I get asked all the time about the "McCormick Sea Salt grinder" which has an non-caking additive called yellow prussate of soda. Suffice to say IT'S FINE! Even more caution about hand washing, avoiding manipulation of the jewelry (except to clean or medicate), and avoiding other trauma to the area from clothing, etc. needs to be observed.

Oral Antibiotics are sometimes necessary if the infection has spread beyond the immediate area of the wound. This as known as cellulitis and occurs when the body can no longer wall off the infection.

Cellulitis is indicated by profound redness, warmth to the touch, and extreme tenderness extending more than a half inch from the piercing site. In most cases, early treatment with antibiotics manages this infection before it becomes severe. In the VAST MAJORITY of local infections the more potent topical antibiotics like BACTROBAN gel are often very successful in managing local infection.

There is also good evidence that the use of some of the topical antibiotics in liquid form (usually used for EYE and EAR infections) are VERY effective for managing local infection when combined with meticulous local hygiene. A drop or two every two to three hours on both sides of the skin piercing, then rotation of the jewelry to distribute the antibiotic is quite effective. Do NOT accept an ocular or otic preparation that contains hydrocortisone (a steroid) which will reduce inflammation but can impede immunity and make the infection worse!

I'm a fan of the local ocular drop called Zymar, which I have used on over 300 local infections with excellent success (upwards of 95%). I advise clients to listen to their professional piercers regarding how much (if any) manipulation of the jewelry is acceptable. I've found that genital and nipple barbells/ CBRs and most umbilical piercings can be manipulated to a limited extent to distribute the



antibiotic locally, if done with meticulous hand washing and local hygiene. No sea salt soaks for at least two hours after application of a local antibiotic please! Most dentists can provide an ORAL swish-and-swallow tetracycline rinse for the rare secondarily infected peri-oral or lingual piercing. (Watch out for those products that are mixed with local steroids).

One special concern with infection is piercing through cartilage, such as the nose or the upper ear. Cartilage does not have its own blood supply--it depends on the surrounding tissues to provide oxygen and nutrients by diffusion. This makes it more susceptible to infection, and harder to treat when infection does occur. Destruction of cartilage by an infection can also lead to deformity of the ear or nasal contours. While most of these infections still clear well with early use of antibiotics, it is a risk that clients should know about. THESE INFECTIONS ALMOST ALWAYS REQUIRE ORAL ANTIBIOTICS AND DAILY LOCAL OBSERVATION.

Good aseptic procedure, good piercing technique, and good instructions on aftercare (with regular reinforcement to a client, if necessary) prevent most infections.

When an infection does occur, having a piercing-friendly physician or health care provider (physician assistant, nurse practitioner, nurse) available to help is the best course. Know who is available in your area. And even if you can't identify someone who is clearly knowledgeable about piercing, most primary care physicians are open to learning and are happy to discuss a case if the client permits it. So, don't hesitate to talk to a health care professional about the special needs of infected piercings. ❖

Beware

—continued from page 9

public comment, and publishes the final regulation in the Federal Register.

The new requirements were published in the Federal Register on June 25, 2004; the public had a chance to comment on them until August 24, and they take effect on that date, likely with no changes.

Disclosure: Your web site would need to have the following statement posted on the front page (or before access could be gained to the see content in question.)

"All models were at least 18 years old when they were photographed." The link should identify the statement as an "18 U.S.C. 2257 Statement," and should go to a page where the following paragraph is stated: "In compliance with the Federal Labeling and Record-Keeping Law (also known as 18 U.S.C. 2257), all models located within our domain were 18 years of age or older during the time of photography. All models' proof of age is held by the custodian of records, which is listed below. All content and images are in full compliance with the requirements of 18 U.S.C. 2257 and associated regulations." And, contact information for the custodian of records must be provided.

IDs: Some forms of identification that were commonly used by models and performers are no longer acceptable. According to the new regulations, the only forms of identification that can be used must have a photograph of the individual, and must also be "part of a system of records that can be independently accessed to verify the legitimacy of the identification card." Driver's licenses and U.S.

Attention Members:

We are now posting member photos along with your membership listings on the APP web site!

Please send in one photo per member, in .jpg format. The photos appear in a relatively small size format (100 pixels in width) so a head shot will work best. We can size them for you (no huge files please). Email to: angel@ringsofdesire.com

If you have any questions, feel free to email for assistance: angel@ringsofdesire.com

issued passports are acceptable. Selective Service cards, college ID cards and any other such forms of identification don't meet the above requirements. And every copy of the ID must be legible. If you sell or give the photos or video to someone to use on another web site, you need to give the unadulterated copy of the ID along with it.

Record Keeping: The proposed changes to the law also require that a cross-indexing system be used that records the URL where every photo of every model appears. That means you need to put the exact web page where the photo is used on the hard copy of the model release, for every photo on your web site that could be construed as "adult content."

Inspections: "Advance notice of record inspections shall not be given "...but the inspections shall take place during "normal business hours" (8 a.m. to 6 p.m.) and "shall be conducted so as not to unreasonably disrupt the operations of the producer's establishment." This means that someone must be present during those hours EVERY business day, in case they want to inspect your records.

Sentence for a first conviction of 2257 violation: 5 years; second conviction: 10 years. Whether that is per photo or per situation has yet to be demonstrated. They have yet to prosecute, but I wouldn't want to be the first one! ❖

For more information on 2257 see the actual docket on the government website:
<http://www.regulations.gov/freddocs/04-13792.htm>

HAVE YOU REGISTERED TO VOTE YET?

In an important election year, the APP reminds you that a voting community is an empowered community.

While non-partisan in nature, the APP strongly encourages you to register to vote if you have not already done so. Provide Voter Registration forms at your studio to help your customers register to vote.

For forms, go to: <http://www.fec.gov/votregis/vr.htm> and click the "For Public Use" link.

Thinking you'll only vote on the big offices? Please remember that piercing regulations are set by your Representatives and Senators. You can help choose them!

REGISTER! VOTE!

It's your right, privilege, and obligation to make your voice heard.



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ATTENTION Manufacturers & Businesses

The POINT is a quarterly newsletter. It is the only newsletter dedicated to the piercing industry. Our direct mailing list consists mainly of piercers, piercing shops, tattoo studios, and health departments. The newsletters are also distributed to potential members or anyone who is interested. With the 3-hole-punch format, it will continue to be a viable resource and should be part of your advertising budget. *The POINT* can also be viewed as PDF files on our website, increasing the visibility of your company. Nowhere else can you hit the specialized piercing market.

ADVERTISING SPECIFICATIONS

Size		Dimensions	One Insertion	Four Insertions
Inside Front Cover		7.25"w X 9.75"H	\$400	\$350
Inside Back Cover			\$400	\$350
Full Page			\$350	\$325
Half Page—vertical		3.25"w X 9.75"H	\$200	\$180
Half Page—horizontal		7.25" X 4.75"H	\$200	\$180
Quarter Page		3.25"w X 4.75"H	\$90	\$80
Sixth Page—vertical		2.25"w X 4.75"H	\$50	\$45

Call 1-888-888-1APP to place your advertisement in *The POINT*. *The POINT* is created on a Mac using Adobe InDesign, and Photoshop. Acceptable formats for ads are black and white or grayscale jpeg, gif, eps, tiff, pict, pds or PDF files. If you are sending a digital file please include or embed the fonts. Email designdept@rewardinc.com for details on sending digital files. Camera ready art at 600 dpi or better is acceptable if you don't have a digital file. APP reserves the right to edit ads.

Mail payment and artwork on CD or Zip to:

5456 Peachtree Industrial Blvd. Box 286, Chamblee, GA 30341

PIERCING IN THE NEWS

Gauntlet Returns to Its Founder

Perhaps no business name is as synonymous with body piercing as that of Gauntlet. For nearly 25 years it defined the industry.

When mismanagement and deceit brought the company into Chapter 7 bankruptcy in 1998, an ailing Jim Ward, Gauntlet's founder, watched helplessly as his life's work was seized by the bankruptcy court. The business and its assets were to be liquidated to pay creditors.

Good Art was the highest bidder for the inventory, furniture, and equipment. But efforts by the bankruptcy court trustee to liquidate the company's name, trademarks, and intellectual property failed, perhaps because her financial expectations were too great. The estate languished for nearly six years.

"My greatest fear," says Ward, "was that it would fall into the hands of someone who would not appreciate its historical significance. I only hoped that it would go to someone who would cherish and protect it and somehow make it available as a resource to the piercing community."

In June of this year the trustee finally took serious steps to rid herself of the property by putting it up for auction on eBay. On June 26 an APP member who has asked to remain anonymous stepped forward and placed the winning bid of \$6,623.32 in the last five seconds of the auction.

In an email to friends prior to the auction, the winning bidder had this to say. "It brings a tear to my eye every time I think about what has happened over the years. Jim has done so much for me and others that words could never be put forth in this format.... Now it's time to give him something."

On July 19 the estate was finally turned over to the winning bidder who drove it to Jim and Drew Ward's residence in Berkeley, California and sold it to Drew Ward's corporation, re:Ward, Inc. for the sum of \$1.00.

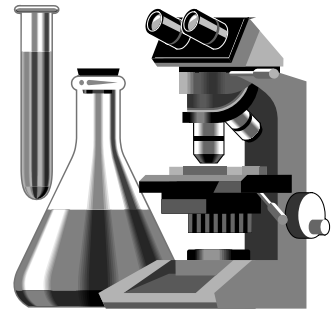
"I am overwhelmed by the incredible generosity and outpouring of support." Jim said. "I never expected the estate to be mine again."

A number of people in the piercing industry who are close to the Wards have formed an advisory panel to help them decide how best to make the historical material available to the community, to generate much needed income for the Wards, and how to capitalize the endeavor. Since Jim has retired from piercing and has no desire to reenter the jewelry manufacturing business, preliminary ideas include reprinting the back issues of *Piercing Fans International Quarterly (PFIQ)*, possibly restarting publication of the magazine under his guidance, updating and publishing the Gauntlet piercer training manual, and reissue of the "Pierce with a Pro" videos on DVD. Anyone interested in assisting in these efforts is urged to contact Drew Ward at gauntlet@rewardinc.com.

Beachside Suspension Gets Attention

"Meat hook dangling craze mystifies police" is the headline that appeared in a Reuters newswire article from Miami, Florida on July 18, 2004.

The article reported that Law enforcement officials in the Florida Keys were mystified by a "bizarre new pas-



Help with RESEARCH PROJECTS

To sign up to be on a separate Email list for research for the APP and *The POINT*, please email your address to the APP at: info@safepiercing.org In the subject line type: "add me to the research mailing list."

Feel free also, in that email, to suggest topics of interest for surveys.

Once we get a list going of piercers who are willing to participate, we will send out occasional piercing-related surveys. After results are compiled, *The POINT* can feature survey results in future issues.

time" of young people dangling themselves from meat hooks on a popular beach area.

A spokeswoman for the US Coast Guard reported that on July 12, the Monroe County Sheriff's office and the Coast Guard were called to a sandbar off Whale Harbor, where locals said the "wild behavior is becoming a tradition."

The officials determined that a bamboo tripod had been erected on the beach, and "meat hooks" were hung from it. They described a young woman, dangling from the frame with her feet brushing the surface of the shallow water, "hooks embedded firmly in her shoulders" and that "she did not seem to mind the hooks." The Coast Guard videotaped the activities and turned the video over to federal authorities. The group did not "create any kind of ruckus or riot within a crowd" so they weren't breaking any laws.

The Coast Guard spokeswoman stated it was clear that the group had done this sort of activity before, and that they intended to "post photos of themselves on a web site dedicated to body modification." She reported that the hooks appeared to be put in professionally with very little loss of blood.

A Coast Guard spokesman, Lt. Tom Brazil, reported that there was also a young man "who also had hooks embedded in his heavily pierced and tattooed skin" who assured Lt. Brazil that the group was "just enjoying the afternoon."

So, suspensions have come to the attention of the authorities in Florida, but, admittedly, there are no laws being broken, and no legal action will be taken. ❖

The POINT

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