



Turtle Creek Valley Mental Health/Mental Retardation, Inc. Agency Newsletter

NAMI Walk

On October 7, staff and friends of TCV MH/MR, Inc. joined over 1300 people in the NAMI Walks for the Mind of America on the South Side Heritage Trail. The TCV MH/MR, Inc. team consisted of: **Kathy Becker, Sheila Brennen, Lindsay Brown** (The Law Office of Karl Osterhout), **Patricia Fitzgerald** (Children’s Hospital), **Rosemary Foerster, Judy Monahan Grystar, Kimberly (Mroziak) King, Amy Sljva-Blystone** and **Olivia Zitelli**.

Congratulations to Kathy and Rosemary who led the pack and came in first of all of the walkers. A big thank you to TCV MH/MR, Inc. employees, family members and friends who contributed to the TCV MH/MR, Inc. team to help them to raise \$1189 for education, support, and advocacy programs about Mental Illness in Southwestern PA.

More than 70 communities across the nation will join the Campaign for the Mind of America and walk together to raise money and awareness about our country’s need for a world-class treatment and recovery system for people with mental illness.



The TCV MH/MR, Inc. team



The group waiting for the walk to start



Kathy and Rosemary resting after the walk

Prevention Community Events

~Submission by Shannon McCleary

Prevention staff was able to reach over 200 families at the Homestead, Rankin and Braddock Community Days over the summer. Each of these events invited our TCV tobacco staff to display a booth and talk with people about the dangers of smoking and secondhand smoke. During these events, TCV staff also promoted clean indoor air by getting signatures on advocacy cards. Each month, these cards are mailed to state legislators which help to get clean indoor air bills passed. Community days are excellent ways to reach local families and talk with them about the negative impact that tobacco has on youth and adults. Individuals were also able to sign up for the free cessation classes that TCV offers.

FREE tobacco classes are provided on an ongoing basis at the Steel Valley COG in Homestead and Westinghouse Human Services Center in Turtle Creek. You can start the classes at any time. Please call 412-464-1522 x500 for further information. **TCV MH/MR, Inc. provides tobacco cessation and information through a contract with Tobacco Free Allegheny.**



Erica and Shannon at community days

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Erie State Park

~ Kim Pollack

Consumers from the Homestead House residential program had the opportunity to take a TCV sponsored day trip to Lake Erie this summer. The day started out rainy and gloomy, but the troops headed on to Erie anyways. Luckily, the sky improved and the sun shone as the bus neared Erie.

There were many activities throughout the day for everyone to participate in. Those that did not want to go swimming played Bingo, or just sat and watched the sailboats go by on the Bay. Some clients went with staff on a tour boat to learn more about Erie. Everyone enjoyed a picnic dinner that consisted of chicken, hamburgers, hot dogs, fruit, different types of salads, cookies, etc. A great time was had by all.

Moraine State Park Outing with Homestead House

~ Kim Pollack

On a sunny summer day, the clients and staff of Homestead House took a trip to Moraine State Park to escape the repair work being done on the site's water line. The clients had the opportunity to swim in the lake, play frisbee, play bingo, or just sit and relax and watch the scenery. It was an adventure when the staff forgot the charcoal, but everyone worked together to come up with a way to heat the food for the picnic. Everyone, including staff, appeared to enjoy themselves and look forward to going back to the park next year.



Enjoying the cool water



A view of a sailboat from the grass



Watching the scenery

Risk Management Committee News

Safety Reminders: With the holidays nearing, please make sure to “think safety” when decorating your homes or offices. Avoid risks of fires caused by lighting or candles and other potential hazards while trying to get into the holiday spirit.

Make sure to be aware of open windows with the cold months approaching. Diesel fuel from cars or other vehicles can cause much harm when floor level windows are left open in the cold.

Review safety in the kitchen with staff and consumers. Make sure everyone is aware of hazards such as using foil in the microwaves, using oven mitts with the stove and being careful using can openers, among other potential risks.

Near misses of serious injuries or potential hazards at each site should be reported with the same importance as actual injuries to Human Resources. Reporting these incidents will enable the Risk Management Committee to find solutions to avoid future incidents.

Safety Campaign Update: Since July, members of the Risk Management Committee have been visiting each TCV site to identify safety hazards within the Agency. The Risk Management Committee will be sending out a report before December 1st to each site to make staff aware of any comments or problems that were found at the location. Before determining the safest location for the six month period, the committee will have follow up visits beginning December 1st at each location to verify that improvements were made. The winners will be announced at a later date!

We are thankful for the enthusiasm and cooperation of all participants to help keep TCV MH/MR Inc staff and consumers as safe as possible!!!

Recovery Conference

~Jacki C.

On September 11 and 12, 2007, Allegheny HealthChoices, Inc. (AHCI) presented the conference "A Region in Recovery: How Does your County Fare?," at the Convention Center in downtown Pittsburgh. The participation of employees and consumers from TCV was tremendous.

TCV MH/MR, Inc.'s Executive Director, **Judy Monahan Grystar**, along with Kevin Trenney from Mayview State Hospital and Carmelita Kramer, presented an Employment Workshop "Care-Taker to Care-Giver and Peer Specialists and Peer Mentors," to teach the audience about two specific jobs and how relationships must change when a consumer is hired to provide services.

Darlene Karpaski, along with Wilma Townsend from WLT Consulting, presented "Recovery Focused Supervision: Empowering Staff to Empower Consumers," a workshop designed to teach the secrets to empowering staff by building on their hidden strengths and competencies.

Terry M., Sandra K. (AHCI), and Nancy Parrotta (CCBHO) led "Community Living: Road Map to Recovery," to educate on the importance of communication among consumers, family members and providers throughout the recovery process and learn the importance of forming a partnership between consumers and professionals while on the road to managing their wellness.

Terry M., along with **Lisa Burbidge**, hosted "The Art of Recovery," a hands-on workshop demonstrating how mental health facilitators employ artistic and creative activities to promote and encourage the use of the arts in recovery.

JR B. and Joanne Koehler (advocate for MH Association of Beaver County) presented "Recovery 101: What is this thing called Recovery?," a workshop to display how recovery can be done in the community instead of the hospital.

Many others including **Sandra J.**, **Loretta B.** and I helped plan and work at the conference. I had the pleasure to introduce Mary Ellen Copeland at her Community Links Workshop. Mary Ellen has been an important contributor to the recovery movement with her W.R.A.P. (Wellness Recovery Action Plan) which is currently being taught at TCV MH/MR, Inc.

Hasan Davis opened the conference with his own personal message of hope and not giving up, a message carried out through the ending address, given by Al Condeluci, CEO United Cerebral Palsy, Pittsburgh. What inspiration! The conference was a chance to learn, relax, enjoy. Everyone wished that they could have taken more workshops.

Thank you to Allegheny County Health Choices and TCV MH/MR, Inc. for being at the forefront of the recovery movement and staying involved and stepping forward, hand in hand into the future, an exciting new realm of treatment of mental illness.

Welcome to new employees!

Anthony Alford - CHI MR Crestview
Bridget Burgwin - Rankin Christian Ctr.
Dana Edwards - 723 Mobile Med.
Elizabeth Fedornock - CHI MR Tioga
Mark Heastings - HH Next Step
Christopher Kovalyak - SV COG Child TCM
Anne Ladik - Homestead House Recept.
Donna Langan - TC Adult OP
Richard Laptosky - TC, SV COG Adult OP
Jane Litterini - 723 Mobile Med.
Nicholas Mroziak - 723 Maintenance
Amanda Palguta - St. Roberts Comm. Link
Lisa Polidora - Rankin Christian Ctr.
Harry Robson - HH DAS
Charles Schaffold - 723 IS
Becky Seman - SV COG PSR
Jessica Skiles - CHI MR Tioga
LaBaron Stevens - SV COG Family MT
Heather Suhajda - St. Roberts Comm Link
Angela Washington - SV COG Family TCM
Kecia White - SV COG Family TSS



Goodbye and Good luck!

Cristal Blackman - Brinton Manor
Sean Burns - Child Therapist
Diana Davis - SV COG PSR
Stephanie Deglau - TC Child Therapist
Mary Egan - TC, SV COG D&A
Aaron Fancsali - SV COG PSR
Terri Godels - 723 SCU
Joycelyn Harper - HH DAS
Jeanne Harris - 723 Mobile Med.
Jennifer Hensler - SV COG Family
Karen Holt - Munhall Supported Housing
Emmanuel Hughes - CHI MR Lynda Lane
Stephen Ionadi - HH CRRS, DAS
Mark Kennedy - SV COG ATF
Curry Long - HH
James McAdams - Mt. Washington
Megan McGrail - SV COG Family TSS
Veronica Meriwether - HH ICM
Deana Orsino - SV COG Adult OP
Dr. Robindra Paul - Psychologist
Carol Petronio - Munhall Supported Housing
Todd Schatzman - St. Roberts ATF
Asia Shabazz - SV COG Family TSS
Adam Stump - CHI MR Lynda Lane
Vernon Webb - CRRS Munhall Apts.
Jonathan Williams - SV COG Family TSS

2007 AMCOM Office Systems/TCV Toward a Brighter Future Golf Outing

TCV MH/MR, Inc. would like to thank all sponsors, golfers and those who donated to the 9th Annual Toward a Brighter Future Golf Outing. Through your efforts we raised the most that we ever have, over \$23,000! A big thank you goes to our title sponsor, Amcom Office Systems.

The proceeds of this benefit will support the programs at TCV MH/MR, Inc. and ultimately help to provide additional prevention/intervention programming to mentor and teach the children in the community to strive toward a brighter future.

Winning foursome: CCBHO - Tim Casey, Brandi Phillips, Mark Junazski and Jim Giammarco

Losing foursome: TCV MH/MR, Inc. Team - John Ryan King, Nick Mroziak, John Frain and Rico Dillard

Skill Prize Winners: Closest to Pin - Ken Puskaric, Longest Putt - Dan Skreptach and Putting Contest - Tim Casey

Sponsors and Donations

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UPMC Braddock

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Allegheny East MH/MR

Citizens Bank

Law Office of Evan Jenkins

Teresa Lutka Fedor, Joe Fedor,

Larry Jones and Cara

Jones Foursome

NOVACARE Rehabilitation

Sky Bank

Brown, Munson, Hochendoner

and Ganano Foursome

Napolitano, Bresni, Domis and O'Keefe

Foursome

Typecraft Press

Twosome

Ken Carnahan and Ken Puskaric

Individual Golfer

Premier Comp - Eugene Barilla

Raymond Logan, TCV Board President

Babb, Inc. - Ed Shae,

Babb, Inc. - Dan Gass

Dan Hearn - TCV Employee

John Coma - TCV Employee

John Ryan King

Nick Mroziak

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Pittsburgh Civic Light Opera

Pittsburgh International

Children's Theater

Pittsburgh Irish and Classical Theater

Pittsburgh Pirates

Pittsburgh Penguins

Pittsburgh Playhouse

Pittsburgh Opera

Pittsburgh Public Theater

Pittsburgh Steak Company

Pittsburgh Symphony

Pittsburgh Zoo

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Southpointe Golf Club

Toth Carpet

University of Pittsburgh

Athletics

Washington Wild Things



Title Sponsor - Amcom Office Systems



Title Sponsor - Amcom Office Systems #2



Winning Foursome - CCBHO



Losing Foursome - John King, Nick Mroziak, John Frain & Rico Dillard



Allegheny East MH/MR



Ameriserv Financial



Citizens Bank



Dan Gass, Eugene Barilla, Ed Shea



Law Office of Evan Jenkins



Joe Fedor, Teresa Lutka Fedor, Cara Jones & Larry Jones



Martha Hochendoner, Sharon Munson, Helene Brown & Tommy Ganano



Highmark



Hometown Pharmacy



Inservco, Martin King Smith & John Coma



Jefferson Regional Medical Center



Maier Duessel CPAs



Mission Pharmacy



Joe Bresnei, Ron Domis, Mike Napolitano & Gary O'Keefe



National City Bank



NOVACARE Rehabilitation



Sky Bank



Hudhaifa Ismaeli, Kathy Becker, Raymond Logan & Dan Hearn



Typecraft Press & Individual golfers - Ken Puskaric and Ken Carnahan



UPMC Braddock

MR Fundraising News

~ Patti Ferron, MR Fundraising Chairperson

The MR Fund Raising Committee has just completed the sales of Home and Garden Party candles. It was a great success due to fantastic staff and consumer participation. In the end, 228 candles were sold, with a \$570.00 profit!! Many thanks go out to all who supported us.

All of the profits of the MR Fundraising Committee go into a special Agency fund to assist our MR population with camp costs, activities and community outings. With our profits, we were able to send two consumers to camp this year that would not have been able to go, as well as sponsor a trip to Idlewild Park, which included transportation and lunch!!

Currently, we are sponsoring a Hershey candy sale (\$1.00 each). When all of the candy is sold, we will make at least a \$500.00 profit. Also, from mid-Oct. through Nov. 1, 2007, we are selling fresh pies (just in time for Thanksgiving). So, for those non-bakers out there, we will have 14 different pie selections and pumpkin rolls!!

An additional thank you to everyone on the MR Fund Raising Committee: **Jennifer Pingor, Tina Wimbs, Joe Edwards, Judy Gazda, Denice Scherrbaum, Sharon Kostelnik, Nancy Janosko and Barb Brown.** They are hard working, enthusiastic, creative and give their time freely to such a great cause. The MR Fundraising Committee would not be so successful without them. If any parent or staff would like to join our committee, we would be happy to have you and your ideas! **Please contact: Patti Ferron at 412-823-0600 x 102.** Again, thank you to everyone for supporting our efforts to provide our consumers opportunities they may not otherwise be able to experience. A little can make a big difference!

MR Enclaves Working in McKeesport

~Judy Gazda

Besides placing MR clients into individual job settings, the MR Supported Employment program finds group jobs for our clients. When we do this, we call it an "Enclave". The Borough of McKeesport hired our enclaves to clean-up the bike trail and the grounds around McKee's Point Marina. They have been doing this since the spring.

In appreciation to the borough for hiring our clients, **Kathy Tagaloe** and **Judy Gazda** attended the McKeesport Council Meeting on 9/5/07 and presented a *Certificate of Appreciation* to the Mayor, Jim Brewster.

If you would like more information about TCV MH/MR, Inc's Supported Employment program, please contact **Dan Kostyak** at St. Robert's, ext. 104 or Judy Gazda, 412-953-0019.



Judy Gazda, Mayor Brewster and Kathy Tagaloe

Snack Korner is Open!

~ Judy Stump

The Snack Korner is one of the most recent endeavors of the PSR Department at TCV MH/MR, Inc. It has been the topic of discussions and a dream for the department for the past couple of years.

The PSR consumers were looking for opportunities to raise funds for special trips and decided that it was time to try a snack bar. The Snack Korner received its name by using the initials S and K, which are the initials of Sandra K., formally from TCV, who promoted the idea of having a snack bar. While Sandra was employed at TCV, she received second place in the Inspiration Category at Eli Lilly and Company's Reintegration Awards. At the awards, she received a trophy and a cash contribution to be used at a designated program. Sandra chose the PSR department at TCV and from the financial award, the Snack Korner came into fruition. The department was able to purchase carts, drink coolers and food items to turn the dream of starting a snack bar into a reality.

Nearly twenty individuals in the program have volunteered to help at the Snack Korner, which is open Monday through Friday from 9:00 AM - 1:00 PM. The volunteers are receiving formal training in customer service and are learning valuable experiences that come from volunteering. Volunteers are enjoying working together, meeting new people and watching the proceeds accumulate. If you are at the SV COG building in Homestead please stop by. We look forward to seeing you.



Employee Spotlight



Every newsletter will randomly profile an employee. Who will be in the next issue??

Employee Name: Samer Kazour

Site Location: SV COG

How long have you worked here?: Interned for 6 months and became employee 5/8/06

What is your position? Mobile Therapist

What was your very first job? Cashier at Giant Eagle

What is your favorite movie of all time? Superman

If you could have dinner with anyone (living or dead) who would you choose?

John Stewart

What three things can always be found in your refrigerator? Cheese, OJ and Milk

What is your favorite vacation spot? Lebanon

What accomplishment would you say that you are most proud of? Getting an MSW

What are your pets, and their names? 2 cats, Methos & Cotton

Whom do you most admire and why? My mom, because of all her hard work in raising her children.



ATF Wins the 4th Annual Basketball Challenge

~ Amy Sljva-Blystone

The 4th annual basketball challenge between the Psych and Social Rehabilitation Department and the MR Adult Training Facility was held at the Auberle Gym on September 14, 2007. It was a great game!

Consumers, staff and family members all joined in the fun by cheering the group on or shooting some hoops in hopes of making a basket. A special halftime recognition was given to **Dawn B.** from the ATF for selling the most tickets. Gail G. presented her a ribbon and a bouquet of flowers from PSR.

We ended this year's challenge by having a 3-point shooting contest. After the game, everyone came back to the COG and enjoyed socializing and eating some pizza provided by Papa V's. The PSR department would like to thank everyone for helping them raise \$108.00!!!!!! The proceeds of the basketball challenge will be used to plan a trip, dinner or another activity determined by consumers and staff.

We are looking forward to planning our 5th annual basketball challenge. We hope everyone will consider joining the fun next year. The PSR Department is always looking for more basketball players and could always use more voices to help cheer us on!! Thanks to all who made this a fun and enjoyable event!



Sign made by the PSR Art Class

Children and Adolescent Outpatient Expands to the Rankin Christian Center

Stop by to see us!! We have a new location to provide Child and Adolescent Outpatient Services in Rankin!!! TCV MH/MR, Inc. will hold an open house on Friday, November 9th from 3-5:30 PM at the Rankin Christian Center, 230 Third Avenue, Suite 202. Please help us to celebrate our new office just for children and adolescents by stopping by. Information about the Outpatient Services for Adolescents, Children & Family that TCV MH/MR, Inc. offers will be provided.

Children and Family Services Treatment provides brief, family-focused mental health treatment to children, adolescents and their families. Treatment includes assessment, psychiatric evaluations, medication, treatment planning and family, individual and group therapies. These services can be Office-Based, School-Based or Community-Based through our intensive Wrap Around program.

All of the community is welcome to attend.

Please stop by the OPEN HOUSE on Friday November 9th from 3 - 5:30 PM.

The Turtle Doves and the Cogettes

~John Meikle

After much discussion, the Turtle Doves and the Cogettes is the name that the PSR fledgling singing group decided to call itself as the act hit the road. The Psych/Soc Rehab Department has been singing its way to recovery for some time now, and decided to take our "talents" into the neighborhood around us, specifically to a couple of local care facilities – Eldercrest in Munhall and the GAR Home in Turtle Creek. Singing for us has been a very positive way to heal and enrich our lives. Being able to share this healing and enrichment has been very rewarding. The singing group has from 6 to 12 enthusiastic voices sharing popular, old time and traditional songs that are meaningful and uplifting.

We have found that the very act of performing, though challenging, is appreciated by our audience who love to join in on the choruses. There are several soloists in our ranks (The Cogettes) backed up by our spirited group (The Turtle Doves). One of our members plays the piano fantastically and adds her interpretations to our renditions. The Turtle Doves and the Cogettes practice every Friday at the PSR Department and do monthly shows at the two above locations.

Music and song can be great healers in all our lives and bringing this message to others in need of healing may be one of the more rewarding things we can do on our life journey. If you are interested in singing in the singing group, please call the PSR department for more information 412-461-4100.



A Young Mary

Good Luck Mary!

~Information given by Jim Kidd

Congratulations to **Mary Egan** on her recent retirement from TCV MH/MR, Inc. Mary was born on Long Island and has been with the Agency for 35 years!

Mary has been a great asset to TCV. She is a licensed Psychologist and also has a private practice. She has been at many locations throughout the Agency, including 723, East Pittsburgh and Turtle Creek. Many of us see her keeping the environment clean and always willing to try something new, including being Rolfed (a high intensity, sometimes painful, therapy designed to assist the body in regaining function.)

We hope that Mary is enjoying her retirement and that she is able to spend more time at her cottage in Maine.



Mary at her retirement party

Holiday Happiness

~ Janet Carroll

It's never too early to plan for the holidays. At least that's the impression one gets from walking into any store nowadays. It seems Halloween, Thanksgiving, Hanukkah and Christmas miraculously merge together into one giant sales event. Despite the mass marketing, the true meaning of the holidays is alive and well at Turtle Creek Valley MH/MR, Inc. The staff of TCV'S Children and Family Services participates in numerous community events to help less fortunate families experience the genuine spirit of this time of year. The first event will be the Bedtime Story event on November 16, 2007 from 5:30-7:30 at the Duquesne Boy's and Girl's Club sponsored by the Duquesne Communities That Care. Reading, storytelling and fun will fill the evening. Communities in Action Peace (CAP) will hold it's annual Celebration of Peace Dinner on December 3, 2007 (contact Janet Carroll at 412- 464-1522 Ext. 513 if you are interested in attending this event). TCV also supports the Braddock Library's Light Up Night and its' own After School Program. Please help fulfill the Agency's mission of caring and support by donating a toy or stuffed animal to the children's department at the Steel Valley COG Room B3. These gifts will help you as well as the children capture the true magic of the holidays.

Fall Driving Tips

~ Adapted from Brown & Brown Newsletter

Autumn leaves drift by the window and right into the street. Driving in the fall presents its own colorful set of problems. Decreasing daylight and wet leaves create challenges for the unsuspecting driver. Follow these tips to help you navigate fall driving hazards.

Patches of fallen leaves can be just as treacherous as patches of ice. Fallen leaves retain large amounts of water and can create a slippery surface. Drive slowly through them and avoid hard or panic braking.

Fall brings the first frost. Be aware of slippery conditions that occur with frost. At freezing or near freezing temperatures, the moisture on bridges and overpasses will become ice much more quickly than the approach roadway.

Remember the "two-second rule" when following other drivers, and in severe weather increase your following distance. If you are being tailgated let the other driver pass.

Common sense and the basics of safe driving (seat belt, driving alert, sober and at a legal speed) can keep you driving safe in the fall.

Congrats Outstanding TCV MH/MR, Inc. Employees!!!

September 2007: Gerri Hlavac and Bob Pugh

Donation Thank You

TCV Board Member Sean O'Connor through the United Way Campaign

Ann Kann, Barbara Pughin, Mary White and **Andrew Ryabik** in memory of **Andrew Ryabik**

Please Remember to Donate to TCV MH/MR, Inc.!!!



3 Rivers Combined Federal Campaign

**TCV's Federal CFC Code is:
66902**

**To donate to the Educational
Improvement Tax Credit Program,
call Kym: 412-351-0222 x420**

VEHICLES - General vehicle preferred guidelines:

Car in running condition with valid title and inspection & minimal rust
We are generally not interested in "parts/salvage cars," as storage space is limited.

WE DO TAKE ALL CARS! Pick up is free. Your donation is tax deductible. Call us at 412-351-0222 x420.

Please remember to ask your family and friends to designate Turtle Creek Valley MH/MR, Inc. as the recipient of their United Way gift through the Contributor Choice option when completing the United Way form, or donate online at

www.unitedwaypittsburgh.org.

TCV's United Way code is #136.

A copy of the official registration and financial information of Turtle Creek Valley MH/MR, Inc. may be obtained from the PA Dept. of State by calling toll-free, within Pennsylvania, 1-800-732-0999. Registration does not imply endorsement.

Judy Monahan Grystar, LSW
TCV MH/MR, Inc.
Executive Director

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Requests for additional information should be directed to Kimberly King, 723 Braddock Avenue, Braddock, PA 15104, (412)351-0222 x420, email: KMroziak@tcmhmr.org

TCV MH/MR, Inc. News

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