



Allegheny County Special Olympics Basketball Tournament

- Mr. Girman

The combined Turtle Creek Valley and Mon Valley Special Olympics Basketball Team, known as the Mon Valley Special Steelers, entered the annual tournament at the Fitzgerald Fieldhouse for the first time ever on Saturday, March 20th. The Special Steelers performed well, each earning a Gold Medal.

The team defeated the Washington County Wolves in the preliminary game by a score of 19-4. In the second game, they were pitted against a long experienced Allegheny Bulldogs team in a non-scheduled game. The Special Steelers were defeated by a score of 16-4. They next played the Lawrence County Specials and won by a score of 30-28. The fourth and final contest with the Olympic Flames, in a timed game of only 16 minutes, ended in a 28-28 tie.

High scorer for the Special Steelers was **Kenny R.**, having scored 30 points in four games. Also scoring well from Turtle Creek Valley was **James M.**

Each participant received a gold medal from the committee. The Special Steelers will participate again next year and hope to have at least one home game and one away game.



Special Steelers: (L-R) Michael G., James M., Dawn B., Blaine S. and Ronald H.

April 28, 2004 – Adult Education Fair

All staff, family and friends are invited to attend the Agency’s Adult Education Fair. This is a great event if you are thinking of going back to school or are just starting back to school. The fair will be held from 10 am until 2 pm at the Beulah Presbyterian Church, right off of exit 10A of the Parkway East in Churchill. Fair and parking are free.

Find out information on degrees from Associate’s to Doctoral and meet with representatives from the following schools: California University of PA, Carlow College, Carnegie Mellon University, CCAC, Chatham College, DeVry/Keller School, Duquesne University, Geneva College, Indiana University of PA, La Roche College, Penn State University, Pittsburgh Technical Institute, Point Park University, Robert Morris University, Seton Hill University, University of Phoenix, University of Pittsburgh and Waynesburg College.

There will be financial aid representatives at the fair to discuss ways to receive tuition reductions, grants and scholarships as well as new schedule options for going to school full time and working full time.

This event is sponsored by Allegheny East MH/MR, Family Services of Western PA and Turtle Creek Valley MH/MR, Inc. in cooperation with the Continuing Education Association of PA.

Turtle Creek Valley MH/MR, Inc.

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Can you guess what TCV site this is?

- a.) 723 - TCV’s Administrative Office
- b.) Rankin House - residential site
- c.) Homestead House - residential site and outpatient services



answer on pg. 6

Consumer-Provider Dialogue Day

- Amy Sljva

The first Consumer/Provider Dialogue Day was held at the COG building on March 30, 2004. The approximate 45 participants included staff and consumers from the ICM, RC, and Psych/Social Rehabilitation, Outpatient, Partial and Administrative departments. The facilitators for this event were members of the Consumer-Provider Collaborative group who have been assisting TCV and providers in the county that want to organize dialogues within their organizations. Topics discussed were recovery, respect, language, boundaries and communication. All individuals had the opportunity to share their thoughts about these topics. Feedback from both consumers and staff about the day were very positive and everyone would like to see dialogues continue throughout the agency to include other departments. Special thanks go out to the committee members and everyone that participated to make this day happen.

The goal of planning a consumer-provider dialogue day is to promote better communication and understanding between treatment, service providers and the recipients of those services. This forum is helpful in raising awareness of recovery issues and setting the stage for more significant collaboration between consumers and providers. The staff and consumer planning committee for TCV dialogues will meet in May to make plans for the second dialogue day, tentatively scheduled for July. We hope to have a total of 3 dialogues in 2004. If you are interested in becoming a part of this committee, or in learning more about dialogues, please contact **Amy Sljva** at (412)461-4100 ext. 714.

Consumer Sports Luncheon

- Connie Cook

On the 29th of February, The Beth Shalom Men's Club sponsored a Sports luncheon. Consumers from supportive housing, Munhall Apartments, Homestead House and Rankin House attended the event along with around 200 other MH/MR program consumers in Allegheny County. All individuals that attended the event received a bobble head "Iceberg" the mascot for the Pittsburgh Penguins, a stack of hockey and basketball trading cards and a small Pittsburgh Pirates AM/FM radio. Athletes including Doink the clown (Wrestler), Sheriff Steel (wrestler), the Pitt women's soccer team, the Duquesne women's basketball team and tight end for the Pittsburgh Steelers, Matt Cushing, were on hand to sign autographs for the participants. All attendees received hot dogs, hamburgers, and french fries for lunch.

McKeesport Community Accountability Panel

On March 25th, 2004, fifteen McKeesport residents were sworn in as members of the city's new Community Accountability Panel. One of the fifteen members included **Kim Pollack**, who works in the Partial Program at Homestead House. The Accountability Panel is divided into 2 different panels with 7-8 residents to each and acts as a way for first-time, non-violent juvenile offenders to avoid a court appearance.

The Accountability Panel is made up of community volunteers ranging from officials, church members and other members of the community. A case is referred to the panel from one of four sources: 1.) school (McKeesport), 2.) police department, 3.) juvenile court or 4.) probation officer. A letter is sent to the parent of the child charged with the crime. In the letter, the parent is given the opportunity to have their child go in front of the community panel instead of going to trial.

These children are first time non-violent offenders. Their charges range anywhere from drugs, truancy, fighting, breaking windows, stealing, etc. The panel listens to the cases and decides what punishment is best for the juvenile. The juvenile must admit to their wrongdoing and own up to the crime that they committed. At this point, the panel has several options for the offender's punishment. They include: 1.) pay a fine, 2.) community service, 3.) write reports or do research, etc. The punishment can be anything that the panel feels is sufficient for the crime committed. The juvenile has to agree to the punishment. If it is not agreed upon, the case will go back to the referral and it will probably go to court.

The best part about the Community Accountability Panel is that if the offender admits to their wrongdoing and follows through with their punishment, their record will be wiped clean. There will be no record of any crime committed.

Kim believes that the Panel "gives kids a chance that made a mistake with the wrong crowd or wanted to fit into the wrong crowd to start anew with a fresh slate."

Tobacco Free 3 on 3 BBall Tournament

Over 65 youth and 25 adults participated in the 2004 "Kick Butts" 3 on 3 Basketball Tournament held by Turtle Creek Valley MH/MR, Inc. through its Steel Valley and Woodland Hills Youth Coalitions Against Tobacco, on Friday March 26, 2004. The successful event was held in the gymnasium of Good Shepherd Catholic School in Braddock from 4-8 PM. Teams played in the 10-12 years and 13-15 years age groups. The basketball tournament was sponsored by Turtle Creek Valley MH/MR, Inc. through Tobacco Free Allegheny and the PA Department of Health.

Kick Butts Day is a national initiative to make kids leaders in the effort to stop tobacco use. To support or join the project call 412-464-1522.



Participants listen to the instructions of the tournament



The players take the court for the championship game in the 13-15 division

Welcome to new employees!

Susan Albayed - SV COG RC
Robert Anderson - Supported Housing
Tracy Beck - MR Semi-Independent
Lisa Burbidge - Turtle Creek
Nancy Crawford - CRRS Electric Ave.
Kelly Dickman - SV COG PSR
Barbara Garrison - HH
Michelle Gitahni - HH
Angela Hauck - TC
Tara Holley - CRRS Homestead House
Michelle Lawson - Rankin House
John Meikle - SV COG PSR
Linda Perris - CHI MR Payne St.
Emily Rankin - SV COG
Aaron Rivers - Supported Housing
Christine Romeo - TC
Susan Stay - SV COG OP



Goodbye and Good luck!

Helen Donahoe - CRRS HH
Clara Edmunds - CRRS HH
Christina Lipinski - SV COG PSR
Lois Little - CRRS The Next Step
Charlotte Miller - 723 BSU
Craig Morsaint - SV COG ATF
Janet Naglich - SV COG ATF
Dee Piskor - SV COG MR
Willie Sims - South Side D&A

Special Thanks

- Linda Miller-Green
I would like to thank **Patti Ferron** for her quick thinking and action as well as **Cindy Cwiklik** when I had my accident at Lynda Lane. I called her to tell her what happened. Patti called the emergency number, then she and Cindy came to Lynda Lane to let people in and do anything else that I needed at that time. It made a difficult situation much easier knowing I had people around caring for me. Thanks!!

Let Our Voices Be Heard

- Carol Roebuck

Did you know that if persons with disabilities voted at the same rate as the non-disabled, between 5 and 10 million more votes would be cast in the upcoming Presidential election! In fact, 10 million votes would have changed almost every Presidential election in the past— only 4 have been decided by more than 10 million votes.

Let Our Voices Be Heard is a coalition of concerned citizens who want to make sure that disabled voters, including mental health consumers, are registered to vote so that their voices can be heard at election time. Although the coalition is working on other policy issues, the most important focus is on the upcoming Presidential election and on organizing voter registration, education and activities to get voters to the polls.

Staff – this is your chance to make a difference! It takes less than 5 minutes to help someone fill out a registration form. If you would like more information and voter registration forms, contact **Carol Roebuck** (extension 728) in the Psych/Social Rehabilitation office.

Free Smoking Cessation Program

Turtle Creek Valley MH/MR, Inc. will be offering a free smoking cessation program in the near future to TCV employees, clients and members of the community using the American Lung Association's Freedom From Smoking® cessation program. The American Lung Association® offers its Freedom From Smoking® program, for people who already smoke and want to quit. The program is considered the "gold standard" of group-setting, peer-support smoking cessation programs. TCV will offer the program in 6-8 sessions. Each session is one hour. Free nicotine patches will be available as part of the project for participants who obtain a prescription from their doctor. Please call 412-464-1522 x500 for further information on these free sessions.

TCV Participates in National Alcohol Screening Day

As a part of the National Alcohol Awareness Screening Day, Turtle Creek Valley MH/MR, Inc. held its first on-site alcohol screening on April 5th at the 723 Braddock administration offices. The screening day is held every year in April for which we have annually participated at Century III Mall's Health Expo in collaboration with the Mon Valley Providers Council. The screenings are designed to raise public awareness about the consequences of at-risk drinking and alcohol's effect on general health. As part of this event at TCV, attendees were able to complete a written self-evaluation, hear an educational presentation and talk one-on-one with a health professional.

Participants also were provided the opportunity to engage in a hands-on experience to alcohol's effects on the body by wearing impaired goggles provided by the DUI Program. A simulation of a breathalyzer was also performed.

Beth Smith, Janice Burruss, Terri Godels and Precious Roberts of the B.S.U. and Community Outreach Team facilitated this event. Twenty people from the community participated and all involved considered it a great success. We hope to continue to participate in this event on an annual basis.



Precious Roberts explains and demonstrates the effects of alcohol with vision impaired glasses to attendees of the screening

Psychiatric and Social Rehabilitation News

- Carol Roebuck

Two new staff persons joined the Psych/Social Rehabilitation department in February. **John Meikle**, psychiatric and social rehab. coach, brings years of counseling experience and wonderful musical talents to our programs. His new group, Drum It Up, gives members a chance to use rhythm to reduce stress and have fun. **Kylie Dickman**, social rehab. coach, brings her holistic approach to social rehab. One of her new groups is Relaxation and Easy Yoga. We also have a relatively new addition to our peer staff, **Terry Moore**, whose groups include Expressive Arts, Money Management and Improving Reading Skills. For more information about our programs, including the difference between psychiatric and social rehab. and for lists of our groups and classes, please contact **Carol Roebuck**, Supervisor, at 461-3811, extension 728.

Bake Sale

The Advisory Board from the Psych & Soc Rehab programs have a bake sale on the first Tuesday of each month at the COG in the first floor conference room. The time is 10:00 until 2:00. They serve baked goods as well as lunch items (hot dogs, chili, baked beans, etc.). The proceeds go to help fund program outings, etc. The next bake sale will be Tuesday, May 4th.



Volunteering Honoree

-Nancy Miller

Florence F. is a "Senior Program" participant. She has been participating at the YMCA in Wilmerding and enjoys swimming and exercise. Flo has met many new friends and enjoys the swim program very much.

Florence is a member of the Braddock Hills Senior Center. On Sunday April 18th, she was honored at the Churchill Valley Country Club for her volunteer efforts. Congratulations Flo!

Linda Lane Open House

The residents and staff at Lynda Lane invited the community to their new home on March 17th, 2004 from noon- 6pm. The St. Patrick's Day theme party was a great opportunity for staff, family, friends and others to see new home that the residents are happy to call home.



Tobacco Project Expanded to Duquesne

The TCV Department of Family Services has recently received additional grant funding through Tobacco Free Allegheny and the PA Department of Health to provide tobacco prevention and education to children in the Duquesne area. Duquesne will be added to the programming that is already offered in the Woodland Hills, East Allegheny, Steel Valley and West Mifflin School Districts where the project was initiated two years ago. The project is designed to prevent children from smoking and to help teens that have started smoking to learn how to stop.

The project has two components: school-based and community-based. In the school-based programming, Life Skills Training is being offered to the fourth grades of the WH, EA SV and WM School Districts. The Duquesne school district will be added next year. All students participating in the program take a pre-and post-test survey on their knowledge of tobacco use and are taught information by TCV staff on the harmful effects of smoking. A project is also being initiated in each district to have all students caught on their first smoking offense to be referred to TCV MH/MR, Inc. for tobacco education classes. When the student completes the tobacco education class and would like to learn ways to quit smoking, they are given the opportunity to enroll in cessation classes offered at the high school.

In the community based part of the programming, two youth coalitions, one in the Steel Valley the other in the Woodland Hills area, are already up and running. The third, in Duquesne, will be implemented in the upcoming months. The focus of the three coalitions is to do peer education and advocacy to work on preventing youth tobacco use.

The Woodland Hills Youth Coalition currently has twelve members participating in activities at the site of UPMC-Braddock. The coalition is comprised of secondary school children. The members are meeting from 4-6 PM to complete their activities. This is a collaborative effort between TCV, the Allegheny Intermediate Unit, Tobacco Free Allegheny and UPMC Braddock.

The SV Youth Coalition currently has twenty members and has activities on a regular basis at the Auberle Education Center in Homestead. The members meet every Wednesday from 4-6 PM.

The Duquesne Youth Coalition already has eight members participating at the site of the Urban League of Pittsburgh Duquesne Community Mobilization Project. The members are composed of elementary and middle school youth and meet every Monday from 3-5 pm to plan activities. Activities occur monthly (call for schedule). The Duquesne expansion is a collaborative effort between the TCV MH/MR, Inc., ULP-DCMP, the AIU and TFA.

If you're a smoker who is interested in being linked to a cessation program, would like to get help for a child that smokes, or a parent who would like their child to be involved in the youth coalitions, or someone who would like further information, or would like to be involved in TCV's Tobacco Prevention project, please call 412-464-1522 x500.



Employee Spotlight

Every newsletter will profile a random employee. Who will be in the next issue??

Employee Name: Rosalia "Pinky" Danchak

Site Location: Homestead House

How long have you worked here?: 11 years

What is your position? Receptionist/Secretary

What was your very first job? Secretary – St. Margaret Hospital (Lab)

What do you enjoy the most about working at TCV? I enjoy the people I work with. I also enjoy the clients at Homestead House

What is your favorite movie of all time? Gone with the Wind

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

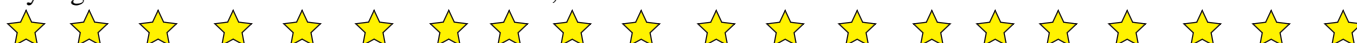
What three things can always be found in your refrigerator? Whipped Cream, fruit and salsa

What is your favorite vacation spot? Bahamas

What accomplishment would you say that you are most proud of? My daughter

If you have pets, what are they, and what are their names? 2 cats. Sterling (male) and Samantha Jane (female)

Whom do you most admire and why? Jackie Kennedy – she endured a lot in her life, but she always seemed to be very dignified and reserved. Come to think of it, I would like to have dinner with her also.



Looking to hire qualified individuals to fill positions at your company?

- Amy Sljva

The Employment Services department at Turtle Creek Valley would like to hear from you. We develop community employment opportunities for people with mental health disabilities while helping employers to fill essential positions. We work with adults who are at least 18 years of age, at least a high school diploma or GED and have work experience or the motivation to be competitively employed. To qualify for recruitment assistance you must 1.) Be willing to meet with an employment specialist to discuss job functions and preferred work hours and 2.) Interview pre-screened candidates to fill your employment needs. All of our services are at no cost to you. To learn more about all of the services we provide, please contact **Amy Sljva** at (412)461-4100 ext. 714.

Answer to page 1: c.) Homestead House - Outpatient and Residential site

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.

Judy Monahan Grystar, LSW
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To report duplicate mailings, provide feedback, or to be added to the Turtle Creek Valley News mailing list, please email Kym at KMroziak@tcvmhmr.org

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