



TCV Agency Newsletter

Board of Directors Annual Dinner Meeting

On Monday December 9th, 2002 dinner was held to honor employees working at the agency 10, 15, 20,25 and 30 years.

10 years of service

Robin Brown
Janice Burruss
Darlene Karpaski
Daniel Kostyak
Lori Maggio
Darryl Mance
Kevin McCain
Frederick Mintus
Carol Petronio
Karen Pruey
Ruth Ann Sauter
Judy Slater
Jane Stadnik
Martha Zucco

15 Years of Service

Cora Addicott
Bernard Galanko
Robert Greene
Catherine Hlavac
Tina Wimbs

20 Years of Service

Linda Holt
Yvette Pickett
Kathleen Samsa

25 Years of Service

James Biagini

30 Years of Service

Esther Wilson

Board of Directors and Management Staff attended



Guests

Mary Eskievich
Charles Evans
Mel Haber
Joseph Labriola
Kathleen Labriola
Mimi Priselac
Dawn Sauter

Regis Derry, who recently resigned from the Board of Directors, was honored for his many years of dedicated service.

Charles Evans, Agency Attorney, was honored for his loyal support to Turtle Creek Valley for over 25 years.



The Queen Holds Court

We call her the “Queen.” She loves wearing hats and jewelry – looking like a “royal.” A kind, gentle, generous person is Vera Shea. At 80 years of age, a special celebration was in order.

On December 15, 2002, Vera indeed held court on the occasion of her 80th birthday at the Amvets in North Braddock. Looking regal in her crown and cape, she accepted birthday wishes from every house, both ATF’s, the Senior Program, Community Link, MR Director Gail Burner and her husband. Al and Margaret Rossi kept all spirits bright and bouncy with music and dance. The smiles and joyful noises abounded.

As the life of the party, Vera honored one man with a dance. She was regaled with gifts and good wishes, song and merriment. In return, Vera gifted all by singing “Let Me Call You Sweetheart”. If you needed a lift-spiritually or if you ever wondered why you do the work you do – you should have been there. The answer was in every face, especially Vera’s. Special thanks to Nancy, Sharon, Tina, Betsey and all who helped in any way.

A very special thanks to Barb Brown who took the time to make all centerpieces for the tables and especially for Vera’s cape and crown.

Turtle Creek Valley MH/MR, Inc.

Volume 2, Issue 1

~Inside~

DUI Lessons	2
Walk for Charity	2
HIPAA	3
All Aboard!	3
ACES	3
TCV Safety	5
Mr. Liberty	5

Driving Under the Influence Lessons for Adopt-A-School Participants

In November, the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), Pittsburgh Division, the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Western District of PA, the District Attorney's Office for Allegheny County, the Kennedy Township, Robinson Township, and Ingram police departments, the Montour School District and the members of the "Adopt-A-School" Advisory Board asked **Cindy Holmes Dawkin** of the DUI Program to talk about driving under the influence to three 9th grade classes of Montour High School.

The presentation included a simulation of a DUI arrest with a 9th grade volunteer by using various props along with mouthwash and a breathalyzer. Officer Anthony Ligouri (the Adopt-A-School area coordinator) arrested and hand-cuffed the students. He presented the DUI law and zero tolerance information to students. Students then used a cue card to present the information to their own class. Frank Scherer, an adult probation officer spoke to the students about the rules and regulations of probation, house arrest, and the interlock safety device.

After the information session, the class separated into three smaller groups to gain a hands-on experience to alcohol's affects on the body. Wearing impaired goggles, and performing exercises such as batting a ball while impaired, picking up paper clips and shooting hoops were used to help the students gain knowledge of the effects that alcohol does to your body.

The workshop was a great success and the students were very receptive to the information presented. Cindy was also asked to provide another workshop in the near future. All students who volunteered received a drunkbusters cap and designated driver pencil.



Psychiatric And Social Rehabilitation News

The Psychiatric and Social Rehabilitation Departments would like to thank all who participated and/or attended the 2002 Mental Health Awareness concert November 16, 2002. It was an even larger success than the first year due to the participation of many other providers and consumers in Allegheny County. Providers, consumers, and community members may audition with their acts on Saturdays May 3rd, 10th or 17th from 2:00-3:30 at the Wilkins School Community Center. Acts may coincide with this years themes of Recovery and Wellness, Perseverance, or Keeping on Track. Contact **Alby Gates** for information 412-461-3811 extension 731. Get ready for the Recovery Train Mental Health Awareness Concert September 13, 2003!



The Social Rehabilitation Department is sponsoring Self-Defense classes through PSAN for consumers and staff. Please contact **Jim Rawe** for additional information at 412-461-4100 extension 737.

PSR will be sending new class schedules and calendar in February to all departments. Please share this information with consumers.



TCV Employees part of Light of the Night Walk

Christine Kuniak, Pat Ogilvie and Deana Orsino joined thousands of people on October 2nd at Heinz field to participate in the Light the Night Walk fundraiser. This year celebrated the 4th annual nationwide walk for the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society, which commemorates lives affected by cancer.

At dusk, the participants walked around Heinz Field holding illuminated white-and-red balloons while being led by a bagpiper. Those that raised \$25 or more held red balloons, while white balloons were held by cancer survivors. Participants walked anywhere from a half mile to two miles around the stadium.

Funds that were raised at the walk are used for research, patient programs and governmental advocacy. Christine's team raised \$400 which contributed to the total \$195,000 raised.

The Leukemia and Lymphoma Society, based in White Plains, N. Y. , is a national voluntary health agency dedicated to curing leukemia, lymphoma, Hodgkin's Disease and myeloma and to improve the quality of life of patients and their families. Since its founding in 1949 the Society has provided more than \$200 million for research specifically targeting blood related cancers.

Congratulations to Christine and her team on the motivation and enthusiasm it took to raise and support the Light the Night Walk.

Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996

Covered Entities

~Virtually all healthcare providers, physician practices, hospitals, long-term care, behavioral health, dentists, etc.

~All healthcare payers

Individually Identifiable Health Information

Anything that we do or say to reveal the identity of one of our consumers could be called Individually Identifiable Health Information.

General Privacy Rule:

Protected health information may not be used or disclosed for reasons other than treatment, payment or healthcare operations without specific patient authorization.



Cat Bruno

Recreation Committee Plans Exciting Day Trip

On October 7th, 2002 thirty eight individuals attended an all day outing planned by the MR Recreation Committee. The trip included a train ride through Cumberland, Maryland where the riders enjoyed the colorful fall foliage. Everyone had a wonderful lunch in the dining car and then did some shopping at local stores. The trip also allowed time for a tour of the Carriage Museum. The riders arrived home late in the evening after a day well spent. Thanks to the committee members whose hard work provided an excellent opportunity to individuals who otherwise may not receive recreational attention.

Committee members included: **Sharon Kostelnik, Melanie Milko, Harriet Metts, Nancy Naulder, and Peg Williams.**



ACES (Allegheny Crisis Emergency Services)

ACES is a collaboration of Turtle Creek Valley MH/MR, Inc., Allegheny East, Family Services, Family Links and CACTIS. The partnership provides telephone and mobile behavioral health crisis intervention services for children and adults in Allegheny County. ACES is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week and is staffed by trained crisis clinicians who are able to handle telephone crisis calls, mobile crisis activation or request for services. The goals of ACES are to complete a thorough crisis assessment and to reach a recommendation regarding disposition. These may include:

- Resolution of the crisis
- Referral to the appropriate social service provider or existing support network
- Referral to a crisis residential facility or shelter
- Referral to an acute care psychiatric hospital for evaluation and possible admission
- Initiation of the 302 process
- Referral to a specialty children and family unit for consultation/services

*Anyone interested in becoming a staff member or ACES, or would like more information, please contact **Janice Burruss** at 412-351-0222 x412*

Anyone can call and request assistance with a crisis situation by calling **1-888-424-2287.**

Welcome to new employees!

Justin Becinski - CHI MR Main St.
 Connie Cook - CRRS Next Step
 Tamara Diggs - CRRS Munhall Apts.
 Valetta Ford - Prevention Network
 Elizabeth Hewett - South Side
 Tracey Little - CRRS Homestead House
 Georgiana Mbamala - Rankin House
 Beverley McElwee - Turtle Creek
 Jennifer Pingor - ATF/MR Services
 William Ross - CRRS Wilmerding
 Stephanie Surmick - CRRS Rankin
 Satee Walker - Electric Avenue
 Steffany Yamada - Homestead House



Goodbye and Good luck!

Janet Andreko - Crestview Drive
 Pauline Giles - CHI MR 17th Ave.
 Gaye Grindle - Supported Employment
 Gia Helsel - CHI MR 17th Ave.
 Linda McCarthy - Med Monitoring
 John Pierce - CHI MR Crestview Drive
 Denise Wiesen - Homestead House
 Robert Yetsko - CHI MR Payne Street

Tri-Boro Prevention Network In Full Swing

The TriBoro Prevention Network Project has begun the New Year in a big way by implementing Life Skills Groups for youth in the 3rd through the 6th grades. The first two sites to get up and running with the program are Braddock Library's After School Program and the New Life Multi-Purpose Center, Youth Investment Program.

The goal of the Life Skills Groups is to train young people in the skills needed to resist the pull of destructive activities including the use of alcohol, drugs and tobacco. The site to be located in the UPMC Braddock Hospital will be up and running before the end of January. The project will work with a total of 60 youth in this first year. TCV employees **Beth Pepe** and **Erin Seely** are working with the children at the Library, and **Ed Ford** and **Steve Zmigrosky** are working with the YIP program participants.

Safety is Priority at TCV

The Risk Management Committee of Turtle Creek Valley is charged with providing a safe and healthful work environment for employees, clients and visitors. The success of the committee depends on the alertness and personal commitment of all TCV staff. This year the committee members have been making sure that all sites have current evacuation reports, and that a copy of these reports are on file in the Human Resource Office. They also have visited a number of sites to become familiar with the buildings, residential sites and the office complexes that make up Turtle Creek Valley MH/MR, Inc: South Side, Turtle Creek COG, Munhall Apartments, 16th Street, Main Street and the Steel Valley COG.

The Risk Mangement Committee also follows up Worker's Compensation incidents and performs an investigative report to determine if there are changes that should be made to one of our sites and /or procedures to make sure that we do not have a repeat of accidents.

Some of the best improvement ideas come from employees. Employees with ideas, concerns, or suggestions for improved safety in the workplace are encouraged to raise them with their supervisors or with a member of the Risk Management Committee. The Committee is listed below with their work numbers:

Pat Ogilvie	Human Resources	406
Cat Bruno	Maintenance/CIS	462
Helen Donahoe	Munhall Apartments	412-464-0674
Cindy Cwiklik	Community Link	412-351-2022 x104
Kirk Ferkett	Homestead House	412-462-9901
Carrie Johnston	Homestead House	412-462-9901
Janie King	D&A	726
Dan Kostyak	Day Vocational/ATF	744
Linda Mallick	Turtle Creek OP	603
Kimberly Mroziak	Marketing	420
Jean Pingor	16th Avenue	412-461-8837
Dee Piskor	ATF	720
Erin Seeley	Special Services	504
Bart Vant	Southside DUI	412-488-6446



Mr. Liberty Is Recognized

On December 19th, Bart Vant was recognized with a special award for 19 years of service. He began working at Turtle Creek Valley MH/MR, Inc. in December of 1983 with intentions of only staying on staff for a year. At that time he was doing private practice, working part-time & working on his doctorate. He decided he needed a full-time job. His history working as a waiter, juvenile probation officer, MH counselor, and D&A therapist made an easy transition to working at Alternatives. When he first began working at TCV in the Drug and Alcohol Program, he split his time between South Side and Main Street Munhall. Bart says that he “really enjoyed Main Street. When I worked there, half the building was D&A the other half was MR. I learned a lot about the mental retardation program. It was amazing how well all the clients got along.” Some of his most memorable experiences were when he worked at Main Street. The education that he received from the clients was phenomenal because he believes that their personalities were truly engaging.

The Drug and Alcohol Program was one of the first programs to move into the Steel Valley COG building. Bart served as a part-time supervisor and part-time therapist. He went from the COG to the South Side as a Unit Supervisor of D&A outpatient and the DUI Program. His current job entails supervising the largest DUI program in Allegheny County, which services approximately 1,400 clients a year. All DUI offenders are required to participate in Alcohol Highway Safety Classes and group therapy. “What I like most about my job continues to be the client contact. I am pleased when we can enlighten clients as to other ways to deal with their problems than through alcohol. I have to say that I have grown up at TCV and truly have appreciated the incredible staff. I get angry at the poor salaries that we in community based treatment receive. I wish we lived in a society that valued our helping profession. I believe we provide a very valuable service and I am very proud of the work we do at TCV.”

Thank you Bart for your continued service to the Agency. Those that work with you say that they are truly are blessed with your hard working, fun-loving nature and ability to put a smile on everyone's face.



Bart receives a well-deserved award

Thank you to everyone who submitted articles to the second issue of Turtle Creek Valley News! Hopefully you think that it is another success! This issue contains events that have occurred since October, 2002. I hope that I receive more submissions for the next newsletter. We will feature a program and staff member in every issue. Please notify me if there are any suggestions for April's issue. The 2003 Toward a Brighter Future Golf Outing will be held Tuesday, September 9th, 2003 at Churchill Valley Country Club. Please put us on your calendar for that date. Continued support is greatly needed. If anyone would like to volunteer for the Golf Outing Planning Committee, please contact Steve Zmigrosky at 412-464-4781. Meetings will be held in the near future.



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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@tvmhmr.org

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