



the GrapeVine

Lenawee Community
Mental Health Authority

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LCMHA Board

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Of Interest

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A Word With Our Director



Linda Feeney, a member of the Lenawee

Community Mental Health Authority Board, has decided to “retire” after 30 years of service. Jackie Koch wrote an article about Linda that appeared in the Daily Telegram in the Lenawee Spotlight on May 27th, 2008. I encourage you to read that article as it highlights many aspects of Linda’s life that made her a true leader in the mental health system.

Linda learned from personal experience that one person can change their world. Linda’s daughter was diagnosed as developmentally disabled in the late 1960’s when it was customary to place such children in institutions. In fact, Linda was advised by the attending doctor that he would tell her when it was ‘time’. This was simply not an acceptable course in her mind.

With a determination we have come to respect over the years, Linda sought out programs and exercises that helped her daughter improve her skills. At a time when school was not an option, Linda joined other families in starting a nursery school for developmentally disabled children. The following year the community agreed there was a need and the

Intermediate School District opened the Porter Center. It was this vision and determination that prompted a friend to encourage Linda to become a member of the CMH Board of Directors.

Linda joined the board in 1978 at the time that public policy had begun to shift the focus from warehousing people in state-run facilities to supporting them in their own communities, Linda was in the right place at the right time to use her personal experience and her determination to become a significant leader in the development of community-based services and alternatives to state institutions.

As an advocate, a parent, a friend of consumers, a steady and reliable member of the board, Linda’s leadership, perseverance, vision and understanding of the history and development of community mental health services in general and the LCMHA Board in particular will be greatly missed. We celebrate and thank her for her years of dedicated service.

A Word ABOUT Our Director

On July 1st 1973, Roger Myers joined us from Manteno State Hospital in Illinois to become the first

Administrative Director of the newly formed CMH Board. While at Manteno Roger went from caseworker to Director of Administrative Services in a few short years. In 1984, Roger took over the helm of CMH as Executive Director and steered this agency through many changes and often rocky waters. He has held the course through organizational restructuring, changes in operations, site relocation, regional affiliations, and many budget crises. These changes included becoming an Authority in 1998 and joining the Community Mental Health Partnership of Southeast Michigan with Washtenaw, Livingston and Monroe Counties. There really weren’t many quiet and uneventful times over the past 35 years but Roger’s commitment to our consumers and this organization never waned. Recently, Roger and Bev have become proud grandparents. Their daughter Amy and her husband Chris first blessed them with a granddaughter Chloe. Their son Ryan and his wife Rachel added Oliver to Roger and Bev’s list of ‘stories’ they can’t wait to share! Congratulations and “thank you” Roger for your consistent leadership of an astonishing 35 years!



LCMHA Staff Update

Fran Foley Recipient Rights Officer

Fran moved from the UP to be closer to family. This position is new for her but she has worked for CMH for 19 years in various settings and multiple positions. Adaptability is a good quality to have. If you ever have questions about your rights please give Fran a call or stop by and see her at LCMHA.

Lisa Brasher

MI Case Management Nurse

Lisa has been a Registered Nurse for 25 years, graduated from Toledo Hospital School of Nursing in 1983 and received a BSN from Lourdes College in 1996. She is a member of Sigma Theta Tau International Honorary Nursing Society. For the past 9 years she has been working in Nursing Management, her background has included geriatrics, med-surg., office nursing, and psych.

Trudi Grossman

Certified Peer Support Specialist

Trudi first came to work at LCMHA in February in a contractual, part-time position. We are pleased that she has joined us as a full time employee effective June 16th. Trudi was born, raised and still lives in Tecumseh. She has 3 very active sons, and a spunky dog. Trudi is an avid reader and really enjoys writing (in fact, you will notice that she has authored many articles in this edition of the Grapevine). Trudi attended the week long extensive training to become a Peer Support Specialist in April of this year. She passed the comprehensive exam and became a Certified Peer in May. Over the past 6 months, Trudi has had many opportunities to assist consumers and meet with people who are new to our agency. She is excited to be more available to serve our consumers, staff and the community!

Bea Miller has been with LCMHA for 15 years of service in March 2008.

Mental Health Month Activities

By Trudi Grossman

“Walk a Mile in My Shoes” were the cheers from the crowd of walkers who were marching up Winter Street to the Old Courthouse on May 12th. This event was done in honor of May’s Mental Health Awareness month. There was a great exhilaration in the air as approximately 25 people marched onto the old courthouse steps to read their anti-stigma quotes. Cars honked and people waved in support of this time honored local event.



The tradition continued on May 14th in Lansing at our State Capitol. Many Lenawee consumers and employees attended this year’s very wet event. Rain was everywhere, but that did nothing to dampen the spirits of thousands of people from all over Michigan. Singers sang from a podium on the Capitol steps and several people read emotion filled poems about their own recovery stories. It was truly exciting to be part of such an important event, which not only helps stamp out stigma, but builds life long friendships and memories that keep this awareness alive.

May 21st brought another day of celebration in the form of Path to Recovery and Independence. This day was brought to us by LCMHA Mental Health Awareness Committee, the Consumer Advisory Committee and Customer Services. Michelle Rose Armstrong was the keynote speaker and everyone listened attentively as she told of her own powerful struggle and recovery from mental illness. The Sixth Annual Lori Sallows Anti Stigma Award was handed out to two winners this year. Jim Thompson a CMH employee and Doris Beckey of the New Focus Clubhouse were very surprised as their names were called. Everyone agreed these two were well deserved recipients of this year’s award. A brief lunch break broke up the day’s event and allowed everyone to mingle and meet new exciting faces. After lunch individual awards of appreciation were given out by several people. There was not a dry eye in the house as each

person told their own story and how someone in their life never gave up on them. Whether it was a friend, a case manager, husband or family member, the roles these supporters took in each person’s life was amazing and each recipient was handed a certificate by their individual. Nothing prepares you for how just one person can make such a huge difference in someone’s life. Hope is very easy to share and can last a lifetime.

Listening As An Art

By Trudi Grossman

Words run through our minds like a fast moving stream. Often it’s very difficult to move our wants, fears and needs beyond the “stream” stage and really communicate to someone our inner hopes and dreams. The art of listening has been around for hundreds of years and Socrates himself used the art of pretending ignorance in order to encourage others to express their views fully. Yet most people simply listen to the words being said to them. When in fact words only contain 10% of the message. The remaining 90% is hidden in the body language and tone of voice.

Try to engage all of your senses while listening as the human brain stores pictures, feelings, smells tastes are more effectively than words. Listen for ideas, not facts. Listen optimistically, don’t lose interest immediately. Concentrate, don’t start dreaming and keep eye contact. Open your mind, practice accepting new information. Breathe slowly and deeply. Relax physically and get comfortable.

The most common problem with listening effectively is that many of us are busy formulating a response and are not hearing the goals and barriers the other person is trying to convey. We are a “fix it” society and instead of just letting someone express his or her ideas, we are busy in our minds coming up with a way to correct the problem. While giving encouraging feedback and positive acceptance of what is really being said is the simple goal. 82% of people prefer to talk to great listeners, not speakers. So the next time you are having a conversation, use some of the tips included above. People appreciate, respect and value others who are great listeners.



IT'S YOUR RIGHT

By Kay Ross

Many years ago (I won't tell you how long) I was finally at the age where I could vote in a Presidential Election! Boy was I excited. My dad was a great one for debating and, being his daughter, I would always give him a debate, but I had nothing to back it up with as I couldn't vote. Now it was time for me to put my money where my mouth was. I can't even tell you now what Presidential election it was. I can tell you that I was scared to death and totally not knowing what I should do. I felt I didn't have anyone to ask for direction either as I definitely didn't want to appear as if I was ignorant...heaven forbid! So as the day approached for voting, I had all the people I wanted to vote for in my mind. I had found out where I was to vote, it was a school in my neighborhood, which made me feel a little more at ease. I followed the signs and did what I had to do to get my turn at the BIG machine. My first problem was in not asking what I was supposed to do. My second mistake was in not reading all the directions, in my defense I was worried I was holding everyone else up as there was a long line. Then the ultimate mistake happened! The first lever was a large one that allowed you to vote for everyone in a particular party with just one swipe of the lever. I did not know this. I pushed the lever over, not really understanding. I had just voted for the party that I didn't want in office! And to my shame, that party won. It was all my fault! 4 years of _____! After that election I knew to ask questions if I was unsure and I didn't care how I looked!

I'm telling you this because I have never forgotten about this incident. Voting is very important to me. It's my chance to have my say in how parts of my life are effected. I feel very strongly in the right to vote for who ever I feel will do the best for me and my family over the next 4 years. I want everyone to have that right. To not be afraid to go to the voter's box and cast a vote for the person they want to influence the next 4 years of their lives.

On July 11, 2008, we will be holding a Voter Registration and Demo. If you are not registered to vote and would like a chance to voice your opinion in the November Presidential Election, you need to be registered by no later than October 6, 2008.

We will have a voting box there for you to test out. We can get information about where you are to vote and go over procedures with you so you will know exactly what you need to do when you go to vote. There will be alternative voting techniques available for those that cannot vote in the conventional way. Have you had questions about how to vote by Absentee Ballot? Roxann Hoffman, County Clerk, will be available to answer any questions you have about your voting rights. We will be at:

Community Action Agency
July 11, 2008
9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

This is also the start of Project Fresh. There will be a Farmers Market and cooking demonstrations all morning. If you need transportation, let us know, we will help you get there. Our co-sponsors for this event are Community Action Agency, WLEN, County Clerk's Office, MSU Extension and Dial A Ride. Call Customer Services at 263-8905.

I Am the Flag of the United States of America



My
Name is
Old
Glory
by Howard
Schnauber

I am the flag of the United States of
America.
My name is Old Glory.
I fly atop the world's tallest buildings.
I stand watch in America's halls of justice.
I fly majestically over great institutes of
learning.
I stand guard with the greatest military
power in the world.
Look up! And see me!
I stand for peace - honor - truth and justice.
I stand for freedom
I am confident - I am arrogant
I am proud.
When I am flown with my fellow banners
My head is a little higher
My colors a little truer.
I bow to no one.
I am recognized all over the world.

I am worshipped - I am saluted - I am
respected
I am revered - I am loved, and I am feared.
I have fought every battle of every war for
more than 200 years:
Gettysburg, Shilo, Appomatox, San Juan
Hill, the trenches of France,
the Argonne Forest, Anzio, Rome, the
beaches of Normandy,
the deserts of Africa, the cane fields of the
Philippines, the rice paddies and jungles of
Guam, Okinawa, Japan, Korea, Vietnam,
Guadalcanal
New Britain, Peleliu, and many more
islands.
And a score of places long forgotten by all
but those who were with me.
I was there.
I led my soldiers - I followed them.
I watched over them.
They loved me.
I was on a small hill in Iwo Jima.
I was dirty, battle-worn and tired, but my
soldiers cheered me,
and I was proud.
I have been soiled, burned, torn and
trampled on the streets of
countries I have helped set free.
It does not hurt, for I am invincible.
I have been soiled, burned, torn and
trampled on the streets of
my country, and when it is by those
with whom I have served in battle - it
hurts.
But I shall overcome - for I am strong.
I have slipped the bonds of Earth and stand
watch over the
uncharted new frontiers of space
from my vantage point on the moon.
I have been a silent witness to all of
America's finest hours.
But my finest hour comes when I am torn
into strips to
be used for bandages for my wounded
comrades on the field of battle,
When I fly at half mast to honor my
soldiers,
And when I lie in the trembling arms of a
grieving
mother at the graveside of her fallen son.
I am proud.
My name is Old Glory.
Dear God - Long may I wave.

*Mr. Schnauber has given permission to use this
poem for program or publishing purposes.
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Mr. Howard Schnauber, the author.](#)*

Peer Support Specialist

By Trudi Grossman

When I first came to CMH as a consumer, I was confused, tired and not sure of my future. I had been hospitalized, treated, and diagnosed in a span of one week. I reported to my psychiatrist and we began the process of pinning down the right medications that would help control my symptoms. I also began counseling and started to unravel the big ball of yarn that had become my life.

The people that treated me were more than hired workers in jobs they performed. They truly cared about my feelings and recovery. When I felt too tired to battle my symptoms, they offered me a shoulder on which to lean. When my meds caused side affects, they tirelessly worked to find me a new and better medication, because these “workers” never took their job as a 9-5 place to pickup a paycheck and walk away. Because of them, I had a team of doctors, nurses, social workers, and counselors to help me battle my illness with pride and dignity.

As I muddled through the mental health system, I found myself working at CMH a few hours a week. My first job since my diagnosis, in a place where any blip in my character was regarded with patience and kindness. CMH believed enough in me to allow me to use my experience to help others in similar situations. As I helped people with various odd jobs, I soon realized that I was using my illness and its journey to give others hope when they felt there was none. In doing that, my own problems and symptoms were given a boost of adrenaline called peer support.

I was soon informed that peer support was an actual job at CMH and would I like to train to become one. I was shown what the trainings entailed along with the various times and dates. I had to apply to become a peer support, as this was not just a “title”, but a genuine job. After my training I would be called a Certified Peer Support Specialist. What this meant was I would be a person who had gone through the system, the meds, the diagnoses, the symptoms and everything that came along with having a mental illness. I would be a peer who understood all that someone had gone through and offer my services. These services could merely be just listening and sharing my story. They could also mean being a part of someone’s life in other ways. Helping to fill out confusing paperwork, accompanying them to visits to their

counselor or psychiatrist. Because of my own experiences I could help lead someone through their recovery and deliver hope to them, when it may seem darkness is all they can see. I could be a light in the darkness, a beacon of hope that represents my own personal experience and provides encouragement in this confusing time to them.

A Certified Peer Support Specialist undergoes an intense week long training program, supervised and taught by highly trained individuals who have gone through the mental health system at one point in their life. Every aspect from the beginning symptoms right through to the recovery process and beyond is covered in this training. Role playing, individual stories and group bonding is implemented in these days of reviewing our own illnesses. It’s like being in a room with fellow comrades who have also endured mental illness and all that it encompasses. After a week these people are like family and friendships forged are life changing. The energy in the room is amazing and within each of our own recovery stories is the knowledge of hope and moving beyond our illness to who we really have become. I left this training with a renewed sense of faith in my newfound skills as a certified peer support.

Three weeks later we all met again to study for our test that certifies us in this field. Worry and fear were prevalent on all our faces as we reviewed everything we had learned. Then with words of encouragement and confidence in us from our trainer, we realized one thing.

This test was not going to be as difficult as we all feared. This is a test we had already passed, as we progressed into the recovery stage of our own illness. All we had to do was remember our own journeys of self discovery and use that power to answer questions which were embedded in our memories. As I took the test, my fear faded and I answered each question as I was taught and as I had endured.

Being a Certified Peer Support Specialist is my calling and after 42 years I finally found my niche in life and work. I am proud of the work I do and leave everyday knowing I have helped someone even in a minor way with a open ear and an open heart. The people, who have pushed, prodded and even shoved to get us here as Peer Support Specialists are unbelievably selfless people who saw a way to teach people helping people. They believed in us and our skills when even we questioned our own ability. To those

people who shall remain nameless but never forgotten- Thank you for having the fortitude and knowledge to propel many of us forward, when standing still was all we could ever dream

Peer Support Roundtable

As Certified Peer Support Specialists become more and more valuable in the Mental Health field, information sharing has sparked a great way to get the word out. These informative monthly meetings are known as Peer Roundtables and have developed into a terrific way to stay in touch with what other Peer supports are doing in our area. These meetings rotate between our 4 counties in the WCHO which are Lenawee, Washtenaw, Livingston and Monroe. Sharing ideas and points of interest are highlighted in the roundtables which usually consist of anywhere from 10-15 peers.

The last Peer Support roundtable held on June 5, 2008 was in Ypsilanti at the Washtenaw County Public Health Human & Services building. Some of the topics were the Lansing Walk A Mile and new renovations to the Monroe County Drop In Center. Also handed out was a “Now what” packet for what to do after you have become a Certified Peer Support Specialist. These meetings are a relaxed atmosphere with plenty of story sharing and ideas on how to make the most of our Peer “skills.”

Congratulations!

We would like to extend congratulations to **Diane Ballingall** for the hard work it took to become a Certified Peer Support Specialist. Diane has a long history of advocating for persons with mental illness and other disabilities. She has been active in our Consumer Advisory Committee, the local NAMI chapter, serves on the NAMI State Board and is the Representative to the National NAMI Board. Diane continues to promote efforts to stamp out the stigma associated with having a mental illness and is willing to speak to groups about her own recovery. Diane is in the process of becoming an independent facilitator to further her abilities to assist our consumers. In her down time she can be seen walking her two cats. Congratulations Diane!!

Mental Health Awareness Month Scrapbook May 2008



5/12/08 Local Walk from the Human Service Building to the Old Courthouse



Rain didn't stop the 1800 people that lined the Capitol steps and lawn on May 14th for the Annual Walk A Mile In My Shoes Rally

Lenawee was well represented by Doris Beckey and Linda Holden holding our County Flag on the steps of the Capitol.




2008 Recipients of the Lori Sallows Anti Stigma Award, Jim Thompson (left) and Doris Beckey (right) with last year's recipient, Diane Ballingall



Keynote Speaker, Michelle Rose Armstrong, talks about "Recovery: More Than Managing You Symptoms" at the Conference and Independence Conference May 21.

Lenawee Safe Kids held a seat check event at Wal-Mart and checked 23 seats. The new Booster Seat Law goes into effect July 1.





Save the Date

- **Suicide Prevention Workgroup meeting**—July 10, 2008 2:30 pm at CMH.
- **LCMHA Board Meetings** 6/26/08, 7/24/08 at LCMHA office
- **Farmers Market** at Community Action Agency—July 11, 18, 26 and Aug. 1, 9:00 to noon.
- **Lenawee County Fair** July 20—July 26, 2008

LCMHA Board Position

LCMHA has an opening on its Board of Directors for a community minded person concerned with issues related to the welfare of citizens with mental health challenges. This is a three year term of office pending approval by the County Board of Commissioners with per diem and mileage compensation. Availability one day per month for Board Meetings, and appointment to other committees as assigned. Please submit a letter of interest and related qualifications to: Roger Myers, Executive Director, Lenawee Community Mental Health Authority, 1040 S. Winter Street, Suite 1022, Adrian, MI 49221.

PROJECT FRESH Community Action Agency

Four Fridays this summer you will find additional activity at Community Action Agency. They plan to have a Farmers Market in their parking lot between the hours of 9:00 am and 1:00 pm as well as cooking demonstrations by MSU Extension.

The kick-off will be July 11th. As stated in the article on Page 3, you will also get a chance to register to vote. Mark these dates on your calendar:

July 11, 2008
July 18, 2008
July 25, 2008
Aug 01, 2008

Get great fresh vegetables and fruit and learn new ways to prepare summer's delights.

Do you have something interesting you would like to share? Contact Customer Services with your ideas, poems, stories. You might just get published!

Has your address changed recently? Don't forget to contact LCMHA with your new address.

If you do not wish to have future newsletter mailed to our home, please notify:
Customer Services
263-8905

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