
NEW DIRECTIONS

Volume 1, Issue 2 "By, for, and about consumers of behavioral health services."

June/July 2004

RICC

If you have a disability, or are the parent of or work with persons with disabilities, then the Regional Interagency Coordinating Council (RICC) is for you!

RICC is a Community-based Council that addresses the issues that affect persons with disabilities in Grand Traverse County and teaches Self-Advocacy and Leadership skills so that you can have greater voice in your Community.

Grand Traverse County RICC is one of 50 RICC's in Michigan that is funded by a grant from the Developmental Disabilities Council. Area RICC's work on issues that affect their community as well as collaborate on projects that affect all of our communities.

The RICC meets at the Traverse City Public Library once a month. Our next meeting will be held on June 16, 2004 from 12:00-1:00 with special guest Terry Hunt from the Developmental Disabilities Council in Lansing.

Any Questions Contact Angela or Jim at Northern Michigan Alliance for Independent Living at 231-922-0903.

Make A Difference Today



Shown here is Duncan Wyeth, Executive Director of the Michigan Commission on Disability Concerns (MCDC).

Duncan recently spoke at the Regional Consumer Conference, "Knowledge Leads to Empowerment!"

Duncan's presentation was both informative and humorous.

He made it clear that you need to know yourself, recognizing your history. You also need to be comfortable in defining yourself. He describes himself as having a "cerebral palsy accent." How can you define yourself so that you're comfortable with the label? You need to look at what you can do, not what you can't do. Thinking outside of the box allows for more creativity. Lastly, be proud of your history!

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NAMI STATE CONFERENCE

National Alliance of the Mentally Ill (NAMI) held their conference in Traverse City this year, April 24-26th.

Consumers attended a preconference event to introduce people to The Michigan Consumer Council and elect representatives to serve in this capacity. Peter Landry was elected as Representative and Charity Kendall and Leslie Sladek-Sobczak as Co-Alternate representatives.

They were all involved in a conference call at the end of May. Susan Shaver will be assisting us through this transition as she has served all of us well in the past

If you would like to contribute to *New Directions* please contact the Editor, Leslie Sladek-Sobczak, at 231 933-4907, or email Leslie.Sladek-Sobczak@nlcmh.org.

Would you like to receive your copy of *New Directions* through the email? Just send your address to the above with the message *New Directions* in the subject line.

THE AWAKENINGS PROJECT:
Consumers Use the Arts to Heal and Educate

The Awakenings Project, based in Glen Ellyn, Illinois, is an arts program designed to showcase the talents of gifted individuals. The Program includes literature, fine arts, theatre and musical arts, but what makes this program special is that all its contributors are living with mental illnesses.

This unique arts program is administered by Robert Lundin, founder and president, and editor and chief of the magazine, *Awakenings Review*, and Irene O'Neill, co-founder and director of the fine arts program. Lundin, who is himself living with a mental illness, explained, "We wanted to create a vehicle whereby people could express their feelings about living with a mental illness, as well as their feelings on recovery and reintegration. This is a project about individuals with mental illnesses showing their excellence."

The project's literary magazine — *The Awakenings Review* — in its summer review 2003 issue focused on the writings of individuals living with depression and bipolar disorder.

The Awakenings Review is published twice a year. To request a subscription, call 630-469-1567.

This article was reprinted from REINTEGRATION TODAY, spring 2004 issue.



Attention: All Creative Artists

The 2004 Recipient Rights Statewide Conference Steering Committee is offering two exciting opportunities for consumers who are:

ARTISTS, POETS, WRITERS, ENTREPRENEURS,
and Anyone involved in the creative arts.

VENDORS

Show your art, book, or musical CD at the conference. The work must be in selling or exhibition condition, i.e., framed and ready for easel. Vendors will be selected on the basis of quality of work and diversity. Vendors should send a sample of their work. (Polaroid photos will do just fine!)

PANELISTS

The conference is also looking for consumers who would be willing to participate with other artists sharing their experiences with art and recovery. Please submit a brief history of your artistic background, along with a copy of the material you would like to present. Panelists will be chosen on the basis of submitted ideas/outlines.

Send Submissions with your name, address, and phone number by June 30, 2004 to:

Roann Bonney, Kalamazoo CMHS, 3299 Gull Road,
P.O. Box 63, Nazareth, MI 49074, 269 553-8045
rbonney@kazoozcmh.org

Daily Life

Hello again. Today we will take a look at our Daily Life. Things that you did in the past but have left behind. Activities that you once enjoyed doing. People from your list of Natural Supports. Places you frequented in the past. Bringing them back into your life.

Let's take a look at your daily routine and what you may want it to be like, a step at a time. For many they wake up, shower, dress, eat breakfast, brush their teeth and begin the remainder of the day. Whether that be work, school, daily chores, or off running errands, the day has begun. Sometimes you may need to remind yourself of these activities and others throughout the day.

What should be looked at first are those items that need to happen, such as taking your medication, eating breakfast, lunch and dinner. Food provides you with the energy needed to function well. A healthy diet is recommended. For those with other health-related issues that concern your diet, what you choose may need to be planned out. (If you need help with this let your worker or health care provider know so they can assist you in finding that help.) Exercise, needed by all and yet so easily neglected. Take a walk in the morning, park farther from your destination. Get off the bus a stop away from where you are going. The lakeshores are beautiful here in Michigan. We are blessed with an abundance of State and National Parks for hiking and biking. If you don't like the out of doors you can walk the mall, many people do. No mall? How about your local schools? Many allow you to walk the halls for your exercise.

Fun! Everyone needs a little fun in his or her day. We all enjoy different activities and the definition of fun can have a different meaning for you. You might spend time on a craft, coffee or lunch with a friend or family member. Go to or rent a movie, watch it with a friend. Attend a community event. Local bookstores often have entertainment. Go fishing, swimming, dancing, or bowling. There are many possibilities. These activities may be done alone, but may also be used to renew relationships and make new friends. Relaxation, so often this is set aside and forgotten about. How did you relax in the past?

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Web Sites you might like to visit:

northernlakescmh.org

nwcma.org

www.healthyplace.com

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How do you relax now? Take a bubble bath; we see this portrayed in television commercials. Yoga, meditation, deep breathing, reading a book, candle light and soft music, enjoying a cup of herbal tea, writing in your journal, watching the sun set, or children playing in the park. Feeding the ducks, bird watching, having a massage. Observe others for more ideas. Only you limit the possibilities.

These ideas are not here to overwhelm you or cause you to feel as if you're not doing enough. There are times when we need to take things one step at a time. Ask yourself what do I have to do each day and list those items, starting with self-care. Then look at what you may want to add into your routine. Exercise, for example. Choose the type of exercise and add this to your list. When you do all the items on your list and feel ready to add more to the list, you might try fun, relaxation, education or any other activity that may be of interest. The time will come when you are able to remove an item from the list; maybe you no longer need a reminder to brush your teeth or some other task. As you recover much of what you do will become habits. This doesn't mean you won't find reminders helpful, some of us will always need a list.

I wish you well as you work your way toward wellness.

Leslie Sladek-Sobczak

HHS launches pilot consumer health site With WebMD

The Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) has launched a nine-month pilot project with WebMD Health to present the government's consumer health information to the public on a new online HHS "channel" (hhs.webmd.com). The Web site will include health content "supporting national priorities," including topics such as physical activity, nutrition, preventive screening, and diabetes. According to HHS, this partnership will also allow them to disseminate life-saving information to the public in the event of a major public health emergency.

Information: Go to <http://hhs.webmd.com>

Traverse House News

Recently Traverse House hosted their first ever Spaghetti Dinner Fund Raiser. A good time was had by all. They made \$350.00, and served 55 people.

Presently people are signing up to work at Interlochen for the summer. They also joined in Art In The Park fund raiser to raise monies for the continuation of art classes at Traverse City. Tom McClellan and several other artists participated as well as Traverse House members.

They continue to have their ethnic meal each month and hope to have Native American featured this month.

Your Voice Counts!

How to Provide Testimony to the Mental Health Commission

Earlier this year, after a series of negative articles in the *Detroit News*, Governor Granholm formed a "Mental Health Commission." The commission is charged with recommending "sweeping changes" in the delivery and effectiveness of the Michigan public mental health system.

It's too early to tell what the Commission's recommendations will be or what changes will be implemented. It is important that we, as consumers, make sure the Commission knows what services we value and what we see as the gaps.

The Commission is looking for "testimony" from consumers and other groups about the mental health system.

If you want to provide testimony there are some choices about how to do it:

- 1. You can mail your testimony in a letter to:**
Mental Health Commission
c/o Public Sector Consultants
600 W. St. Joseph St., Suite 10
Lansing MI 48933
- 2. You can fax your testimony to:**
(517) 484-6529 fax
- 3. You can email your testimony to:**
www.michigan.gov/mentalhealth
- 4. You can testify on videotape:**
If you are interested in videotaping, please tell a CAC Member your name and how to reach you and we'll find a way to help you videotape.

Book Review

If you like a story that is zany, twisted humor and that has fast action, *Stingray Shuffle* by Tim Dorsey is for you.

This book focuses on local historian and a serial killer, Serge A. Storms. When he is off his medication, no one is safe! Not the Russian Mafia, spoiled frat boys, women's book clubs, and bad Vegas performing acts. Especially when 5 million in cash in a bugged suitcase is racing up and down the Eastern Seaboard. In this oddball circus little things such as astronomical body counts tend to get lost in the shuffle. If you also enjoy Carl Hinson then you will certainly love Tim Dorsey.

You can also go to Tim's web site at: www.timdorsey.com and get a Serge A. Storm T-shirt.

Respectfully submitted by Rob Minnema

Ongoing Events

If you know of other ongoing events that could help other consumers, please contact the Editor of *New Directions*.

- **NAMI Support** second Monday of the month at 6:00 p.m. Munson Medical Center – Doctors Dining room.
- **Schizophrenic's Anonymous** every Friday at 1:00 p.m. Traverse House, 105 Hall St., TC.
- **Support group** for parents of children with ADHD Third Thursday of the month 6:00-7:30 p.m. Child Guidance Inc, 947-2255
- **Survivors of Suicide Support Group** third Wednesday of the month, 7-8:30 p.m., at Mercy Hospital 2nd floor Wexford Room, Cadillac.
- **NAMI-C.A.R.E. Support Group** for people with a mental illness. 2nd Monday of the month, 6-7:30 p.m. Grace Episcopal Church Corner of Washington and Boardman, TC.
- **DBSA** (Depressive Bipolar Support Alliance) meets every Tuesday 7-8:00 p.m. Club Cadillac. Contact Betty Clark at 775-5638.
- **Our Kids Support Group**, for parents/caregivers of kids with bipolar disorder, 7:00 p.m. fourth Tuesday, Traverse Area District Library. 941-9128.

Upcoming Events

- The First Annual Club House Conference “Bridging the Gap” June 10 & 11
- Self Determination Conference June 14 & 15
- Kandu Island Open House July 24. James Gordon to perform.
- Consumer Conference Lansing, August 26-27
- Person Centered Planning Conference Lansing, Sept.20-21

Club Cadillac

3 New Interns From Baker College

Rich P. is currently employed at NLCMH as a Residential Care Aide at Seneca Place Home. Rich is pursuing his Bachelors Degree in Human Services, and has split his internship between Club Cadillac and other programs through NLCMH to get exposure to a variety of programs. He hopes to have his bachelors degree by January 2006. Rich also enjoys fishing, hunting, photography, cooking, and Church missions. What he has enjoyed most during his time with us is meeting and interacting with members.

Kristin began her internship with us in February and will finish when she has completed 160 hours. She is pursuing an Associate's Degree in Human Services, and will graduate this June. She plans on taking a break from studies, but plans on pursuing a Bachelors Degree in Human Services. Kristin says her internship has been a real eye opening experience. She says, “It is one thing to watch videos in the classroom about persons with mental disabilities, but it is a whole different experience to actually sit down and talk with people. It has been an enjoyable experience.”

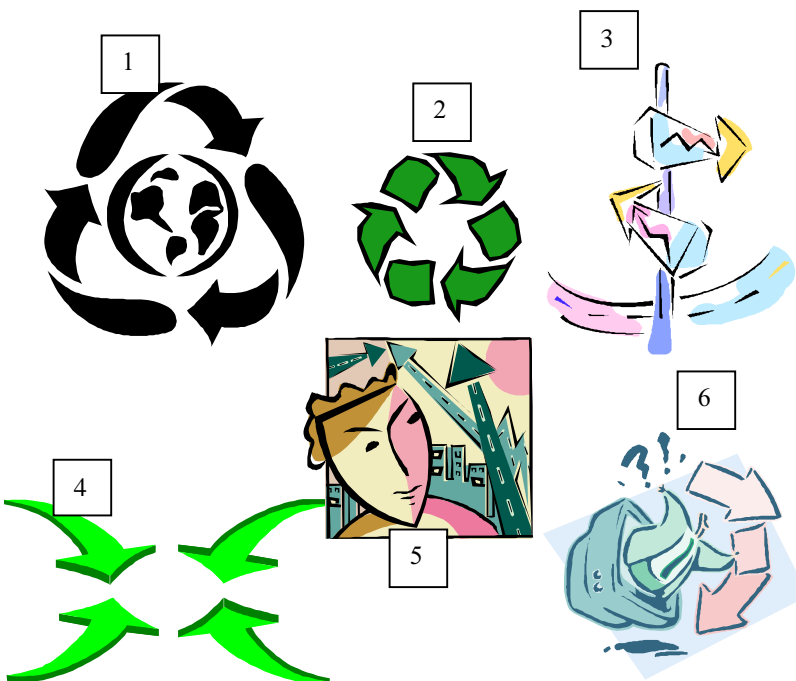
Diane, having her Associates Degree in Human Services, is now pursuing her Bachelors Degree in Social Work. She began her internship with Club Cadillac in February and needs to put in a total of 160 hours. Dianne says she likes us — all the different personalities help her work & studies. She helps us out in all areas of Club Cadillac and is energetic in all she does. She thinks everyone should experience Club Cadillac and its members. She enjoys cross stitch and embroidery and she also teaches a prayer class. ~ *Marlene A. & Chris A./staff*

New Directions needs a logo

Please help by choosing your first and second choice and turn into reception in an envelope for Leslie Sladek-Sobczak at the Traverse City office. Your Help is appreciated.

First Choice: _____

Second Choice _____



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