



NEW DIRECTIONS

“By, for, and about consumers of behavioral health services.”

Volume 3, Issue 1

April-May 2006

Save This Date! Save This Date!



**Thursday, May 25, 2006
10:00 a.m. to 11:30 p.m.**

State Capitol Building, Lansing

Why We Walk...

- Because May is Mental Health Awareness month
To enhance public awareness**
- Because legislators need to know Mental Health Matters
To put an end to the stigma related to mental illness
and developmental disabilities**
- Because Michigan does not have parity between
mental health and physical health care coverage
To promote mental health and wellness**
- Because we can make a difference**

“Unmasking the Beauty Within”



What can you unmask? The Northwest CMH Affiliation Consumer Conference, which is designed by, for and about consumers, is coming up soon, May 17. The conference will be in Tustin this year at the Kettunen Center. Staff will be assisting in the transportation to and from the conference. Look for registration forms in the Lobby or ask your worker for one. The theme for the conference this year will look at the wonderful attributes we all have within. Some of us may have forgotten those great things that we have done in the past or continue to do without realizing how others appreciate what we do.

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One again we will feature “Celebrating your Talents and Gifts.” What talent can you share and display for others to see. We already have entries for various crafts, painting, pottery, crocheting, knitting and much more. Forms for entering your work are available in the Lobby or through your worker. Deadline for work is May 15, so we may best prepare for the display.

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Email subscriptions!

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Contributions!

If you would like to contribute to *New Directions* please contact The Editor, Leslie Sladek, at 231 933-4907, or email Leslie.Sladek@nlcmh.org. Contributing writers: Kandu Island and Chat Room.

Recovery is possible with proper treatment and support.



Northern Lakes Welcomes New Board Member

Nina Zamora, our newest NLCMH board member, pictured with her co-chair Pat Bogar of the Northwest CMH Affiliation Consumer Conference.

Nina Zamora, newest member to the Northern lakes board, is excited by all that she will be doing. Presently she is sometimes quiet at the board meeting. "I'm a sponge right now, absorbing all that I can and trying to process the information," states Nina.

Nina has served two years as an Americorps volunteer in the past. Presently, Nina serves on the Council of Volunteers and Mentors board (CVM), which oversees Kandu Island Drop-in Center, and the Regional Interagency Coordinating Council (RICC). She belongs to Americans with Developmental Disabilities and is co-chair for this year's Northwest CMH Affiliation Consumer Conference. If you watch television much you may have seen her on the ad for Bay Home Medical and Rehab. Our own TV star!

"I'm a sponge right absorbing all that I can and trying to process the information," states Nina.

When asked how she came to be on the board she was approached by an individual who thought she would be good, she had good ideas and she knew how to convey herself to others. She wasn't so sure about being on the board, questioning what does she know about being on a board? She was with a group of friends at this time and they all laughed telling her of all the things she already does.

She talks now about the amount of literature she needs to read to be ready for a board meeting as well as all she learned at the Michigan Association of Community Mental Health Boards conference. She's jazzed about what will come and what she can do. She's optimistic, she feels the work is a blessing not a burden, she has Hope in her life and a sense of belonging, she is not alone and is knowledgeable of resources or where to go to get information. She is well along on the Road of Recovery. Nina has stories to entertain you for hours if you take a moment and chat with her. I guarantee you will not be bored and you will have more than your share of laughs.

On the lighter side it has come to the attention of some that she can be seen working on her crocheting during meetings.

You are more than just a diagnosis – you can lead an enjoyable, full and productive life.

Congratulations, Patriots!

We all remember the wonderful performance of the Patriots Choir last year at the consumer conference. The Patriots continue to perform for many. This winter the singing Patriots (composed of Bridgeway participants in the Cadillac Office) had the honor of singing the National Anthem at the opening ceremony of the Special Olympics winter games in Traverse City. Over 1600 people attended the ceremonies and heard them sing! It is quite an honor for the Patriots and all of us receiving services through Northern Lakes CMH.

Traverse House Update



David Allen, the new Director of Traverse House, was welcomed aboard March 20. David has worked previously at Fisher Clubhouse in Detroit. One of David's first priorities will be to hire staff for the clubhouse. Welcome, David!

Chat Room

Good news---- the Chat Room Drop-In Center is really swelling its doors. The daily attendance has swollen to 18 to 20 consumers daily. Many young people are finding Chat Room a safe place to gather and meet new friends.

A recent consumer meeting has brought more understanding of what the consumers want in the summer to come. One item for the girls are over night sleepovers and a trip to the movies for the guys. Special trips are also planned, camping, visiting other Drop-In Centers and a trip to Holland for the Tulip Festival are just a few plans underway.

The Chat Room will soon start the production of an introductory movie for new consumers coming in to the system. The film will inform about the Chat Room Drop-In. The film will also let them know that they are not alone in their disabilities. Come visit us and say HI!

The Chat Room is located in Houghton Lake.

Cadillac News

Members of the Cadillac Leadership Class of 2005/2006 are excited to announce the annual project for this year. The project is titled "Club Cadillac – Hope for the Future."

The team is looking forward to helping a wonderful service organization to renovate their facility. Club Cadillac has been in the community for 11 years.

The Leadership class has been given the opportunity to help give Hope for the Future. The goal is to enhance, update and rearrange the business/banking unit and improve the lobby/library area of the clubhouse. ~ Information in part from the Cadillac Area Business Magazine January/February, 2006

Consumer Advocacy Council



The March meeting included a presentation from MRS, (Michigan Rehabilitation Services). This proved to be very informative to the CAC and several staff members. If you are thinking of returning to work, talk with your worker to help evaluate your readiness. This is a goal that can be built into your person centered plan.

The mission of Michigan Rehabilitation Services is to assist individuals to achieve employment and self-sufficiency.

Basically there are 4 steps to follow when working with MRS:

1. Decide on an employment goal.
2. Develop a plan.
3. Follow the plan.
4. Reach the goal.

MRS can help you explore job possibilities that are right for you. Services that are provided are based on individual need. You may not get the same services that your friend or family member received.

When working with MRS you form a partnership and work together for your goal. The employment goal is for your job to become a major source of income for you, not just for a little extra spending money. One must be realistic when choosing to return to work.

If you have questions you may choose to speak with your worker or a CAC member.



Club Cadillac



The clubhouse has begun many new activities this spring. Club members have been conscious of their health and started a walking club. They walk at the Wexford arena presently and hope to continue outside when the weather warms up. They have also made some menu changes to the snack bar, looking at healthier items.

Cooking classes have started. The classes take items off the shelves at the grocery store and use the recipes on the box, and recently they made lasagna with no-cook noodles.

Many are enjoying the new craft night. Members have worked on drawing (sketching), plastic canvas and will soon be working with clay. The clay was unfortunately back ordered.

Club members look forward to attending the upcoming MAC meeting in April. The members will also be writing the quarterly newsletter for MAC. No time to let the grass grow around their feet as the lawn crew is gearing up for spring.

Kandu Island

The Traverse City Drop-In Center is well into our second year of operation. The application of the Federal Block Grant awarded CVM, Inc. for use in the current fiscal year 2006 is also well under way.

Thanks to the Grant, and Northern Lakes in-kind services, Kandu Vandu* provides the Drop-In the ability to transport donations, supplies, and ourselves, to and from presentations, meetings, and social/recreational outings.

The Drop-In is in a business transition in the natural course of growth. CVM, Inc. is continuing to network and develop constructive community and business relationships. The transition has created the need to reprise the business plan, and to plan for the writing of additional grant funds including the ongoing development of a contractual agreement at the Federal and State level in pursuance of 501c3 status.

The celebration in all of the Drop-In continues to remain a key to our concentrated energies in support of maintenance, stability, and well-being. We send our thanks to all who have provided us with help and support. We measure our strength and success in large part due to the support and help from the community. Thank You! Happy Spring to us all and have a safe and fun Summer in the Northwestern Michigan Lower Peninsula!

* *Kandu Vandu is the name for the drop-in's van.*

Seeking help when you need it is a sign of strength – not weakness.



Summer Camp for Kids

There's a summer camp this year for kids ages 10-16 who have autism or asperger's disorder at Hayo-Went-Ha on Torch Lake sponsored by North Country and open to folks outside their service area (like ours!). Day Camp will be 5 days, August 21-25, and Residential Camp for 3 days and 2 nights, August 21-23. Day camp is \$230 and Residential Camp \$200. To see the camp go to www.hayowentha.org. For more information or to register contact Julie Kosloskey 231-533-8619 or jkosloskey@norcocmh.org.

Consumer Advocate on the Loose

Ernie Reynolds is Northern Lakes Consumer Advocacy Council Chair. He resides in Roscommon, Michigan. Ernie is also the Director of the Chat Room in Houghton Lake.

He first entered the mental health system in 1965 and has knowledge of how bad the system was at that time with only a couple of medicines to HELP consumers with their problems. Since then he has developed diabetes, epilepsy, bipolar disorder, asthma, and COPD.

He has been in a psychiatric unit a couple of times since 1965. After being misdiagnosed or taking part in incorrect therapies, he suffered for many years. Having been in the mental health system for forty years, he is well aware of how far the mental health system has come and how far it still has to go. He believes consumers need to be involved and providing input for the system to become recovery based.

Ernie's involvement did not happen overnight but began first by attending the drop-in center in Houghton Lake. Staff at Northern lakes encouraged him to get involved and he's done just that. These are the councils, committees and boards he presently is on as well as other achievements:

1. Chairman of Consumer Advocacy Council for NLCMH
2. Certified Advocate for Persons with Disabilities
3. Chairman of the state PAIMI (Person and Individuals with a Mental Illness), Council for MPAS
4. Member of the Board of Michigan Protection and Advocacy Services (MPAS)
5. Member of Public Policy Committee for MPAS
6. Vice-President of New Hope Inc. (for drop-in centers)
7. Chairman of Consumer Education and Self-Advocacy committee for National Disability Rights Network
8. Member of Project Advisory Committee for National Disability Rights Network
9. Member of Mental Health Association of Michigan
10. Member of Improving Practices Leadership Committee for NLCMH
11. Member of new Michigan Recovery Council
12. Certified First-Aid and CPR Instructor
13. Peer Support Specialist
- 14.

Ernie's inspiration was to make a change in the system and

not complain about how the system doesn't work. "With the encouragement of Greg Paffhouse and his trust and faith that I could make a change...I put this in my Person Center Process planning program. My case manager has helped me achieve these goals and from time to time asks me if I am too involved. My answer is that with the things I do I have not felt this good in many, many years."

Ernie is an inspiration to all in what can be done with the Person Centered Plan.

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 6:00pm Munson Medical Center-Doctors Dining room.
- **DBSA (Depressive Bipolar Support Alliance)** meets every Tuesday 7-8:00pm Club Cadillac. Contact Betty Clark at 775-5638.
- **Bereavement Support Group**, available to the public through MMC's Hospice and Palliative Care program. Mondays at Hospice house 6:30pm or Tuesdays at the TC Senior Center 10:00am. For more information 935-8491
- **Support Group for Teens (13-19)**, For Bipolar disorder and Depression. This peer-led group meets every **Thursday** from 3:15-5:00 pm., at the First Presbyterian Church, 221 East Harris St., Cadillac.
- **Healthy Choices-** This group meets to discuss and share diabetic friendly recipes. Meeting the **fourth Monday** of the month from 11:00 am – 12:00 noon at 3003 S. Garfield (Kandu Island). Information call Jeremy Wolf at 922-0903, or 645-4884.

Upcoming Events

- **April 19**, Consumer Advocacy Council, 1:30-3:30pm. Traverse City, video to Houghton Lake.
- **April 20**, Regional Consumer Forum in Cadillac from 10-noon.
- **April 20**, NLCMH Board Meeting, 6:30pm Elmwood Township Hall, Traverse City.
- **May 17**, Consumer Conference at the Kettunen Center south of Cadillac 9-3:00pm.
- **May 18**, NLCMH Board Meeting, 6:30pm at NLCMH in Houghton Lake
- **May 21-27**, Schizophrenia awareness Week: Hope is Today's Reality. "Increase Awareness, Spread the Hope"
- **May 25 & 26**, New Perspectives on Mental Health in your Community, a NAMI Michigan & Michigan Mental Health Association conference.
- **May 25**, Walk a Mile in my Shoes Rally, Lansing 10:00-11:30am.
- **June 12 & 13**, 9th Annual Self-Determination Conference, Holiday Inn South, Lansing
- **June 28 – July 2**, NAMI Convention, "Changing Minds, Keeping the Promise," Washington, DC.