

Summer 2011



OUTREACH

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By: Millie Tomidy-Pepper, Executive Director

Looking at the picture below, you can see that our friend and supporter, Senator Michael Ranzenhofer stopped by the MHA last week to drop off a few of his own gently used suits and other clothing items for our clothing store. The "Colors Galore Clothing Store" at the MHA provides a valuable resource for Social Club Members to purchase professional attire for re-entry to the workforce, return to college or casual clothing for the change of seasons. It also provides valuable retail experience for the Social Club members that work in the store.

In addition to stopping at the clothing store, the Senator also visited the Snack Shop and Warm Line – two other programs at the MHA that offer opportunities to gain job skills. The tour wrapped up in the Social Club where the Senator met and listened to the concerns of the members. A former President of the Social Club and current Warm Line Listener expressed her concerns regarding the budgetary cuts the MHA has sustained this year. These cuts have led to many difficult decisions, one of which is the closure



of Social Club on Saturdays. Her willingness to express to the Senator what the MHA has meant to her and how much it has helped herself and others was a powerful experience- her voice was heard by the Senator! Senator Ranzenhofer assured her he would remember those concerns when he travels back to Albany.

With budgetary reductions affecting almost everyone these days, we continue to look for new and innovative ways to reach the community with economical educational opportunities. Beginning in September we will begin a lunch & learn series on various mental health topics. We invite everyone to bring a brown bag lunch and come and spend your lunch hour with us! We will offer a 30 minute video followed by discussion period. You can find all the details on the enclosed insert.

In closing, knowing that having fun is good for everyone's mental health, we are also looking for creative ways to put the "fun" back in fundraising. So on August 26th, we hope you will join us for the "Birdies, BBQ and Boogie Classic"; the MHA's first miniature golf tournament at Terry Hills Golf Course. Teams are filling up fast so if you are interested in joining the fun, please call the MHA at 585-344-2611 for more information and to register your team of four. Thank you in advance for your continued support of the MHA as we strive to meet the needs of the community in these fiscally challenging times.

May the rest of your summer be safe and enjoyable!

SUPPORT GROUPS AT THE MHA

Life Bridges

Life Bridges is a support group that is open to the community and provides education, information, mutual support and encouragement to individuals with ALL types of trauma histories. Life Bridges is open to anyone 18 or older, who would like to enhance or improve their positive living skills and who finds the group process beneficial in doing so. The group meets on Thursdays from 1:30-3:00pm and 6:15-7:45pm at the MHA.

MICA Support Group

(Mental Illness/Chemical Addiction)

This group is designed to support and educate individuals with a dual diagnosis of mental illness & chemical addiction. This group meets every Friday from 2:30-3:30pm at the MHA.

Survivors of Suicide

S.O.S is a monthly support group designed to help those who have lost a loved one to suicide resolve their grief and pain in their own personal way. Please call the agency for more information.

Depression/Bipolar Support Group

A group for individuals who cope with Depression and/or Bipolar Disorder. Please contact the MHA for more info.

Family Support Group

A group for families or friends whose loved one has a mental illness. Please contact the MHA for more info.

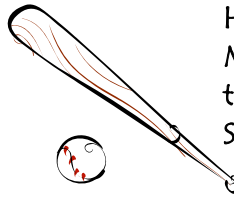
Congratulations to Gary Horton!

Gary was selected as the recipient of the 2011 NYS Defenders Association Wilfred R. O'Connor Award. Wilfred R. O'Connor was a founding member of the Defenders Association.

His beliefs were clear: every defendant, regardless of race, color, creed or economic status, deserves a day in court and zealous client-centered representation. He believed in making a difference one life at a time-through mercy, justice and compassion.

Gary is the Genesee County Public Defender as well as Vice-President of the Mental Health Association's Board of Directors.

*Congratulations 2011 Guitar Raffle Winner
Josh Fulmer from Batavia, NY.*



HOME RUN!!! A big thank you to Rick Mancuso at TF Browns for donating tickets to the Muckdogs game for our Life Bridges Support Group to attend the game!

Criminal Justice Day 2011

Each year the MHA sponsors Criminal Justice Day in conjunction with National Crime Victims' Rights Week. This year, in April, *Restorative Justice: Impact on the Community* was presented. Restorative Justice is concerned with healing the wounds of the injured party, holding the person(s) causing injury accountable in a meaningful way and repairing harm done to interpersonal relationships and the related damage to the community. It seeks to involve all stakeholders and provide opportunities for those most affected by the crime to be directly involved in the process of responding to the harm caused and heal the trauma.

Keynote speaker, Lorraine Stutzman Amstutz, Co-Director of the Mennonite Central Committee's (MCC) Office on Justice and Peacebuilding, presented relevant information on the importance of restorative justice.

The program was a huge success due to partnerships with the following: the Batavia City Police Department, CASA for Children, GCASA, Genesee Community College, Genesee Justice, Genesee County District Attorney's Office, Genesee County Public Defender's Office, Mental Health Association in Genesee County, Justice for Children Advocacy Center, Rape Crisis Services and YWCA Domestic Violence.



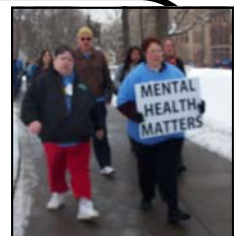
The Warm Line Travels to Albany

On March 8 and 9, CMHP teams from 12 MHA affiliates, gathered in Albany for the project's 17th annual statewide meeting. Three team members and the Warm Line Coordinator, Charley DelPlato participated in the two day event. The over-arching theme of this year's meeting was learning to think creatively to find new resources and solutions for ongoing challenges.

Training topics included *Finding Funding in Lean Times*, *Clinical Restructuring from Grass Roots Perspectives*, *Advocacy Strategies for Lean Times*, *Creating a Statewide Veterans' Coalition*, and *The Possibilities Program*, *New Perspectives for Positive Change*.

In addition, returning teams shared outcomes of the work they did in 2010 as well as what they learned from their efforts. As in past years, participants found this portion of the meeting to be the most informative and most inspiring. Despite the budgetary and policy challenges we will all face in 2011 and 2012, individuals left feeling renewed and empowered to continue advocating for people with psychiatric diagnoses.

On March 9th, teams joined approximately 350 other advocates at the Legislative Office Building and the Capitol, where they listened to State leaders, demonstrated at the Capitol, and then returned to the LOB to visit their local lawmakers to educate and advocate for the needs of their constituents with psychiatric disabilities.



All About Art



Thank's to GO ART!'s REACH Grant, the MHA was able to partner with Oatka School of Glass on Harvester Avenue in Batavia to develop this glass quilt. Social Club members worked with Amanda and Lance Taylor to design a quilt square representing what mental wellness means to them. The quilt was on display at the Genesee County Chamber of Commerce as well as the MHA's Annual Meeting, and is now on permanent display in the window of the MHA at 25 Liberty Street.

I found I could say things with color and shapes that I couldn't say any other way - things I had no words for.
~Georgia O'Keeffe



GoArt's Joe Langen and Kelly Kieballa present Millie Tomidy-Pepper (right) with a certificate for the Arts Spotlight Recognition at the MHA's Annual Meeting.



On May 10th, 2011 the MHA held our Annual Meeting at Terry Hills Restaurant. Keynote speaker, Peggy Marone, Director of Leadership Genesee talked about Healing and Educating through the Arts.

Maryanne Arena, Director of Fine and Performing Arts at Genesee Community College accepted the annual Constance E. Miller Award of Excellence for her dedication to mental wellness in the community as well as shaping her students to become more aware of mental illness through her productions.

In addition, Brenda Westhoven, MHA Volunteer, was presented a Special Recognition Award for her long time commitment to co-facilitate the Life Bridges Support Group.

Thank you to those who attended our Annual Meeting as well as those who show their support to the MHA throughout the year.

The MHA was chosen as the May recipient of the Arts Spotlight by GO ART! in recognition of its contribution to the arts.

Among the accomplishments listed in the nomination are:

- Weekly art lessons for Social Club members by Peter Langen.
- Maintaining an open art studio for Social Club members to work on their art during social club hours.
- Offering Social Club members a chance to participate at Oatka Glass in making a glass square collage for display.
- Maintaining an "in-house" art gallery of Social Club members' art.
- Participation in the Creative Wellness Coalition Event on 5/6/2011, in which four Social Club members had art work accepted.
- Beginning a Social Club Poetry group.
- Featuring Maryanne Arena and Peggy Marone at the Mental Health Association's Annual Meeting as speakers on *Healing and the Arts*.
- Starting a book review/discussion group.
- Holding the annual Jamble at TF Brown's in June, featuring local bands and raffles to support the Warm Line.



Local Artist, Peter Langen was presented the 1st Place Award by Laurie Jenkins for a piece of art-work in metal entitled "Cobra" at *Searching Beyond* at the Creative Wellness Gallery in Rochester.

NAMI Family to Family is coming to the MHA this fall!

What is it? Despite gains in the treatment and opportunities for recovery, coping with the difficulties that many people encounter in caring for a relative or friend with mental illness can be difficult. The NAMI Family to Family Education Program is a 12 week course for families and friends of adults living with schizophrenia, bipolar disorder, major depression, anxiety disorders and borderline personality disorder. Course participants gain vital information, insight and understanding of their loved one that many describe as life changing. Family to Family provides caregivers with communication and problem solving techniques, coping mechanisms and the self-care skills needed to deal with their loved one's mental illness as well as its impact on the family.

Why is Family to Family unique? The course provides insights into, and resolution of, the profound concerns experienced by families, close relatives, and friends as they strive to cope with the realities of serious mental illness. Caregivers not only learn a wide range of information about serious mental illness they also learn to understand how living with these conditions affect their loved ones.

The NAMI Family to Family education program is taught in 49 states, two provinces in Canada, Mexico and in Italy. It has touched the lives of more than 200,000 participants.

**For more information or to register for the fall training,
please contact NAMI Rochester at (585) 423-1593.**

Thank You to
United Way Day of Caring Volunteers!
Members of the LeRoy Rotary Club spent the day
at the MHA painting offices, building shelves, and
sprucing up the yard.

**Thank you for all your hard work!
You Make a Difference!**

Are you a peer?

Are you interested in supporting others in your community?

The Peer-to-Peer Warm Line is an award winning program of the Mental Health Association that provides support and encouragement to individuals in our community. The Warm Line is in operation from 5:30 to 8:30pm, 365 days per year.

In order to meet the needs of the community, on September 6th and September 13th, there will be a Warm Line Volunteer Listener Training.

If you would like to find out more about this training opportunity or general Warm Line Services, please contact Charley DelPlato, Warm Line Coordinator at (585) 813-0072.

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

On the Web: www.gcmha.org

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