

MENTAL HEALTH AMERICA OF AUGUSTA

101 West Frederick Street
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The Professional Building
Staunton, VA 24401

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MENTAL HEALTH AMERICA OF AUGUSTA

Spring 2010



**You are invited to
The 15th Annual Pete Giesen
Mental Health America of Augusta Golf Tournament
May 21, 2010, 1:00 p.m. shotgun start**


Lunch will be available on your own in the 19th hole
CLUB AT IRONWOOD (FORMERLY Country Club of Staunton)
\$100 per person~ Captain's Choice~ 4 person teams
Compete for the 2010 Golf Corporate Cup (\$15 additional)
Includes Buffet Dinner, Awards, Door Prizes, & Raffle Drawing Proceeds benefit
The Mental Health America of Augusta Call 886-7181 or 949-0169
Registration Deadline is May 13TH

We're on the Web!
mha-augusta.org



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Virginia's FIRST Therapeutic Foster Care Agency -Serving since 1973

The Mental Health America of Augusta thanks those who supported the United Way of Greater Augusta for 2010-2011 budgeted year. It is our hope that you will support the United Way again during this year's campaign and designate to the MHA-A.



LIVE UNITED.®

BUILDING COMMUNITY

President's Comments

This year Mental Health America-Augusta has adopted the theme "**BuildingCommunity.**" Like most good themes those two words lend themselves to many different ideas, to a lot of the human needs that drive MHA-A. Building on that theme, I see "community" as an impressive structure whose building blocks are the caring people, organizations, programs and traditions of that community. But a strong community, just like a strong building, cannot be missing blocks, cannot be riddled with gaps and holes. A strong community must be built on the people of that community, **all** the people **all** living up to their potential. We cannot be strong without the contributions and participation of those in our community who suffer from mental illnesses or disabilities.

We can and must do more to educate those in our community about mental illness, what it is, how to recognize it, where to find help, and the benefits of proper treatment. We can and must do more to enhance treatment for those who suffer from mental illness; to eradicate the stigma so often associated with mental illness; and to advocate with local, state and national officials on behalf of the mentally ill. We can and must do more to draw those with mental illness or disabilities into our community's life... to fill in those missing building blocks and make our community stronger. In doing this, indeed, we are **building community.**

That's what the MHA-A exists for. If you are a member of MHA-A, thanks, you are truly appreciated by us, and those we serve. Please consider even greater involvement, and a contribution. If you are not a member, please help us help those struggling against mental illness, help us help them and build that strong community.

You'll find information elsewhere in this newsletter about how to get in touch with us, and to join. If you have questions, comments or need information on local treatment options, please call. We will respond promptly... It's what we do.



On Mothers Day

Mother,

You've been there when I've fallen

AND have been there when I'm sick

You've seen me in the worst of time

AND often saved me in a nick!

You've been there when I've risen

High above the crowd,

You've been there when I beat the odds

And you were very proud.

You've seen me grow and blossom

And seen me down and out.

You've supported me in good times

AND stayed in times of doubt.

I've often got mad at you

AND wished you weren't around

But then I got an ouchie

AND guess where I'll be bound!

You've filled each day with hope

AND set you're magic free.

You've given special love

AND mean the world to me.

I hope your dreams come true

AND lives as prosperous as can be

I hope someday to repay you

For being they're for me.

I thank you for the moments

We've been lucky enough to share

AND hope that in reverse times

For you, I will be there.

By Janet Morris

AUGUSTA HEALTH MENTAL HEALTH COALITION

“We Can Talk About It...” is the theme of the Augusta Health’s social norms campaign to eradicate the stigma towards mental health. The purpose is to promote access to treatment and services in our community, so that people know it is okay to talk about their mental illness, just like their medical / physical health. Augusta Health Foundation’s 2008 needs assessment found that mental health to be the number one issue of concern in this community and they want to do something about it. Mental health stakeholders from law enforcement, schools, private and public providers, DSS, aging services, and the MHA-A have been meeting since the summer to develop ways to combat the stigma towards mental illness and foster peer support for those who have medical and mental issues in this community.

A power point / video presentation regarding the stigma of mental health for clubs, service organizations, churches and others has been developed by the coalition. If you would like to have this presentation for your organization or church, please contact the MHA-A office at 886-7181 / 949-0169 or mhaa@ntelos.net.

Legacy Program

You support MHA-A. Thanks. But did you know that you can continue to be of help even when you're not around. When you draw up your will, please consider including a gift to MHA-A. Your bequest to MHA-A can make a huge difference to those in Staunton, Waynesboro and Augusta County who are struggling with mental illness. Your bequest – of any size – can help new programs to serve those who suffer from mental illness, or to educate those in our community about mental illness. Your bequest can help us fight the stigma associated with mental illness, and enhance treatment options.

Your legacy can be a general investment in help for those who suffer from mental illness, or it can be a special bequest for a specific program or purpose. This is one way you can continue your support for your community - and **all** those in it - for years to come.

For information on how to make a bequest to MHA-A, contact your attorney, or call the MHA-A.

May, Mental Health Month Activity

Building Community

Mental Health America of Augusta, Valley Community Services Board, Western State Hospital Art Therapy Department, and Staunton-Augusta Art Center will collaborate to present the 2nd Annual Mental Health Consumer Art Show the 1st week in May with an Opening on May 7th at the Staunton-Augusta Art Center on New Street, downtown Staunton.

Other activities include library displays, proclamation signed by the 3 governmental bodies, public service announcements on the radio, and newspaper articles. A billboard titled *Strong Physical and Mental Health Builds Community* designed in collaboration with the Graphics Design Class at Blue Ridge Community College. The billboard is located on Rt. 250 W in Fishersville before the bridge underpass.

The 15th Annual Pete Giesen Golf Tournament will be held May 21, 1:00 p.m. shotgun start at Club at Ironwood (formerly Country Club of Staunton). See details elsewhere in this newsletter.

To conclude Mental Health Month, MHA-A members will work Shakin on May 27th at the Wharf Parking Lot, Staunton.



True health goes beyond the absence of illness. That's why we go beyond medicine, with "Answers that Matter" — like free information on how to better care for yourself and your family.

With programs and resources such as "A Healthy You! America's Guide to Healthy Living," we make it easier for anyone to start making healthier choices — whether you're sick, healthy or somewhere in between.

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Building Community –Join Mental Health America of Augusta

This year's MHA theme is *Building Community* by taking positive actions to protect the mental health of our community by continuing your membership in Mental Health America of Augusta. The MHA-A recognizes and values the contributions of everyone who helps to build community in Staunton, Waynesboro, and Augusta County.

You can take a positive action to protect the mental health of our community by continuing your membership in Mental Health America of Augusta. Life is often stressful, yet it is still possible to maintain and protect our mental health, and that is vital to our overall health and well-being. Economic troubles increase the stress demands on all of us, and more and more people in our community are suffering because of this. Having good mental health strengthens our ability to cope with stress and serious challenges in life.

This newsletter issue promotes the MHA-A's programs and services as they help people in our community so many ways. Your financial support as MHA-A Members is essential for many of these services to be a success. As informed members, you can communicate the mental health needs in our community and how the MHA is working to address these needs through our varied programs for all age groups. Person to person discussion about mental health and successes in treatment can be most effective in combating the stigma that some associate with mental illness.

Membership is the backbone of this organization as we do not receive local, state, or federal governments money. Please give us your support at your most generous level of membership.



Family Preservation Services, Inc.
“Human Services Without Walls”
 Intensive In-Home Treatment
 Life Skills Counseling & Therapeutic Mentoring
 Community-Based Adolescent Sex Offender Program
 Substance Abuse Treatment
 School Based Day Treatment Programs
 Virtual Residential Program –(creating the required structure & treatment in the client’s home)
 Serves Staunton, Waynesboro, Augusta County, Rockingham County, Harrisonburg, Rockbridge County, Lexington, Highland and Alleghany Counties.
540-248-5510
JoAnn Shoemaker, Staunton Regional Office Director,
www.fpscorp.com

- What are the signs of depression?
- Persistent sad, anxious or “empty” mood
 - Difficulty falling asleep, staying asleep or sleeping more than usual
 - Reduced appetite and weight loss, or increased appetite and weight gain
 - Loss of pleasure and interest in once-enjoyable activities
 - Restlessness, irritability
 - Difficulty concentrating at work or at school, or difficulty remembering things or making decisions
 - Fatigue or loss of energy
 - Feeling guilty, hopeless or worthless

- What are the signs of stress?
- Feeling angry, irritable or easily frustrated
 - Feeling overwhelmed
 - Change in eating habits
 - Problems concentrating
 - Feeling nervous or anxious
 - Trouble with sleeping
 - Problems with memory
 - Feeling burned out from work
 - Feeling that you can't overcome difficulties in life
 - Having trouble functioning in your job or personal life

If you're having any of these symptoms of depression or stress, it's important that you take care of yourself. There are healthy steps you can take to stay well when you're stressed, like connecting to people close to you, getting enough sleep or being physically active.

If you feel overwhelmed, unable to cope and feel as though your depression or stress is affecting how you function every day, don't let it go unchecked. Contact your health provider. For a referral to local services, contact Mental Health America of Augusta, 886-7181/ 949-0169 or mhaa@ntelos.net.

What Parents Need to Know: Treating Depression in Children and Teens



Know your family's medical history so you can identify early warning signs.

Trust your instincts and pay attention to a child's complaints, such as “I don't feel well”.

Stay attuned to changes in your child's behavior or activities.

Educate yourself on the signs and symptoms of mental health disorders. Separate “fact from fiction” by using credible sources with information based on medical science rather than rumor or opinion. Beware of extreme claims, such as antidepressants are “always dangerous” or “never affective”. Ask your family doctor if you have questions.

Knowing that your child may need help is hard to accept. Don't blame yourself. Mental health problems are not a symptom of bad parenting. They are common and very treatable.

Seek help if your child shows signs of a mental health problem. Start with your pediatrician since ruling out any physical health problem should be the 1st step of your child's care.

Advocate for your child. If his or her provider does not recognize telltale signs, seek a 2nd opinion. If your spouse cannot admit your child has a problem, continue to assert the truth, that he or she has an illness, but can get better. If you meet insurance hurdles, don't be deterred from getting your child help.

Discuss all available treatment options with your child's doctor and carefully weigh all the risks and benefits associated with each treatment.

Stay attuned to how your child responds to treatments. Make sure he/she receives a thorough evaluation, continual follow-up and careful monitoring—particularly in the first several weeks—by your doctor.

Educate yourself about the warning signs of both mental disorders and suicide. Learn your child's earliest warning signs, like changes in sleeping and eating habits, irritability or poor school performance. Act quickly if you are concerned. Many people are afraid to discuss the issue of suicide for fear of “planting” the idea—it is better to be open and direct.

Do not abruptly discontinue or change treatments—it can lead to significant side effects.

Know that your child will get better. Remember that the worst possible situation for a child with a mental health problem is to go without any treatment at all.

Call Mental Health America of Augusta for a private or public provider referral, 886-7181 / 949-0169 or mhaa@ntelos.net



Membership Form

Name: _____
Address: _____

City: _____ **State:** _____ **Zip:** _____
Phone: () _____ **Today's Date:** _____
E-mail: _____
Job / Profession: _____
 New Member Renewal

Yes!

I want to be a member **Bell Honor Members**

- | | | | |
|--|-------|---|--------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Individual | \$ 25 | <input type="checkbox"/> Bronze Bell* | \$ 200 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Family | 40 | <input type="checkbox"/> Silver Bell* | 300 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Patron | 50 | <input type="checkbox"/> Gold Bell* | 600 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Professional* | 50 | <input type="checkbox"/> Platinum Bell* | 1000 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Supporter* | 100 | | |

**Includes MHA-A Membership Certificate*

What was your membership level last year - _____

New member? Who referred you? - _____

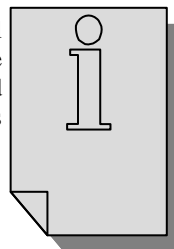
Mental Health America - Augusta is a chapter of the country's leading nonprofit dedicated to helping ALL people live mentally healthier lives. With more than 320 affiliates nationwide, we are a growing movement of Americans who promote mental wellness for the health and well-being of the nation - everyday and in times of crisis.



Please make checks payable to: MHA-A. Send to MHA-A, Rm. 206, The Professional Building, 101 W. Frederick Street, Staunton, VA 24401

Information & Referral Services

The MHA-A continues to be a phone referral service for mental health/wellness needs in the community. New mental health/mental illness articles have been added to our website, www.mha-augusta.org. The MHA-A directory is also on the website which includes mental health professionals, public agencies, and support groups in Staunton, Waynesboro, and Augusta County. We wish to thank Mr. Ed Tobias for his continued work to put the new articles on mental health issues as well as our fundraisers and events. You can email us from the website or directly at mhaa@ntelos.net if you have questions.



Pro-Bono Counseling Program

This program provides free, crisis intervention, counseling to people in the community who cannot afford counseling, do not have insurance and are not currently receiving services from Valley Mental Health Services. Qualifying clients make their own calls after receiving 2-3 mental health professionals' names. They may receive up to 12 hours of free counseling services donated by area mental health professionals.

Year One . . . For Newlyweds Program

This program addresses the potential problems encountered during the first year of marriage, and promotes marriage and family wellness by providing education to couples in their marriage in hopes of developing good healthy relationship patterns and preventing separations or divorce and or dysfunctional families. A free newsletter series (7), written by local mental health professionals is mailed to newlyweds beginning the third month of marriage, addressing the issues regarding children, communication, sex, finances, in-laws, friendships, and remarriage. Request cards for this program are included in the marriage packet received from the Clerk of the Court when applying for a marriage license. Some program comments include: "Excellent service for the community", "Send it to me even though it's a 2nd marriage for both of us" and "The series opened up even more discussion for the past, present, and future." If you know of married couples who could benefit from this program please let us know and it will be sent to them.

Pearl of Happiness



A guidance counselor wrote, "Jeffery listened intently as I read the story *Search for the Pearl*, smiling at the end as the child found the happiness they sought. He was elated to discover that he could actually keep the coloring book version of the book. As we reviewed the contents of the parent letter he spoke up to say that he sure wished that his parents would read it because they never had anything good to say about him.

His parents have visited me since then. They are looking at ways to help him feel more successful and accepted in their family. Jeffery is still searching for the pearl." A parent recently said that her daughter used the "Pearl of Happiness" coloring book, *Search for the Pearl* to help her recover from the death of her great grandmother.

Bereavement Program

The program addresses and recognizes the personal, mental, and emotional strain (stress) the bereaved family endures when suddenly or not so suddenly, one is faced with the reality of a loss due to the death of a loved one. An informational packet including "Coping With Loss" brochure and a letter with a list of support groups in the area is mailed to a relative of a recently deceased person by our volunteer, Darlena Gochenour. Comments include "Many of the questions and thoughts in my mind were answered and explained", "Now I know the feelings that I have are okay", and "It's great to know that others out there care and can help me through this time in my life."

SURVIVORS OF SUICIDE SUPPORT GROUP

A support group for people who have lost a loved one to suicide meets the 2nd and 4th Tuesday of each month, 7:30-9:00 p.m. at Christ Lutheran Church, Staunton. 2807 N. Augusta St. Cynthia Long, Grief Support Specialist with Lutheran Family Services facilitates the group. She can be contacted at 383-2902.

JOB LOSS SUPPORT GROUP

10:30 to noon Tuesdays

May 4 – June 8, 2010

Fishersville UMC

Facilitator: Cynthia L. Long, D.Min

Please preregister by calling 540.383.2902 or emailing clong@lfsva.org

Free to the public

Literature from Reemploy Virginia, a division of VEC, will be available at the group meetings.

Sponsored by Lutheran Family Services of Virginia and a gift from Augusta Health Foundation and United Way of Greater Augusta

WE CARE

The Augusta County Chapter of the National Alliance on Mental Illness, known as WE CARE continues to meet the 3rd Tuesday of each month, in Central United Methodist Church, corner of Lewis and Beverly Street in Staunton at 6:30 p.m. There will be a guest speaker / program each month followed by break out groups for family members and for those who have a mental illness. Parking is available in the rear of the church in the Wilson Lot, corner of Lewis and Frederick St. All consumers as well as concerned parents, siblings, spouses, and friends who care about the quality of life and the recovery of persons with a serious mental illness are invited. There is no charge.

WE CARE NAMI works to promote and provide support and advocacy by offering mutual encouragement through a sharing of problems and coping strategies and helping individuals overcome feelings of guilt, isolation, and frustration. Families, friends, and those who have a mental illness learn about the causes of mental illness, and how to recognize acute and chronic symptoms, and current treatments. Education is key in the recovery process and for the public to help them overcome myths and fears and stigma. The more the public knows about mental illness, the more doors and opportunities become available for those who have a mental illness.

2010-2011 MHA-A Long Range Plan

The MHA-A Board of Directors updated its three year Long Range Plan which was adopted in September, 2009. There are many objectives for each of the goals listed below as they are executed over a 3-year time period and will be reviewed each year in between. The MHA-A's mission is to improve the mental health of our community by providing programs to promote mental well-being, facilitating access to mental health services to the public, and communicating effectively with the public regarding mental health issues.



To provide mental health education to the public

To provide crisis information leading to direct services

To collaborate with the legislators and other mental health advocacy groups to eliminate disparities in mental health services

To collaborate with other agencies as they relate to mental health

To support the Recovery Model in the delivery of mental health services

To create a more diverse Board of Directors

MHA-A Public Policy Activity

Donna Gum, Executive Director and Jane Desper, Board Member attended the Coalition for Mentally Disabled Citizens of Virginia Rally with VCSB staff, Jim Rohrer and Jason Welch and mental health consumers at St. Paul's Episcopal Church, Richmond, January 18, 2010. Speakers included the BHDS personnel, General Assembly members, and Donna Gum among other coalition members. Coalition members advocated for continued and increased General Assembly funds for community based services in the recovery continuum of care to promote wellness, recovery and improved self-management.

They also visited offices of our local legislators-Dels. Cline, Landes, and Bell and Sen. Hanger and left mental health packets of information regarding our budget concerns relating to mental health issues. Legislators received numerous emails, letters, and faxes during the General Assembly session regarding issues relating to the proposed closing of Commonwealth Center for Children and Adolescents, Medicaid and the budget.

Many of the rally's talks centered on Gov. McDonnell's proposed closing of Commonwealth Center for Children and Adolescents and Southwest Virginia Mental Health Institute's adolescent unit in Marion. The CCCA remains in the budget as passed by the General Assembly. Governor McDonnell will approve or propose amendments to the state budget by April 13 when the General Assembly goes back to Richmond for a veto session.

<i>Women's Issues Group- Create a Brighter Tomorrow</i>	Bi-Polar Support Group	NEW!! Generalized Anxiety Disorders Support Group
Call Jean Geiser, Ed. S., at Augusta Behavioral Health Center, 213-2525 to register for the class held on Thursdays at 4:00 pm. The cost of the group will be submitted to your insurance. A co-payment may apply. The group is formed to help reduce stress, bond with other women who have similar difficulties, work on relationships, live happily after the end of a relationship, and aid in many of life's transitions.	For persons (families) who are affected by Bi-Polar Disorder. Newcomers are welcome. When: Every Thursday Time: 12:00 noon Where: Valley Hope Counseling Center (Stoneridge Office Complex), Waynesboro Call MHAA for further information at 886-7181 or 949-0169	This is a support group and not intended to replace individual therapy for members. When: Every Wednesday Time: 5:00pm Where: Valley Hope Counseling Center (Stoneridge Office Complex), Waynesboro