

# G.O.C. GAZETTE

THE NEWSPAPER FOR THE  
GANINESVILLE OPPORTUNITY CENTER

## Sandy Callan

As of our last newsletter I was fortunate to get a job at Meridian as a Peer Specialist. It is a new program geared to working with the mentally ill and helping them achieve their goals and dreams. We work with them to start and

continue their road to recovery. This gives me the opportunity to share about the clubhouse and bring in new members. I have found that the people I meet are in some stages ready for a change and are re-

ceptive to GOC. Debbie, Dave and I will continue to speak to the people we serve about GOC with the hope they will become clubhouse members.



## GOC visits Florida sister Clubhouse!

### GOC's Trip to Sedona House

Sedona House is located in Lake Mary, Florida. We were greeted with a smile and a warm welcome. Sedona House has about 54 members. They have 6 members working in "TEP" (Transitional Employment Program). Sedona House's building is nothing short of amazing.

Their building used to be a restaurant. They have a huge kitchen, a large dining room and a place "where everybody knows your name", a bar! There are wide open spaces for work. They have labels in front of every desk. Labels like "Attendance", "Newsletter", "Monthly News, etc.

But the best part of Sedona House is the people. All of the members are very kind and gentle and the staff very courteous and kind.

I interviewed a member named "John". He told me he attends Sedona House five days a week. They have two 15 minute meetings a day. After they meet they have jobs to do. On Thursday they have a large group meeting including staff and members. On the weekend they have outings like going to flea markets, the mall, movies, etc.

As I walk around the different rooms of the clubhouse, I glance at an aquarium. It is very tranquil and serene. It amazes me how sister clubhouses are so willing to help GOC get on our feet by showing us a basic model of a clubhouse. I hope someday we can return the favor to a clubhouse in it birth period.

-Mike Leyman  
GOC Charter Member

**A CLUBHOUSE WITHOUT WALLS...*what we are doing while working on a home..***

- Publish a newsletter
- Outreach to other potential members.
- Speak to community leaders and programs about the clubhouse.
- Visit other clubhouses to get ideas and inspiration.
- Have meetings to educate ourselves about clubhouse, support each other and help develop the club.
- Setup a support system for each other.
- Help with fundraising
- Socialize
- Attend conferences and workshops



Gainesville Opportunity Center, Inc.



A World of Growing Opportunities  
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## New Members Highlighted!



““A chance for adventure, a chance to get out”

## Welcome Shirley and Michael to the family...

*Director's Note:* This month we also wanted to take an opportunity to introduce you to new members as they join the club.

Shirley Sheffield joins us by way of the new and dynamic peer support program now being offered through Meridian. Another example of how agencies work together to provide support services!

Shirley was introduced at a recent member meeting where she introduced herself and introduced to other members. Stories of hope and encouragement were spontaneously shared by all. Each member shared why membership was

so important within this new clubhouse community and how each member was so very needed for it's success! Shirley loves to sing... we look forward to joining our voices together! Welcome Shirley!

Michael Simmons has been spending a dedicated to caring for his mother. Regardless Michael has been looking for a community of support for himself. He feels that he has found that in the friends he has made in the Clubhouse. Michael has taken on a leadership role to coordinate a weekly (at least) walking group. Michael is

also coordinating an outreach warm line service to make sure members have a chance to keep in touch with each other and have informal opportunities to socialize between weekly clubhouse weekends. Welcome Michael!



““I have a purpose I didn't have before joining this clubhouse community”

# MAY 2008

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7 NO MEETING	8 Visit LIGHTHOUSE	9	10
11	12	13	14 <u>Clubhouse Without Walls Meeting</u> 10:00 am to 12:00 pm...	15	16	17
18	19	20	21 <u>Clubhouse Without Walls Meeting</u> 10:00 am to 12:00 pm... followed by Lunch	22	23	24
25	26	27	28 <u>Clubhouse Without Walls Meeting</u> 10:00 am to 12:00 pm... followed by Lunch	29 	30	31

## VISIT TO CLUB SUCCESS, LAKELAND, FL



Working along with Club Success members in their business unit busy getting their monthly newsletter mailed out.



Alexis and Andy learning the ropes...



Club Success members and staff joining GOC members and staff for a shared photo after a great day of sharing and education. Thank you CLUB SUCCESS!



### MEMBER VIEW.....

#### “Behind Brown Eyes” by Mike Leyman



There are two forks in the road in life; seemingly the orthodox and the unorthodox. My early life was the unorthodox. I was a freshman in high school; right here in Gainesville. I was going to Buchholz High School. I was 14. I had about five friends. I was listening to “Nirvana”, yet I wore preppy clothes with my hair in the morning combed over until it was just right. I was a good looking kid, although I had no self confidence with women, so I didn’t have a girlfriend freshmen year. I didn’t play football in 9<sup>th</sup> grade, and I totally kick myself for that. I was very athletic. I played boys club football for two or three years, and even once got named an all-star.

Academically, I only applied myself in classes that I liked. I loved science; our teacher was a formal NFL football player, and was coach of the football team. I loved my math teacher and algebra was pretty fun. I had a passion for art. I could tolerate social studies. Physiology I had an interest in, but I struggled. Pure Phys. Ed I passed with ease. I loved it so much. I failed English. Other people viewed me as fine, a regular nice guy. But it was mostly a front. There was another side to me. I was sad much of the time. I was lonely, I was a stranger. Clinically I was probably had manic-depression, but all I knew was the struggle. I felt too much within.

In the locker room one day after gym, Ronnie looked into my eyes and said; “are you okay man?” I said yes. It was a lie. I went on to pass the ninth grade.

I got kicked out of my parents house and wound up at Bay Harbor Residential Treatment Center. That was a story in itself. Let’s just say there was a lot of troubled kids there, and the staff nicknamed me: “The golden boy”. All I will say is that we were allowed to talk to the females one-on-one without the staff listening, and we would pass notes. I fell in love with a girl that looked like Kathy Ireland. My love was unrequited. She liked some seventeen year old.

Anyway I wound up in a small town in Pennsylvania called “Doylestown”; a rural suburb of Philadelphia. I lived with my aunt and uncle in a humble neighborhood. I enrolled in one of the top schools in not only the state, but the nation. And their football team had won like 7 state championships. All my aunts and uncles had gone there. Even my mom went there her senior year. My uncle John had been valedictorian sometime in the late eighties and his picture was hanging on the wall. Even to this day his picture is on the wall.

I started my sophomore year a couple weeks late, along with an Italian kid named “Anthony”. We became friends. I was pretty much still a prep kid, and so was Anthony. I turned 15 shortly after school started. I got made fun of a lot for no apparent reason. And there was this girl “Liz Bxxx”, whom I was childhood friends with, and she gave me the cold shoulder. She didn’t even want me to talk or sit next to her at lunchtime. And when we were scheduled for the same art class; she dropped out of the class just to avoid me. It was like people were pre-judging me on things I hadn’t even done yet. And if that’s true then it’s bullsh%! I mean I went to an amusement park with my best friend; his girlfriend, and another girl. And on one of those lifts where you ride over the park; she didn’t say one word to me. And I thought I was just ugly.

(more next month)



- Meaningful opportunities in Gainesville community
- Important work
- Restorative environment emphasizing abilities and talents
- Help with education & college degree programs
- Access to services, supports, housing
- Friendship

The Gainesville place where people whose lives have been drastically disrupted by a mental illness come to rebuild their lives.

[www.GoClubhouse.org](http://www.GoClubhouse.org)

A World of Growing Opportunities



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Clubhouse Standard  
 of the Month  
 Standard # 3:  
 "Members choose the way they  
 utilize the Clubhouse, and the  
 staff with whom they work.  
 There are no agreements,  
 contracts, schedules, or rules  
 intended to enforce  
 participation of members."

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GOC Charter Member Mike Leyman, as always, working on a new article for the "Member View". Check it out on page 3!