

G.O.C. GAZETTE

The NEWSPAPER FOR THE
GAINESVILLE OPPORTUNITY CENTER



CIGARETTE SURCHARGES, TAXES AND CLUBHOUSE FUNDING...THE WHOLE STORY

Okay we are all aware that cigarette prices have risen a lot in the last few years. How many smokers are tired of paying so much for a pack and not seeing any of that money coming back to you? What would you think if I told you it might be? There are two bills that are floating around the Florida Senate and The Florida House of Representatives that would redirect 5% of what you pay back to The Department of Children and Families for the expansion of projects. So what does all that mean?

The State of Florida anticipates receiving \$900 million dollars from the \$1 Cigarette Surcharge per pack of cigarettes. A recent study completed by the National Institute of Health (NIH), recently determined that nationwide adults who have mental health or substance abuse issues account for 44% of the cigarettes sold in this country. That means that of the \$900 from cigarette surcharges, \$396 million dollars was spent by adults living with mental health or substance abuse histories. Additionally there is \$0.34 tax on

each pack sold, this total \$389 million, so given that same 44% figure, over \$171 million has been paid for by these same adults. \$567 million dollars of revenue has been generated by adults who are living with a mental health or substance abuse problem, and of that ONLY \$207,000 is allocated directly to Mental Health services or .03% of what you paid in.

Senate Bill (SB)1802 and House Bill (HB)669 are both requesting that 5% of the \$900 million (\$45 million) be reallocated to DCF for the expansion of current services. Guess what, that means clubhouses! We are in the process of writing Senator Oelrich and our Representatives to request that they support these bills. We need your help! We have sample letters for those of you who would like to help get these bills passed. Please contact us if you would like the sample, have any questions, or want to email the letters.

By Pam Demers

THE GAINESVILLE OPPORTUNITY CENTERS FIRST ANNUAL APPEAL

You know the phrase, "money makes the world go 'round'....well it makes GOC's world go around too. Many of you may be aware that since October 2009, the Gainesville Opportunity Center has been running on \$75,000/year.

To you and me \$75,000 maybe a lot of money but to a clubhouse, it is just a drop in the water. In order for us to grow and do more the clubhouse needs more money. Ultimately we would love to have \$500,000/year for our annual budget, but we could grow with a lot less.

The Board of Directors has been working very hard on looking for money, and they decided a letter writing campaign was a

great way to start. A list was developed from the Board of Directors and a letter was drafted. The clubhouse members and staff worked together to get all the information into the Clubhouse Database, and within about a month we had a list of over 600 names and addresses.

The letter that was sent explained a little bit about the clubhouse model, The Gainesville Opportunity Center, and what we do here. We asked the Gainesville Community to dig down deep into their pockets, and make a small donation.

People have responded! To date we have received over \$2000 and the money keeps

coming in. We want to thank everyone who donated. All donation, even just \$25 made a great difference.

We would also like to thank those who have donated gifts-in-kind, as well as time. It is only through your support that the dream of a fully functioning clubhouse in Gainesville can come true. If you have received a letter, but have not donated yet, please consider making a donation. Your small donation could make a large difference in a member's life.

by Pam Demers. & Sara O.

Gainesville Opportunity Center, Inc.



A World of Growing Opportunities

www.GoClubhouse.org

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The Gainesville Opportunity Center's Board of Directors

Bruce Stevens - President
Sandy Callan - Vice President
Patricia Sokol -Treasurer
Barry Wagner -Secretary
Alexis Henderson
Dick Dugan
Markus Dietrich
Edward "Andy" Bernard
Joe Antonelli

Clubhouse Employment

Volunteer Work

Place of Work	Position	Schedule	Hours	Member
Gainesville Pet Rescue	Dog Walker	Saturday	4	David S.

Transitional Employment Placements

Employer	Position	Schedule	Hours	Member
St. Francis Catholic High School	Kitchen Asst.	M-F	25	Joel A.

Supported and Independent Employment

Member	Position/Employer	Hrs/Week
Crystal A.	Dishwasher/Meridian	15
Andy B.	Dishwasher/Meridian	10
Dave B.	Peer Specialist/Meridian	20
Sara O.	Fiscal Clerk/Meridian	8
Sandy C.	Peer Specialist/Meridian	20
Greg U.	Crew Member/Burger King	20
Angie M.	Peer Specialist/Meridian	16
Jane P.	Cashier/Win-Dixie	20
Dave J.	Groundskeeper/Meridian	4
Crystal A.	Dishwasher/Meridian	15
Shirley S.	File Clerk/Meridian	3

Employment quote of the month:

"A true friend knows your weaknesses but shows your strengths; feels your fears but fortifies your faith; sees your anxieties but frees your spirit; recognizes your disabilities but emphasizes your possibilities" ~ William Arthur Ward



- *Need a job?*
- *Don't know what you should do?*
- *Submitted applications but haven't gotten a job?*
- *We can help!*

Stop by Monday, Wednesday or Friday to see Pam or call her at 224-5523

Working Member Interview - Jane Perez



Where do you work?

Winn-Dixie on North Main St.

What do you do there?

I am a Courtesy Clerk, which means I assist customers with bringing groceries to their car, I bring carriages from the parking lot to the store, and clean public areas like the bathroom and front of the store.

How long have you been there?

I've been there for 3 years now.

How did you get your job?

I went to Winn-Dixie on my own and completed an application and then, after I didn't

hear anything from them, went back and talked to a manager. Next thing I knew, I was hired and in training. I've been there ever since.

What is your favorite part of your job?

I like talking with the customers and being around people. They are usually very nice.

What is your least favorite part of your job?

Bringing the carts in, they are heavy, get stuck oh my, they can be a real pain.

When was the last time you worked before starting at Winn-Dixie?

I hadn't worked since I lived in Miami, almost 15 years! Wow!

What was the hardest part of the transition from being at the club to working?

It is hard getting up in the morning. I have to be at work at 7:00am sometimes, and I have to get up at 5:30am to be on time.

Do you still come to the club?

Yes, my friend Andy picks me up and brings me in after work. I usually try to make it at least once every 2 weeks but sometimes less.

What is your advice to anyone looking for work? Have good attitude and keep smiling.

By Pam Demers

Meet our members



New Member Highlight – Jon Hughes



Yeah we know this isn't Jon but he does have a cool car. When we get our act together more we'll post his picture. Sorry Jon

How did you find the clubhouse? I happened to be at Catholic Charities and I saw the posting in the lobby.

How long have been here? I have been

here since August of 2009.

What do you hope the club can help you with? I see the club helping me with support of my mental illness and helping me become gainfully employed.

What skills do you have that could be used here? I can advocate, provide transportation, and have clerical skills. I help make

lunch sometimes and do anything they need me to do/

What were you doing before you came to the club? I was looking for work, and staying home.

By Pam Demers

My Story - Sara O.



My story is one where I had to face numerous difficult challenges and adversities, and I am proud to say that I have survived. Also, I discovered that I could handle complex circumstances.

I have lived a very sheltered and shy life by mostly being a caregiver to my elderly parents and relying on other family members to solve difficult problems that would occur

in my life.

I have had not many friends because I would choose to remain close to my family and only leave my parents house to go to a local college where I received an Associates Degree and Certificate, held two brief jobs in the community, run errands, and transported my parents to various places in the community.

After my parents died I was suddenly faced with living in apartments with my older brother, Peter, and by myself, living out of

my car with my older brother, and many other hardships.

With the assistance and support of a local mental health organization and The Gainesville Opportunity Center I have endured those difficult challenges and adversities to surprisingly discover I have become a more adept person than I was before.

By Sara O.

Member Interview - Mike Leyman

How long have you been a member? Three Years

How did you find the clubhouse? I found the clubhouse through Pam Demers the Program Director.

What things do you do here? I write articles, data entry, reception, raising funds, and attendance.

What is your favorite part? Making outreach calls and sending letters to members

who have not visited the clubhouse in over six months.

Do you work? No.

Have you ever been to any other clubhouse? I have visited Sedona House.

What kinds of things do you like to do when you're not at the club? I enjoy doing graphics & playing games on my computer.

How do you get to the club? My parents bring me.

Has coming to club helped you? Yes.

How? Social and job networks. The clubhouse provides me interesting and fun volunteering work to perform.

Would you recommend coming to the club to other people? Yes

-by Sara O.



Mike Leyman (left) & Andy Bernard at the 15th IS in St. Pete Beach

May 1st: Belk Fundraiser!

Have you been looking for a way to help GOC financially? Do you like to shop? Would you like to find a way to combine both of these? Well we have a great way to help GOC, and your wallet as well..

The Gainesville Opportunity Center and Belk are partnering to raise money for us. Belk is hosting it's annual Charity Day sale on Saturday **May 1st** from 6am -10am at the Belk store at the Oaks Mall. This is a ticketed event and all proceeds

from the ticket sales that we make go directly to GOC.

The ticket prices are \$5, and the best part is that if you buy a ticket then purchase something in the store, you will get \$5 off the price. So you get your \$5 back! Pretty cool huh!

Worried that there will be nothing really worth buying, or that only the junk will be on sale....not at this event. This sale is definitely worth it. The average sale percentage on all the items is **25%**

off. But there are many items **30%, 45%, 55%, 60%**, all the way up to **70%** off! Items that are not normally on sale there will be as well

Tickets are on sale now, and are available at the clubhouse. If you have any questions or want more information call us, at 224-5523 and please buy a ticket.

-by Mike Leyman



GAINESVILLE OPPORTUNITY CENTER & WUFT VIDEO PROJECT



Many of you may have seen the recent PBS series, This Emotional Life. The series chronicles ways that people are handling emotional stress and mental health issues.

WUFT, Gainesville PBS station applied for a grant to WGBH-Boston (the national PBS station) to bring some local stories to the forefront in the Gainesville area. Pam Shamel, who is the Director of Education and Outreach at WUFT (our local PBS station) applied for the grant and received it. The monies will be used to highlight area organizations that are helping people cope with emotional issues and/or mental health issues.

Pam, who is very active in NAMI, immediately thought of the Gainesville Opportunity Center, as one of the organizations she would like to profile. The clubhouse, Pam and our videographer will work together to develop a video that explains the functions of the clubhouse to people out in the community who may or may not even know who we are or what we do.

This video project will be shooting video of members and staff at the club, at work and at home. The final project will be a 3 to 5 minute informative piece describing the various functions of the club and that the GOC is meant to help and support people with mental illness. When this video is completed it can be viewed when someone from the GOC goes out into the Gainesville community to give a speech regarding the clubhouse. We are also looking to use the

video to talk to legislators and potential donors or grant organizations about what we do and the need for more money.

As part of the grant GOC will provide webcams that will that we will use to do a podcasts and broadcast on the computer that could be shown of YouTube. A podcast is "a digital recording of a radio broadcast or similar program, made available on the Internet for downloading to a personal audio player,". So even though the grant may be over we will still have the ability to broadcast videos and educate the public.

So keep your eyes open and if your interested I being profiled, involved in other ways let us know.

-by Sara Olney and Pam Demers

Executive Directors Notes

Hello everyone. I know it has been along time since we sent a newsletter out and there is a lot of things happening both at Gainesville Opportunity Center (GOC) and within the clubhouse world. First and most important, we have some new members and continue to grow. If ever there was proof that Gainesville **NEEDS** a clubhouse, this is it. We have 46 registered members! This brings me to my second point...money or a lack of it.

GOC is a *VERY* small clubhouse still in development and runs on a very small budget. We started this venture of developing a clubhouse right before the current economic concerns. Though it is tough, it's a challenge waiting to be met! Our troubles are not unique to GOC. The entire state is going through the same thing.

As legislators try to find creative ways of balanc-

ing the budget, we are faced with many opportunities. These include advocating to stop budget cuts and to support bills that might financially support clubhouses. Working with the Florida Clubhouse Coalition, the Peer Support Network and the Advocacy Center, we have been meeting with local and state politicians to tell them our story, tell them what we do with what little we are given and explain what we could do with more funding. But this isn't the only answer for us.

Diversifying funds does not only apply to your retirement fund but to our funding as well. In a way it may be good that we don't get most of our funding from one source. It strengthens any organization to diversify its funding as much as possible. It is a harder road to develop a clubhouse in such a manner; however we will have a

stronger foundation for our clubhouse if we do so. As we complete our Annual Appeal and continue to apply for different funding sources we hope to begin, in a small way, to develop a high-quality and effective program. We will be able to provide hundreds of members a base of support with opportunities for jobs, education, friendship, access to community resources and housing, to improve each members hope for a better life.

G.O.C. is a part of the Florida Clubhouse Coalition www.floridaclubhouses.com and The International Center for Clubhouse Development www.iccd.org. Together we are fighting for our right to exist as "places and bases" of support for members.

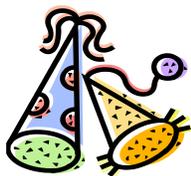
-by Mike Demers



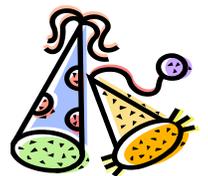


The days highlighted in gray are days that the club is closed.

GOC		APRIL 2010					GOC	
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday		
				1	2 Begin selling Belk Fundraiser tickets	3 Happy Birthday Cheryl S. 		
4 Happy Easter 	5	6	7	8	9	10		
11	12 BOD mtg. 6pm—8pm Happy Birthday Florenda B. 	13 Happy Birthday David S. and Sharon A. 	14	15	16	17		
18	19	20	21 Employment Dinner! 6pm - 8pm	22 EARTH DAY! 	23	24		
25	26	27	28	29	30	May 1st: Belk Fundraiser 6am-10am!		



Happy Birthday: Cheryl S. (April 3), Florenda B. (April 12), David S. (April 13), and Sharon A. (April 13)!





- 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

A World of Growing Opportunities



Gainesville Opportunity Center, Inc.

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We're on the Web at:
www.GoClubhouse.org

Clubhouse Standard of the Month

Standard #13:
The Clubhouse is located in its own physical space. It is separate from any mental health center or residential settings, and is accessible to other programs. The Clubhouse is designed to facilitate the work-oriented day and at the same time be attractive, adequate in size, and convey a sense of respect and dignity.

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