

FALL 2013

VOLUME 6, ISSUE 6

GOC GAZETTE



Rebuilding lives
Removing stigma
Restoring dignity
Resource
for mental health recovery

Free Your Mind



Most everyone in America knows someone who has been or is incarcerated. The United States has the highest incarceration rate per capita than any other nation in the world. Too many times, however, those with mental illness are arrested in the midst of an episode that is beyond their control. Mental Health departments in jails and prisons are fighting a losing battle across the country. According to an online article published by Human Rights Watch, "Prisoners have rates of mental illness - including such serious disorders as schizophrenia, bipolar disorder, and major depression - that are two to four times higher than members of the general public. Studies and clinical experience consistently indicate that 8 to 19 percent of prisoners have psychiatric disorders that result in significant functional disabilities, and another 15 to 20 percent will require some form of psychiatric intervention during their incarceration."

These are grim statistics and the reality that follows them is usually more than the average American is prepared to face. So many times citizens avoid the truth even when confronted by reports from recognized media outlets. Broadcasters and print journalists are talking, however, few are listening. There are many advocacy groups and non-mainstream news sources who are reporting about the many problems that correctional facilities are facing. The trick is to get people to seek out and research the numerous articles and information for themselves. Taking time out of busy, cluttered lives in order to read all it would take to

form an educated opinion is just not feasible for Joe Q Taxpayer.

There is a huge lack of knowledge and understanding with in inmate communities when it comes to the plight of those afflicted with psychiatric disorders. Popular rap songs mention manic depression as a synonym for insane and out of control. This fosters misconception and ignorance which makes it easy for those who have a habit of controlling or manipulating others to exploit those who seem weak as a result of their illness. In reality, inmates with severe problems are more unequipped than the rest to handle life behind bars. So many times, they are forced or encouraged to be housed in isolation. They are also often sequestered from the general population in the jailhouse equivalent of an inpatient mental facility. Even though it is for their own safety, it is not beneficial for their sanity and overall mental health. An extreme example would be a severely schizophrenic inmate who tied a noose around his neck and hanged himself from the ceiling of his cell as reported by the Huffington Post in February of this year.

The studied and statistics drone on, but the problem remains. More needs to be done to ensure that previous and future patients receive a higher level of care. Prison life is a horrid enough experience when you are stuck in a cell or surrounded by a group of other unstable individuals. It is even more frightening when you are lonely, misunderstood and trapped inside your own head.

- Lloyd B.

"For to be free is not merely to cast off one's chains, but to live in a way that respects and enhances the freedom of others."

- Nelson Mandela



See how clubhouses can help. Read the article on Page 4 and Ken Dudek's (President of Fountain House) response to the 60-Minutes segment "Untreated Mental Illness; An Imminent Danger" page 6



Inside This Issue:

Our Members at Work	2
Activities Calendar	2
Birthdays	2
Calendar	3
From the Director's Desk	3
Mixed Bag	4-5
Art Page	6
The Last Word	6

The Gainesville Opportunity Center's Board of Directors

Bruce Stevens - President
Andy Bernard - Vice President
Patricia Sokol -Treasurer
Vacant -Secretary
Markus Dietrich
Sandy Callan
Jennie Whitson
Jodi Irving
Victor Acevedo

IMPORTANT DATES

★HAPPY★ ★HAPPY★ ★HAPPY★ ★HAPPY★
BIRTHDAY! BIRTHDAY! BIRTHDAY! BIRTHDAY!

FALL 2013

November:

8th Homecoming Parade
9th Homecoming Game
11th Veteran's Day
28th Thanksgiving Day

10/3 Manny A.
10/5 Ronald B.
10/5 Kim I.
10/5 Kiandre T.
10/7 Ashley R.
10/8 Zennie B.

10/15 Teresa G.
10/21 Lois G.
10/24 Mike L.
10/25 Howard J.
10/26 Melvin C.
10/30 Jade w.

11/4 Michael T.
11/5 Alexis H.
11/5 Johnny M.
11/6 William D.
11/9 Robert P.
11/11 Kaye E.
11/12 Andy B.

11/12 Ryan J.
11/13 Victoria M.
11/13 Alexander S.
11/15 Holly H.
11/20 Jose C.
11/25 Henry Z.
11/28 Carlos C.

Our Members at Work: Clubhouse Employment, Education, and Volunteer Work

Education

Member	Location	Degree
Mike L.	Santa Fe College	College Prep
Jane B	At Home Professionals	Med. Transcription
Ryan J.	New Horizons	I.T. Administrator

Volunteer Work

Member	Position/Work Site	Hours/Week
David S.	Dog Walker/Gainesville Pet Rescue	2
Greg W.	Horse Care/Mill Creek Horse Farm	8

Employment Quote of the Month

Choose a job you love, and you
will never have to work a day
in your life.

-Confucius

Supported and Independent Employment

Member	Position/Employer	Hours/Week
Andy B.	Kitchen Asst./St. Francis H.S.	25
Andy B.	Dishwasher/Meridian	5
Sara O.	Peer Specialist/Meridian	16
Sandy C	Peer Specialist/Meridian	9
Regis G.	Clinical Supervisor/Discount Counseling Group	3
Regis G.	Group Leader/Clinical Director	40
Frances S.	Peer Specialist/Meridian	16
Tommy A.	Stocker/Catholic Charities	4
David J	Groundskeeper/Meridian	4
Deb O	SE Newsletter Editor/Meridian	5
Joel A.	Customer Service/Gainesville Flooring	40
Evan H.	Cleaning/Tribond	10.5
Jade W.	Customer Service/Full Cup	20
Alexis H.	Peer Specialist/Shand's Vista at UF	8
Alexis H.	Connections Facilitator/NAMI	2
David S	Peer to Peer Facilitator/NAMI	2
Ashley R.	Front Service Clerk/Publix	36

CONGRATULATIONS TO:

Alexis H. for her
new job at Shand's
Vista as a Peer
Specialist!!

- 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,
Thursday or Friday to see Pam or
call 224-5523

October 2013 Calendar

FALL 2013

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1 <i>CLUB CLOSED</i>	2 <i>CLUB OPEN</i>	3 <i>CLUB OPEN</i>	4 <i>CLUB OPEN</i>	5
6	7 <i>CLUB OPEN</i>	8 <i>CLUB CLOSED</i>	9 <i>CLUB OPEN</i>	10 <i>CLUB OPEN</i>	11 <i>CLUB OPEN</i>	12
13	14 <i>CLUB OPEN</i>	15 <i>CLUB CLOSED</i>	16 <i>CLUB OPEN</i>	17 <i>CLUB OPEN</i>	18 <i>CLUB OPEN</i>	19
20	21 <i>CLUB OPEN</i>	22 <i>CLUB CLOSED</i>	23 <i>CLUB OPEN</i>	24 <i>CLUB OPEN</i>	25 <i>CLUB OPEN</i>	26
27	28 <i>CLUB OPEN</i>	29 <i>CLUB OPEN</i>	30 <i>CLUB CLOSED</i>	31 <i>CLUB CLOSED</i>		

November 2013 Calendar

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1 <i>CLUB CLOSED</i>	2
3	4 <i>CLUB OPENS AT 12 NOON</i>	5 <i>CLUB CLOSED</i>	6 <i>CLUB OPEN</i>	7 <i>CLUB OPEN</i>	8 Homecoming Parade <i>Club Closed Trip to parade Be at club by 10:30</i>	9
10	11 <i>CLUB CLOSED Veteran's Day</i>	12 <i>CLUB CLOSED</i>	13 <i>CLUB OPEN</i>	14 <i>CLUB OPEN</i>	15 <i>CLUB OPEN</i>	16
17	18 <i>CLUB OPEN</i>	19 <i>CLUB CLOSED</i>	20 <i>CLUB OPEN</i>	21 <i>CLUB OPEN</i>	22 <i>CLUB OPEN</i>	23
24	25 <i>CLUB OPEN</i>	26 Club Open THANKSGIVING POT LUCK LUNCHEON	27 <i>CLUB CLOSED</i>	28 Thanksgiving Club Closed	29 <i>CLUB CLOSED</i>	30

Board of Director Interview: Victor A.



Q How long have you been on the Board of Directors?

A I just joined the Board this Spring.

Q What kinds of things do you do on the Board of Directors?

A I help give input on planning new events, feedback on dealing with organizations that fund us and review the budget.

Q How did you find out about GOC?

A Honestly, it's been so long (six or seven years) that I can't remember.

Q What made you want to become a part of the GOC Board of Directors?

A I love everyone at the Clubhouse and I strongly believe in its mission. The Clubhouse has been so instrumental in my life but I can see it affecting many more lives especially when it becomes fully functioning.

Q What is most rewarding about being on the Board of Directors?

A Even though there are many challenges, I believe Pam is taking the Clubhouse in the right direction and making the most of what she has to work with. I believe the Clubhouse is evolving (slowly) in to a fully functioning clubhouse.

Q Do you have any other connections to the mental health field?

A No. Not as a Board member.

Q What do you do for a living?

A My academic training is in Accounting but currently I have signed on to work with a financial planning firm.

Q Do you have any kids?

A Two step-children, both with Autism (high functioning).

Q Do you have any hobbies?

A I am very serious about my commitment to the Christian faith. I also love spectator sports (I was very athletic when I was younger and in better shape), especially football.

-By David S.

HELP IS AVAILABLE



The article by Lloyd B (Free Your Mind), on the front page highlights a problem that most of us are unfortunately aware of; Jails and the Department of Corrections are the LARGEST Mental Health Provider in the country. Here are some grim statistics...

- 16% of the population in prison is diagnosed with a severe mental illness, compared with 5% of the US Population.
- 7% of all people with a Serious or Persistent Mental Illness are put in Jail each year.
- Miami-Dade County Jail in Florida holds five times as many people with a mental illness as any psychiatric hospital in the state.
- The unemployment rate for people who are living with a mental illness is 85%.
- One third of all homeless people are living with a mental illness.

Why is it this way? That is a loaded question and one that would take more room than I have here to answer. The larger and more important question isn't why, but rather how. How can I help? What can I do?

Clubhouses have been helping since 1948, when they were first envisioned by a group of former patients from a local mental health facility who wanted something different. From their desire, came Fountain

House, the first clubhouse in the world, and some 65 years later, there are over 300 clubhouses worldwide with almost two-thirds of them being in the United States. How do we help?

First and foremost, clubhouses are a community where people, who have the same commonality, mental illnesses, come together. Our members, work together, laugh together, play together and ultimately support each other. Our members vary in the same way any community varies. We all have strengths and struggles that we bring to the table, staff and members alike. We use those strengths to help the clubhouse community, to lessen each other's struggles, to help each other grow and to thrive.

When someone is released from either jail or prison, many have little or no supports available other than those that they had before they went to prison, and these are often the same people or situations that led to their imprisonment. Individuals are released with little or no clothing (in fact whatever they went into jail wearing, sometimes pajamas), very little money in their pocket and often with no place to stay and no job. Clubhouses can and do help people with all these issues.

Clubhouses provide a support network, where members can get help accessing food, public assistance, housing and work. Clubhouses fill the gap in services. Your doctor helps you physically by providing

medications and your therapist by helping you address issues. Who helps you find friends, meaningful work, a place to come to, and a place to belong? Clubhouses! In a research project that was done in 1999 (Johnson J. & Hickey S. 1999 Arrests and Incarcerations after Psychosocial Program Involvement; Clubhouse vs. Jailhouse, *Psychosocial Rehabilitation Journal* 23 66-69), clubhouses were shown to decrease recidivism (repeated incarcerations) for many members. It was also found to reduce the likelihood of hospital readmissions. One of the key components that was observed but not fully researched was ability of these programs to "keep offenders with serious psychiatric disabilities out of jail at critical junctures (e.g. release), when they are most likely to blunder back into the criminal justice system."

The clubhouse model works, it helps adults living with a mental illness go back to work and give back to a community that helped them., and at a fraction of the cost of a jail or state hospital. GOC is doing this on a small scale. Members come to GOC because for a variety of reasons, but they stay because they find friends, supports and meaning. They find that it is no longer about how someone is helping them, but rather how they are helping the community, they are no longer taking but rather giving, they are persons, not an illness or a felon, they can teach as well as learn and help others along the way.

By Pam D.

My Trip to Colorado Springs



On August 23rd through August 26th I went to Colorado Springs for an un-official family reunion. The people that made it were my Uncle, Kent, my Grandma, Marge, my Grandpa, Robert, my Cousins, Steve, and Jenny, and their spouses and my cousins-in-laws (respectively) Ingrid, and John, Steve's and Ingrid's 11 month daughter, Avery, my Dad, Bruce, my brother, Brian, and me. My Mom didn't go due to health issues.

On Friday, August 23rd, my Dad, Brian, and I flew out of Gainesville, stopped at Atlanta, Georgia, and flew from there to Colorado Springs, Colorado. The view of was awesome, and it couldn't have been any better because as I looked out of window to see the Rocky mountains for the first time in my life, the sun was setting in a beautiful sunset behind the mountains.

The Broadmoor, the 5 star resort that we stayed at, had a "table" at the Colorado Springs Airport with a driver waiting for us to take us to Emerald Valley, a ranch near, and owned by Broadmoor, that was renovated into a sort of rustic resort. It had only been open for a few weeks, so we were some of the first guests to be there since the renovation!

My grandparents stayed in a cabin by themselves, while the rest of us stayed in a big two-story cabin. There were a couple of other cabins, but the whole ranch was relatively small, only big enough for about 32 guests. There was a ratio of about 1 to 1 for staff to guests, and we were constantly waited on. So, while we were living in luxurious "log cabins" with a big wide screen TV, there was a lodge about 100 feet away where you could ask for "just about anything," and "minutes later" receive it from one of the various people waiting on you with a smile. The food was really good, too!

Everyone learned how to fly fish from 2 guides that worked at Emerald Valley. After everyone learned how to fly fish, we fly fished out of a big pond only a couple hundred feet from the lodge. I caught 3 fish (with help reeling the fish in)! They were all rainbow trout. I almost caught a 4th fish—I got a fish to bite, but I tried to reel it in on my own too fast, and it got away. Fly fishing was a great experience for me. There was also horseback riding with a guide on a mountain trail. In order to ride horses, though, you have to be under 250 lbs., and I weigh around 295 lbs., so I wasn't able to go on the trail with everyone else. However, they made an exception for me. I was able to ride a horse, later on in the day for about an hour instead of an hour and a half. It was exciting! There was also archery with different bows and arrows, and with 2 targets. I almost got a perfect bull's-eye! Also, my cousin, Steve, who is a forester, led a short walk down a trail while telling everyone who went (my dad, my grandpa, my uncle, and cousin-in-law, John) about the names for the different trees in the area. I didn't go, though. I went to the cabin and relaxed.

When considering if I was going to go on the trip at all I was thinking about how much anxiety I might have had gone; I need some time to be alone and to relax by myself, and to meditate by myself. I was thinking how horrible it would be to be all the way in Colorado, to have a lot of anxiety, and to not be able to be in my apartment where I feel "safe" to relax and meditate in, by myself, but I took a sort of risk to go, and I am glad I did go! I have not been feeling as anxious lately as I have in the past, and I only had the "super" anxiety once on the trip. It was during dinner one night, so after dinner, I went to the cabin and went to sleep. I was especially sleepy that night after I took my medications, so it wasn't hard to fall asleep (I read after I arrived back in Gainesville, that high altitudes can affect some medications, so that might have been the reason I was so sleepy and sedated).

On the way back home, By Dad, Brain, and I flew from Colorado Springs, Colorado, to Dallas, Texas, from there to Atlanta, Georgia, and from there to Gainesville. The whole trip experience was wonderful, and I got to bond with my family and extended family, some of whom I have not seen in for over 10 years! I also got to meet Avery, my cousin Steve's and cousin in law Ingrid's daughter, my second cousin, for the first time! The whole trip will be an experience that I will probably never forget.

-By David S.

Fun Facts for Thanksgiving



The average weight of a turkey purchased at Thanksgiving is 15 pounds.

Male turkeys gobble. Hens make a clucking noise.

Although, Thanksgiving is widely considered an American holiday, it is also celebrated on the second Monday in October in Canada.

Black Friday is the Friday after Thanksgiving in the United States, where it is the beginning of the traditional Christmas shopping season.

Benjamin Franklin wanted the turkey to be the national bird of the United States.

Sarah Josepha Hale, an American magazine editor, persuaded Abraham Lincoln to declare Thanksgiving a national holiday.

Foods not present on the first Thanksgiving Day's table — Mashed potatoes, pumpkin pies, popcorn, milk, corn on the cob, and cranberries.

These were thought to have made up the spread — Lobster, rabbit, chicken, fish, squashes, beans, chestnuts, hickory nuts, onions, leeks, dried fruits, maple syrup and honey, radishes, cabbage, carrots, eggs, and goat cheese.

The first Thanksgiving celebration lasted three

days.

The Pilgrim leader, Governor William Bradford, had organized the first Thanksgiving feast in 1621. He invited the neighboring Wampanoag Indians to the feast. The Wampanoag Indians were the people who taught the Pilgrims how to cultivate the land.

The pilgrims didn't use forks; they ate with spoons, knives, and their fingers.

In 1920 the Philadelphia department store, Gimbel's, held a Thanksgiving Day Parade four years before Macy's.

MENTAL HEALTH SOLUTIONS NEED COVERAGE, TOO

Submitted by admin on Wed, 10/02/2013 - 4:50pm – Ken Dudek, President of Fountain House, New York City, NY

On Sunday, September 29, *60 Minutes* aired **a segment entitled “Untreated Mental Illness an Imminent Danger?”** reported by Steve Kroft. The connection between mental illness and violence is a complex and fraught issue, not easily covered in 13 ½ minutes of primetime television, but the story did aptly describe failures in the mental health system.

Inadequate mental healthcare is responsible for untold human suffering – not only for the sensational mass shootings that prompted the segment, but for homelessness, incarceration, suicide, and countless lives of wasted potential. States are quick to cut their community mental health budgets, abandoning people who are living with serious mental illness to the Medicaid system – a medical plan that is woefully unable to meet their needs. Rather than the integrated psychiatric, medical, and social support that is proven to lead to better outcomes, many people are left to the revolving door of the justice, corrections, and hospital systems. Society pays the price, in real economic costs and in inestimable human costs.

The problem is easy to formulate, but what about the solution? In the present dialogue, it is easy to lose sight of the fact that there are responses in place to the mental health crisis that are working. Sunday’s segment neglected any mention of this, yet in almost 40 states there exist community mental health centers that help people with serious mental illness live productive, fulfilling lives. These centers often struggle for survival in the face of limited support and funding, but they are successfully ad-

ressing the problem. People’s concern and understanding of what is possible should be informed by that.

Everyone who weighs in on this issue agrees that ultimately we must expand mental health support services for people living with schizophrenia. My experience as the president and executive director of **Fountain House**, a world-renowned community mental health program, has taught me that these support services must have a few key features:

Early intervention
50% of psychiatric illnesses manifest by the age of 14 and 75% manifest by the age of 24. Diagnosing and treating these disorders earlier means less time lost to the downward spiral of illness and the slow climb back to recovery.

Location
Isolation is one of the single largest problems facing people living with serious mental illness today. Even someone who is in mental health treatment may dutifully take their medications, see their providers for a few hours a month, and have little else to fill their life. Frequently these conditions disrupt people’s lives – causing them to lose jobs, drop out of school, and alienate those around them. Discrimination, misunderstanding, and self-stigma only exacerbate that. Centers in the community – physical locations where people congregate – can help those living with mental illness reconstruct their social networks and build the support that encourages them to move forward with their lives.

Proactive outreach
People living with serious mental illness are frequently difficult to engage, and

mental health recovery is seldom straight line. Any number of things may deter people from seeking or connecting with available help – anxiety, medication changes, and lethargy, to name a few. A persistent outreach effort by a person or team aimed at building a genuine relationship with the recovering person is crucial.

Since 1948, Fountain House has been confronting the social challenges of mental illness and developing a response that includes these vital features. Fountain House serves New York City from its Hell’s Kitchen location, but the inherent humanity, social inclusivity, personal empowerment, and innovation of this approach has inspired its replication around the world and has earned federal recognition in the US as an evidence-based practice. It is the gold standard for community mental health programs, and it is **the model for more than 200 programs in 38 states** and another 100 programs internationally that successfully address the social impact of mental illness and support people to build meaningful lives in their communities.

Untreated mental illness *is* an imminent danger, but as the *60 Minutes* report rightly stated, very little of that danger is due to tragedies like the Navy Yard shooting. It is much easier to avert our eyes from the smaller daily tragedies of mentally ill individuals and their loved ones struggling to make their way in an inhospitable world with little or no help. But that help does exist. As a society, we must decide whether we will prioritize making it available to everyone who needs it.

Kenneth J. Dudek
President, Fountain House

Famous and Influential People with Mental Illness

Michelangelo	Bipolar Disorder	Ricky Williams	Social Anxiety Disorder
Dick Clark	Depression	Willard Scott	Panic Disorder
Tom Harrell	Schizophrenia	Frederic Chopin	Depression
Jim Carrey	Depression	Winston Churchill	Depression
Isaac Newton	Bipolar Disorder	Virginia Woolf	Bipolar Disorder
Sheryl Crow	Depression	Lionel Aldridge	Schizophrenia
Catherine-Zeta Jones	Bipolar II	Howard Stern	Obsessive Compulsive Disorder
Abraham Lincoln	Depression	Janet Jackson	Depression

An insiders look at being homeless - Kelly's story

It didn't take me long to hear about Tent City here in Gainesville when I touched down here. The homeless problem in the city of Gainesville is common to most cities of this size. The real problem is the reactions of everyday citizens towards those who can't see a way out of their situations. Not everyone living on the streets is a panhandler or hobo who has adopted this way of life because it is easier to live without being a responsible or productive human being. According to the online Merriam-Webster, stigma is a set of negative and often unfair beliefs that a society or group of people have about something. It stems from ignorance and bias. Those who buy in to it and/or pass it on to others only continue to keep the "us and them" mentality going strong. If you turn a deaf ear to disturbing scenes or events, you do an injustice to the people who deal with the hard topics on a daily basis.

Here at the Gainesville Opportunity, we have members of all walks of life, assorted mental illnesses, and varying levels of functioning. Kelly is a member and has been homeless for four years. She lives in tent city. She didn't think she could write an article herself, so I asked her a few written questions. Everyone has a story to tell. Some are more difficult to hear, but reality is harsh. Kelly lived paycheck to

paycheck for some time. The crucial event that happened to her was an accident where she was hit by a non-insured driver. She lost her job as well as two weeks wages.

When asked why she dislikes living in homeless shelters, Kelly says there are not enough beds and the noise, filth and stress is difficult to deal with. In her opinion, the homeless population in Gainesville consists of a large amount of mentally ill people as well as the elderly and those who are very sick. Everything about being without a solid roof over her head is a challenge. "Extreme poverty affects purchasing meds or anything important. When it's too cold, hot or wet outside, it's very hard/depressing," she writes.

In my experience, there is a common societal image of a group of men huddled around a fire made in a 50 gallon oil drum or holding a "will work for food" sign at a busy street corner. Kelly says there are plenty of women and families out there as well. Once again (in nice handwriting I might add) she writes, "Most families are young and healthy. They can recover from the dilemma easier. Besides, they have more family members to rely on. When asked if she thinks some choose to be homeless, she mentions that some get a check which goes towards their addiction to whatever drug. In essence,

they choose their lot in life as we all do on some level.

Those with mental illness do have choices when it comes to certain things, but there are legitimate chemical imbalances that hinder us from being ourselves at times. That coupled with a myriad of environmental and situational things that cloud the lives of everyone on a daily basis, often makes living much harder than it needs to be. Kelly's life is not what she would like it to be and, I'm know there are plenty more in Tent City who would say the same. My last question is, what would you like the general public to know about you and the homeless of Gainesville? Her answer, "Most of us are elderly and unwell. I am educated, but my health has declines lately. Most jobs are taken by the younger, healthier people. Most of my family is deceased".

Life can be real hard when you're alone and afraid. There isn't a person alive who doesn't know who this feels like, but it's how we react to others who are in need that is important. Everyone has the option as to who they choose to bestow charity upon. Choose wisely, but doing nothing is, well... doing nothing.

-By Lloyd B.

Everyone's a Critic



As I'm reading through the critics and audience reviews for a movie I recently had the pleasure of viewing, I realized that there is a discrepancy. I already know critics – not matter the medium in which they choose as their "specialty" – are all the same. Their business is taking apart what hundreds of people have put much time and effort into creating. The work that goes into putting a film together shouldn't be torn down or belittled on the word of a so called expert. I always read a few reviews before I see a movie at the theater, but I don't limit myself to critics only. The only reason I do this is that I don't want to waste nine to twelve dollars on a crappy movie, but I enjoy the theater experience. Perhaps we can go into why ticket prices are so high at a later date. It isn't right to gouge your loyal law abiding moviegoers at the expense of those who think that pirating or downloading media illegally is OK.

Anyway, I was looking through the DVD

section at the Millhopper Branch Library and *A Beginner's Guide to Endings* stood out to me. It is Jonathan Sobol's debut as a director from his own script. Basically, it was about a father who had done nothing but wrong in his life. He was a gambler, a womanizer and a screw-up, but he loved his sons more than they even knew. The movie opens up with Duke White (Harvey Keitel) explaining how so many people don't get suicide right the first time. Duke eventually succeeds and it leads into his boys in a bar being handed out items from Duke's meager estate. The catch is that when the boys were young, their father signed them up for a pharmaceutical drug study. Come to find out that death was one of the side effects. And, to add insult to injury, good ol' dad had spent the insurance money at the track.

That's how it opens. Any more would get into severe spoiler alert territory. I found the film quite humorous in places as each tried to deal with their impending demise in their own way. The most reserved and uptight son starting writing this bucket list with some

reasonable and some not-so-much items.

My personal favorite was the tattoo scene where Jacob got back into his classic El Camino (he always wanted a muscle car) with a fourth young son who was from another one of Duke's escapades. He tried to play off the fact that he didn't get the tat because it hurt too much, but that didn't last long. There were plenty of other well done comedic moments. It worked well as a dark comedy and I found the message of a family who overcomes their dysfunction was a nicely done. It's unfortunate that Duke had to check out, but sometimes it takes a drastic event to bring those who are left behind closer together. Perfect is boring and it is those little idiosyncrasies that keep life fun.

A Beginner's Guide to Endings was an entertaining diversion and I enjoyed it with a new friend. I put only a little stock in what critics and pundits say in most things. I'd rather just figure it out for myself these days. I suggest you give Mr. Sobol a chance. The worst that can happen is that you'll laugh a little. When is that ever a bad thing?

- Lloyd B.

Art Page

Pain and Mirrors

The swirl of chaos...
 The one that causes pain.
 The one in the back of your mind...
 Those thoughts that make you wince,
 That headache, the stress, the anxiety.
 That same black cloud that pours grief on your head and
 The weight of stressful occurrences on your shoulders.
 The small voice behind that chaos...
 The one that cries out to you.
 "Help me," it says.
 You shudder because it sounds hopeless.
 That voice keeps calling out to you softly
 And every time you hear it; it's ignored
 You couldn't help it...
 Could you?
 You start to think back.
 "Help me," it cries again.
 Your hands tremble and shake as they hold onto your skull,
 And that thought carries your mind.
 "Help me!"
 You wince and you shudder.
 Your mind comes to a bleak darkness.

Thoughts rush back and forth
 And nothing can stop the voice calling you...
 Help me.
 The silence is paused.
 "Quit it!" You scream...
 It doesn't need the help,
 You're just feeding it pity.
 The voice grows smaller, softer...
 But, it becomes a calm silence.
 You look up from the darkness,
 Your hands stop the trembling and
 A hand is extended to yours.
 You slowly take a hold of it and
 Those cries of "Help me" are long gone.
 You stand on your own and
 You look back one more time.
 Instead of finding those cries of desperation,
 Those who cried for help...
 You're greeted with a warm smile
 And you return it.
 You blink, suddenly confused.
 You begin to question yourself.
 What was that? Who was it?
 And you find yourself looking again.
 Those cries, that smile...
 You finally know who it was!

Not a reflection of course...right?
 "Are you sure?"
 The same voice singing in a different tune.
 You look back again and close your eyes.
 You know who it is.
 You know who it was.
 Tears rush to your eyes and you see the person
 trapped behind the mirror
 That society has trapped them in...
 You can barely recognize the reflection
 But you know those eyes, that constant look of
 separation.
 Lies have trapped them there.
 Constant lies and lack of self-confidence.
 You take a deep breath and press your hand hard
 against the glass.
 You want to break it but you know you don't have
 the strength.
 Not now, not yet.
 So you're left staring. Longing...HOPING
 That one day you get them out, save the shell...
 The shell trapped behind the thick layer of glass.

It's you...

- By Ashley R.

The Chaser

6-20-2013

Smoke a cigarette
 Chase it down with Oxy-
 gen

Survival ?
 Not so good
 Perhaps good enough
 To keep me out
 Of the nursing home

Smoke another cigarette
 Chase it down
 With Oxygen

-By Greg U.

How Can I ?

6-27-2913

How can I love you Jesus
 When the feeling is mean and true ?
 How can I love you
 For taking away the blue ?

How can I sing a son
 With such a beautiful melody ?
 Always for you, Lord
 Never ever for me
 (chorus)

How can I love you, Jesus
 More and more
 How can I love you, Jesus
 Through all the joys and sorrows

How...for I love you Lord
 This is what I said
 I will always love you Jesus
 Be it through my life or death

Untitled

A universe said to The Man "sir, you are broken"
 And so, his switch was cut,
 Which wrought in him a tired, tolling sigh;
 His soul's deflation.
 It was until another said to the man "sir, you exist",
 And lent him tired eyes.
 And, to The Man he spoke then screamed ac-
 ceptance, understood
 And then The Man...THE MAN!
 The man's world shifted, plates aligned,
 And he was taught.
 Forgiveness is humanity's embrace.
 The man once taught was I.

- By Ryan J.



Mike L.	-	Rejoice	Pamela D.	-	Courage	Mike D.	-	Brave
Ashley R.	-	Bat-kittens	Victor A.	-	Joy	Lloyd B.	-	Nothingness
Ryan J.	-	Blue	Alexis H.	-	Peace	David S.	-	Good