

GOC GAZETTE

THE NEWSPAPER FOR THE
GANESVILLE OPPORTUNITY CENTER



Gainesville
& North Central Florida
www.NamiGainesville.org



What can we learn from Sandy Hook?

Like all of the country, we at GOC were in shock on Friday December 14th, when we began to first hear about the horrific shootings at Sandy Hook Elementary School in Newtown, CT. That day many members asked me why. How could someone do this to such innocent children? We had no answers but by the following week we were even more horrified to learn that the shooter was someone who had been living with a mental illness.

One member asked “Does that mean people are going to think that I’m going to kill a child, because I wouldn’t. Children are precious.” Other members felt it highlighted the need for more services, or for tighter gun control, or for better security at schools. But in the end, the main concern we all had, was how sad it was for the families who lost loved ones and also how do we keep this from happening here.

We do not expect amputees to walk without a prosthetic or a wheel chair, we don’t expect a blind person to just cross a street without a guide dog or a cane, we don’t expect people going through chemotherapy to be working the very next day, but we expect someone with a mental illness to be able to “just snap out of it”, we expect people living a mental illness to “not be so lazy”, we expect people with a mental illness to not work because “you’re too sick”. We cut the programs that provide the prosthetic or the cane, for the mentally ill; than we expect these same people to function without that support. Mental illness is just that, an illness. It is treatable! You **CAN RECOVER** from a mental illness, but support is needed.

Having a place to come to, having a place where members can feel wanted, needed and appreciated, and having the ability to get a job, makes a difference. Here are some numbers from GOC to make you think. To date GOC has 79 members. 33.3% of the GOC membership holds an Associate’s Degree or

higher. 35.9% have either a GED or High School Diploma. 12.8% only completed middle school. During the last fiscal year 19 different members worked for 8 different employers. These same members average hourly wage was over \$12.25/hour, and they worked over 11 hours/week on average. Last year our members earned over \$70,000. We accomplished all this with only 1 staff person. It is important to note, many of these working members had not worked in years prior to coming to the clubhouse. In the six years we have been in operation we have **NEVER** had to call the police because of a member’s action.

We hear stories in the news about advanced technology helping the blind be more independent, the mobility impaired move easier, but we don’t see the same for mental illness. We hear about pain and suffering, about death and destruction, about homelessness and dangerousness, but not of love, success, and life. Maybe if we focused more on the positives, less on the negatives. Maybe if we challenged Hollywood about the presentation of disabled people, the same way they were challenged in the 50’s and 60’s with the presentation of minorities in TV and movies we would see a difference.

This will not change the fact that 26 innocent people lost their lives to a man who was had a mental illness. Maybe if he had help, a job, a place to go it might have made a difference. Maybe not, but we know that if we don’t do anything, this **WILL** happen again. If we just talk but take no actions than all those deaths were in vain. Let’s make a change, let’s look at things differently, let’s stop seeing money spent on mental illness as extraneous and look at it as equal to national security, or Medicaid, or Social Security.

Then and **ONLY** then, will we see a change.

-by Pam D

Inside This Issue:	
Employment and Education Page	2
Activities Calendar and Birthdays	2
Calendar	3
BOD Interview	3
America’s Values	4
Holiday Party a Success	5
New Year’s Resolution	6
New Year’s Traditions	6
Art Page	7
Your Resolutions	7
The Last Word	7

The Gainesville Opportunity Center’s Board of Directors	
Bruce Stevens - President	
Andy Bernard - Vice President	
Patricia Sokol –Treasurer	
Barry Wagner –Secretary	
Markus Dietrich	
Sandy Callan	
Jennie Whitson	
Jodi Irving	

OUR CALENDAR
1ST NEW YEAR'S DAY 21ST MARTIN LUTHER KING DAY

JANUARY BIRTHDAYS	
3RD TOMY A. 4TH MADELIN B. 8TH TOM N. 14TH CAROL B.	15TH MARCIA S. 22ND MICHAEL S. 30TH DAVID J.



Happy Birthday Everyone!!!

Clubhouse Employment, Education, and Volunteerism Page: *Our Members at Work!*

Education		
Member	Location	Degree
Mike L.	Santa Fe College	College Prep
Deb O.	Santa Fe College	Business
Sandy C.	Argosy University	Psychology
Joel A.	Santa Fe College	GED

Volunteer Work		
Member	Position/Work Site	Hours/Week
David S.	Dog Walker/Gainesville Pet Rescue	4
Greg W.	Horse Care/Mill Creek Horse Farm	20

Supported and Independent Employment		
Member	Position/Employer	Hrs/Week
Andy B.	Kitchen Asst./St. Francis H.S.	25
Andy B.	Dishwasher/Meridian	5
Sara O.	Peer Specialist/Meridian	16
Jane B.	Courtesy Clerk/Winn-Dixie	25
Sandy C	Peer Specialist/Meridian	20
Victor A	Accountant/Harrigan's	20
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
Dave B.	Carpenter/Self Employed	2
David J	Groundskeeper/Meridian	4
Deb O	SE Newsletter Editor/Meridian	5
Joel A.	Shipping & Receiving/Express Employment	PRN
David S.	Peer Mentor/NAMI	2
Ryan J.	Computer Repair Tech./ 43rd St Comp. Repair	20
Chris F.	Cart Return/Wal-Mart	20
Manny A	Caller/Telemarketing Firm	20

Employment Quote of the Month

“In order to succeed, your desire for success must be greater than you fear of failure.”

~ Bill Cosby

CONGRATULATIONS TO
All our members who
worked last year!!!
Our members made a
collective total of
over \$73,000 during
2012!

- *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 Ross or call them at 224-5523

January 2013

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1 <i>New Year's Day</i> <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 Closed</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>Marin Luther King Day</i> <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 Closed</i>	30 <i>Club open</i>	31 <i>Club open</i>		

Board of Directors Interview: Markus Dietrich



How long have you been on the Board of Directors?
I'm not sure. We might have to check the board minutes. I was not on the inaugural board, but came on pretty early. I do know that my board involvement goes back to the "Clubhouse without walls".

hired as the first Executive Director.

What made you want to become a part of the GOC Board of Directors?
I really was (and still am) excited about the concept of the Clubhouse, as an evidence based program that focuses on recovery. As a mental health professional, it was very apparent to me that something like the clubhouse is painfully missing in our community.

come. This experience gives me a pretty good understanding of the resources, and resource deficits, for people who live with a mental illness in our community.

What do you do for a living?
See above

Do you have any kids?
I have been married to my wife Ginny for 33 years and we have two beautiful daughters. My older daughter is a Sophomore at Buchholz and the younger one is in 8th Grade at Westwood Middle School.

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

The answer to this question is probably similar for all of us. On a small board of a fairly new organization, board members are usually not specialized, so all of us feel responsible for the overall board duties. This includes making sure we support the mission, secure funding, plan for the future, and support the Executive Director. In short, whatever it takes to keep the doors open and the lights on. One of the bigger challenges we all faced was finding a new home last year. I think it worked out well.

What is most rewarding about being on the Board of Directors?
Seeing that GOC works. I had the privilege of participating in the Thanksgiving dinner with the members. It was a great experience of community, mutual support and fun.

Do you have any hobbies?
Unfortunately I have more hobbies and interests than I have time for. I have been a musician for most of my life and love music, even though I don't play much myself these days (that time thing again). I love to sail and try to get on the water as much as I can. Lastly I love sports, which of course is a year round attraction in this town.

How did you find out about GOC?
I remember being in planning meetings, hosted by Meridian, even before Mike Demers was

Do you have any other connections to the mental health field?
I am a licensed mental health counselor and have been employed by Shands Vista for 25 years. I had different clinical and management responsibilities over the years. Throughout this time I always worked with populations that had mental health or addiction problems to over-

-by David Stevens

America's Returning to Old Values



America's best generation was the WW2 generation. After we beat the Nazi's and the Japanese, America was at it's best, celebrating the victory. So supposedly , progressively , generations moving forward are better than the generation before them. That is not so with the baby boomers. What happened? Well, it started with women's jobs being lost by the troops who were no longer in the army.

So then, one might consider, "What can women do?" Well, some got other jobs, or remained were they were , but unfortunately most women had to stay at home and cook and take care of the kids full time. So, men got jobs at mostly everything. It was a man's work place. I imagine it didn't take long for women to get fed up with their stereotypes on TV and in real life. But they put up with it for about ten years before rebelling. Men started conforming to either straight edge or greasers. The straight edge people would wear a plain white t-shirt, and jeans. They would part

their hair. The Greaser's would wear a black leather jacket and jeans, and grease their hair. Gangs started to form. I'm sure there were plenty of adults concerned about these young men and I'm sure they discussed on TV and the radio.

Then, the sixties and came and we had a handsome young president named John F. Kennedy. He talked about a torch being passed to the young. I bet the kids and young adults ate it up. The Hippie movement began, Flower children were suddenly around and "Love Children" were being born. Peace and Love not war, protests, and sit-ins.

The counter culture continued to grow. Kids and adults would wear rag dresses and the men would wear long shirts and bell bottom jeans. They lived in communes and smoked pot, and used other drugs. Music was a big thing to them. Many bands started using drugs as well as the people. Concerts like Woodstock, Haight-Asbury, The Beatles at Shea Stadium and more. Classic Bands and singers like Hendrix, The Who, Joni Mitchell, Santana and the Grateful Dead began. Drug use was

rampant, and our society began to fail. We gained a lot but we also gave up a lot too

By the 1970's the woman's liberation movement was moving forward. Bra's were being burned. Women refused to stay in the kitchen and raise kids for a career. They didn't want men to push their chairs in for them or hold the door open. They wanted equal rights for men and woman. So, Chivalry kind of died.

I believe America is on it's way back to the old values. Wouldn't it be great to go somewhere where you could be yourself with a woman and she also acted like herself without games or superficial talk? I believe schools will start back as being conservative schools with more rules of code of conduct and dress code. I think it would be a better America were people treated each other right.

Does America want these values now? I think so.

-by Mike L.

Better Social Security Benefits!



Many of us are probably getting Social Security benefits, and for us that are, there is good news!

Why is that good news? Well this yeas again, as

in previous years we have seen an increase in benefits! The increases affect both SSI, SSDI checks, as well as Substantial Gainful Activity (SGA) limits, Trail Work Period amounts.

First and foremost, most of us have already seen this but just in case you are unaware, our checks have increased! Individuals on SSI will see a \$12 increase, bringing our

checks up from \$698 a month to \$710. For couples who receive one SSI check your checks will go from \$1,048 to \$1,066 a month. I know this isn't much but we will all have a little bit more money in our pockets each month!

Substantial Gainful Activity or SGA, is the maximum amount of money an individual who receives an SSDI check can make while still retaining their entire check. That amount has also been raised from \$1,010 to \$1,040 per month!

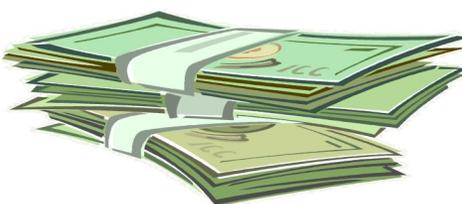
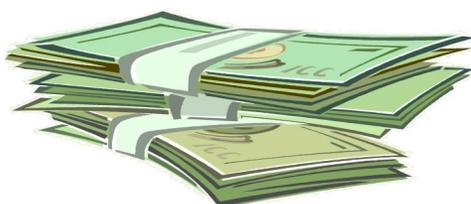
When you are on SSDI, you have a 9 month Trial Work Period. This year, the Trial Work Period amount increased from

\$720 a month, to \$750 a month.

A Trial Work Period is used during the first 9 months that you work, and as of 2013 earn more than \$750. Trial work periods do not have to be used consecutively, and could take years to use them all up.

So all in all, even though we don't make much are we are definitely ahead of where we were last year. If you have any specific questions about your benefits feel free to talk to Pam. Call her at the club or email her. She knows a lot and can help!

-by David S.



GOC 2012 Holiday Party a Success!



GOC had it's annual Holiday Party on December 20th, from noon until 3 O'clock. I arrived at the party at about 12:30. My dad had already set up my guitar, amplifier, and microphone before I got there, so when I walked in the room everything was ready for me to play. Manny showed up a little bit later. Mike was there before I arrived. Party guests helped themselves to

finger food Hors' devours, and beverages . We waited a while for more people to arrive, and then about 1:30, "we" started our little performance. I played guitar, and sang while Manny played tambourine during our first and only original song, "My Heart Beats for You," which lyrics were written by Mike L. Mike decided not to play bass for "My Heart Beats for You," but sang his usual introduction for it. Next, Manny and Jane played guitar (and sang), while I played the "sleigh bells" (and sang) for three Christmas songs: "Jingle Bells," "Deck the Halls," and "Frosty the Snow-

man" (everyone sang along). After that, Manny played guitar and I continued to play "sleigh bells" for "Silent Night" while everyone sang along as well. That mini "concert-sing-along," was the perfect climax to our Holiday Party! After that, people started to leave, and some people stayed and helped clean up and put tables, and chairs away. Then, Crystal and Madeline came at about 2:45. They ate some of the scraps that were left of the party and hung out for a while.

-by David S.



Origins of the New Year's Resolution



What Are The Origins of the New Year's Resolution? Here Is What History.com Has To Say About It...

EARLY NEW YEAR'S CELEBRATIONS

The earliest recorded festivities in honor of a new year's arrival date back some 4,000 years to ancient Babylon. For the Babylonians, the first new moon following the vernal equinox—the day in late March with an equal amount of sunlight and darkness—heralded the start of a new year. They marked the occasion with a massive religious festival called Akitu (derived from the Sumerian word for barley, which was cut in the spring) that involved a different ritual on each of its 11 days. In addition to the new year, Akitu celebrated the mythical victory of the Babylonian sky god Marduk over the evil sea goddess Tiamat and served an important political purpose: It was during this time that a new king was crowned or that the current ruler's

divine mandate was symbolically renewed.

Throughout antiquity, civilizations around the world developed increasingly sophisticated calendars, typically pinning the first day of the year to an agricultural or astronomical event. In Egypt, for instance, the year began with the annual flooding of the Nile, which coincided with the rising of the star Sirius. The first day of the Chinese new year, meanwhile, occurred with the second new moon after the winter solstice.

JANUARY 1 BECOMES NEW YEAR'S DAY

The early Roman calendar consisted of 10 months and 304 days, with each new year beginning at the vernal equinox; according to tradition, it was created by Romulus, the founder of Rome, in the eighth century B.C. A later king, Numa Pompilius, is credited with adding the months of Januarius and Februarius. Over the centuries, the calendar fell out of sync with the sun, and in 46 B.C. the emperor Julius Caesar decided to solve the problem by consulting

with the most prominent astronomers and mathematicians of his time. He introduced the Julian calendar, which closely resembles the more modern Gregorian calendar that most countries around the world use today.

As part of his reform, Caesar instituted January 1 as the first day of the year, partly to honor the month's namesake: Janus, the Roman god of beginnings, whose two faces allowed him to look back into the past and forward into the future. Romans celebrated by offering sacrifices to Janus, exchanging gifts with one another, decorating their homes with laurel branches and attending raucous parties. In medieval Europe, Christian leaders temporarily replaced January 1 as the first of the year with days carrying more religious significance, such as December 25 (the anniversary of Jesus' birth) and March 25 (the Feast of the Annunciation); Pope Gregory XIII reestablished January 1 as New Year's Day in 1582.

Source: <http://history.com/topics/new-years>

Here Are Some New Year's Traditions From Around the World...



With New Year's upon us, here's a look at some of the good luck rituals from around the world. They are believed to bring good fortune and prosperity in the coming year.

AUSTRIA - The suckling pig is the symbol for good luck for the new year. It's served on a table decorated with tiny edible pigs. Dessert often consists of green peppermint ice cream in the shape of a four-leaf clover.

ENGLAND - The British place their fortunes for the coming year in the hands of their first guest. They believe the first visitor of each year should be male and bearing gifts. Traditional gifts are coal for the fire, a loaf for the table and a drink for the master. For good luck, the guest should enter through the front door and leave through the back. Guests who are empty-handed or unwanted are not allowed to enter first.

WALES - At the first toll of midnight, the back door is opened and then shut to release the old year and lock out all of its bad luck. Then at the twelfth stroke of the clock, the front door is opened and the New

Year is welcomed with all of its luck.

HAITI - In Haiti, New Year's Day is a sign of the year to come. Haitians wear new clothing and exchange gifts in the hope that it will bode well for the new year.

SICILY - An old Sicilian tradition says good luck will come to those who eat lasagna on New Year's Day, but woe if you dine on macaroni, for any other noodle will bring bad luck.

SPAIN - In Spain, when the clock strikes midnight, the Spanish eat 12 grapes, one with every toll, to bring good luck for the 12 months ahead.

PERU - The Peruvian New Year's custom is a spin on the Spanish tradition of eating 12 grapes at the turn of the year. But in Peru, a 13th grape must be eaten to assure good luck.

GREECE - A special New Year's bread is baked with a coin buried in the dough. The first slice is for the Christ child, the second for the father of the household and the third slice is for the house. If the third slice holds the coin, spring will come early that year.

JAPAN - The Japanese decorate their homes in tribute to lucky gods. One tradition, kadomatsu, consists of a pine branch symbolizing longevity, a bamboo stalk symbolizing prosperity, and a plum blossom showing nobility.

CHINA - For the Chinese New Year, every front door is adorned with a fresh coat of red paint, red being a symbol of good luck and happiness. Although the whole family prepares a feast for the New Year, all knives are put away for 24 hours to keep anyone from cutting themselves, which is thought to cut the family's good luck for the next year.

UNITED STATES - The kiss shared at the stroke of midnight in the United States is derived from masked balls that have been common throughout history. As tradition has it, the masks symbolize evil spirits from the old year and the kiss is the purification into the new year.

NORWAY - Norwegians make rice pudding at New Year's and hide one whole almond within. Guaranteed wealth goes to the person whose serving holds the lucky almond.

Source: <http://EzineArticles.com/245213>

Art Page

Ripples On a Pond



-David S.

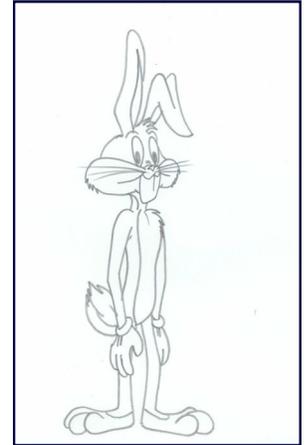
Fall Leaves in Florida...or as close as we get.



- Pam D.

“Art enables us to find ourselves and lose ourselves at the same time.” - Thomas Merton

What’s up Doc?



Hand drawn by Rhyne B.

Bugs Bunny is owned by Warner Brothers.

Neither Rhyne nor GOC claim any ownership of Bugs Bunny, and makes no money of off this.

What Are YOUR New Year’s Resolutions? Let’s Find Out...

“To get back to school.” -Travis H.

“My New Year’s Resolution is to enjoy life.” -David S.

“Work my hardest for m show.” -Greg U.

“To get happy.” -Paula H.

“It’s the same every year—my New Year’s

Resolution is to not have a resolution.” - Pam D.

“To go through the entire Catholic Catechism and to improve my prayer life.” - Mike D

“I didn’t make one. I am just glad to be alive!” - Eddie

“Loose more weight.” Marianne

“Low and behold I didn’t have one on New Years. But now...I find myself thinking that I want to continue to respect myself more” - Ryan J.



“To ignore people that are bothering me and not think bad thoughts after that” - Mike L.

THE LAST WORD

“Employment!” -David S.

“Happiness.” -Paula H.

“Farmed.” -Travis H.

“Love.” -Greg U.

“Embarrassing.” - Marianne

“Possibilities” - Mike D.

“Huh” - Ryan J.

“Peace” - Mike L.

“Playfulness” - Rhyne B.

“Generosity” - Pam D.

