

JUNE 2012

VOLUME 5, ISSUE 4

GOC GAZETTE

THE NEWSPAPER FOR THE
GAINESVILLE OPPORTUNITY CENTER



MANY THANKS...AGAIN!!

Many of you have heard the saying “It takes a village to raise a child.” Well I would like to amend that to say “It takes a village to raise a Clubhouse.” In the last 6 months, I have been saying thank you to so many people for all the support that the clubhouse has received. This month’s thanks are to all those people who helped and came to our open house.

On May 16th GOC held its first Community Open House at our new site, and it was a great success. We had a “Global” theme, to coincide with the globe in GOC logo. The club was filled with balloons, flowers, globes and most of all people...over 80 in all! I have spoken to many people since the Open House and have heard nothing but rave reviews!

First and foremost...thank you to all of our friends who time out of their busy schedules on a damp Wednesday night to join us for our open house. I know how hard it is sometimes to squeeze another event into your schedules and I appreciate your efforts. It was wonderful to see you all.

The success of this event was truly a team effort. Thanks to all the members who worked so hard on this with us: Ryan, Joel, Alexis, David, Victor, and Christine who helped with setup, breakdown, and preparation.

Thanks to the NAMI Gators team (the new NAMI Chapter at UF), who helped with registration and set-up. Thanks to the many members NAMI Gainesville and other community volunteers who volunteered their culinary skills. The food was awesome!

Thanks to the other community volunteers who helped with marketing, invitations, email addresses, set-up, breakdown and so many other areas.

Thanks to my entire Board of Directors for taking time out of your own evening to come to this and answering the many questions that you did. Thanks especially to Bruce Stevens, our Board President, who coordinated HUNDREDS of email addresses for our invitation

list. And got the mailing list to work!

Last but not never least...special thanks to my Open House Team. My Coordinator with Spunk...Susan Boulet. The Knock Out Punch Lady...Terri Mullins. The Global Queen...Christine McEvoy. My Make-It-Work Man...Ryan Jones. You guys were phenomenal! What success we had was because of the great coordination you guys put into this. Thank you so much.

So this is our new village...and it is a growing community. With all your help...this clubhouse will be growing as well. So again...thank you to everyone.

By Pam Demers



Bruce and Cynthia

Theresa (L) and Nancy



We were filled to the brim!

Joan and her tray of goodies!



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The Gainesville Opportunity Center's Board of Directors

Bruce Stevens - President
Edward "Andy" Bernard - Vice President
Patricia Sokol -Treasurer
Barry Wagner -Secretary
Markus Dietrich
Sandy Callan
Jennie Whitson

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OUR CALENDAR

JUNE

17TH FATHER'S DAY
 JUNE 22ND FLORIDA CLUBHOUSE
 COALITION MEETING. CLUB CLOSED

BIRTHDAYS

JUNE 4TH PAM D.
 JUNE 7TH JANE B.
 JUNE 26TH JOE W.

Happy Birthday Everyone!!!



Clubhouse Employment, Education and Volunteerism - *Our Members at Work*

Education

Member	Location	Degree
Mike Leyman	Santa Fe College	Welding
Deb O.	Santa Fe College	Business
Greg U.	BBN Bible Institute	Scripture Studies
Alexis H.	Santa Fe College	Welding
Sandy Callan	Argosy University	Psychology

Employment Quote of the Month

“My job is about the most fun thing I do, but I have a broad set of interests, going places, reading things, doing things.”

-Bill Gates

Volunteer Work

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

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
Regis G.	Clinical Supervisor/Discount Counseling Group	3
Regis G.	Consultant/Boys and Girls Club	20
Frances S.	Peer Specialist/Meridian	16
Tommy A.	Stocker/Catholic Charities	4
David B.	Peer Specialist/Meridian	20
Alexis H	Peer to Peer Facilitator/NAMI	2
David J	Groundskeeper/Meridian	4

Congratulations to

Sandy, Alexis, Dave B., David S., Terrie, for their completion of the third annual Peer Conference!

- *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

When further funding becomes available we will be able to increase our staff to cover our work-ordered day program, which will support a strong Transitional Employment (TE) Program!

June 2012

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

Open House a Success

There was preparation for the open house days before the event. We cleaned, organized, and rearranged tables and chairs. We hung member quotes on poster board as well as a banner to the walls. Globes were put around the inside of the building to be a part of the GOC theme: "A World of Opportunity." Videos about the clubhouse were playing in the computer lab. People were busily putting out their ordure's and punch.

Then, on Wednesday May 16th at 5 O'clock pm the Gainesville Opportunity Center had an open house to the councilors, doctors, nurses, politicians, realtors, and other people that are in the community. In the lunch room, there was a slide show that Devon, Mike and Pam Demers' son, made. The slide show was amazing. It was playing continually while open house guests helped themselves to ordure's. 70 people RSVP'd and 80 plus people came to the open house so it was a little crowded at the GOC, but that was a good thing. There was a party atmosphere. Bruce Stevens had to make his mid-party speech twice because there were so many more people that showed up after his first speech. The open house was from 5 O'clock to 8 O'clock.

After the open house everyone took the remains of their ordure's home and we rearranged the chairs and tables in the clubhouse to their previous places. The open house was a success!

-by David S.



Alexis and her sisters



Joel and Elizabeth



Susan, Maddy, Elizabeth, and Mike



Pam, Sam, Joan, Terrie, and Brian

What I learned at the Peer Conference: Service, Therapy, and Emotional Support Dogs

From May 21st to 24th, I attended (with other people from Gainesville, NAMI, and GOC) a Peer Conference that was completely run by people who either have a mental illness, or know someone who is affected by a mental illness. I attended three workshops a day meeting new people, and often seeing people I already knew at the workshops that I was attending. Here is some information from one of the workshops that I attended: Psychiatric Service Dogs, Other Service Dogs, and Therapy and Emotional Support Dogs.

Service Dogs:

“Service Dogs are individually trained to perform tasks and do work that mitigate their handler’s disabilities.” This is how Service Dogs are defined as. These dogs are more than just cute companions. They are not pets. They work with their partners that are disabled to establish safety and independence that the disabled persons would otherwise not have.

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) protects people with disabilities rights to be able to be accompanied by their Service Dog in public places that ordinarily wouldn’t allow animals. Examples of this are places like businesses, restaurants, grocery stores, and hotels. There are even more laws that protect disabled people’s rights with Service Dogs that extend further than the ADA. Examples of these laws are the DOT’s Air Carrier Access Act, SOJ/HUD Fair Housing Act, and Federal Rehabilitation Act.

And...there are even Service Dogs that help people with mental illness. These dogs are called Psychiatric Service Dogs. The definition of these Dogs is, “A dog that is individually trained to do work or perform tasks for the benefit of an individual disabled by severe mental illness.” Some diagnosis that can be assisted by a Psychiatric Service Dog, or PSD, are all DSM-IV Axis 1 disorders like Major Depression, Bipolar Disorder, Schizo-

phrenia, Panic Disorder, Social Anxiety Disorder Agoraphobia, Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder, and Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder.

Some tasks that PSDs can be trained for are to remind the handler to take medication on time, warm the handler’s body during a panic attack, interrupt repetitive behaviors, accompany handler outside of home, alert to mania, panic attacks, or dissociation, attend to handler during emotional distress, interrupt dissociative episodes or flashbacks, hallucination discernment, provide a safe grounding presence, mitigate paranoia with reality testing, turn on lights and search a room for intruders.

PSDs are allowed to go to public spaces, but may be lawfully excluded from private spaces including, but not limited to private homes, country clubs, and churches. Other places where they might not be allowed is in places where their presence would be a safety risk (like operating rooms, research laboratories, construction sites) or in situations where the animal is a direct threat to others.

So, Service Dogs are great to have but they require a lot of work. To train one, you must have great training skills, or hire a professional dog trainer to work with you. It will take two years to properly train a Service Dog. Owning a Service Dog, you will need to keep him or her with you for at least 90% of the time everywhere you go. Having a service Dog is a lifestyle, and requires a serious long-term commitment. If this doesn’t sound like what you would like, then consider if you really would like a Service Dog.

With a Service Dog, you will be more visible to people in public. Some people might question your need for a Service Dog, or try to deny your access to public places. Dealing with the public is a skill that you develop. Learn about the demands of a Service Dog before taking on the responsibility of being

responsible for a dog’s life.

Therapy Dogs:

Therapy Dogs need a lot of training, but have a different purpose from Service Dogs. Therapy Dogs provide psychological or physiological therapy to people other than their handlers, who are most of the time their owners. Most of the time these dogs will visit hospitals, schools, hospices, psychotherapy offices, and nursing homes. They are encouraged to socialize and interact with “everyone” during the time they are on duty, which is not so with Service Dogs.

Therapy Dog’s roles vary from providing emotional therapy, to being someone for children with learning disabilities to read out loud to, to do physical rehabilitation therapy. Sometimes a therapy dog might do therapy at one exclusive location like at a psychotherapy practice.

Even though Therapy dogs go through extensive training, they don’t have the same rights that a Service Dog has in regard to being in public places.

Emotional Support Animals:

These animals can be any type of animal (Ginny pig, cat, dog), and don’t need training. What they are for is to provide their owner with emotional support. Emotional Support Animals can provide tremendous psychological support. The unconditional love an animal can give just might be what someone that suffers from Major Depression needs.

While these animals can’t be with you in public places that don’t allow pets like Service Dogs, and Therapy Dogs, owners of Emotional Support Animals can get by the rule of a “no pet policy” some residential housing have as well as being allowed to be on airplanes when otherwise not allowed.

-by David S.

Diet, Nutrition and Exercise...and Jobs?



FYI...We have some new volunteers who are going to be working with us, on a few different projects.

First is Melissa, a UF Nursing Student who is interested in doing a long term project with

us. She would like your feedback about possible topics that she could work with us on. Possible topics might be Healthy Food on a Food Stamp budget, Losing Weight without spending a dime, Fast Food and Nutrition. She is open to many topics, so come by and meet her and let us know what you think.

Secondly is Ross,. He will be working with members to help them get jobs, make resumes, and even do mock interviews. Ross will be available one or two days a week and is setting a schedule soon, so keep an eye out.