



# THE BEACON

*Mental Health America of Lancaster County, A United Way Agency*

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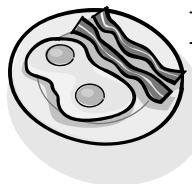
## MHALC President's Message by Chris Wise

As 2009 begins, I am excited about the year ahead for Mental Health America of Lancaster County (MHALC). We recently received some very good news from the Lancaster County Community Foundation that we were selected as one of eight recipients of \$10,000 matching grants which will make possible a new MHALC endowment of at least \$20,000 as we raise additional funds. Given today's uncertain economic times, this endowment will help to strengthen our long-term financial health as we continue to advocate, educate, support and serve persons impacted by mental and emotional illness living in Lancaster County thus

improving mental health recovery, promoting mental well-being and enhancing the quality of their lives.

Thank you to the many individuals who made end of year gifts. Your gift brings help and hope to people who have mental illnesses as they continue on their path to recovery. Thanks to each of you who have generously supported Mental Health America of Lancaster County in the past. We hope that you will continue to support our organization through the giving of your time, talents, and financial gifts as we move forward in 2009 and the years ahead.

Some of the highlights for 2009 are MHALC's annual Legislative Breakfast on Friday, March 27 and our 5<sup>th</sup> semi-annual Diversity Seminar on Friday, May 15. We hope that you will be able to attend these very educational programs. In addition, we will have our 2<sup>nd</sup> annual Chili Cook-off fundraising event on Saturday, March 21. Please call MHALC's office at 397-7461 or visit our website at [www.mhalancaster.org](http://www.mhalancaster.org) for more information. Wishing you good mental health and wellness in 2009!



## MHALC Annual Legislative Breakfast

Please join us for breakfast on Friday, **March 27,**

**2009** at Eden Resort Inn & Suites from 7:45AM-10:00AM. **Menu includes:** Sliced fresh fruit, Silver Dollar pancakes with syrup, fluffy scrambled eggs, American fried potatoes, bacon, assorted breakfast pastries, chilled juices, coffee, decaffeinated coffee, herbal teas, and milk **Topic of discussion will be:** Maintaining Mental Health Services Through Recession

### **SPEAKERS:**

- James Laughman, Executive Director, Mental Health/Mental Retardation/Early Intervention
- Crystal Gingrich, Executive Director, Children and Youth Agency
- Rick Kastner, Executive Director, Lancaster County Drug and Alcohol Commission
- Susan Blue, President, Community Services Group
- Scott Martin, County Commissione

Each will address from their own perspectives the realities, various cuts and plans to survive and serve those in need of services in 2009-and maybe beyond.

A limited number of scholarships will be available for persons who are users of mental health services. Please write and send a paragraph on why you would like to attend and what you hope to learn. Please make check or money order(\$20 per person) payable to MHALC. Return payment and registration form on or before **March 20, 2009**. Forms are available at [www.mhalancaster.org](http://www.mhalancaster.org) or by calling 397-7461. We hope you can join us!

## Eight nonprofit organizations receive help to bolster their financial future

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE – (January 13, 2009) Eight nonprofit organizations have received funding from the Lancaster County Community Foundation to help bolster their financial future. Through an Endowment Matching Program, \$80,000 – up to \$10,000 for each organization – in matching funds were awarded to encourage nonprofits to consider endowments as a part of their long-term strategies.

“Endowments can play a vital role in the long-term sustainability of nonprofits. Many organizations are considering endowments as a part of their long-term strategies.

Even given the economic challenges faced by organizations today, long-term financial planning through endowment building remains a priority,” said Sam Bressi, President & CEO of the Community Foundation.

The Council on Drug & Alcohol Abuse, **Mental Health America**, Lancaster Museum of Art, Lititz Recreation Center, North Museum of Natural History, Tabor Community Services, the Fulton and the YWCA will each receive the matching funds to establish new endowments. The endowments will provide a permanent and reliable source of income that can be used at the discretion of each organization. The permanent pool of funds will grow over time through additional donations and investments.

### About the Lancaster County

#### Community Foundation

Established in 1924, the Community Foundation works with donors, nonprofit organizations, and community leaders to Create Extraordinary Community. We are a nonprofit organization that works to make a difference in targeted areas of the community and connects individuals and organizations to charitable causes they care about most. The Community Foundation is entrusted with millions of community assets, which are invested for the long-term benefit of Lancaster County.

*\* Press Release courtesy of Lancaster County Community Foundation*

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## GIFTS THAT GIVE

We would like to thank everyone for showing support of MHALC through “Gifts that Give: Lancaster’s 1st Alternative Gift Fair.” We received a letter from the committee involved in coordinating the event, which raised collectively \$30,000.00. MHALC received the following generous gifts: one hour of Alpha Club (Sold 9@ \$15 each), one person to attend a 3 hour anger management workshop (Sold 3 @ \$25), class sessions to educate 25 students on realities of living with a mental illness (sold 2@ \$50 each, \$100).



Attention MHALC Members! We thank everyone for responding with generous End of Year gifts totaling **\$5,638.00**. Your 2009 membership appeal will arrive in your mailboxes in the next couple of weeks and we thank you in advance for renewing.

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On behalf of MHALC Board and staff we apologize to the following members for having omitted their names from our 2007-2008 list of contributors in our Annual Beacon. Thank you for your continued generous support.

*Gibbel, Kraybill, & Hess      Melvin & Laura Hess*

## 2008 Holiday Gift Project

Christmas is a time spent by many of us with friends and family members. Preparing for the holiday season is a busy time baking, shopping, and attending holiday parties. There are persons living in Lancaster County who do not have closeness of family during this most celebrated time of the year.

Thanks to the combined generous contributions of **\$3,798.79** from members and civic organizations, **400** mental health consumers from the community and Wernersville State Hospital, Special Offenders Services and Community Treatment Team received a specific gift they requested. Their gifts included such things as flannel shirts, sweaters, pants, DVD's, books, and perfume/ cologne.

In addition to individual gifts, we were able to make contributions to local acute care mental health units at Lancaster Regional Medical Center and Ephrata Community Hospital. Columbia , Ephrata, & Lancaster Alpha Clubs as well as MHALC support groups enjoyed a Holiday meal and gathering. We also say Thank you to the Santas and Elf pictured for volunteering their time. We would like to thank the following **groups** for contributing to the success of the Holiday Gift Project.

**Michele Hartman-2008 Holiday Gift Project Coordinator**  
**Bethany Presbyterian Church**  
**Columbia Alpha Gifts– Jean Fellenbaum & Gerry Curtis**  
**Hershey Paper Company**  
**Highland Presbyterian Church**  
**Lancaster Alpha Club– Lititz Women of Today & East Petersburg Women's Club**  
**Lancaster Friends Meeting & Karen Aldefer**  
**Kay Comly & Friends**  
**Newtown United Methodist Church**  
**Rossmere Mennonite Church**  
**Saint John Neumann Church & Knights of Columbus**  
**Saint Luke's Episcopal Church & Judy Funk**  
**Saint Mary's Church**  
**UGI Utilities**

\*Individuals will be acknowledged in MHALC Annual Report



Columbia Alpha Club



Ephrata Alpha Club & Santa Claus



Lancaster Alpha Volunteers and Santa Claus



Thank You Meghan Sidelnick for 8 years of Lancaster Alpha Club Leadership!

# Misconceptions of Mental Illness by Juliana Arnold, Peer Educator

I have been living with bipolar for many years. I grew up in a family where mental illness exists. So often I hear people talk about the mania of bipolar, listing symptoms of extreme energy, inflated self importance feelings of grandiosity. Even the feelings of being able to fly. Although these are symptoms some people do experience, not everyone with bipolar experiences the euphoric highs. For me and my family, mania manifests itself as agitation anger and rage. There wasn't a door in my home growing up that didn't have a fist mark on it. Spending sprees are often related, also medicating with drugs and alcohol. I have spoken with many people about bipolar that never knew their rage and irritability was part of mania.

I have a 12 year old relative who has been displaying symptoms of bipolar for quite a long time. She was diagnosed with ADHD years



ago. She was put on numerous medications for ADHD that had little to no impact on her. She lives in a residential school, coming home some weekends. She comes from a difficult situation, so there are other factors involved. The mother has tried to explain to the doctor and therapist that bipolar runs in the family; that the child's father also has bipolar. Their response was that they do not believe she is bipolar because she does not exhibit the signs of euphoria or the happy high. Her speech is often rapid, her focus is limited. She cannot follow the rigid routine of the school or the student home, where she stays. Her moods often swing, she may seem to be doing ok then suddenly becomes irritable, agitated and on the edge of a full blown rage. Not until she was removed from the home for a weekend, due to aggressive behavior, did someone finally call for a

family history. They were asked several times over the past year to call me. Dad's not in the picture and mom doesn't understand much about bipolar but felt they needed to know the father's family history. I find that so many people I work with know very little about the illness they are being treated for. Some don't even know what they are dealing with; just are told to take the medications given to them. I have been told by some providers that they are hesitant to tell people what their diagnosis is. I have been told by a professional that they worked with an individual who spoke of suicide. This person expressed concern that discussing it may give the person the idea to follow through or use it for attention seeking behavior. If a person isn't told they have diabetes, are given insulin and told to watch their diet, do you think they would be able to manage their illness correctly? Mental illness can be managed. However education is one of the keys for RECOVERY.

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### MHALC 2nd Chili Cook-off- Please Join Us!

The event will be held on **March 21, 2009 11:00Am-3:00PM at Hempfield United Methodist Church., 3050 Marietta Ave, Lancaster PA, 17601**



The admission prices are \$7.00 for adults, children 4-10 years \$4.00, 3 years and under are free. You will be able sample the chili and vote for the "People's Choice" favorite. The judges will pick the winners in several categories such as Grand Champion, 5 Alarm Chili, Most Unique & President's. This Chili Cook-off will be a fun filled event for the whole family with Entertainment, Music by Stu Huggens Band, GREAT CHILI, and other food. For more information and/or to purchase tickets for the event please call MHALC office at 397-7461 or visit our website at [www.mhalancaster.org](http://www.mhalancaster.org).



# Save The Date

Friday, May 15, 2009

for

Mental Health America of Lancaster County's  
5th Annual Diversity Seminar entitled

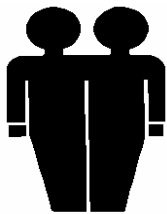
## Listening to our Diversity: Bridging Our Differences



Millersville University  
Student Memorial Center

To receive brochures of this event in Spring 2009, please email:  
mhalc@supernet.com  
Visit our website at [www.mhalancaster.org](http://www.mhalancaster.org)

**Join us as we  
explore how our  
mental well-being  
is effected by  
spirituality,  
culture, domestic  
violence, poverty,  
relationships and  
untreated mental illness.**



I HOPE You Will Read This.  
By Sarah E. Myers, Program Director of Compeer Lancaster

I hope we have pizza for supper. I hope it doesn't snow tomorrow. I hope there is a letter for me in the mail.

We frequently use hope as a verb meaning to wish or desire very much. Hope is also a noun defined as a feeling that what one desires will happen. Hope is a right. We all have the right to hope. When I was fighting cancer and the path ahead looked very uncertain, I could still hope that I would recover. Hope is also a critical factor in mental illness recovery. Sometimes others carry hope for us until we can hope again.

At Compeer Lancaster we strive to inspire hope. There are many ways we can do this for each other. I will list just four:

- ◆ believe in the person's potential and strengths
- ◆ value the person as a unique

- ◆ human being
- ◆ listen non-judgmentally to the person's experiences
- ◆ express genuine concern for the person's well-being

What happens to someone who has given up hope when another human being believes in them, values them, listens to them and communicates genuine concern about them? They begin to hope again!

In 2008 Compeer Lancaster hoped by the end of the year to have more friends matched than were waiting for a match. Compeer began 2009 with 70 active matches and 53 persons waiting to be matched. Our hope was realized. Now we are hoping to find a volunteer friend for each person waiting. Call Kim Green at 735-0667 ext 101 to learn more about how you can become a Compeer volunteer.

### Anger Workshop

Please join us for a workshop which will address the causes, beliefs, results, and expression of anger.

The workshop will be held on: Monday, April 6, 2009 in meeting room B-103 from 6:30 until 9:30 PM, located at Community Service Building 630 Janet Avenue, Lancaster

Cost \$25.00 per person  
For more information or to register –Please call 397-7461



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Lancaster, PA 17601-4585

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**2009 Celebration of Recovery**  
Community Support Program of Lancaster County is pleased to invite you to 2009 Celebration of Recovery event on Friday, June 19, 2009 at Long's Park, Harrisburg Pike, Pavilion #1 10:00AM-4:00PM. Event will be held rain or shine. **This year's theme is "Beach"!**



To register or for more information please call Tempo Clubhouse at 392-2300

**MISSION**

MHALC mission for persons living in Lancaster County is to advocate, educate, support and serve persons who are impacted by mental illnesses, improving mental health recovery, promoting mental well being and enhancing the quality of their lives.

**VISION**

MHALC envisions a mentally healthy Lancaster community where all people are able to achieve their full potential, free from stigma and prejudice.

Mental Health America of Lancaster County is eligible to receive contributions through United Way Donor Choice program