

CHARTER HOUSE  
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# Charter House Chatter

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## COORDINATOR'S CORNER by Stephanie Tighe

### Words

There are some "buzz" words or words that are relevant to us, important to us. One of these is "Recovery". You may have heard this word at a conference or here at the Club-house. You may have heard this word used in relation to Melinda or Mark or other Peer Support Specialists (PSS) because to be a PSS you must be in "recovery" from your mental illness.

Recovery is about getting better, moving from a place of being "sick" from mental illness to a place of being healthier.

One of the hot questions is "What has helped you to get better?" or "What is your recovery story?" or "How has Charter House helped you to recover?" You may have read "Recovery" stories, stories of

how people recovered from their mental illness. There have been a couple of these stories in our newsletter over the years.

I challenge each of you to think about your own recovery. In what ways have you recovered? What has helped you on this journey? How has Charter House helped you? What have you done at Charter House (CH) that you might not have been able to do before?

Has CH helped you to get new friends? Have you learned how to make decisions? Have you learned skills that help you? Where have you gone with CH? conferences? Workshops? Frankenmuth? Saugatuck? Staying overnight at a hotel? Boat rides, Train rides?

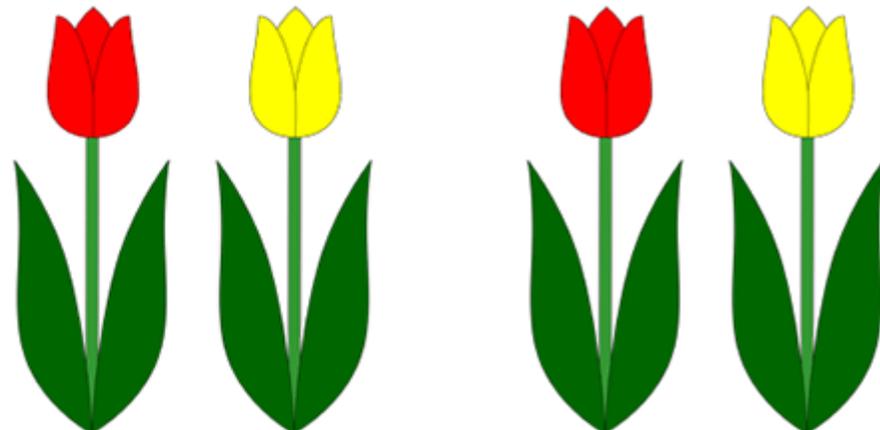
What opportunities have you gotten through CH? A job? self esteem? greater independence?

more freedom? volunteer experiences? Has your relationship with your family improved? Are you happier? Do you feel better about your life?

It would be great if you wrote up your recovery story to be printed in the newsletter or read out loud at morning meeting. I am looking forward to reading them.

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## HAITI by Nicole Wright

*This article was originally written on January 17th 2010.*

The country of Haiti was hit with a 7.0 earthquake. The capitol, Port-Au-Prince was buried in rubble as well as some of the surrounding cities. Haiti is in a crisis and the world is coming to its aide.

The United States has the 101st Air Borne Division over there to keep the peace and to get water and food to the people. Some other countries are helping out such as European and Asian countries.

There are medical doctors working in make-shift operating rooms. They are in need of medical supplies and antibiotics.

The USS Comfort is in the harbor of Port-Au-

Prince. It is a regular floating hospital with operating rooms, intensive care, and recovery rooms.

Just recently they pulled a boy alive from the rubble after being buried for ten days. That is a miracle. The boy came out and was lifted up high and raised both of his arms as a sign of victory.

The Haitian people have great faith and even in

this crisis are singing their spiritual songs. They have an indomitable spirit. The people and the country will rise again with our help and aid.

We, as Christian Americans, and people around the world have the Samaritan duty to help the people. We must do and give what we can. For as we have done it unto the least of them; we have done it for the Lord.



## STRUGGLING WITH EMPLOYMENT by Blanca Bayless

Due to the fact businesses are going under, employment is slow and people are going crazy over work. Seeking a job is scarce and in high demand. Some people have to go to agencies, look at help wanted ads in the newspaper, send out resumes, or looking on the internet for jobs.

Don't worry, there are solutions in seeking employment. First, make yourself useful and advertise yourself. Encourage employers that you are available anytime. Then, update your resume, making sure it is black and white and neat.

Also, go to job seminars and find out which job

best fits you. Set up and appointment if you need to take an exam or if you have no luck, then go to an employment agency. If they don't have a computer, go to the library, they are free.

Best of all, refer a friend, that person might find you employment after all. If you have an

interview, show the employer your confidence. Wear your "Sunday Best" and never forget a polite smile. Probably the person just might get hired on the spot.

## SUNLIGHT AND MOOD by Ben Williams

One of my favorite things in life is sunshine. I love to walk outside or be close to a window, in the sun. Warmth from the sun is very comforting and draws people outside to enjoy it in many ways: biking, walking, sun-bathing, and the like. Sunlight also helps

the body produce vitamin D. Vitamin D helps create *serotonin*, which is a neurotransmitter (*chemical in your brain*) that fights depression. I would encourage everyone to have a healthy amount of sunlight.



## CHESS (*Just Another Board Game?*) by Ben Williams

The game of chess is a very complex, yet enjoyable past time for all ages and skill level. Chess is not only a fun game, but has been known to sharpen the intellect. Take it from me, it can be very frustrating at times. I am sure you can relate if you have ever played chess. For me, chess is a hobby that improves my ability to analyze, calculate, and improve my problem solving skills.

I've played chess on and off since the age of 7, when my late father taught me how the pieces moved and other basic chess rules and regulations. I still

love it even though there was much strategy I couldn't grasp. Recently I rediscovered my love for chess and I play everyday with friends and on my



laptop. I think it would be cool if Charter House had a chess club. It would be nice have designated times to practice and perhaps have a chess competition.

I would also like to encourage new-comers

to learn from the more experienced and play against other novices and new players.

The reason I wrote this article is because chess has been a great coping skill for me. I find that all the cognitive skills I am gaining from studying and playing chess has made myself more competent



and able, to think in a more lucid, pragmatic, and expedient way. Also chess, most of all, is great fun!

## GRATITUDE by Christine Gonzalez

Charter House is a blessing to me. I can come here and be accepted by my peers with open arms. There is a special sense of belonging at Charter House.

I'm grateful to Charter House because nobody treats others badly. We expect positive feedback and we get it. If someone's out

of line it gets taken care of.

I have a sense of belonging at Charter House. It's a place where everyone is equal.

Morning meeting is a lot of fun. We sit together and clap and cheer. I'm grateful I have a place to go where I can feel safe.

Charter House helps me in my recovery by being positive, helping me to stay busy, and helps me to socialize.

Charter House helped me learn how to use computers. I learned how to make greeting cards, banners, to type, and use the internet. I just bought my own computer with Windows 7.

## WHY-YMCA by Gary Lewis and Charlie Wang

Why YMCA? Well, because as far exercise goes it is the best workout for your body. At the YMCA there are three pools for swimming. There is also a rock climbing wall. We've played basketball in one of the big gymnasiums. There is an area for people to use inline skates. Racketball courts were available to use. There are also many exercise machines, such as treadmill, bikes, and stair climbers. After a hard workout there were steam rooms, saunas, and

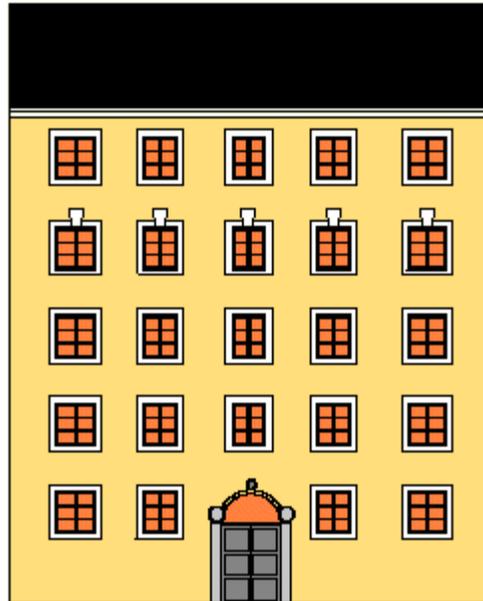
also a whirlpool / Jacuzzi.

Charter House members go every Monday for two hours. It's fun as well as exhilarating. It's a good time for everybody!



## EAST GLEN APARTMENTS by Lynn Lofton

Thursday March 25th, I moved to East Glen Apartments. It took me four days to move. The first three days I moved all by myself in my small car until I got to East Glen, then Carol Mac helped me. I am very glad Carol helped me. I got help on Saturday from my uncle Ken, aunt Janette, Patrick, and Anthony. The apartment is small with one bedroom. There



are a lot of elderly people there. It's really quiet there. We have three days that meals are provided for \$2.50; Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday. We have a library and a workout room. There is also hair salon, but I haven't seen it yet. Over all, it's a nice place to be. I just need to get used to it.

## CHARTER HOUSE AND WORK by Stephen Marusich

My name is Steve M. I've been going to Charter House for three years and have done shredding work for two years. I have done numerous sorts of employment like janitorial, maintenance, and a dishwashing job. I first started working at age 18, as a dishwasher. I then went on to train as a janitor for two years. I got a job, working nights, as a janitor and had that job for six years. I then worked at the state Secondary Complex as janitor. What I accomplished is gainful employment outside of Charter House. Being around members at Charter House is helpful to me.

I worked six years in the state buildings, both days and nights. I

then worked at K-Mart for seven years, then dishwashing four years at Denny's.

In the past year my health has become poor. I am having surgery on my esophagus. I will need to be in the hospital for seven to ten days, then I will have to be in my apartment to rest and recuperate for up to three months. I'll miss my friends at Charter House, but it will be nice to see them all once I get better.



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Charter House - "Where Everyone Has a VOICE!"

## What Does Charter House Mean To You?

Survey by Ryan Shank

**Christine G.**

*A place where I feel welcomed and accepted, I love Charter House.*

**Ryan S.**

*Something to do during the day.*

**Mary Be.**

*To get out of the house.*

**Maryette R.**

*Getting away from home.*

**Mike E.**

*It's a place where you can socialize and take part in units.*

**Blanca B.**

*Charter house is a place where I can be myself and I make myself useful by helping others like me.*

**Jake W.**

*A place to be at during the day.*

**Bobby W.**

*It means a lot to me and I like coming, really doing good.*

**Serralee L.**

*Friendship, a place to grow teamwork and get along with others.*

**Malcolm G.**

*An opportunity to work.*

**Julia C.**

*The members, so we can communicate.*

**Keith H.**

*I learn work skills.*

**John N.**

*The food.*

**Julie T.**

*I like riding in the van, my job, and my friends.*

**Charlie W.**

*Charter House help me meet spend-down, help me get a job, and meet friends.*

**Carol Mac.**

*Volunteer work activity.*

**Lynn L.**

*Teaches work skills*

**Kelly Mc.**

*I love it here. I love doing tasks and I love the food.*

**John O.**

*Nice place to come. I like the people, the activities, and the outings.*

**Nicole W.**

*Recovery from my mental illness. It gives me purpose and direction to my life. I have made many friends here. It gives me overall motivation in my life.*