



# Charter House Journal

## Coordinator's Corner

By Stephanie Tighe

Yesterday Steve B. stopped by my office and talked about Gratitude and Appreciation. We talked about how just thinking about what we are grateful for can help us to feel happier.

Most of us would probably like to be happier but somehow don't remember that gratitude can get us there.

Sometimes taking care of ourselves can be so easy but we don't do it. The cool thing about a Clubhouse is that we can remind each other, put up signs to help us remember.

So I am asking all of you to help me remember what I am thankful for and what I

appreciate. It would be great to get help everyday! That is one of the things I appreciate about a clubhouse that we help each other out!

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## Coping Skills Group

Presented by Mark Phillips PSS

A "Coping Skill Group" is being offered at Charter House and is facilitated by Peer Support Specialist, Mark Phillips. The groups focus is on learning coping skills to effectively deal with life's stresses. Recent skills related topics have included, Health and Wellness, Interpersonal Effectiveness and Distress Tolerance. In Distress Tolerance for example the coping skills learned teach ways of lowering stress and reducing suffering, due to everyday stress and anxiety. Breathing techniques are learned that produce a calming effect. Mindfulness techniques are learned which helps people to stay in the moment, giving a break from worrying about the past or future.

Interpersonal Effectiveness teaches ways of becoming better communicators in our relationships. Participants learn how to express their wants and needs or how to get their point across without offending others. In Health and Wellness, members learn how things like poor nutrition, poor sleeping habits or abuse of alcohol/drugs may lead to making poor decisions or putting a strain on relationships.

The skills taught are loosely based on DBT (Dialectic Behavior Therapy), which is used to treat Borderline Personality Disorder. Mark has been comprehensively trained in DBT and teaches a Men's group at Jolly Rd.

# Connecting with Charter House

## New Member Corner

By Jodi Trout

Charter House has had the opportunity to meet 7 prospective members for tours this month. 7 of the 7 decided that they would like to pursue membership at Charter House. 5 have started their orientation; and are involved on either the clerical, maintenance or Vineyard

Grill teams. 2 will start orientation on February 1<sup>st</sup>. Several have successfully completed their orientation and are a welcomed addition to Charter House. Congratulations Rachel, Travis, and Bill, we are very glad you are here.



Welcome Rachel Laden

## Get to Know Bill M.

By Clerical Unit

Bill, how long have you been at Charter House?

**I have been here for 2 – 3 weeks. I come 5 days a week.**

Why did you come to Charter House?

**I was referred by my case manager to work on mental health issues, getting along with people, employment and not to be depressed and paranoid.**

Which unit did you select to work on after orientation on each of the units?

**I like the clerical unit, and will work there.**

What do you like about Charter House?

**I like the atmosphere. I like the people, they are people I can relate to, and they can relate to me. I like the staff, and I like the lunches. I like the structure in my life.**

What are your employment interests?

**Working at Peckham on the sewing team. There are many applicants though so I'm not sure how it will turn out. I'm also interested in the many other Charter House work opportunities.**

What are your hobbies?

**I like to listen to music – rock and jazz.**

Are there any final things that you would like folks to know about you?

**I'm easy going and easy to get along with. I give respect to others, and I wish to receive respect from others.**



Welcome Bill Morris

## Clerical Unit Report

By Clerical Unit

This month the clerical unit spent time on each member assessing their strengths and determining, which areas of the unit contain skills that they are unfamiliar with. The goal is that each member is trained and confident in each area of the unit. To accomplish this we have begun an extensive training program, beginning with daily data entry. Sean Hetrick, the Charter House computer "go to guy" created a 66 page power point presentation to teach us how to complete the daily attendance. We have risen to the challenge by regularly practicing, and working together to learn this valuable skill. We are confident that we will be successful at completing the attendance daily with 100% accuracy.

Additional skills that we will focus on in the upcoming weeks include computer and switchboard training. Learning tools

will be developed to provide hands on supportive instruction in each of these areas.

We are pleased with the direction of our Out Reach Program. We have increased contact with current, former and prospective members. With the daily hustle and business of a clubhouse there has to be a systematic way to maintain contact so that no one is forgotten. We are maintaining and building relationships which benefits the individual and the clubhouse. Looking forward we will be adding other facets to the program—stay tuned!

Congratulations Clerical Unit, learning new things can be scary, yet challenging and exciting. Each of you have been open to new ideas and met each day with a positive attitude and willingness to do your best. Together we will meet each challenge with greatness! Together we will soar!

## Maintenance Team

By Maintenance Team

The Maintenance Team has over 25 clubhouse members who have made a commitment to display the pride that we have in our clubhouse by upgrading and maintaining the appearance of the building and grounds. Here are our goals as we defined them in our recent Team Meetings.

### **Our Goals:**

- ⇒ We want to build a better team.
- ⇒ We are going to focus on training, work preparation and getting those who want to work out in the community.
- ⇒ We are going to educate ourselves about the products that we are using.
- ⇒ We will work towards having more afternoon tasks for those who want to stay later.
- ⇒ We will have trained unit leaders to guide the unit.
- ⇒ We will work towards having a professional looking environment that we can all be proud of.

Congratulations to the Maintenance Team for the tremendous progress that has been made in a very short period of time.

## Now We're Cooking with Gas...

By Vineyard Grill (aka Kitchen Unit)

Changes are taking place in the Vineyard Grill. Veteran kitchen unit members have been teaching the staff who are new to the kitchen unit. The transition has been relatively smooth, though change is not easy for many of us. The next big change takes place on February 1st, where we will move away from a two lunch-time system into just one lunch hour.

This new approach should streamline lunch production as well as lessen the variables that may contribute to food contamination and degradation. Often times food had been cooked fully and was held at a safe temperature for an extended period of time, which sometimes left food without optimal taste. Vineyard Grill is a licensed kitchen through the State of Michigan and we must keep up to date with many regulations. Moving to one lunch will help provide the high quality food and at the same time insure that safe food handling guidelines are continued.

## What's Happening In the Snack Shop?

By Snack Shop Team

What a busy and productive month we've had. The group has been doing an excellent job with the daily banking, inventory and customer service responsibilities. Julia and Gary have settled into the positions of Quality Control, and are very helpful and supportive of their co-workers. This month we have taken an assessment of our profits and determined we need to offer additional items that may increase the traffic again in the snack shop. Some of the new items offered include fresh bagels, cream cheese, chocolate pudding, fruit cups, cottage cheese with fruit, yogurt, a variety of pop and microwavable soup. In February, we will be planning a special event, **"The Grand Re-Opening of the Snack Shop"**. The event will include a ribbon cutting ceremony, food samples of new items and other surprises!

## Lucia V. TE Peer Support Specialist

By Clerical Unit

Lucia V. is a TE Peer Support Specialist here at Charter House. She joins Mark Phillips and Melinda Mathews as Peer Support Specialist working at the clubhouse. Peer Supports, through their own recovery from Mental Illness, are uniquely qualified to aid in the recovery of members at Charter House. By using compassion and empathy Peer Supports can communicate on the same level as members fostering recovery and growth. Both Peer Support specialist and members have walked the same road and shared in similar struggles.

On any given day you might find Lucia working on the Maintenance Unit, working on the Clerical Unit, doing activities or simply hanging out with Members. Having that flexibility allows Lucia to work where she is needed and allows her to work on aiding in the recovery of others.

One area Lucia has decided to work on with members is in First Aid. Lucia is a Registered Nurse and has a background in health care. She will be putting on a "First Aid" seminar for the members of Charter House. She will touch on different areas of First Aid such as burn and wound care. Members will have an opportunity to ask question and draw information from Lucia's years of experience.

Lucia currently works Wednesday's and Thursday's at Charter House and plans to do her workshop in early February.

# Transitional Employment

By Melinda Mathews

A few things have changed since our last article. Welcome Kathleen A to the T.E. (Transitional Employment) Team. Kathleen came to us from the Clerical Unit and has begun her T.E. on the recycling crew. She has done this job before, but says, "I forgot how hard it was".

I would like to give a sincere THANK YOU to Malcolm G. and David TB for a job well done. They have completed their T.E. positions. Malcolm worked with the vending crew maintaining the pop machines at the main agency building, and David held the position of cleaning up after the ACT program. Great Job Guys!



Thank you David!

## Kathleen Adkins (*New Employee*)

By Clerical Unit

How did you get your job? I expressed an interest in working to my unit leader, Jodi Trout and the vocational specialist, Laura Sandberg. I met with Laura, we discussed the opportunity and I was offered the job of Recycler.

Where are you working? I am on the recycling crew. I recycle at C-E-I-CMH and other affiliates.

What are some of the things you like about your job? Earning an income, working together as a team.

Is there anything difficult or challenging about the recycling team? The work itself is very physical, and requires heavy lifting and handling of bags filled with recycled paper.

What have you learned about your job? I'm learning the schedule of the job and the responsibilities. I'm able to use my organization skills.



Congratulations on your new job Kathleen!

## Charlie Wang

By Clerical Unit

What is your job here at Charter House? I am on the vending crew. I've worked on the crew for about six months. We fill pop machines at CEI-CMH at Jolly Rd.

How has your job changed recently? Starting in January we began servicing the pop machines in Mason, at House of Commons.

How is this different from the pop machines at Jolly Rd? By doing the machines at House of Commons, it is a new source of income for Charter House and also they only sell Coke products.

Who do you work with on the crew? Melinda is our team leader. Arvin and Malcolm also have worked on the crew.

What do you like most about the crew? It gives me a sense of accomplishment and purpose. I like the added income also.



Crewman Charlie Wang.



# February 2011 Menu

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1 Chic Drummies Peas Apple Pie	2 Egg Salad Cole Slaw Cherry Pie	3 Hamburgers Fries Fruit Cup	4 AuGratin Potatoes w/ Ham Cherry Pie	5
6	7 Mac & Cheese Cottage Cheese Pecan Pie	8 Hot Dog Fries Ice Cream Sandwich	9 Tony's Supreme Pizza Apple Pie	10 Nachos Refried Beans	11 Chic Drummies Beets Cottage Cheese	12
13	14 Pulled BBQ Beef Potato Salad Ice Cream Cup	15 Meatloaf Mashed Potatoes Cookie	16 Nachos Salad Fruit Cup	17 Hamburgers Fries Fruit Cup	18 Burritos Corn Choc Cream Pie	19
20	21	22 Tuna Melt Cottage Cheese	23 Kielbasa Potato Salad Cherry Pie	24 Sloppy Joe Onion Rings Blueberry Pie	25 Rueben French Fries Lemon Pie	26
27	28 Spaghetti w/ meat sce Corn on the Cob Apple Pie					

# February 2011 Activities

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1 1:00 - House Meeting 2:00 - Ceramics 4:00 - Coffee Shop Outing	2 12:30 - Coping Skills Group	3 9:30 - Advocacy 1:00 - Web Class (Alternate)	4 10:30 - Supported Employment 1:00 - BINGO	5
6	7 12:30 - YMCA 1:00 - Web Design Class	8 1:00 - House Meeting 2:00 - Ceramics	9 12:30 - Coping Skills Group	10 9:30 - Advocacy 1:00 - Web Class (Alternate) 4:00 - Thrift Shop Shopping	11 10:30 - Supported Employment 1:00 - BINGO	12 1-3 - Valentines Party
13	14 12:30 - YMCA 1:00 - Web Design Class	15 1:00 - House Meeting 2:00 - Ceramics 4:00 - Lansing Mall Outing	16 12:30 - Coping Skills Group	17 9:30 - Advocacy 1:00 - Web Class (Alternate)	18 10:30 - Supported Employment 1:00 - BINGO	19
20	21 12:30 - YMCA 1:00 - Web Design Class	22 1:00 - House Meeting 2:00 - Ceramics	23 12:30 - Coping Skills Group	24 9:30 - Advocacy 1:00 - Web Class (Alternate) 4:00 - MSU Dairy	25 10:30 - Supported Employment 1:00 - BINGO	26
27	28 12:30 - YMCA 1:00 - Web Design Class					

# Charter House

## *Snap-Shot*

### DAILY SCHEDULE

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Charter House Hours	Monday - Friday 8:00am - 4:00pm
Clerical Unit	Monday - Friday 8:00am - 4:00pm
Maintenance Unit	Monday - Friday 8:00am - 4:00pm
Kitchen Unit	Monday - Friday 8:00am - 1:00pm
Lunch Served	Monday - Friday 11:30am - 11:45am

### MEETINGS

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Morning Meeting	Monday - Friday 9:00am - 9:30am
House Meeting	Tuesdays 1:00pm - 2:00pm
Wellness YMCA	Mondays 12:30pm - 2:30pm
Volunteering (Capital Area Humane Society)	Fridays 12:00pm - 2:00pm
Computer Class	Mondays 1:00pm - 2:00pm Thursdays 1:00pm - 2:00pm (alternate day)
Coping Skills Group	Wednesdays 1:00pm - 2:00pm
Advocacy Team	Thursdays 9:30am - 10:30am
Birthday Celebration Team	Wednesdays 9:30am - 10:00am

### SOCIAL TIME

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Evening Activity	Thursdays 4:00pm - 6:00pm
Weekend Activity	Monthly Saturday (Time Dependent on Chosen Activity)

Social Activities take place after 4:00pm and on some weekends and evenings. All activities are planned through consensus and posted a month in advance on the social activity calendar.

## New Vocational Staff!

By Laura Sandberg

AMHS Vocational services is very pleased to welcome Jean Merrill as a new vocational staff. She comes to us with almost 10 years of experience in AMHS residential and started at Charter House on January 10th. Jean will be working under a one year grant from the State of Michigan for Evidence-Based Supported Employment. Jean is currently training and gathering information about how she will be doing her job specifically. We are excited to have her and look forward to working with her. Welcome aboard Jean!

## Vocational

### Get to Know Jean Merrill:

*Job Developer, Community Employment Specialist*

By Tina Baese

I had the pleasure of interviewing Jean Merrill, a new staff person hired to develop employment for the membership in the Greater Lansing Community.

**Tina:** Where did you work prior to coming to Charter House?

*Jean:* I worked in a residential home in Eaton Rapids for 9 ½ years.

**Tina:** What is your job title here at Charter House, and what will you be doing?

*Jean:* My work here is a Job Developer and Employment Specialist. I will be helping individuals in seeking community employment.

**Tina:** There is often stigma associated with mental illness, did you have any reservations about coming to Charter House and working with mentally ill people?

*Jean:* No, because I've had past experiences with working in residential, I had no reservations at all. I believe I will enjoy working with the Charter House membership and staff.

**Tina:** What do you like to do in your spare time?

*Jean:* I like to read, spend time with my grandson and cook.

Welcome to Charter House Jean! We look forward to working with you.

## Supported Employment Stats

By Laura Sandberg

Statistics from Supported Employment from the first quarter (Oct, Nov, and Dec) of fiscal year 2010-2011:

- ◆ Community Work Experience Program referrals: **24**
- ◆ Transitional Employees working through Charter House: **14**
- ◆ Transitional Employees who moved to community employment: **1**



# Recovery: The Steve Bartlett Story

By Steve Bartlett

Hello, my name is Steve Bartlett. I have worked in heating and air conditioning, electronics, truck driving, and custodial maintenance. It's amazing that I learned these jobs after my brain injury, which occurred when I was 16 years old.

I am the youngest of five children. My father died when I was four, so my dear mother raised us all by herself. I enjoy cooking, poetry, bicycling, nature & wildlife, and spending time with my friends and family. I guess you could say I'm the kind of person who likes to find a rainbow...even on a cloudy day.

On August 11, 1977, while in the back seat of a car with friends, the driver lost control and struck a telephone pole. We were trapped inside the vehicle for two hours, but were one of the first people in the community to be extracted by the latest rescue tool of that time..."The Jaws of Life". I later learned that one of my best friends died in the accident.

I awoke after several weeks in a coma, and they thought I would be a vegetable until I answered when my mother asked me what kind of pie I would like. I somehow managed to say..."CHOCOLATE" (Ahh...the power of chocolate!)

For a long time I had no real understanding of how serious my situation was, but I was told that my neck and hip had been broken, my pelvis was crushed, and that I had a "severe head injury". After three months and some brief physical therapies, I was released from the hospital, after just being able to walk a bit. My life had drastically changed.

There were no extensive physical therapies and few cognitive retraining programs in the 1970's. I was told to return to high school for my senior year, but I wasn't able to do school work. They graduated me on my past merits and perhaps because they didn't know how to help me.

I tried to return to my heating and air-conditioning job, but I couldn't concentrate or complete my work, and was let go after just one month. I then tried to return to college, but I couldn't comprehend or remember any course work, and so I had to leave college.

With all of these set backs, neither I nor even professionals could recognize or appreciate how much or why I changed...so...I just went on...trying to survive in a very difficult world with this broken brain. I felt quite alone.

A family member finally found me work, loading and driving trucks, but after two months, I was told to find help to keep my job. I didn't know it, but I was told I would become suddenly angry and difficult to work with, so I was sent to Dr. Post. He helped me to understand that I was not accurately monitoring my behavior. He helped me regain some perspective of my social behavior and interpersonal skills that I had lost. He helped me regain control and awareness of my Adynamia.

This "Adynamia" was like living in neutral. I had difficulty generating any type of thoughts, feelings, or even words. I often didn't know how to feel, think, or act. I became easily overwhelmed and would "shut

down" as my brain became overwhelmed with too much stimulation or activity. I withdrew from others, but would later discover that this behavior had hurt many of my family and friends; who didn't understand my behavior.

Eleven years after my accident, I was still in physical pain, with no steady job. I was still trying to make sense of my life with my broken brain. Many people mistook my neurofatigue and forgetfulness as me being lazy and even disrespectful. Making matters worse, I had a second car accident and brain injury. I was a passenger in a car, in which another best friend died.

I went back to work as a truck driver, but in 1993 I had a third car accident, with another hospitalization and more pain. I had become permanently disabled at the ripe age of 33.

The added injuries and trauma left me feeling very depressed and hopeless. I was sent to Charter House for psycho-social support. I worked with another doctor, who helped me utilize medications and therapy to cope with my emotional changes and cognitive deficits. I began to improve as I began using strategies that helped me complete tasks I hadn't done in literally 16 years.

My group and Charter House provide the support I need to live life daily. I am not alone in my daily struggle. Although we each have our own story of unique problems, working together, the road to recovery is truly possible.