

April , 2023

APRIL, 2023

Charter House Celebrates its 45th Birthday

by Sandra Youngs

Charter House celebrated its 45th anniversary this

year on April 11th. When the clubhouse opened in 1978, it was the first in Michigan, and it remains the longest running clubhouse in the state. Members and staff are proud of the accepting and supportive community they have created and nurtured.



So how did we celebrate our clubhouse's birthday? With a fabulous meal of course. On the 11th, George was our head chef and made his famous prime rib lunch. Stephanie Tigh attended our lunch celebration, and it was great to see her. Richard G. said: "It was one of the best meals of my life." We will celebrate our 45th again on May 17th, during our Anniversary Party and Community Open House, from 12:00 PM-4:00 PM. Members can bring family and friends and show off their successes at the clubhouse.

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Save the Date: Wed. 5/17/23

12:00 PM—4:00 PM

*Charter House's 45th
Anniversary Party &*

Community Open House

**Join us for food, swag bags,
community outreach & friends.**



DIRECTOR'S NOTES: Accreditation News & Updates *by George Hatter*

In January we had our most recent Accreditation visit. We were visited by Joe Shaffer from Independence Center in St. Louis and Audrey Levine from Fountain House in New York City. The visit was great and it generated a bunch of ideas that we can work on to help improve Charter House. We've been working on these ideas and have made some progress.

One of the ideas was to recruit more members for Charter House's Advisory Board that were not in the mental health field. Emanuel Dukes from St. Vincent Catholic Charities has volunteered to join us to lend us his expertise in matters of housing. Emanuel has worked with local refugees with finding housing. Standard 27, from the Clubhouse International Standards, talks about the many services that Clubhouses provide and housing is one of those services. We will certainly benefit from having Emanuel on our board.

We are also talking with Alixandra Jyawook from Town Square Media Lansing to see if it would be a good fit for her to join our Advisory Board.

Alixandra is a senior marketing consultant with Town Square and has many ideas on how can get the news about Charter House out to the public.

Another area where we have made progress is in developing a new Transitional Employment position with the Disability Net-

started on April 4th and are already doing a great job with getting our newsletter put together. In addition to the newsletter, the Communications Unit will be helping members write down their story, create videos for us to post on our social me-



From left to right: Audrey Levine, George Hatter, Andrew M., Joe Schaffer, Asa M.

work Capital Area. We had a member start working there in March. The member says that he really likes the work and the people from the DNCA say that they are very pleased with the member's work.

The most recent success we have had with working on these ideas was the creation of Charter House's third unit, the Communications Unit. This unit just

dia, and will be making outreach visits to further get the word out about Charter House.

We have made a lot of great progress, but have more to do. *I know that with staff and member colleagues working side by side, we will help Charter House achieve new heights.*

Lower Level Unit News: Introducing Our New peer, Abbey

by Karen G. & Sandra Youngs

Charter House members and staff were happy to welcome Abbey Wright as our new peer support staff last month. Abbey fit right in when she arrived, and has brought many gifts to the clubhouse.

Abbey was raised in Charlotte and attended high school in Olivet. She attended Western and goes to LCC . She is passionate about psychology and addictions studies. She is the oldest of 4 girls. She has two cats named Ollie and Sprout. Abbey loves reading, listening to music, col-



oring, and having movie nights at home. Her ultimate way to de-stress is to take very long baths. Her favorite color is yellow.

Abbey also loves Charter House, and says: "Everyone here is so understanding of me as an individual. Members and staff are so willing to be helpful. There's a real sense of community." She also feels as though she is meant to be here, due to her Aunt Shelley L. having been a member here, which Abbey didn't realize until she began the job.

"Abbey is a fast learner. She really cares about the staff and members."
-Marvin J.

Upper Level News: Making Charter House More Beautiful One Bulletin Board At A Time

When we were told during our accreditation report that we should spruce up our clubhouse to create a more beautiful and inviting space, some staff and members were excited for this challenge. We started the

beautification process with re-vamping our boards. Thanks to all of the members and staff who helped with this. They look great!



FUNDRAISING UPDATE FROM MARCH CHILI SALE *by Sandra Youngs and Karen G.*

In March, Charter House held a chili and baked goods sale at CMH on Jolly Rd., in hopes of raising money for our upcoming Anniversary Party and Community Open House. We sold chili, vegetarian chili, corn bread, brownies, and cookies.

The sale was a big success.

According to George, we made \$383 in profit and “We sold every last bowl.” The feedback we received from customers was incredibly positive. People enjoyed that we had a vegetarian option, and asked us to come back again. Staff and

members worked hard to prep the food and serve. Harry R. reported: “I liked serving and the prices were good.”

“There were a lot of interactions with people, which was really cool.” Marrisona



Pictured above in the CMH Atrium: (left photo) Paul M., Marrisona Swartz, George Hatter, Mike E., (center photo) James R., (right photo) Harry R., Jennifer O.

Employment Success Highlight: Justus Saplys



When Justus began attending Charter House last summer, he had one main goal-to get a job by November. Justus met this goal by joining the crew through our Transitional Employment Program. He then surpassed his goal by taking on the new custodial TE position at Disability Network Lansing. Justus loves his new job, and says that since he began

working, “I feel more motivated and confident. It makes me feel awesome. With the right support, I can keep achieving and stay motivated.” Justus would like you to know that you can meet your goals too. His advice is to “*Figure out what you want to do. Tell yourself you can do it. Keep repeating your goal in your mind until you believe it.*”

My Education Journey: Marvin Johnson

My whole life I really wanted a good education and a college degree. My family embedded the importance of this goal. School was always a challenge for me, and I got in trouble a lot for things I couldn't help, like talking too loud. I ended up going to Job Corps to get my GED. I studied at Davenport College briefly but wasn't really ready for school. My education goals never changed though, and setbacks made me want to pursue my goals even

more. My experiences in corrections opened my eyes to the poor conditions prisoners deal with, and this made me want to go back to school to help inmates' conditions and lives.

In January, I met my goal of returning to school. I received a Pell grant that allowed me to start an Associate's Degree at Lansing Community College.

Since I started college, I feel more confident and have a more positive outlook. It feels great to achieve my goals. The

staff at LCC have been very nice and helpful, and have worked with me to get the right accommodations for my learning challenges.

"I'm 61 years old. I'm an ex-drug addict, and I have learning disabilities. If I can do it, anyone can. You just need to apply yourself."



MY VISIT TO THE LAKESIDE CLUBHOUSE

By James Roehl

In March, I went to visit my mom in Holland, and I was able to check out the Lakeside Clubhouse. We arrived at 10:00 AM. I went to their daily meeting, and I met the director of their CMH and the Lakeside coordinator. Members and staff were very nice and welcoming. I worked with a Lakeside member at their snack shop, which they call their "café." I noticed that they don't sell pop in their café, and that they try to

have healthy options. I didn't eat lunch while I was there because I was with my mom who is a vegetarian, but lunch looked good.

Some differences I noticed during my visit is that Lakeside is a smaller space, and is located in a nice office suite. They have a small thrift store in the corner of their building. I also noticed their billing task is done by just one person, instead of a group.

My mom was able to donate

items to their thrift store, and I got a free Lakeside T shirt. I plan to return to Lakeside when I visit my mom for Memorial Day, and I will wear my Lakeside shirt when I go. I'm glad I visited.



Tracie P.'s Recovery Story

My childhood was full of trauma, sadness, abuse, hurt, and grief. My whole life, I experienced hardships, including at some of the AFC homes I lived at. But that is all behind me now. *I have a new story, and new beginnings. I can write new chapters of me.* I am currently in a new AFC home where I can experience healing, peace, calmness, love, joy, happiness, and kindness.

My recovery began when I started learning how to accept different mindsets and different types of people. I have learned that we are all different, we act differently, we have different needs, and we all need acceptance. This growth began

when I started learning DBT skills. Regulating stress and

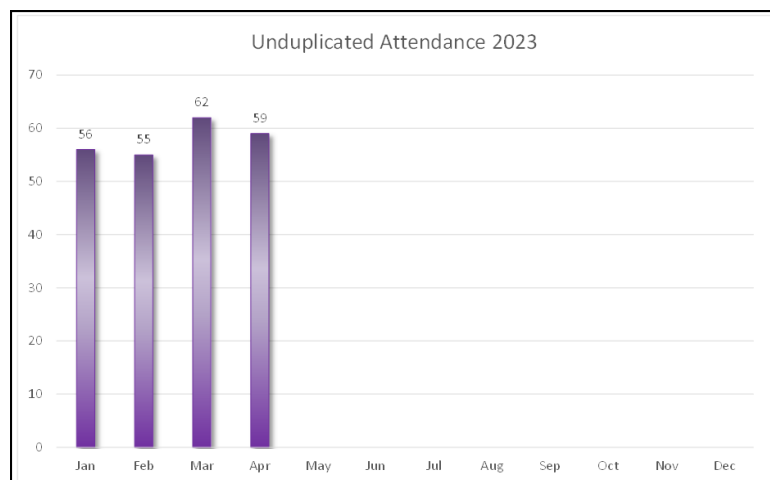
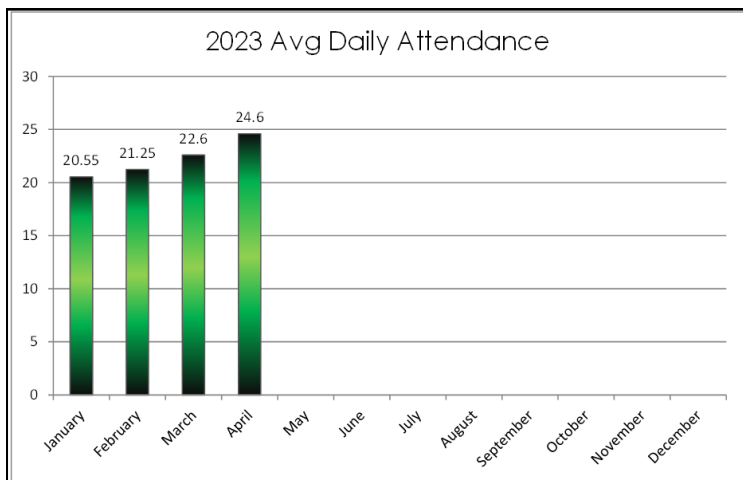


emotions has been very helpful in my recovery.

Coming to Charter House has allowed me to practice the skills I learned in DBT. I consid-

er Charter House my family. At Charter House, we all get along really well. I am able to work on my relationships and see them blossom and grow. This has helped me understand myself better, and to form a more solid identity. *Every single person here is important to me. Every person here welcomes me, accepts me, and allows me to be myself. This has been essential to my growth and healing. I am able to be a positive butterfly rainbow when I come to Charter House, and to make other people happy.*

April Charter House Data



Member Highlight: Did You Know Richard G. Is A Prolific Artist?



We all know Richard G. for his positivity, his passion for Frisbee, and his strong work ethic. But you may be surprised to know that he has been making art for many years, and has compiled a large collection of his works. Some pieces will be displayed at our clubhouse. Make sure to check it out.



The Charter House Communications Unit Is Now Open

The Communications Unit started early this month on the third floor of the clubhouse. Sandra and Kimberly are staffing the new unit, and are looking for members to join them.

The new unit will work on helping members to write and showcase their recovery stories, writing the monthly newsletter,

video production, and community outreach and education. Additionally, there are some janitorial tasks, as well as the ability to work on the slide show, and to work with community partners.

A lot of members have already worked on the new unit, and there has been a lot of positive

feedback given about the colorful space.



Charter House Out on the Town

Frederick Meijer Gardens & Butterfly House by Nicole W.

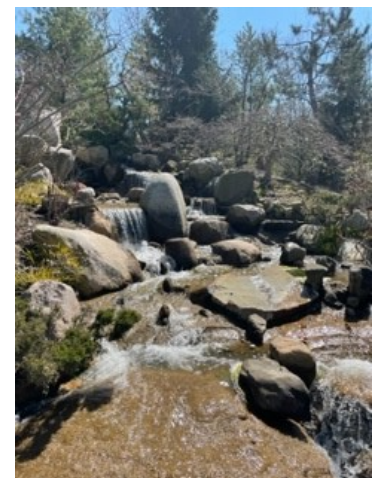
We went to Grand Rapids to see the butterflies at the Meijer Gardens this month. We were happy to see the butterflies in a tropical environment where they thrive. *It was magical.* They were just flying all around and landing on different objects and plants, and occasionally on people. We also enjoyed the sculptures in the outdoors.

It was almost 80 degrees when we went and the gardens were

well travelled. Some children there were barefoot and playing in the splash park. They looked like they were having a ball.

We also went to the gift shop and I bought a jar of cherry pecan jam to go on my morning toast.

Lastly, we went to the food café. I joined a few members at a table, and we talked and discussed our lives.



Restaurant Review: Grand Grillin’ 740 W Lake Lansing Rd, East Lansing

For April’s out to eat group, members chose to try a new restaurant in East Lansing called Grand Grillin’. All staff and members who attended had high praise for the food and the relatively low prices.

Karen G. tried the chicken pita wrap, and said you can choose your toppings there in “Subway style.” She rated her meal 5/5.

Karin H. stated: “It was quick and the chicken philly salad was delicious with mild horseradish.” Marrison said she would definitely go back, and Gary L. agreed.



Pictured above (left to right) Mike E., Eloise, Karin H, Marrison, Kimberly, Karen G., Gary L.



I loved our trip to Horrocks on Thursday, April 20th. I was accompanied by Mike E., James R., Dianne M., Joel S., Abbey and Marrison. I took lots of pictures of the beautiful roses, garden decorations, various mushrooms, candied apples and scrumptious cookies. I enjoyed eating egg rolls and diet soda from a food truck. I bought a “Love Michigan” magnet and took pictures of various other stickers, coasters, and magnets

that I appreciated, like: “Michigan’s state bird: the mosquito,” and “No salt, no sharks, no worries.” I bought a dragonfly garden decoration on a pole for my patio planter and some starter soil as well. James bought a package of the most delicious chocolate chip cookies, and was kind enough to share. Dianne bought a planter of succulents and blue hyacinths and mini muffins, along with a cucumber and

some apples. I noticed that staff bought bags of different flavors of popcorn, among other items including chocolate.

The two hour time allotment was just right to do all of our shopping and grab a bite to eat.



Charter House

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APRIL BIRTHDAYS

Joel S. April 2nd

Rebekah P. April 5th

Leslie M. April 6th

Steve C. April 9th

Brett C. April 11th

Jamie C. April 19th

Mike K. April 21st

Mark R. April 25th

Kathleen A. April 27th

Richard P. April 27th

Donatus B. April 27th

MAY BIRTHDAYS

Jeffrey M. May 1st

Maurice S. May 1st

Julia C. May 3rd

Richard G. May 6th

David P. May 6th

Kathryn W. May 8th

Robin B. May 9th

Julia L. May 9th

Brian M. May 12th

David T.B. May 13th

George May 14th

Mary B. May 15th

Brenda B. May 15th

Marrissa May 24th

Upcoming Community Events



The Lugnuts will have daily home games May 2nd-May 7, May 16-21, and May 30-31. Tickets start at \$9. \$4 Tacos on Tuesdays. Box office #: (485) 4500 x 252



ALLEN FARMERS MARKET

Wednesdays 2:30 PM - 7:00 PM
1629 E Kalamazoo St



In May, the market hours are 3:00 PM-6:00 PM every Wednesday. EBT dollars are doubled.



Free Virtual Music Therapy event every 1st Wednesday of the month through the Mid-Michigan Autism Association. Contact Blatnik @ (517) 381-1410 or blatsle63@yahoo.com



MID-MICHIGAN
AUTISM
ASSOCIATION



Mason Symphony Orchestra Concert (a free event)

May 13th 7:00 PM- 9:00 PM 7910 W. St. Joseph
Hwy (517) 256-9151



East Lansing Art Fair & Annual Spring
Arts & Crafts Show

May 20th-21st 10:00 AM- 6:00 PM