



Charter House Journal

May/June 2025 Edition

Coordinator's Corner: By George Hatter

Charter House recently celebrated its 47th anniversary. Charter House opened up on April 11, 1978 and has served innumerable members. This is something I say whenever I give a tour to someone interested in becoming a member. I'll talk about how some people come to Charter House for help finding a job, other people come because they want help with their educational goals, and others come here because they are searching for a place where they can feel comfortable and develop relationships. In other words, they are looking for a community where they can be themselves and be with others. I'll often add on and say that there is only so much TV a person can watch while being home stuck in their own head.

People are meant to be with people and Charter House can be their home away from home. In my 31 years with CEI CMHA, I've worked in AFC's directly run by CEI CMHA, with ACT, and with Charter House. Each setting helped people in different ways. What I love most about working at Charter House is that it really feels like we are helping people live their lives and make progress toward their goals and recovery. Some people come to Charter House and find that it doesn't really suit them and they decide not attend. Whereas others find their people, find their community, and make Charter House part of

their lives. We actually have a few members who have been here for 30+ years.

It is understandable over time, members come and go. Life situations change and they are not able to come in. However, "Once a member, always a member" is a great part of Clubhouse. It is great to see members who used to attend regularly find that they can easily return to Charter House and pick up where they left off.

Clubhouse for life!

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Employment Updates at Clubhouse

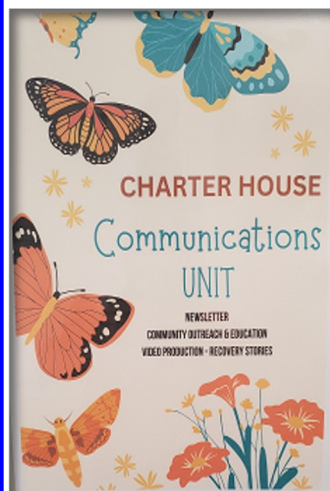
In employment news, we are still full for our Crew positions for Transitional Employment. We have a group of 3 people who have been making strides in their employment history as well as their skills to encourage future employment. Currently we have James Rom., Jennifer J., and

Lyndall K. all as members of the crew. If you have questions about what transitional employment is, please talk to George Hatter or Marrisona Swartz to get clarification. As a reminder Transitional Employment is 6-9 months in duration, and should be taken on with

benefits counseling to be fully informed on what the impact may or may not be for benefits received.

Just a reminder that Transitional Employment is not long term or permanent employment and generally lasts between 6-9 months.

Penthouse News/Unit News:



You may have already heard but there has been some changes to the staffing on each level. The penthouse now includes Sean and Marrissa. We are working hard on bringing videos, weekly scoop, and the monthly newsletter. If you'd like to try your hand at writing some articles come on up to 3rd floor and work with us on creating some more content for the newsletter. Are you interested in filming,

interviewing members, sharing your story, or editing videos? This would be a great opportunity to learn something new or to tickle that journalism itch then look no further than communications unit.

ULU News

Charter House will be implementing a new Flourish program. The timeline is still in the works but this will be focused on the ULU to ensure efficiency.

The ULU will now include Dan and Sandra on the unit for staff.

LLU News

Lower Level Unit will be starting to work out the training process for members in the kitchen. This will ensure that members are correctly trained in food safety, cross contamination etc. for completing tasks in the kitchen. Josh, Denice and Abbey (Floating) will be on the LLU.

Being Homeless with mental health concerns By Joel Smith

Hi Everyone, My name is Joel. I am here to tell my story and how I deal with both mental illness and homelessness. Yes I am homeless and stay at the City Rescue Mission Mens Mission. There are so many homeless people I see who deal with mental health, and have for many years. Being homeless back in the day used to be that you were into illegal drugs and beer and liquor. Now there seems to be a rise in homelessness with mental health concerns. In my opinion we are looked at like a disease. I got inspired by Mark Chris when he used to fundraise, he would for 7 days leave his home and walk the streets with very little money to see what it was like to be homeless. There are only

3 shelters in Lansing, Michigan. Having a mental health condition that I was born with makes it hard to hold a job, especially when an employer may not recognize or factor in mental health. I also deal with depression, which I take meds for. I come to Charter House to help with my depression and make new friends. Charter House is backed by Community Mental Health. I see how people are treated and some are treated like they are crazy and don't know how to cop with everyday life. I see that some people are homeless not because of drugs, but also people are evicted due to not having money to pay for their bills from losing their job. It is also hard to find

housing when you have to make 2-3 times the rent and some people are on a fixed income. I got fired at my last place of employment due to my employer not caring about my mental health. I understand that some jobs are very stressful but you shouldn't be fired for caring about your mental health. Charter House address is 606 W Shiawassee St, Lansing, MI. If you are a CMH client or have Medicaid you can call for a tour at 517-371-2077. Once you become a member you are always a member. I know with depression I sometimes want to isolate myself from the world. Coming to Charter House gives me people who are trying to recover

From their own mental health concerns. The City Rescue mission will be moving from 607 E Michigan Ave to 415 W Kalamazoo st, either the 2nd or 3rd week of July with an open house and cross walk August 9, 2025 at 9am. It will be a walk from 607 E Michigan Ave to 415 W Kalamazoo st with a brief ceremony on the Capital Steps.

As updates are available, we will include them!

Consumer Advisory Council

Are you looking to give your input into CMH and its services? Well there is a great opportunity to get involved with a consumer advisory council. Once a month this group meets to get input on advice from its consumers on how to improve CMH's services. If you are willing to lend your voice and voices of others in a constructive manner you might be the one to get involved. This council meets

every 1st Thursday of the month from 3:30-5pm via zoom or phone in. Having access to the internet or a phone will be a requirement. This position requires a 2 year commitment per term and can stay on for 3 terms (6 years) after which you'll need to take a year break then can reapply. Being part of the consumer advisory council also pays \$75. It's a great way to be an advocate for your self and friends. There are some members at Charter House who already

have experience in the Consumer Advisory Council, if you'd like to know more ask one of the staff who might be the people to talk to.

Resources: MEAP and Northwest Initiative Free tax service.

Michigan energy assistance program (MEAP) helps people who are struggling to pay for their utilities. One important tip MEAP provides is if you know you'll fall behind in payments call your utility company early to let them know, they may be able to work on a payment plan that works for you. If you need help making

payments MEAP can connect you to provide supplemental payments and self sufficiency services to low income residence. MEAP grantees are all community partners with MDHHS and can help applicants to navigate the MDHHS application process.

Northwest Initiative through AARP is offering free tax prepa-

ration. To make an appointment call 517-999-2894. This service is available to all low to moderate income individuals and families ages 50 and older.

Art Night; April 23, 2025 by James R.

We started the night with chips and cookies. I colored with colored pencils and colored a tree. The tree branches were in many colors. Paul M. Did a canvas that turned out really well. It was amazing. I also did two hangers with yarn around them.

I did end up paying Diane M for finishing my two hangers. They were green and white yarn for MSU colors.



Art Night at Charter House: by Josh Kessler & Diane M

Josh's Perspective

We had a great time socializing and using our creative minds during Art Night. Attendees included Mike E., Kathryn, Richard R., Kathy, Diane M., James R., Bezuye K., Lori C., Johnny, Paul M., Erica L., George and Josh. Mike E. brought chips and dip,

cookies, and soda for everyone to enjoy. He even brought my favorite soda, Cherry Pepsi....Yum! We are all grateful for Mike and his thoughtfulness in providing these snacks for in-house activities. Kathy, James, Josh and Kathryn worked on coloring. Mike E. drew a picture and colored two other flower pic-

tures. Kathy who is relatively new to Charter house commented on the evening's event: "I had a lot of fun! I'd like to do that again." Kathy also mentioned that she would like to bring her knitting supplies to the next Art Night. Josh colored a colorful, trippy, fun cat. James col-

ored an abstract picture. Kathy colored a flower picture. Paul M. painted a beautiful, textured painting of a lake, the sky and the sun shining over the lake. George, Diane, Kathryn and James decorated some wire hangers with yarn. Everyone participated, and I dare to say that everyone had fun. This is one of my favorite activities and I have been lucky to do this 2 times alongside George this year alone.

Diane's Perspective

I taught Kathryn, James and George how to macramé hangers.

Kathryn completed part of a hanger and moved on to coloring two flowers. I finished up Kathryn's hanger. George worked on and completed a brown and navy hanger. I tied the bow for George to help him finish the hanger. I shared a calzone with Kathryn and we both enjoyed this special treat. It was really fun to share different crafts with people. Erica L. shared her experience with needle point. Erica brought a ton of art supplies with a big suitcase on wheels with her sewing machine and a plethora of other art supplies.



Activities/ Activity Dates In the coming months

May Activities:

May 1, 2025; 4-6pm– Out to Eat Group with Victoria & Marrissa

May 7, 2025; 4-6pm– Fitzgerald Park & Ice Cream (bring money) with George & Denice

May 15, 2025; 4-6pm– Tie dye shirts & baking brownies with Josh & Dan

May 17, 2025; 11am-3pm– Art Festival & Crafts show in East Lansing with Sandra & Denice

May 21, 2025; 4-6pm– Bingo & Sloppy Joes with Marrissa & Sandra

May 26, 2025; 10am-2pm– Memorial Day Activity (Hot dogs, Hamburgers, Coleslaw & Baked beans) – with Sandra & Abbey

June Activities:

June 4, 2025; 4-6pm– Out to eat Group with George & Sean

June 12, 2025; 4-6pm– with Dan & Marrissa

June 16, 2025; Time TBA– Juneteenth Activity– Josh & Victoria

June 25, 2025; 4-6pm– with Denice & Sandra

Weekend Activity Staff: Josh & Sean (Weekend activity date and time will be determined at a later date, and posted on the activity board sign up)

**** Please note that some staffing changes may occur that may change the staff who are on the activity. Please see sign up sheets in the main Charter House hallway for updated information as needed.****

[https://
charterhousemi.org/](https://charterhousemi.org/)

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Charter House Journal

Charter House is a community of acceptance that empowers members with mental health challenges to contribute their talents for collaboration, recovery, and personal growth.

May Birthdays:

Julia C 5/3
Richard G 5/6
Liam H 5/8
David T-B 5/13
Billy R 5/18
Kathryn W 5/18

June Birthdays

Ryan S 6/2
Dawson W-T
6/11
James R 6/12
Sabrina F 6/13
Ray B 6/22
Diane M 6/23
Ryan Sch. 6/23
Whitney G 6/25
Mike G 6/27

