



From the desk of the Executive Director

Hello everyone,

The MHA had a lot of fun this summer and we're so happy that so many of you were able to join us. Fantasy Island was a blast as were the CPAC/Compeer Picnics and the Compeer Train Ride. The Art Show TWIST was once again filled with extraordinary pieces and was viewed by many. Special thanks go out to the Carnegie Art Center Staff, Jean Lichtenthal, and all of those that shared their art work.

Our Compeer Community Garden Project was a great opportunity for the kids to learn a little about horticulture. The group worked very hard on the garden and did so during some of the hottest days of the year (yes, we did have a few of those). The garden is located on Walnut Street across from the former location of Kenyon's Variety. We'd like to thank the YWCA of Niagara for allowing us to use their space for this project. Because we started this project so late in the planting season, we look forward to seeing how it blooms next year.

Let's hope our fall season doesn't go by as fast as our summer did and that each of us can find the time to enjoy the fresh crisp air, cooler temps and spectacular changing colors. Happy Fall!

Cheryl



Photos from the Compeer Community Garden Project (learn more on p. 4)

New ways to learn about MHA

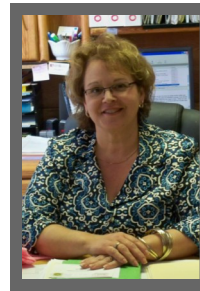
Information about MHA programs is now available on Facebook and Twitter. Our Facebook page has news releases, stories and pictures from recent events. Those who follow us on Twitter will get brief updates or

"breaking news" about MHA Niagara through the web or a mobile phone. Links to our Facebook and Twitter sites can be found by visiting our webpage at www.mhanc.com and clicking the "Links" tab.



Now on Facebook and Twitter as "MHAniagara"

Both Facebook and Twitter can be accessed for free. If you choose to join, remember to use these sites safely by limiting the amount of personal information you post.



Cheryl Blacklock

Words to live by:

I, not events, have the power to make me happy or unhappy today.

I can choose which it shall be.

- Groucho Marx

Inside this issue: Program Updates

<i>MHA Highlights</i>	2
<i>Compeer for Kids</i>	4
<i>Compeer for Adults</i>	5
<i>Consumer Planning Advisory Committee (CPAC)</i>	5
<i>Community Education</i>	6
<i>In-Home Respite</i>	2
<i>Mom's Net and the Warm-line</i>	2
<i>Resource Library</i>	6
<i>Youth Education</i>	7

Events:

<i>Depression Screening Day</i>	7
<i>Mini-Workshops</i>	6
<i>Poinsettias and Wreath Sale</i>	2

Special Points of Interest:

<i>Janice and the T Word</i> — Special contribution by Mary Furlong	3
<i>Follow-up on the Environmental Youth Summit — Compeer Teens' efforts lead to new community garden</i>	4
<i>Highlights from the "Mental Health America" National Convention</i>	6
<i>Go Green! Ask to receive this newsletter by email</i>	7

MHA Highlights

Open House in May



Rebecca Frank

MHA celebrated 40 years of service to Niagara County this year by opening its doors to the community for refreshments and tours on May 18th from 5:30 to 7 pm. Following the board's annual meeting, Rebecca Frank was awarded the MHA Board of Director's Jerry Casey Memorial Scholarship for \$500. Frank graduated from high school in June 2009.

Stomp Out Stigma Walk

The third annual walk occurred on April 26, 2009. MHA received \$2000 from Niagara University's Active Minds as a result! Thanks to all who participated!



"Active Minds" student organization at Niagara University.

Mom's Net and the Warm Line

by Carleen Stover,
Mom's Net Coordinator

The Mental Health Association in Niagara County, Inc. has supportive services available for expectant and new moms experiencing depression, anxiety, and

post traumatic stress disorder. These services for Postpartum Depression include education, literature and support groups. Coming Soon...Support groups for new moms in **Hartland and Niagara Falls**. For more information call 433-3780.

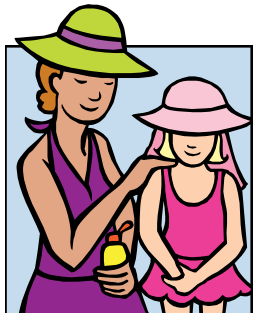
In-Home Respite

by Marg Raduns,
In-Home Respite Coordinator

In Home respite continues to be busy...and it is easy to see why!

Summer Highlights

This summer we joined with the Compeer for Kids program to have a picnic. The picnic was held at Krull Park in Olcott. The weather was great along with the food, plenty of hamburgers, hotdogs, salads and treats. The kids enjoyed the games of spitting watermelon seeds, after eating their watermelon. The wading pool was open and the kids enjoyed it also.



About the Program

In -Home Respite is a planned break (respite), for a family with a child/ children with a serious emotional or behavior disturbance. The care is provided by screened and trained workers. We have movie night where the workers bring a movie, snack and drink to the family's home. The movie and snack are chosen and approved in advance. Games are also available for respite workers to bring with them.

Give us a call!

If you need a break and you have already had an intake, please call us to schedule a respite. Or, you can get more information about the program. Please call Marg at 433-3780 ext. 304.

Holiday Sale 2009

Poinsettias and Wreaths

Your purchase supports the programs of the **Mental Health Association.**

For order forms and information, call 433-3780.

Orders due by November 13
Pick up on Tuesday, December 1
36 Pine Street
Lockport NY 14094

Warm Line for New Moms

A Resource for New Mothers

Supportive services available now for new and expectant mothers who:

- Have parenting concerns
- Just aren't feeling well
- Need someone to talk to

Share your concerns with other mothers who have had similar experiences.

It's ok to ask questions or share your thoughts.

We are here to help!

Compeer Friendship Connection

Janice and the T Word

Special contribution
by Mary E. Furlong

Guess what Compeer volunteer Janice and I talked about. Sh-sh-sh. The T word. That means taxes. Not generally regarded as a fit topic for social conversation. But we did it anyway.

No, we didn't compare our property tax bills. We didn't have an argument about whether taxes are too high or unfairly burdensome on this or that income group. We didn't bring up any stale old bromides about how they're the only thing you can count on besides death. We simply agreed that a fair portion of our taxes should pay for services to mental health patients.

The subject came up when Janice revealed that her late son was diagnosed as schizophrenic at the age of 21. The family was living in another state at the time, one that boasted of its low taxes. Never mind which state. We're not picking a fight here.

Of course, Janice sought services for her son, but to no avail. It was heart breaking, she recalls. Mental illness patients were pretty much on their own. In fact, Janice was told by the officials she talked to that no state would give her son the kind of support she was asking for.

Not so. And Janice knew it. Fortunately, she still had family connections in New York State. She came home, as she puts it, and in time her son was in a wonderfully supportive program that allowed him to be on his own and to live a reasonably productive life. Sadly, he eventually passed away as a result of an asthma attack.

It was her efforts to deal with her son's mental illness that led to Janice's interest in Compeer. Years ago, she saw a flier for an Erie County branch of the

program. At the time, she wasn't in a position to follow up on it, but the idea stayed in the back of her mind. When the time was ripe, she volunteered, not in Erie County, but with our own Mental Health Association in Niagara County. Now, as a volunteer, she offers her Compeer friend companionship and support. Their informal relationship is similar, but on a smaller scale, to that which her son had with professional mental health support staff.

Compeer is simple in its concept, but nothing short of amazing in its results.

Janice's personal experiences have inspired a special rapport with her Compeer friend, who claims that the friendship has

made a "big difference" in her life, a positive one that more than supplements the help that professionals can give her. With modest good humor, Janice attributes this difference mostly to the "spectacular" once-a-week fun the two have together. Actually, the spectacular stuff includes the same kinds of everyday things most Compeer friends do together - eating out, movies, games of Scrabble and picnics.

Oh, and Weight Watchers meetings. "My friend and I have a lot in common," says Janice with a laugh. "We both have diabetes. We both have asthma. And we're both overweight." How's that for a special bond?

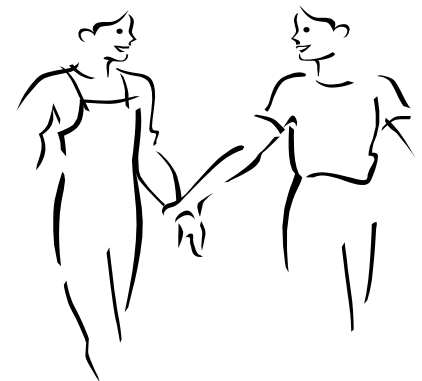
Janice is a receptionist for a medical group. Besides her late son, she has two other grown children - both daughters. Her younger daughter has lived in Blois, France, where she taught English and is now home. Her older daughter resides with her husband in Ventura, California.

Janice is a member of the Secular Franciscans, an official order of lay persons within the Roman Catholic Church. Members pledge themselves to live the gospel in their everyday lives in the

manner of St. Francis of Assisi - "from gospel to life, from life to gospel." Volunteering or otherwise serving the needs of the less fortunate is not a necessary condition of membership, but it often grows out of the call to "perfect charity" that is part of the Franciscan tradition. Thus, while the chapter to which Janice belongs has no over-all program for helping others, its members have chosen their own ways of serving. At their monthly meetings, they share with each other the special attributes of the volunteer paths they follow. Naturally, Janice keeps them all up to speed on the value of the Compeer program.

Come to think about it, it wouldn't be a bad idea to bring other people up to speed as well. Compeer is simple in its concept, but nothing short of amazing in its results. Spectacular, as Janice might say. Mental health care professionals are unanimous in their praise of the positive effects that an ordinary one-to-one friendship can have. These positive effects translate into more independence for mental health clients, a diminished need for professional intervention, and although it can't be quantified, a corresponding reduction in costs.

Reduction in costs? Well! Does that bring us full circle or what! Next time your friends or associates mention the T word, tell them how Compeer is doing its share to keep things in check. Maybe it will give them a different perspective on things.



Mary Furlong is a published author and former Compeer volunteer.

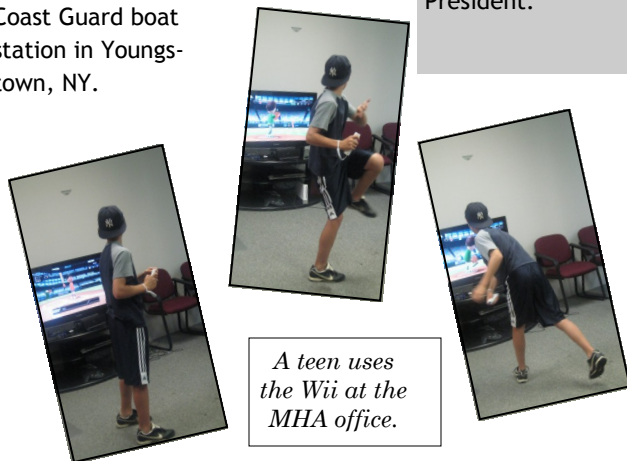
Compeer for Kids

Activities & Events

We have done many great and fun things this summer.

Summer Highlights:

- We played Wii with a small group. (We hope you sign up for more Wii sessions this fall!)
- We went to the Animal Sanctuary and although it was quite windy we had a good time.
- We did the railroad ride.
- We went to "Oklahoma" at the Palace Theatre.
- We attended a Bison's baseball game.
- We had a picnic.
- We had a blast at Fantasy Island.
- We took a tour of the Youngstown Coast Guard boat station in Youngstown, NY.



A teen uses the Wii at the MHA office.

But now fall is approaching. Welcome Fall! We have many more fun activities coming up.

September:

Come take a trip to the Buffalo Zoo followed by lunch at the Country Buffet.

October:

Dress up for our Halloween Party one Saturday in October at the Wheatfield Community Center.

November:

Attend Disaster Training at the Wheatfield Community Center. Learn what to do should a disaster occur and how to prepare for it. Presentation will be done by Howard Morgan, our new MHA Board President.

by Darlene Paulson,
Compeer for Kids Coordinator



Stay in touch!

Remember to read the Compeer newsletter! All of our events and

activities are listed there. Since we purchase in advance, we need to know who plans on attending. Keep this in mind and please RSVP when asked. I will look forward to hearing from you!

Have a safe and happy school year. I have enjoyed working with you all, families and children. Let's get together to plan next year's events and activities.

Thank You!

Darlene Paulson

(716) 433-3780 ext. 313



The Compeer teens' garden project at the corner of Walnut and Saxton Streets in Lockport. More pictures soon on our Facebook page!

Environmental Youth Summit Compeer Teens' efforts lead to new Community Garden

Project updates can be found on Facebook and Twitter at "GreenTeen14094"



The Compeer teens at the first day of the Environmental Youth Summit this past April (Park School in Amherst, NY).

Five teens from Compeer attended the Environmental Youth Summit. They are now preparing a garden in the City of Lockport. Their many hopes and dreams for the garden are to have it grow and flourish over the years. If you want to help make their dreams a reality, kids or adults can volunteer to help. Extra garden hands or donations would be greatly appre-

ciated. Their wish list includes paving stones, a park bench and perennials. Also, the Compeer Kids are still learning about Leadership and Creative Problem Solving. They are up for the challenge! They are now planning how to spend the \$200 award from Sustainable Solutions that they all earned for their progress. "You Go Compeer Kids".

Compeer for Adults

by Virginia Gonzalez
Compeer Adult Coordinator

To Our Compeer Members

I trust you have been enjoying the summer! It has been wonderful to see many of you attending our monthly enrichment activities. During these activities we especially enjoy greeting those of you who are new to our program.

We encourage you to read our newsletter and participate in our events. We especially appreciate the participation of our unmatched consumers. When you come to an activity our staff will be there to assist you and in some instances we are able to pair you with a volunteer for the evening. Joining our activities is always a good way to meet other Compeer consumers and volunteers. Compeer Niagara's goal is to match every consumer who joins our program with a volunteer.

Compeer Niagara Upcoming Events:

September—Bus trip to the
Jell - O Museum in Leroy, NY
followed by lunch!

October—Our annual Harvest
Banquet

November—Dinner and bingo



at the Wheatfield Center.

December will be bringing
snow flakes and our wonder-
ful Christmas party!

Consumer Planning Advisory Committee (CPAC)

by Marg Raduns,
CPAC Coordinator

Summer Highlights

Picnic
Consumer
Activities
sponsored
our third
annual CPAC
picnic.



Again the
weather did not cooperate so the
picnic was moved to the office at
36 Pine Street. We had good music,
great food and plenty of prizes.

The TWIST Art Show

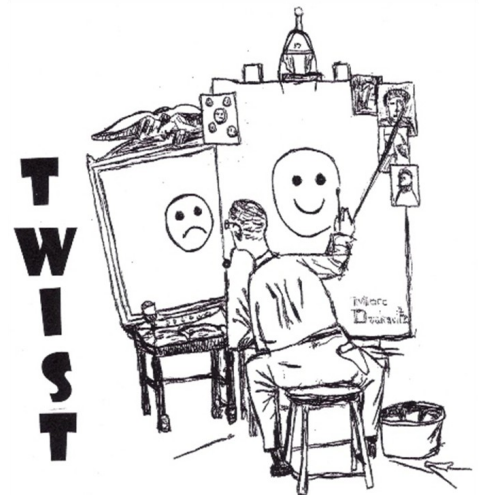
Our third annual TWIST art show
was a success. The art pieces dis-
played at the Carnegie Art Center
were made by participants of the
art class, which meets every
Wednesday, as well as consumers
throughout the community. The art
class is open to everyone.

Support Groups

In addition to the art class, the
MHA also sponsors support groups
for Depression/Anxiety, Family &
Friends support group, Peer-led
support group for teens, Grief
Share support group and also
S.M.I.L.E. (Support Me In Life's
Endeavors). Please call for more
information on dates, times and
places 433-3780.

CPAC Meetings:

CPAC meetings are held once a
month. CPAC stands for Con-
sumer Planning Advisory Commit-
tee. The meetings are held so
that consumers and service pro-
viders can share ideas. Atten-
dees also identify and prioritize
gaps in services. Occasionally,
guest speakers will come to
share information about their
agencies and talk about services
that are available. If you would
like to be added to the mailing
list, please call the MHA at 433-
3780.



THE WAY I SEE THIS

“The Many Faces of Mental Health”

LCTV

Channel 20
Tuesdays at 10 pm

(see TV listings for
additional times)

Upcoming Topics:

Avoiding Home Foreclosures (September)

The Art of Self-Help (October)

Holiday De-Stress (November-December)



All programs produced by
MHA in Niagara Country, Inc.

Community Education



National Conference Hi-lights

Washington, D.C. June 2009

- Presentations given by national figures such as Tipper Gore, George Stephanopolos and youth leader Ross Szabo.
- Social networking sites like Facebook and Twitter and how they can expand an organizations' outreach.
- Personal meeting with Congressman Chris Lee to advocate for mental health parity.
- Presentation about Mental Health America's 2009 campaign "Live Your Life Well" - check it out at www.liveyourlifewell.org.
- Advocacy training for the day on Capital Hill.



Pam Szalay at the Washington D.C. office of Senator Charles Schumer.

- Expert panel discussions about the latest on mental health research, health care reform, changing military policies, and how to help youth and young adults access mental health services.

By Pamela Szalay
Community Educator

Mini-Workshops

New Series: Tools and Techniques for Group Facilitating and Creative Problem Solving

Each month, we'll present a new tool or technique, explain when to use it, and then give you a chance to practice it! These tools will help you explore topics, encourage group discussion, solve problems, generate ideas, compare options and evaluate solutions. Techniques work for individuals and groups!

September: Idea Box

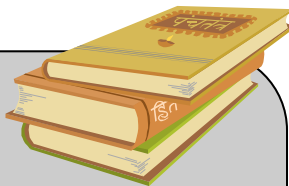
A simple tool that greatly increases the number of new ideas. Fun and effective -use for problem solving and creative projects, too!

When: Thursday, September 24th
9 to 10 a.m.

Where: Mental Health Association
36 Pine Street
Lockport, NY 14094

RSVP: phone: 433-3780, ext. 311
email: pszalay@mhanc.com

Our Resource Library



The MHA maintains a library of books and videos on a wide range of issues, available for you to borrow. For a list of the new additions to our library, please visit the website at www.mhanc.com or call us at 433-3780. A special bonus for visiting our website: you can read an additional review of John Elder Robinson's book, *Look Me In The Eye*. More book reviews will be added each month.

Book Review: *The Quiet Room* by Lori Schiller in collaboration with Amanda Bennett

Spending time in the quiet room became an important factor in the road to recovery and a chance at a 'normal' life for Lori Schiller. Her journey through an adult life coping with schizophrenia, and her relationships with family and friends is documented in her book, which is at times difficult to read because of her honesty. She pulls no punches in describing her behavior: lack of control, scheming to outwit her caregivers, and the hurt she inflicts on those around her.

That quiet room looms large during her treatment but also seems to be a symbol of a place Lori needs to reach inside herself before she can become a functioning, productive adult. Anyone dealing with this most difficult diagnosis may find comfort in the knowledge that a rewarding life can be lived with structure and support.



by Jackie
Kenney

Youth Education

By Carleen Stover
Youth Coordinator



A youth group attended a workshop and performed volunteer service at the MHA.

This past summer the Youth Education Program, a program of The Mental Health Association, spent a lot of time with youth at the YMCA day camp program in Niagara Falls.

Youth actively participated in workshops on Bullying, Anger Management, Relationships and Peer Pressure. Youth enjoyed sharing their thoughts, ideas and giving their input on these topics.

The Youth program is designed to bring awareness and education to

youth on anger management, communication skills, conflict resolution, coping skills and healthy choices.

It was a pleasure working with youth at the YMCA of Niagara Falls. The students took an interest in the workshops and were very excited to listen and learn. Many of the students have the potential to be great role-models to their peers.

The Mental Health Association would like to wish all of them the best of luck this upcoming school year! We hope to see all of you again soon!

Part of

**Mental Health
Awareness Week**

October
4 - 10, 2009

National Depression Screening Day Events

Thursday, October 8

Lockport Public Library
23 East Avenue
from 12 pm to 6 pm

Online screenings at
<http://www.depression-screening.org>

Niagara University
DePaul Room 135, 12-7pm.

Niagara County Community
College, Wellness Center

Free screenings for depression offered. For additional information, dates, hours and locations, call the Mental Health Association in Niagara County, Inc at 433-3780.

Become a Friend of MHA

Membership to MHA Niagara offers the opportunity to improve the services provided to individuals with mental illness, and also to promote mental health education.

To become a member:

- I would like to become a member of the Mental Health Association in Niagara County, Inc. I understand membership entitles me to receive the *VOICE* newsletter, use of the resource library and access to all Mental Health Association educational programs and conferences, as well as voting rights at the Annual Meeting.

Membership Rates

- | | |
|---|----------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Senior/Student | \$10.00 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Individual | \$15.00 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mental Health Worker | \$20.00 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Family | \$25.00 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Organization | \$50.00 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sustaining | \$100.00 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Corporate | \$500.00 |

To make a donation:

- Please accept this donation:
 In memory of In honor of

Person's Name _____

Amount of Donation: \$ _____

For Memberships and Donations:

Please fill out contact information below and mail this form to:

The Mental Health Association
36 Pine St
Lockport NY 14094

Make check payable to: "The Mental Health Association in Niagara County, Inc."

Your Name _____

Address (Street and Apartment No.) _____

City State Zip

Phone _____

Go Green!

**Ask to receive
this newsletter
by email!**



Sending this newsletter by email saves us money and helps us reduce the amount of paper we use. We ask both new and existing members to consider an electronic subscription! Call us, use the form below, or send your request by email to web@mhanc.com

- Please send me the *VOICE* newsletter by email.

Email Address (please write clearly) _____



**Mental Health Association
in Niagara County, Inc.**

36 Pine Street
Lockport NY 14094

Phone: 716-433-3780
Fax: 716-4333847

We're on the web!
www.mhanc.com



Find us on Facebook
and Twitter at
"MHAniagara"

MHA 40 Years!

Volunteer and Paid Opportunities

Throughout the year, MHA in Niagara County provides wonderful programs that enrich the lives of children and adults. As word about our programs spread, so does the need for volunteers to help us in our mission.

We are currently looking for volunteers in the following areas:

- Warm-Line (answering calls)
- Compeer "Be a Friend" program.

Also needed are home respite workers, who are paid on a per diem basis.

Please consider volunteering for one of our excellent programs. We offer training and flexibility. For more information on how to get involved, give us a call!

Call MHA at 433-3780

**NON-PROFIT ORG.
U.S.POSTAGE
PAID
Lockport, NY 14094
Permit NO. 453**



**Mental Health Association
In Niagara County, Inc.**

Mission Statement

The Mental Health Association in Niagara County, Inc. will offer programs and services aimed at promoting mental health while advocating for individuals with mental illnesses and working toward dispelling commonly held misunderstandings regarding mental illnesses.

Executive Board

- Cheryl Blacklock - Executive Director
- Howard Morgan - President
- Susan Mason - Vice President
- Dona Chase - Treasurer
- Stacy Passino - Secretary

Board Members

- Rhonda Bivins
- Frances Crosby
- Rebecca Thompson
- Jeffery Peresie
- Pamela Garlock

Funded by the New York State Office of Mental Health, the Niagara County Department of Mental Health, the Eastern Niagara United Way, the United Way of Niagara, the United Way of the Tonawandas, grants, memberships and voluntary contributions.