

A New Name...

Center for Mental Health

*(formerly Golden Triangle
Community Mental Health Center)*

and a New Look...

Exterior sitework nearing completion

Issue 7
July 2006



Marty Wilcox & Chuck Fulcher planting a bur oak tree.

Arbor Day marked the unveiling of our new name, Center for Mental Health, which officially took effect July 1. "The old name served us well for 23 years," says Mike McLaughlin, Executive Director. "We now have literally outgrown it." Originally nine counties were served with Great Falls at the bottom of the "triangle." Currently 13 counties are in the service area which extends from the Canadian border south to White Sulphur Springs, Boulder and Whitehall.

Great Falls celebrated the name change on Arbor Day with a tree planting ceremony, symbolic of growth, which is reflected in our new logo. Regional offices will have similar celebrations on the following dates and the public is encouraged to attend.

July 25 Conrad 10:30am
July 27 Choteau 10:30am
Aug 2 Browning 10:00am

Aug 2 Cut Bank 2:00pm
Aug 3 Boulder 10:00am
Aug 3 Townsend 2:30pm

Aug 4 Helena 10:00am
Aug 8 Havre 10:30am
Aug 8 Chinook 1:00pm

Aug 22 Shelby 11:00am
Aug 31 New Directions Center,
Great Falls 1:00pm

Visit our new website at www.center4mh.org

Dignity Dinner in Helena: A Huge Success!

Our Fifth Annual *Beautiful Minds* Dignity Dinner on May 5 in support of building a new Crisis Stabilization facility was a banner event with the most attendees in our Helena Dignity Dinner history. We are pleased to report that we netted over \$23,000 thanks to our sponsors, donors and volunteers.

The new Crisis Stabilization facility will house an 8-bed short-term voluntary program designed to assist adults who are experiencing increased symptoms of mental illness and who do not meet the criteria of inpatient care. The program will also meet the needs of adults who have co-occurring (chemical dependency and mental health) disorders. Care House, a 7-bed facility at 836 North Jackson, was opened in June to provide services until more funds can be raised for a permanent location.

Joe Fleming was honored with the 2006 Dignity Award. The award honors extraordinary gifts of time, energy, talent and resources to make life better for those among us with mental illness. One of Joe's twin sons was diagnosed with schizophrenia in college. After a couple of tough years, he learned to live with the disease and is now in recovery, living independently, and is in the 2nd year of a 2-year degree program at the Helena College of Technology. Keynote speaker was Gary Popiel, a Bozeman businessman whose family was directly impacted by mental illness. Dean Bjerke of Diamond Construction was also honored. Music was performed by pianist Glenn Porte and duo Outreach.



Joe Fleming, 2006 Dignity Award

Center for Mental Health

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A Message from Mike McLaughlin, Ph.D. Center Executive Director

Welcome to the new look for the newsletter that goes along with our new name. I've been pleased with the way that our staff and the public have adjusted to the new name.

Since we operate on a fiscal year ending June 30, July marks the beginning of a new year for the Center for Mental Health. We are starting this new year off with several exciting projects. The Center is a partner in the development of much needed crisis services in Helena. We have opened Care House which is a part of this community effort. We can now provide crisis residential services for up to seven people in the community.

We have also been notified that the State is funding a pilot project in crisis peer support. This project is the result of a partnership with our peer consumers, family members, and people involved with the Great Falls and Teton/Pondera local advisory councils. We will bring national experts here to help us create jobs for people recovering from mental illness, using their skill to help others. We are seeking a project director who has personal experience in recovery from mental illness and we are scheduling a kick-off Recovery Conference in September. The pilot sites will be in Great Falls as well as Teton and Pondera counties. We are excited by the potential to create a rural peer support model.

July also marks the start of another contract for the Center. Dr. Patricia Calkin is providing psychiatric services for the Benefis Skilled Nursing Center. She is replacing Dr. George Gelerntner, who retired after a long career of service to the community.

A Gift of Space

When Rehabilitation Specialist Laurie Levitan decided to form a drama group as a regular outing for clients in the Helena day treatment program, she needed to find an appropriate venue. She called a local theater, only to be told there would be a \$50 charge each time the space was used and she needed it each week for twelve weeks!

Levitan decided to phone Carroll College. She met with Chuck Driscoll, Chairman of the Fine Arts Department, who, to her amazement, offered the use of the Thomas Merton Acting Studio, free of charge. "It's in...(our)...tradition to help those who need help," he stated.

The studio was a large room with a mirrored wall running along its length. Everyone had to remove his or her shoes prior to entering. Being in this setting gave the clients a sense of involvement in something truly professional.

After twelve weeks of drama group meetings, a short play was performed at Montana House on December 13, 2005. It turned out to be a rousing success. For Levitan, the most important part was the increased self-confidence clients gained from participating in the production. "But it never would have happened without the generosity of Carroll College," Levitan said.

**Please remember us
in your trusts and wills.**

Carmen Schafer for Mrs. Montana

Carmen Schafer, a therapeutic aide in Havre, has been sponsored by the Center for Mental Health to run for Mrs. Montana. The contest is being held in Billings. We cheer you on, Carmen, and congratulate you on being a great wife, mom, and grandmother!



Wish List

These are items or services needed by the following programs to be used directly by clients. Thank you for donating what you can and helping those in need.

PACT Program, Great Falls (Program for Assertive Community Treatment): single beds, bedding, towels, office furniture, kitchen items (pots & pans, dishes, etc.), non-perishable food, and cleaning supplies.

Contact: Barb Walker at 727-4315

PATH Program, Great Falls (Projects for Assistance in Transition from Homelessness): Used clothes in good condition, pots & pans, dishes, household items for apartment set-up, personal hygiene items, cleaning supplies and non-perishable food.

Contact: Debbie Halvorson at 791-9586

New Directions Center, Great Falls (Adult Mental Health Services and Community Support Program): Home repair, vehicle repair, pet food, and fresh fruits & vegetables.

Contact: Sue Workman 761-2104 ext. 3212

PACT, PATH & outpatient services, Helena:

All above items would be welcome.

Contact: Betty Routzahn 449-9479

A Paver for Berni

Berni is 30 years old now, happily married with 3 children. That's a good place to be, considering her earlier years. When she was 11 and her younger siblings were 9 and 5, her Dad, who she adored, abruptly left the family. At 15, Berni's behavior was often out of control but her Mom thought it was teenage "acting out." After an incident at school her mom received an emergency call — Berni was curled up in a ball and said she hated herself and wanted to die.

Berni was diagnosed with clinical depression and so began years of professional help and a courageous family who stuck together when the going got tough. Her mom is honoring her daughter's triumphant journey with a cobblestone paver simply engraved "Berni".



*Cobblestone paver for our Journey of Hope path
Call 791-9509 to order*

Honoring their Memory

Center for Mental Health was the recipient of gifts honoring the memory of special people who have recently passed away: **Kenneth Brock, Michael Conner, Gerald Grayson, and Kristen Lange.**



From Sheila Rice, Foundation Board Chair

With humbleness and enthusiasm, I agreed to become the Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Center for Mental Health Foundation, and I was delighted to be elected to the position.

I am humbled because of the great work that lies before the Foundation to fulfill our mission of development and support of high quality mental health care in Central Montana; because of the vast area we serve and the tremendous need for mental health services; and because there are many more qualified than me to take the Chair's position.

I am enthusiastic because of our recent success in raising more than \$1.6 million to create the Center for Mental Health building in Great Falls; our plans to increase the involvement of the residents and facilities through our 13-county service area; and our incredibly effective staff in the Foundation and in the Center's mental health services.

Like many of you reading this newsletter, my family and I have been affected by mental illness. Like many of you, I wonder why "mental illness" is regarded differently than any other "illness" and why persons suffering from mental illness seem to have less access to the health care system in the United States. I see the importance of your support of mental health services everyday.

I think it important to note that the Center for Mental Health Foundation is not about buildings or events; it is about high quality mental health care. Buildings help develop and support services, by allowing us to provide better space for staff and for consumers. Events help us by increasing awareness and raising funds. But the end purpose of our work is to assure that those in need of mental health programs have access to high quality services, provided by top-notch professionals and supported by the community.

Toward that end, I invite your participation in the Foundation's work, through your donation, your volunteer time and your active belief that mental illness is just that — an illness that deserves the best treatment available. To promote better services, we encourage you to talk to legislative and congressional candidates about the importance of adequate funding of mental health care. To make a donation, please use the enclosed envelope. To volunteer, please contact the Foundation office (we are looking for volunteer Foundation Board members). Please join the Foundation in our commitment to high quality mental health care in Central Montana.

Center for Mental Health Foundation

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Boulder's 3rd Annual DIGNITY DASH

Celebrate mental wellness!

When: Saturday, August 19 (sign-up at 7:30am)

Where: Boulder City Park (north end)

Walk or Run: 1 or 3 miles at 8:00am

Immediately following the dash: a pancake breakfast (\$4)

Entry fee: \$10.00 (includes t-shirt) Proceeds support mental health services in Boulder.

Also in Boulder: Farmer's Market, Boulder Hot Springs and outdoor recreation!

To sign-up OR get more info: call Melissa Baker at 406.443.0795 ext. 1423 (her Helena office #)



JOIN THE FUN!

Regional Offices

Boulder/Whitehall	(406) 225-9114
Browning	(406) 338-5566
Chinook	(406) 357-3364
Choteau	(406) 466-5681
Conrad	(406) 278-3205
Cut Bank	(406) 873-5538
Great Falls	
Regional Headquarters	(406) 771-8648
Appointments	(406) 761-2100
New Directions Center	(406) 761-2104
PACT Program	(406) 727-4315
Havre	(406) 265-9639
Helena	(406) 443-7151
Care House	(406) 442-2925
PACT Program	(406) 495-8545
Lincoln	(406) 362-4603
Shelby	(406) 434-5285
Townsend	(406) 266-3327
White Sulphur Springs	(406) 547-4382

Useful Mental Health Links:

National Mental Health Association:
www.nmha.org
National Alliance for Mental Illness (NAMI):
www.nami.org
National Mental Health Consumers Self-Help Clearinghouse: www.mhselfhelp.org

Interesting Facts about CMH

Region served: 13 counties
Consumers served: more than 4,200 annually
Number of employees: 300
Number of facilities: 22 (outpatient offices, day treatment and group homes)
Center budget: \$13.2 million
Annual Charity Care: over \$2 million unreimbursed services

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

www.center4mh.org