

# THE VOICE

June 2007

CONSUMER VOICES ARE BORN  
CVAB

Volume 1, Issue 12

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## THE VOICE STAFF

Editor

Brad Berry

The VOICE Contributors

Nick K

Karen M

The VOICE is a monthly newsletter produced and distributed by CVAB, Inc.

The content of articles are the opinions of the writers and are published in the Voice so they may exercise their right to say something, and for your reading pleasure

CVAB is a consumer-run non-profit organization.

*(Editors Note: The Voice welcomes all original contributions related to your recovery experience that you may want to share with our community. We'll treat each with respect and we'll try to print them as submitted but may need to edit for space. Our deadline is the 15th of each month. Thank you.)*

## You Have A Voice

There are many discoveries for each of us on our journey of recovery and one will include finding and using our voice. CVAB is where you can begin to exercise your voice through our words as well as actions, to express your recovery by what you do and what you say.

You can safely express yourself through the following:

### Monthly Community Gatherings

The third Monday of each month offers you a chance to participate in the process of shaping our community. The CVAB Community Gathering is where you can hear what is happening behind the scenes and in the future; celebrate the contributions of others; and participate in the town hall style so you can ask questions or offer ideas. We often invite an outside speaker to our gath-

erings to inform us or hear from us (the Quality Review Team came to hear from us in May). This month we'll be discussing what our annual excursion will be.

### Members Advisory Council

CVAB is creating a Members Advisory Council (MAC). We are seeking members who will participate in helping CVAB staff and Board make decisions that impact the Recovery Center, Warm Line, and future plans. The next meeting is Monday, June 11, at 3 PM. We will be asking you for three wishes you have for CVAB as a Recovery Center. Come prepared to contribute and learn.

### Brown Bag with Brad

Let's have lunch. Brad invites you to join him in a different location

*(Continued on bottom of page 2)*



## Appreciation

There are many ways to say thanks, as many ways as there are people. At CVAB, we try to say find a way to say thank you to about everyone who enters our doors, volunteers or

otherwise helps us accomplish our mission. This month, we want to say thank you to three outgoing Board of Directors; Bob, Scott and Tom. You will find over 10 years of board

service among the three of them.

Gentlemen, we are very grateful for your service and holding CVAB interest in the highest regard. V



## KESSLER'S KOLUMN

**“I BELIEVE THAT  
EVERYTHING WE  
EVER TRULY NEED  
TO KNOW CAN BE  
FOUND WITHIN OUR  
OWN SELVES. “**

## What it *feels* like

As I write this, May 9<sup>th</sup>, it is Mental Health Awareness Month. This is the month of the NAMI Walk. The nice, summer weather invites happiness and excitement for the months to come. I think it is a good idea for us to have our “recovery wall” and share our stories about how we have conquered, or more appropriately, learned to cope with our mental illnesses (no caps please). It’s time for me to share as well.

But I’m not going to tell you about the hardships I’ve been through to get here, the number of times I’ve went to the hospital, been suicidal, etc. I think that’s missing the point. Rather, I am going to tell you about what it *feels like* to be a Mental Health consumer, and what I’ve learned.

Bad days happen to everyone, often at inconvenient times. In fact, I don’t think I can once recall the time that I was glad I had a bad day! But that doesn’t mean we have to feed off them. It doesn’t mean everyone we come into contact with in the “Mental Health System” is right or wrong. It just means we’re having a bad day and we need to let it go. For some people, this might sound like I’m asking an awful lot.

You’re right. I am.

It’s especially hard to “let things go” when your meds aren’t working right, when

you’re hanging out with the wrong group of friends, when you’re too depressed or apathetic or stricken to make it to appointments and there’s no one there to walk you out and wait at the bus stop, plug your ears at DSHS to hide from the crying of babies, or just plain take care of you once in a while. And once one horror is over, another begins. And so on and so forth.

Why? I think it’s due to mental illness, yes, but I think it’s also due to what you’re telling yourself. What kind of person am I? You ask yourself. If the answer is “Loser”, or “Nutcase”, or “Druggie”, you’re not going to feel too good about yourself, now are you? Or, to dig even deeper, if you were to say that “I’m a loser because I’m overweight” or “I suck at Math”...I mean, come on, people! You’re going to have a bad day thinking like that no matter what happens. I believe that everything we ever truly need to know can be found within our own selves. I’m not saying we *have* to look there to find it. In fact, I don’t recommend it. But it’s true. Meeting others helps us survive and fulfills our needs of relationships and belonging...But who do we turn to at the end of the day? Who do we really trust?

In my opinion, it should be ourselves. I feel that we know who we are if we try hard enough. And if we know who we are, we know how we should proceed. V

## Your Voice *(continued from page 1)*

for lunch or something like it once a month. The locations, times and days will change to take advantage of the variety of places to gather and what is happening in our community. Most of the time you will have to bring your own lunch and other occasions, lunch—or some part of it—will be provided. This is your chance to help Brad understand what is going well and what could be better at CVAB. If you’re interested, check the calendar for the day and then you’ll have to contact CVAB to regis-

ter and get the location.

### Annual BBQ and Picnic Planning Group

*(See the bottom of page 3.)*

CVAB’s commitment to being a person-centered, recovery-oriented supportive community is a commitment to seeing that everyone has the opportunity to express him or herself through words and actions. V



WE'RE LISTENING

## Faith and Recovery

Four years ago an experience deeply affected my mental and physical well being. In an emotional spiral I cried out to Jesus and asked Him to be in my life, to forgive and heal me. By faith and hope, I began to make serious changes in my life.

This was the beginning of my recovery process. I moved to a new home, began attending a faithful Christ believing church, started making true friends, and initiated advocating for my mental and physical needs. I decided to change my mindset, behaviors, habits, attitudes, addictions, etc. I was determined to live again, not to be afraid anymore. I began my journey into life after all the traumas I have experienced as well as the choices I made trying to 'fix' them. I chose not to use alcohol, drugs, shopping sprees, anorexia, bulimia, depression, memories, etc... to control my life.

I choose not to use statements like "I was..." or "I am an ex..." whatever, instead I choose to say, "I've survived and recovered, and living a fruitful life".

It is my hope that you to can find hope in your life as well. Not submerging into the negative world just because of past experiences, having "issues." Being determined to go forward is a start. We all have "bad day (s)." It is just a moment, sometimes it is a long moment, and it will pass. Going forward is living.

I am not discounting nor speaking any condemnation to anyone's life in their recovery. Having life's issues is a part in all our lives. There is HOPE in recovery.

It is the choices we make in our recovery lifestyle that helps us to move forward. V



## Review of a Trilogy by Nick

**Lord of the Rings Trilogy: 2001, 2002, 2003, Numerous Actors; Directed by Peter Jackson.** I know that most people that are reading this are aware that the Lord of the Rings, both the books and the movies, and the phenomena that both produced, so I'm not going to talk to much about the plot here, or the characters, or even the actors. But I thought it would still be worth it to write an article about. Why? Because there seems to be a lot of divisions in the audiences of both media representations of it, and I see this as negative. People that have been around longer tend to say, "Oh, the books were way better than the movies." In

fact, most people who read the books do find them better than the movies. But does that mean we should treat the movies disrespectfully, as if they never should've been made in the first place? Absolutely not. Up until the movie release of "Fellowship of the Ring", I had never read the Lord of the Rings. By the time "Return of the King" came out, I was completely familiar with the books. The movies were extremely high quality—the acting was good, the music was good, there was plenty of action, and on and on. The two versions play off each other really well. There's no reason that we can't respect both. V

## CVAB Picnic and Barbeque

CVAB needs volunteers to help organize the annual picnic. We would like to have the picnic towards the end of summer. The hope is to have a barbeque and picnic and we are presently seeking volunteers willing

to donate time. The barbeque and picnic planning meeting will be June 11 at 3:00 PM. If you are interested, contact CVAB and leave a message for Lloyd or Scott. V

**"HAVING LIFE'S  
ISSUES IS A PART IN  
ALL OUR  
LIVES. THERE IS  
HOPE IN  
RECOVERY."**



**HELP US PLAN THE MENU**

## A PERSON-CENTERED, RECOVERY-ORIENTED, SUPPORTIVE COMMUNITY

Consumer Voices Are Born  
CVAB

PO BOX 1707  
1601 E Fourth Plain Blvd  
Building 17 Suite A114  
Vancouver WA, 98661

Phone: 360.397.8050  
Fax: 360.397.8059  
E-mail: info@cvab.org

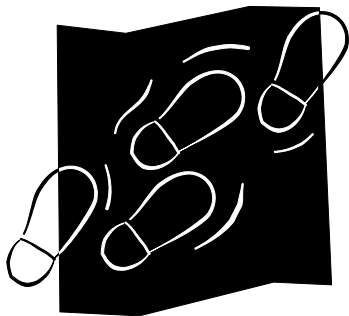
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# CVAB

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### Executive Direction from Brad Berry

I've lost contact with a mentor I once had but I still remember many of the lessons he taught or that I caught from him. Among those lessons, he constantly reminded me to assume nothing about an audience when you step before them; sitting quietly and really listening before you speak in meetings will strengthen your understanding and position; and above all, respect every person.

I have tried to keep these lessons in mind as we have worked to change the culture here at

CVAB. I haven't always been as successful as I have wanted to be but continue to work through them.

(Honestly, I have the most difficult time with those who just want to complain, who think they're speaking for others without doing their own work.) Recovery and wellness is hard work for each person.

There are a number of opportunities for you to participate in my continuing education. "You Have A Voice," the article on page one of this

issue of The Voice outlines some of the ways you can help my education and CVAB continue on the road of being a person-centered, recovery-oriented supportive community.

Rest assured that we at CVAB are willing to listen to you as the expert on who you are, to understand your position and respect you for being you and we desire to hear your voice. **V**

**IT'S HAPPENING AT CVAB IN JUNE! IT'S HAPPENING AT CVAB IN JUNE!**

**Brown Bag with Brad**

Meet for lunch, or something like it, to talk about CVAB and other stuff.

Register at CVAB



Come to CVAB 101 to find...

- ...Who CVAB is
- ...What CVAB is
- ...How you can get involved

CVAB 101 is a 3 hour class and you have 2 opportunities in June. We request you register for CVAB 101 at our office or through emailing [info@cvab.org](mailto:info@cvab.org). Thanks!

**Employment Help**

**Job Ready—Mondays at 11 AM**  
A group that helps with resumes, interviewing, searches—whatever you need.

**Wednesday @ 2 PM Support Group**  
A "drop-in" support group for your journey of recovery. No registration needed. Facilitated by Cathy Bowen.

**Games ON Games Of Nick**  
Come each week to play a new strategic game. Hosted by Nick

**Computers 101—Basic Computers**  
Starting June 19  
**Register at CVAB.**

**Computer Labs**  
The Computer Lab is open twice weekly for any assistance you may need.  
Tuesday 2-3 PM  
Friday 9-10 AM

**Computers 201—WORD**  
Wednesdays @ 9:30 AM  
This class is a self-paced tutorial with staff support. Start when your ready and continue at your own pace.

**WRAP GROUP**

WRAP=Wellness Recovery Action Plan

Learn self-help skills and how to use them more easily to monitor physical and emotional symptoms. This group will help you:

- Develop your own list of activities for your everyday well being.
- Track triggering events and early warning signs.
- Prepare your personal responses if symptoms increase.
- Create a plan for your supporters to care for you if necessary.

Angela Dummann, Facilitator

Sign up at CVAB. New Groups beginning every 4-6 weeks. Try the three hour WRAP Lite for a taste of WRAP!

**MAC MEETS June 11**

MAC MEETS JUNE 11

MAC MEETS June 11

**RELAXATION THROUGH ...**  
**New Group Meets June 20**  
**Register @ CVAB**

MELANIE MAIORINO, Ed.D  
CLARK COUNTY OMBUDS  
360-397-8470  
1-866-666-5070

**OMBUDS IN June**  
June 25 @ CVAB

**Life After...**

A supportive group for any woman who has experienced trauma or life-altering events.

**You are not alone**

**Karen Maust**  
Facilitator

Karen is a peer facilitator who has experienced trauma and the benefits of this type of group.

We can share our experiences to help ourselves as well as others.

**Thursdays**  
**10 AM-12 PM**

HELP PLAN THIS YEARS BBQ! JUNE 11 @ 3PM

