

# THE VOICE

May 2007

## CVAB Confirms the Board

CVAB members went to the polls last month for the first time in years and confirmed a new governing Board of Directors. All 10 on the ballot received votes and nine were welcomed and introduced to one another at their first meeting. After introductions, they began learning about the role and

work of the Board from Leslie Smith, a consultant to CVAB. They will continue to have extended work sessions in the coming months and be involved in a number of projects to help CVAB move forward as a leading consumer-run agency. Introduced at the April 24 meeting were the following:

- Bridget Ball
  - Julie Bracken
  - Rey Cabral
  - Glen Clark
  - Lance Echo-Hawk
  - Aaron Harris
  - Lonny Klugman
  - Teresa Olson
  - Teri Owen
- Please support and encourage each of them in their role. **V**

## Mental Health Recovery Month

May is Mental Health Month. It is the one month during the year when the nation turns its attention to those issues that matter most to our community. Mental Health Month's purpose is to raise awareness about mental illnesses and the importance of mental wellness

for all. At CVAB, we want to focus on strength and courage of each participant in our community so we celebrate Mental Health Recovery Month. We invite each of you to come in during the month of May and share your story of recovery by writing

it on one of our colorful Mental Health Recovery Month forms. As we collect them, we will begin to create a colorful Recovery Wall that tells the positive message of hope, wellness and well being. **V**

### Inside this issue:

Kessler's Kolumn	2
Carolyn Wonders	2
QRT Wants To Know	3
Community Gathering	3
CVAB's MAC	4
Calendar	
CVAB Happenings	

### The VOICE Staff **Editor**

*Brad Berry*

### **The VOICE Contributors**

*Nick K*

*Carolyn 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.*

---

## Culture Within A Culture: Hippies or Druggies? by Nick

It's a fact: a lot of people in the Mental Health System suffer from drug addiction as well. Although I'm a novice when it comes to this subject, I have



### Kessler's Kolumn

g o t t e n drunk on occasion, and I have g o t t e n high on occasion—n o t h i n g that would get me into an AA or NA meeting. For at least the first ten years of my illness, the only drug I took that was not prescription was caffeine; I didn't smoke cigarettes, and I graduated from High School clean and happy. I attended what you would call "hippie"

concerts during my teenage years—bands such as Medeski, Martin and Wood and Phish. I was disgusted by the amount of marijuana usage at places where the point was to enjoy the music. Yet I could identify with the concert-goers in a more spiritual way, and this was how I made a lot of my friends—through music.

It's common knowledge that we imitate the people we hang out with, but I never got high until I played Dungeons and Dragons with some people whose names I will withhold, not only to avoid antagonism but also because it is far beside the point who they were. But to say just one thing—they were not stupid people. They were brilliant, contrary to what is said of people who smoke pot.

I think the lesson I learned from that joint being passed

into my hands and the fact I refused it after a very brief trial period was that drugs do not make you who you are. A lot, and I mean a LOT of people have misconceptions on what drugs can do to you. If a person wants to dress like a hippie and you see a pot-smoker, chances are you don't have a very open mind at all. If you see your doctor and assume they never get toasted out on the town, again, you're probably wrong to a certain extent, depending on who it is. I think a lot of people don't think outside the box when it comes to lifestyles. (If she dresses like this, she MUST be like this, and this MUST be what she does in her spare time). Minds are like parachutes; they only work when they are open! **V**

## I Wondered... by Carolyn

A few years ago I went on a NAMI Walk. I had never been before and it was a new experience.

At the walk there were fun things to do, such as face paintings and balloons. We sang the Star Spangled Banner. One girl who had a mental health disorder sang a beautiful song.

During the day of the NAMI Walk I learned something very sad. There was a beautiful young girl who took her life because she lost all her assis-

"Somewhere someone is trying to listen."

tance. The girl's mother wrote a beautiful poem in honor of her daughter.

I wondered how the mental health [system] failed, what recovery is really all about. We have to fight back really hard to help other people in crisis; most of the times no one listens [and] money is wiped out.

There are few free clinics that offer help.

The best thing to do is contact your congressmen, write letters. Somewhere someone is trying to listen. **V**

**Editors Note:** This years NAMI Walk is Sunday, May 20th. CVAB is joining Melanie Mairino, Clark County Ombuds to form a team. Contact CVAB or Melanie for details.

Also, CVAB encourages you to increase your understanding of the issues that impact individuals with mental illness and to let elected officials know what you think. Contact CVAB for details.

---

## How Is It Going?

### **The Mental Health Advisory Board Wants to Know!**

The Quality Review Team (QRT) reports directly to the Mental Health Advisory Board and has the job of answering that question. But it can only happen if you let them know how it really is going!

There are many opportunities to provide answers to this question - written surveys, phone surveys, provider feedback sessions, etc. But how can you know that your ideas go straight to the top?

Here's how: Join the QRT after our CVAB Community Gathering on May 21<sup>st</sup>. They'll be here to listen to your ideas, thoughts and feelings about changes that you feel need to

"Let them know how it really is going!"

be made regarding the type of services you want.

The QRT is especially interested in how you feel some of

the newer activities, like peer review counselors, and helping set your recovery plan goals are working. Can they be done better? What? How? By whom?

Join us and let's tell the Mental Health Advisory Board how it's going. See you there! **V**

**Editors Note:** *The Quality Review Team will be participating at the May 21, Community Gathering as our invited guests. The QRT is inviting CVAB's Community to evaluate what is working well and what can be improved. We hope you participate and voice your opinions.*

## CVAB Community Gathering

Gathering together as a community is one of the most important things we do.

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 our Consumer Volunteers of Excellence; and participate in the town hall style so you can ask questions or offer

ideas.

Our last Community Gathering was April 16<sup>th</sup>. Following are some of the highlights:

- We talked about May being Mental Health Recovery.
- We said thank you to The CVAB community as Consumer Volunteers of Excellence—everyone is making a difference.
- We made announcements about upcoming groups and more.

We introduced our Board of Directors candidates.

Gathering together once a month is a good thing. We look forward to seeing and hearing you at the next Community Gathering on May 21, at CVAB. This meeting will include the QRT asking us how well it is going and areas of improvement for the mental health system. Followed by the Ombuds training about Self-Advocacy. **V**

## Forming New 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; and individuals willing to prepare to be leaders in our community.

The first meeting is Monday, May 14, at 3 PM. We will be asking you for three wishes that you have for CVAB as a Recovery Center. The only requirements are you need to complete CVAB 101, become a member and be actively involved at CVAB. Come prepared to contribute and learn.

**(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.)*

Consumer Voices Are Born

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

# CVAB

A Person-Centered,  
Recovery-Oriented,  
Supportive Community

---

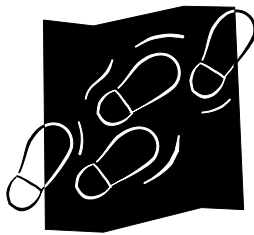
WWW.CVABONLINE.COM

---

Nonprofit Org  
US Postage Paid  
Vancouver, WA  
Permit #435

## Executive Direction by Brad Berry

Many, many years ago I competed in high and intermediate hurdles as a high school athlete. When competing in



hurdles you quickly discover that once the event begins you are constantly encountering one obstacle after another until you reach the finish line; reaching the finish line takes a combination of speed, rhythm, endurance and determination. Along the way, you may clip

the top of a couple hurdles or get tripped up and the ability to regain your footing and compete takes your entire being. You are not in the race alone and in the end, if you focus on your race and compete to the best of your ability you will finish well.

Living a life of recovery and resiliency is similar to competing in a hurdling event. Once you begin you will encounter one hurdle after another, which is part of life and okay. You are not to focus on the person in the next lane of life but run your own race at your speed and in your rhythm. Clipping or banging

into obstacles can take some energy out of you but through determination and endurance you can continue your journey of recovery.

As with every race, there are supporters, onlookers, fans and others willing to run; at CVAB, we are all of these. Because of Mental Health Month and recent local and national events, our community is being observed by supporters and skeptical onlookers. Let's encourage one another as each of us competes to the best of our ability in our event of recovery and resiliency. **V**

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

FREE CONCERT MAY 18, 2007

The Kate White Band  
Center for Community Health  
2nd Floor—Doors open at 4 PM



**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 May: May 14 & 31. 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.

**Peer Support Applications—May 25 @ 10 AM**

Get your Peer Support application completed and submitted, get on the road to recovery or mental health employment.

**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**  
Tuesdays at 11 AM.

Come each week to play a new strategic game. Hosted by Nick

**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!

**Trainers Wanted Trainers Wanted Trainers**

*CVAB is partnering with the Washington Health Empowerment Network (WHEN; the still-forming statewide consumer network) and other agencies across Washington to train consumers to do eight Recovery and Resiliency Trainings.*

*If you think you have what it takes to train mental health consumers and providers on the subject of Recovery and Resiliency, fill out a training application before May 22, 2007; they are available at CVAB or [cvabonline.com](http://cvabonline.com).*

**Learn the Basics of American Sign Language**

CVAB will begin offering a basic sign language class May 8, 2007. Two of our community members, Bella and Lloyd will teach us to better communicate with the hearing impaired community. Join them each Tuesday afternoon and help CVAB become a welcoming community through sign language. Classes begin at 3 PM on May 8th.

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

**OMBUDS IN MAY**  
MAY 21, 2:30-3:30 @ CVAB

**Life After...**

A supportive group for any woman who has experienced trauma or life-altering events. **You are not alone**

**Karen Maust**

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**

**Computers 101—Basic Computers**

Starting May 16  
**Register at CVAB.**

**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.

**Computer Labs**

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

**MAC MEETS MAY 14**  
**MAC MEETS MAY 14**  
**MAC MEETS MAY 14**