



THE VOICE

September 2008

CONSUMER VOICES ARE BORN
CVAB

Volume 3, Issue 3

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The VOICE Contributors Cindy F. Carolyn M. Leigha B. Nick K.	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.
Layout Stacy D.	CVAB is a consumer-run nonprofit organization.

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.

Housing Summit Drafts Solutions

After two months of voting and one month of preparing, it came down to one day to survey the horizon and draft a plan to address housing issues in Clark County.

More than a dozen people gathered on August 12, to participate in the Housing Summit Café at St Andrews Church. The summit was hosted and facilitated by CVAB with additional leadership from Mary Jadowski of MATAAC, LLC. The day long summit was divided into two parts: the morning session was to get out as many issues as possible; the afternoon was to develop solutions and action plans.

A key element of these summits is consumers voicing their concerns and creatively seeking consumer-initiated solutions. Because of this, CVAB purposely did not invite

housing "experts" or representatives of agencies. One of the drawbacks of this approach was the lack of specific information the day of the summit but the positive outcome is the development of active leaders seeking the information to address specific issues. At the end of the day, assignments were accepted by individuals or persons joining together in a group to work to fulfill the action plans; some plans included seeking out the experts or agencies to discover answers.

The day resulted in action items that teams of people are working to see through including: Assessing access to services through a "one-stop" approach; Navigation of systems assistance. CVAB will soon be posting all the information on its website (www.cvabonline.com). A followup will be in October. V



PLANS ARE BEING DRAWN FOR A BETTER COMMUNITY

CVAB Hours Change—Phase One

The second week of September is bringing change to CVAB. Beginning September 8, 2008, CVAB will be open 9 AM-7 PM Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday. We are excited to extend our hours and we know there may be some necessary adjustments as we adapt to the new schedule so we hope you are patient.

We will need some old and new volunteers to take on new hours and responsibilities.

What isn't changing is CVAB's Center continuing to host a community focused on recovery and wellness. Look for Phase Two in October. V



KESSLER'S KOLUMN

I THINK THE MORE

WE CAN

PEACEFULLY

EXCHANGE

OPINIONS THROUGH

CVAB, THE MORE

WE WILL FLOURISH.

Kessler's Kolumn

Many people see me as an angry, fed-up wise ass that loves to take his given opportunities in these "Kolumns" to bash whatever may be in his sight. They may be right, but allow me to provide a different perspective for a few short paragraphs:

Most of the angst and anger that emits from these columns is not directed at me, or even at others. It's directed at the way people respond to my illness and/or behavior. I know I've probably hurt the feelings of many too many people by critiques that they felt were directed towards them. Believe me, it's not intentional. The "rebuttals" I have in my columns are the way people have responded to me, and not a jab at their personal well-being.

I think that once CVAB can get an

online post board or chat room going that things will clear up considerable. Of course we shall have our share of deception and lies online, but I think for the most part people won't bother. I think people will be able to "voice" their opinions and needs in the written word—something we don't see enough of in The Voice newsletter. With expanded hours starting this coming month, we'll also have more time to get to know each other in recreational ways. Certain outings and activities are being planned with the MAC team (any CVAB members are welcome to sit in and/or join).

In short, I think the more we can peacefully exchange opinions through CVAB, the more we will flourish. V

Fun Times of Recovery by Carolyn

September 1, 2008, I will be at CVAB two years. I have stabilized a lot better. Being a Greeter or receptionist is something I wanted to do. I get to meet a lot of nice people and talk to people on the phone. CVAB is a happy place not only for myself, but for a lot of people. I have grown a lot from associating with everyone at CVAB. There have been a lot of fun times at CVAB. I enjoy the parties and the potlucks. I enjoy coffee days.

Yoga has been a very happy class; thanks to the teacher for giving her time to help and teach us.

I thought I would let everyone know I will be traveling in September. I will miss everybody. I hopefully get to see two of my daughters and grandchildren. One daughter would not come around. I hope to connect with her. It takes a lot of love, accepting and being a friend. V

CVAB by the Numbers

Jul 2007

50 First time Visits

737 Total Visits

35 Daily Visits Avg.

Jul 2008

110 First time Visits

1332 Total Visits

61 Daily Visits Avg.

Equaling a whole lot of Recovery!

Recovery Theme

CVAB is committed to the reality of Recovery. We encourage you to look for a Recovery Concept posted each month and enter into the dialog we enjoy around the new theme at each CVAB Community Gathering. September's theme is *Person-Centered*. V



I am not alone

Dear CVAB,

I have been coming to CVAB for three years and I felt it was time someone knew how much CVAB has done for me. Before I got into coming to CVAB I didn't leave my house unless I had to. I felt like I was all alone and that no one understood what I was going through. My thoughts and feelings of loneliness was wearing on my home life and relationships with my family. But since I've started coming to CVAB I have realized that I'm not alone and I don't have to be. I have found a place where I feel safe and wanted. The staff is awesome, and the consumers are wonderful. I have made a lot of new healthy friendships.

Having CVAB to come to where I'm not judged and I can be myself has been a big blessing in my life. I'm finally able to leave my house 2-3 times a week, I can even ride the bus now. I've learned to except me for me and the people around me for them. My relationships with my family have gotten better. I really believe that CVAB saved my life in so many ways. Thank you CVAB for being there for so many people and keep up the good work. I don't think you can really see the difference you make so I decided to tell you.

Sincerely,
Leigha B

WITH Benefits by Cindy Falter

Hello! This is your benefits specialist. I have been helping people with their benefits for over 2 years. In that time I have heard lots of stories and myths. There are a lot of twists and turns and lots of questions, with little help out in the cruel world. It seems like no two peoples benefits are the same. That is why I do individual appointments. Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) and Supplemental Security Income (SSI) are to very different programs. Three-quarters of the people I see don't know what benefit they have, which is no problem; there are ways to find out. You can keep your health insurance if you work or there is health insurance you can buy for a small premium.

I want to tell you about the options you have and the best one is education. Blindfolded, would you reach

into your purse or pocket and hand the store clerk a hand full of money without knowing how much you had or how much you owed? You wouldn't do that but you don't know how or from what source your money comes from and are you under paid or are you in overpayment. If any of this is disturbing you need to come see me. I have not been able to get a hold of some people so please call and leave me your number and best time to reach you.

I am at CVAB 1-4:00 PM on Thursdays. Drop-in appointments, first come first served, are taken at this time or I can call you to set up a time. If you have seen me but your circumstances has changed or you are thinking of going back to work. I look forward to seeing you. V



HEALTHY FRIENDSHIPS

MY RELATIONSHIPS

WITH MY FAMILY

HAVE GOTTEN

BETTER. I REALLY

BELIEVE THAT

CVAB SAVED MY

LIFE IN SO MANY

WAYS.



DON'T GET CAUGHT
BLINDFOLDED

CVAB's Annual Summertime Recovery Picnic and BBQ



DATE: 9/13/08

TIME: 11:00-3:00

*It's time for CVAB's
annual BBQ picnic!!!*

Come join your friends
from CVAB for a fun day at
Orchards Park

located at:

9800 N.E. 54th Street.

There will be food, fun,
games, and prizes for all!

CVAB will be providing bur-
gers, dogs, and all the fix-
ings'. We encourage every-
one to bring one or two pot-
luck dishes to complete the
meal!

Donations for door and raf-
fle prizes also welcome

QUESTIONS? PLEASE CONTACT STACY @

397-8050 OR E-MAIL DUNNS@CVAB.ORG

Please sign up at CVAB or call
397-8050 to RSVP.

We look forward to seeing you there!!!

Plan to Vote in November—Register Now!

Vancouver, WA—Clark County election officials urge citizens to register to vote early this year. Election officials predict 20,000 citizens will register to vote before the November election. In the 2004 presidential election, about 1,500 citizens waited to register until the last day.

To avoid long lines this year, the Clark County Election Office strongly encourages citizens not to wait. Beat the rush, register now!

The deadline for submitting an online or mail-in voter registration form for the presidential election is Saturday, October 4. Registration in person at the Elections Office ends October 20, but after October 4 this option is only available to citizens not currently registered anywhere in the state of Washington.



MAKE YOUR VOICE COUNT!

Registering takes only a few minutes, and you can do it by mail or online at www.clarkvotes.org. Mail-in registration forms are available during business hours at public libraries, public schools, city and town halls, auto license agencies, and the County Elections Office, 1408 Franklin St., Vancouver.

The Clark County Elections Office also wants to remind registered voters that address or name changes must be submitted by October 4 in order ensure that voters receive the right ballots for the presidential election set for November 4. For information on accessible voting options, visit www.clarkvotes.org or contact the Elections Office. V

Legislative Education=Making Change Happen

CVAB is committed to giving voice to the participants in our community. In addition to the summits, we are exploring ways to bring about changes that will improve all of the lives in our community. CVAB is beginning a regular meeting we're calling Legislative Education. This new meeting will begin with us exploring and determining our public

policy priorities and progress to learning how to actively advocate for change with the political system as we develop plans and attend legislative sessions in Olympia. Join us to help set the direction of our efforts to build a better community. V

Speak Up

Speaking to the public about what it is like to be a consumer. Wellness and recovery and about other mental health-related topics changes the way the public sees us and improves the way we see ourselves.

CVAB is organizing a Speakers Bureau. What is a Speakers Bureau? There are three components to operat-

ing a speakers' bureau: (1) Creating and organizing one. (2) Training to speak to audiences effectively. (3) Maintaining or improving the quality of the services offered by your speakers' bureau.

The Speakers Bureau will begin meeting September 16, at 2 PM. To speak up, all you need is to bring your voice. V



TELL IT LIKE IT IS!

Gaming Group Begins in September

A new Gaming Group begins in September. The Tuesday evening group will feature a different game or two each month. September will get it started with "Inn-fighting," a bar room brawl dice game; the second choice for next month is "Save Dr. Lucky." Each game has a six player maximum so be

there at the beginning of each Tuesday to make sure you have a seat. Nick is the head gamer.

Instant Replay: Tuesday's from 4-7 PM; maximum of six players; get there to get in on the fun. V



WHO'S UP FOR A GAME?

A PERSON-CENTERED, RECOVERY-ORIENTED, SUPPORTIVE COMMUNITY

Consumer Voices Are Born
CVAB

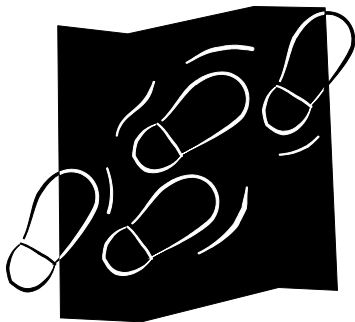
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Executive Direction from Brad Berry

We are doing it again. Doing what again? We are making changes at CVAB over the coming months. What changes? Here is just a sample.

CVAB is hiring two new peer specialists over the next two months. First we will be interviewing and hiring an Employment Support Specialist to help people with developing a plan for going to work or transitioning in their career. Second, we'll be hiring another Community Support Specialist to help us extend the hours and days we are open.

Extend hours? CVAB will be open until 7 PM four days a week beginning September 8. When you look at the calendar you will find that CVAB will be open 9AM to 7 PM, Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday. Extend days we are open? Begin-

ning in October, CVAB should be open Monday through Saturday, 9AM-7PM.

Other changes, you ask? CVAB will be electing new Board members in November at our Members Banquet. Members Banquet? Yes, CVAB will be having a evening celebration of CVAB in November to celebrate our accomplishments, give out some awards, elect Directors and Advisory Council members, and renew memberships. (Members will soon be receiving a letter to explain all of this.)

More? I'm sure there is and you can find some of it in this issue of The Voice. Many of these changes are what leads to CVAB being an effective and exciting person-centered, recovery-oriented supportive community. *V*