

LINES OF COMMUNICATION

Fall 2001

MENTAL HEALTH ASSOCIATION OF SOUTHEASTERN PENNSYLVANIA

1211 Chestnut Street, Philadelphia, PA 19107

www.mhasp.org

Bell of Hope Dinner honors the lives of Ernesta Ballard and Robert Casey, Sr.

The Mental Health Association of Southeastern Pennsylvania celebrated its Second Annual Bell of Hope Awards Dinner and Silent Auction on May 31, 2001. The event, held at the Radisson Twelve Caesars Hotel on City Avenue, brought out over 150 friends and supporters in honor of two very special individuals. The evening was hosted by Emmy award-winning meteorologist. Kathy Orr and proved to be a night filled with friends, fond memories, good food, incredible auction prizes, and, most importantly, hope.

MHASP recognized the late Governor Robert P. Casey for his courage and leadership in the process (1987-1990) that closed the infamous Philadelphia State Hospital and accelerated the development of community-based mental health treatment in the Commonwealth. The Bell of Hope Award was presented by John White, Jr., who served as Director of Public Welfare in the Casey Administration. Bob Casey, Jr., Auditor General for the Commonwealth, accepted the award on behalf of his father.

The Bell of Hope Award honors an individual, organization, foundation or corporation for significant and far-reaching contributions benefiting those facing the challenge of mental illness. It salutes those who bring hope to the struggle through their words, resources, products, research, or advocacy efforts. It is named in honor of the bell that resides in the offices of the National Mental Health Association in Alexandria, Va. It was cast, in 1953 in Maryland, from the shackles and chains that had
continued on p. 4



Joseph Rogers, Vincent Hughes, Ernesta Ballard, Bob Casey, Jr., Joanne Walker and John White, Jr., at the dinner.

In This Issue ...

Mobile Nurse Specialist.....	2
Advocate's Corner.....	3
MHASP on the Move.....	5
The Compeer Story.....	6
Alternatives 2001.....	7
Friends Connection Expansion.....	8
MHASP Annual Meeting.....	9
Websites.....	9

Mobile Nurse Specialist reaches people through drop-in centers

The Mental Health Association of Southeastern Pennsylvania is very grateful for grant monies received from Glaxo-SmithKline through the United Way and from the First Hospital Foundation. The generosity of these grants is facilitating the provision of mobile physical health care services to persons with serious and persistent mental illness in Philadelphia.

Since September 6, 2001, a nurse specialist has been working within MHASP's established system of drop-in centers for persons with mental illness in Philadelphia. Our three inner-city centers offer consumers a safe, welcoming place to engage in social, recreational, educational and therapeutic activities on a regular basis and on a user-friendly schedule. They are places where individuals are more willing to try new approaches to self-care, outside of what is often perceived as a frightening or threatening "professional setting." These sites are already a place where this "hard to reach" population chooses to gather. Though there is a diversity of population among the three centers, all include high numbers of individuals with

chronic health problems and with little means to address them.

Eileen Niksa, R.N., M.S.N., C.S. (known as Nurse Niki) is coordinating our effort to achieve the following goals:

- Enhanced consumer compliance with prescribed medical treatment and medication management;
- Increased consumer satisfaction with the amount and quality of care received;
- Increased numbers of referrals for service between behavioral health and physical health care professionals;
- Reduction in the level of fear and resistance held by consumers regarding health care professionals;
- Increased number of appointments kept and care received from referrals made;
- Decreased number of emergency room visits made by mental health

- consumers receiving these services;
- Decreased number of in-patient hospital visits; and
- Increased wellness and quality of life for consumers receiving these services.

"We believe that access to health care is a basic human right."

—CHRISTINE SIMIRIGLIA,
DIRECTOR OF RESIDENTIAL
& TREATMENT SERVICES

The nurse is available to treat minor health care needs on site and to refer out for more acute and chronic medical conditions. She makes appointments for consumers and follows up with the primary health care providers. At times, when needed, she accompanies folks to appointments. She bridges the gap between the managed care companies, the doctors, case managers and the patients. She listens to questions and offers answers. Eileen conducts small groups at the centers on health related topics and attends other groups when medical questions and issues come up. Her presence has made a tremendous impact on the services that we are able to offer.

Eileen is based at the Do Drop In Consumer Center at 1229 N. Broad Street in Philadelphia. The program serves consumers in that area, in West Philadelphia at A New Life Consumer Center and in Mayfair through the Northeast Consumer Center.

Data is being gathered to measure the efficacy of providing physical health care services in a drop-in-center setting. A report will be issued in Spring of 2002 outlining the findings of the data collected in the program, and illustrating the health care successes of the program, while identifying service gaps that still need to be filled.

The nurse and the holistic concept of "health and wellness" have been well received by the hundreds of consumers who visit our inner-city centers on a weekly basis. We are pleased to be able to offer these services. **LC**



MHASP's Nursing Staff: Eileen Niksa, RN, MSN, CS; Denise Pinder, RN; and Barbara Rohne, RN.

Advocate's Corner

BY FRANCESCA VASSALLUZZO / *Coordinator, Children's Crisis Response Center Project*

In 1991, the Child and Adolescent Unit at Albert Einstein Medical Center saw fewer than 300 children in its psychiatric emergency service. Later reconfigured as part of the Crisis Response Center (CRC), Einstein's unit provides mental health and substance abuse services. It is the only site designated by the Philadelphia Office of Mental Health (OMH) to evaluate, treat and refer children and adolescents experiencing behavioral health crises. Designed to serve children in imminent danger of hurting themselves or others, the CRC provides service and linkage without regard to medical insurance or ability to pay. More than 1,100 children were seen in 1999. In Fiscal Year 2000-01, more than 3,000 children and their families came to the CRC.

The increasing need for emotional, behavioral and substance abuse emergency services for Philadelphia children is driven by many factors. Greater public awareness and education around the symptoms of serious behavioral health disorders and efforts to eliminate stigma increase the number of children and families who seek help. The Child and Adolescent Services Division of the Mental Health Association of Southeastern Pennsylvania (MHASP) is a leader in the effort to educate society about supports and services for children with behavioral health issues.

The frustrating and challenging side of serving more than 3,000 children in the CRC is the inability of Philadelphia's child-serving systems to meet the needs of its most vulnerable children and their families. Philadelphia services need better coordination and pooled resources to effectively communicate with one another and provide services. Navigating the Department of Human Services (DHS), the behavioral health and juvenile justice systems, and Philadelphia's Office of



Mental Retardation to find and secure services for a child takes inordinate amounts of time, tenacity, personal contacts and luck even for seasoned social workers and advocates. Parents and caregivers often give up in frustration.

Providing more services for children without service coordination wastes limited resources, often without actually helping them and their families. Consequently, a child may receive several intensive services without decreasing

ferent mechanic service each system in your car without sharing information or tools. It is expensive, frustrating and often futile.

Until recently, children under the care and protection of DHS who needed behavioral health services received those services through a different mechanism than the public system for all other Philadelphia children. Children with co-occurring serious behavioral health disorders and mental retardation have few services available. Children with behavioral health issues entering the juvenile justice system are often not identified, nor do they receive proper care. A National Mental Health Association study estimated that 20 percent of the children entering the juvenile justice system have serious mental disorders, yet routine evaluation and treatment is not done.

Often service providers do not have the resources they are contractually obligated to provide, such as psychiatric or bilingual services or even enough staff to cover case-loads. Children may wait weeks, months, and even a year to receive appropriate services in their communities. It is difficult to attract and retain qualified, dedicated professionals for demanding, stressful and poorly compensated work. Philadelphia's overburdened, underfunded school system is often ineffective for those who need it most. A growing concern about "safe schools" places punishment and accountability before support and resources, further fueling the demand for crisis services.

MHASP's Children's CRC Project is one of many recent steps toward intensifying the conversation between systems about how to provide quality support and service to children with emotional and behavioral health issues. Last year, the behavioral health system, then under the leadership of Estelle Richman, teamed with Parents Involved Network (PIN) of MHASP's Child and Adolescent Division to provide on-site

The Family Advocate ... Offering support and assistance to families of children and adolescents in crisis

his or her need for crisis-level care. For example, children who need intensive behavioral health services to remain in their schools are often prescribed one-to-one Therapeutic Staff Support (TSS). For TSS to work as an intervention requires well-trained TSS staff with close supervision by a behavioral health professional and regular communication between the TSS, the family, school district staff and other providers, such as psychiatrists and therapists.

In our advocacy work we have found that getting TSS services for a child can be half the problem and having TSS the other half. It is rather like having a dif-

continued on p. 10

Bell of Hope dinner continued from p.1

once bound people with mental illness in institutions. The inscription on the bell reads:

Cast from the shackles which bound them, this bell shall ring out hope for the mentally ill and victory over mental illness.

In his comments, MHASP President and CEO, Joseph Rogers acknowledged both Gov. Casey's and John White's courage in choosing to act against political expediency and "to do the right thing" in closing the state hospital and supporting community-based services.

Ernesta Drinker Ballard received an award in recognition of her outstanding activism on behalf of vulnerable members of our community. The Association honored her tireless and lifelong devotion to the community as a champion of women's rights, a promoter of horticultural

"... we celebrate the lives and the courage of all those who face the challenge of mental illness – children, adolescents, adults and the elderly – and those who stand beside them. Making their lives better is our bottom line!"

—JOANNE WALKER, CHAIRPERSON,
BOARD OF DIRECTORS, IN HER COMMENTS AT THE DINNER



"Everybody's different. Everybody's unique; and no matter where you go in the world, there's nobody else exactly like you. It is important to recognize that and to have a system that draws out from people their best and to give them the opportunity to do their best."

—GOVERNOR CASEY DURING A VISIT TO IRIS HOUSE, A LONG-TERM STRUCTURED RESIDENCE FOR PERSONS WITH SERIOUS AND PERSISTENT MENTAL ILLNESS IN PHILADELPHIA, IN APRIL 1993




Kathy Orr hosts the Bell of Hope Awards Dinner and Silent Auction.

and urban life, a civic activist and as an advocate for those who need diagnosis and treatment for mental illness, especially among the elderly. Mrs. Ballard has spoken openly and publicly about the clinical depression that has affected her for years. It is her hope that her words will help others, especially older adults, to seek help.

State Senator Vincent Hughes joined us as part of the awards presentation, recognizing the incredible life of Ernesta Drinker Ballard and all that she has contributed to Philadelphia.

The original advocacy focus of the Association has expanded and diversified over the past 50 years in response to the

needs of our community. Today, 300 staff members operate 35 programs, spread over five counties; and each year we touch the lives of over 100,000 consumers of mental health services, children and adolescents with emotional or behavioral disorders and their families.

In order to respond to those evolving needs, MHASP steps out with innovative and unique programs that fill a critical need. The funding for these initiatives comes from unrestricted dollars... the unrestricted dollars that were raised from events like this dinner/auction. We hope you will plan on joining us in May of 2002 for the Third Annual Bell of Hope Awards Dinner and Silent Auction. 

Take Me Out to the Ball Game

On Monday, August 13th, MHASP's staff enjoyed a relaxing evening at the ball park. The Association traveled across the river to Campbell Field, a beautiful new stadium in Camden, NJ... the home of the Riversharks minor league baseball team.

MHASP reserved the picnic area off third base and had a wonderful catered barbecue. There was plenty to eat and drink... and an exciting game to watch. Each year the picnic gets better and better... The buzz is already starting about what's to come in 2002!

MHASP on the Move

The Mental Health Association of Southeastern Pennsylvania is growing. We are serving more people with innovative programming in a larger area than ever before. To keep up with the demand for services, we are renovating several new program spaces for occupancy. We are grateful for the opportunity to bring our unique blend of services to more of our neighbors.



Lavonia Waddington

November in a beautiful new space. This move is part of a larger North Philadelphia Initiative being spearheaded by Lavonia Waddington, Director of Consumer Center Services.

Homeward Bound has been home to hundreds of men and women with serious mental illness in its current location on 42nd and Chestnut Streets in West Philadelphia. The residence houses 18 consumers

with chronic histories of homelessness. It is a relatively small building that has served its purpose well over the years. We have, however, outgrown that space and are thrilled to announce that MHASP has purchased a very large home on an acre of landscaped property for the Homeward Bound community to move into. The new residence is part of the East Oak Lane section of

Philadelphia. Plans are being drawn up for renovation of the facility and we are projecting a Spring 2002 move. The new space will allow us to serve twenty persons, including six persons who require accommodation for physical disabilities. We are very happy to have such a healthy space to offer to our consumers.

The Mental Health Association of Southeastern Pennsylvania is celebrating the opening of its 10th Consumer Center! **The Bryn Mawr Consumer Center** opened on October 17th to serve the Montgomery County community. The Center is located in a lovely building at 1001 W. Lancaster Avenue, convenient to public transportation. The center boasts a recreation room complete with a pool table and ping pong table, several meeting rooms, a large conference area, on-site parking, and a full calendar of events.

Also in Montgomery County is the new home of the **Parents Involved Network (PIN) and Friends Connection**. Both programs share a newly renovated facility in the heart of Norristown. Friends Connection has just recently expanded its services to include Montgomery County and is happy to offer peer support to people with mental illness and substance abuse problems in that area.

In May of this year, MHASP opened its third **Compeer Program**, in Bucks County. The Association has two Compeer programs already operating successfully in Philadelphia and Chester counties. We are looking forward to having an office to serve the needs of Bucks County in 2002. **LC**



Homeward Bound's new property in East Oak Lane

Charles G. Curie confirmed to head SAMHSA

Charles G. Curie, who until recently headed the Pennsylvania Department of Public Welfare's Office of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services (OMHSAS), has been appointed by President Bush and confirmed by the Senate to lead the federal Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration.

"Mr. Curie has done a great job here in Pennsylvania," said MHASP President and CEO Joseph A. Rogers, citing Curie's support of the consumer and family movements; his fostering the development of a mental health system based on community-based services, including MHASP initiatives; and his instituting a move toward a zero seclusion and restraint policy. This initiative last year won a \$100,000 Innovations in American Government Award for reducing the use of seclusion and restraints in the state's nine mental hospitals by 74 percent since 1997 and making treatment safer for patients and staff.

Gerald Radke, who has taken over the top post at OMHSAS, previously headed the Office of Medical Assistance Programs under two administrations, and most recently was chief of staff and interim executive director at the National Alliance for the Mentally Ill.

Compeer offers peer support to rebuild lives

In 1991, as Philadelphia State Hospital (a/k/a Byberry) was closing its doors for good, the Mental Health Association of Southeastern Pennsylvania (MHASP) was looking for creative ways to help people move on with their lives after years of isolation and separation from family and peers.

With the conviction that one person can make a difference in someone's life and that friendship is part of the healing process, MHASP launched a new program in Philadelphia called Community Companion. The program offered community support to people who were being discharged from the state hospital by linking each of them with a volunteer "friend." This friend would not replace other mental health supports, but would provide an additional support to people by helping them overcome isolation and loneliness.

Since then, Community Companion has served hundreds of consumers by matching them with caring volunteers from the community. Some of those volunteers have been consumers themselves, people who have wanted to "give back" by helping others in mental health recovery regain their lives and begin anew.

"The greatest gift one person can give another is friendship," said Community Companion program manager Kathie Berkey. "As a famous British rock group once sang, 'We get by with a little help from our friends.'"

The program relies on its cadre of volunteers, who come from all walks of life for many different reasons, to carry out its mission. Volunteers are asked to spend a minimum of four hours a month with a friend engaging in various activities of mutual interest, and to commit to the relationship for at least one year. Volunteers are recruited, interviewed and trained before they are matched with companions.

The outcome? Companions, both friends and volunteers, say that the friendships have changed their lives. Some friends say the relationship has meant the difference between recovery and relapse.

"My friend made me feel like life wasn't over for me," a friend in Community Companion said recently. "Talking to me

on the phone and doing things together really helped my confidence."

To help strengthen the program, MHASP teamed with an international volunteer program that was running a similar friendship program, called Compeer, Inc. Compeer, which means "equal or companion," is also known worldwide for its program, which fosters mental health recovery through friend-

Compeer: fostering mental health recovery through friendship with a caring, trained, adult volunteer.

ship. Compeer has 115 affiliates in the United States, Canada and Australia, with more than 4,200 volunteers providing friendship to people recovering from mental illness.

Here are some sentiments of individuals locally and nationally who have benefited from the Compeer program:

"I like the way Compeer helps adults find a friend who respects them for not just who they are, but where they've come from."

"I would say one person, a Compeer volunteer, could spell the difference between recovery and relapse."

"I think I get as much out of it as my compeer. We've both learned to give and take, and have grown because of it."

"As a person in mental health recovery, I can give back to another person with the help of Compeer."

Over the past decade, more than 1,000 consumers and volunteers have been served by Community Companion. Last year, 182 people received services which included 33 new friendships. The program currently has

87 volunteers, 61 of whom are matched with a friend.

In May 1999, MHASP extended its friendship services into Chester County. Rob Chisholm, who had started Compeer of Suburban Philadelphia, was hired to create the Chester County program.

Over the past two years, 64 consumers in Chester County have been matched with a volunteer in one-to-one friendships. As of July, 70 consumers were currently receiving Compeer services. Fifty-one consumers are matched in one-to-one friendships with volunteers, three are matched with a group volunteer, 11 receive Compeer calling and four have a Compeer Pen Pal. In a group match, consumers are matched with a volunteer who facilitates group activities with them on a regular basis. Compeer calling is a service provided to consumers who would prefer to talk to a friend by telephone only. The Pen Pal program involves being a friend through letters.

Both programs hold annual luncheons to recognize and honor their volunteers. Throughout the year, various group activities are held for matched and unmatched friends in the programs.

In May 2001, MHASP began to develop a Compeer initiative in Bucks County, to be headed by Janet Wills. Janet will divide her time between Community Companion in Philadelphia and Bucks County, assisting in the recruitment of volunteers, development of referral resources, and special projects.

In Bucks County, a Compeer advisory committee has just been established and will hold its first meeting on September 25, 2001, in Warminster at the offices of Bucks County-Creating Satisfaction Together (BC-CST), a team of consumers and family members who assess the satisfaction of consumers using county mental health services. Compeer volunteers and consumers are actively being recruited and the first matches are expected to occur over the next several months.

Anyone interested in participating in the program should call the Philadelphia office at 215-751-1800 ext. 269, or the Chester County office at 610-436-4445. **LC**

Alternatives 2001 Draws a Big Crowd

From August 22 to 26, MHASP welcomed 900 consumers from around the nation to the Loews Philadelphia Hotel for Alternatives 2001, the 17th annual Alternatives conference.

"This is really the only annual national event entirely organized by and for consumers," said MHASP president and CEO Joseph Rogers. Rogers is also executive director of the National Mental Health Consumers' Self-Help Clearinghouse, an MHASP-affiliated project, which organized the conference. "Each year since 1985, the Alternatives conferences have given the consumer movement a national forum for sharing expertise in self-help programs and mental health advocacy," Rogers said.

The Clearinghouse takes turns hosting Alternatives with the two other consumer-run national technical assistance centers. All three centers are funded by the Center for Mental Health Services of the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration to provide training and information to individuals and consumer groups around the nation.

"The Alternatives conferences allow the consumer movement to share information about topics that really matter to



they'll take their knowledge home with them and use it to build programs in other communities." — Jack Boyle

us, like mutual support and advocacy, and they are also a springboard for participants to organize at a national level," Rogers continued.

New to Alternatives this year was a set of "dialogue sessions" on 12 topics, such as multicultural issues, force and coercion, and financing. These sessions orig-

inated at the National Summit of Mental Health Consumers and Survivors, held in Portland, Ore., in 1999. "The dialogue sessions are a vital step in national organizing because they allow consumers from around the country to identify key positions on which there is consensus, and to develop action plans to turn these ideas into reality," Rogers explained.

As in previous years, Alternatives 2001 featured a full slate of workshops and

"Our staff worked hard to make Alternatives 2001 a positive experience for so many people. I hope that

half-day institutes on diverse topics such as peer counseling, leadership, and spirituality. One popular institute was "Recovery University," an introduction to four national programs: Wellness Recovery Action Plan (WRAP), Leadership Academy, Advocacy Unlimited, and the BRIDGES curriculum. These programs are based in Vermont, West Virginia, Connecticut and New York State, respectively.

From the beginning, the conference maintained a national perspective but showed off the region's behavioral health innovations. After Philadelphia director of social services Estelle Richman welcomed participants, Liz Spikol, managing editor of Philadelphia Weekly, who often writes about her own mental illness, gave an inspirational keynote speech. "People around the country can learn an important lesson from the Philadelphia behavioral health system's support of consumer-run programs," said MHASP Senior vice president and COO Jack Boyle.

Rep. Jim Greenwood (R-PA) told an

continued on p. 11



Keynote speaker Liz Spikol flashes a peace sign at Alternatives 2001.

Friends Connection participates in research, expands into Montgomery County

The Friends Connection (TFC), which provides peer support to people with co-occurring mental illness and substance abuse disorders, is expanding its services and participating in a significant, multi-site research study.

In January, the project expanded into Montgomery County, where it is currently serving 16 consumers from Lower Merion Township and Norristown. At the same time, TFC is about to embark on the final year of a four-year study, funded by the Center for Mental Health Services of the Substance Abuse and

Mental Health Services Administration, to determine the effectiveness of consumer-operated service programs.

RESEARCH STUDY

TFC is one of eight consumer-run services around the country that are participating in the Consumer-Operated Services Program Outcomes Project; the others — in Tennessee, Maine, California, Connecticut, Iowa, Florida and Illinois — are drop-in centers, advocacy programs and self-help groups. All the participating programs were involved in designing the protocol for the project. Among the outcomes under scrutiny are how well the services perform in increasing consumer empowerment, recovery, hope, quality of life, and general well being.

As of mid-September, 113 TFC clients were involved; eligible participants must have co-occurring mental health and substance abuse disorders and be receiving the services of either an Intensive Case Manager or a Resource Coordinator. They are paid \$20 for each of five confidential interviews with University of Pennsylvania researchers over 16 months. Recruitment ended on September 30.

Program director Jeanie Whitecraft noted that TFC participated in a small pilot study that indicated a decrease in hospitalizations for people using Friends Connection. “Subjectively, we know that people are doing better; and the pilot study confirmed this. People reported longer periods of clean time and an improved quality of life,” Whitecraft said. However, she added, only 20 people participated in that study. If, as

expected, the much larger, four-year study shows that consumer-run services are effective, it is hoped that this will result in increased funding for and replication of such services

MONTGOMERY COUNTY EXPANSION

At this writing, TFC is getting ready to move from DeKalb Street in Norristown to its new home on East Main Street. “We’re here to help people build a support network — a recovery community — that will be self-sustaining,” said Carol Holmes, program manager of the Montgomery County Friends Connection. “And there’s no charge. Folks keep looking for the snake oil, but there is no catch.”

Over the last decade, TFC has combated loneliness and isolation by engaging people in meaningful social and recreational activities, and the Montgomery County program is no exception. “You can ride a bike, go fishing, go to the museum, hear jazz at Rittenhouse Square, go to Penn’s Landing or Longwood Gardens,” Holmes said. “We can do anything you want, as long as you agree to be accountable and follow it through.” This means that clients can decide on an activity, gather information about it, “keep it within a certain cost factor, and get people to commit by a certain date,” Holmes continued. “If you’re willing to drive this buggy, we’re willing to push it.”

One program participant, who is in her early 40s, said that, before joining the pro-

continued on p. 10

The Friends Connection: Making the Right Connections



LINES OF COMMUNICATION

is a quarterly publication of the Mental Health Association of Southeastern Pennsylvania (MHASP), a nonprofit, membership-based advocacy organization. The Association works to improve the care and treatment of people with mental illness and children with serious emotional problems and to prevent mental illness through research and education.

Joanne Walker, Esq.
Chairperson

Joseph A. Rogers
President

Downes Designs
Art Director

The Association is supported by United Way contributions (MHASP's United Way donor number is 00082), government and foundation grants, membership fees and individual donations. Direct inquiries to:

LINES c/o MHASP
1211 Chestnut St. 11th Floor
Philadelphia, PA 19107
(215) 751-1800
e-mail: mha@mhasp.org

A copy of the Mental Health Association of Southeastern Pennsylvania official registration and financial information may be obtained from the Pennsylvania Department of State by calling toll-free within Pennsylvania 1-800-732-0999. Registration does not imply endorsement.



A United Way Agency

Annual Meeting held in historic mansion

The Mental Health Association held its annual meeting and luncheon on October 15, 2001, at the beautiful Pen Ryn Mansion on the Delaware in Bensalem, Bucks County. Close to 200 people made the trip to the historic property to celebrate MHASP's accomplishments over the past year.

Pen Ryn was built in 1774 by a wealthy shipping merchant, Abraham Bickley, as his country estate. In 1893, Lucy Wharton Drexel purchased and expanded the mansion. After years of abandonment and decay, Pen Ryn was purchased privately in the late 1980's and meticulously restored. It is now listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

Joanne Walker, Esq., Chairperson of MHASP's Board of Directors, welcomed the guests and made introductory remarks.

Congressman Jim Greenwood graciously joined us and offered the keynote address. The Congressman has been representing Bucks County, first in the state and now on the federal level, since

1980. This social worker turned politician, along with Rep. Marcy Kaptur introduced The Mental Illness Consumer-Run Services Support Act (H.R. 2363), which would establish 10 regional technical assistance centers that would foster the development of mental



Joanne Walker, Esq., Chairperson of MHASP's Board of Directors, and Jack Boyle, Senior Vice President and COO.

health consumer-run services and other non-professional services across the nation.

Joanne Walker presented the Congressman with a clock inscribed with the following message:

October 15, 2001

The Mental Health Association of Southeastern Pennsylvania wishes to express its gratitude to Congressman Jim Greenwood for all that you do on behalf of persons with mental illness in America.

After a lovely buffet lunch, Michael Fitzpatrick, Esq., a member of the board of commissioners since 1995, welcomed the Association to Bucks County.

Joseph Rogers, MHASP's President and Chief Executive Officer, closed the afternoon with a reflection of the agency's accomplishments and a look to our goal of expanding services for persons with mental illness in Bucks County in the future. **LC**



Eleanor Daly & Christine Simiriglia greet guests at the luncheon.

WEBSITES

Make the most of your on-line resources.

■ www.mhasp.org

includes information about the Association, its history, and background about the self-help movement. All MHASP programs and services are also listed. A "getting help" section provides links and information about where to turn for help from the mental health system, and how to cope with psychiatric emergencies.

■ www.mhasp.org/coping

provides help and information for children coping with mental illness in their families or in their homes. This site is provided by the TEC Family Center of MHASP.

■ www.mhaging.org

offers advocacy recommendations and informational resources for senior citizens navigating the mental health system. This site is provided by the Association's Mental Health/Aging Advocacy Project.

■ www.pinofpa.org

is the website for the Association's Parents Involved Network of Pennsylvania. It provides information and advocacy resources for parents of children with emotional disorders.

■ www.mhselfhelp.org

is the informational site for the Mental Health Consumer's Self-Help Clearinghouse, a national technical assistance program.

Advocate's Corner continued from p. 3

Family Advocacy at Einstein's Children's CRC.

The Children's CRC Project was created to assist in coping with the child's crisis, access follow-up services, and provide both immediate and ongoing support to the family in learning and negotiating the Behavioral Health System. We work to reduce the need for readmission into emergency or inpatient services by obtaining community-based services. PIN's 17-year history of providing information, support, advocacy and referral to families of children with emotional and behavioral issues makes it a perfect service for children in crisis.

Family Advocacy at the CRC is a free, voluntary and confidential service. We ask families, "What brought you here?" and "What does success look like for you and your family?" The answers are as powerful as they are obvious: coordination of services across systems; collaboration with the children, their families and other supportive individuals in choosing and planning services; and quality services that improve a child's daily life and future. Children especially need services that consistently support their strengths, adapt to their changing situations and acknowledge their ability to learn.

The Family Advocates at Einstein have been overwhelmed by the joy and relief people express at their presence. They are able to follow child and family to a resolution, whether it be making services "walk" out the door at hospital discharge planning, getting special education services in place quickly, or facilitating communication across systems via phone calls and interagency meetings. Children, families and providers welcome someone with the ability to interpret and speak the language of each system to get services for children.

The Children's CRC Project joins other advocates — parents, providers and administrators in the child-serving systems — in the ongoing effort to develop high-quality and coordinated behavioral health services for children. **LC**

"Advocate's Corner" is a regular feature of Lines of Communication. Each issue includes a column written by a different MHASP advocate offering his or her views on an important issue impacting the mental health community.



MHASP welcomes new members to its 2000-2001 Board of Directors

2000-2001 new members of the board of directors Marie Tolson, Chris Uhrinek, George Rizzuto, Margie Gallagher Thompson, Esq. Not pictured: Denise Stewart, Stephen Weinstein, Ph.D., J.D. Siemsen, Trusandra Taylor, M.D.

Friends Connection continued from p. 8

program, she had been "isolating" at home. Now, she said, "I have things to look forward to." She and her peer counselor talk and go out for breakfast, to the movies, or a video arcade. In addition, the client, who has her associate's degree, hopes to return for her bachelor's; her peer counselor is helping her investigate this.

The participant, who is also working on giving up smoking after 27 years, says that the friendship with her peer counselor is a two-way street: "She's an example for me about not using [drugs or alcohol], and maybe I can be an example for her about not smoking."

PSYCH REHAB CREDENTIALS

Community Behavioral Health in Philadelphia has approved the Friends Connection as a mobile psychosocial rehabilitation program, Whitecraft also

reported. "We've been working for a number of years to prepare the Friends Connection to meet the regulatory requirement that would allow us to become a billable service," she said. "This would make the program available to more people." Certification is currently on hold due to pending state psych rehab criteria, Whitecraft noted.

WEB SITE

TFC is also in the process of developing a Web site, which will provide information about the program, individual advocacy, resources on co-occurring issues, a calendar of program events and a semi-annual newsletter. "Through this site we will be able to help more people have access to our program as an alternative, or as a supplement, to traditional services," Whitecraft said. —Susan Rogers **LC**

First-ever national consumer-driven bill introduced

As a result of advocacy by the Mental Health Association of Southeastern Pennsylvania (MHASP) and the National Mental Health Association, the first-ever consumer-driven bill at the national level was introduced in the House of Representatives in June. Efforts are under way around the country to persuade additional members of Congress to sign on as co-sponsors.

The Mental Illness Consumer-Run Services Support Act (H.R. 2363) was introduced by Rep. James Greenwood (R-PA) along with Rep. Marcy Kaptur (D-OH). If passed, it would authorize the establishment of 10 regional technical assistance centers that would foster the development of mental health consumer-run services and other non-professional services. "This is landmark legislation that addresses the critically important role that peer-support services can play in recovery from mental illness," said MHASP President and CEO Joseph A. Rogers.

"Ten geographically spaced regional centers are important because most mental health policy is decided on the state level," continued Rogers, who is executive director of MHASP's National Mental Health Consumers' Self-Help Clearinghouse, which provides technical assistance to the consumer movement nationally. "Regional centers could specialize in the issues affecting their respective regions, each of which has its own special needs."

According to a report published last year by the federal Center for Mental Health Services, consumers report a need for the kind of technical assistance the proposed regional centers would provide. About 70 percent of the consumer-operated services surveyed indicated that additional technical assistance would have contributed to increased success and that a lack of such knowledge had hampered them.

At this writing, co-sponsors include Reps. Andrews, Bonior, Borski, Brady, English, Hart, Johnson, Kaptur, Lee, Roukema, Stark, Towns, Baldacci, DeFacio, Frost, Hinchey, Hoeffel, Jones, Lantos, McCarthy, Shows, Tauscher, Weldon, and Waxman.

For more information, see the MHASP Web site, www.mhasp.org. 

Alternatives 2001 from on p. 7
enthusiastic crowd about a national initiative that resulted from the work of MHASP advocates: He has introduced a bill, which MHASP staff played a major role in initiating, that would fund 10 regional consumer-run technical assistance centers to offer the types of services now provided by the Clearinghouse and the other two consumer-run national technical assistance centers.

The highlight of the Philadelphia experience was the "MHASP Consumer Expo," at which many MHASP programs staffed exhibit tables and gave short presentations. "For years, MHASP has had some of the most successful consumer-run programs in the country,

so we wanted people from around the country to learn about these programs from the people who run them," said Rogers.

"Our staff worked hard to make Alternatives 2001 a positive experience for so many people," said Boyle. "I hope that they'll take their knowledge home with them and use it to build programs in other communities."

MHASP staff also provided support services, such as two drop-in centers, a support suite, and a special needs desk. "Conferences can be overwhelming for some participants, but our staff made sure that everyone had a positive experience," said division director for residential and treatment services


United Way Campaign 2002

As we as a nation grapple with the tragedy and loss on September 11th, let us be mindful of all that we have and of all that we are... and be thankful.

As an agency, we are thankful for our partnership with the United Way. Last year MHASP received an allocation of over \$300,000 from the United Way (and additional monies from the donor option program) to support the myriad of services that we provide to persons in need. This year, our campaign theme is centered around being thankful and moving forward.

Our 2002 United Way Campaign kicked off on Tuesday, October 30th, from 11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. in the 12th floor conference room at 1211 Chestnut Street. Royercomm, Inc., generously provided lunch for the kick-off, and we are thankful to the many other supporters who donated some fabulous prizes for our campaign drawings. The room was packed and all in attendance had a great time.

In 2000, MHASP employees pledged over \$20,000... a 27% increase over 1999. Their generosity and the generosity of our membership and supporters enables us to continue to provide competent and compassionate services to persons in need in the five-county area.

MHASP's donor option number is 00082. Thanks for your continued support! 

Christine Simiriglia.

"Alternatives 2001 will be remembered as one of the very best," said Hikmah Gardiner, a retired MHASP division director and consumer activist who has attended most of the Alternatives conferences. By working together with skilled presenters from around the country and MHASP staff, the Clearinghouse was able to put together an event that, Rogers hopes, "will help consumers work for change at the local, state, and national levels."

—Alan Marzilli

Join Us!

Your participation as a donor to the Mental Health Association of Southeastern Pennsylvania makes a powerful statement of confidence in the Association's programs that change lives for the better in your community.

___ I want to make a gift at the following level:

- ___ Leader... \$5,000 or more
- ___ Partner ... \$1,000 – 4,999
- ___ Sustainer ... \$500 – 999
- ___ Associate ... \$101 – 499
- ___ Friend ... \$10 – 100

Ways to give:

- ___ I have enclosed a check, payable to MHASP, for my total 2002 gift.
- ___ I would like my gift of \$ ___ charged to a credit card.

Signature _____

For all gifts, please provide the following information:

Name _____
 Address _____
 City _____ State _____
 Zip _____
 Phone _____
 E-mail _____
 Date of Birth _____

For those using credit cards:

Visa _____ Mastercard _____
 no. _____ Exp. _____

_____ My company is a matching gift corporation, and I have enclosed the completed form.

Note: Each gift, at \$10 or more, entitles you to membership if you are not already enrolled. Among the benefits of membership are a subscription to "Lines of Communication," MHASP's quarterly newsletter, additional periodic publications and invitations to special Association functions throughout the year.

Printed on recycled paper 

Nonprofit Organization
 U.S. Postage
 PAID
 Philadelphia, PA
 Permit No. 320

LINE OF COMMUNICATION
 MHASP
 1211 Chestnut Street
 11th Floor
 Philadelphia, PA 19107



The Bell of Hope