



The Starry Night Gazette

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What Does *Recovery* Mean to You?

In recent years, **recovery** and **transformation** have been important buzz words in Florida's Department of Children and Families as well as our mental health circles. We decided to ask ourselves about the true meaning of recovery – whether it implies a permanent cure, or if, in fact, it suggests something else. We asked several of our members and here is what they said:

RECOVERY IS LEARNING TO COPE

Recovery means being able to go back to work, socialize with more people and be part of the work-ordered day. It also means being able to have the opportunity to eventually work five days a week. It means staying active. It means getting along with other people. Recovery isn't a cure from mental illness. It's learning to cope in a better way, through work and socializing. That is what recovery means to me! - Jeffrey Albertson



RECOVERY IS COMMUNITY

Recovery is having the chance to meet nice people and that's why I enjoy coming to Vincent House. You see, I'm different and not like most people. Just socializing and talking to people is recovery for me. It's get-

ting out of the house and having a place to go. It's no good to sit at home all day. I'm 69 years old, so at this stage of life, employment is not my goal. Recovery is spending time with people I care about and not isolating. - Theodore Sederlof (Vincent House's self-proclaimed oldest member)



RECOVERY MIGHT BE POSSIBLE

I have often had difficulty with the word *recovery* because after losing so much I felt that I couldn't recover. I chose, instead, to use the word *rebuild* because it made more sense for me in my process. But the longer I participate at Vincent House, the more I come to realize that recovery might be possible. I have gone from feeling *disabled* to feeling *enabled*. I now realize that I can expect more from life than simply reaching stability. At Vincent House, I am learning new skills and making more friends than I ever have in the past. I have had new opportunities, including public speaking engagements. I have had the chance to work in clerical positions in Transitional Employment – and I never did that sort of work before! By being at Clubhouse, I have come to believe that recovery might be for me. - Richard Baker

RECOVERY IS ABOUT WORK

Recovery to me means having strength for what I do in life. It means believing in myself and making goals for a better future. For me, recovery is coming to Vincent House everyday and continuing to make friends. It feels good to be here for each other. Helping in the kitchen gives me a reason to get out of bed in the morning. It gives me the motivation to come here and do things to help out. Basically, Vincent House is about work because work helps me to feel good inside about what I do. - Aimee Hunnell

I DON'T THINK OF MYSELF IN RECOVERY

I have goals to achieve. I don't think the word *recovery* applies to me because I don't have problems with addictions. But, I do have issues of wanting to get out there and have a career for myself. My main goals are college and getting clerical experience. I would love to be a police officer ten years from now. At Vincent House, I like to work in the Leisure (member) Bank because it gives me good experience. There's a lot of networking at Vincent House and that can help me get a job! - Carla McPherson



Recovery is a Journey

By Rand Pierce

There is a saying that I live by: "*Recovery is not a destination, it's the journey.*" That goes for people recovering from addictions as well as people recovering from mental illnesses. The journey ends when a person passes on. Vincent House has been that little resting stool alongside the road. And along the way, I have met life-long friends. Because of my experience here at Vincent House, I have changed the way I understand mental illness. Basically, I am not my illness. What's more,

the illness doesn't control me and I can live a very fulfilling life. It is no longer a death sentence.

When I look at myself and what I have done in the last eight months, I am blown away. I am working a full-time job, I have the respect of my co-workers, I am in the field that I want to be in, I have a stable home (it's the longest I have ever lived in one place in my life), and I even have the car of my dreams – a vintage Firebird. I will soon be off disability and totally self-sufficient. I never thought I'd be able to be off governmental support. Yet that's scary, very scary to me, but in a good, exciting kind of way. I know I have the

support of Vincent House and that reduces the anxiety. It's a giant step. I now have hope in my life and the chance to be happy.



Florida ICCD Clubhouse Expansion Project: First Year Success

During the current fiscal year, ending on June 30, 2007, Vincent House received funding to support the establishment of more ICCD Clubhouses across the State of Florida. Funding was provided by a special Legislative Budget Request and made a wide range of technical support available to interested individuals, mental health agencies, working groups and stakeholders throughout the State. Under the guidance of Dianne and Elliott Steele, William McKeever, and members and staff, Vincent House developed an ICCD Clubhouse Orientation Program custom-made to meet the needs in Florida. The Orientation Program consisted of on-site theoretical and practical learning experiences in one-day overview and one-week sessions. In addition to the formal Orientation Program, Vincent House offered technical assistance, mentoring, and ongoing consultation.

Vincent House supported a total of 15 Florida Counties including members,

staff, and administrators from Sedona House (Polk County), Club Success (Seminole County), Light House (Citrus County), Gainesville Opportunity Center (Alachua County), Hope Club (Hillsborough County), and working groups from Collier, Bay, North Pinellas and Miami-Dade Counties.



Participants from Bay County, North Pinellas County and Hope Club (Tampa) attend a one-week orientation session in May, 2007.

The funding status of the Florida ICCD Clubhouse Expansion Project for the next fiscal year, beginning July 1st, is unclear. Vincent House is actively working to secure funding and ensure the continued success of Florida ICCD Clubhouses.

We Stand Corrected!

Thank you Modern Woodmen of America! Our May Gazette listed their name incorrectly. We apologize for the error. Modern Woodmen of America provided us with a matching fund grant of \$2,500.00. We truly appreciate their generosity which assisted us in reaching our goal. We also received an indoor American Flag and the assistance of Connie Marmaro, Board President Head Start/Early Head Start Child Development and Family Services, Inc. Connie not only assisted us on the first day, she purchased and donated items for our Annual Yard Sale. Thank you Connie and Modern Woodmen of America!

Vincent House is Proud to Welcome Two New Staff Members

We are pleased to welcome two new Clubhouse Staff into the Vincent House community. Both staff bring a wealth of personal and professional experiences. We will be counting on their valuable contribution as Vincent House continues to grow and expand. Bob Canada joins us from here in Pinellas County while David Ulch hails from Michigan.

My name is Bob Canada and I was born and raised in Indiana. I joined the Air Force right after High School and raised two sons in Phoenix, Arizona. I came to Florida in 2001 and changed my career field from Healthcare Finance to Community Services. I have done volunteer work most of my life and found this switch somewhat easy. I totally enjoy Vincent House and feel all my training, certifications, and education have given me the background I need to do a good job. I feel welcomed here and pass that back to our members.



Hello, my name is Dave Ulch. I moved here from Michigan on the 5th of May of this year. I was raised in Lincoln Park, Michigan, just outside of Detroit. I joined the United States Marine Corps in 1979 and retired from the Marines in 1994 as a Gunnery Sergeant. I attended Wayne State University for Social Work and graduated with my Master's Degree in 2005. My last job was as a coordinator with the Turning Point Clubhouse, just outside of Detroit. We had a daily attendance of about 50 members.

I have been married for the past 29 years to my wife, Donna, and we have two grown children. My daughter is a nurse living in Michigan and my son is in the Marines, stationed in North Carolina.

I am glad to be a staff with Vincent House Clubhouse because I see the camaraderie and hard work ethic between staff and members. I am looking forward to meeting everyone and developing great working relationships and friendships that will strengthen the Clubhouse.



Vincent House Members

CELEBRATING RECOVERY THROUGH WORK

during May - 2007

TRANSITIONAL EMPLOYMENT

Jeffrey Albertson	Skate Park
Brian Craver	Skate Park
Larry Haines	Senior Services
Gary Hinkson	Pro-Clean/Raytheon
Carol Jackson	Liberty Lanes
Cindy Kelly	Suncoast Center
Karen Maloof	Tri-Glo/Raytheon
Gayle Marchiniak	Galleria
Ron Ritchie	Tri-Glo/Raytheon
Lisa Sanders	Pro-Clean/Raytheon
Chris Schaer	Skate Park
Allyn Spidella	Tri-Glo/Raytheon
Joe Stabile	Liberty Lanes
Athena Steele	Suncoast Center
Michael Taddeo	Pro-Clean/Raytheon
Ed Wohlford	Tri-Glo/Raytheon
Jackqueline Williams	Skate Park
Judy Wilson	Suncoast Center

Supported & Independent Employment

Susan Alvey	Eileen Jones
Alice Bongiorno	William Kuropatwinski
Nancy Brown	Bonnie Lawniczak
Nicholas Cercone	Philip Noonan
Debbie Cibik	Rand Pierce
Tess Daniels	Bob Pitts
Don DiCarlo	Warren Prince
Jennifer Dickey	Shannon Riley
Eddie Gares	Heidi Rippen
Steven Gregoski III	Beth Schweikert
Art Hallman	Justin Shea
Kim Harrell	Theresa Stabile
Kathleen Hartwell	Terry Taggart
Elizabeth Hoff	George Torrence

Casual Employment

Kerry Birchett
Gerard Caldarise
Christine Dotson
V. Mike Hodges
Aimee Hunnell
John Markle

Continuing Education

Bridgette Elias
Kathleen Hartwell
Brian Rivard
Michael Serkes
Jeff Suzanne

Standard #23:

Clubhouse assists and supports members to secure, sustain, and subsequently to better their employment.

The Happy Bus Driver: Driver's Update

Well, my time is up for the school year. May 18 was my last day of school. I am sorry to be off for the summer, for I'm going to miss my kids. But boy do I need a break. I have been on the job full-time since February. I have been loving everything about being back to work and I know that none of it would have happened without the encouragement I receive from all the folks at Vincent House. Working two Transitional Employment jobs and being on the right combination of medications have changed my life around. If you are willing to come to the Clubhouse and work hard, go to work in a Transitional job, you can accomplish the same - so don't ever give up! There is always hope. Vincent House has given me my life back and I will never be able to repay all the folks here for their help in getting me where I am today.

With all my love and gratitude, Debbie Cibik, the "Happy Bus Driver"



JUNE 2007

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1	SOCIAL 2
					Ginger's Slumgullion <i>Ginger Robbins</i>	Sand Key Park Pier 60 & Picnic <i>Alex Houser</i>
3	4	5	6	7	8	SOCIAL 9
	Baked Chicken <i>Anthony Altieri</i>	Bean Burritos & Nachos	Stuffed Manicotti <i>Barry Lewellen</i> <i>Employment Dinner - Chopped Sirloin with mashed potatoes & veg.</i>	Gyros <i>Garrett Bowen</i>	Robert's Teriyaki Chicken Wings <i>Robert Flexer</i>	Bowling <i>Susan Woodlief</i>
10	11	12	13	14	15	SOCIAL 16
	Spaghetti & Meatballs <i>Mike Hodges, Ron Reiger, Gigi Behar</i>	Grilled Cheese Sandwich & Tomato Soup <i>George Torrence</i>	2-Year Anniversary at New Location!! Steak & Potatoes <i>Del Watson</i>	Alex's Shepherds Pie <i>Ania Zalenski</i>	Ginger's Jumbo Stuffed Potato <i>Pizza and Movie Night 4:45pm - 7:00pm</i>	Heritage Village and Picnic <i>Pat Curtin</i>
17	18	19	20	21	22	SOCIAL 23
	Cuban Sandwich <i>Rodney Strother</i>	Sloppy Joes & Chips	Black Bean Soup & Yellow Rice <i>Employment Dinner - Salmon & baked potatoes</i>	Vincent Burgers Cole Slaw	Fruit Plate Homemade Banana Bread	IN-HOUSE Lunch & Movie <i>Mary Warner, Geri Ruggeri, Justin Shea</i>
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
<i>Richard Morand</i>	Frito Pie	Ham & Cheese Sandwich Chicken Noodle Soup	Eggplant Parmesan <i>Judy Wilson</i>	Ham Scalloped Potatoes <i>Karl Karch, Kay Shakeshaft</i>	Liver & Onions <i>Donald Ackroyd, Leace Hughes</i>	To Be Announced <i>Delon Holmes</i>

Menus are subject to change. Casey's Café offers alternative lunch – call to order before 11:00 A.M.