



The Starry Night Gazette

Vincent House, 4801 78th Avenue
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The Power of Dreams

By Stephen Gregosky and William McKeever

Some dreams come to us while we sleep at night. Other dreams are born from our idealism and a vision of a better world. Some arise over a cup of coffee while we gaze out through a window. No matter where dreams are shaped, we all know that some inspire us more than others. How is it that some dreams come true, while others, no matter how dear they may seem at first, are discarded or forgotten in the *busy-ness* of our lives?

It seems that certain dreams are destined to be fulfilled. But they usually become reality because we decide to do something and act on our inspiration. That means making the effort to actualize a special dream. Vincent House was the cherished dream of our founders, Dianne and Elliott Steele. It became a reality through lots of hard work, dedication, community and statewide support, and a dose of good fortune.

So where does Vincent House go from here? With 500 lifetime members, an average daily attendance approaching 60 people, and members earning a combined \$340,000 per year in paid employment, it'd be a letdown for our membership if we collectively decided to coast into the coming years. Why not challenge ourselves with something beyond the confines of our local community?

Well, we have a big announcement to make: We are fortunate and grateful to have been chosen to host the 15th International Clubhouse Seminar in October 2009. In the Clubhouse world, the chance to host an International Seminar is akin to hosting the Olympics. We are expecting 900 participants from 30 different countries. It is a dream come true for our Clubhouse community - and one of the original dreams of Dianne and Elliott.

15th International Clubhouse Seminar October 24 - 29, 2009



The International Clubhouse Seminar convenes every two years and has been held in such places as Pakistan, Finland, and most recently in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. It is an honor and a privilege to be chosen to host such an event. Vincent House and the ICCD will work closely with the TradeWinds Island Resort for a successful and memorable convention.

The 15th International Clubhouse Seminar will be held at the TradeWinds Island Resort on St. Pete Beach. Participants will include Clubhouse members, families, staff, administrators and Boards of Directors. The Seminar will offer a wide array of learning opportunities that will promote the continued implementation and expansion of the Clubhouse Model for people living with mental illnesses.

Your Vote Counts

Pat Curtin

This year's upcoming election on November 4th is a topic that is on the minds and in the hearts of many individuals. The excitement of the election is alive here at Vincent House. Americans all over this country will have the opportunity to elect the official they feel best represents them.



votes and give their valued opinion in the Democratic process. We have explained to our members that it is important to not only go out and vote but to be informed voters. Here at Vincent House we have had house meetings where we provided information from both of the major party candidates. NAMI had prepared a questionnaire for the candidates regarding their thoughts about the issues of survivors like us who suffer with psychiatric symptoms.

Some people vote for the person their friends are voting for. Some vote for the person who looks or talks the best. Some vote because of sex or racial or religious reasons. Some just vote for one party or the other. I have looked at both candidates for president. And I will con-

tinue to research their positions

On October 3rd, a representative from the League of Women Voters came to Vincent House to teach our members how to use the new voter ballots and assist them to register to vote. This was part of Vincent House's effort to have as many educated voters from our membership as possible.

Voting is a right and a responsibility. Voting only for what will help me personally is irresponsible especially at the Federal level. Voting is for our country. Thought needs to be given to the biggest picture. My vote is not only about one issue that affects me. It is a question of the mind and the heart.

"My name is Pat Curtin, and I endorse this message."

A Young Adult's Travel Diary: Vincent House Receives a National Award in Indianapolis

By Brittaney Spaulding

1:10 pm Thursday, October 16: I am at Tampa Airport with Elliott and Dianne Steele. We are waiting to depart to Indianapolis. Vincent House will be receiving the prestigious 2008 **Lilly Reintegration Award for Advocacy**. This will be my first flight and naturally, I am very nervous and excited about the trip.

4:30 pm later that day: We check into the Omni Severin Hotel. This is a beautiful Hotel. The view from my hotel room window is amazing. I see part of the downtown area and the front of the Lucas Oil Stadium. I believe it's where the Colts play.

6:00 pm that evening: We enjoyed a cocktail reception in the Fisher ballroom. There were hugs and hellos, plus many business cards passed out while everyone mingled. The room was gorgeous. Food for the dinner lined the walls, including salads, desserts and everything in between. We were able to special order any type of pasta as they sautéed it right in front of us, with flames coming across the pan. I met Patty Duke that night. Dianne introduced me to her and we talked for about 10 minutes. After she left, Dianne informed me what a celebrity and advocate she is. Unfortunately for me, her show was a little before my time!

7:15 am Friday, October 17: After a wonderful night's sleep in the Hotel, we enjoyed a very nice breakfast served in the Fisher ballroom.

8:00 am: We attended three interesting workshops. The first one was on Public Relations, moderated by Katrina Gay, of the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI). I was able to meet Katrina the night before. The second workshop was on Fundraising. It was pre-



From left to right: Ralph Aquila, M.D., Chair of Lilly Reintegration Awards Judging Panel; Dianne and Elliott Steele, Vincent House; Brittaney Spaulding, Vincent House; Enrique Conterno, Vice President, Eli Lilly and Company

sented by Christopher Chantson from Thresholds. The third workshop, on Transitional Employment, was presented by Ralph Bilby, from the International Center for Clubhouse Development (ICCD). A few months ago I met Ralph at Vincent House and even gave him a tour of our Clubhouse. It was interesting to hear about Transitional Employment from a different side.

Lunch was followed by a panel, "From Wow to How," hosted by Patty Duke and Ralph Aquila, M.D. Here the award winners, including Elliott Steele, answered questions from Patty Duke and Dr. Aquila. They sat on two couches, on stage, and answered each question perfectly and with a touch of humor, especially Patty Duke.

6:00 pm: That evening we left for the Columbia Club. We boarded large tour busses and rode through downtown Indianapolis. The city was great with so many things to see in such a short drive. The weather was cool and refreshing.

The trees are turning a beautiful color - I almost forgot that trees did that. The buildings were old and picture perfect in the night light. The cocktail reception was held at the Columbia Club in the 10th floor foyer. Through the window, you could see the circle, fountain, and statue.

Dinner was grand and was followed by the 2008 Lilly Reintegration Awards. The first award category was the Treatment Team Category, with Vincent House receiving the first place award for Advocacy. I had the honor of accepting this award with Elliott Steele on behalf of Vincent House. Elliott spoke briefly and introduced me next. I was nervous as I walked up to accept the award. I think what I said was very appropriate and short. I believe this as everyone told me later how well I did in what I said. I had the award in my hands when I gave my speech. I handed it back to Elliott because I was afraid I might drop the beautiful award given to Vincent House.



Elliott Steele watches as Brittaney Spaulding gives the Reintegration Award acceptance speech.

5:00 am Saturday, October 18: We headed to the airport to come home. The trip was an experience I will never forget.

Vincent House Welcomes New Staff Member

By Laia Longo



I am delighted to be here at Vincent House. I feel very fortunate to be part of such a supportive and hard working community. Thank you to everyone for making me feel so welcomed. I was born in Asheville, North Carolina and grew up in Tallahassee, Florida. I studied Anthropology and Political Science at the University of Florida and after graduating moved to Spain to continue my studies in Anthropology at the Universitat Autònoma d'Barcelona. During my first year in Spain, I met my husband Marco while doing a hiking trail across Northern

Spain called EL Camino de Santiago. I stayed in Spain several more years working as an English teacher. I am happy to be back in Florida in beautiful Pinellas County and couldn't be happier to be part of Vincent House. You guys are great!

Interested in seeing Vincent House?

Choose from any of the following dates:

Wed, Nov. 12: 10-11 am
Wed, Dec. 10: 10-11 am

A Vincent House Showcase can be a life changing experience!

This is our current **WISH LIST:**

- Clothing dressers
- Commercial Walk-In Cooler
- Part-time jobs for our members
- Color Laser Printer
- Upgraded Camcorder & Microphone
- Copy Paper



Pickin' Myself Back Up and Startin' All Over Again



There are framed proverbs on many walls of Vincent House to inspire us. One that caught my eye recently was one that talked about starting over from a failure - and learning from a failure. I can relate to this proverb.

After having much success at SeashellBooks.com, I went on to my second Transitional Employment job that was at Suncoast Center for Community Mental Health. It was at this job that I realized - even though I was successful previously - that I needed to adjust my attitude towards certain job responsibilities.

The responsibilities I am writing about are attendance and punctuality. I realized that I could not have a "college class" attitude towards a decent paying job, where every other employee is required to punch in on time and leave on time. Sick days kept to an extreme minimum. In these two areas, I failed. However, Vincent House still welcomed me back to the Clubhouse with open arms. I acknowledged my shortcomings. I learned from the mistake, and now I am

an active volunteer member at Vincent House. My goal is to show up to Vincent House at the same time every day, and leave at the same time every day. With these newly acquired skills along with my pre-existing job performance and conscientiousness, I am confident that I will have a job again someday.

One of my favorite musicians once sang "...but I'm 'gonna pick myself up, dust myself off, and start all over again...." I cannot agree more. Learning from my mistakes is a success in itself.

TRANSITIONAL EMPLOYMENT

- Dimitri Byelov
- Adam Franz
- Stephanie Freskos
- Debra Gaide
- Larry Haines
- Brian Howe
- Alex Houser
- Carol Jackson
- Brittaney Spaulding
- Athena Steele
- Michael Taddeo
- Deborah Wilson
- Ed Wohlford
- Abraham Youssouf

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- Senior Services
- Liberty Lanes
- SCC-FACT Team
- Suncoast Center
- Suncoast Center
- Tri-Glo/Raytheon
- Galleria Plumbing

Supported & Independent Employment

- Michael Ballenger
- William Champion
- Ursula Clarke
- Debbie Cibik
- Jennifer Dickey
- Tess Daniels
- Eddie Gares
- Dennis Hill
- Brian Howe
- Bonnie Lawniczak
- Brian Lutz
- Alvis Mills
- Ralph Morphew
- Philip Noonan
- Angela Parker
- Michael Ralston
- David Reed
- Shannon Riley
- Heidi Rippen
- Ron Ritchie
- Chris Schaer
- Justin Shea
- Joe Stabile
- Jason Sulimay
- Terry Taggart
- Judy Wilson
- Irrigation Specialist
- Recovery Specialist
- Retail Sales
- Driver
- House Cleaning
- Housekeeping
- Recovery Coach
- Theater Usher
- Prep Technician
- Machine Operator
- Food Preparation
- Recovery Coach
- Food Service
- Maintenance
- Transportation
- Transportation
- Transcriptionist
- Recovery Coach
- Service Clerk
- Transportation
- Telemarketer
- Recreation Leader
- Floor Maintenance
- Receptionist
- Pet Groomer
- Transportation

Continuing Education in 2008

- Michael Ballenger
- Latoya Johnson
- Bob Krehbiel
- Franklin La Torre
- Gayle Marchiniak
- Aloysia McPherson
- Shawna Rylander
- Steve Scofield
- Justin Shea
- Jason Sulimay

"My job at SeashellBooks.com made it possible for me to add to my family...Lilly, my little Italian Greyhound, fills each day with boundless joy." - Stephanie Freskos

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November 2008

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						1
					Chef's Surprise	Disc Golf Irma Diaz Luis Gonzalez
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Kyle C. Thompson	Sloppy Joes & Chips Kevin McDonough	Curried Veggies & Basmati Rice Donna Engles	Buffalo Wings & Pasta Salad Employment Dinner Steak Fajitas w/ Yellow rice	Taco Salad Elizabeth Cook Vincent Michael Hodges Peggy Parker	Chef's Surprise Stephanie Freskos	Hiking/Picnic Boyd Hill Park
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
	Grilled Pork Chops & Mashed Potatoes Leslie Day	Egg Salad & Sprout Sandwich with Tomato and Rice Soup Dimitri Byelov	Grilled Tilapia with Tater Tots James M. McCaa	Tess's Chicken Alfredo with Veggies Sally Fullerton Gary Hinkson Gary S. Sinner	Chef's Surprise Veronica Coxhead Pizza & Movie \$1.50 "Cool Runnings"	Ellenton Mall
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
Roberta Hirsh	Corned Beef & Cabbage	Jeff's Macaroni & Cheese William Whidden	Chicken Nuggets Charles Cox Employment Dinner Shrimp Fried rice w/ Egg drop soup	Spinach Stuffed Shells Jackie Cunningham	Chef's Surprise Erik J. Koskela	Fort de Soto Beach Trip & Picnic William Olmstead
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
Mark Guy Jane Terrin	Ham & Red Potatoes Roger Brooks	Boca Burgers with Chips Ryan Martino	Chicken Noodle Soup with Grilled Cheese Curtis Mitchell	Happy Thanksgiving	Chef's Surprise	Veterinary Clinic
30						

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