



WESTCARE EXPRESS



The WestCare Foundation Employee Newsletter

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July 2011

Say Cheese!

Submitted by WestCare Florida Staff

- This photograph represents:
- A. PowerBall winners celebrating? (Mike Lavin has the ticket in his mouth).
 - B. The 2011-2012 cast of "Glee?"
 - C. Frank Rabbito's Florida/Caribbean Leadership Teams at a 2-day meeting in Miami?



FLORIDA COMMUNITY COUNCIL SPOTLIGHT Guidance/Care Center Honors Community Council Member Janine Gedmin

By Patricia-Ann Unferth – Executive Assistant

The Guidance/Care Center's Community Council honored Janine Gedmin for her many years of service to the agency and Monroe County children and families.

Even as she was honored, she stated "Children are often voiceless victims, silent in the face of their oppression and abuse. If there is one thing I can ask, it is that you keep on doing it!"

We wish Janine well on her new journey in retirement and thank her again for her many years of service to GCC and to our Florida Keys community.



UPLIFTING THE HUMAN SPIRIT

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July is National Blueberry Month!

“Uplifting the Human Spirit” in Key West

By Larry Prescott – Site Director/ KOTS initiative

All of us are aware of “Uplifting the Human Spirit” as WestCare’s motto and our shared goal not only for clients, but for staff as well. Through its many programs, WestCare staff exemplifies this commitment every day in a variety of ways and settings. We highlight some of those ways in this issue with the work of Larry Prescott and Daniela Menardi of WestCare’s Guidance Care Center in Key West. Larry is our Site Director in Key West, as well as the Director of the Addiction Studies Program at Florida Keys Community College. Daniela is a therapist and Certified Yoga Instructor and practitioner at GCC, as well as having a private practice. In addition to their clinical work, they are the sole instructors for the Addiction Studies Program. Since 1994, they have helped over 100 students attain their Certificate in Addiction Studies and become certified addictions and mental health professionals. The Program consists of 39 college credits with coursework in substance abuse and mental health with students attending classes on weekends. “I never imagined that when we started the Program that it would become so popular and reach so many people. It has been wonderful to see the community support, not only from the College, but agencies such as WestCare,” said Larry. “It is difficult to find a human services agency in the Keys that does not employ at least one of our graduates.” Daniela agreed and related, “For me, the ability to bring real clinical experiences into the classroom is

invaluable in terms of reminding students that we are talking about human lives and that the work they will be doing will be life-saving for many. I also find that teaching these courses helps me to stay on top of the latest developments and research in the field. I really enjoy teaching.”

In addition to his other duties, Larry is also on the Mayor’s Committee for Homelessness in Key West and supervises GCC/WestCare’s KOTS initiative. KOTS, Keys Overnight Temporary Shelter, is a program in conjunction with the Florida Keys Outreach Coalition, where homeless individuals in the Lower Keys spend the night from 7pm until 7am. On any given night, there are approximately 150 homeless adults who receive help from GCC in attaining identification, birth certificates, mental health and substance abuse counseling, housing placement, assessments, medical referrals, and psychiatric services. “I was really surprised to see so many individuals who were previously self sufficient who, because of the economy, have now become homeless. These are people who never imagined that they would be in this type of situation. Being able to help them help themselves with the services we provide is extremely rewarding.” “The KOTS Program has shown me that when we are *Uplifting the Human Spirit* of another; we are also uplifting our own.”

Florida



Flower of the Month: Delphinium



With its lush, dolphin-shaped flowers, the aptly named delphinium – or larkspur – symbolizes an open heart and ardent attachment. Also signifying a feeling of lightness and levity, the gentle hues and refreshing fragrance of this summer birth flower give it a refreshing and distinctive natural beauty.



WestCare Makes an Early Impression in the Volunteer State

By Leslie Wilson – *Coordinator-Rural Health Network*

WestCare was invited to Hancock County in 2009 by the Hancock County Substance Abuse Coalition in an effort to help address the community's increasing need for substance abuse prevention. Through collaboration with local agencies, the Hancock County Rural Health Network was formed and awarded a one-year HRSA Network Planning Grant that began in early 2010. Since that time, the Network has formed a Board of Directors, created and signed a Memorandum of Understanding, and WestCare Tennessee has been formed as an independent affiliate of WestCare Foundation, Inc. Some projects completed throughout the planning grant have included a Community Needs Assessment, a Program Mapping Project, an Information Technology Readiness Assessment, and a Network Sustainability Plan.

Under the leadership of WestCare's Jenifer Noland as Project Director, and Leslie Wilson as Network Coordinator, the Hancock County Rural Health Network has been awarded a three-year HRSA Network

Development Grant to continue the work of the planning grant. Over the next three years, we plan to open a Community Involvement Center to offer licensed outpatient treatment services and ancillary educational services to the community. We will further integrate substance abuse treatment services into primary care by use of Tele-Health services. Additional programs and training that are planned for network members include Mental Health First Aid and use of the SBIRT (Screening, Brief Intervention, Referral, and Treatment). A lot of exciting things are happening in Tennessee!

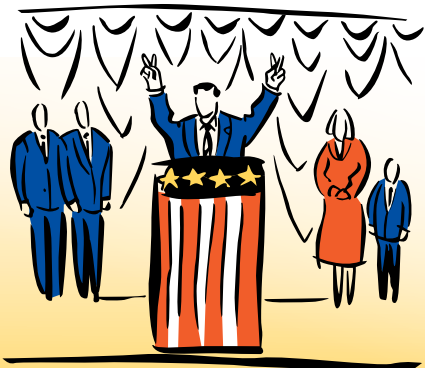


Tennessee Governor Signs "I Hate Meth Act"

By Join Together Staff – *June 9, 2011*

Tennessee Governor Bill Haslam has signed the "I Hate Meth Act," which classifies preparing methamphetamine in front of a child as aggravated child endangerment.

The new law also bans pharmacies from selling more than 3.6 grams of pseudoephedrine per day or more than 9 grams per 30-day period to one person, unless he or she has a valid prescription,



... The Tennessean reports. Pseudoephedrine, a key ingredient in many cold medicines, is also used to make meth.

More than 2,000 meth labs were shut down in Tennessee last year and 484 children were removed from homes in meth-related incidents, the newspaper reports.

Currently the state requires consumers to show a photo ID and give their name and address to a pharmacist before purchasing pseudoephedrine. That practice will continue under the new law.

Pharmacies now log information on pseudoephedrine into their computer systems and there is a lag of six to eight weeks before law enforcement receives the information. Under the new law, pharmacies will have to log information on pseudoephedrine sales at least daily to the Tennessee Meth Information System database.



HAPPY BIRTHDAY AMERICA!

On July 4, 1776, we claimed our independence from Britain and Democracy was born. Every day, thousands leave their homeland to come to the "land of the free and the home of the brave" so they can begin their American Dream.

The United States is truly a diverse nation made up of dynamic people. Each year on July 4, Americans celebrate that freedom and independence with barbecues, picnics,



and family gatherings. Through the Internet, we are learning about and communicating with people of different nations, with different languages and different races throughout the world. Bringing the world closer with understanding and knowledge can only benefit all nations. We invite all nations to celebrate with Americans online this Fourth of July. Happy Birthday, America!



TIME TO HEAT UP THE GRILL!

Rib Eye with Garlic-Thyme Marinade

Courtesy: marthastewart.com

You can also try this recipe with different cuts of meat: strip, T-bone, porterhouse, or tenderloin.

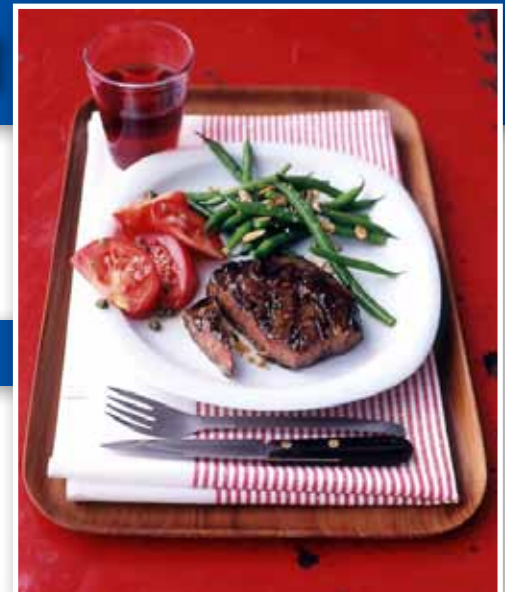
Prep Time 10 minutes • Total Time 1 hour 30 minutes • Yield Serves

Ingredients

- 2 tablespoons olive oil, plus more for grates
- 6 cloves garlic, smashed and coarsely chopped
- 2 tablespoons (about 15 sprigs) fresh thyme leaves
- 2 rib-eye steaks, each about 1 pound and about 1 1/2 inches thick
- Coarse salt and pepper

Directions

1. In a medium baking dish (or bowl), combine oil, garlic, and thyme. Add steaks, and turn to coat. Cover dish and refrigerate; let marinate, turning steaks occasionally, at least 1 hour and up to overnight.
2. Heat grill to medium-high; lightly oil grates. Remove steak from marinade, letting excess drip off (discard marinade); season with salt and pepper. Place steak on grill; cover. Cook, turning once, until meat is desired doneness, 12 to 16 minutes for medium-rare.



Arizona Hosts Veterans Roundtable Workshop

By Tracy Stevens – Area Manager

On Saturday, June 18th, WestCare Arizona hosted a Veterans Roundtable Workshop at Kingman Regional Medical Center in Kingman, AZ. Discussions were spearheaded by CEO Dick Steinberg and SR VP of Veterans Services, Judi Kosterman. There were over a dozen veterans in attendance including: representatives from WestCare Foundation, WC Arizona's Community Council, the Commander of the local Korean War Veterans Association, a young Army vet from Operation Iraqi Freedom, a female Navy vet, and three veterans who currently work for the Arizona State Department of Veterans Services offices in Kingman and Lake Havasu.

The group held a lively discussion centered on what services for veterans are lacking in the Tri-State area, as well as provided input as to what they perceive are needed priority services. Everyone at the table agreed that there is a need for housing for male vets, however accommodating female vets with children/families is also a very big issue.

Arizona currently has a vacant 10,000 sq. foot facility in Mohave Valley which formerly housed homeless and runaway youth. The Colorado River Regional Youth Shelter (CRRYS) suspended services in 2009 due to State funding cuts and a shift in the State's philosophy determining to house children

in foster homes rather than in group shelter home-like environments. Arizona has been looking at different options and programming for the facility and began pursuing and building relationships with various local veterans organizations over 9-months ago. The vacant CRRYS facility would seem to be an ideal location and setting for some type of veterans housing and services.

After watching a short video produced by the organization, "Grace After Fire," and discussion about the different needs of female and male vets, a consensus of the workshop attendees felt the CRRYS location would be ideal for female veterans services, particularly women and children/families. A technical assistance committee was identified and that committee will meet in the next 2-3 weeks at the CRRYS facility and begin formulating a plan to move forward. Arizona is hoping that our goal to bring veterans services to the Tri-State area with the support, input and dedication from Veteran's organizations will become a reality in the near future.

WestCare Arizona holds the belief that is true across the WestCare world that, together, we can make a difference in the lives of others including our veterans who have made a difference for all of us!

Arizona



▲ (Left to right) Foundation Board member Bill Porter, WC consultant Frank Lemus, Sr. VP Maurice Lee, CEO Dick Steinberg, and Alicia Porome-Arizona Dept. of Veterans Services.



▲ Mark Doyle-Arizona Dept. of Veterans Services, and Judi Kosterman-WestCare Sr. VP.



▲ Bill Ekstrom-WC Arizona Board Chair, and Commander William Gilfoil-Korean War Veterans Association.

Officials Say Reformulation of OxyContin Has Increased Interest in Abuse of Other Narcotics

By Join Together Staff – June 16, 2011

Now that OxyContin has been reformulated to make the opioid harder to snort, inject or chew, The New York Times reports that demand for other narcotics has increased.

OxyContin is designed to slowly release its main ingredient, oxycodone, over the course of 12 hours. But after it was introduced in 1996, people began chewing, or crushing and then snorting or injecting the drug, to get an instant high. Some areas of the country have seen high rates of OxyContin addiction, and abuse of the drug has

led to many overdose deaths.

Now that the maker of the drug, Purdue Pharma, has made it more difficult to abuse, demand has risen for pure oxycodone pills in a 30-milligram dose, according to the article. Another time-release painkiller, Opana, is also becoming more popular as a drug of abuse. Police and rehab centers also report a sharp rise in heroin use.

While the old formulation of OxyContin sold for as much as \$80 per 80-milligram pill on the street, a 30-milligram tablet of oxycodone sells for

\$20 to \$30, the article states.

The Food and Drug Administration is requiring Purdue Pharma to conduct clinical trials of the new version of OxyContin, called OxyContin OP, before the company can say that it is less prone to abuse.



Prevention Coalition and High School Present: Boulder City Behind the Scenes

By Polly Keene – *Prevention Specialist and*
Alyson Martinez – *Coordinator*
Community Involvement Center, WestCare Nevada

Nevada

▼ Jermaine Wroten-Outreach Worker, and
Polly Keene-Prevention Specialist

In the beginning of this year, Boulder City High School administration asked Nevada Communities Prevention Coalition (NCPC) to meet with some of their students to find out what challenges they face in their school, at home and in their community. As representatives of NCPC, Polly Keene, Community Involvement Center's Prevention Specialist and Jermaine Wroten, Community Involvement Center's Outreach Worker, set up a time to meet twice a month during school hours with a group of 10 students who were selected by the staff. These students all had diverse lifestyles in and out of school. As a result, the Boulder City Breakfast Club (BCBC) was formed.

By the end of the second BCBC meeting, everyone in attendance came to the same conclusion: that they did not have to gripe about problems and challenges that they face, instead they could do something about them. They realized they would also need the support of their parents. To have the parents as a part of the solution, first they would have to understand the problem. From that, Boulder City Behind the Scenes was developed as a night when students would educate their parents.

The four subjects that the BCBC chose to present on were: Alcohol & Partying, Prescription

and Illicit Substances, Marijuana, and Discrimination. The presentations were completely researched and developed by the Boulder City Breakfast Club. In addition to the subjects listed above, they also initiated a school-wide project where they gave each student, in every English class, a slip of paper that read, "If you only knew me, you would know . . ." The idea was to get kids to tell their parents, anonymously, what they could not tell them in person. There were some riveting responses to the "If you only knew me, you would know . . ." project and many of the responses were read on parent night. One in particular read, "If you really knew me, you would know that most nights I cry myself to sleep because my father drinks and is always angry." It was an enlightening and humbling night for all who attended.

The BCBC has decided to continue their work in the 2011-2012 school year and to increase the size and diversity of the group. It should prove to be an interesting school year as they develop more information to teach their parents and the community.



Girls with ADHD More Likely Than Boys to Abuse Alcohol or Drugs

By Join Together Staff – *June 14, 2011*

A new study suggests that girls with attention-deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) are more likely than boys with ADHD to abuse drugs and alcohol.

UPI reports that the Finnish study included 1,545 teens, and found that ADHD symptoms were less common among girls than among boys. Among girls, but not boys, having ADHD symptoms at age 11 or 12 was a significant predictor of alcohol abuse and dependence and

illegal drug use at age 14.

By age 17 ½, parents' reports of teens' inattentiveness and hyperactivity were significant predictors of frequent alcohol use in both boys and girls, but the findings were more predictive in girls.

The study was presented this week at the symposium of European Society for Child and Adolescent Psychiatry in Helsinki, Finland by researchers at the University of Helsinki and University of Jyväskylä, Finland.



Taking a Minute to “Check In” with Kathy Gubbins

By Charlene Hamann – *Recreation Therapist*

Today we “Check In” with WestCare Sheridan’s Kathy Gubbins to welcome her as the new clinical manager. Kathy comes to the WestCare family with a variety of clinical experience. With a solid background in counseling psychology, and thinking, as many do when we all start out, that she would be working with children, Kathy never went that route. Instead, she focused her work in the community mental health area with the belief that services should be open to all, not only to the ones who could afford it or to the ones with healthcare benefits. Kathy especially enjoyed working with the chronically mentally ill population. She believes in helping people be the best they can be.

From the community mental health sector, Kathy went from counselor to manager to supervisor and, finally, to director of a mental health center for 18 suburbs in western Cook County. She then moved on to Safer Foundation and was the director for the SCC project statewide.

Kathy was responsible for bringing the job fair into the prison. Kathy then left Safer and SCC for a less stressful job in order to spend time with an ailing parent. Later, she returned to the stressful job duties at Behavior Interventions, Inc. (B.I.), running two of their reporting centers in Inglewood and Chicago Heights. Finally Kathy made her way to Sheridan CC again, this time, as West Care’s

clinical manager. Kathy knew that SCC and the program here is so unique and have such a nationwide impact, she wanted to return. “I literally think we are making history here and I wanted to be part of that again,” she said enthusiastically.

Kathy is an LCPC (Licensed Clinical Professional Counselor) and has also served as a chairman for the homeless coalition for west Cook County. She volunteered her time in college on a suicide hotline, which originally directed her toward the counseling field. Some other areas that round out Kathy’s non-work life include golf (although she says she “isn’t good at it”). She enjoys participating in the game a couple of times per week. She also loves to read mystery novels and is looking to replace the loss of an 18-year-old Labrador with a dog that resembles the one in the “Caesar” dog food commercial.

An odd fact Kathy shared was that when she was 5 years old she and her family endured a “Nor’easter Hurricane.” During this storm, huge trees in both the front and back yards were threatened. The front yard tree fell on the house, narrowly missing Kathy and her family. Luckily, all survived the horrible storm. A funny fact about Kathy is . . . well, Kathy says she finds it funny that she can’t think of a funny fact about her!

We also learned that Kathy joined the work force

in 8th grade putting together floral arrangements for a local florist and also making pizzas for the neighborhood pizza parlor. We want to welcome Kathy to our Sheridan WestCare team as her dedication to this field, expertise and new ideas are truly going to be a wonderful and much appreciated asset.

Illinois



▲
Kathy Gubbins



▲
Left to right: Denise Schultz, Lauren Schmidt, Stephanie Wright, Amanda Stotler

Immersion Training at Sheridan

By Charlene Hamann – *Recreation Therapist*

Recently, some of the substance abuse counselors at WestCare Sheridan participated in a week-long, immersion training. Taking a minute to ask about areas they found to be most helpful, how they plan to apply them to their groups and their overall experience, here is what a few had to say:

Amanda Stotler: It helped me to see exactly how the AM and PM groups were run. I have brought that knowledge back and shared it with the supervisor and have made some suggestions on how to change a few things during those meetings. I also gained much knowledge on encounters and have brought that knowledge back as well and try to apply it to my encounter groups. I also learned about feedback and how it can be used in a constructive way and a new way to encounter someone and then give them positive feedback at the end of the encounter. Finally, I learned to redirect clients more effectively if they are sub-grouping or getting off topic.

Lauren Schmidt: Some of the information that I found to be the most helpful included different concepts that were brought into my awareness, for example: “When there is more of something I don’t want to hear, it is probably something I need to take a look at.” That is something that can be used in



Immersion Training at Sheridan *Continued from page 7*

encounter groups as some clients struggle with looking at their own negative behavior due to denial. It was beneficial to learn about better ways of explaining to clients the different reasons for encounters, pull-ups, etc. so they can turn it around and look at it with situations that may come about once released. In society, they would not sit face to face in a chair, but they can confront someone on their negative behavior and express their feelings by being assertive versus physical. I also found it helpful to discuss when there is no confrontation, there is no change, because a person's behavior is not being brought into their awareness. Therefore, they believe they are getting away with it and then will continue to do the same behavior. It was helpful to learn that no feedback nor dialogue is an effective way to teach clients how to handle emotions and not react on impulse. A person needs to focus on the action to give versus focusing on the outcome. I learned a lot from the process groups that were held in the training and the different areas that can be addressed with clients about their behavior. That is what we are here for . . . to help bring about change in our clients.

Denise Schultz: I would like to say that I was completely astonished by this training! I was immersed completely in a role of a therapeutic community. Everyone who enters into Sheridan as an employee should be required to be a part of this training. It clearly is an eye opener to the therapeutic community. It was of great assistance to me to better understand the roles of individuals of the TC as well as the functions and responsibilities of each individual. This is a must-do experience! It was awesome to see the transformation of each one of my peers as well as myself! There are simply no words to describe my experience; it's just one you must be a part of!

Stephanie Wright: I was truly grateful to be a part of a very powerful experience! For me, it was a spiritual week not only professionally, but personally as well. I love the TC process. To be among my peers and to be a part of what our clients go through was very moving!

We also asked the counselors to describe what it means to them to be a substance abuse counselor in a TC.)

Amanda: The week-long training helped me to see there is no perfect counselor, but to take advice and knowledge from each counselor and apply it where I can. Being a sound counselor in a TC has many challenges that have come my way. It is great to see the smile on a client's face when they get it, whatever "it" is that we are talking about.

Lauren: My experience here so far at SCC has been good. I have learned a lot that will help me grow as a counselor in this field. It was an adjustment coming from being a therapist in an outpatient setting to a prison (TC) setting, having to hold clients accountable for their actions and give learning experiences. That was the toughest challenge for me, as I did not have to do that as a counselor in an outpatient setting. My experiences, leading up to my working in this field in a TC, were doing outpatient mental health and substance abuse treatment and realizing that I wanted to work more in the field of addiction. Also, criminal thinking is always something that has interested me and is something that, I have said since high school, I wanted to work with.

Denise: My background – My journey began at SCC three years and three months ago. Before coming to SCC I worked at a large company in the IT Dept. for 13 years. I had many roles within this

Illinois



company, including being the leader of a crew of 7. And, it was during this time, that I began my volunteer work in our surrounding communities with low-cost food programs, providing meals and clothing, working at the homeless shelters, assisting in the domestic violence shelters, as well as counseling those in need. After several years of volunteering services, this was a key focus for me and I soon knew this focus was where my heart truly was and changed careers.

Stephanie: I got into this field to be of service and to plant a seed of hope that change is possible, if you're willing. I have been in recovery for many years and the biggest piece of my foundation of long-term recovery was early on, through the impact of my counselor, who gave me three gifts which I try to pass on to my clients: (1) She did not judge me, (2) She was not afraid of my anger, and (3) She believed in me. So, for me, I continue to show up, do my best, and pass on what was so graciously given to me! I am thankful to have the opportunity to "Uplift the Human Spirit" and see lives transforming and generations being altered and changed because one person had the courage to take the risk and change!

Thought for the Month:

"The problems of the world cannot possibly be solved by skeptics or cynics whose horizons are limited by obvious realities. We need men and women who can dream of things that never were."

– John F. Kennedy, 35th President of the USA



“From the Penthouse to the Outhouse,” a Former NBA Player Tells WC Clients His Own Story of Heartache and Hope

By John Wallace – Express Editor

Chris Herren has lived a dream . . . and a nightmare.

Once the subject of a book and a movie about his storybook teenage years as a pot-smoking basketball star in New England, Chris Herren has a 20-year rollercoaster saga to relate. And he did so to WestCare clients at our residential treatment facility in Fresno.

From the onset, he connected solidly with his audience: He had done time. He was tatted up. He had been hooked on oxycontin, heroin, crystal meth. And his message of courage and hope brought tears to many a client long hardened by the scourge of drugs.

Chris Herren laughs and cries with the TC audience, uses street talk, and is allowed into their circle. He tells of playing basketball at Fresno State, then the Denver Nuggets, then the Boston Celtics. Making a half-million dollars a year. And getting stoned every day. Life was wonderful, in Chris' world. Until it collapsed.

An injury ended his NBA career and forced him to take his talents to Europe to find his paycheck . . . and his drugs. Soon, his family's bank account (he had a wife and small children) dwindled to nothing. He quit basketball. But not

Oxy, getting doctors' prescriptions for his many 'injuries.'

At some point, after several attempts at rehab, Chris found his way to a Therapeutic Community near his Rhode Island home. And the counselor there said: "Chris, don't ever talk to your wife or children again. You are ruining their lives. Be a man and allow them to be free from you." It was a wake-up that he had never experienced.

He has been clean and sober since December 2008. Yet he understands what everyone in recovery knows: It is day by day, breath by breath. And Chris Herren stands tall in the eyes of his family, his God, his community, his new friends at WestCare, and . . . most of all . . . himself.

(Editor's note: I was a big fan of Chris Herren when he played for Jerry Tarkanian at Fresno State in the late 1990's. When I heard him on a national radio show talking about his new book, "Basketball Junkie," I knew I had to get him back to Fresno. So, I got a hold of him through Facebook and he quickly accepted the invitation to return to the city where he is still adulated as a man who faced up to his issues. His visit to our residential facility was followed by another presentation the next day at a local church. It was a magical time of connectivity, love and support.)

Former basketball star Chris Herren addresses men and women at Fresno's residential campus. A crew from ESPN recorded his visit for a documentary.

An audience, young and old, were mesmerized at a local church where Chris Herren spoke.

California



Herren signs autographs for a his new WestCare friends.



Long-time friends John Wallace and Chris Herren at the WestCare-sponsored public event.



SJVV Reaching Out to Veterans in Tent City

By Vicente Garcia – SJVV Case Manager

According to The Department of Veteran Services, when the war in Vietnam washed up the first wave of veterans in need of shelter -- the Department of Veteran Affairs had no homeless programs at all. While today, they offer services in every state. Still, as many as 275,000 veterans will likely sleep out in the cold tonight. Why weren't all the lessons of Vietnam learned this time?

The staff at San Joaquin Valley Veterans recently hit the streets of Fresno to reach out to the homeless veterans who reside in and around Tent City, located in West Fresno. NAS Lemoore and SJVV have been actively working together to collect donations ranging from children's clothes, electronics, furniture, toys, and shoes. SJVV staff has also stepped up its efforts to conduct continuous outreach in order to spread the word of Veteran services within SJVV and the Greater Fresno area. Attending Veteran resource fairs, public speaking engagements have been among the key elements in the success of SJVV thus far. San Joaquin Valley Veterans serves over 400 Veterans on a monthly basis offering a variety of resources, programs, and benefits which are in high demand with our homeless veteran population.

On June 2, Vince Cummings, Shavon Parker, and Vince Garcia conducted outreach in hopes of providing and informing the veterans of services available to them. Handing out the donations is a small but important first step in building the rapport with veterans who are in need of our services.

"Most of the veterans that we're seeing have a mental health and a substance abuse problem," said Vince Garcia, Case Manager at SJVV. "Those problems are the underlying factors and being connected with WestCare we are able to provide the first step to a new life."

SJVV staff has recently dedicated its efforts to our homeless veterans. Shavon Parker the new Case manager at "Home Front" has hit the ground running and is striving to fill the beds available at the women's home. Patricia Dunn, the Case Manager for the Homeless Prevention Rapid- rehousing Program (HPRP) continues to house veterans at a steady rate, while the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) case managers continue to provide education and job readiness training to its veterans.



California

▲
SJVV Case Workers Vince Garcia and Vince Cummings with Home Front Case Manager Shavon Parker

Note: If you are ready and willing to get involved or want to make any sort of donation, please contact SJVV staff at (559)255-8838, or by email vicente.garcia@westcare.com. This September the SJVV staff is teaming up with local veterans organizations as it prepares for our Central Valley Stand Down.)

Army Takes Steps to Curb Prescription Drug Abuse

Courtesy: jointogether@drugfree.org

Following a 2010 report on health promotion, risk reduction and suicide prevention in the Army that cites prescription drug abuse as a growing issue, the Army is making changes to reduce the misuse of prescription pain medications.

Prescription drug abuse in the military mirrors a growing trend in the country as a whole, but soldiers may have specific job-related reasons to start using prescription painkillers, which can lead to abuse, says Col. Paul Bliese, Ph.D., Director of the Center for Military Psychiatry and Neuroscience at the Walter Reed Army Institute of Research.

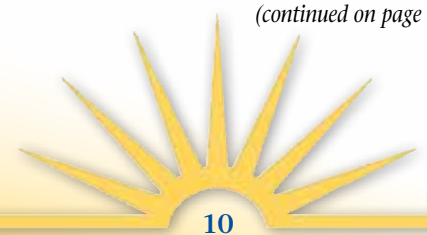
While young adults in the general population

who abuse prescription drugs often do so to get high, soldiers tend to misuse prescription painkillers to treat pain, not for recreational use, Col. Bliese says.

"The military has seen an increase in the rate of prescription drug abuse, and that's to be expected since we draw from the civilian population, which is also seeing a rise," Col. Bliese said. "But we also tend to create chronic pain as an occupational hazard. Soldiers are wearing body armor, carrying heavy backpacks, wearing helmets and getting banged around in vehicles in addition to getting physically injured in combat."

The report by the Army's Suicide Prevention Task Force, entitled Health Promotion, Risk Reduction, Suicide Prevention, notes that while pharmaceutical drugs account for only 18 percent of illicit drug use cases in the Army, they were involved in almost one-third of the active duty suicides the previous year. The report also states that of the 188 accidental or undetermined deaths caused by drugs or alcohol

(continued on page 11)



July Calendar



July 4th
July 4th Holiday

July 6th
Pre-Board Exec. Committee Meeting
8:00am PT/11:00am

July 6th
CAC Minnesota
8:30am PT/10:30am CT
VICTRI, Minneapolis, Minnesota

July 6th
CAC Monthly Report Due
12:00pm PT – Executive Committee

July 12th
Florida GulfCoast CAC Meeting
3:30pm PT/6:30pm ET
Bradley Davis Building

July 16th
Foundation Board Meeting
East/West
8:00am–12:00pm PT

July 20th
CAC Minnesota
8:30am PT/10:30am CT
VICTRI, Minneapolis, Minnesota

July 22nd
CAC California
8:30am PT/11:30am ET
611 E. Belmont, Fresno, CA

Army Takes Steps to Curb Prescription Drug Abuse — *(continued from page 10)*

from 2006-2009, 139 (72 percent) were caused by prescription drugs. Recently reported data indicates that 73% of the accidental or undetermined deaths in 2010 were related to prescription medications.

Oxycodone and hydrocodone have become the second and third most frequently used pain management medications in the U.S. military, the report notes.

The report contains more than 250 recommendations to identify and mitigate problems in the Army related to suicide and high-risk soldier behavior, including several recommendations aimed at curbing prescription drug abuse.

Limiting Duration of Prescriptions

One recommendation that the Army has implemented is limiting the duration of a prescription so that it is not considered valid after six months without a doctor's reevaluation and renewal, says Bruce Shahbaz of the Army's Health Promotion and Risk Reduction Task Force. Previously, the amount of time a soldier could use a prescription was open-ended. "If a person tested positive for a prescription pain medication, they could say, 'I hurt my knee last weekend and I'm just using up an old prescription,' but we've eliminated that excuse," he says.

The maximum amount of time a person is authorized to use an oxycodone prescription, for example, is now six months from the time the prescription is written. "If they test positive for the drug more than six months after the prescription is written, an investigation is conducted by the commanding officer to determine why," Col. Bliese says. "Our goal is to find out whether a person is taking the medication for a bona fide medical issue, or whether they may have a substance abuse problem or are using the drugs recreationally. If the person says they got hurt again, then they have to go back to the doctor for a new prescription."

Shahbaz says that sometimes soldiers share prescription drugs as a favor to a fellow soldier in pain. "Someone who is being treated for pain may run out of pills and borrows more from a buddy, or a soldier's knee hurts and someone gives him a pill and says, 'Try this, it helped me,'" he says.

When a drug screen turns up prescription pain medication, a medical review officer checks to

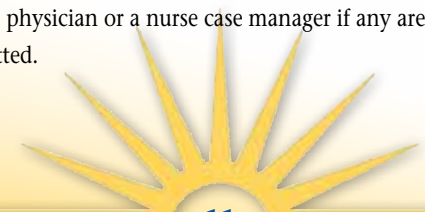
ensure that the soldier has a prescription for that particular drug, Col. Bliese says. He notes that the Army conducts random drug testing even in Iraq and Afghanistan, although it is more difficult to do in a war zone.



More Closely Managing Medications

Another recent change that results from the report is the Surgeon General's directive to health care providers about treating acute and chronic pain. For acute pain, a doctor cannot prescribe more than 30 days of pain medication. For a person suffering from chronic pain, medical exams are required twice a year. "We saw we needed to more closely manage these medications and have a closer relationship between the doctor and patient," Shahbaz says.

There is also a new policy that requires any soldier who has multiple prescriptions for both behavioral and pain medications to have someone coordinating their care so that they do not have any adverse reactions between medications. "If someone is being treated for PTSD (post-traumatic stress syndrome) and physical injuries, we want to make sure there are no bad interactions between the medications prescribed by different specialists," Shahbaz says. In these cases, a pharmacist is responsible for performing a review of medications to look for potential drug interactions, and hands the case off to a primary care physician or a nurse case manager if any are spotted.



Boost Your Emotional Health

By Sylvia Davis – WebMD

You know you need to take care of your physical health, but have you been doing enough to maintain a healthy emotional balance? Here are 12 tips from the experts for reducing stress, managing negative emotions, and improving your emotional wellness.

1. Collect Friends

You need people, lots of them.

“If you look at all the theories of psychotherapy, people who have a lot of social support are happier,” says Rebecca Curtis, PhD, a professor of psychology at Adelphi University in Garden City, N.Y., and director of research at the W.A. White Institute of Psychiatry, Psychology and Psychoanalysis in New York City.



The opposite is true, also. “We all need to be checking out our thoughts with other people, and people get weirder and weirder the more they stay alone,” Curtis says.

If the friends-of-friends-of-friends chain reaction that had kept your life stocked with new relationships has fizzled out – for example, if you have moved to a new place where you don’t know anyone – try taking a more active role. But instead of trying to chat up folks at the local watering hole, sign up for a class that involves a lot of social interaction.

“It’s easier to meet people if there’s some kind of a structured discussion about a certain subject,” says Muriel James, PhD, psychologist and author of *It’s Never Too Late to Be Happy*.

2. Enjoy Solitude

This step may seem to contradict the first one, but actually it complements it. Some isolation can be quite healthy.

“The isolation that comes when people have given up on other people is the problem,” Curtis says.

Avoid this extreme, but don’t be such a social butterfly that you lose yourself completely. Take time to “sit with your feelings,” Curtis says, without distractions.

Some call this meditation, but it doesn’t have to be done in the lotus position. For example, if you spend an hour alone in the car every day, keep the radio off, and listen to your thoughts instead.

Haven’t got an hour alone? Try a three-minute meditation: close your door, turn off the phone, then close your eyes. Take deep breaths, focusing on your breath as it goes in and out. If thoughts come to you, just bring yourself back to your breathing. Then think about a beautiful image, a flower, a child’s face; look at every detail. Then, gradually, breathe faster and open your eyes.



3. Get Fit

We’re not saying, “Look fabulous in time for swimsuit season.” Just get your body moving. Study after study has shown that exercise lifts mood and generally enhances quality of life.

Break any vicious cycles you see happening, which get in the way of adding positive things like exercise to your daily routine. Booze, cigarettes, overeating, junk food, or all these together are an impediment to physical activity, and overindulging leads to more of the same.

It’s important for emotional health to maintain your physical health in all the ways you can. So get enough sleep; eat regular, balanced meals; and take time for relaxation as well.

4. Seek Pleasure

This may also seem like a contradiction, but moderation in all things is the message here. Everyone knows that “all work and no play makes Jack a dull boy.” Overly rigorous devotion to work drives you batty.

Still, it’s easy to become consumed by your responsibilities and to neglect your own enjoyment of life.

In his book, *Your Own Worst Enemy: Breaking the Habit of Adult Underachievement*, psychologist Kenneth Christian, PhD, directs readers to add something positive and pleasurable to their life, do it every day, and make it permanent.

Other suggestions to help you achieve a healthy emotional balance can be found at: http://www.medicinenet.com/emotional_wellness/page2.htm
Our experts offer these 12 steps to emotional wellness. Check them all out!

- **Collect Friends • Enjoy Solitude • Get Fit**
- **Seek Pleasure • Find a Passion • Plan for Problems**
- **Seek Constructive Criticism • Take Healthy Risks**
- **Manage Success Well • Don’t Go It Alone**
- **Write It Down**
- **Protect Yourself from ‘Energy Vampires’**



July is National Blueberry Month!

Celebrate 4th of July with a Red, White, and Blueberry Trifle

Courtesy: marthastewart.com

This dessert would be right at home at a Fourth of July barbecue. You can substitute sliced fresh strawberries for the raspberries, if you prefer.

Prep Time 30 minutes • Total Time 1 hour 30 minutes • Yield Serves 6

Ingredients

- 1/4 cup plus 1/3 cup sugar
- 1/4 cup fresh lemon juice
- 1 store-bought pound cake (12 ounces), cut into 3/4-inch-thick slices
- 1 bar (8 ounces) reduced-fat cream cheese, room temperature
- 1 cup heavy cream
- 3 cups fresh blueberries (three 1/2-pint containers), rinsed and dried
- 3 cups fresh raspberries (two 6-ounce containers)

Directions

1. Make lemon syrup: In a small saucepan, bring 1/4 cup sugar, lemon juice, and 1/4 cup water to a boil over medium heat, stirring to dissolve sugar. Let cool completely, then brush over both sides of cake slices. Quarter each slice.
2. With an electric mixer, beat cream cheese with remaining 1/3 cup sugar on high speed until lightened. With mixer on medium speed, gradually add heavy cream in a steady stream; continue beating until mixture is light and airy (mixture will be like a very soft whipped cream).
3. Arrange half the cake pieces in the bottom of a 2-quart serving dish. Spoon half the cream-cheese mixture over cake in dollops; spread to sides of dish. Scatter half the blueberries and raspberries on top. Repeat layering with remaining cake, cream-cheese mixture, and berries, piling berries in the center.
4. Cover, and refrigerate until chilled, at least 1 hour and up to overnight.



Blueberry Blast Smoothie

Yield: Serves 1

Ingredients:

- 1/2 cup light vanilla ice cream
- 1/2 cup frozen blueberries
- 3 ounces raspberry or blueberry low-fat yogurt
- 1/4 cup low-fat milk or soy milk

Directions:

Add all the ingredients to a blender or small food processor and mix until well blended. Pour into a glass and enjoy!



Nutritional Information:

Per serving: 230 calories, 9 g protein, 37 g carbohydrate, 5 g fat (3 g saturated fat, 1.2 g monounsaturated fat, 0.5 g polyunsaturated fat), 19 mg cholesterol, 3 g fiber, 143 mg sodium, 40% Daily Value for calcium, 21% Daily Value for vitamin C. Calories from fat: 21%.

