

AURORA TIMES

SUMMER EDITION 2015



In this edition you will find out things you never knew about your friends, great stories, things that happened this summer and familiar items like Kristian's weather articles and poetry that uplifts the soul. Start thinking about how you can contribute to the next issue. ENJOY!

From the desk of the *Executive Director*



As we finish the summer off in great fashion, HOT, HUMID but NO SNOW it's refreshing to think about our achievements this summer. Not only should each Consumer be proud of his/her accomplishments, but my hat goes off to the dedicated Staff of Aurora. We now have three (3) Certified Peer Specialists who are always available and eager to assist our Consumers. Who better to understand recovery than our Peer Specialists?

Seems like yesterday that Katrina starting as a part-time receptionist and now is our Program Coordinator. Cleon went from a part-time custodian, to a full-time employee, doing social rehabilitation and Individual Mental Heal Rehabilitation (IMHR). Let's not forget Donnel who "barged" into Aurora last September wanting assistance with a goal to become a Peer Specialist. It took 9 months but now she too a full-time employee.

We have seen our Consumers participate in non-smoking programs, Wellness Recovery Action Plan classes, and initiation of a gardening program at our Harrisburg Center, continual participation at Caitlin Smiles and the Annual NAMI walk on City Island. Aurora is the evidence that recovery is possible for everyone. The means of obtaining recovery is individual, but also manifests itself with sharing and establishing relationship with peers and the community.

I want to take this time to thank...Mr. and Mrs. Conrad Siegel (Foundation for Enhancing Communities) for their contribution of \$500.00 for Arts & Craft supplies.

I want to take this time to also thank the administrative staff at Dauphin County Mental Health who have supported our program for years and continue to do so. They are always there to participate in our special events; the Executive Board who visit and give us their time and energy; finally to donors like Mr. and Mrs. Conrad Siegel (Foundation for Enhancing Communities) for their contribution of \$500.00 for Arts & Craft supplies and the many others who donate to our mission of stamping out the stigma associated with mental illnesses.



As we enter our 54th year of providing services we also celebrate the 3rd year of Hope Troupe our interactive creative Arts group that performs in Dauphin County. Consumer recovery stories, musical songs, poems, and skits are all performed by our Consumers. Last, but certainly, not least, a special thanks to Rose Shultz, Dauphin County MHID, who writes the yearly grant for Hope Troupe.

Harrisburg Aurora Center Happenings

By: Donnel, Editor

I am proud to be working here at Aurora Social Rehabilitation Services. They say when you love what you do, you'll never work a day in your life. How true it is! I've had so much fun getting to know everyone, but most of all, I am pleased to be of service to this community. Your warm welcomes have meant so much to me. Thank you for allowing me into the haven that you call **Aurora**.

This is my first time as the new editor of The Aurora Times and it's been a pleasure working with everyone involved. The Consumers at the Harrisburg Center are all so dedicated to making this place a sanctuary to enjoy one another by doing social events, outings, workshops, and so much more. All of these activities help us on our recovery journey.

In this edition you will find some familiar items like the message from our Executive Director, Mr. Owen, poetry from Anthony and Keith, word search, moving stories of recovery, meet new members, fun facts...

Remember to be kind to one another !!

—Donnel

Ms. Lisa's left us to start another leg on her life's journey, we will miss her dearly



What Does Aurora Mean to Me An Aurora Exclusive with *Ms. Doris*



Aurora: What did you do before you came to the Aura Center?

Doris: I lived in Maryland. I took care of my grandchildren. I was retired.

Aurora: How did you here about the Center?

Doris: From my sister church member.
Aurora: When did you start coming to the Center?

Doris: I don't remember, but it was when the Club was on 3rd Street.

Aurora: Why do you come to the Aurora Center?

Doris: To relieve my stress and tension, to fill my daily routine, to do my arts and crafts, and to be with my associates.

In My Spare Time

Aurora times interviewed some of our members, to ask...when you're not at aurora I like to...?



Kimmy: "I love to cook, watch TV, and play cards."

Angie M.: "I like to relax, watching movies, and listening to music."

Erick: "...play music, video games, and watch movies."

Tina R.: "...socialize with friends and neighbors."

Mike: "...watch TV and go fishing."

Weather Maps

By: Kristian B.

A weather map displays various meteorological features across a particular point in time and has various symbols that have specific meanings. Such maps have been in use since the mid 19th century and are used for research and weather forecasting purposes.

Isotach Maps

Maps using isotherms show temperature gradients, which can help locate weather fronts. Isotach maps analyze lines of equal wind speed on a constant pressure surface of 300 mb or 250 mb. Use of constant pressure charts at the 500 and 700 hPa level can indicate tropical cyclone motion.

Surface Weather Maps

Two dimensional streamlines based on wind speeds at various levels show areas of convergence and divergence in the wind field, which are helpful in determining the location of features within the wind pattern. A popular type of surface weather map is the surface weather analysis, which depicts areas of high pressure (H) and low pressure (L)

Prayer: By Anthony W.



Prayer is the safest place to be.

Prayer is a mighty sanctuary where we can find rest and peace and comfort.

Prayer is talking to our heavenly Father about our emotional, physical, and spiritual bumps, busies, scrapes and wounds.

God's hotline is never busy and open 24/7, 365 days a year.

Through prayer, we can talk to our heavenly Father about our sorrows, joy, setbacks, triumphs, etc...

What a privilege it is to be able to tell God thank you!! The kind of thank you that comes from the deepest places of our hearts.

Prayer is a blessing.

Let us pray to our friend, God the Father, who will never let us down.

Prayer is a tender place, sweet and joyous place where we can be in communion with God.



Pizza Chicken Roll-Ups

TOTAL TIME: Prep: 10 min. Bake: 40 min. **MAKES:** 4 servings

Ingredients

4 boneless skinless chicken breast halves (4 ounces each)
12 pepperoni slices
8 slices part-skim mozzarella cheese
1 can (15 ounces) pizza sauce



Directions

Flatten chicken to 1/4-in. thickness. Place three slices of pepperoni and one slice of cheese on each. Roll up tightly; secure with toothpicks. Place in a greased 11x7-in. baking dish. Spoon pizza sauce over top. Cover and bake at 350° for 35-40 minutes or until chicken is no longer pink. Uncover; top with the remaining cheese. Bake 5 minutes longer or until cheese is melted. Yield: 4 servings.

Nutritional Facts

1 serving (1 each) equals 344 calories, 18 g fat (9 g saturated fat), 112 mg cholesterol

Easy Peasy Recipes in Five Ingredients or Less

Welcome new member William D. MEd.

On Joining Aurora Social Rehabilitation Services: What Aurora Club Means for Me By William D. MEd.

Introduction

As I am writing this it 12:30 PM on Tuesday, August 19, 2015, just under 2 days until my fortieth birthday. Reflecting on the year that has passed is a somewhat painful event but it is the events of that year, which has brought me to be on this computer typing this article and to joining Aurora Social Rehabilitation Services (the Aurora Club) and joining here represents hope and faith in the future.



Aurora further represents for me a non-judgmental and safe place to be myself, and to better myself regardless of the form my struggle may take.

Explaining how I have come to be a consumer at the Aurora Club, and what the club means to me will require first some background on how I came to be here.

I'm not
where I need
to be, but
thank God
I'm not
where I used
to be.
curiano.com

My history, diagnosis, and the effects thereof:

I have always been different, while individuals often consider me gifted or intelligent, these gifts do not come without cost. For the first 29 years of my life, I knew only that I had attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, but that that disorder did not explain many of the difficulties I had. When I became a parent and saw many of these difficulties affecting my school age children as well, a series of evaluations led to their own diagnosis with PDD: NOS, and my own reevaluation as well.

Finally at 29 years of age I had an explanation for my struggles, their diagnosis at the time was Asperger Syndrome.

Both PDD: NOS and Asperger's Syndrome have been combined in the newer DSM-V

under the title Autism Spectrum Disorder, and it is this diagnosis, along with ADHD, and Major Depression that I now struggle with.

The diagnosis that I was on the autism spectrum was at once liberating and devastating for me. It was liberating in that it finally explained why I am unable to do some things that come very easy to my peers, but devastating in that, as a neurological condition, rather than a behavioral or mental health one, it means that the condition is a life-long one and one that will always influence my life.



My Autism spectrum disorder (ASD) is characterized by:

- ◆ An inability for me to communicate effectively socially in many instances, regardless of my eloquence or understanding of the subject matter.
- ◆ Restricted, repetitive patterns of behavior and physical movement (these are known as autistic stereotypy's)
- ◆ Intense and often highly focused interests (though I have a very large number of such interests, some individuals on the spectrum have much more limited ones).
- ◆ Sensory issues that cause me difficulty at times with all five of my senses.
- ◆ Inattention to things considered important or socially required by others at times including hygiene, personal space, social niceties etcetera. This is exacerbated by my comorbid ADHD diagnosis.

The term “spectrum” refers to the wide range of symptoms, skills, and levels of impairment that others and myself might suffer from not only in contrast to each other, but as this spectrum is not static, from one time to the next.

I have only held one real significant job in my adult life, working for an agency that operates several facilities for court adjudicated youth (initially as a teacher assistant and later in another role, I will explain below).

Furthermore, it was only due to the intervention of a family member that I was able to obtain said job. My autism spectrum condition did not go away while I held this job and it continued to impact my day to day function, yet that job became a passion for me and was a true career, it inspired me to further my education and eventually earn a Master's Degree in Education.

Obtaining that degree should have been a boon, but it brought considerable complications. I had focused my education very specifically on my current job, and how it would help me function therein. Unfortunately, increasing my education led my former employer to the conclusion that I was being underutilized and I was pressed into a new position within the company, one where I no longer was able to do the day to day work with students that I loved, and rather worked in an administrative and ultimately highly political position.

I detested this new job but I continued trying to do my best in spite of this fact, but my health, mental and physical began to suffer considerably and finally after one too many illnesses I was terminated.

My first reaction to my firing was one of relief. Though I was always active, and was the first person people would come to for aid in projects regardless of their relevance to my job description, I no longer felt I was helping the children under my care. But as financial realities set in and as it became clear that my struggles with my autism spectrum disorder were being manipulated by my former employer to ensure I was not paid unemployment compensation, my mental health further deteriorated, I stopped sleeping almost entirely. I finally did fall asleep, but when my wife attempted to wake me for another UC hearing after just a few hours of sleep, I suffered a breakdown and ended up hospitalized at Pennsylvania Psychiatric Institute (PPI).

My Journey to Recovery

My autism spectrum disorder will never go away. As a result, there are definite things I will never be able to do as neurotypical individuals do. Fortunately, while I am definitely disabled, my past experience shows that when I am in the right position I can prosper. Unfortunately, such positions are highly limited and few and far between.

Fortunately my hospitalization, and subsequent partial hospitalization, at PPI, proved a blessing in many ways. In addition to stabilizing the mental health aspects of my condition, and with the Case Management Unit introducing me to the Aurora Club, they also introduced me into the prospects of a potential future career, for which I may very well be ideally suited, that of peer support specialist. I would be helping people directly, educating, and ministering to their needs, all aspects of my original career that so motivated me.



The truth is that while I am in recovery, I still have very real financial issues that I have no idea how I will resolve. The fact that I am unable to work in a normal capacity for many reasons leaves open the question of how I will survive long enough to seek certification as a peer support specialist, and maintain my recovery long enough to secure a position in that role.

For me Aurora Club is about structure and stability in seeking to survive day to day. When not engaged I quickly go back to negative thinking. As a result I have done my best to through myself headlong into programs and activities at the club.

Here as a consumer I work with peers on a day to day basis and have the model of other peer support specialists who have managed to reach their goals. There can be no doubt that my membership here is an important stepping stone in the lifelong journey of recovery that I find myself upon. Aurora Club is about hope for the future, something that I had lost prior to being hospitalized.

NOTE: A stereotypy ("STAIR-ee-oh-TEYE-pee") is a repetitive or ritualistic movement, posture, or utterance. Stereotypy's may be simple movements such as body rocking, or complex, such as self-caressing, crossing and uncrossing of legs, and marching in place.

Neurotypical is a term used to describe the neurology of individuals who are not considered autistic. The term is a useful descriptor as it does not carry the baggage of alternative terms that suggest that those who differ from norms are abnormal or inferior.

2015 Aurora Summer Picnic: By, Rick B.



Wow! Who would have thought that 20 days after the 4th of July someone would still be celebrating?

And celebrate we did. We continued the great American tradition of summer picnics, and did it the Aurora way... Those whom attended this year appreciated the great weather we had, compared to the heat and humidity of last year's picnic. A lot of people enjoyed seeing Kathy since was promoted and is stationed at our Mechanicsburg Center.



One of the other highlights, as always was seeing and interacting with consumers from our Mechanicsburg Center and our New Bloomfield Center...one big family joined together once more for good eats and great conversation.



Besides Kathy getting her award for employee of the year, as usual, Bingo was a big hit, but the grub was an even bigger hit. Oh, that chicken is always sooo good!!

The picnic went too fast for me and I was sorry to say goodbye to new and old friends. Maybe we should put in the suggestion box to have another picnic—a smaller one, instead of eating somewhere else like Subway.

In any case, the day could not have been better. Thank you, Mr. Owen, The Board, and Dauphin County for supporting our Centers and making sure that we enjoy our recovery journey .



Aurora Harrisburg

Gardening Club



Exciting things are happening for the Garden Club. We partnered with Green Urban Initiative and Wesley Union AME Church's community garden to gain knowledge about basic gardening. They donated four (4) garden boxes for us to grow late summer and fall produce and flowers like: Zinnias, Onions, Leaks, Peas, broccoli, cauliflower, cabbage, collards and Kohlrabi (a German turnip). Join us for some much needed sun (Vitamin D), learning and fun!



IMHR Cooking Classes

Aurora Harrisburg Center will begin our Individual Mental Health Rehabilitation (IMHR) beginners cooking classes on September 15th. If you are interested in learning basic cooking techniques, fill out a form to enroll in IMHR and speak to Mr. Owen about enrollment.

Certificates will be given to successful participants.



**Only a fool argues
with a skunk,**



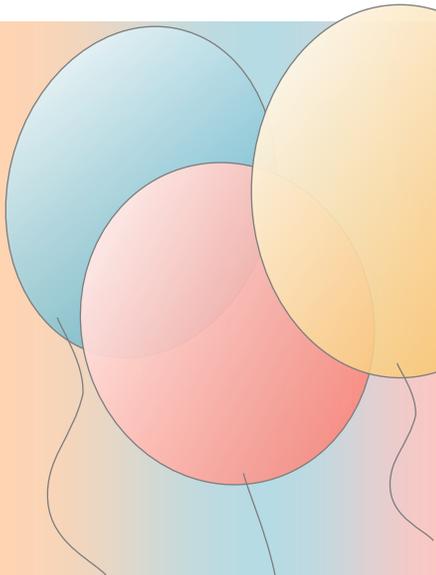
a mule,



or a cook.



— COWBOY SAYING



We will miss you.
Please keep in touch

Love,
The Staff at Aurora

The Road Not Taken—Robert Frost

*Two roads diverged in a yellow wood,
And sorry I could not travel both
And be one traveler, long I stood
And looked down one as far as I could
To where it bent in the undergrowth;*

*Then took the other, as just as fair,
And having perhaps the better claim
Because it was grassy and wanted wear,
Though as for that the passing there
Had worn them really about the same,*

*And both that morning equally lay
In leaves no step had trodden black.
Oh, I kept the first for another day!
Yet knowing how way leads on to way
I doubted if I should ever come back.*

*I shall be telling this with a sigh
Somewhere ages and ages hence:
Two roads diverged in a wood, and I,
I took the one less traveled by,
And that has made all the difference.*

B'Sha'ah Tovah: Blessing on your new journey!



Layla with us during our Women's Group Pampering Day at our Mechanicsburg Center. Megan and her crew from New Bloomfield came down while Megan lead the group on the art of Maquillage: application of cosmetics/makeup.

