



## MHA OFFICE NEWS

I regret to inform you that our Executive Director Arin Norris has resigned and we are financially unable to replace this position at this time. The MHA office will run on a skeleton crew in the next few months as we seek community support for operating expenses through membership drives and fundraisers. Our current budget includes adequate funds to continue the Supplemental Medication Program and Growing Thru Loss programs through the end of the school year. Funding is needed for the seven unique support groups held monthly. Our trained group facilitators are paid a meager \$40 per session to assist participants as needed. There were 762 visits to our support groups in 2009. That equates to about 60 individuals per month gathering to share their experiences within a supportive and non-judgmental group environment which promotes recovery and friendship.

Our Board of Directors are meeting frequently and actively pursuing funding options to resolve the budget constraints. We also need your help. By joining MHA for a minimum membership rate of \$25.00, you can make a difference. Your donation is tax deductible; additional amounts are appreciated.

Mike Chambliss, Board President



## VALENTINE'S DAY COUPON BOOK

A coupon book with over \$80 in discounts from local businesses brought in \$1,000 during the month of February. The coupons ranged from a free photo to discounts on food, flowers, coffee, music lessons, hair care, yarn, stationery, and gift items. This was MHA's first endeavor for a discount book that also included information about the organization and our support groups. Books were sold through board members, participating businesses, and tables at Old National Bank and Schnucks Groceries. Thanks to participating businesses: *Just Rennie's Cookie Co., Knit Witts Yarn Shoppe, Cork N' Cleaver, The Musician's Den, Brian Smith Photography, The Flower Shop, Pen Pals Stationary Shoppe, Aveda Hair Salon-Solaris, Ollie's Sports Bar, BasketKases, and Coffee Cottage.* Hats off to *Matt McAnelly*, intern, for compiling the books!

### MHA Support Groups – call 426-2640 to confirm

Anxiety/Obsessive Compulsive Disorder	7:30 p.m.	2 <sup>nd</sup> Wednesday/month	Central Library
Bipolar	7:00 p.m.	1 <sup>st</sup> & 3 <sup>rd</sup> Wed/month	Kempf Bipolar Wellness
		(2 <sup>nd</sup> Wednesday-educational program offering)	
Depression	7:00 pm.	1 <sup>st</sup> Thursday/month	Central Library
Postpartum Depression	6:00 p.m.	1 <sup>st</sup> & 3 <sup>rd</sup> Monday/month	Deaconess Women's Hosp
Survivors of Suicide	6:30 p.m.	1 <sup>st</sup> & 3 <sup>rd</sup> Monday/month	Methodist Temple
Widows and Widowers	8:30 a.m.	1 <sup>st</sup> & 3 <sup>rd</sup> Monday/month	Pie Pan Restaurant
	11:30 a.m.	4 <sup>th</sup> Monday/month	Canton Inn
Youth Grief	6:00 a.m.	1 <sup>st</sup> Thursday/month	Welborn Conf Center



## UPDATE

### PROGRAMS & SERVICES

- SUPPLEMENTAL MEDICATION PROGRAM:** 62 individuals were served in 2009 through the MHA Supplemental Medication Program. People in financial crisis with anxiety, depression, bipolar disorder, and PTSD were able to receive financial assistance to pay for medications while seeking the resources they need to pay for the medicine long-term.
- GROWING THROUGH LOSS PROGRAM:** Three intensive grief counseling workshops are currently in place at YMCA, Washington Middle School, and Central Library. Youth are encouraged to use their painful experiences to make a difference in the lives of others. Youth regain a sense of purpose that fosters growth and positive change. The supportive environment facilitates healing and development of positive coping techniques. Participants learn anger management, behavior modification and life skills.
- GIFT LIFT PROGRAM:** MHA purchased gift items including personal care products, sock hats, and gloves for clients at Southwestern Healthcare and Evansville State Hospital.

# SUICIDE RATE AT ITS HIGHEST EVER

The suicide rate in Vanderburgh County is at an all time high – 21.7 per 100,000 people. **Annie Groves**, Vanderburgh County Coroner and MHA board member, announced recently that there were a total of 49 self-inflicted deaths in 2009, an increase from 38 in 2008. Factors cited were economic worries, drug overdoses, and firearms. Suicides have tended to be higher in the August summer month than the expected holiday period November/December. 90 percent of those who commit suicide have a diagnosed mental illness. Only a small number of cases were receiving counseling.



**Janie Chappell**, chairwoman for the Southwestern Indiana Suicide Coalition and MHA board member, reports that individuals may not follow the advice by their physician for counseling for a number of reasons including stigmas and cost. Both Groves and Chappell agree that medication and therapy work best and hope to get that message out to prevent further incidents. MHA works together with the suicide coalition to provide suicide awareness and prevention training at no cost to organizations, community groups and churches. Information in the form of handouts, brochures, and posters are tools used to educate the public about the danger signs for suicide and how to find help. Call Janie at 812-471-4521 for suicide prevention information.

## HOW CAN YOU HELP?

- **Renew your membership** or become a member for as little as \$25.00; your membership is tax deductible; additional amounts are appreciated.
- Send \$40.00 to **fund one facilitator** at a group support meeting.
- Attend the **March 16 Hacienda Give Back Night** – Green River Rd (coupon required—on this page!)
- Volunteer – help is needed at our fundraisers such as passing out water at the **Homeward Bound walk/run on Saturday, June 12**. MHA is a benefiting agency providing services to the homeless.
- Join **MHA's Walk/Run Team for Homeward Bound June 12**– sign up at [www.homewardboundindiana.org](http://www.homewardboundindiana.org)
- Participate in **Mental Health Awareness Month** activities in May—call 426-2640
- Participate or help at the **2nd Ride for Recovery** motorcycle benefit on Sunday, June 13.
- Professional speakers are needed for MHA educational programs, annual symposium, and special events and benefits—**Join the MHA Speaker's Bureau**.
- Pass the word – mental illnesses are real disorders that are treatable. Encourage a friend or loved one to seek professional help if needed. Together we can extinguish the stigmas and give all individuals the respect and dignity they rightfully deserve.



**PLEASE HELP RING THE MENTAL HEALTH BELL FOR WELLNESS!**

### MHA OF VANDERBURGH COUNTY

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**We are on the Web!**  
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*MHA MISSION:  
IMPROVING LIVES THROUGH  
EDUCATION, AWARENESS,  
SERVICE, AND ADVOCACY.*

### MHA Board of Directors

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