

# Issues and Insights

Mental Health Association of Wells County

Volume 5

Issue 16

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## "DID YOU KNOW"

### CHRISTMAS: "CELEBRATION ON A SKINNY BUDGET"

By: Jean Reef

Once again it's that time of year when we all begin to think of Christmas and what it means to us. There is plenty of planning for family gatherings, gifts to purchase and cards to be mailed just for starters on the "things to do list".

Considering the economic times, we, as a nation and ourselves, are currently in, is all of this necessary? Everything may need to be scaled back and some even eliminated. **Think about it!**

For starters let's still plan the family gatherings. Include the food and fun but scale back on the gifts. Food and fun far outweigh gifts. If you feel that gifts are necessary, think about regifting and make it a game when exchanging the gifts. This can be more fun than getting something new plus you may have next year's gift already in your hands. A few new gifts may be an essential for the younger family members. Remember these family gatherings are some of the most memorable times of your life.

Cards may be sent only to friends that you don't often see or communicate with. You know that the card usually includes a letter telling of the events of the past year and how your life is going. Isn't it amazing how you can sum up the past year's events in a single page! Best

Wishes and Seasons Greetings can be

said vocally to your local friends and loved ones.

The daylight hours are shorter and the weather is colder and frequently unpleasant. Who said, "'Tis the season to be jolly!" Let's make the most of what we have and don't try to out do "The Jones's".

If you have clothing or household goods you no longer want or need—get rid of them. There are plenty of organizations that will accept them. Somebody in your area might need them. Your trash may be somebody's treasure.

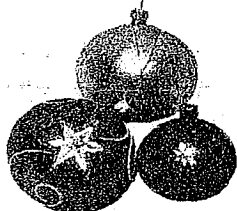
If you know someone who will be alone this holiday season, try to include him/her in your plans. It may take only a short visit or phone call to make their day and put a smile on their face.

Are you the one who feels left out of the holiday events? If so, hopefully, you can tell someone how you feel and they can direct you in a way to get help. Please ask! All of us need somebody sometime so you aren't alone.

Let's all remember that the holiday season isn't the only time of the year to do what we can so that others will benefit. Our giving doesn't have to be in dollars. Our friendship and assistance to others often means much more than money.

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*HAPPY  
HOLIDAYS*



**Stay Healthy and**

**Keep Safe!!!**

**From: MHAWC**

### Change of Address?

Please be sure to let us know if your address, phone number, or e-mail address changes so that you don't miss your copies of Issues and Insights, the Mental Health Association of Wells County newsletter.

Report changes to:

Mental Health Association of Wells County, 223 West Washington St., Bluffton, IN 46714. Telephone number 260.824.1514

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

As I prepare this article, the weather has changed to winter-like conditions. I was unprepared for it: my leaves are still strewn about the lawn under a blanket of snow, garden hoses are now frozen solid, and I had to scramble to find my winter shoveling clothes. The calendar says its late autumn and winter is close, but I have been spoiled by consecutive years of warmer weather until closer to Christmas.

Speaking of being spoiled, the economy downturn has taken everyone by surprise too. We are all accustomed to favorable economic conditions where most of us have extra money in our pockets to spend on ourselves or others. Energy, food, clothing, housing, transportation, and entertainment have all taken a hit. Even if we are not directly affected, people we know are and we feel for them.

Mental health is not much different from the weather or economy in terms of surprises. It often takes us by surprise: from mild bouts of depression to chronic mental illness, we are often surprised by our own, or a loved one's, decline in mental health. And, mental health affects more than just the afflicted person; it affects many others around the person. And with the holiday season here, mental health "surprises" will surely be coming too.

Like many other things in life, we can take some precautions to minimize the onset of declining mental health. Exercise your body, mind and soul regularly. Eat healthy and stay away from harmful habits. Maintain healthy routines, but also consider a change of routine too like arranging to visit old friends, volunteer for a non-profit organization, or visit a park or museum that you have never been to before.

"Expect the unexpected" is advice of many sages. That's easier said than done: but we at the Mental Health Association stand ready to follow the advice of St. Paul: *Encourage one another and build each other up, just as in fact you are doing.* (1 Thessalonians 5:11).

I pray each of your reading this may have a blessed Christmas and a joyous new year!

Greg Werich, President

## HEALTH

### WELLS COUNTY HEALTH FAIR

The Wells County Health Fair was held on November 1, 2008 from 7:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. at the Bluffton -Harrison Middle School.

The Mental Health Association of Wells County sponsored a display that was manned by Jim and Jean Reef and Bill Hanson. Paul and Nancy Bonham set up the display board and resource materials on the table earlier in the morning.

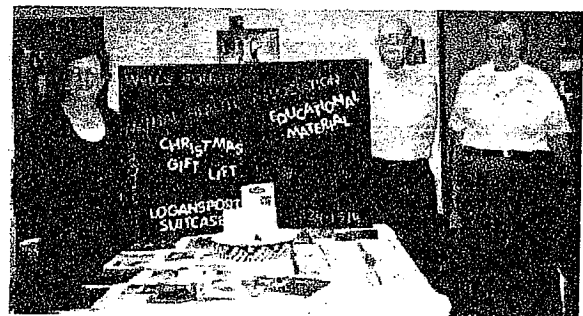
Fewer exhibitors were present this year than in previous years and fewer giveaways were noticed.

As an inducement to viewers, each was given a "passport" and asked to have it stamped or initialed at each exhibit. When the "passport" was completed and placed in a drop-box, a drawing for a prize occurred at the end of the program.

At the end of the day, 500 persons went through various screening processes.

At our display table, there were frequent inquiries on booklets and pamphlets regarding children, grandchildren and adult problems.

#### Health Fair Display



Pictured Left to Right: Jean Reef, Jim Reef and Bill Hansen

**BELL AWARD**

Melba Cole was the recipient of the Wells County Mental Health Association's Annual Bell Award at the Association's Annual Meeting in October. The Bell Award is given to recognize members of our community who have made a difference in the area of mental health. The permanent plaque is housed at the Wells Carnegie Annex. Greg Werich, President of the local association made the presentation and thanked Melba for her many years of service and work on many committees for the association. Some of these have included serving as vice-president, newsletter chairman, education committee member, and a weekly volunteer in the MHA office. She was recently very active as chairman of a community awareness program on Domestic Violence featuring Terra Brantley in October.

Melba was joined by husband, Peter, and daughter, Liz Koehne of Indianapolis, IN, at the presentation.



**FUND RAISER for OUABACHE VILLAGE**

Park Center's Quabache Village is starting an aluminum can collection, Fund Raising Event to raise money for purchase of a gas grill, and a Wii Console. It is our intent to improve motivation and increase physical activities with our residents. We will take aluminum cans only at Ouabache Village, 401 East State St. thru the end of February, 2009. We are located down the street south and behind Scotts grocery. It would be appreciated if you call us at 824-7614 before you deliver, so we can plan to have staff available to take your aluminum cans.

It is hoped that we will receive enough cans to supplement what our residents are already collecting on their own. Your efforts to support our residents remaining independent in the community will be deeply appreciated.

Dee McClurg, Manager, Ouabache Village

**GIFT LIFT PROJECT 2008**



Pictured left to right: Front Row: Georgi Leyse, Nancy Bonham, Melba Cole  
Back Row: Kay Manges, Kelly Leyse, Sue Kipfer and Kay Gerber.

In the latter part of this summer, the Gift Lift Committee was well on their way establishing the guidelines for this year's Christmas Gift Lift. Those who will benefit from this project will be consumers from the Bluffton community and Logansport State Hospital. Chairman, Kay Manges was assisted by the Mental Health Association Board members Nancy Bonham, Melba Cole, Hans Manges and Pete Cole. Kelly Leyse and little helper, daughter, Georgi Leyse, Sue Kipfer, Kay Gerber and members of the Apostolic Christian Church-East generously provided 74 clients with over 200 gifts at the Bluffton Park Center. Gifts were delivered to Tanya Bryant, coordinator from Bright Beginnings, who compiled the list of clients. The staff at Bright Beginnings is responsible for wrapping and distributing the gifts for Bluffton Park Center.

Also, receiving gifts were 14 clients residing at Ouabache Village.

Gwen Craighead, Chairman and member of the Apostolic Christian Church-North worked diligently collecting gifts for consumers who reside at the Logansport State Hospital. Most of these consumers do not have any family members.

Church members donated 75 gifts, which will be distributed to 25 consumers (3 gifts per consumer). These gifts were picked up on November 19th along with suitcases that were collected throughout the year.

**CHRISTMAS CARD PROJECT**

The Christmas Card Project, sends a personal greeting card to each resident of a Wells County nursing or retirement home was chaired by Bill Hansen, assisted by Gwen Payne, members from the MHAWC Education Committee and participants from Ouabache Village. The nursing or retirement homes serviced are Maplewood Home, Markle Health Care, Christian Care Retirement Community, River Terrace Estates, Meadowvale Health and Rehabilitation Center and Ossian Health and Rehabilitation Center. Christmas Cards were delivered November 25, 2008 to each facility for distribution to their clients at an appropriate time.

In addition to greeting cards, the Mental Health Association of Wells County provides \$200.00 to each facility for purchase of a gift befitting the residents.

**MENTAL HEALTH  
ASSOCIATION OF  
WELLS COUNTY**

**223 W. Washington Street  
Bluffton, Indiana 46714**

**www.mentalhealth@wellscounty.org  
260.824.1514**



# Happy Holidays

**FROM**

**MENTAL HEALTH ASSOCIATION OF WELLS CO.**

**HELP THE MHA COMPLETE ITS MISSION -**

### **BECOME A MEMBER**

Through your membership in the Mental Health Association of Wells County, we will be able to provide quality programs of education, service, and advocacy that will make the lives of persons with mental illness better.

You can become involved as a volunteer.

Volunteers are always needed and appreciated. Please consider volunteering and call the Mental health Association of Wells County at 260.824.1514 (leave your name and number in the event that you get the answering machine) for more information.

**Mail Your Membership Contribution TODAY!!!!**

**Mental Health Association of Wells County  
223 W. Washington, Bluffton, IN 46714**

**Name** \_\_\_\_\_

**Address** \_\_\_\_\_

**City** \_\_\_\_\_ **Zip** \_\_\_\_\_

**Phone** \_\_\_\_\_ **Township** \_\_\_\_\_

New Membership     Renewal Membership

\$250.00     \$100.00     \$50.00

\$25.00     \$10.00     Other     Please call for Volunteer Work

Some of my interests include \_\_\_\_\_

If you desire to be a Member, Board Member, or serve on the Education Comm. Call Greg Werich 260.824.6496 or MHAWC office 260.824.1514.