



Newsletter

A publication of Greater
Macomb Project Vox
Issue 9
April 2009

Tragedy Raises Issue of Availability of Treatment

The death of 4 teens in a fatal crash on March 16th in Roseville has brought a strong show of support for the families and friends of the Lake Shore High Students. Many local agencies also hope that along with that it brings an increased awareness of treatment availability and a wave of activism to support struggling treatment programs here in Michigan, and Macomb County.

The March 25th on-line edition of the Detroit News said that the driver, Francis Dingle had been charged with 4 counts of Second Degree Murder, and four counts of operating while intoxicated. However, a jury will ultimately decide between charges to convict. According to the same source she is currently under a suicide watch at Macomb County jail.

It was reported in the Detroit Free Press that Ms. Dingle had suffered many years with addiction. She had been alcohol-free for 3 years when she recently relapsed.

Kathy Rager, the Executive Director of CARE, Macomb County's access point for treatment says while the loss of the young lives is horrific, and will forever impact the community, it should not be forgotten that Ms. Dingle and millions like her have been able to obtain sobriety. She

says that this should bring attention to the need for the on-going support that needs to be available for those who are trying to maintain a life in recovery.

"Our current system does not have the funding necessary to treat the disease as a chronic condition. Many other chronic conditions can also result in relapse."

According to Ms. Rager Macomb County has a waiting list of 256 people who are low income and need residential treatment. Most recently, funding for outpatient treatment has not kept pace with need resulting in a 45 day wait for those programs.

A February 2009 report compiled by the Michigan Association of Substance Abuse Coordinating Agencies states that as recently as 1995, the state supported treatment programs with \$35.2 million in general fund spending. Today that figure is \$19.5 million— a \$15 million reduction. This despite a California study that showed for every \$1 used in treatment and prevention, state and local governments saved \$7.

A 1998 report published by The National Center of Addiction and Substance Abuse

at Columbia University found substance abuse cost Michigan \$279.19 per person in tax dollars, while the state spent only 19 cents per person to prevent and treat addiction. The ratio was one of the worst in the nation. The report further states spending on corrections has skyrocketed driving the cost of addiction even higher. This while funding for treatment and prevention has fell dramatically.

The members of Greater Macomb Project Vox extend out heartfelt sympathy to the families of *Erica Marie Haudek, Jordan T. Michalak, Devon Spurlock, and Stephanie Currie., and Francis Dingle.*

Lake Shore Public Schools has set up a memorial fund for the students. The donations will be used to help the victims' families. Checks should be made payable to the Lake Shore Public Schools Memorial Fund, Attention: Business Office, 28850 Harper Ave., St. Clair Shores, MI 48081.

" Advocacy is about turning personal stories into social action and presenting an alternative perception that helps effect change."

From Faces and Voices of Recovery Web Site

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Greater Macomb Project Vox is a grass roots effort organized to educate all segments of the community that recovery is not only possible but a reality for many people, and to advocate for change to policies that negatively affect the availability of treatment and resources for the recovering community



WWW.JOINTOGETHER.ORG

Spotlight On Our Members... BETTY RISHER – by James Fischer

Once again I get the privilege of writing about someone I have come to admire and call friend. Betty Risher has been a stalwart member of Greater Macomb Project Vox since the group started. We are a group of people from different backgrounds and different circumstances all coming together to advocate for those people whose lives are effected by addiction. Betty's dedication to our goals and her diligence in getting that message out is one of our greatest assets.

Betty is a person in long-term recovery, which means she has not used alcohol or other drugs in 28 years. An amazing accomplishment! As amazing as her sobriety is the path of service that her recovery has led her to follow.

Betty grew up in Detroit, on the east side. Her father was a functioning alcoholic and her mother was a prescription drug abuser. She started drinking in high school. She soon got married, had two babies and settled in being a stay-at-home mom. She had two more daughters over the next few years. She engaged herself in her daughters' lives becoming involved with the Girl Scouts and other things. As her children grew she started to work a variety of part time jobs, working in market research for

fifteen years.

Betty stresses that alcoholism is a progressive disease. She didn't become an alcoholic overnight. She had to work at it. As stressors in her life kept building, her compulsion to drink built along with it. Eventually she divorced and needed to work a full-time job, so took a job in a downtown bar. Her disease really took off then. She became unable to care for her children. Her ex-husband, moved in to the home to take care if the kids, and Betty moved herself into an apartment, and continued to drink.

While working downtown, she met Bob Bennett who was a Reporter for channel 4 news at the time. They became good friends. One day he called and told Betty that he was going out to interview Betty Ford who was opening a new treatment facility called Maple Grove in Bloomfield Hills. She asked her friend Bob if he could get Mrs. Fords telephone number for her. It didn't seem such an outlandish request at the time. Why wouldn't an ex-first lady give her phone number to a complete stranger? What she got from her friend Bob was the number for Maple Grove. Curiosity got the best of her and she called to get information about their program, she was asked if she had a problem with an addiction, she replied, "Maybe, but this isn't for me." She entered Maple Grove March 23, 1981. She has been sober since.

Upon her release from treatment Betty stayed involved in out-patient services for 8 months and found a group that she continues to attend to this day.

I asked Betty what was the key to her success in recovery, and she answered rather slyly "The only thing I had to do was change everywhere I went, everyone I knew, and every thought I had." With that in mind she began to become part of the solution instead of part of the problem.

She went back to work at General Motors, became a benefit representative which evolved into her becoming an Employee Assistance Professional. Her job was crisis intervention with GM employees. Betty summed up her job simply. "It's just like being a Mom."

She retired from General Motors and is now active in recovery advocacy. She is a true driving force within our group. We honor her here as our spotlight candidate because of her dedication to recovery advocacy and her dedication to the still suffering addict. If you are blessed to ever meet her you will walk away from that meeting a better human being. Betty has a way of bringing out the best in everyone whose life she touches. We at Project Vox thank her for her dedication and look forward to many more years of association.

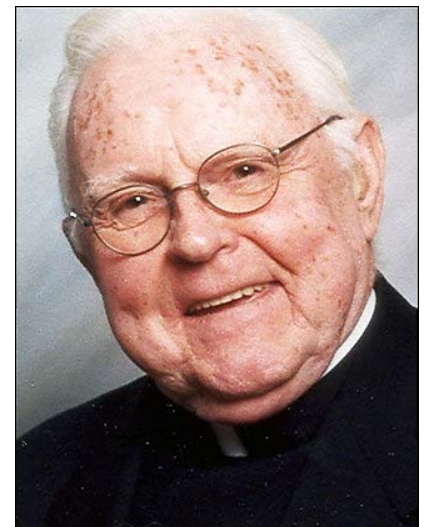
AA ICON FR. MARTIN DIES

The Rev. Joseph C. Martin, 84, a recovering alcoholic and an international leader in the fight against alcoholism and substance abuse who was a co-founder of Father Martin's Ashley, a Harford County treatment center, died March 9 at his home in Havre de Grace, Md. He had heart disease.

Father Martin's "Chalk Talk on Alcohol" and "No Laughing Matter" have become standard tools used by recovery centers, schools and employee assistance programs the world over. In the more than 30 years since Father Martin's Ashley accepted its first patient, more than 30,000 people have been treated.

During the 1960s, he began presenting his program at Alcoholics Anonymous meetings, rehab centers and private businesses. In 1972, his "Chalk Talk" lecture was filmed by the Navy and later was picked up by the other armed forces where it was used as mandatory addiction training for service personnel.

Photo courtesy of Associated Press



CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Project Focus- A *FREE* support program for family members of those in recovery or concerned about a family member's use of drugs or alcohol. Parents, caring adults, and children ages 6-15. Dinner provided nightly and childcare available. Visit www.careofmacomb.com or call CARE at 586-541-0033 to register April 14, and May 12 from 6-8 P.M. Tuesday at Christ United Methodist Church, 34385 Garfield (across from Fraser High School), Fraser.

Youth Support Summer Camp- 8 day morning summer program-ages 6-15 who are affected by a loved one's use of alcohol or other drugs or have a loved one in recovery. Registration kit available on-line are careofmacomb.org or call 586-541-0033. Sessions held from 8:30 AM-Noon July 27, 29, 30, and August 3, 4, 5 and 6th.

April 7 -7-8:30 PM-Butcher Educational Center in Warren. April is Alcohol Awareness Month. Join Project Vox for a free evening of discussion with noted Author Debra Jay. See details in article at left. .

May 1-6:30 PM-Spirit of Compassion Celebrating Women in Recovery Benefit-Renaissance Unity church. Ticket price is \$40 and includes dinner and entertainment by the Go Comedy Improv Group. Contact tmurray@sacredheartcenter.com for tickets.

May 11 - 6:30 PM-Teens Talking Truth presentation on Underage Drinking-Macomb Intermediate School District 44001 Garfield in Clinton Township. Light Refreshments. No registration required.

May 13-8:30-3:30 PM-MI Prison ReEntry Initiative-Coming Together Creating Safer Neighborhoods- Macomb Intermediate School District 44001 Garfield, Clinton Twp. Register by calling 586-783-8717.

June 1-6:30 PM-Beyond Trauma-11 week journey for women to explore the connection between addiction and trauma. Classes every Monday at CARE. Call for registration details. 586-541-0033.

Aug 20 -**Sober Cruise aboard The Detroit Princess Riverboat-** \$50 includes a deluxe buffet, soft drinks and entertainment. Leaves the dock at 7:00 and returns at 9:30 pm. Registrations will be received by CARE at 31900 Utica Road, Fraser. Call Carrie at 586 541-0033 for information. Sponsored by Greater Macomb Project Vox and NCADD-Greater Detroit Area.

Sept 12-10 AM-4 PM on Belle Isle -Celebrate Recovery March and Rally!! More Recovery Month details as announced!!

SUBSTANCE ABUSE SUPPORT SERVICES FAMILY EDUCATION CLASSES

All classes are free and scheduled from 2-3:30 and held at in Lower level Conference Room at CARE

Call CARE at 586-541-0044 for further details

- April 23- The Medical Model of Addiction
- May 28- Treatment: What Should I expect?
- June 25-Peer Support Groups (NA, AA, Women for Sobriety)
- July 30-Family Support: What Does It Mean?
- Aug 27-Barriers to Recovery and Relapse Prevention
- Sept 24-Breaking the Cycle of Addiction



Photo Courtesy of www.lovefirst.net

Noted Author Debra Jay at April 7th Vox Event

Debra Jay is the author of *No More Letting Go: The Spirituality of Taking Action Against Alcoholism and Drug Addiction* published by Bantam in 2006. She has also co-authored two Hazelden Guidebooks, *Love First: A family's Guide to Intervention and Aging and Addiction: Helping Older Adults Overcome Alcohol or Medication Dependence*.

She is in private practice with her Husband Jeff, providing intervention training and consultation services and has an additional specialty in older adult intervention. She previously worked as an addiction specialist for the Hazelden Foundation. She is a nationally known speaker and has been writing a newspaper column on alcohol and drugs since 1996. Ms. Jay has regularly appeared on the Oprah Winfrey Show.

Ms. Jay will be speaking on Tuesday, April 7th from 7-8:30 P.M at the Butcher Educational Center. The center is located at 27500 Cosgrove in Warren. The event is free and open to the public.

Faces & Voices of Recovery's Online Book Club

This month's selection is *America Anonymous: Eight Addicts in Search of a Life* by Benoit Denizet-Lewis.

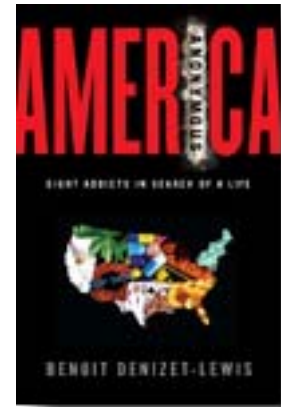
America Anonymous is the story of eight men and women from around the country—including a grandmother, a college student, a bodybuilder, a housewife, and a drug and gambling addiction counselor—struggling to recover from addictions. For nearly three years, the Author was immersed in their lives as they battled drug and alcohol

abuse, overeating, and compulsive gambling and sexuality. Alternating with their stories is the author's own story of addiction and recovery.

Addiction is this country's biggest public-health problem, costing us \$524 billion each year and triggering or exacerbating many of our most pressing social problems. While cancer and AIDS survivors have taken to the streets and to the halls of Congress demanding to be counted, millions of addicts

with successful long-term recovery only talk to each other in the confines of anonymous Twelve Step meetings.

Benoit tries to shine a spotlight on our most misunderstood health problem and break through the shame and denial that still shape our cultural understanding of it—and hamper our ability to treat it. The author records their struggles—and his own—with honesty and empathy.



Book of the Month!

America Anonymous: Eight Addicts In Search of a Life
by Benoit Denizet-Lewis

April Sexual Assault Awareness Month Events

United Nations statistics say that 1 in 3 women on this planet will be the victim of violence. ACLU Statistics indicate that 75% of women in the criminal justice system were using drugs prior to arrest. Only 17% of those in that system who were on probation received any kind of drug treatment. It costs 7 times more to imprison a woman than to provide her with drug treatment services.

4/2 -7 PM-Take Back the Night Ann Arbor-U of M Diag in downtown Ann Arbor. Visit www.tbnnannarbor.org for further details. Entertainment and march.

4/9- 6:30 PM- Macomb County Take Back The Night-Roseville Rec Center 18195 Sycamore Roseville-Vigil, march and much more!

4/18 -3 PM-6 PM- First Annual Take Back The Night Detroit Forum and candlelight march-Samaritan Center, Carolyn Cheeks-Kilpatrick Auditorium, 5555 Conner, Detroit. Visit www.takebackthenightdetroit.org for further details.

4/20 -6 PM-Speak Up! Reach Out! Public Policy Action Forum-Macomb Intermediate School District Room 201 A (19 Mile and Garfield) This event is in partnership with State Representative Fred Miller and Jean Doss. Join the discussion on current legislative opportunities to respond to sexual assault survivors.

OUR MESSAGE

- Many people who suffer the effects of addiction can and do get better and lead meaningful and productive lives.
- The ways they achieve this are as many and varied as the people AOD problems affect.
- Shaming and stigmatizing those with AOD problems shows not only a lack of understanding of the problem, but prevents people from seeking help.
- Removing environmental barriers to recovery, which include the promotion of laws and social policies that reduce AOD problems saves money in medical, criminal justice, social services, and productivity costs.
- It is vitally important to promote services that support a recovery lifestyle.

More on The Recovery Bill of Rights

From the web site of
Faces and Voices of Recovery

A new life, free from addiction to alcohol and other drugs, is a reality for millions of Americans. Regardless of the path a person takes in seeking recovery, the lives of those around the individual – family members, friends and neighbors – are vastly improved as a result. We know that recovery is an achievable goal for the 21 million Americans who still need help. Breaking the cycle of addiction is critical to a healthy society

Our nation's response to the crisis of addiction should be based on the engagement and involvement of the recovery community – people in recovery, their families, friends and allies – and on sound public health science. Policies and programs must close the gap between science and policy. By speaking out and putting a human face on recovery, people in or seeking recovery and their families play a critical role in breaking down barriers. These personal "faces and voices of recovery" serve powerfully to educate the public about addiction and recovery and about discrimination against those seeking sustained recovery. Color posters of the Bill of Rights are available at CARE. Please call 586-541-0033 to order.

To read more visit:
http://www.facesandvoicesofrecovery.org/about/campaigns/more_bill_of_rights.php



THE RECOVERY BILL OF RIGHTS
FACES & VOICES OF RECOVERY

We can safeguard hope and improve the lives of millions of Americans, their families, and communities if we treat addiction to alcohol and other drugs as the public health crisis that it is. To overcome this crisis, we must accord dignity to people with addiction and recognize that there is no one path to recovery. Individuals can recover on their own or with the help of others. Effective aid can be rendered by mutual support groups or health care professionals. Recovery can begin in a doctor's office, treatment center, church, prison, peer support meeting or in one's own home. The journey can be guided by religious faith, spiritual experiences or secular teachings. Recovery happens every day across our country and there are effective solutions for people still struggling. Whatever the route, it will be far easier to travel if people seeking recovery can enjoy respect for their basic rights:

- 1. We have the right to be viewed as capable of changing, growing,** and becoming positively connected to our community, no matter what we did in the past because of our addiction.
- 2. We have the right—as do our families and friends—to know about the many pathways to recovery, the nature of addiction** and the barriers to long-term recovery, all conveyed in ways that we can understand.
- 3. We have the right, whether seeking recovery in the community, a physician's office, treatment center, or while incarcerated, to set our own recovery goals,** working with a personalized recovery plan that we have designed based on accurate and understandable information about our health status, including a comprehensive, holistic assessment.
- 4. We have the right to select services that build on our strengths,** armed with full information about the experience, and credentials of the people providing services, and the effectiveness of the services and programs from which we are seeking help.
- 5. We have the right to be served by organizations or health care and social service providers that view recovery positively,** meet the highest public health and safety standards, provide rapid access to services, treat us respectfully, understand that our motivation is related to successfully accessing our strengths and will work with us and our families to find a pathway to recovery.
- 6. We have the right to be considered as more than a statistic,** stereotype, risk score, diagnosis, label, or pathology unit—free from the social stigma that characterizes us as weak or morally flawed. If we relapse and begin treatment again, we should be treated with dignity and respect that welcomes our continued efforts to achieve long-term recovery.
- 7. We have the right to a health care and social services system that recognizes the strengths and needs of people with addiction** and coordinates its efforts to provide recovery-based care that honors and respects our cultural beliefs. This support may include introduction to religious, spiritual and secular communities of recovery, and the involvement of our families, kinship networks and indigenous healers as part of our treatment experience.
- 8. We have the right to be represented by informed policymakers** who remove barriers to educational, housing, and employment opportunities once we are no longer misusing alcohol or other drugs and are on the road to recovery.
- 9. We have the right to respectful, nondiscriminatory care from doctors** and other health care providers and to receive services on the same basis as people do for any other chronic illness, with the same provisions, copayments, lifetime benefits and catastrophic coverage in insurance, self-funded/self-insured health plans, Medicare and HMO plans. The criteria of "proper" care should be exclusively between our health care providers and ourselves; it should reflect the severity, complexity and duration of our illness and provide a reasonable opportunity for recovery maintenance.
- 10. We have the right to treatment and recovery support in the criminal justice system** and to regain our place and rights in society once we have served our sentences.
- 11. We have the right to speak out publicly about our recovery** to let others know that long-term recovery from addiction is a reality.

ENDORSED BY: American Association for the Treatment of Opioid Dependence, Inc. • American Society of Addiction Medicine • Community Anti-Drug Coalitions of America • Emerging Solutions to Alcohol Problems • Entertainment Industries Council • Johnson Institute • Join Together • Legal Action Center • NAADAC, the Association for Addiction Professionals • National African American Drug Policy Coalition • National Alliance of Advocates for Buprenorphine Treatment • National Alliance of Methadone Advocates • National Association on Alcohol, Drugs and Disability • National Association of Drug Court Professionals • National Association for Children of Alcoholics • National Association of Addiction Treatment Providers • National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence • National Council for Community Behavioral Healthcare • Rebecca Project for Human Rights • State Association of Addiction Services • TASC, Inc. • Therapeutic Communities of America • White House

CONTACT INFO:

Faces & Voices of Recovery: www.facesandvoicesofrecovery.org
info@facesandvoicesofrecovery.org

ADDICTION RECOVERY AND TREATMENT CAUCUS

The Congressional Addiction, Treatment and Recovery Caucus was founded in 2004 to serve as a groundbreaking forum to inform, educate and raise awareness about addiction and recovery and to increase legislative support for expanding access to care for people with addiction. The bi-partisan caucus brings members of the House and their staffs together to focus attention on their shared interest and build support for policies that will support addiction recovery.

In 2009, Representatives Patrick Ken-

edy (D-RI) and John Sullivan (R-OK) will be serving as the Caucus co-chairs, joined by Representatives Mary Bono Mack (R-CA) and Carol Shea-Porter (D-NH) who will be serving as Vice co-chairs.

Faces & Voices of Recovery and allied organizations such as Project Vox have set a goal of enlisting one-third of the members of the US House of Representatives in the Congressional Addiction, Treatment and Recovery Caucus by the

end of this year. Eighty one members have already joined. Three from Michigan. Visit http://www.facesandvoicesofrecovery.org/about/campaigns/caucus_reps.php to see those from MI who have joined, and more information about how you can write and ask those who haven't to be part of the caucus.

Advocacy organizations like Project Vox have played key roles in getting parity legislation moving and effecting spending decisions with appropriation committees.

How To Get Involved!

Legislative and Community Activists: We have a contingent that writes letters and voices their response to legislation that affects the quality and delivery of care to those suffering from addiction, and their families. It is imperative that the stigma associated with addiction be removed. Examples would be Letters to the Editor, letters to legislatures, etc. Please contact us if you'd like to be added to our email list and receive notice of how you can support Vox's efforts in this area.

Event Planning Committee
Project Vox strives to be actively involved in the recovery community and organizes several events a year. We participate in National Recovery Month events in September, and host other dinners and events throughout the year.

2008 Accomplishments included
Participation in the 8th Annual Celebrate Recovery event, which included a walk and rally downtown. Host to the Science of Addiction and Recovery training facilitated by Faces And Voices of Recovery.

Speakers Bureau: We are training a wonderful group of individuals who will be going to treatment agencies and other public forums to discuss what it is like to live a life in recovery, why it important to speak out and how others can get involved. Help us put a face on recovery by speaking out!

Newsletter: Contributions are gladly accepted for this newsletter. We hope to keep it chocked full of news about current events and issues facing those living a life in recovery. It's purpose is to share what fellow advocates all over the country are doing, and some valuable resources for how to "put a face on recovery."

Web Site and Message Board
Project Vox's web site is always being updated with links and meeting information. Web address is: <http://www.projectvox.com>. Please join us!!

**The Community Can
not support what it can
not See!**

Meetings on Third Thurs of
every month
5:45 p.m.

Offices of CARE
31900 Utica Rd
Fraser MI 48026
(586) 541-0033

Please call to confirm future
meeting dates

