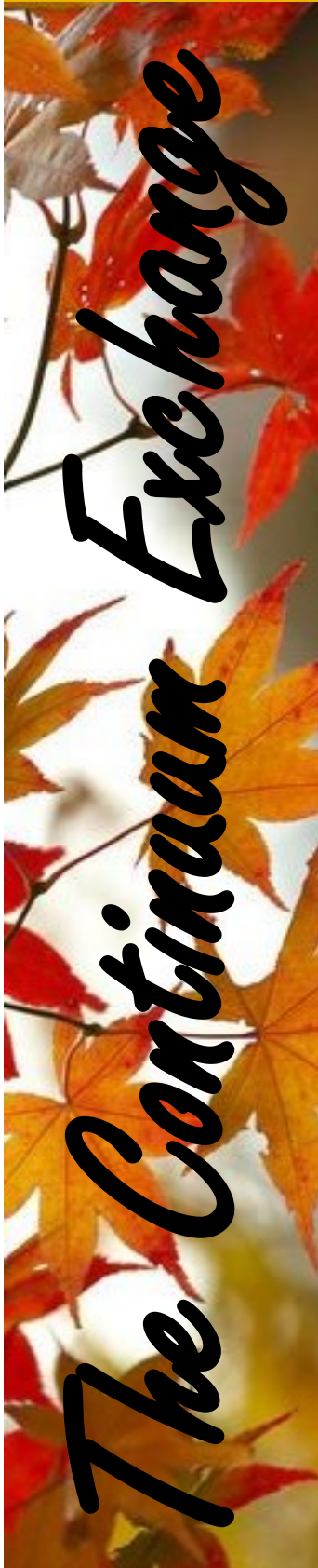


Fall 2014

31 Years Later...

An Interview with Continuum's President & CEO Patti Walker



Did you have an idea that this is what you wanted to do when you were growing up?

I thought that I would always be in some kind of helping profession. I thought it would be with animals, though, because I'm so fanatically passionate about animals, but ... I started [college] as a physical therapy major. [In] my sophomore year, I switched to being a social work major because that's when I realized that physical therapy [and] ... dealing with the mechanics and the physical issues of the body ... wasn't of interest to me. How I could help somebody in other ways just seemed more [suited] to me.

What brought you to Continuum?

I was living at 324 Howard Avenue, which is now our ISLP [Intensive Supportive Living] program. It was a three-family house and I was renting the second floor with a friend. I had just completed my master's degree at Fordham and was anxious to find a new job. We were looking at the classifieds and found a listing for an Executive Director of the New Haven Halfway House. I had never heard of the Agency and really had very little information about it, but thought it was a good place to start looking so I [applied]. My background had been in developmental disabilities. The only experience that I had with mental illness was what I had learned, of course, getting my MSW but I interviewed [anyway]. It was a tiny little job. It was one house with five staff. They hired me! I guess they decided that I was a good fit and they would take a chance. Little did I know that this house that I had just accepted the Executive Director position of was the same house that nine months earlier the SWAT team had been to. The street was closed down for 24 hours because of a hostage-taking situation [there].

The first day that I walked into the Halfway House [for work] I got a phone call from the Attorney General. Here I am 29 years old and the Attorney General was calling me and saying, 'I want records on this person and that person and this person and that person' and I'm like, 'I-I-I-I-I-I have no idea what to do.' And it was because of this incident that had occurred nine months to a year earlier. I asked the staff, 'Why are all the doors in this house brand new, heavy, solid core wood doors that don't match?' You know me and my insane decorator nonsense. I said, 'And why are they shiny and a different color than all the other wood trim in the house?' And they said, 'Because ... the old doors all got shot out by the SWAT team.' I said, 'Wha-wha-what?' Then I started putting all the pieces together: 'Oh my God, that must have been the SWAT team incident that was on the front of the paper last year.' I went home that evening terrified of what I had just gotten myself into!

Tell me about Continuum's early days.

It was a very different world. You know how I always like to take off my shoes? Well, I used to like to take off my shoes then too. And one day I walked from my office into the kitchen and I stepped on a live mouse with my bare feet. As I was reaching to open the cupboard to get a teacup out ... the cockroaches fell out. [After] my first week on this job, ... I can remember going home [and thinking], 'Are you kidding me? I really took this job?' But I was taught that when you accepted a responsibility you followed through. The Board actually interviewed me and hired me in May but I couldn't start until October 1st because they didn't have enough money to pay me for more than nine months. My starting salary was \$17,000 a year. They told me [that] if I didn't find a way to make up [that] money that was lost ... that we were going to be closing the organization after the end of that first year, and if I wanted to take that challenge then it was up to me. I didn't know what I was doing. I was so green! I was terrified. I said, 'Okay.' *Continued on the next page.*

I found out by looking at a ledger — [and] I had never looked at a general ledger in my life — that we were owed \$10,000 by the welfare department of the City of New Haven. I was nauseous, I was so nervous. I walked into the welfare department and said, 'Hi, I'm Patti Walker. I'm the new Executive Director of the New Haven Halfway House and my records indicate that you owe [us] \$10,000.' They started giving me the runaround and I said, 'Listen, I really can't leave until I have a better handle on this and you need to sit down with me and go through this.' And they did. I was there all day long. And ... I walked out with a check for about three quarters of what they owed. Back then [that] was huge. The annual budget of the Halfway House when I started was \$98,059. So [the] check [I brought] for them was [about] 10% of the budget. That's what really got us out of debt and put us back on to some equal footing. Then the state and DMHAS started giving us opportunities to write grants. And we wrote our first grant and ... bought the house [I had lived in at 324 Howard Ave] for \$70,000 and that was our first program after the Halfway House.

Anybody that works at Continuum now couldn't possibly have a concept of what it was like in 1983. It was a different era ... and it was a very different mental health world. Drug addiction and abuse [were] nowhere near as prevalent as [they are] now, so the face of mental illness looked very different back in the '80s than it does now with the onslaught of substance abuse. In 1983, we just had the New Haven Halfway House, ... [which] had 11 people in it and you couldn't get in the Halfway House if you had any kind of substance abuse problem whatsoever. It was more for what we would probably refer to now as the worried well: college kids that had problems their first year of school, had breaks, dropped out of school, [and] needed help. They were young, 18-22 [years old], [with] no substance abuse involvement. [It was] very different than now where the median age is probably closer to 35 or 36 and probably 75%, if not 85%, of all our clients have some substance abuse involvement with their mental health issues. But back in the '80s we didn't know [as] much about mental illness as we do now, which laid the groundwork for developing all the new programs. Around '85, the Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services started recognizing the need for supported housing services, vocational services and other support services in the community for people with mental illness and ... started offering grant opportunities and that's when we ... started writing grants and opening residential programs. So it's just been a steady growth since 1983 — slow growth in the beginning, but now the growth rate is exponentially different in the last 10 years than it was in the first 10. The [percentage] growth rate [has been 15% every year for the past 10 years].

Continuum's growth speaks to your strength as a leader. Which experiences or people have contributed to developing you into the leader, president and CEO that you are?

I'm told that people do see me as a very strong leader. I'm not sure what it is that I do that makes that happen except that I'm stubborn and determined. But I have the vision for what I know is possible within this organization and my stubbornness and my determination to see that happen, I think, has been a good match with everybody else who has come on board, accepted that mission, and have been as ferocious about advocating for our folks and as determined as I am to build the very best possible network of programs for people. So we're a great team. I think [they] make my job easier now in many ways than it was before; much easier than it was in the first 15 years, despite how massive we are now. The challenges that we have now are very different. Some of them are very intimidating because of the sheer number of dollars involved. I have the best team of management staff that anybody could have. I know that any day that I walk out the door and can't come back to work for whatever reason [or] period of time I don't have to worry about what happens here because I genuinely know that the vice presidents of this organization know exactly what to do and how to do it and wouldn't skip a beat. So that's very stabilizing for the organization. I'm very complimented by people that tell me I am a good leader. I hope that that's true but a good leader can only lead when she's got great people working for her. And I do. My success here is truly ... based upon the successful team that we have built here of people that share the same passion, ... work ethics and values that I do.

What have you learned from the great people that you have gotten the chance to work with through the years?

Be quiet and listen. People need to be respected and validated and you need to let people be autonomous. A long time ago, we reached a point in the development of the organization [at which] I could no longer know everything that needed to be known nor could I do every job that needed to be done. It was very hard for me when I hit [that] point. The biggest managerial adjustment that I had to make was recognizing that it was not a sign of administrative weakness if I didn't know all the answers. I credit my ability to be able to get to that point to those great managers we just talked about who are still with us now [and] have also grown in their roles as vice presidents and have taken over much bigger pieces of the pie. *Continued on page 14*

Inside this issue:

Summer Fun at Continuum	3
What's New at Continuum?	4
You Are What You Drink	5
Ninth Annual Employee Recognition Dinner	6-7
Shumra Chambers, Reaching Home Hon-	8-9
Summer Fun at Continuum	10
What Influences Our Happiness?	11
Special Dates	12
Creative Corner	13
Patti Walker Q&A (continued)	14
Staff Development Training Calendar	15
Employee Anniversaries	16-17
Guess Who	17
One Word Essays	18
Autumn Sudoku	19

Summer Fun at Continuum



Christine and Yolanda from South Colony CRS attended the Connecticut Women's Expo at the Convention Center in Hartford with their staff Leslie Colburn and Christine Solecki on Saturday, September 6. They met the soap actor Eric Martsolf who plays Brady Black from *Days of Our Lives* and two WWE wrestlers! Everyone enjoyed their time at the Women's Expo and look forward to attending more events very soon!



Colleen Marotta did the ALS Association ice bucket challenge after being nominated by Darrelle from the YAS Michael Street Program.



ELP I and III enjoyed a day of bumper boats, mini golf and fun at the batting cages.



On Wednesday, September 17, DDS and its newly developed Fun Committee had its first Annual Picnic, held at the Southington Community Pavilion. Food was prepared by the Wolcott Fire Fryers and the DDS programs. The day was absolutely perfect for kick-ball, badminton, bocce and more! They had an amazing turn out and the take away sentiment was, 'Yes, we will do this again next year!'

What's New at Continuum?

Growing Up Together is a support group for Continuum residents who are in recovery or struggling with drug/alcohol use.

The group is different than the traditional Alcoholics Anonymous or Narcotics Anonymous because members are free to talk about their mental health and medications with the group's support and without feeling stigmatized.

Addiction is a dependency problem and it is not easy to recover alone. With support it makes it just a little easier.

The group is here to help its members grow, mature, and learn to make clear decisions and take responsibility for their actions.

Growing Up Together meets every Saturday at 10:00 a.m. for an hour at 1079 Whalley Avenue in the Westville section (diagonally across from McDonalds). There is a speaker the last Saturday of each month. There are no dues or fees.



A few Growing Up Together members

Personal Testimony from Olga (member):

In my personal life I was addicted to drugs and I realized I could not go it alone in my addiction. I had to trust and have something more powerful to stop my addiction. And I realized that GOD was my solution. I had to choose between addiction and my life.

We want to emphasize that Growing Up Together is not going to force you to choose between your addiction or your life. That's [a] very personal [decision] that only you [can make]. No one can make you do anything you do not want [to do], but we will be here to support you every Saturday.



The Smoking Cessation subcommittee of Continuum of Care's Health and Wellness Committee has started a **Smoker's Quit Support Phone/Text Line**. If you are interested in quitting smoking, or have recently quit and need support, pick up the phone and call or text someone that is in the same position as you. Elsa from South Central Peer Services is recently smoke-free and can be **texted** at (203) 809-3458. Kathleen from Brownell is also smoke-free and can be **called** at (781) 606-2900.

"It is not because things are difficult that we do not dare; it is because we do not dare that they are difficult."
-Lucius Annaeus Seneca



The Wellness Team sponsored a **fitness challenge** during the month of July, inviting staff from Mental Health Services to **track their workouts for 30 days** to earn one point for each minute of exercise and bonus points when clients participated in the activity with staff. The challenge was such a success, they are planning to do it with the DDS and CHH staff.

For the fitness challenge, staff members were divided into ten teams and the **three winning teams were Extended Living Program IV (1st place), Community Transitional Services (2nd place) and Young Adult Services (3rd place)**. Each program awarded one individual as a **Wellness Warrior** — this award was given to the individual from each program who consistently maintained the most amount of points for the 30 days.

Congratulations to our **Wellness Warriors** Taneha Edwards (Brownell), Xavier McCown (Crisis), Samantha Yatsinko (CIEP & CTS-Step Down), Alexx Arnold (ELP I), Ivette Altieri (South Central Peer Services), Gretchen Elder (Admin), Cecilio Sealey (Crawford), Rob Mumford (Michael Street-YAS), Brian De-Lauro (Burban), and Jennifer Turner (Bridgeport Crisis). Great job and keep up the good work!

You Are What You Drink

by Raymond Small, MD, MPH (former ELP I resident)

It has often been stated that "you are what you eat," but recently the saying has been changing with more of an emphasis on "you are what you drink." Obviously alcoholic beverages of all kinds and concentrations can drastically alter one's mental disposition – particularly for people who deal with various types of mental illness – and should be avoided by people living with a serious mental disorder. This is especially the case for those taking medication, as the sedative and depressive aspects of alcohol can negatively affect the properties of psychotropic medication in various ways. So "you are what you drink" is important to keep in mind for alcohol consumption, but did you know that soft drinks containing caffeine and/or high levels of sugar, such as High Fructose Corn Syrup (HFCS) – a type of sugar manufactured and stored in plants; corn in this case – and even refined sugar (scientifically known as sucrose) can significantly alter mental status too?

Several health related government agencies – mainly the National Institutes of Health (NIH), the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) and the American Academy of Family Physicians (AAFP) – agree that **soft drinks not only negatively affect body physiology and metabolism but can also alter one's mental status in both the short and long term.**

The first component of many soft drinks that can seriously alter mood is caffeine. This ubiquitous chemical found in many kinds of soda has been increasing in concentration over the last decade according to the Food & Drug Administration (FDA). Caffeine is a stimulant that promotes the production of the hormone epinephrine (adrenaline) in the adrenal glands, which can greatly increase one's mood as well as enhance mental alertness and productivity. The fact is that most people don't drink coffee or other caffeinated beverages because they "like" the taste; rather they are relying on the physiological and psychological effects they know caffeine consumption brings. And while there are those who can consume caffeine in moderation without ill effects, many others are reliant on it just to get through the day; some to the point of addiction.

The second component of soft drinks that is linked to changes in one's mental status is sugar. In the form of its natural or refined state (sucrose), or as HFCS

(fructose), sugar has a marked physiologic effect on the body, and even more on the brain. You may have heard people stating that they are on a sugar "high" or are having a bona fide withdrawal referred to as "the blues" where, not unlike illicit drugs, they may find themselves craving sugar when going without it. Sugar's power is believed to be both directly and indirectly related to brain neurotransmitters (chemicals that affect the nervous system; mainly the brain) and certain hormones derived and excreted from multiple organs in the body and brain. The neurotransmitter dopamine, often referred to as the "pleasure chemical," plays a major role in regulating mood as well as motor function. **High concentrations of dopamine are responsible for the euphoric "high" one feels from drinking alcohol or taking drugs. This is also the case for sugar.** When broken down and metabolized via the digestive system and liver to a simpler chemical form called glucose, sugar is responsible for indirect stimulation of the excretion of dopamine in the brain.

The elevated mood from sugar intake can induce mania or hypomania, even in those without mental illness. **Thus, if enough sugar in the body can cause mania in those who do not have a mental illness, then it could certainly have a more multiplied effect on those with mental disorders.** Additionally, when the high concentration of sugar in the body and brain starts to decrease, it can cause a withdrawal syndrome similar to the cessation of psychoactive drugs like alcohol and tobacco. This abstinence – while not dangerous to a person physically – is defined as a psychological withdrawal which can drastically lower one's mood to the point of clinical depression and even suicidality (though rarely).

Now, I'm not suggesting that you should completely avoid beverages containing caffeine and/or sugar. I am just saying **"everything in moderation,"** which makes good sense – even more so for those with a mental disorder or a predilection for one.



The World Health Organization's recommended sugar intake for adults is no more than 6 teaspoons a day, but look at how many teaspoons these sugary drinks have!

Ninth Annual Employee



On May 21, 2014, Continuum held our 9th Annual Recognition Dinner at Amarante's Sea Cliff in New Haven. The event's objective is to acknowledge staff who have been with the agency for three years or more. Our president and CEO Patti Walker celebrated her 30th anniversary with the Agency, indicative of her commitment to our clients as well as to the mission of the organization. That night over 100 individuals joined together to celebrate each other and socialize with the various programs that were represented at the occasion.

ee Recognition Dinner



A Standing Ovation: Shumra Chambers Walsh



Kathleen Walsh, Shumra Chambers, John Labieniec, & Raven Hodge at the Reaching Home Dinner

“Home is Where the Heart Is” rang quite true at this year’s Reaching Home Celebration Dinner and Housing Awards. This annual event highlights the successes of the Reaching Home Campaign created in 2004 to provide thousands of homeless Connecticut residents – especially those with disabilities – with supportive housing. Its founding goal was to create permanent and affordable housing alongside individualized community support services, and Continuum of Care is proud to be one of the most successful providers of these important client and community services. We are even prouder that **Shumra Chambers**, a Forensics client and Recovery Support Specialist with South Central Peer Services, was chosen out of thousands who have received housing through this campaign to be honored as a **2014 recipient of their Tenant Award.**

In front of nearly 500 onlookers – which included his friends and colleagues, his proud mother and sister seated front and center, and many state officials, including Governor Dannel Malloy who was also honored at this event – Shumra was introduced and then presented with the Carol Walter Supportive Housing Tenant Award, which he graciously accepted. He took to the podium to address the impressive crowd and shared his story, speaking humbly, triumphantly and honestly:

“I started to experiment with drugs and alcohol at twelve years old... [and] was kicked out of high school in the 10th grade because I was arrested for possession of a firearm in a motor vehicle. It was my first run-in with the criminal justice system, and it was also when I was diagnosed with bipolar disorder. After I was released from prison, my life took a downward spiral ... I was in and out of jails and institutions until 2009.

I was brought to jail because of an incident during a manic episode. This is when my life changed dramatically. I was referred to Continuum of Care by the Sierra Pre-Trial [Residential] Center. I went to the Brownell Street house where I was a resident for a year and a half. I was able to obtain employment, remain clean and sober, and stay connected to mental health treatment. I moved out of the program into my apartment in October 2010.

I am currently employed as a peer support specialist at the Connecticut Mental Health Center (CMHC) and I love my job because I am helping others achieve what I’ve achieved. I am grateful for all of my experiences, the good and bad, because they have shaped me into the person that stands before you. I would like to thank my family, friends, and Continuum of Care for being in my corner...”

After a standing ovation, the praise continued with congratulations, warm embraces from friends and loved ones (old and new), and with invitations to speak (including at our state capitol!), which he graciously accepted. *“I feel I can help someone by talking about it...I like to give back. If anyone ... needs a helping hand in a situation they’re going through, I am there. For all the programs I’ve been through ... I can help,”* shared Shumra.

And help he does. Shumra’s achievements provide wonderful roadmaps to success, not only through his ability to successfully maintain both his housing and his sobriety, but also through the powerful strides he’s made in his work as a recovery support specialist, his continuing education, and his contributions to his community.

Wins Hearts and This Year's Tenant Award!

He is living proof that choosing paths that lead away from the danger zones of addiction and crime are always the better routes. He established his foundation for success by choosing these paths and with the choices he has made and continues to make, Shumra proves that seeking the right supports for oneself in the community, staying engaged, and giving back are powerful and bold currency.

Continuum of Care is proud to have been there for Shumra when he transitioned back into the community, proud to have cheered for him at the Reaching Home Awards Dinner, and especially proud that Shumra himself stood up to his challenges, thereby becoming his very own driving force for success. The richness in his life today — *“especially the ability to give back to [his] son and clients,”* he shares — is best expressed in his own words as he describes what he calls his stress-free state of mind: *“clarity, gratitude, and leading by example.”*



Raven Hodge on Shumra's Road to Redemption

Shumra's road to recovery began in October 2009 when he arrived at Continuum of Care's brand new Extended Living IV/Brownell program. He was one of the first residents to arrive at this fresh and innovative program. Shumra had no idea what lay ahead of him but he stepped into his new future with both feet. His journey at Continuum has been one of tremendous struggle and strength. As an outsider looking in, it sometimes pained me to see him work so hard towards a goal just to be told no, but Shumra never gave up.

Shumra lived at the program for over a year before he found his calling to help others. He was the first resident at ELP IV to become a recovery support specialist. It has always filled my heart with joy to see that big bright smile behind the desk as I walk into CMHC. People are always saying how kind, gentle, and helpful Shumra has been for the staff and clients at CMHC. One of the most important lessons I have learned from him is about perseverance and courage. I am fortunate to know such a wonderful, powerful example of the fact that if you never give up, you can make it to the other side.



Artwork by Randall Stanton, ELP II/Blake St.

Summer Fun at Continuum



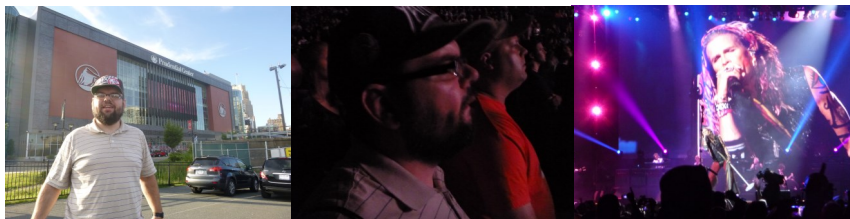
On September 4, Alan and John from CLA V had the pleasure of visiting Camp Harkness. They made craft projects for their families and friends, went on a nature walk, played Bingo and even had a scavenger hunt. Alan and John were ecstatic to take a tractor ride around the camp to see a different part of the beach and laughed and joked the whole way. They also enjoyed looking at some of the animals that grazed the campground. Before leaving camp, Alan played basketball with a few other individuals while John took pictures of some of the new friends he made. They both had a wonderful time and eagerly expressed their desire to attend next year's camping trip!



The Permanent Supportive Housing programs mingled with wild-life at the Bronx Zoo in July.



Continuum supported mental health awareness at the 10th annual CT NAMIWalks held at our state capitol.



Craig from the Sylvan PDD program's dream came true when he got the chance to see Aerosmith, one of his favorite bands, in concert. Darryl Pet-teway, staff at Sylvan PDD, accompanied Craig to the Prudential Center in Newark, NJ. Craig even had a front row seat at the concert!



W.I.S.E. watched the Bridgeport Bluefish play.



The fourth annual Resident Council cookout was a great success! Over 100 staff and residents from Continuum's Mental Health Service programs came to Lighthouse Point Park in New Haven to enjoy a variety of food (each program brought a dish), board games, kickball, music and dancing, fishing, and a walk led by Shelley Halligan. Everyone gave a helping hand to make this event a memorable day and all the hard work was much appreciated!

What influences our happiness?

50% is genetic disposition – we are wired positive or negative. **40% is intentional activity** – we can change our attitude and develop happiness. **10% is life's circumstances.**

Genes put you at a set point, but most people let life's circumstances influence them more than intentional activity, which has a greater impact.

Chasing after money and things will make you frustrated because once you achieve it you want more, like lottery winners for instance. Invest in experiences and memories for happiness.

Resilience is important. How fast you recover from adverse events will contribute to your ability to manage stress. Resilience is like a muscle. The more you practice it, the stronger it gets. Anticipate a challenge. Recognize emotional amplifiers, i.e., what triggers you. Use the resources that you have — past experiences and social support, for example. Practice skills like strategy games to help your brain increase its ability to solve problems.

Don't sweat the small stuff. Shift your attention to the positive instead of obsessing about the situation – acceptance instead of resistance or blame.

Adjust your outlook, or view on life. Are you an optimist who tends to see the good in a situation or a Debbie Downer who interprets good news in a negative way, e.g., "I won the lottery but now I have to pay all these taxes"?

Happy people identify negative

thoughts and judgments and consciously intervene to reframe them in a positive or neutral way. Unhappy people continue to dwell on the negative thoughts. You want to focus on how to recover from setbacks. Overcome the tendency to ruminate or resist. To acquire optimism, practice the habit of optimistic thinking. **View the glass as half full.** See what else is positive in your life and remember empowering times. **Focus on your successes.**

Or distract yourself by refocusing your attention on something positive, whether it's music, a book, or a happy memory. Doing this will provide the brain with a different activity. If the brain isn't sufficiently stimulated, it will try to relieve boredom by worrying and you need to get the brain to think about something else.

Happy people manage stress well. They view problems as predictable, temporary and manageable. Practice **proactive thinking** to develop the courage to create change and the patience to make incremental progress.

Every time you encounter a stressor, **STOP** and evaluate if you have some control over it. When you feel a problem can be solved, it is no longer a stressor.

But you don't actually have to be in control. You just have to feel as if you have control. Ask yourself, what can I do about the stress? If you don't have control, acknowledge it and accept it. Don't resist it. Happy people are less stressed and less stressed people are happier.

Be more expressive in your emotions. **Gratitude** has a major impact on happiness. Each day write down three things that

make you happy. Have **compassion** for others and show and tell people you care about them. **And accept your limitations.** Happy people tame their "inner critic." Perfectionists tend to be unhappy because they hold themselves to an unattainable standard.

Acting happy makes you feel happy, so manipulate your emotions. See the humor in everyday life and find an excuse to **laugh!**

Other habits to apply to your life for increased happiness include regu-

lar physical activity, which also helps you to sleep better, and the practice of **mindfulness**, or moment to moment awareness without judgment. Take time to lose track of time.

Be happy in the NOW.

Practical Tips for Mindfulness

- Take a couple of minutes to notice your breathing. Sense the flow of the breath, the rise and fall of your belly.
- Notice what you are doing as you are doing it and tune into your senses. For example, when you are eating, notice the color, texture and taste of the food.
- Don't feel that you need to fill up all your time with doing. Take some time to simply be.
- Recognize that thoughts are simply thoughts; you don't need to believe them or react to them.
- Practice listening without making judgments.
- Notice where you tend to zone out (e.g., driving, texting, web surfing, doing dishes, brushing teeth, etc.). Practice bringing more awareness to that activity.
- Spend time in nature.

Special Dates

October is National Breast Cancer Awareness Month (NBCAM).

Founded in 1985 by the American Cancer Society and the pharmaceutical division of Imperial Chemical Industries (now part of AstraZeneca, producer of several anti-breast cancer drugs), NBCAM's focus from the beginning was to promote mammography as the most effective weapon in the fight against breast cancer.



Breast cancer is one of the leading health crises for women in the United States and is the 2nd most common kind of cancer in women. 1 in 8 women will be diagnosed with breast cancer in their lifetime. There is currently no known cure for breast cancer, and its early diagnosis is critical to survival.

The good news is that many women can survive breast cancer if it's found and treated early, i.e., by getting a high-quality mammogram and having a clinical breast exam on a regular basis. The National Cancer Institute recommends women age 40 and older receive annual mammogram screenings to provide early detection of breast cancer. Breast cancer death rates are going down and there are currently about two and a half million breast cancer survivors in the United States.

There are many events and promotions during NBCAM to spread breast cancer awareness, raise funds for research, offer support to those affected by the disease, and, most importantly, highlight the criticalness of the early detection of breast cancer. There are walks and runs as well as special offerings in retail stores. Landmark buildings are often illuminated in pink during this time. Another notable occasion is **Male Breast Cancer Awareness Week (3rd week in October)**. It was estab-

lished in 2009 because male breast cancer, which is rare, is generally overlooked.



In 1990, **November** was first designated **as National Native American Heritage Month**. Also commonly referred to as **American Indian and Alaska Native Heritage Month**, the month is an opportunity to celebrate Native culture and traditions and learn more about the significant contributions made by the first indigenous peoples of North America and the unique challenges that they currently face.

Congress chose the month of November as it concludes the traditional harvest season and is generally a time of thanksgiving and celebration for the American Indians.

Here are a few interesting Native American facts:

Connecticut comes from the Mohegan word *Quinnehtukqut*, which means "long river place" or "beside the long tidal river."

The state-recognized sovereign Native American nations in Connecticut are the Eastern Pequot, Golden Hill Paugussett, and Schaghticoke tribes. The Mashantucket Pequot and Mohegan are both state and federally recognized.

As of the 2012 U.S. Census, there are more than 3.9 million American Indians and Alaska Natives living in the United States.

More than one-third of American Indians live in California, Arizona, and Oklahoma.

There are 566 federally recognized tribes.

Many American Indian words have become a part of the English language, including barbecue, cannibal, chipmunk, chocolate, cougar, hammock, hurricane, mahogany, moose, opossum, potato, skunk, squash, toboggan and woodchuck, to name a few.

Many of New York City's most famous skyscrapers — including the Chrysler Building, the George Washington Bridge, and the United Nations building — were built with the high rise construction expertise of Mohawk Indians. Mohawks from upstate New York and from the area around Montreal have been working on high rise ironworks construction projects since the 1880s, and continue to be experts in this specialized kind of building in the 21st century.



In this age of social media and smartphones, can you remember the last time you

composed a sentence without using a keyboard? **Write a Friend**

Month, celebrated during the month of **December**, aims to bring back the lost art of letter writing; **Letter Writing Day is December 7th**. Letters have such a personal

touch and can be saved and treasured for lifetimes. There is just something about holding a piece of paper in your hand and knowing that it was once in the hands of someone who cares enough about you to take the time to craft a heartfelt message to you without the aid of spell check or a backspace key. So, before you send that email or text message, consider dusting off a pen or pencil and putting it to paper. And there's no need to wait for December to get started. Imagine the joyful surprise your loved one will feel when they open up the mailbox and see a handwritten note from you!

Computers All in My Mind

by Anonymous

Computers, computer, computadora
Craziness in my mind
How it transports my thoughts and ideas
Into a realm I wish to leave behind

Pushing buttons, living information
As much freedom as one can see
But when I go to leave this place,
Far from a computer I wish to be

Computers, computer, computadora
Smash my head on the keyboard
Throw it in the bin, tie up the bag
And let out a great big SIGH!



Words of Wisdom

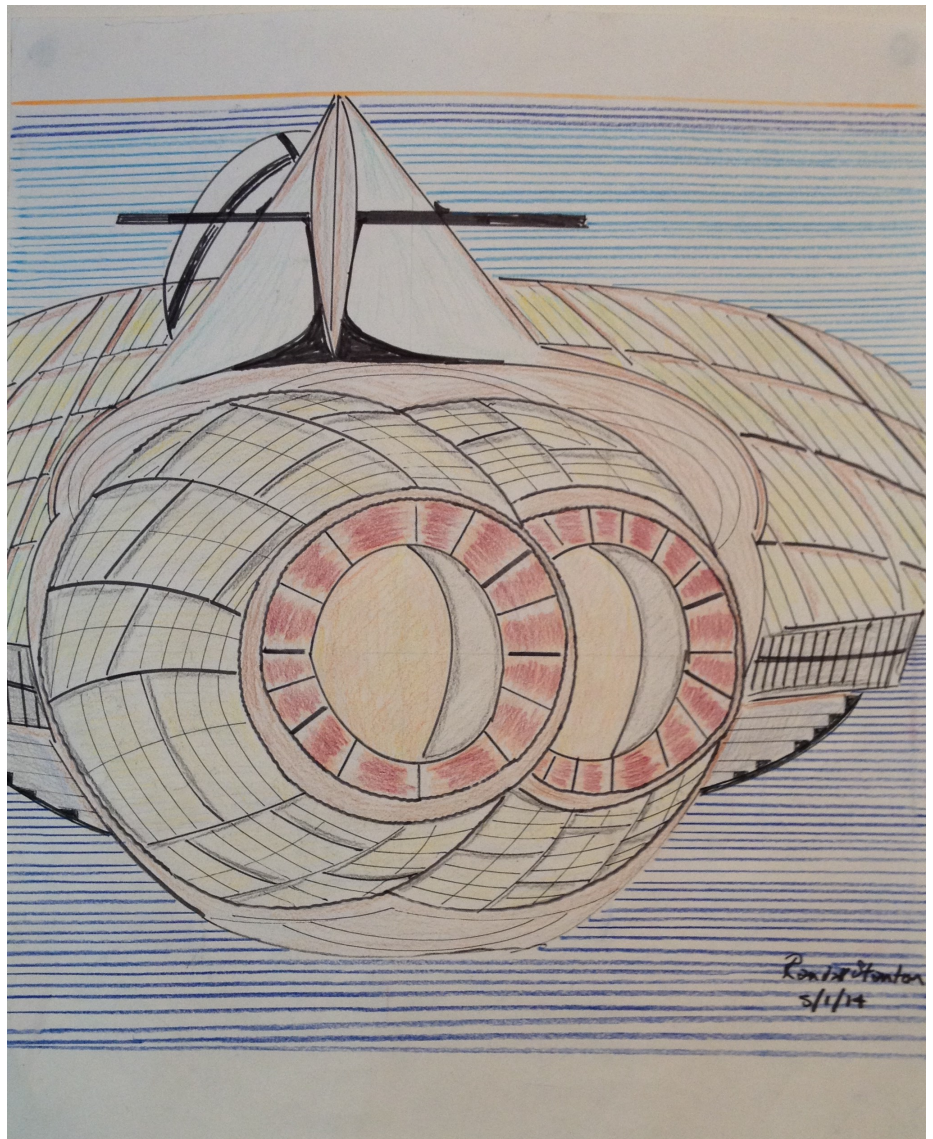
by Rick L. Best, The People's Poet

*It's better to have lit a candle
Than to have cursed
the darkness*



Creative Corner COLUET CLEAF!VE

Artwork by Randall Stanton, ELP II/Blake St.



Continued from page 2

When you look back at the different types of jobs you've had, which elements of those experiences do you realize contribute to what you do now?

My first job was a maid [in a hotel]. I was a nurse's aid. I was a physical therapy assistant. I did the scummiest, most disgusting jobs in the world. You do what you have to do. And I remember hating most of those jobs but also knowing that I had to do [it]. I have worked in a grocery store as a cashier. After [receiving] my bachelor's degree, I worked in a factory doing piece work until 5:30 in the morning because I couldn't get a job in social work. I also worked in Wisconsin and Michigan for the summers when I [was in] college [for] the Girl Scouts, which I'm sure nobody could believe I did. I did very primitive camping ... [and] led a group of girls [on] backpacking and cycling trips, [including] campfires, cooking outside, and the whole 9 yards, for three months straight. [You] put everything on your back, get on a bicycle, take a group of girls, and ride your bike for 60 miles, 70 miles, camp out for five days, [and] pitch a tent in a different place all the time. It was the best thing that ever happened to me. It was very physically challenging. It was very mentally challenging. It was a fabulous opportunity to learn what you're made of and what you can do.

I'm really grateful for the diversity of experiences that I've had. I think that I was always tenacious. I think that I was always determined and independent and stubborn. I think that my parents would have probably said that that was true. I did a lot more risk-taking than they were often comfortable with but they finally learned that that was what I was going to do. I think every job, every experience, [and] every major relationship help to identify who you're going to be when you grow up. I learned something valuable from every job that I ever had, whether it [was] that I [didn't] want to scrub another toilet. But ... when I was doing those really difficult jobs for next to no money there was still a sense of pride that I was able to do them — that I was able to make 50 beds that day and scrub that many toilets and do whatever it was that I had to do ... and not walk away from the job and say, 'Forget this. This is awful and I don't want to do it.' I knew that [if] I started something I had to finish it. I couldn't get a job and quit. That was ingrained in me.

What is the most rewarding aspect of the work you do?

The size of the organization makes me feel wonderful because I know that [at least] 1,600 people get life-essential services [every year]. 31 years ago ... we served 22 people on average in a year. [Continuum] has grown to service [people] with much better programming and much higher trained staff and much greater insight into [mental] illness. [It] is very exciting that there's so many more people that we can help, and do help, than we did 31 years ago. It is also inspiring that we have successfully opened so many different types of services that I think have really formed that "continuum" of services that we have always set as a goal. Our services funded by DDS have grown and the challenging needs of the clients we care for have only gotten more challenging. Continuum has a reputation for serving clients that other agencies won't consider because of the challenges they present. Those are the folks we learn the most from and have the greatest success with it seems. Our crisis programs are so impressive and well regarded in the community. I think we will continue to recreate these services throughout the State. Having a home care entity within Continuum speaks to our commitment to care for the whole person. I don't believe there is any organization in the country that offers the comprehensive community based services that we do and that makes me very proud.

What do you envision for Continuum within the next five years or so?

I want to see us open an outpatient clinic ... that specializes in home visits because so many [people] find it hard to access care; they have to go out of the house to get it. And they're so mistrustful, with very good reason, of the system because our system is very fractured. I want to have an outpatient clinic [that] we can coordinate with CHH. What a win-win it would be for the whole organization. We have so many people that are so seriously in need of specialized outpatient services. They're simply not offered anywhere else and I would like us to be a forerunner of being able to do that. I would also like to further our vocational employment services, ... which I hope opening [a] restaurant [in the new building will do].

Tell me more about the restaurant Continuum intends to have in the new building.

Well, my expectation is that it's going to be a great deli [and] that we're going to make all of our own bread and have a bakery, as well. The neighborhood said that they remembered ... there being a bakery there and they would love the smell of the baked bread on Sunday morning, [so] they wanted something like that. And I think that's awesome. So I was thinking if we baked our own bread and then made our own sandwiches on the bread that we baked, you could either [buy] bread or baked goods or you could come in and grab some kind of specialty sandwich. And nobody at Continuum would have to go anywhere for lunch except to our own place, and then we would get the high school right across the street, the ... hospital, CMHC, [and] all the businesses that are down there. I think it would be hard not to be successful. Having said that, we are waiting to design this component of the new building until we have done more due diligence as to what will be successful and welcomed by the community.

Will we be serving your mac and cheese there?

Well, it doesn't always have to be deli food. We could add other stuff like that, too. But, see, then I'd have to start cooking. Maybe that's what I should do in my retirement. Cook!



CONTINUUM STAFF DEVELOPMENT 2014 TRAINING CALENDAR



October 2, 2014: Domestic Violence

Introduction and overview of domestic violence, including the cycle of violence, power and control, safety planning and community resources.

Trainer: Roseann Moore, BHcare: Center for Domestic Violence Services

Location: 24 Sheldon Terrace, New Haven, CT 06510

Time: 1:30 - 3:00 p.m.

October 21, 2014: Charting

Charting items, including Monthly Progress Notes, Community Support Plans, Encounter Notes, TCMs, Medication Log, and Incident Reports will be reviewed. Examples with handouts will be provided. Staff are encouraged to bring examples of their work to be reviewed in the training.

Trainer: Dianna Gleason, MS, Quality Assurance Coordinator

Location: 1079 Whalley Avenue, New Haven, CT 06515

Time: 2:00 - 4:00 p.m.

****Please note that this training is on a Tuesday.*

November 20, 2014: Hearing Voices

“Hearing Voices That Are Distressing” is a simulation training program designed to provide a glimpse into living with the condition known as schizophrenia and other mental illnesses. Participants will experience being "symptomatic," i.e., hearing voices that are distressing while participating in several activities.

Trainer: Jim Farrales, LCSW, ACSW and David Ostrom, LCSW

Location: 67 Trumbull Street, New Haven, CT 06510

Time: 11:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.

****Please note that this training is limited to 15 staff. Lunch will be provided.*

December 2014: NO TRAINING THIS MONTH

Staff members are asked to please arrive 5-10 minutes early to trainings in an effort to begin trainings on time and out of courtesy to our trainers. Any staff arriving more than 10 minutes late will not be accepted into the training.

To register, please contact Dianna Gleason, Quality Assurance Coordinator, at (203) 498-4160 x3 or via email at dgleason@continuumct.org.

Happy Anniversary Continuum of Care

JANUARY

Renee Coe, 23 years
Anita Hardy, 14 years
Keenan Armstrong, 13 years
Yvonne Williams, 12 years
Xavier McCown, 11 years
John Labieniec, 10 years
Jacqueline Greene, 9 years
Amanda Ward, 8 years
Katisha Elliott, 6 years
Joshua Johnson, 6 years
Justin Mitchell, 6 years
Lakeeta Moore, 6 years
Ariel Pagan Jr., 6 years
Tony Bailey, 5 years
Regina Douglas, 5 years
Marcia Georges, 3 years
Ishalee Green, 3 years
Toni Carlton, 1 year
Le'Nise Gause, 1 year
Julienne Gousse, 1 year
Derrika James, 1 year
Dawanna Jones, 1 year
Jessica Medina, 1 year
Jermaine Morris, 1 year
Laquvia Myers, 1 year
Jessica Plakias, 1 year
Denise Sarosky, 1 year

FEBRUARY

Kimberly Brown, 11 years
Detrie Robinson, 11 years
Marilyn Wenzel, 11 years
Jeanine Avitabile, 9 years
Sonya Bethea, 6 years
Mary Bunn, 6 years
Angela Wynkoop, 6 years
Kenneth Butler Jr., 5 years
Jeffrey Tamizkar, 5 years
Natasha Brightly, 4 years
Lauren Hotchkiss, 4 years
Christina Lapierre, 4 years
Shamecca Piggott, 4 years
Gloryann Torres-Amaris, 4 years
Tequetta Valeriano, 4 years
Aiesha Wilkes-Phelmetto, 3 years
David Hall, 2 years
Ashley Madison, 2 years
Meagan Ortiz, 2 years
Gale Plancon, 2 years
Kathleen Walsh, 2 years
Larry Young, 2 years
John Davis, 1 year
Tarshima Downing, 1 year
Michael Gatobu, 1 year

David Hosfield, 1 year
Chakia Little, 1 year
Maria Lorenzo, 1 year
Adam McClain, 1 year
Gwendolyn McKinsey, 1 year
Demarcus Nixon, 1 year

MARCH

Michael Lucibello, 8 years
Monica O'Connor, 8 years
Stanley Labieniec, 7 years
Cynthia Nunes, 7 years
Trina Blue-Williams, 6 years
Sheila Bryant, 6 years
Kathleen Ryan, 6 years
Cheryl N Staggers, 6 years
Shaina Cotten, 5 years
Millissa Ellis, 5 years
Sarah McDonald, 5 years
Rochelle Bacote, 4 years
Tanyce Gambrell, 4 years
Cheryl Grady, 4 years
Michael Suraci, 4 years
Bradley Benson, 3 years
Tracey McLeod, 3 years
Tina Charbonneau, 2 years
Aaron Collins Jr., 2 years
Caitlin Dargan, 2 years
Melissa Davison-Wood, 2 years
Toni Dawson, 2 years
Victor Forbes Jr., 2 years
Alexia Hamilton, 2 years
Joseph Poswinski, 2 years
Anna Marie Belicia, 1 year
William Burnham, 1 year
Jillian Griffin, 1 year
Dorothy Naseerullah, 1 year
Chaz Phillips, 1 year
Tracey Teach, 1 year
Amy Velush, 1 year
Timothy Washington, 1 year

APRIL

Lisa Heard, 10 years
Martin Morrissey, 10 years
Michael Barkley, 8 years
Joseph Fernandes, 8 years
Darryl Petteway, 6 years
Alexander Quayson, 6 years
Raven Hodge, 4 years
Jessica Muolo, 4 years
Saige Tavaris, 4 years
David Chrzanowski, 3 years
Shelley Halligan, 3 years
Trevon Jones, 3 years

Velma Jones, 3 years
Marilyn LaLuzTaft, 3 years
Sally Bailey, 2 years
Jonathon DeLucrezia, 2 years
Jakub Majewski, 2 years
Damion Matthews, 2 years
Joan Murray, 2 years
Jasmine Perry, 2 years
Sarai Radford, 2 years
Brenda Taylor, 2 years
Henry Thomas, 2 years
Heather Tyson, 2 years
Daniqua Boulware, 1 year
Leslie Colburn, 1 year
Michael Edwards, 1 year
Patricia Formica, 1 year
Anne Gaetano, 1 year
Colleen Harrison, 1 year
Nickeisha Hill, 1 year
Mark Janatiss, 1 year
Jessica Knobel, 1 year
Marilyn LaFlamme, 1 year
Efrain Lopez, 1 year
Samantha Martinez, 1 year
David Miles, 1 year
Ashley Reynolds, 1 year
Israel Robles, 1 year
Vanelie Velez, 1 year
Janday Wilson, 1 year

MAY

Elizabeth Orlando, 13 years
Gisell Vivas, 8 years
Alanda Garner, 7 years
George Ruffin, 7 years
Ivelisse Segarra, 7 years
Twayne Clarke, 6 years
Damian Henderson, 5 years
Jenny Torres, 4 years
Manuel Antonio Cruz, 3 years
Elizabeth Figueroa, 3 years
Michelle Labounty, 3 years
Cicely Little, 3 years
Jacquelyn Morrone, 3 years
David Ostrom, 3 years
Karen Ostuno, 3 years
George Pipkin III, 3 years
Janis Staton, 3 years
Samantha Yatsinko, 3 years
Spencer Charette, 2 years
Corron Petway, 2 years
Marvin Taylor, 2 years
Melissa Dias, 1 year
Jocelyn Leakes-Hundley, 1 year
Catina Lewis, 1 year

Roxann Lindo, 1 year
Dwayne Shaw, 1 year
Alyssa Stapper, 1 year

JUNE

Romane Spain, 13 years
Diana Strong, 13 years
Cheryl Boisvert, 12 years
Maria Edwards, 11 years
Judith Trussell, 11 years
Ian Smith, 10 years
Raymond Lewis, 9 years
Scott Quirion, 9 years
Michelle Brockington, 7 years
Charles Salters, 6 years
Corey Cotten, 5 years
Katrina Robinson, 5 years
Noel Anderson, 4 years
Bonnie Czczot, 4 years
Keisha Hart, 4 years
Genovia Pope, 4 years
Taleim Salters, 4 years
Camia Brown, 3 years
Nickesha Mitchell, 3 years
Tenee Ricks, 3 years
Kelly Antonio, 2 years
Lisa Acosta, 2 years
Sharon Brown, 2 years
Viviana Bulls, 2 years
Marisha Daley, 2 years
Marvin Evans, 2 years
Roberta Harris, 2 years
Nedjine Marcel, 2 years
Adela Martinez, 2 years
Glenda Nowell-Fair, 2 years
Gandria Paris, 2 years
Isaiah White, 2 years
Carl Anderson, 1 year
Hope Armstrong, 1 year
Tamika Coleman, 1 year
Taneha Edwards, 1 year
Dianna Gleason, 1 year
Darvalle Grandville, 1 year
Kimberly Hamilton, 1 year
Omohar Henry, 1 year
Candace Little, 1 year
Kristen Luccia, 1 year
Prince Manu, 1 year
Marcquest Redding, 1 year
Jasmine Sanders, 1 year
Elsa Ward, 1 year

Happy Anniversary Continuum Home Health

JANUARY

Valerie Raccio, 9 years
Ruth Saunders, 7 years
Adrienne Scales, 2 years

FEBRUARY

Courtney Sutherland, 1 year

MARCH

Deandres Morriar, 6 years
John Spielman, 6 years
Lyecia Jackson, 5 years
Sven Mani Kunnappallil, 4 years

Frederick Agbomanyi, 2 years
Stephanie Edwards, 2 years
Shanikqua Blue, 1 year

APRIL

Kathy DellaMura, 13 years
Andrea Randlett, 12 years
Mona Blumell, 7 years
Travis King, 1 year
Karen Lynn Kornberg, 1 year

MAY

Penny Marotta, 12 years
Tamara Ciccocanti, 8 years
Eileen Tweed, 8 years
John Benvenuti, 5 years
Cyntrell Robinson, 5 years
Euphemia White, 5 years
Naim Langston, 4 years
Theresa Arrington-Heard, 2 years
Lisa Cioffi-Smith, 2 years
Stacey Brooks, 1 year
Mary Beth Morse, 1 year
Yvonne Salifu, 1 year

JUNE

Pamela Siciliano, 13 years
Francia Romero, 3 years

Welcome to all new Continuum employees!

Guess Who

Do you recognize these Continuum staff members?

Hint: They all work in the administrative office at 67 Trumbull Street.



A



B



C

One Word Essays



Accomplishment



Adventure



Contentment



Companionship



Beauty



Determination



Friendship



Honor



Awe



Relating



Security



Hope



Excitement



Heroism



Whimsy

"It took a long time not to judge myself through someone else's eyes." -Sally Fields

Just for Fun!

Autumn Sudoku

Every row, column and mini-grid must contain the letters A C O R N S.
Don't guess - use logic



S					O
		O	N		
	S	A	O	R	
	O	R	S	N	
		N	C		
R					N

Continuum of Care, Inc.
67 Trumbull Street
New Haven, CT 06510

Newsletter Committee members:

Reggie Bok - rbok@continuumct.org
Dominique Coleman - dcoleman@continuumct.org
Dianna Gleason - dgleason@continuumct.org
Debra Sticht - dsticht@continuumct.org
Janday Wilson - jwilson@continuumct.org

Contributors:

Lorena Barham-Moore, Rick Best, Kandis Cannon, Shelley Halligan, Raven Hodge, Rose Jackson, Colleen Marotta, Sarah Mount, Cindy Nunes, Darryl Petteway, Raymond Small, Randall Stanton, Kathleen Walsh, Elsa Ward

Thank you!

'Guess Who' answer key: A) Janday Wilson, Administrative Assistant, B) Debra Sticht, Executive Assistant, C) Myron Benton, IT Support Specialist

If you have any ideas for future newsletters, or if you would like to join the Newsletter Committee, please contact one of the members listed above. All comments and suggestions are welcome.