

VTDC Bulletin

Our Capabilities...Expanding Your Opportunities...

Project SEARCH's 1st Graduating Class



Those receiving diplomas include: Garrett Joseph Woelkers of Leeper, Benjamin Rice of Cranberry, Chastity Renee Oakes of Oil City, Eric William Lewis of Cranberry, Ricky J. Keverline of Kennerdell, Troy A Jansen of Oil City, Lacie Hart of Cranberry, Carol Ann Franklin of Cranberry, Tiffany Sue English of Oil City and Justin P. Campbell of Oil City.

The Project SEARCH High School Transition Program held its First Graduation on Wednesday, June 1st at UPMC Northwest in the Courtyard Conference Room. Ten students have been attending since August of last year, and finished the program receiving their certificate of completion. Over 65 students, family members, hospital managers and administrators, and business partners were in attendance.

Project SEARCH is a unique one-year only school-to-work program that takes place entirely at UPMC Northwest. Students participate in employability and independent skill instruction and are assigned internships in up to three departments. This program is made possible by collaboration between the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation, Riverview Intermediate Unit #6, UPMC Northwest Venango County Mental Health & Developmental Services and

Venango Training & Development Center, Inc. Cranberry and Oil City School Districts, as well as OVR were the referring sources for this inaugural school year. Although there is no guarantee of employment through this program, the goal for each student is to obtain competitive employment either within the UPMC network or in another community business. If students did not gain employment throughout the course of the year, they continue to receive supports through the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation, Venango County MH/DS, and/or Venango Training Development Center, Inc. upon graduation.

The graduation program included a Entrance Solo sung by Mrs. Jill Williams; Introductions by Miss Courtney Cox, Vice President of Human Resources and UPMC Project SEARCH Liaison; Departmental Recognition by Mrs. Paula Davis, Instructor

and Mrs. Dorothy Staub, Employment Training Coordinator. Job Coaches Amy Seybert, Shawn McGranaghan and Liza Manross awarded UPMC Northwest with Outstanding Mentors of Year Certificates. Those recognized include for individual recognition, Ginger Simons, Director of Nursing, Transitional Care & Rehabilitation Unit; for departmental recognition, the Health Information Management Staff. Student Graduation included reflections by each student, a video and certificate presentation. David Gibbons, President of UPMC Northwest closed the evening by commending the students for all their hard work over the past school year, for helping the staff to learn as well, and welcomed the new graduates to the UPMC Northwest team and family. A gathering reception immediately followed.

Submitted by: Dorothy Staub, Employment Training Specialist

Venango
Training
&
Development
Center

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June Staff Birthdays

06/02 Eric Mahlon—DuBois Truck Driver	06/23 Brenda Caltagarone—DuBois HCH
06/08 Angel Lutchter—The Cove Coordinator	06/23 Kara Crowley—WIA Youth Coordinator
06/11 Alyssa Cornmesser—Life Skills Coach	06/23 Donna King—BSU Receptionist
06/12 Rachel Boyer—One on One	06/25 Raymond Frantz—Seneca Truck Driver
06/13 Stacy Grigsby—Assistant Program Director—Facility	06/28 Rob Morgan—DuBois Assistant Program Director
06/14 Ed May—Plant Manager	

May Calendar Winners

DATE	LOTTO #	NAME	SELLER	\$ WON
05/01/10	292	Not Sold		
05/02/10	555	Denny Peden	Denny Peden	10
05/03/10	243	Sam Brown	Janeil Todhunter	10
05/04/10	090	Sandy Lange	The Cove	10
05/05/10	044	Not Sold		
05/06/10	322	Kathy Guth	Dixie Knight	10
05/07/10	929	Not Sold		
05/08/10	528	Not Sold		
05/09/10	486	Not Sold		
05/10/10	030	Kelly Haris	Dixie Knight	10
05/11/10	543	Jim Kerr	Randall Hickey	10
05/12/10	985	Not Sold		
05/13/10	595	Byham's Insurance	Denny Peden	10
05/14/10	869	Jack Preston	Linda McGranaghan	10
05/15/10	227	William Wheeler	John Kurtich	10
05/16/10	000	Jean Merwin	Lisa Groner	10
05/17/10	081	Meghan Keely	Lisa Barnhart	10
05/18/10	184	Mary Simmons	Stephanie Simmons	10
05/19/10	582	Terry Ruediger	Melissa Ruediger	10
05/20/10	270	Byham's Insurance	Denny Peden	10
05/21/10	595	Byham's Insurance	Denny Peden	10
05/22/10	384	Lavonne Hutchinson	Susanna Giesey	10
05/23/10	876	Not Sold		
05/24/10	447	Dan Gricks	Rachel Boyer	10
05/25/10	054	Craig Shipwash	Donna King	10
05/26/10	150	Michael J. Freeman	Michael J. Freeman	10
05/27/10	994	Not Sold		
05/28/10	232	Becky Wyne	Kathy Welch	10
5/29/10	580	Not Sold		
05/30/10	570	Patty Clonser	Randall Hickey	10
05/31/10	584	Glenn Edwards	Lisa Newberry	10

June Staff Anniversaries

9 YEARS JUANET SHEFCHUNAS WIA Assistant Program Director	1 YEAR RANDALL HICKEY The Cove
7 YEARS ALYSSA CORNMESSE Life Skills Coach—Seneca	BRENDA ZIMMERMAN Life Skills Coach—Seneca

New to the VTDC Family

May 2nd
SHEENA GOODMAN
Life Skills Coach—Seneca

JOEY PATASKI
Home & Community Hab—DuBois



*All our dreams
can come
true...
if we have the
courage to
pursue them.*

- Walt Disney -

DID YOU KNOW.....

Please enjoy the news from our VTDC family!



Dreama is the daughter of Tina and David Borger. (*Tina is the Coordinator at Morning Haus*) She is a senior at Rocky Grove High School . She is currently enrolled in the cosmetology program at the Venango Technology Center. She is the president of the Venture Crew 314 from Oil City.

Dreama is also an Indian Dancer with her Venture Crew. Dreama has just had her senior recital with Studio 22 where she also belongs to the dance competition team PEDAs. Her team received top honors at the dance comp in Pittsburgh. She has been dancing for 15 years. She belongs to the Oil Region Ballet company in which she has been in several productions and will continue to dance. Dreama will take her state boards for cosmetology soon and is currently enrolled in the fall to the Great Lakes Institute of Technology for the Massage Therapy program. She will also be teaching dance at Studio 22.

CONGRATULATIONS DREAMA!

Josiah Lutcher, Son of Angel Lutcher, (*Angel is the Coordinator at The Cove*) will be graduating from High School on June 3rd. On June 23rd, Josiah will ship out for **Navy Boot Camp**.



CONGRATULATIONS AND BEST OF LUCK TO YOU JOSIAH!



Timothy Staub, Son of Dorothy Staub, (*Dorothy is the Employment Training Coordinator*) will be graduating from **Oil City High School** on June 10th.

This summer, Timothy will be joining us here at VTDC working in **Macropack**.

In the fall, Timothy will be attending **Hilbert College** in Hamburg, New York where his Major will be Forensics and his Minor will be Psychology.

CONGRATULATIONS TIMOTHY AND WELCOME!



CONGRATULATIONS TO ALL OF OUR GRADUATES!

SOMETHING TO THINK ABOUT...



During my second year of nursing school our professor gave us a quiz. I breezed through the questions until I read the last one: "What is the first name of the woman who cleans the school?" Surely this was a joke. I had seen the cleaning woman several times, but how would I

know her name? I handed in my paper, leaving the last question blank. Before the class ended, one student asked if the last question would count toward our grade. "Absolutely," the professor said. "In your careers, you will meet many people. All are significant. They deserve your attention and care, even if all you

do is smile and say hello." I've never forgotten that lesson. I also learned her name was Dorothy.

~Joann C. Jones



VTDC FUNDRAISERS

VENANGO VTDC
TRAINING & DEVELOPMENT CENTER, INC.

2011 Annual Golf Scramble
Wednesday, August 24th, 2011
10:00am Shotgun Start

ENTRY FEE INCLUDES:

- 18 HOLES OF GOLF
- GOLF CART
- BEVERAGES
- LUNCH
- DINNER
- DOOR PRIZES
- HOLE PRIZES

Cross Creek resort

Call Denny at 814.676.5755 to sign up today!

TEAM BIG CHEESE



Team Big Cheese is participating at the Relay For Life event at the Oil City High School June 3rd. The event starts at 4 p.m. on Friday and continues through 4 p.m. on Saturday.

Linda McGranaghan, Brian & Juanet Shefchunas, Dorothy Staub, Mike Carothers, Jacki Fike, Rhea Jones, Stephanie Simmons, Angie Banner, Colleen Stuart and Kerri Bruce will be there.

Team Big Cheese has raised \$1,487 for the 2011 event so far. Since we began in 2007, we have raised over \$20,100!!!

We currently have a Schwan's pizza fundraiser going on, and a few candles left. Please ask a team member how you can help!

More details and pictures will be included in next month's newsletter!



Upcoming Fundraisers:

- **Friday Luncheons at Seneca Production Center:**
 - June 3rd—Sloppy Joe, Chips & Pop
 - June 17th—Meatball Sub, Chips & Punch
 - July 1st—Hot Dog, Chips, Sherbet & Pop
 - July 15th—Goulash, Fruit & Pop
 - July 29th—Walking Tacos, Applesauce & Pop

• **C/J Packaging & Distribution Fundraiser:**

Annual Summer Picnic, thoughts of \$\$\$\$ dancing in our heads! The staff at **CJ Packaging** has decided to sell **Sheetz coupons**. The coupon books should be arriving any day now. The fundraiser from **Sheetz** has changed a little, books are now purchased for **\$10 each** and include the following: *Free M•T•O® item, Buy One Get One Free M•T•go!® Sandwich or Parfait, Free M•T•O® Breakfast Sandwich, Free Bag of Fryz, Free Hot Dog (2), Free Specialty Coffee, Buy One Get One Free Nutz, Free Self-Serve Brewed Coffee or Fizz City® Fountain Drink (2), Free Sheetz Donut, Buy One Get One Free Nova Blue® Bottled Water.* **If you would like to purchase a booklet please call Kaylee at 375-7061. Thank you in advance for your support.**

WIA NEWS...

2011 Youth Awards Luncheon



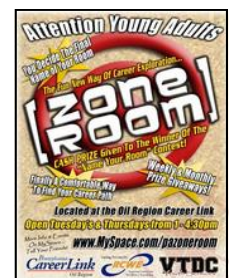
This year's annual Awards Luncheon was held on May 25th, 2011 at the Meadville Country Club. The purpose of the awards luncheon is to allow staff to nominate outstanding youth and partners for their dedication and commitment. There are 7 categories each year, Educational Partner of the Year, Employer of the Year, Community Partner of the Year, Older Youth of the Year, Younger Youth of the Year, Outstanding Industry Club Participant of the Year, and TANF Participant of the Year. The following are the winners in each category for our counties. Tyler Blair "Older Youth of the Year" (Venango Co), McKenna Hanely "IC Participant of the Year" (Forest Co), Jarrett Miller "TANF Participant of the Year" (Warren Co), Titusville YMCA "Community Partner of the Year". Congratulations to all nominees and winners. This year was the best so far, everyone was very pleased with location, food, and order of events. We even had our own Youth Ambassadors, Derek Hanely and Aaliyah Gordon speak about their experiences in the program.



An Update from... THE G.A.T.E

A student, age 20, was finishing his Industrial Business Program at Clarion University. He was referred to the G.A.T.E. by his parents. He was unsure of what type of industry he could get started in with his degree. I was able to sit down with and suggested that he look at opportunities with G.E. or Marcellus Shale. He took it upon himself to look at the Oil Region Job Fair and G.E.'s own website and apply for careers. This was in April 2011. Fast-forward to now. He decided to visit me today at Oil City High School. I was not expecting to hear him tell me that not only did he receive a job from G.E., but the job will be enough to financially support both his wife and himself. This will allow her to stay at home and assist with their family. He thanked me for my help with the G.A.T.E. and I told him to let more people know about it. He said that he would.

Submitted by: Michael Carothers, WIA Youth Coordinator



The Cove...

May is remembered for the beautiful flowers and fresh spring scents that it brings; revitalizing life after another bitter cold winter and ongoing spring showers.

The arrival of May (and hopefully a cessation of showers) is continuing to renew the energy stream at the Cove with a stream of events throughout the month that continue to come to increasing fruition.

We began with Angel's working with consumers on stories for the CSP recipe book; picked up cruising speed with the favorite Bingo time and kept a fast pace going with a Cinco de Mayo Celebration. The Celebration featured Tim's Tasty Tacos, rated a "T" for terrific by many satisfied taste buds!

The Cove also offers a helping hand to those in need for food with trips to the local food distribution sites; and with laundry needs as well. Providing access to these basic needs has been a great stress relief as well as another way to build comradeship and teamwork as each member helps each other with signups, procurement of food/sundries and helping each other transport it back to the van. Some consumers donate what food that is extra to the Cove (which helps defray some of the expense for all to dinners, etc.).

The schedule continues to fill with creative activities and this month included the first class by Angel in Painting with Acrylics. There was also music class by John Moore; T-shirt painting; Ceramics and ending the month with a planned trip to the Winkler Art Museum. There was also a Taffy Pulling day that demonstrated how to have your own Taffy Party. Sweet rewards!

These events may start small but interest grows once the fertile seed has been planted. These activities provide a relaxing, safe atmosphere as well as



a way for consumers begin to utilize art to express themselves constructively. It's also a way to make new friends and 'casual', informal talk therapy of a sorts. Some consumers who were 'wall flowers' and wasn't sure of even trying the Cove have begun to come more regularly and even on days there aren't crafts, just to socialize. Anyone who has suffered from depression and afraid to socialize would realize just how amazing that simple event is.

As the consumers gain confidence in themselves and their work, it stimulates them even more to explore the myriad world of the arts; music, dance, writing, various forms of painting, etc. With growing supports from each other and the Cove, the potential and hope is there that some may even find financial gain from their work, or even employment opportunities as they continue to strive towards their goal of recovery.

Another consumer has begun organizing and running a pool tournament which seems to be drawing



more interest monthly. Its great to see the group having fun competing, 'bantering' and all and all just having a lot of laughs.

Saving the best for last, the 9th and 10th of May were extremely busy for Angel, Randall, Cory and a few volunteers as they dusted, cleaned chairs, windows, equipment, rugs and so on. Randall did a wonderful job in cutting and trimming all around the Cove and saw that the van as well was cleaned and washed. It's a slow process to gather a large group to come clean, but as attendance and pride grows at the Cove it's hoped this group will increase as well.

The 11th of May greeted us with sunshine and tons of excitement as we gathered for the One Year Bash, which included two gift baskets (movie night and gardening themed), a buffet style luncheon and speakers. Artwork was also on display.

A group of consumers, working like a well-oiled machine, with guidance from Angel prepared for the event with setting up tables, flowers, preparing the luncheon and setting it up and then cleaning it up. It ran very smoothly.

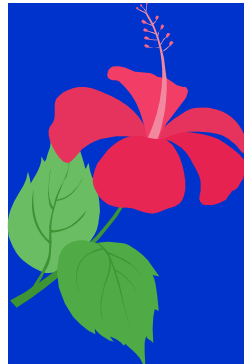
The event was honored with gracious and dedicated speakers such as Colleen Stuart, John Kurtich, Angel Lutchter, Bill Mendat and hosted by John Moore. Several peer specialists and a consumer talked about how the Cove has positively affected their lives on their own roads to recovery.

All in all, May has been a very busy month and ending with the art tour seemed a good way to continue to nurture future aspirations and activities that will empower and energize the Cove membership.

*Submitted by:
Angel Lutchter, The Cove Director*

Fairweather Lodge News....

Two of our Fairweather Lodge folks have recently made progress in their employment situations. Tim from Cranberry has been hired for the VTDC lawn crew and Michele from Grandview continues to gain hours at the BSU receptionist position. We congratulate them for their willingness and interest in improving their standard of living.... Several other lodge members have been volunteering their time helping out with the Morning Haus jewelry team. There is a recent opening at the Grandview lodge and several applicants have been interviewed. If you know of a mental health consumer that needs safe affordable housing contact John Kurtich at the Seneca site or call 676-5755.



*Submitted by:
John Kurtich, Fairweather Lodge Manager*

Morning Haus....



My name is Tina Borger. I'm the new Program Director for Morning Haus. I'm married to David and we reside near Cooperstown. I have 3 children Dreama, Lance and a step son Nic. Both boys are Eagle Scouts and my daughter Dreama is the President of her Venture Crew in Oil City. I also have a grandson Camdyn who will be one in April. I have most recently worked with Lifelong Learning programs where I have been a Tutor. I have been a woodcrafter for over 20 years. I belong to the Erie guild of craftsmen. I have been a Boy Scout Leader for over 13 years. Currently, I am a Associate Advisor with the Venture Crew in Oil City and most recently made costumes for the Oil Region Ballet.

Seneca Production Center News....



FUNDRAISERS UPDATE...



Our May fundraiser luncheons netted \$251.99! Please see the fundraiser page for future luncheons. This is a rough estimate, a couple orders aren't in yet, but Venango Production Center grossed approximately \$2550, and Clarion \$1500 from the Nature's Vision Fundraiser! This means approximately \$1620 for the picnic fund!

TRAINEE PICNIC

The trainee picnic is scheduled for June 24th at Morrison Park with the rain location being the Seneca Fire Hall. The busses and caregivers will be dropping off the trainees at the park or fire hall. Their schedule is as usual.

Here are some pictures of last year's picnic.



The trainees are happy that they can now wear summer attire.



*Submitted by:
Kathy Welch,
Program Specialist*

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The Mission of Venango Training and Development Center, Inc., is to assist disabled and/or disadvantaged individuals to achieve their highest potential by providing quality programs, services, and opportunities.



Volume 6, Issue 1



An Active Approach To Back Pain



If you suffer from lower back pain, your natural reaction to a flare-up may be to get some rest. But, in fact, inactivity can actually make back pain worse.

Resting a sore lower back can weaken muscles and cause joints to become stiff, both of which only add to the problem.

Of course, there are varying causes of back pain, and for people with extreme, long-lasting pain caused by spinal abnormalities, surgery can be the best option. But the fact is, staying active and exercising can be two of the best remedies for many types of low back pain. You should consult your physician for possible treatment options if your pain persists.

There are other steps you can take as well:

- Manage stress and depression — Many people with long-lasting back pain experience stress and depression, making their condition even more difficult to deal with. Yoga, relaxation techniques and other practices can not only help physically, but emotionally as well.
 - Get support — Serious back pain is difficult to deal with. Having an exercise partner, for example, can keep you motivated and positive.
 - Use treatment wisely — If you suffer from back pain, you've likely heard of a number of possible treatments. But beware — many have not been proven scientifically to work, and some can actually do more harm than good. Talk to your doctor before you try any treatment.
- Highmark provides three excellent resources for more

information and guidance on back pain:

- One of the Highmark Health Coaches can help you better understand back pain, help you weigh your treatment options and assist you in working with your doctor. CALL 1-888-BLUE-428 (1-888-258-3428) any time of the day or night, seven days a week.
- The Highmark Web site offers many health resources, including in-depth information on back pain, its causes and treatment options. To learn more, visit www.highmarkbcbs.com.
- Or login to www.highmarkbcbs.com and click on "Your Health" followed by "Improve Your Health" to enroll in the Health Media® Care™ for Your Back program.

The Lighter Side... From Denny

