

# Recovery is Possible!

PROSUMER—A PERSON WHO IS PROACTIVE IN HIS OR HER RECOVERY AND WHO PROVIDES OR GIVES BACK TO THE COMMUNITY.



A Prosumer is not who you are, it is what you do!

## PROSUMER NEWS

March

2008

Janet Paleo—Editor

Volume 6, Issue 03

### Prosumer Meetings

The 2nd Friday of the Month  
12 Noon to 3 PM

at the

UTHSC School of Nursing Auditorium  
All Welcome!

7703 Floyd Curl—Enter at the Louis Pasteur  
entrance near Babcock. Buses 91,92

#### March 14, 2008 Meeting

If you were made king and had the power to change the world, how would you want the world to be? Peaceful, happy, and exciting are words that pop into my head. Together we will explore the power to change. Intertwined in this discussion will be a very motivational speech by Kathryn Power, "*Being the Master Gardener of Your Life*." If you are ready to start living life, ready to stop the "yes, but" in your life, ready to really feel good, then this meeting is for you. A motivational, inspirational empowerment meeting from beginning to end. You won't want to miss this one!

#### April 11, 2008 Meeting

Unleash the power of your mind. We will be doing a project outlined in Shakti Gawain's 1978 book, *Creative Visualization*.

Come and have fun cutting out pictures and words from magazines and past-

ing them onto a collage called a Treasure Map. Shape your future by visualizing what you want today. This is a simple and powerful exercise that is remarkably effective. It is also uplifting and will unleash your inner ten year old as you create your Treasure Map.

**Prosumer meetings start with food, so please remember to RSVP to 210-653-5267 so that we have enough food to feed everyone. Remember: first come, first serve. We will see you there!!**

### Suicide: Research Synopsis by Lydia Martinez

Studies show that individuals who are labeled and treated as chronically mentally ill die on average 25 years earlier than their peers. They are twice as likely to die from external factors such as suicide. Recent research points to hopelessness as the single most important factor in suicidal ideation and attempt(s). Rarely, though, are consumers themselves asked how they alleviate suicidal ideation and its corollary, hopelessness.

There is one study, "*Coping with thoughts of suicide: Techniques used by consumers of mental health services*" that was presented at the 135<sup>th</sup> American Public Health Association Annual Meeting and Exposition in Washington, D.C. on November 3 – 7, 2007 that was researched by consumers of mental health services. This study was carried out in a statewide network of consumer-led forums. These forums were held in consumer-operated drop in centers, mutual support groups/peer education and advocacy programs. These settings are safe environments for consumers. They are inclusive, supportive of self-expression and supportive of choice and respect.

In these forums seeking out peer support was at the top of the list of strategies consumers used to counteract feelings of hopelessness, isolation and despair. Conversely, only 5% of the consumers said they would use the traditional mental health system as a first step in dealing with suicidal thoughts. Unfortunately, the Surgeon General's Call to Action for Mental Health does not speak to the importance of such shared communities of meaning — that is, the self-help and mutual support groups of psychiatric survivors.

Another significant aid in combating the hopelessness that leads to suicide attempts is spirituality. Here too, spirituality is often an under-appreciated aspect of the lives of consumers. Basically,

### REFLECTIONS ON RECOVERY Is There Fate?

By Sarah Ho, Kona, Hawaii

A recent episode on 'Oprah' featured a gentleman who was speaking about the importance of paying attention to our body's signals that something in our environment might be dangerous because those signals are usually true. Mindfully honoring those instincts could save our lives. In this context, he quoted Carl Jung: "What we do not make conscious emerges later as fate."

"What we do not make conscious emerges later as fate." This saying implies many things. It bears thinking about.

Some of us believe there is Fate, a sort of inevitable destiny. But doesn't the destiny of each of us lie within ourselves? And isn't it this that makes it inevitable?

I just went through a difficult time in my 35-year marriage. Things are much better now. We both had to grow, learn some new behavior patterns and stop doing some other ones. We had to put peace and caring ahead of 'being right.' We had to choose kindness over dominance. We had to live more genuinely. Part of healing all this is involved with growing older: we have less time. But we were driven to it: we could no longer live the other way. Something inside us both wanted to create something better.

Recovery is exactly this process. We only feel truly good/warm/free inside when we are doing the loving thing. If we are healing from trauma and adversity (which is everybody), we need to bathe our minds and hearts and bodies in energies that promote peace.

Consciousness or mindfulness is the key to all of it: getting well, staying well, knowing that Recovery = Life = Freedom = Lightness of Being.

It is up to each of us what we want to become. Do I stay as I am,

connectedness to a Higher Power and/or through mutual relationships is the first line of defense against suicidality. To emphasize, environments of mutual peer support have an immensely important role to play in minimizing the stigma of suicide and its concurrent isolation and sense of hopelessness.

This is why groups like the Prosumers can literally make a life or death difference in the lives of psychiatric survivors. The Prosumers salutogenic approach to recovery fosters a sense of meaning and purpose, as well as the peer environment that mitigates hopelessness. When there is a renewed sense of hope in the life of a psychiatric survivor through the process of recovery and through the reciprocity of peer relationships it serves as a natural prevention against suicidality.~

**Editors Note:** There is a lot of work and studies done for helping people with mental illness. However, as this study cleared showed, by not involving consumers in the studies and in the work, it is money that is not always used effectively.

**Every once in a while, take the opportunity to look around you, at the things that bring you joy. Do not take your happiness for granted.**



## Low-income electricity customers in Texas to get discount

By ELIZABETH SOUDER /  
The Dallas Morning News



Low-income electricity customers will get a 20 percent discount this summer since the Legislature finally funded the program after a five-year

hiatus.

Texans have been paying for the discount since lawmakers deregulated the electricity industry, but in 2003 the state used the funds for other budgetary items, and the discount vanished.

Last year, the Legislature passed a law to ensure that the money in the System Benefit Fund would go toward the low-income discounts, and on Monday the Public Utility Commission said it authorized the discount for people in deregulated areas.

All electricity customers in deregulated areas pay 65 cents into the fund for every 1,000 kilowatt-hours of electricity they use - and the average household uses about 1,000 kilowatt-hours a month.

Low-income customers will get the discount from May to September. People living at or below 125 percent of the federal poverty line - \$26,500 a year - qualify for the program, as well as people who receive other benefits.

Around 366,000 customers have been identified for the program. To enroll, call 1-866-454-8387.~

or do I change? Am I willing to learn and grow from what happens to me? How do I see the world, and what do my views say about me? What in my life needs my loving attention? Do I attempt the scary thing that might make me more well? Do I feel like a victim? Do I feel safe? What kind of person do I want to be?

When we ask ourselves these questions, we grow in consciousness. With new self-awareness, we can begin to see things we hadn't noticed before. And the more we notice, the more we can be responsible for: we can 'own' it and change it. Our mindfulness grants us the option of choice.

"What we do not make conscious emerges later as fate." Although it might feel easier to let Life roll over us, I'm betting that most of us would prefer to struggle consciously with our mind's roadblocks. The tricky part is seeing what those roadblocks are.

Suddenly, I find myself remembering my friend who cannot control his temper, and a woman whose voices almost never stop, a guy whose meds give him horrible side effects, and my support group member who isn't sleeping. Is their consciousness any different from yours and mine? Is there some key to their wellness that they haven't yet found? Do they want to get well? When the desire to get well is what's broken, how can one proceed? Clearly, I have no right to pass judgment on any person's life. These apparently 'stuck' places may be working magic and growth within that is not immediately visible to someone outside.

I don't know, my brothers and sisters, what is meant to be - Fate, if you will. I don't know how limited we are by our physical selves. I don't know at what level, if any, we might choose our physical selves. I cannot necessarily see the lessons in each life. Every compassionate understanding I have says that all consciousness is equally blessed, a frog or kitty no less than you or me. Every created thing has this Oneness running through it, don't you think? And, there is a timing to recovering, as well as a desire and all the hard work.

All I know, really, is this moment. Sometimes I think that all of Life, all of Recovery, is nothing but a journey into the Present.~

Hey Prosumers! It's time to walk and recover at the same time. Join the Prosumer team on April 12, 2008. If you are walking, join in and start practicing today. NAMI holds a yearly walk for their organization which helps individuals and families with "mental illness". Please call Janet to sign up for the Prosumer's team. Our team captain, Kayla will contact you to help you register and raise funds for this great organization. If you can not walk a 3k don't worry!!!! You can give water to walkers, walk a shorter route or even just donate money. Although this is a fundraiser, it is just as important to come show your support by walking or cheering others on. Please consider doing something to give back to this organization that has supported our Prosumer Program in many ways.

## S.A.L.S.A.

San Antonio League  
of Self-Advocates

*An organization of people with  
intellectual disabilities, speaking up  
for their human and civil rights*

All are welcome at our meetings.  
We meet on the 1st & 3rd  
Tuesdays of the month.

**March 4, 2008**  
Regular Meeting  
**6:30-8:00 p.m.**

**March 18, 2008**  
Regular Meeting  
**6:30-8:00 p.m.**

Meetings are held at  
Brighton, the Center for  
Inclusive Communities  
14207 Higgins  
(One-half mile west of Nacogdoches,  
between Thousand Oaks and  
O'Connor)  
For More Information call  
Jomel Crayton, chair  
210-590-1348  
Judith Laufer, Advisor  
**210-828-7125**

**Phone number for Children's  
Crisis & Eligibility/Enrollment is  
210-299-8139.**

### Home Comforts

A small non-profit which works to help people with mental illness who are moving into independent housing with household furniture and cleaning supplies.

To use these services, have your case manager call 222-8736 for more information, or e-mail [bexarhome-comforts@satx.rr.com](mailto:bexarhome-comforts@satx.rr.com). Brochures and applications for assistance are available on request at the same contact number.

**Find happiness by  
scheduling quality  
time for yourself to  
do things that are  
unrelated to  
anything else that  
you do.**

# What's New?

The Prosumer Program is expanding, growing and reaching new heights. We have seated the Steering Committee for the Prosumer Program. The new officers are:

**Michelle Mata—Chair**

**Lydia Martinez**

**Janie Swatzell**

**Debbie Neisler**

**Jim Eifler**

The Steering Committee has taken on several duties. The first is that approximately every other month, we will have a group volunteer project. Our first project will be the NAMI Walk on April 12, 2008. Even if you have trouble raising money, come walk with us to show your support. We also need cheerleaders.

The Steering Committee and a few other Prosumers attended the Mental Health Transformation Focused Forum in Austin on Tuesday, February 19, 2008. I think we were rather a surprise to the Forum, and many really heard that consumers want to focus on recovery and wellness. We had a great time.

A wonderful opportunity has come up for the Steering Committee. The Center for Mental Health Services (CMHS) a federal agency that is part of the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration within the US Department of Health and Human Services, is leading national efforts to improve prevention and mental health services for all Americans. As part of its efforts, CMHS is having a regional meeting in Oklahoma City on March 27 to identify the needs, issues, and concerns of people with mental illnesses (also known as consumers, survivors, and clients); gather input and suggestions for CMHS activities; and facilitate networking to foster transformation in mental health systems. Representatives from Arkansas, Louisiana, New Mexico, Oklahoma and Texas will participate.

The kicker is that no money was made available for consumers to get to this Regional Meeting. But being Prosumers, we will not let that stop us. We are raising our own money to go. We are having a bowl-a-thon on March 16 at noon at the Thousand Oaks Brunswick Bowling Alley. The bowling alley had donated 30 games, (10 people bowling 3 games each). Our goal is to raise \$1,000 for food, gas and lodging. If you would like to help raise money or donate money for the Steering Committee to get to this event, please contact Janet at 210-653-5267.

An added incentive happened shortly after we got this announcement. Lubbock has asked us about starting a Prosumer Group there. So, we decided that on our way home from Oklahoma City, we are going to stop in Lubbock and put on a Prosumer Meeting. This is a great opportunity for the consumers of Lubbock to hear from several of our members. I know it will be a great experience for all.

Also, your Steering Committee is working hard on the Concert. We just got word that State Representative Mike Villarreal has accepted our invitation to emcee the concert. What a wonderful opportunity for him to interact with consumers in recovery. Also, we have 5 consumer organizations that are in the Mental Health Coalitional, Prosumers, Alliance for Mental Health Consumers Rights, The Depressive Bipolar Support Alliance of San Antonio, The Depressive Bipolar Support Alliance of Bexar County and Our House Clubhouse. The singers are awesome and so are the songs. We are still looking for advertisements in the handbill, if you know someone who wants to place an ad. Also, tickets go on sale the first of March. Tickets are \$15.00 but you can get in free if you volunteer to work the concert. Contact Janet about volunteer opportunities at 210-653-5267.

**Thank all of you who work so hard to make our group be so great!**

2008

March

2008

S	MON	TUE	WED	THUR	FRI	SAT
	March 3 <b>AMHCR Arts &amp; Crafts</b> 11-2 S. Presa <b>DBSA</b> 7 pm @8026 Floyd Curl	March 4 <b>DBSA CF</b> 6 pm @210 South Grimes <b>Anxiety Sup Grp</b> 6:30-8pm 566-5783	March 5 <b>Womens Sup Grp</b> 10 S.Presa <b>Concert Planning</b> 1:00 S. Presa <b>Arts &amp; Crafts</b> 1-3 S. Presa <b>Dual Recovery Grp</b> 12 S.Presa <b>AMHCR Coping with Anxiety</b> 7pm @ Central Library Room 5.1	March 6 <b>DBSABC</b> 7pm @758 Ramsey <b>Prosumer Journaling</b> 2 pm 653-5267	March 7 <b>AMHCR Schizophrenia Anonymous</b> 11:30 am @ Central Library Room 5.1	3/08 <b>AMHCR PTSD-Armed Services</b> (All welcome) 10:00 @ Central Library
9	March 10 <b>AMHCR Arts &amp; Crafts</b> . 11-2 S. Presa <b>DBSA</b> 7 pm@8026 Floyd Curl	March 11 <b>DBSA CF</b> 6 pm @210 South Grimes <b>Anxiety Sup Grp</b> 6:30-8pm 566-5783 <b>NAMI</b> 7 pm 510 Belknap	March 12 <b>Womens Sup Grp</b> 10 S Presa <b>Arts &amp; Crafts</b> 1-3 S. Presa <b>Dual Recovery Grp</b> 12 S.Presa  <b>AMHCR Coping with OCD</b> 7 pm @Central Library Room 5.1	March 13 <b>Mental Health Support Grp</b> 7 pm St. George Episcopal Church, 6904 West Ave 342-4261  <b>DBSABC</b> 7pm @758 Ramsey	March 14 <b>Prosumer Meeting</b> 12-3 School of Nursing	3/15
16	March 17 <b>AMHCR Arts &amp; Crafts</b> 11-2 S. Presa <b>AMHCR Coping with Anxiety</b> @6:30pm <b>DBSA</b> 7 pm@8026 Floyd Curl	March 18 <b>DBSA CF</b> 6 pm @210 South Grimes <b>Anxiety Sup Grp</b> 6:30-8pm 566-5783	March 19 <b>Womens Sup Grp</b> 10 S.Presa <b>AMHCR Dual Recovery Grp</b> 12 S.Presa <b>Concert Planning</b> 1:00 S. Presa <b>Arts &amp; Crafts</b> 1-3 S. Presa	March 20 <b>AMHCR General Meeting</b> 1 P.M.  <b>AMHCR Board Meeting</b> 1:30 p.m. @ S. Presa—Free lunch for all who attend  <b>DBSABC</b> 7pm @758 Ramsey <b>Prosumer Journaling</b> 2 pm 653-5267	March 21 <b>AMHCR Schizophrenia Anonymous</b> 11:30 am @ Central Library Room 5.1	3/22 <b>AMHCR PTSD-Armed Services</b> (All welcome) 10:00 @ Central Library Rm 5.1
23	March 24 <b>AMHCR Arts &amp; Crafts</b> 11-2 S. Presa <b>DBSA</b> 7 pm@8026 Floyd Curl	March 25 <b>DBSA CF</b> 6 pm @210 South Grimes <b>Anxiety Sup Grp</b> 6:30-8pm 566-5783	March 26 <b>Womens Sup Grp</b> 10 S.Presa <b>Arts &amp; Crafts</b> 1-3 S. Presa <b>AMHCR Dual Recovery Grp</b> 12 S.Presa <b>AMHCR Parents &amp; Siblings of Children with Mental Illnesses</b> 7:00@Central Library, Rm. 5.1	March 27 <b>AMHCR Life Skills</b> 2pm @SAILS 2:00 p.m  <b>DBSABC</b> 7pm @758 Ramsey	March 28	3/29 <b>AMHCR Meet up Bipolar Sup Grp</b> 3 pm @ Central Library Rm. 5.1
30	March 31 <b>AMHCR Arts &amp; Crafts</b> 11-2 S. Presa <b>DBSA</b> 7 pm@8026 Floyd Curl	April 1 <b>DBSA CF</b> 6 pm @210 South Grimes <b>Anxiety Sup Grp</b> 6:30-8pm 566-5783	April 2 <b>Womens Sup Grp</b> 10 S.Presa <b>Concert Planning</b> 1:00 S. Presa <b>Arts &amp; Crafts</b> 1-3 S. Presa <b>AMHCR Dual Recovery Grp</b> 12 S.Presa	April 3 <b>DBSABC</b> 7pm @758 Ramsey <b>Prosumer Journaling</b> 2 pm 653-5267	April 4	4/5

\* Please check time and place prior to going to any of the meetings. Numbers are on the next page.

Planning for the next **Positively Me! Concert 2008** is underway. If you would like to be a part of the next concert, please contact Janet at **210-653-5267**. Come join us! We always have lots of fun.

**“When you are inspired by some great purpose, some extraordinary project, all your thoughts break their bonds: Your mind transcends limitations, your consciousness expands in every direction, and you find yourself in a new, great, and wonderful world. Dormant forces, faculties and talents become alive, and you discover yourself to be a greater person by far than you ever dreamed yourself to be.” Patanjali**

**Mental Health Support Group.  
St. George Episcopal Church  
6904 West Avenue in Conference Room.  
Every 2nd Thursday at 7 pm.**

Editor in Chief—Janet Paleo, PRO International, P.O. Box 120394 San Antonio, TX 78212

The views expressed in this newsletter do not necessarily reflect the views of the editor or any of its sponsors.

## CALENDAR NAMES, ADDRESSES and PHONE NUMBERS

**Prosumer Group**- 210-653-5267 [www.ProsumersInternational.org](http://www.ProsumersInternational.org) PO Box 120394 San Antonio, TX 78212 Main meeting meets at the School of Nursing.

**24/7 Crisis Clinic**—Address is 520 N. Leona 2nd Floor (the Brady Green). 210-225-5481.

**Crisis Hotline** for people feeling suicidal, homicidal or people not doing well mentally 210-223-7233 or 1-800-316-9241.

**CHCS** - Center for Health Care Services address is 3031 IH 10 West (Central Office) 210-731-1300

**MR PNAC** - Mental Retardation Planning & Network Advisory Committee

**BHPNAC**—Behavioral Health Planning & Networking Advisory Committee for individuals with mental health and/or substance abuse issues

**CHCS Adult Mental Health Intake**—Address is 1921 Burnet 210-223-4061

**S. Presa CHCS Consumer/Family Support**—Address is 5802 S. Presa 210-436-8018

**Children's Clinic for Crisis 7 Eligibility/Enrollment**—Address is 711 E. Josephine 210-299-8139

**Burnet Clinic** - Address is 1920 Burnet 210-227-3401

**Palo Alto Clinic**—Address is 2711 Palo Alto Road 210-533-2577

**North West Clinic**—Address is 9502 Computer Dr # 100 210-615-5700

**Zarzamora Clinic** - Address is 806 S. Zarzamora 210-434-7001

**Advocacy Inc.** - Address is 6800 First Park Ten Blvd. 210-737-0499 [www.advocacyinc.org](http://www.advocacyinc.org)

**Anxiety Support Group**— Address is 8265 Manderly, Converse 210-566-5783- Rene or email: [RMontf4221@aol.com](mailto:RMontf4221@aol.com).

**AMHCR** - Alliance for Mental Health Consumers Rights usually meets at S. Presa. For more info call 210-436-8018 ext 307 or 210-535-2025 or [SaMentalHealth@sbcglobal.net](mailto:SaMentalHealth@sbcglobal.net) or [www.SaMentalHealth.org](http://www.SaMentalHealth.org). Office located at 5802 S. Presa

**DARS (Formerly TRC) Mary Murphy** is the liaison to CHCS clients. For services call 210-924-9205

**DBSA** --Depressive Bipolar Support Alliance meets at 8026 Floyd Curl 210-945-0689

**DBSA BC**—Depressive Bipolar Support Alliance Bexar County meets at 758 Ramsey, Holy Cross Church Call Michael at 214-532-3896

**DBSA CF** --Depressive Bipolar Support Alliance Christian Family meets at 210 South Grimes St. Call Willie 210-315-1298

**Fair Housing Council of Greater San Antonio**- Address 4414 Centerview Drive, Suite 170 210-733-3247 Office

**Home Comforts** —210-222-8736 for help getting furniture and cleaning supplies.

**NAMI SA** - National Alliance for the Mentally Ill of San Antonio 210-734-3349

**Mental Health Support Group** — St. George Episcopal Church 6904 West Avenue 210- 342-4261 for more information

**Peer-to-Peer and Family Support Group** -San Juan de los Lagos Church at 3231 El Paso St. Call 210-436-8018 for more information

**School of Nursing** -- Main Entrance is 7703 Floyd Curl Drive, but the entrance on Louis Pasteur is closer to the room. Room is the auditorium. Call Janet Paleo at 210-736-5034 if you need a map.

**SAILS** - San Antonio Independent Living Services address is 1028 S. Alamo Drive 210-281-1878

**VIA Metro Center** — Address is 1021 San Pedro 210-362-2020 Monday - Friday 7:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m. Call for help with bus schedules and bus transfers

These committees are open to the public and will receive public comment. If you are interested in serving on one of these committees, contact: Evelyn Sanchez at 210-731-1300 ext 269



## Our Elected Officials

**SENATOR LETICIA VAN DE PUTTE,**  
SENATE DIST 26  
700 N. Saint Mary's St., Suite 1725-A, SA, TX 78205  
(210) 733-6604 Closest Bus Route: Downtown

**REPRESENTATIVE TREY MARTINEZ FISCHER,**  
HOUSE DIST116  
1910 Fredericksburg Road, SA, TX 78201  
(210) 737-7200 Closest Bus Route: 92

**REPRESENTATIVE JOE STRAUS,**  
HOUSE DIST 121  
P.O. Box 2910, Austin, TX 78701  
(210) 828-1411 Closest Bus Route:

**REPRESENTATIVE, JOE FARIAS**  
HOUSE DIST 118  
P.O. Box 2910, Austin, TX 78768  
(512) 463-0714 Closest Bus Route:

**SENATOR JUDITH ZAFFIRINI,** SENATE DIST 21  
12702 Topperwein, Rd. Suite 214, SA, TX 78233  
(210) 657-0095

**SENATOR CARLOS I. URESTI,** SENATE DIST 19  
1114 SW Military Drive, Suite 103, SA, TX 78221  
(210) 932-2568 Closest Bus Route:

**REPRESENTATIVE ROBERT R. PUENTE,**  
HOUSE DIST119  
2823 East Southcross, SA, TX 78223  
(210) 532-8899 Closest Bus Route: 34

**REPRESENTATIVE FRANK J. CORTE,**  
HOUSE DISTRICT 122  
2040 Babcock Rd., Ste. 402, SA, TX 78229  
(210) 349-0320 Closest Bus Route: 520

**REPRESENTATIVE RUTH JONES MCCLENDON,**  
HOUSE DIST120  
403 South WW White Road, Suite 210, SA, TX 78219  
(210) 225-2107 Closest Bus Route: 25, 550, 551

**SENATOR JEFF WENTWORTH,**  
SENATE DIST 25  
1250 N.E. Loop 410, Suite 925 SA, TX 78209  
(210) 826-7800 Closest Bus Route: 10

**REPRESENTATIVE DAVID LEIBOWITZ,**  
HOUSE DIST 117  
P.O. Box 2910, Austin, TX 78768  
Closest Bus Route:

**REPRESENTATIVE JOAQUIN CASTRO,**  
HOUSE DIST 125  
6502 Bandera, Ste. 106, SA, TX 78238  
(210) 684-6896 Closest Bus Route: 88

**REPRESENTATIVE MIKE VILLARREAL,**  
HOUSE DIST123  
1806 Blanco Rd, SA, TX 78212  
(210) 734-8937 Closest Bus Route: 2

**REPRESENTATIVE JOSE MENENDEZ,**  
HOUSE DIST 124  
7121 US Hwy. 90 West, Suite 240, SA, TX 78227  
(210) 673-3579 Bus Route: 76

## Useful Websites and Links

An Online Wellness Tool

[www.ProsumersLightaCandle.org](http://www.ProsumersLightaCandle.org)

The Prosumer website

[www.ProsumersInternational.org](http://www.ProsumersInternational.org)

PRO International for Empowermentware

[www.TheProInternational.com](http://www.TheProInternational.com)

National Consumer/Survivor Coalition

[www.ncmhcsso.org](http://www.ncmhcsso.org)

The Center for Health Care Services

[www.CHCSBC.org](http://www.CHCSBC.org)

A website for all Texas government departments

[www.texas.gov](http://www.texas.gov)

NAMI

[www.nami.org](http://www.nami.org)

Texas Mental Health Consumers

[www.tmhc.org](http://www.tmhc.org)

Mental Health America of Texas

[www.mhatexas.org](http://www.mhatexas.org)

Texas Legislature Online

<http://www.capitol.state.tx.us>

Texas Administrative Code where you find the laws pertaining to the running of MHMR Centers

<http://www.sos.state.tx.us/tac/>

The Texas Election Division to find voter information, and candidates

<http://www.sos.state.tx.us/tac/>

Substance Abuse Mental Health Services Administration

[www.SAMHSA.gov](http://www.SAMHSA.gov)

SAMHSA's Mental Health Information Center

<http://www.samhsa.gov/centers/clearinghouse/clearinghouses.html>

Website for Medications, Assistance Programs, Discount programs

[www.needymeds.com](http://www.needymeds.com)

Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs

<http://www.tdhca.state.tx.us>

Patient Assistance with Medications

<http://www.phrma.org/>

Free Online Computer Classes through Global Community Foundation a division of Goodwill Industries

[www.qcflernfree.org/](http://www.qcflernfree.org/)

A website designed to provide clients with more information specific to their current situation and the transition to Medicare Rx

[www.texasmedicarerx.org](http://www.texasmedicarerx.org)

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## The Point List

### What is a point?

A point is just a means of keeping score of what people are doing to earn money to go to the next Alternatives Conference in October of 2008. A monthly point card will be sent to everyone who wants to go to the conference.

### How do I earn points?

You earn points for doing activities.

**10 points per dollar**—For every dollar raised on your own through sales or donations

**2 points**—Attending Prosumer Meeting

**2 points**—Attending sponsored Prosumer meetings

**3 points**—Helping serve/clean up at Prosumer Meeting

**3 points per hour**—Volunteering at the Prosumer Office

**3 points per hour**—Assisting at Fundraisers

**3 points per hour**—Helping with the Prosumer mail out

**5 points per hour**—Serving on Prosumer Steering Committee

**5 points per hour**—Making things to sell

**5 points per hour**—Helping with phoning members for the Meeting

**10 points**—Writing an article that is published in the Prosumer News.

If you are doing something that helps the Prosumers or have an idea that you think should earn points, call and we will discuss it.

### Where do I get my point sheet?

Call Janet at 210-653-5267. You will be sent a form or you can pick one up at any Prosumer event. Then start participating to earn your points.

**Strive for happiness and win back your life!**

## Conference Dates to Remember

### National Council for Community Behavioral Healthcare

May 1-3, 2008

Boston, MA

[www.thenationalcouncil.org/cs/boston](http://www.thenationalcouncil.org/cs/boston)

### The International Conference on Self-Determination

May 27-29, 2008

Detroit, MI

[www.self-determination.com/](http://www.self-determination.com/)

### National Association of Peer Specialists

August 20-22, 2008

Philadelphia, PA

<http://naops.org/>

### National Association of Rural Mental Health

August 6-9, 2008

Burlington, VT

[www.narmh.org/conferences/2008\\_conference.html](http://www.narmh.org/conferences/2008_conference.html)

### Alternatives2008 Conference

Alternatives is a national conference for consumers by consumers.

October 29- November 2, 2008

Adams Mark Hotel in Buffalo, NY

<http://www.power2u.org/alternatives-2008>

### World Congress of the World Federation for Mental Health

Athens, GREECE,

September 2-6, 2009

If you think you would like to go to Athens, Greece for a conference then log onto [www.ProsumersLightaCandle.org](http://www.ProsumersLightaCandle.org) and click on WFMH Conference. On the site you will find information and be able to join a forum discussion. In the forum, you will be able to discuss raising money, putting in applications for scholarships, sharing hotels, presenting at the conference and so much more. Together, we can encourage each other, support each other and really challenge each other to obtain a very worthwhile goal. Together, we can make all our dreams come true. Join the discussion today!

## Cats may Protect Owners from Heart Attack

Having a cat in your home may reduce your risk of having a heart attack by as much as one-third, new research suggests. The finding comes from a 10-year study of more than 4,300 Americans and suggests that having a pet provides heart-healthy stress relief. Though dog owners weren't found to have the same heart protection, researchers say that's probably because there weren't enough dog owners in the study group to draw a firm conclusion.

SOURCE: (U.S. News and World Reports) UPDATED 02/21/2008

## New Book, New Author

Prosumer Greg Umlauf announces the release of his autobiography 'Severed in Two' Surviving Bipolar Mood Disorders. He bares his soul of living over 30 years with this disease.

Cost: \$15.00 including shipping and tax. Make checks to Thomas Umlauf, Sr. Please include your name, address, city, state, zip and phone number. Send to:

Greg Umlauf  
4400 NW 39th Avenue #31  
Gainesville, FL 32606  
(352) 375-2088

Allow 4-6 weeks for delivery.

## Prosumer Opens a Prosumer Co-op

Phil Schulman has two houses that he is opening up as Prosumer Co-ops. You rent a room and share the main living space with other Prosumers. The location of the house is near downtown and on a bus route. If you are interested in renting a room, please contact Phil at 210-614-2014. He is looking for Prosumers who are in recovery.

**Happiness is the unexpected bonus of a generous heart!**  
**-David Baird**

I'm not sure if you have heard of the 2008 Economic Stimulus Payment. Individuals who receive disability benefits can possibly qualify for this payment. They must file a tax return and a **form 1040 X**. They can file for free at any VITA location. Qualifying income includes Social Security benefits; certain Railroad Retirement benefits; certain Veterans' benefits; or persons with low incomes who would not normally have to file a tax return. You can call the 211 United Way Helpline for the closest location if your unsure or no longer have the VITA site locations. I copy and pasted more information from the United Way Website below .

### Economic Stimulus Payment

"Starting in May, 2008, the Treasury will begin sending economic stimulus payments to more than 130 million individuals. The vast majority of Americans who qualify for an economic stimulus payment will not have to do anything other than file their 2007 individual income tax return to receive their payment this year. The payment is automatic—you will not have to file any extra forms or call the IRS. The IRS will determine eligibility, figure the amount, and issue the payment. Select tax payers who have no tax liability may be eligible if they had at least \$3000 in qualifying income. **Qualifying income includes Social Security benefits; certain Railroad Retirement benefits; certain Veterans' benefits; or persons with low incomes who would not normally have to file a tax return.**

Those who have already filed their 2007 tax return reflecting more than \$3000 in qualifying income do not need to do anything more to receive their payment; those who have already filed a tax return showing less than \$3000 in qualifying income and DID NOT LIST Social Security, Railroad Retirement, or Veterans benefits should file an amendment, Form 1040X to list those non-taxable benefits and qualify for the stimulus payment; those who are not required to file a 2007 return, but have qualifying income of \$3000 or more, should file a return reporting these benefits

To qualify you must have \$3000 or more in qualifying income. You must have a valid Social Security Number. Persons who file using an Individual Taxpayer Identification Number ITIN are not eligible. If tax returns are filed jointly, both individuals listed must have valid Social Security numbers.

Submitted by:  
Frances Hernandez  
Community Service Worker  
Office of Development and Community Action  
Family and Consumer Resource Unit



## THRIVING WITH DIABETES

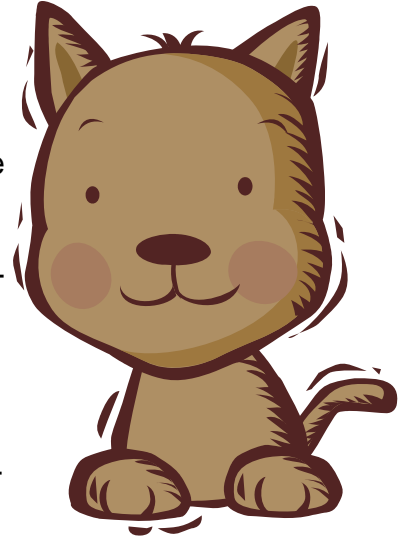
### Could a dog save your life?

No one knows for sure how they do it, but a growing number of canine companions are helping people with diabetes avoid dangerous hypoglycemia

Devin Grayson's world was shrinking. The 36-year-old California comic-book author and video game writer had been diagnosed with type 1 diabetes when she was 15, and like many people with insulin-dependent diabetes, she suffered wild swings in her blood glucose. Over time, she'd also developed hypoglycemia unawareness, the inability to recognize symptoms of severe glucose lows. "One night I woke up and my blood sugar was 17," she recalls. "It's amazing I woke up at all and didn't die in my sleep."

By the summer of 2005, Grayson was restricting her activities because of her fear of hypoglycemic episodes. She gave up many of her favorite pursuits, like hiking in the redwoods north of San Francisco, and became reluctant to go out alone. She even moved into a house with friends because she worried that her diabetes made it dangerous to live alone any longer. And still she felt trapped. "There's a real psychic burden attached to diabetes," she says. "You never get a break. Every meal, every day, you have to monitor. It's lonely. There are days when you would do anything just to have a weekend off."

Then Grayson met Cody, and everything changed. It was an Internet hook-up, of sorts: Online, Grayson had discovered Dogs for Diabetics, a Concord, California – based organization that trains dogs to respond to serious blood glucose drops in humans. She registered for classes in the summer of 2005, and in six months she was teamed up with Cody, a male Golden Retriever. Not only has Cody saved Grayson's life, he's given her a life to enjoy, she says: "For the first time since I was diagnosed, I feel this enormous burden has been lifted. I'm not alone with it anymore."



Assistance dogs, such as guide dogs for blind people, dogs that "hear" for the hearing impaired, or dogs that retrieve items for the wheelchair-bound, have been helping humans for decades. But Cody is part of a new trend in which dogs are trained to identify the onset of hypoglycemia in people with insulin-dependent diabetes. For the dogs, it's a game. Once they alert, they receive their treat, plus lots of positive enforcement from their owners. But for the humans they live with, the results are nothing short of miraculous.

And yet science tells us nothing about whether dogs can really do this. Or how: "We believe the dogs are picking up on scents that are created by chemical changes going on in the person's body before we humans see the actual symptoms of the illness," says Darlene Sullivan, executive director of Canine Partners for Life. But the scent has not been identified. In fact, the first academic study to evaluate how well dogs detect hypoglycemia is being done by Deborah Wells, MD, at Queens University in Belfast, Northern Ireland. If she verifies that dogs can alert to blood glucose drops, her next project will be to identify the sensory cue the dogs are reacting to.

Part of what is so uncanny about these dogs is their reliability: Trainers say they are right 90 percent of the time. They also seem to have a skill that no test kit or piece of machinery offers: the ability to sense a dangerous drop in blood glucose before the drop occurs. Some dogs become so good at sensing low and high blood glucose that they "diagnose" people around them. At Grayson's office, for example, a coworker mentioned that Cody had been anxiously pawing the woman's knee. "Wait a minute," Grayson said, and went to get her glucose monitor. When she checked the woman, her blood glucose was 180. She was later diagnosed with type 2 diabetes.

SOURCE: Adapted from March 2008 issue of *Diabetes Forecast* published by the American Diabetes Association ©2008.