

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

October 2008

Janet Paleo—Editor

Volume 6, Issue 10

Prosumer Meetings

Things You Should Know

13 Ways to Make Friends By Therese J. Borchard

We presented our program to SAMHSA (Substance Abuse Mental Health Services Administration) Wednesday, September 10, 2008 in Rockville, MD.

The presentation went very well with a lot of interest generated by the people who were in attendance. Gigi Belanger from the Home Resource Center (www.homeless.samhsa.gov) was very excited about our program as was Chris Marshall. It was interesting to note that most people thought they had a general idea of what our program was about. However, after the presentation, they admitted that our program was much more unique and that it was definitely something that had to be experienced.

The Center for Health Care Service has a lot of building changes happening. The people who were officed at S. Presa are being moved to 1920 Burnet in November, including the Prosumer group and the Alliance. This will also be the office for the Recovery Navigators. The people officed at Burnet are moving to a Methodist Professional Building on Brooklyn near IH 35. Some of the programs from Palo Alto will be moving to S. Presa. The main office building will also be moving but they are not sure where yet. We will try to keep you informed as we know the changes.

The State of Texas contracts with the Center for Health Care Services to provide services to people diagnosed with mental health problems. The State decides how many people each mental health community center in TX can serve and pay them accordingly. If a community center does not serve enough people, they get in trouble. If a community center serves more people than the State says, they also get in trouble. The thought process is that if you are serving more people than the State is giving the centers money for, then the centers are not giving everyone what they need. As it happens, the Center for Health Care Services is serving more people than the State says. Therefore, people who are doing well in their recovery are being asked to find an alternative place to get their needs met. To aid consumers in this process, CHCS is hiring Recovery Navigators. People trained in coaching, focusing on wellness will be partnered with consumers identified as doing well in their recovery. If you are interested in being partnered with a Recovery Navigator and getting your services elsewhere in the community, talk with your case worker or doctor on how you can make that happen.

They say it takes a village to raise a child. Well, it also takes a village—at best a supportive community, and at the least a few very good friends—to keep a person sane and happy. All of us need companionship, which is exactly why teenagers are texting their friends in the middle of dinner (TMI, BFF, OMG ...), and why people who didn't own a personal computer last year now have profiles on Facebook, My Space, and other social-networking sites.

In our hearts we all crave for the deep connection that a graded friendship can offer.

Maybe the first trick to finding friends is to befriend ourselves, and to become comfortable with silence, because **no one has the power to make us feel okay with ourselves but us**. But, lest we stay quiet for too long, here are 13 techniques to meet new friends, which I think everyone can benefit from, because, as I learned in Girl Scouts a few hundred years ago (where I didn't make any friends...some are silver and the others are old, I mean gold.)

1. Join a Book Club

Am I in one? Heck no. I don't have time. And if I did, I wouldn't read novels or a book straight through, from cover to cover. Remember, I suffer from poor concentration and was saved by Cliffs Notes back in high school and college. But most of my friends are in book clubs, and, I have to admit, I'm a little envious of the discussions that happen in these groups.

If your neighborhood doesn't have a book club, you can usually join one as part of the local library, the recreational or community center, the community college, or online, of course. Many papers will post book club notices, as well. Hey, and you could start one, advertising in local coffee shops, recreation centers, etc.

2. Volunteer

That one seems like a no-brainer, but, seriously, have you ever considered the many charities to which you could give your time? Your local civic association is always in need of volunteers for projects like "let's clean up the park before a hundred dogs crap on it again" and Toys-for-Tots, Christmas in April, and so on. Don't forget about all your local politicians who need help with their campaigns. If one impresses you, offer to knock on a few doors for her or him. Host a cheese and cracker party for the community to get to

Continued on the next page

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

University Health System—

Downtown (map on back of this issue only)

(the Old Brady Green)

All Welcome!

527 N. Leona (Near Frio and Martin)

Buses 20, 77, 79, 89

October 10, 2008 Meeting

One of the three components of living a life of resiliency is having meaning in your life. Can you create meaning in your life and if so, how? What is meaning and why do you need it? Do you have anything in your life now that is meaningful? We will explore the answers to these questions and much more. You will come away from this meeting inspired to have your life make a difference in the world. Don't miss this one!!

November 14, 2008 Meeting

When life happens, it is sometimes hard to see the good side of the situation. No matter the situation, there is always another way of looking at it. In this meeting, we will practice looking at things in other ways and learning how to be at peace no matter what happens. In other words, we will empower ourselves to live life, no matter what happens, rather than be a victim of life. This is a meeting that you won't want to miss.

Prosumer meetings start with food, so please remember to RSVP to 210-653-5267 so that we have enough food to feed everyone and also to let us know if you will be using the parking lot. Remember: first come, first serve. We will see you there!!

know the candidate.

These are not only friend-making possibilities, they are networking opportunities and a chance to give back and feel good about that. Remember that "Seinfeld" episode where Jerry gets a girl's number off of an AIDS walk? Bingo. That's what I'm talking about.

3. Go Online

According to a 2002 study published in the American Journal of Psychiatry, Internet support groups have been shown to help those suffering from depression. The study followed a group of more than 100 individuals with severe depression who joined online support groups. Though many had received other forms of treatment, such as face-to-face therapy (86 percent) or antidepressants (96 percent), more than 95 percent of users agreed that participation in the depression Internet support groups helped their symptoms.

"Yeah, but those guys are kids," you're thinking to yourself. WRONG. Fewer than half of Facebook's 35 million users are college students, and by the end of this year its executives predict Fewer than 30 percent of Facebook users will be sleeping in dorms and eating dining hall food. Several of my own most supportive friendships have been born online, and the others (that weren't born online) have been sustained through online technology.

4. Find In-Person Support

Folks, there's more to the support group universe than AA. Have you ever looked through all the local listings of meetings in your area? There's even ACOMP (Adult Cousins of Mean People) ... just kidding. At one time, my goal was to attend every single kind of support group. I was thinking that would bring me good karma. Now I know that it would only lead to exhaustion.

But seriously, for depressed folks there are Recovery meetings (based on Recovery, Inc. founded by Dr. Abraham Low), DRADA (Depression and Related Affective Disorders) groups, NAMI (National Alliance for the Mentally Ill) groups, DBSA (Depression and Bipolar Support Alliance) groups [and Prosumer meetings]. I've also considered assertiveness training classes at my local YWCA (and they have all sorts of programs) and Cognitive Behavioral Therapy groups at the community college.

5. Take a Night Class

That's where you can supposedly meet men (or women) if you find yourself single in your late 30s or 40s or 50s. For example, my one friend was sincerely interested in welding, so she took a class at the college. Naturally, she was the only chick in the class. If you take a class in something that you are interested in, you're very likely to find potential friends with similar hobbies.

6. Get a Dog

I'm not talking about using the dog as a companion, although studies do indicate that pets are natural healers of depression. I just mean that dogs are people magnets--and usually nice-people magnets.

Here in Annapolis, we have dog cults. If you walk your mutt in certain neighborhoods, you will meet approximately five to ten friends per mile. Double that if you're walking a Golden Retriever. Triple it if you head to the "dog park," designed specifically for doggy play, or proper socialization for dogs. Dog people talk dog language, so let your canine sniff you out some new friends.

7. Steal Friends from Friends

I realize this technique was frowned upon in the fifth grade. You would surely earn a reputation as a friend-stealer if you tried this too many times. But many (NOT ALL) people in their 30s, 40s, 50s, etc. have loosened up a bit. I have found this to be a very efficient method of mak-

ing friends, because someone has already done your dirty work--the interview process--and weeded out the toxic folks.

For example, when Eric and I landed in Annapolis ten years ago, I knew no one but my husband and his mom. My sister-in-law, Julie, lived in Arlington, Virginia and came up sometimes on the weekends. I'd tag along with her to many of her social events. Julie became a very good friend of mine. We have several common interests and I respect her very much. It was no coincidence, then, that I also liked her friends. So I "adopted" them. Of course, I asked her ... "Do you mind if I ask your best friend to lunch? I really liked her!" Within a year, Eric and I were hanging out with his sister's friends and their husbands more than his sister was (and this was okay by her). We were even included in the very elite "game night group," a cult that gathers to drink, gossip, and eat dessert.

8. Knock on Doors

Yep. That's what I did six years ago when I was stuck home with a fussy baby and going absolutely crazy. I walked around the neighborhood knocking on every porch that held a stroller. "You in there. I know you have kids. You want to be my friend?" I might have been a tad more subtle than that, but not much.

In addition to my door-knocking, I hung up signs in coffee shops, and I told EVERYONE WITH A KID AND THEIR FRIENDS AND RELATIVES that I started a playgroup on Wednesday mornings, 9 a.m., coffee and doughnuts included when I felt generous. It lasted a year because despite my efforts to get other moms to host, we gathered at my house every single Wednesday. But by then, I had found three really good mom friends to whine and laugh with, so I didn't care about losing the other guys who had to find a new home to wreck.

9. Carpool to Work

Hey, it works for elementary school kids. Many six-year-olds meet their best buddies on the bus because 1) they live in their neighborhood (what could be more convenient?), 2) they are on the same schedule, and 3) they know the same people ("Susie has cooties.")

Not only is this technique eco-friendly, it makes sense on many levels: you already know a lot about these people (and if you don't, you can always ask someone in your office who knows them better if they are friend-worthy), and by working at the same place (or even in the same neighborhood), you already have a few things in common.

10. Attend a Conference

I'm a tad embarrassed to admit this, but I am a conference addict. I love conventions, mostly because I get to feel like a grown-up: there's a smaller chance of someone vomiting on my shirt (unless she has had a martini too many) than if I stay at home.

I've met some of my best friends at conferences that I attend on a regular basis. I try to get there as often as possible, because these get-togethers serve as a reunion of sorts. And I usually fly home with a stack of business cards, and several potential friends.

11. Connect with Your Alumni Association

I used to be much better at this before kids came along, but even today, I still pay my dues. Alumni associations are gold mines for potential friends. You already have a major experience in common: you can rehash old times as a conversation starter if you need one. Plus many associations sponsor community service events, workshops, or trips abroad that you can take advantage of even if you aren't looking for friends.

12. Talk to Strangers

I know this goes against what you were taught in elementary school. But, yes, the way to meet friends is to strike up a conversation with absolutely anyone. If you put yourself out there, yes, you will get rejected many times, and that hurts a little (sometimes a lot). But you will also find your best friends and guardian angels! That's how I met Ann, my guardian angel. I plopped down next to her on an Amtrak train, and not even five minutes outside of New York, we were talking meds, shrinks, and dysfunctional relationships. Had I kept my mouth shut, I would be without one of the most important people in my life today.

Every day life is full of potential friendship moments: waiting rooms, church, trains, planes, automobiles, office meetings, support groups, or coffee shops.

Get on out there!

13. Go to Church

Do you know why many cities--tiny and enormous alike--have a church smack dab in the middle of town? Because the church was the center of socialization for many areas not so long ago. Every social activity of the city and suburbs grew out of the church community: A parish fish fry. A Bible study group. A group council meeting. A let's-get-our-singles-married-off-to-each-other social. Churches today still host plenty of opportunities to meet a buddy. For example, the Catholics have started "Theology on Tap" for young adults in several cities. A year or so ago, I was part of a "six-pack of speakers" put together by parish members for one of these functions. It was wild. Theology in a bar. But I liked it, and thought to myself, "What a great way to meet friends

SOURCE: BeliefNet.com

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.

Oct 7, 2008
Regular Meeting
6:30-8:00 p.m.

Oct 21, 2008
Reunion
6:30-8:00 p.m.

Meetings are held at
Brighton, the Center for
Inclusive Communities
14207 Higgins
(One-half mile west of Nacog-
doches, between Thousand
Oaks and
O'Connor)

For More Information call
Jomel Crayton, chair
210-590-1348
Judith Laufer, Advisor
210-828-7125

**When I hear somebody
sigh, "Life is hard," I
am always tempted to
ask, "Compared to
what?"**

-Sydney Harris

Home Comforts Seeks Volunteers

A small non-profit which works to help people with mental illness who are moving into independent housing with household furniture and cleaning supplies. They need volunteers who can do physical labor of moving furniture. If you would like to help, please call 222-8736.

To use these services, have your case manager call 222-8736 for more information, or e-mail bex-arhomecomforts@satx.rr.com. Brochures and applications for assistance are available on request at the same contact number.

SSI - Some Suggestions to Improve the Lives of 7 million people.

Information Bulletin # 258 (8/08).

A recent report from the bipartisan Social Security Advisory Board (Issue Brief #4) raised some important issues regarding Supplemental Security Income, the federal grant program that provides monthly grants to at least five million very low-income people with disabilities and nearly two million older Americans.

SSI is a poverty program, and many of its provisions make sure people stay in poverty! Here's what the Advisory Board presented to improve SSI:

First, in order to receive the full federal SSI grant, a person currently may keep only \$20 of any income (a "general exclusion") and may also have an "earned income exclusion" of only the first \$65 of earnings and half of the amount above \$65 a month. These "exclusions" were in the original legislation more than 30 years ago and have never been increased.

If advocates had successfully organized and demanded that these exclusions keep up with inflation, then they would be up to \$87 a month for the general exclusion and earned income exclusion would be \$284. Using the Average Wage Index, instead of the general inflation index, the general exclusion would now be \$105 and the earned income exclusion would be \$342 a month.

Until Congress increases these exclusions, people on SSI have tremendous disincentives to work and will remain far below the federal poverty level.

Second, in 1989 the asset limit was increased so that an individual could have no more than \$2,000 in assets and a couple only \$3,000. Remember, these assets were supposed to help SSI recipients cover emergencies that a monthly SSI grant could not cover, e.g., a broken chair lift, car repairs, broken dishwasher, uncovered medical costs. If these 1989 costs had kept up with inflation, an individual would be able to keep \$3,500 and a couple \$5,250. If they were adjusted to the Average Wage Index, they would now be \$4,200 for an individual and \$6,300 for a couple.

Third, when SSI was originally enacted, a married couple on SSI was presumed to be able to live more economically than two people living alone. That's why a SSI grant for a couple is only one-and-a-half times the individual rate. As the Social Security Advisory Board stated, "two single adult SSI beneficiaries who live together are each eligible for a full individual benefit, while each member of a married couple is eligible for three-fourths of the full benefit amount." What an incentive to get divorced or not marry another disabled person, or maybe disabled people are not supposed to marry at all.

Fourth, SSI does not recognize the "additional household costs caused by the disability of a beneficiary." These additional costs include ability to pay rent for an accessible unit, for a reasonable accommodation, or higher utility bills or to meet special dietary requirements. People with disabilities have higher out of pocket health expenditures than nondisabled persons. SSI benefit rates do not reflect these additional needs.

These four issues do not address the fundamental problem that the federal SSI grant levels are currently and have been historically far below the poverty level. (See Information Bulletin #197A).

Despite we're dealing with seven million people on SSI, it's amazing that these issues do not seem to be on the radar of national disability advocates or national disability organizations. What would it take to have a coalition that could convince Congress to make statutory changes that would significantly improve the lives of the five million poorest people with disabilities and two million older Americans? Where are our Congressional leaders? Where are our DC disability and elderly leaders?

Where are our national disability organizations?

Steve Gold, The Disability Odyssey continues

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New Guide on Self-Directed Mental Health Care

Self-directed care is a new approach to the delivery of community services to people with mental illnesses. It allows consumers to manage their own care and control a budget to pay for the services and supports. The Bazelon Center and the UPENN Collaborative on Community Integration which is funded by the National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research have produced a new guide entitled *In the Driver's Seat: A Guide to Self-Directed Mental Health Care*. This 40-page document describes self-directed care, offers advocacy strategies and tactics to develop and implement self-directed care approaches, and looks at how these initiatives work and how they are funded. It also lists strategies by states to support these services. Fact sheets and questions-and-answers provide further information on financing, eligibility, evaluation, planning, and support brokerage. The guide is at website

http://www.upennrrtc.org/resources/view.php?tool_id=184 .

House Passes Supportive Housing Legislation and Revisions to the ADA

On September 17, 2008 the House cleared two important bills to expand supportive housing for non-elderly adults with severe disabilities and restore protections under the Americans With Disabilities Act (ADA). Both bills passed the House unanimously. The supportive housing bill (HR 5772) now moves to the Senate, while the ADA legislation now moves to the White House where the President is expected to sign it next week.

S	MON	TUE	WED	THUR	FRI	SAT
	Sept 29 DBSA 7 pm @8026 Floyd Curl	Sept 30 DBSA CF 6 pm @210 South Grimes	Oct 1 AMHCR Coping with Anxiety 7pm @ Central Library Room 5.1	Oct 2 DBSABC 7pm @758 Ramsey BiPolar/Depression Peer Support Group 7-9pm @ 3011 N. St. Mary's Candlelight Coffee House	Oct 3	10/4 AMHCR PTSD-Armed Services (All welcome) 10:00 @ Central Library Rm 5.1
5	Oct 6 DBSA 7 pm@8026 Floyd Curl	Oct 7 DBSA CF 6 pm @210 South Grimes NAMI 7 pm 510 Belknap	Oct 8 AMHCR Coping with OCD 7 pm @Central Library Room 5.1	Oct 9 Mental Health Support Grp 7 pm St. George Episcopal Church, 6904 West Ave 342-4261 DBSABC 7pm @758 Ramsey BiPolar/Depression Peer Support Group 7-9pm @ 3011 N. St. Mary's Candlelight Coffee House	Oct 10 Prosumer Meeting 12-3 University Health System Downtown	10/11 AMHCR PTSD-Armed Services (All welcome) 10:00 @ Central Library Rm 5.1
12	Oct 13 Coping with Anxiety @6:30pm DBSA 7 pm@8026 Floyd Curl	Oct 14 DBSA CF 6 pm @210 South Grimes	Oct 15 AMHCR Parents & Siblings of Children with Mental Illnesses 7:00@Central Library, Rm. 5.1	Oct 16 DBSABC 7pm @758 Ramsey BiPolar/Depression Peer Support Group 7-9pm @ 3011 N. St. Mary's Candlelight Coffee House	Oct 17 Schizophrenia Anonymous 11:30 am @ Central Library Room 5.1	10/18 AMHCR PTSD-Armed Services (All welcome) 10:00 @ Central Library Rm 5.1
19	Oct 20 DBSA 7 pm@8026 Floyd Curl	Oct 21 DBSA CF 6 pm @210 South Grimes	Oct 22	Oct 23 AMHCR Life Skills 2pm @SAILS 2:00 p.m DBSABC 7pm @758 Ramsey BiPolar/Depression Peer Support Group 7-9pm @ 3011 N. St. Mary's Candlelight Coffee House	Oct 24	10/25 AMHCR Meet up Bipolar Sup Grp 3 pm @ Central Library Rm. 5.1
26	Oct 27 DBSA 7 pm@8026 Floyd Curl	Oct 28 DBSA CF 6 pm @210 South Grimes	Oct 29 AMHCR Coping with Anxiety 7pm @ Central Library Room 5.1	Oct 30 DBSABC 7pm @758 Ramsey BiPolar/Depression Peer Support Group 7-9pm @ 3011 N. St. Mary's Candlelight Coffee House	Oct 31	11/1 AMHCR PTSD-Armed Services (All welcome) 10:00 @ Central Library

*** Please call and verify time and place prior to going to any of the meetings.**

Clothes Closet
Center for Health Care Service
Family and Consumer
Resources
5802 S. Presa
Is Temporarily Closed
Please call Frances Hernandez for
further information at 436-8018

PLEASE NOTE: DUE TO S. PRESA OFFICES MOVING TO BURNET, THE ALLIANCE AND CHCS GROUPS MAY OR MAY NOT BE MEETING. PLEASE VERIFY ALL MEETINGS BEFORE ACTUALLY GOING TO THE LOCATIONS. THANK YOU!

Mental Health
Support Group.
St. George Episcopal Church
6904 West Avenue
in Conference Room.
Every 2nd Thursday
at 7 pm.
Call 342-4261
for more information

When we are motivated by goals that have deep meaning, by dreams that need completion, by pure love that needs expressing— then we truly live life.

—Greg Anderson

When it's all over, it's not who you were. It's whether you made a difference

- Bob Dole

"The ideals which have lighted my way, and time after time have given me new courage to face life cheerfully, have been Kindness, Beauty, and Truth..."

-- Albert Einstein

CALENDAR NAMES, ADDRESSES and PHONE NUMBERS

Prosumer Group- 210-653-5267 www.ProsumersInternational.org PO Box 120394 San Antonio, TX 78212 Meets at the 527 N. Leona Street in the Foundation Room (University Health System Downtown—Old Brady Green)

24/7 Crisis Clinic—Address is 527 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

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

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

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

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 or www.SaMentalHealth.org. Office located at 5802 S. Presa

DARS (Formerly TRC) Albert Olague is the liaison to CHCS clients. For services call 210-561-8600

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 210-413-4094

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

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: 30

REPRESENTATIVE TREY MARTINEZ FISCHER,
HOUSE DIST 116
1910 Fredericksburg Road, SA, TX 78201
(210) 737-7200 Closest Bus Route: 92, 91

REPRESENTATIVE JOE STRAUS,
HOUSE DIST 121
7373 Broadway Suite 202A SA, TX 78209
(210) 828-4411 Closest Bus Route: 9, 10, 505, 647

REPRESENTATIVE, JOE FARIAS
HOUSE DIST 118
601 S. Seguin Road Converse TX 78109
210-659-9071 Closest Bus Route: 21, 639

SENATOR JUDITH ZAFFIRINI, SENATE DIST 21
12702 Topperwein, Rd. Suite 214, SA, TX 78233
(210) 657-0095 Bus Route 640 stops 1 1/2 miles
away from Zaffirini's Office

SENATOR CARLOS I. URESTI, SENATE DIST 19
2530 SW Military Drive, Suite 103, SA, TX 78221
(210) 932-2568 Closest Bus Route: 551, 550, 520

REPRESENTATIVE ROLAND GUTIERREZ
HOUSE DIST 119
3319 Sidney Brooks Bldg. 510 Suite 2 SA, TX 78235
(210) 532-2758 Closest Bus Route: 34, 20

REPRESENTATIVE FRANK J. CORTE,
HOUSE DISTRICT 122
2040 Babcock Rd., Ste. 402, SA, TX 78229
(210) 349-0320 Closest Bus Route: 91, 92 522, 532

REPRESENTATIVE RUTH JONES MCCLENDON,
HOUSE DIST 120
403 South WW White Road, Suite 210, SA, TX 78219
(210) 225-2107 Closest Bus Route: 25, 550

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
9107 Marbach Road Suite 111, SA, TX 78245
(210) 645-4400 Closest Bus Route: 613, 615

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

REPRESENTATIVE MIKE VILLARREAL,
HOUSE DIST 123
1114 S. Saint Mary's Suite 110 SA, TX 78210
(210) 734-8937 Closest Bus Route: 34, 36, 42

REPRESENTATIVE JOSE MENENDEZ,
HOUSE DIST 124
7121 US Hwy. 90 West, Suite 240, SA, TX 78227
(210) 673-3579 Bus Route: 616

Useful Websites and Links

An Online Wellness Tool

www.ProsumersLightaCandle.org

Recovery TV

www.WorldTV.com/RecoveryTV

The Prosumer website

www.ProsumersInternational.org

PRO International for Empowermentware

www.TheProInternational.com

National Consumer/Survivor Coalition

www.ncmhcs.org

The Center for Health Care Services

www.CHCSBC.org

A website for all TX government departments
www.texas.gov

NAMI

www.nami.org

Texas Mental Health Consumers

www.tmhc.org

Mental Health America of Texas

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

SAMHSA's Mental Health Information Center
<http://www.samhsa.gov/centers/clearinghouse/clearinghouses.html>

Website for Medications, Assistance Programs, Discount programs

www.needymeds.com

TX 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
www.gcflernfree.org/

For more information specific to their current situation and the transition to Medicare Rx
www.texasmedicarerx.org

Conference Dates to Remember

National Association of Rights, Protection and Advocacy
“Seizing Opportunities for Change” October 1-4, 2008
Austin, TX www.narpa.org

NAMI Texas 2008 Conference
October 17-18, 2008
Radisson Hills Resort and Spa, San Antonio
www.NAMITexas.org

Alternatives 2008 Conference
Alternatives is a national conference for consumers by consumers.
October 29- November 2, 2008 Adams Mark Hotel in Buffalo, NY
www.power2u.org/alternatives-2008

2009 World Congress of the World Federation for Mental Health
“Working Together for Mental Health” September 2-6, 2009
Hilton Hotel, Athens, Greece
www.wfmh.org/09WCongress.htm

Waiting for the Wrong Answer

There are two basic problems with 1-800-Medicare, the toll-free consumer hotline for people with Medicare:

- It takes too long to talk to a live person, and
- When a live person does get on the line, they often give out incorrect or incomprehensible information.

The consequences of this shoddy service are numerous, but in general, bad advice on a Medicare problem means consumers pay much more out of pocket than they should and they do not receive the health care they need.

Today [9/11/08], Senator Gordon Smith, Republican of Oregon, called Kerry Weems, acting administrator of the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services, and John Curtis, CEO of Vangent, the contractor running 1-800-Medicare, before the Senate Special Committee on Aging to see if improvements could be made to the hotline's service. Senator Smith's staff had spent hundreds of hours cataloguing the bad information given out by 1-800-Medicare operators and demonstrated that during peak hours, the typical caller waits much longer than the 8.5 minute average hold time touted by CMS. At the hearing, the Medicare Rights Center and other advocacy groups testified that the misinformation from 1-800-Medicare continues, as do frequent half-hour waits for a live customer service representative.

Weems promised the committee that average wait times for the hotline would be lower when the annual enrollment period for the Part D drug benefit begins this fall, and new initiatives would reduce the number of people holding for a customer service representative.

However, little was said that would give consumers confidence that much-needed improvements in operator training will be forthcoming, or that the scripts used by operators will be jargon-free and provide callers with the help they need in language they can understand. One suggestion in this regard—that CMS employ the expertise of State Health Insurance Assistance Programs (SHIPs) and counselors at the Medicare Rights Center to develop consumer-friendly scripts and effective training programs for hotline operators—is worth pursuing.

People with Medicare deserve accurate and understandable information about the increasingly complex coverage choices they face. CMS should make an effective consumer hotline the centerpiece of a renewed focus on helping their customer base—people with Medicare.

SOURCE: **Asclepios**- September 11, 2008 • Volume 8, Issue 37

Helping with your Personal Medicine in San Antonio

HOUSTON STREET FAIR & MARKET

Downtown, Oct. 25, 2008 12 noon-6:00pm
Free Entrance

Parking is free @ 400 St. Mary's St.
(Parking Garage) & Travis Street
Starting @ 12 noon

www.houstonstreetfair.com

SAN ANTONIO MUSEUM OF ARTS

200 W. Jones Ave. 978-8100

Free Admission on Tuesdays 4-9 pm

www.samuseum.org

WITTE MUSEUM

3801 Broadway 357-1900

Free Admission on Tuesdays 3-8pm

www.wittemuseum.org

SALON MEXICO

4707 Broadway

Basic Latin dance lesson every Friday 7-8pm with social dancing until 10:30pm in the Garden Room in the Villa @ Incarnate Word - **\$3.00 donation** covers lesson and dancing

Lesson is repeated on the following Monday 7-9pm at an intermediate level for those who want to learn more about the dance. **\$5.00 donation.**

www.salonmexico.20m.com

MEXICAN AMERICAN UNITY COUNCIL AND THE OFFICE OF CULTURE AFFAIRS

978-0500 ask for Sylvia. **Free** Adult & Senior Canvas Painting Art Classes Westside and Northside of San Antonio

"DANCE THERAPY" DANCE YOUR DEPRESSION AWAY INC.

The Neighborhood Place El Hogar de los Vecinos 3014 Rivas St. Ballroom Suite 431-7500 **Free** Every Wednesday 5:30-7pm Punctuality Required Leather Soles shoes

No Partner Necessary No Tennis shoes

THE MCNAY

6000 N. New Braunsfels 824-5368

Free Admission on Thursdays 4-9pm and 1st. Sunday of the Month

www.mcnayart.org

Old School Gamers

All community seniors and adults come join the fun at the Lincoln Community Center. Various games along with refreshments. Workout room available as well. **FREE to participants.** Monday, Tuesday and Friday 2 pm—6 pm. Call Dora or Esther at 210-271-7741 for more information.

Bazan Branch Library

Beginning Guitar in Spanish. 2200 W. Commerce, San Antonio 78207. 12pm on Saturdays. Bring own Guitar. **Free**

Pan American Branch Library Tai Chi

1122 W Pyron Avenue 78221. Free. 6:30 pm on Mondays. Wear loose fitting clothes. Come in 5-10 min early. Call for info at 210-924-8164

Memorial Branch Library Family Fun Nights

3222 Culebra 78228. Stories and crafts. **FREE!** 1st and 3rd Tuesdays of the month at 6:30 pm. Call 210-432-6783 for more info.

Maverick Branch Library Maverick Knitters

8700 Mystic Park 78254. Sundays 2-5pm. **FREE!** Call 210-680-9346 for more info.

Lincoln Community Center Sewing Class

2915 E. Commerce. Wednesdays from 3:30-5:30 pm. Call 210-271-7741 for more information.

Oct 4—Paper Lace/Papel Picado

The decorative art of paper cutting. Great Northwest Branch Library. 2 pm **FREE!** 9050 Wellwood Call 210-684-5251 for more information.

Oct 11—Welcome to my Web

A lively investigation of spiders with a brief walk to look for them with Dr. Cary Guffery form OLLU. Bring a flashlight. Eisenhower Park 19399 NW Military Dr. 7 pm—8:30 pm. No young children. Meet at Harris Mass Pavilion. \$3 per person or \$5 for a family. To reserve your spot call 210-564-6400.

Oct 18—Medina River Natural Area Fall Fest Fun Family Event

10 am—2 pm \$2 per person or \$5 family. 15890 Hwy 16 South. Call 210-624-2575 for more info. Topics: bats, water conservation, plants, birds, fishing, crafts, butterflies, and much more.

Oct 30—Monster Bash Halloween Dance

Sponsored by Therapeutic Recreation Program for people with disabilities and their families. **FREE!** 6-9 pm at the Lou Hamilton Community Center 10700 Nacogdoches Road.

U.S. Department of Labor and Major League Baseball launch 'PITCH' campaign to encourage businesses to hire people with disabilities

Former Major Leaguer Jim Abbott to serve as campaign spokesman

WASHINGTON — The U.S. Department of Labor's Office of Disability Employment Policy (ODEP), in cooperation with Major League Baseball, today announced the launch of the PITCH (Proving Individuals with Talent Can Help) campaign to encourage businesses to hire individuals with disabilities.

Former Major League pitcher Jim Abbott will serve as the campaign's spokesman. The campaign will include radio public service announcements, media awareness activities and appearances at the Little League World Series as well as Major League ballparks during September and October.

Abbott, born without a right hand, was an Olympic Gold Medalist in 1988. In 1993, while pitching for the New York Yankees, he tossed a no-hitter against the Cleveland Indians. He pitched 10 seasons in the major leagues with the California Angels, New York Yankees, Chicago White Sox and Milwaukee Brewers.

Neil Romano, assistant secretary of labor for ODEP, said, "We are thrilled to have the support of Major League Baseball for this significant campaign. Having Jim Abbott as our spokesman demonstrates that given the opportunity people with disabilities can make substantial contributions to any business. Jim succeeded based on his talent. The goal of this campaign and of our office is to have all businesses consider the great talent that people with disabilities can bring to their organizations."

Abbott added, "This is something that is very important to me. I am honored to be working with the Department of Labor's Office of Disability Employment Policy. I will do all that I can to bring attention to this issue and encourage businesses to look towards people with disabilities when they are hiring for their team."

According to the Census Bureau's American Community Survey, in 2006, the employment rate for people with disabilities was 37.7 percent, compared to an employment rate of 79.7 percent for people without disabilities, a 42 percent difference. People with disabilities represent a severely underutilized talent pool.

For more information about the PITCH campaign, visit www.ability.dol.gov.

The Office of Disability Employment Policy provides national leadership on disability employment policy by developing and influencing the use of evidence-based disability employment policies and practices, building collaborative partnerships, and delivering authoritative and credible data on employment of people with disabilities. More information is available at www.dol.gov/odep.

"The purpose of life is a life of purpose."

- Robert Byrne



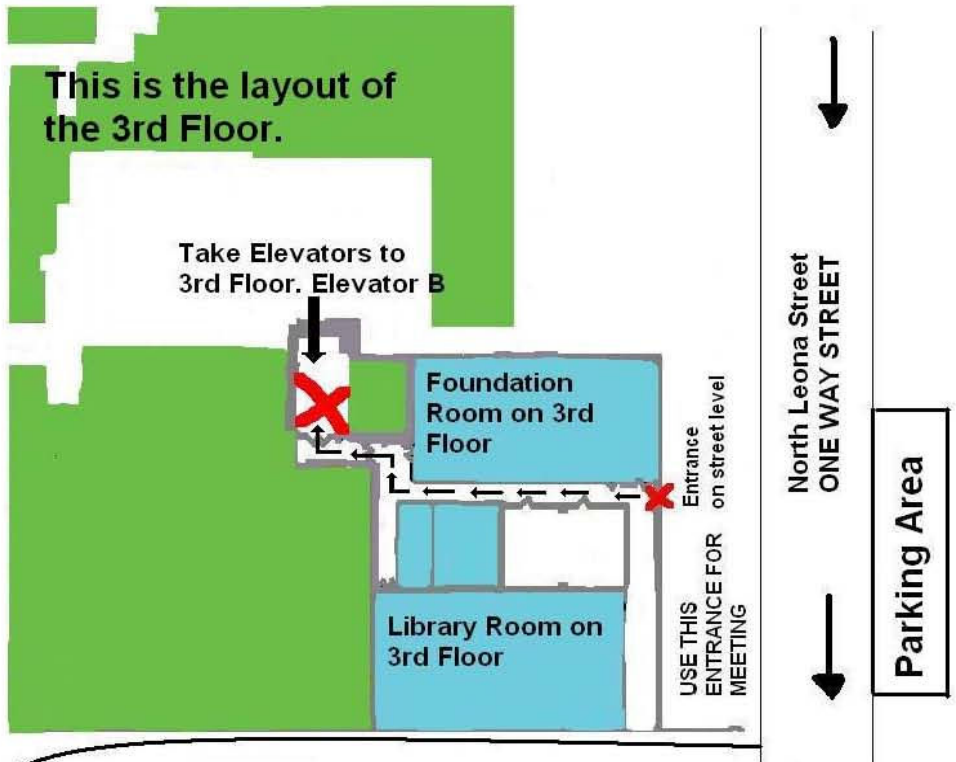
IH 35 S to Laredo

University Health System- Downtown
 (UHS-DT)(Old Brady Green)
527 N Leona Street,
 San Antonio, TX
 78207

Prosumer meeting is on the 3rd Floor in the Foundation Room, near the Library.

Parking is free for participants of the Prosumer Program for the day of the meeting. RSVP so we can put your name on the Guard's Free Parking list.

After parking, enter the UHS building using the **Leona side** entrance. Follow the hallway back and locate Elevator B on your right. Take Elevator to the 3rd Floor. Exit turning left and then left again. Foundation room is straight ahead.



Prosumer Meetings are usually the 2nd Friday of every month. We meet from 12 Noon until 3 pm.
 Please **RSVP** to 210-653-5267 for food and to reserve parking if you are driving a car. Buses 20,77,79,89 are the buses nearest the UHS-DT.