

Listening Ear is pleased to welcome new staff and congratulate those who have made advancements —

- Mary Bury, Clearwater Program Director for Listening Ear North's Residential Services, completed her certification in January to teach CPR/AED/First Aid.
- Susanne Booth was named the Program Director at the North Limits home for Listening Ear North's Residential Services.
- Rachael Eaton, LLMSW, has joined Child & Family Services as the Counselor/Case Manager for the Runaway & Homeless Youth Program and the Transitional Living Program.
- Amanda Hart, Director of Child & Family Services, was given the Rising Star award by the Michigan Network for Runaway Youth.
- Kathy Tarrant, Director of Listening Ear's Crisis Center, was recertified with the Alliance of Information & Referral Systems as a CIRS - an internationally recognized professional credential.

If you desire more information about Listening Ear please visit our website at www.listeningear.com or visit www.guidestar.org to view our latest 990 tax form.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Listening Ear Crisis Center
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Mt. Pleasant, Michigan
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The mission of Listening Ear is to provide citizens of Michigan with human services and affordable housing that satisfy, support, and promote the dignity and well-being of those in need.

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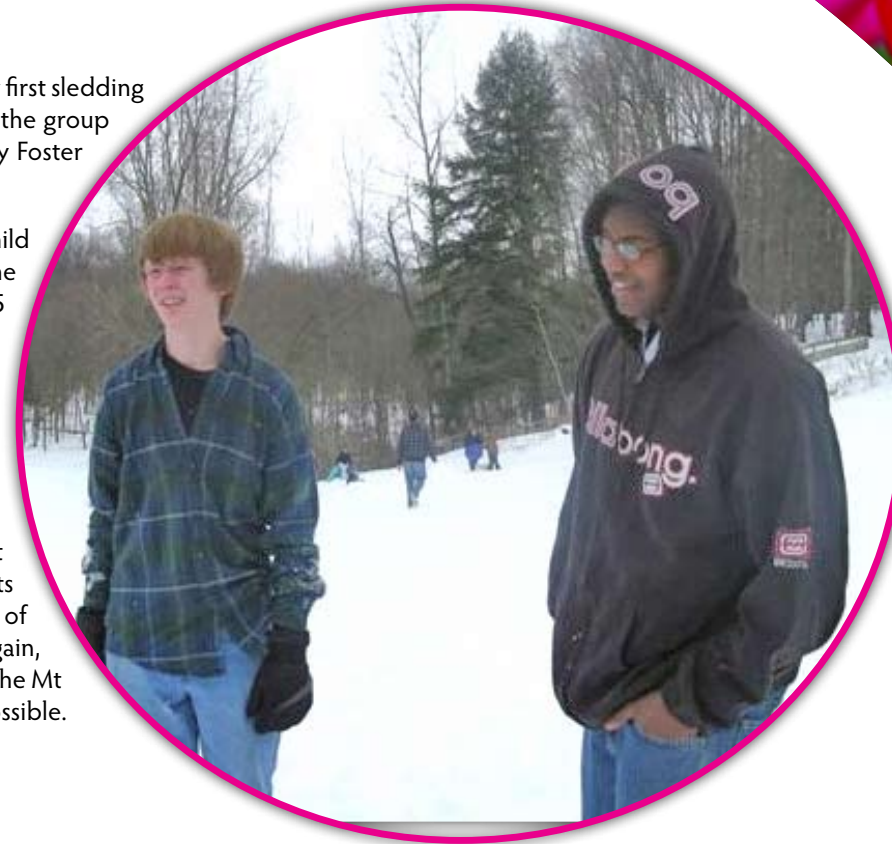
Listening EAR

A Great Time!

A Great Time! That was how Hunter described his very first sledding experience. Josh and Hunter, shown at right, were among the group of youth and adults that enjoyed sledding at the February Foster Care monthly recreation activity.

Each month during the school year Listening Ear's Child Foster Care program offers recreational activities for the 40 children in the child foster care program and the 15 licensed foster care families that provide their loving care. The monthly activities are designed to offer youth new experiences, build their social skills and provide an opportunity to make new friends. The events have included bowling, a climbing wall, canoeing, a cultural field trip, holiday crafts and a community service project.

This month 16 youth and 8 adults enjoyed a retreat at Mystic Lake Camp where they took part in archery, arts and crafts, fishing, games, and, went on a hayride. Several of the youth said it was the best time of their lives! Once again, generous gifts by the Rollin M Gerstacker Foundation and the Mt Pleasant Optimists club helped to make these activities possible.



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INCREDIBLE COMMUNITY

Dear Readers,

The Year in Review article in this newsletter is our annual report to the community. While we welcome the opportunity to share our successes, communication is a two way street. We welcome your input. The key to succeeding always rests with listening to the people we serve, staff and community members. It also rests on what we do with the information, the quality of our staff, and staying true to a clear mission based on organizational values and consumer needs.

Multiple strategies are used to learn about unmet needs among those we serve. Each year we hold forums with consumers and talk with stakeholders on every level to hear about challenges and dreams for a better future. We also distribute satisfaction surveys to consumers, their families, our staff, referring agencies and others to learn what changes we might make to better meet the needs and have staff taking part in community groups to learn about changes in the community that will require new or changed approaches.

None of our success would be possible without the outstanding support from individuals, organizations, private foundations and other donors like those shown here. Your support provides us with the opportunity to enhance our current services for consumers. At Listening Ear we will continue to seek new ways to meet our mission and ensure quality services.

Together, we can build a community that is *Always There.*

Donald Schuster, ACSW
Executive Director

If you wish to have your name removed from the general newsletter mailing list, please notify in writing:

Donald Schuster, Executive Director
Listening Ear, PO Box 800, Mt Pleasant, MI 48804-0800
or email dschuster@listeningear.com.

BUILDING A COMMUNITY THAT'S *Always There*

PAST YEAR IN REVIEW

Listening Ear uses multiple strategies for gauging success and identifying areas that need improvement. The agency looks at outcomes such as - Did the youth meet his goal of enrolling in community college? Did the child stay out of trouble? Was the family reunified? Did the adult consumer with developmental disabilities meet his dream of earning extra money through a small business? Another way that Listening Ear measures success is by counting the numbers. Here is a look back at the numbers for the last fiscal year (Oct 2008 - Sept 2009):

- The Crisis Center handled 26,560 calls—an all time record number! The Mental Health Technicians gave information and referrals to 18,708 people, served 458 walk-ins, and served 11,800 after-hours Mental Health consumers. The Crisis Center also became a joint member in providing 211 information and referral services in mid-Michigan. Overall satisfaction was 100% for callers and 95% for walk-in consumers.
- The Runaway & Homeless Youth Services program provided 1,673 hours of direct service, provided services to 47 youth and families in Clare & Isabella Counties, took 27 youth on summer camping and 20 on a winter outdoor retreat. Overall satisfaction was 95%.
- The Child Sexual Abuse Treatment program provided 249 hours of counseling to 20 children in Isabella and Clare Counties that had been sexually abused. No child receiving treatment was re-molested. Overall satisfaction was 100%.
- The Transitional Living Program provided 1,956 hours of service to more than 100 young people in Isabella and Clare Counties affected by homelessness and in need of self sufficiency skills. Of these 18 received residential support and 27 received other support and skill building guidance. Overall satisfaction was 100%.
- Foster Care children received 10,525 days of care. Foster Care staff made 1,462 youth contacts, 2,101 family/guardian contacts, 5,133 foster parent contacts and 2,321 collateral contacts, staff completed 294 hours of training, and provided 223 hours of training to foster parents. As a licensed child placing agency, the Foster Care team placed 33 children during the year. Overall satisfaction was 88%. Overall satisfaction of Youth was 94%. Parents of children in foster care indicated 89% satisfaction, and foster parents rated their satisfaction at 82%.
- The agency's 71 rental units/apartments housed people who were at moderate, limited, low and very low incomes. The rental program maintained a 98.5% occupancy rate. The overall satisfaction was 96%.
- Residential Services provided support to 139 people with developmental disabilities living in their own homes or in licensed adult foster care group homes. Of these individuals, 3,665 dreams were realized. The number of consumer managed microenterprises and small businesses grew to 28. Overall satisfaction averaged 96%.
- The Weekend Recreation program continues to draw a crowd. Social and recreational programs were provided to 30 to 85 people with developmental disabilities at each event. Consumers were also taken camping during the summer. Overall satisfaction was 95%.

Expenditures during 2008/09 were:

Personnel:	\$ 7,896,852 (69.6%)
Operating Expenses:	\$ 2,431,122 (21.5%)
Administration:	\$ 859,777 (7.6%)
Depreciation:	\$ 151,136 (1.3%)
Total:	\$ 11,338,887

Special Gifts

Listening Ear is only able to succeed when the community at large supports our charitable work. This year several groups and individuals made gifts that were passed on directly to consumers in need. Those receiving the gifts were young people, young families with children and adults with disabilities who were starting out or starting over in a home of their own.

On their behalf, we thank you!

- The Faith Weavers of St. Mary's once again contributed \$1,000 that was used to help a young family and help several parenting and pregnant young people in the Transitional Living Program.
- The Mountain Town Society of Kapnismologists and The Order of Collegiate Pipe Smokers contributed \$335 which was used during the holidays to assist a family associated with our Homeless Prevention-Rapid Re-Housing Program. As requested, the funds were used to purchase Christmas gifts, coats, dishes and pots and pans for this young family.
- The Isabella County Prosecuting Office purchased a number of items for young people in the Transitional Living Program.



Other Special Gifts were made by:

- Jacinda Toney & Dave Bailey who generously donated a television, television stand, book shelf, rocking chair and the items of clothing for the Transitional Living Program Staff Monitored Apartment serving young people working on self sufficiency skills.
- Harriet Simon who donated furniture and furnishings from Gary Weidman's apartment after he passed.
- Marge Zurakowski who donated some kitchen items to the In Home Help Program.
- Sara Sroufe who donated some kitchen items.
- Betsy Banta who donated some kitchen items.

We are thankful for these supporters (Gifts made since the last newsletter) . . .

LISTENING EAR CRISIS CENTER FUND

- Anonymous
- Todd & Lori Swarts
- Lon Morey
- David & Linda Kolenbrander
- Ross & Shelly Rapaport
- Paul & Carolyn Buiten
- Paul & Gloria Siers
- Carol J Meixner
- Leo & Louise Contrera
- Caryn Mehler
- Herbert & Judy Wybenga
- Terry & Marcia Stacy
- Downtown Drugs
- Robert & Catherine Janson
- Bob & Sue Davis in honor of Bryan & Deb Mielke
- Joseph Bohrer & Patricia Brand In honor of Matthew Bohrer
- Jackie Randall
- Betsy Banta
- Kathy Tarrant
- MD Investments
- Martha & John Mater In honor of Kristin Sheridan & Michael Libbee
- Caroline Kramer

CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE TREATMENT FUND

- Mid Michigan Pest Control
- Valerie Stephens, PHD, PC
- Norma J. Bailey
- Earl & GeorgAnn Schuster
- James & Naomi Stark
- Michael Libbee & Kristin Sheridan in honor of Carolyn Van Cleave & Marsha Phillips
- Allison Schuster McElroy
- Barbara Logan
- Al Kaufmann
- Don & Sally Wiper in honor of Don Schuster
- Caroline Kramer & Rick Stevens

CONSUMER NEEDS & DREAMS FUND

- Laura Faber
- Patty Kasbohm
- Vera E. Welling in honor of Sharon Welling
- Michael Libbee & Kristin Sheridan in Memory of Tanya Mogg
- Allison Schuster-McElroy
- Greg & Cecilia Bator
- Robert & Vera Green in honor of Mary Ulmer
- Linda Vos Graham & Kenneth Graham in honor of Laura Faber
- Caroline Kramer & Rick Stevens

GIFTS MADE IN MEMORY AND HONOR OF GARY WEIDMAN BY

- Ann Beamish
- Harry & Janabel Simpson
- Ila & Franklin Ezop
- HJ Beamish
- Margaret & Matt Morrison
- Ivan & Barbara Boyce
- Robert & Janet Benson
- Harriet Simon
- Charles & Bonnie Anthony
- Fred & Sandra Keast
- Loren & Mary Simon
- Mary Dunlop
- Scott Simon

MORE GENEROUS DONORS

- Mt. Pleasant Community of Christ
- Sanda J. Wiper, gift to the Schuster Family Endowment Fund in honor of Don Schuster
- Donald Schuster, gift to the Schuster Family Endowment Fund
- Mt. Pleasant Rotary Club gift for the Child Sexual Abuse Treatment Program
- The Morey Foundation gift to the Crisis Center