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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED









Agency Updates ng Ear is pleased to welcome new personnel and congratulate those who have made advancements —

Stephanie Bird, Mental Health Specialist in the Crisis Center

Children Services Interns: Cindy Seger - MSU MSW, Amanda Webb - Ferris MSW, Katarina Oblinger - CMU BSW, Taylor Ronk - CMU BSW, Rachelle Kellogg - CMU BSW, and, Alyson Strzalkowski - CMU BSW

Rianne Leslie, Mental Health Technician/2-1-1 Call Specialist in the Crisis Center

Alexandria Marcantonio, New Case Manager in the Runaway Homeless Youth and Transitional Living Programs

John Lyons promoted to Assistant Director in the Crisis Center.

Jamie Óagenais promoted to Senior Program Director for Residential Services - Central

Jessica Ellis promoted to Program Director for Residential Services – Central, Mt. Pleasant

Cindy Croke promoted to Assistant Program Director for Residential Services - Central, Mt. Pleasant

Rebecca Brewer promoted to Program Director for Residential Services - Central, Clare

Andrea Binge promoted to Program Director for Residential Services - Central, Isabella Ashley Walters promoted to Program Director for Residential Services - Central, Isabella

Robert Hubbard promoted to Program Director for Residential Services - Central, Adams

Cody Mayhew promoted to Program Director for Residential Services - Central, Adams

Cindy Miller promoted to Senior Direct Care Worker for Residential Services – South, Ionia

Chris Chambers promoted to Senior Direct Care Worker for Residential Services – South, Belding Natasha Ingersoll promoted to PT Assistant Program Director for Residential

Services – North, Kresnak and PT Employment Specialist

April Alexander promoted to Senior Program Director for Residential Services-

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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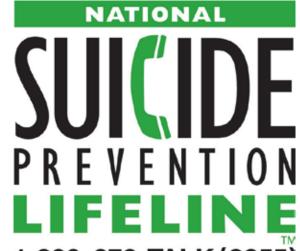
Executive Director: Donald Schuster

If you wish to have your name removed from the newletter mailing list, please write: Executive Director, Listening Ear P.O. Box 800 Mt Pleasant, MI 48804-0800 or, email dschuster@listeningear.com. If you want more information about us, please visit our website at www.listeningear.com or see www.guidestar.org.



Listening Ear Partners with the **National Suicide Prevention Lifeline**

Many don't realize that suicide is the second-leading cause of death for those ages 15-34. While men are more likely to kill themselves, three times the number of women attempt suicide. Sadly, veterans' suicide rate has tripled in the last decade with more than 2,000 suicide deaths across the country. Suicide rates are also high among older adults. But, suicide is preventable. One call can save a life.



1-800-273-TALK (8255)

suicidepreventionlifeline.org

Because of financial support from our donors, for over 45 years Listening Ear has been able to help thousands of area residents expressing pain and discussing their wish for suicide. Our 24 hour Crisis Center mental health workers are trained to identify a caller's suicidal desire, capability, and intent. The staff offer an empathic ear, explore coping strategies and alternatives, and offer resources including emergency help.

Now, Listening Ear has joined the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline Network of 165 crisis centers across the nation. In addition to calls made to our 989-772-2918 or 989-386-2774 numbers, the Network will rout calls made to their Suicide Prevention Lifeline 1-800-273-TALK or 1-800-SUICIDE from Clare, Isabella and Gratiot County callers to our year-round Crisis Center, which thanks to you is "Always There."

(See more on page 2.)

INCREDIBLE **COMMUNITY**

Dear Readers,

Nationally accredited with the Council on Accreditation since 1998, Listening Ear has also met the high standards of the National Suicide Prevention Network. With this new designation, calls received by the Network's Suicide Prevention Lifeline from Clare. Isabella and Gratiot residents will be routed to our Crisis Center. While other Crisis Centers have closed we have been able to sustain the 24 hour crisis line because of community support. This service, founded over 45 years ago, continues to help area reasidents who call for a wide range of reasons. Sadly, suicide is among those reasons. Suicide affects everyone - including the person's family and friends.

One call can save a life... Sally called our 24 hour Crisis Center late one night after she just swallowed a handful of pills. She talked about being a past rape victim, having terrible memories that robbed her of sleep and that she wanted to die. Yet there was part of her that wanted to live. Keith, our trained Crisis Center telephone mental health worker, stayed on the phone with her. He listened to her pain and together they worked on a plan of help and rescue. But as the pills took effect, this became even more challenging. Calling from a cell phone, Sally was not sure of her exact location. Keith asked her for landmarks which he relayed to the dispatcher who directed the emergency responders. He did a great job working with Sally to find a reason to live and summoning help. After the incident, with referrals, Sally did receive treatment to support her recovery while dealing with her past

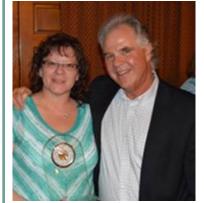
Keith did a great job helping this suicide caller, yet it is you and your financial support that allows us to help hundreds of callers each year like Sally. With your support, Listening Ear is able to build a community that is "Always There."

Sincerely,

Donald Schuster, LMSW **Executive Director**

Power of Kindness...

The Lori A. Shively Power of Kindness Award was presented to three deserving staff at the 2015 Board Award Banquet. The award is given to employees who, like the late former board member Lori A. Shively, demonstrate kindness, passionate and loving service and a tenacious "can do" attitude.



Jenny Jacobs has worked 15 years for Listening Ear, most recently as the Program Director in the Residential Services- South program in Ionia. As verified by letters from her staff, Jenny is a person who has brought Gentle Teaching to life with compassion, warmth, respect, a warm smile or a sharing a laugh.

Jo Crossett has worked 14 years for Listening Ear as a Program Director in the Residential Services- North program in Mancelona. Jo is a great advocate for her consumers and is always ready to lend a helping hand to consumers who operate their own micro enterprise. She is hardworking, loyal and always willing to go the extra mile. She is a woman of action who gets things done quickly but finds time to offer comfort.







Creating Affordable Housing...

More than half of the information and referral calls to Listening Ear's 24 hour help line are from people looking for affordable housing or assistance with utility costs. "Affordable housing with energy efficient heating is usually the number one need", says Donald Schuster, Executive Director of Listening Ear.

Low income housing is a critical part of any community's healthy housing mix but it is in short supply. Affordable housing allows low income families to live in communities close to work, education, and affordable transportation. According to Schuster, "Low income housing contributes to the well-being of both parents and children, since studies show that children living in stable housing do better in school."

Listening Ear has developed 79 apartments over the last fifteen years that meet low income affordable housing standards. In the coming months 60 more low income housing units will be added. Schuster says, "That means that about 350 children and adults will have an affordable and energy efficient place to call home in Isabella County." To learn more about housing options, call 2-1-1 or the 24 hour crisis line at (989) 772-2918.

We are thankful for these supporters!

(Gifts made since the last newsletter)...

LISTENING EAR CRISIS CENTER FUND

• Betsy Banta Kathy Tarrant

CONSUMER NEEDS & DREAMS FUND

- Laurie Booth
- Jane Kipp
- Bonnie Hayward

CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE TREATMENT FUND

- Anonymous
- Chuck & Linda Blaksmith in memory of Valerie Stephen's
- John & Linda Dinan Carolyn VanCleave; from Carolyn, John & Deb in honor

of Kristin Sheridan

PHIL A. LANGLOIS ENDOWMENT FUND

Vicki Chessin

GENERAL DONORS & GRANTMAKERS - Thank you to:

- Alpha Kappa Psi toward Transitional Living Program for homeless
- Anonymous for meeting baseball dreams
- CMU-RPL 430 Fundraising event for the Crisis Center
- First Nonprofit Foundation toward new accounting system and
- The Alden and Vada Dow Family Foundation toward youth and
- The James R. & Anita Horne Jenkins Family Foundation toward Crisis Isabella Bank and Trust toward Transitional Living Program for
- John and Cleo Leppien made a generous gift to the 24 hour Crisis
- Program and for homeless youth. Donald Schuster made a gift to the Schuster Family Fund for
- Jessica Lynn Smith toward the Crisis Center

The following that made gifts for the Harley Days event/Weekend **Recreation Program:**

- Abbott Furniture
- Al Kaufmann
- Battle & Sons
- Eric's Auto Body
- Exit 95 Ila Rousseau
- John Sebastian Productions Mid Michigan Industries

Danielle Kreiner

Julie Labadie

Diane LaLone

- Moose on Bikes St. Louis Moose Lodge 1566
- Tony & Diann Turnwald

The following individuals directed their United Way gift to Listening Ear during 2014/2015 Campaign

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