I was born in Prescott, Arizona, and am the younger of a set of twins, the older being my sister, Nanaba. In my youth, I remember being on the reservation. It was a different way of thinking and living that has become my spiritual being. I often reflect back to ceremonial dances, good food, laughter, and falling asleep watching the dancers in the fire’s light. The Indian-way has stayed with me to this day. I believe that it is a very important part of who I am; as an artist and as a person. My father, a known artist, would be working on literally a dozen paintings all at once and I watched the magic of his artwork unfold.

At no time during these years did I show any aptitude for artwork. I had severe vision problems and struggled to use a coloring book. I was also no good at crafts...it seemed like the only area of art I was good at was appreciation. In the end this was to benefit me.

I didn’t start drawing until I left home. Slowly, I began to make my own images, my own designs. And, slowly but surely, I came up with a style that was uniquely my own. My artwork became a part of my heart, and it became a healing of my soul. I think that it is sad that my father died less than a year after my first art show. He never saw my artwork.

In the year 2000, I was finally diagnosed as bi-polar. At the time, the diagnosis was a godsend because it helped to explain much of what was happening in my life. From there, I could begin a life in recovery. My artwork blossomed. I have sold numerous pieces of commissioned artwork. With assistance from PSA Art Awakenings and Cenpatico, I have gained the self-confidence I need to share my artwork. I believe in my art’s validity, the way it touches the human heart...It is a part of me and I hope to continue growing and sharing my art with others.

Arizona Summer Heat

Arizona is one of the hottest places on earth from June to September. Heat related illnesses are common during the summer. Year after year, nearly 800 people are admitted to hospitals because of heat related illnesses. Heat related illnesses can be fatal. Last year 152 Arizonans died from heat exposure with 80% of those in June, July and August. The largest age group for heat-related deaths are people over 55 (75% are men). There are three key steps you can take to keep yourself and loved ones safe during the summer heat:

1) Keep Cool
2) Keep Hydrated
3) Keep yourself Informed

For a full list of tips and information on hydration stations, view our extreme heat site and online brochure.
Prescott Valley YOFU Presents 1st Annual Talent Show

Child and Family Support Services (CFSS) in Prescott Valley and young people are coming together to expand a youth-guided movement in the system titled Youth Organization for U (YOFU). The purpose of the youth movement is to create opportunities for young people to have fun together, experience reciprocity, affect system growth, and inspire hope in each other. No formal membership is required and all young people are invited to get involved at whatever time and pace fits their interest.

Prescott Valley YOFU held its first annual “Jammin for Talentz” show this past weekend to “showcase the incredible and varying talents of the kids and teens in the Prescott Valley office,” say Kim Alsumiri and Lara Zelman at CFSS. The YOFU kids spent a few months planning the event. Some of the talents showcased included singing, choreographed dancing, dub-step, poetry, rapping, bicycle tricks, hula hoop tricks, guitar solos, art work, and acting. Some kids helped out more behind the scenes, and showed their talents in other ways by helping to DJ and decorate. It was a perfect day as kids of all ages came together to do what they do best, and everyone supported each other.

Magellan Gives 300 Computers to Aid Central Arizona Residents

Magellan of Arizona invests in helping service recipients and family members achieve their recovery goals through its annual Computer Giveaway Program. Since 2008, Magellan has given away 1,586 computers to service recipients and family members involved in their recovery, and peer/family run agencies and providers—connecting these individuals to resources and tools available through technology.

This year, the seventh annual program will provide 300 computers to residents and agencies in central Arizona’s behavioral health community. All qualified service recipients and family members involved in their recovery were eligible to apply for a free computer. More than 400 service recipients completed the essay application, which requires applicants to explain their need for a computer and how having a computer will help in achieving their recovery goals. Winners will receive their computers during pickup day in September as part of Recovery Month. The computers for the program are refurbished and come to Arizona from Magellan offices throughout the country.

The Garden at Southwest Behavioral Health Payson

William Houdek is a Master Gardener as well as a Master’s level therapist for Southwest Behavioral Health Services in Payson. When the agency’s equine program ended due to budget cuts three years ago, the agency came up with the idea of developing a garden. After all, the property for the equine program was not being utilized, and the horses who resided there had provided plenty of manure to make a rich earth for gardening.

The garden provides individuals with the skills and knowledge of all aspects of gardening – hoeing, sowing, and cultivating, learning salesmanship to sell produce at the local farmer’s market, and keeping produce for their own health eating. There are over 20 dedicated participants who take care of organically grown tomatoes, cucumbers, squash, herbs, and many more vegetables on a regular basis. Almost everything is started by seed in the garden’s greenhouse before planting. So far, they have been earning over $60.00 each week at the farmer’s market and it has turned into a self-sustaining business. William welcomes visitors to the garden, but if you go, make sure it is early in the morning, as summer is here and it’s hot out, even in Payson!
Many Unaware of Hepatitis Risk

Thousands of Arizona Baby Boomers are infected with a contagious liver disease and don’t know it. Hepatitis C is an inflammation caused by a virus. The symptoms include fever, fatigue, nausea and abdominal pain. Symptoms can be severe to too mild to be noticed. When left untreated, hepatitis C can cause cirrhosis, liver failure or liver cancer. The longer people live with hepatitis C, the more likely they are to get serious liver disease.

It is estimated that at least 100,000 people in Arizona are infected with hepatitis C and nearly half of them are unaware of the infection. Most of those infected – and unaware they are infected – are Baby Boomers, people born from 1945 through 1965. The reason that Boomers have high rates have hepatitis C isn’t known.

Testing for Hepatitis C is recommended for people who:

- Currently inject drugs or have injected drugs, even just once, in the past.
- Have abnormal liver tests.
- Received donated blood before 1992.
- Have HIV

Healthy Recipe

**Honey Chicken Kabobs**

**Ingredients:**
- 2T vegetable oil
- 2T and 2t honey
- 2T and 2t soy sauce
- 1/8t black pepper
- 4 skinless, boneless chicken breasts cut into 1” cubes
- 1 clove garlic
- 2 1/2 small onions cut into 2” pieces
- 1 red bell pepper, cut into 2” pieces

**Skewers**

**Directions:**
1. In a large bowl, whisk together oil, honey, soy sauce, and pepper. Before adding chicken, reserve a small amount of marinade to brush onto kabobs while cooking. Place the chicken, garlic, onions and peppers in the bowl, and marinate in the refrigerator at least 2 hours (the longer the better).
2. Preheat the grill for medium to high heat.
3. Drain marinade from the chicken and vegetables, and discard marinade. Thread chicken and vegetables alternately onto the skewers.
4. Lightly oil the grill grate. Place the skewers on the grill. Cook for 12-15 minutes, until chicken juices run clear. Turn and brush with reserved marinade frequently.

Makes 6 servings
Source: allrecipes.com

Pool Safety

1. Install fences and gates around pool at least 48 inches tall. Keep gates locked.
2. Remove all chairs, tables, large toys or other objects that would allow a child to climb up to reach the gate latch or enable the child to climb over the pool isolation fence.
3. Keep reaching and throwing aids such as poles on both sides of the pool.
4. Keep drains covered.
5. Install a pool alarm to detect accidental or unauthorized entrance into the water.
6. Install an approved safety cover to completely block access to water in the pool, spa or hot tub. Never allow anyone to stand or play on a pool cover.
7. Invest in swimming lessons and CPR training for your family and pool users.
8. Check for warning signs of an unsafe deck, including loose or wobbly railings or support beams, missing or loose screws that connect a deck to the house, corrosion, rot and cracks.

Grill Safety

1. Place the barbeque grill away from siding, deck railings and out from under eaves and overhanging branches. Never grill on top of anything that can catch on fire. Do not store propane tanks in a garage.
2. Do not add additional lighter fluid or other fuel to a lit grill fire, and never leave a grill unattended.
3. Do not dispose used charcoal until it is completely cooled and extinguished.
4. When grilling, have a fire extinguisher, a garden hose or at least 4 gallons of water close by.
5. Keep children away from fires and grills.
6. Never leave the grill unattended.
Pinal Hispanic Council to Open Café in Eloy

Pinal Hispanic Council, in collaboration with Cenpatico Behavioral Health plans to open a restaurant in Eloy. This will be another location in the growing number of programs across the state where people can gain valuable work experience and skill development on their path toward recovery. Similar ventures have sprung up around the state including the Creative Café in Casa Grande and others in Marana and Tucson. To read more about this exciting work going on, click on the following link: Pinal-Hispanic-Council

Candace Lewis: A Story of Hope

Southwest Network’s CAFÉ program recently hosted a special CAFÉ event: Candace Lewis, a doctoral candidate at Arizona State University for behavioral neuroscience, spoke at the Central Valley office to youth, young adults and their caregivers. Attendees had the chance to hear stories from those who have navigated lives of uncertainty to find success. Candace was joined by Steven, Amanda, and Cheyenne from Southwest Network’s Youth Advisory Board, who also shared their stories of hope and resiliency.

What does it take for young people with behavioral health problems to overcome their challenges? Candace had led a life of neglect and abuse; she attempted suicide twice in her early teens. But a foster family changed her life by proving to her that she was important enough to be loved.

Candace realized that it was always up to her to choose to succeed, to care about her future, and to make the right decisions. She graduated high school with honors, achieved a B.A. degree in psychology and is currently pursuing her Ph.d. “Letting a caring adult into your life may be hard to do,” Candace says, “but it can make a tremendous difference.” Candace added: “You can do great and fun things in your life.”

What is the Recovery Empowerment Network

Recovery Empowerment Network (REN) is a peer run and operated agency for people with lived experience of psychiatric symptoms, substance abuse, or both and serves both the Title XIX & Non-Title XIX populations of Maricopa County.

REN provides services from its new Empowerment Campus at 212 East Osborn, located in midtown Phoenix, and its co-located Empowerment Centers at Osborn, Highland, Metro, San Tan clinics, and out in the greater community of the member’s choice.

REN’s programs are developed to meet the specific needs of its members. Current classes include topics such as creating positive relationships, grief and loss, recovery, compassionate communication, and resiliency. REN also creates opportunities for members to participate in advocacy at the judicial and legislative level. REN’s Recovery Support Training (RST) has been approved by the state to certify Peer Support Workers. REN’s Health and Wellness Program includes Tai Chi and focuses on whole health recovery. Members attend frequent activities such as movies, sporting events, gym outings, bowling, festivals, art exhibits, out-of-town events, and more.
Developing a Sense of Connection

Having a sense of connection to fellow peers can help those dealing with a mental illness or substance abuse issue. Peer-based programs enable those in recovery to learn from others who have experienced similar situations and who are now living healthy lifestyles. Research has shown that including peer support as a form of treatment improves an individual’s quality of life, problem solving, satisfaction, social support and coping skills. In addition, these programs often lead to reductions in hospitalizations and symptomology.

A place to start can be at your nearest peer-run organization. Some of them offer group skill building, educational and enrichment programs and can help you connect with community resources. For example, HOPE, Inc. has a Warm Line that offers peer-to-peer telephone support for people living with mental illness or addiction. The organization also offers the Supportive Peers Assisting as Navigators (SPAN) program to help people experiencing a mental health crisis connect with local support and find alternatives to court-ordered evaluation and hospitalization.

For a full list of peer-run organizations, click here.

Connecting with Others and Developing a Support System

As we look at our lives in recovery, one of the most important and fulfilling dimensions of wellness is the Social Dimension. Having friends and family you can lean on, celebrate with and spend relaxing time with helps us re-energize ourselves. Life is full of challenges and pitfalls. Sometimes having a good friend to listen to your fears – or just be there with you to laugh and cry – can make all the tensions go away. If you aren’t sure you know how to make this dimension work for you, try some of these tips from the SAMHSA website:

• Make a list of supportive family, friends, co-workers and peers.
• Make at least one connection per day by calling, emailing or visiting someone.
• Join a club, social group or support group.
• Volunteer with an organization whose interests you share.
• Get involved in peer support.

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Social Enrichment of Recovery

The diagnosis of mental illness, alcohol or substance abuse often creates a real sense of loneliness. The stigma of mental illness can also have an isolating effect on the people and families it touches. Recovery services can break through loneliness and isolation on a daily basis through meaningful social connections and activities that open up a community of social support.

Your first new “friend” in Arizona’s behavioral healthcare system may be the Peer Support person who joins your recovery team.

Peers are people who have personal experiences with mental illness, alcohol and/or drug abuse. Working with someone who has gone through similar experiences and has come out stronger on the other side can be especially motivating. Peers encourage you to share stories, teach new skills to others and exchange self-help strategies. These conversations help rebuild your morale. Additionally, your recovery may involve wellness programs that allow you to enjoy the social benefits of exercise, diet and nutrition groups.

Recovery services offer opportunities to volunteer or get paid for community-based projects as stepping stones to a well life. Such services enable you to overcome feelings of inadequacy or isolation by being of service to others.
Upcoming Events

14th Annual Summer Institute
When: July 16-19
Where: Sedona Hilton

The 14th Annual Summer Institute will focus on the theme "Change the Conversation: Maximizing Opportunities in Emerging Healthcare Landscape". Breakout sessions include integrated healthcare; prevention and crisis intervention, practice improvement, and collaboration/interagency coordination.

NAMI Family-to-Family
When: August 22
Where: Mountain View Presbyterian Church, Scottsdale

NAMI’s Family-to-Family is a free 12 week course for family members and friends of adult individuals living with mental illness. In addition, NAMI Basics is a new signature education program for parents and other caregivers of children and adolescents living with mental illness. This training is also free and begins September 7 at Banner Desert Hospital in Mesa. For more information and to register call 602-759-8177 or email namimaricopaedu@gmail.com.

45th Annual Southwestern School for Behavioral Health Studies Conference
When: August 18-22
Where: Loews Ventana Canyon, Tucson

The 45th Annual Southwestern School for Behavioral Health Studies, Arizona’s largest and oldest behavioral health conference, will focus on the theme: “Embracing Recovery and Wellness – Where Hope Stems from Within”, and nationally known speakers and faculty will address a wide range of topics and issues relevant to behavioral health.

PLEASE TELL US what you like/don’t like about Recovery WORKS -- and how we can improve!
Take this brief survey anytime July 3 – July15 to help us provide you with the information that’s most important to you in Recovery WORKS.

The DBHS’ Blog Connection

“Want to learn about chronic disease self-management?”

The Division is hosting a training for facilitators (a.k.a. “lay leaders”) of Standford’s Chronic Disease Self-Management “healthy living” workshops. The Marc Community Resources Center will be bringing their master instructors on July 15th, 16th, 19th and 20th to provide this training at our facility located in downtown Phoenix. Any community member interested to learn about this opportunity, please contact Lacreshia.witcher@marccr.com, phone 480-969-3800 ext. 214. Read the full blog post for full details and to print the flyer...

Visit the blog at http://bhsblog.azdhs.gov. Hint: you can subscribe to receive the information as soon as posted!

To submit an article: email your article to DBHSCommunications@azdhs.gov no later than the 15th of each month for publication the following month, pending on space available. Maximum length is 200 words, must be in an editable word document and picture(s) included within the document. By submitting an article you authorize the Editorial Board to edit as appropriate. Bylines or independent writers’ names are not included in the publication, instead you can include a link to your website or resources within the article. Thank you!

Mental Health: Everyone Has It!