



WESTCARE EXPRESS



November 2011

Recovery Makes Anything Possible

By Tim Roper – Boggs Resident

For the longest time I had no hobbies at all. The only things I ever did were smoke drugs and get in trouble. I was very out of shape and I couldn't really do anything active. Then I got in some trouble and got court ordered to WestCare Boggs in Keysville, GA. That's when my whole life changed and I started running.

When I started running I could hardly cover a quarter of a mile. Over time I got better and better until running became not only a hobby for me, but a great tool in recovery. Running became a spiritual thing for me rather than a recreational thing.

The staff at WestCare took us to the Race for Recovery in Augusta on September 10, 2011 and I ended up taking second place. It made me feel so good to actually take part in something constructive for a change. I think everyone in recovery needs something active to focus on.

On top of that, being at WestCare has given

me a lot of time to reflect on myself. I was doing terrible in school and wasn't going anywhere in life. One of my greatest accomplishments that I achieved at WestCare was earning my G.E.D. When I was in school I made all failing grades. I never passed a single class in high school. The work was basic, but I couldn't comprehend it on the few occasions that I actually decided to do my work. Now that I'm off drugs, I can see and think clearly. When I went to G.E.D classes I had little if any hope at all of getting my G.E.D. When I started doing the work I found it very easy to do. Then I went on to earn my G.E.D on October 5. If I can do it then I believe anyone can do it. Perseverance is the key.

I'm Tim Roper and I'm a 16 year old recovering addict. I would like to thank Mr. Kelly for being an inspiration to me to run, Mr. Blackwell for training me to run, and my dad and mom for supporting me through all this.



Boggs resident Tim Roper and his dad at Race for Recovery

JOIN THE VOICES FOR RECOVERY

RECOVERY BENEFITS EVERYONE

National Recovery Month
Prevention Works • Treatment is Effective • People Recover
SEPTEMBER 2011

In This Issue

Page 1
Recovery Makes Anything Possible

Page 2
Young Residents of Kentucky Center Make Good Use of Their Time
Chamber of Commerce Award
Flower of the Month

Page 3
Recognition Ceremony Offers Hope For WestCare Clients
In the News

Page 4
November Calendar
Employee Spotlight Shines on Jeanine Diaz
Setting It Straight

Page 5
Expressions
Television Note

Page 6
Keys Staff Part of National Program "A Day of Caring" with WestCare Gulf Coast Wellness Center Anniversary Celebration

Page 7
Here, There, Wheresoever
Graduation: Another Big Step in the Journey

Page 8
Human Resources
In the News

Page 9
Congressman Tours Home Front
Our Alumni Rock!

Page 10
SMART 2 News
News from SASCA

Page 11
WestCare Wellness Watch
Kudos

Page 12
Kudos!

Page 13
Happy Thanksgiving

Page 14
In the News
Thanksgiving Non-Alcoholic Beverage

Young Residents of Kentucky Center Make Good Use of their Time

By BCDC resident Josh Watson

Residents of the WestCare Substance Abuse Program at the Boyle County Detention Center in Danville, KY worked on creating an informative display board for Domestic Violence Awareness. This board is on display in the lobby of the jail for the month of October. It includes statistics on domestic violence, a toll-free hotline number for help and a bag of purple ribbons (which were handmade by the residents) for visitors to the jail.

During their research, the residents discovered that domestic violence is one of the most under-reported crimes in the United States. It is not only physical abuse, but sexual and emotional, and 85% of all victims are women. They posted the National Domestic Violence Hotline number (1-800-799-7233) for additional information and they used the National Coalition Against Domestic Violence website.

Kentucky

Boyle Center youth and counselors display their work. ▼



Chamber of Commerce Award

WestCare programs throughout the country are deeply involved in the communities they serve.

In Kentucky, Robbie Starling, CADC, receives a certificate from Emily Clifton of the local Chamber of Commerce honoring WestCare for 5 years of outstanding service and commitment to Estill County.



Robbie Starling and Emily Clifton ▲



Flower of the Month: Chrysanthemum

Red for love, white for truth, yellow for the slightest love, but in general, the Chrysanthemum symbolizes cheerfulness and optimism. The Chrysanthemum blooms in the fall, bringing extra cheer to a colder climate when most flowers take a break. Associated with the dead, this flower has popularity at funerals, or to the bereaved in time of need. From this popularity, it was once thought that bringing the Chrysanthemum indoors meant a wishful death. Originating in China, the Chrysanthemum is considered one of the four noble plants among bamboo, the plum, and the orchid. It was once thought that drinking from a stream that flowed between Chrysanthemums would help a person live to be 100. From this myth came Chrysanthemum tea, wine and medicine to encourage a healthy, long life.

Recognition Ceremony Offers Hope For WestCare Clients

By Charlene Hamann – WestCare Recreational Therapist

All the Sheridan Correctional Center stakeholders have a monthly client recognition ceremony in its gymnasium.

During this ceremony, WestCare clients who are close to their release, are awarded a "Certificate of Appreciation" for their participation in the therapeutic community. The certificate is hand signed by the Stan Brooks, WestCare Director. This Recognition Ceremony also honors the clients that have completed other case management, educational and vocational programs offered by the Sheridan Model. ie; WestCare, TASC, Lake Land College, Illinois Manufacturing Foundation, Home Builders Institute, and the Illinois Department of Corrections school district.

The ceremony also offers a guest speaker, which can be an internal or external provider staff member, or a former client who has been successful since his release. Recent WestCare employees who have spoken are Yolanda Barnes, Robert Henderson, Leon Jackson, and Kim Jenkins. Kim, for example, offered many words of encouragement and helpful post-release advice. Kim spoke briefly about her own life and about the road she traveled down that eventually led her to her current supervisor position with WestCare.

During the ceremony clients are reminded that the day they are released from Sheridan and the therapeutic community, " is the first day of the rest of their life." They have been given many tools and opportunities here that other do not have upon release back into the world. The recognition ceremony also offers clients the chance to be part of something they may have never been part of: a ceremony set up with a podium and rows of graduate chairs, and banners with words like "congratulations," "way to go," "you finally made it," "we are proud of you," "your work has paid off." Each client's name is read out loud, along with the names of the programs he has completed, and he walks thru the receiving line shaking hands with all the staff that have helped him gain his achievements. All available staff, administrative personnel, and wardens are invited to attend the ceremony, which takes place on the second Tuesday of every month, in effort to support their accomplishments. Members of the client band usually provide music before, during, and after the ceremony, which ends with all in attendance standing and reciting the Philosophy. The culinary arts class also provides homemade cookies for all in attendance.

Illinois



Sheridan clients are honored at Recognition Ceremony

News from Around the Treatment Industry

Courtesy:
jointogether.org

Petition on White House Website Aims to Raise Profile of Drug Prevention

The Community Anti-Drug Coalitions of America (CADCA) is looking for 25,000 people to sign an online petition to raise the profile of effective drug prevention on the White House's "We the People" website. If the goal is reached by November 4, then Cabinet members of the Obama Administration will discuss the issue, according to CADCA.

The petition calls on the Administration to ensure greater emphasis and support for drug prevention. Anyone over 13 years old can sign. "Given that drug use is increasing, Americans are receiving mixed messages, and perceptions of harm and disapproval are being eroded, we need to send a message to President Obama and his Administration that drug prevention should be a key part of our nation's demand reduction strategy," said CADCA Chairman and CEO Gen. Arthur T. Dean. "This is an amazing opportunity to get drug prevention discussed at the highest levels of government."

To view and sign the petition:

1. Go to: <http://wh.gov/2Yh>.
2. Create a username and password, if you don't have one already.
3. After you have created an account, return to the petition link and hit refresh.
4. Click "Sign Petition" button.

November Calendar

November 2nd
CAC Monthly Report Due
12:00pm

November 8th
Florida Guidance Center
CAC Meeting
3:30pm PT/6:30pm ET

November 10th
WestCare California Graduation
6:30pm PT
West Fresno Seventh Day
Adventist Church

November 16th
Exec. Committee Meeting
8:00am PT / 11:00am ET

November 18th
Veterans Plaza Open House
10:00am – 2:pm PT
Fresno, California

November 19th
Arizona CAC Meeting
Strategic Planning
9:00am PT / 12:00pm ET

November 21st
California CAC Meeting
Strategic Planning
9:00am – 5pm PT /
12:00pm – 8pm ET

November 24th
Happy Thanksgiving!



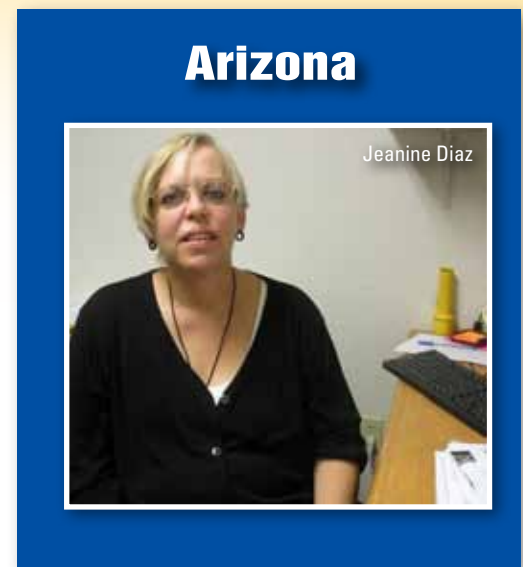
Employee Spotlight Shines on Jeanine Diaz

Submitted by: Tracy Stevens – Area Director-WC Arizona

WestCare Arizona found a real winner when we hired Jeanine Diaz in January of 2011. Jeanine is the Arizona Families FIRST (AFF) Coordinator, providing oversight of the program and staff for Mohave and La Paz Counties. Jeanine has an extensive history working in the Behavioral Health field. She possesses a Masters Degree in Correctional Counseling and has worked over the years in settings that bridge entire systems while specializing in substance abuse treatment within the court systems. Her passion has sustained her working for decades with chronic drug abusers, the criminal substance abusing population and mid and late stage recovery treatment.

Since assuming her position, Jeanine has helped the AFF staff to improve their clinical skills and learn creative ways to engage clients, which is a feat in and of itself since the service delivery area encompasses about 300 square miles and is primarily rural with limited public transportation. She has developed a great working relationship with the Arizona Department of Economic Security, Division of Children Youth and Families (DCYF), the program funder.

With Jeanine's encouragement and direction, AFF staff has been able to obtain two referrals from the State's JOBS program. Although identified as an allowable referral source in the contract, no AFF provider in the State has been able to get a referral from the State JOBS program in over a year. This accomplishment had everyone at DCYF talking and has now raised the bar and standards for community



collaboration and outreach for the other eight AFF providers in the State. Likewise, this feat has led the State to offer WestCare as a consultant to other State contracted AFF providers. Yes, our little and rural WestCare Arizona Families First program is providing guidance to large city programs!

In addition to overseeing the AFF program, Jeanine will be the site supervisor for Arizona's Americorps program staff. She has already made connections with the local State Veteran's offices and workers and laid some of the groundwork that will be needed for the programs implementation. Furthermore, Jeanine will be the staff trainer for Arizona's Performance Improvement Process. Although she admits to feeling over her head at times, Jeanine loves what she does and on a daily basis she is "Uplifting the Human Spirit" in Arizona. We are very blessed to have her on our team.

Setting It Straight

In the October issue of the express, California's Raquel Navarette was misidentified as a Counselor Tech. She is, in fact, a Family Service Specialist!

Editor's note: It is the Express' policy to correct egregious errors. Whether we like to or not.



EXPRESSIONS

By Peter Sullins

– WestCare Chief of Staff



The Best Season of All

Come now the best season of all. For those in the desert, a respite at last and solace from the scorching summer. Fall is upon us, bringing cooler days, chilly nights, and the promise of yet another solstice before Christmas.

Fall is much more than reds and golds with crisp days, important though those are. Fall is the bridge between the long dry spell from Memorial Day to the Holidays. Not quite a real holiday, Halloween none-the-less begins searches through closets and attics for the first round of decorations and fantasy. It's dress up time. Be someone else, be something else. Sort of a psychic shedding of the reality of summer to the disguise of heavy coats and long-sleeved shirts.

Add a mask and smiling pumpkins and the Holiday Season is truly underway. Diets flung asunder, excuses no longer required, the goodies appear. One day like magic, from goblins or fairy princesses, cookies, Glace' ice cream and chocolate, tons and tons of chocolate suddenly appear on counters, in lunch rooms, on tables. Sneaking a tidbit or two is not only allowed, it's positively encouraged. Getting caught is mandatory.

Then breezes pick up, become winds with an edge. Trees start flinging leaves into the sky and streets are littered in crunchy brown. There aren't as many crisp clear days; more gray and rolling clouds. There's more of an urgency and expectation as the Four Days of Thanksgiving approach. The only real holiday everyone can celebrate without the trappings of belief. Hectic plans come together – who's going to who's house? It's Mom's turkey but Grandma's pies. Where Halloween had goodies, Thanksgiving has DINNER!

An all-day affair involving kids (lots of kids), grandmas and grandpas, relatives you don't even know, Moms and Dads all in never ending movement. Early morning carries the whiff of coffee and pastry. By noon its 3rd-and-4 from the front room and the heavy scent of roasting turkey filling from the kitchen. By the time evening arrives, the sounds of clattering dishes in the sink doesn't quite muffle the contented groans and snores from the front room. The dressing was great this year.

There's a quickening to the days and the weather giving. Fall is getting older as you get deeper and deeper into the Season. The approaching Solstice seems to urge folks pulled up, mufflers wrapped about. Not work to home, work to mall to home. There are gifts to buy, cards to send, parties maybe to plan. Have you been naughty or nice? Whose list are you on? Dashes to the post office for those distant but still close. Tears for those gone and not just a picture on the wall. And tears for those new to the hubbub and the season. There's nothing like the excited screams of children early in the Morning rushing the tree. Nothing like it in the entire world.

The Day is more than tree, more than presents or the meal. The Day is family no matter where they are. For a few moments on that Day, the world goes away and becomes where you are and who you are with and all those connections reaching out. Nothing else counts in those moments. All that is precious and dear is focused in those moments. Far or close, doesn't matter. The family we are is the only thing shining.

The Solstice comes just a few days before and sort of sneaks past. Without notice, the days are imperceptibly, but inevitably, getting longer. The great rhythm of the Seasons rolls forward, Holidays almost gone, but still promised for the future. The week between Christmas and New Year always seems almost surreal. The days always are grayer, like a wrong turn taken down some imaginary opening into Winter. The colors of the holidays are gone as if they never were. Yesterday's shiny sparkly tree is suddenly a dull green bush lying at the side of the road losing needles, stray shreds of tinsel limp on the breeze.

All day football just doesn't do it. It's like a Saturday or Sunday stuck in the middle of the week with all the wrong teams playing. Chips and dip are not holiday fare. No matter what anyone says. And then the next day, back to work and a long long way before the magic starts again. Winter winds are not Fall breezes.

Fall, the best season of all.

Television Note

A recent issue of the Express profiled former NBA player Chris Herren and his visit to WestCare California, which was filmed by a documentary crew. Tonight, Tuesday November 1st at 8PM EST, "Unguarded: The Chris Herren Story" will air on ESPN.



Keys Staff Part of National Program

Florida



The Shorecrest Preparatory School's football team.

MWC Committee members with guests.



Submitted by WestCare Florida Keys staff

Congratulations to the Florida Keys Other Side of the Fence (ORP) team for being selected as one of 5 Grants in the country to participate in a NIATx Rapid Cycle Change project. Program staff attended a 2 day kick off meeting in Washington DC on September 22 and 23 for an introduction to NIATx processes and to meet with the other 4 teams in the cohort. The team is being assigned a Project coach for the next twelve months and will work with the coach and other cohort members to develop program processes to improve client services and outcomes. Way to go ORP staff!

◀ Brad Noack, Patty Polivchak, Kathleen Costello (Team Leader), Connie Leopold, Joan Forreider and Nadine Hood (Executive Sponsor and G/CC Deputy Director)

"A Day of Caring" with WestCare Gulf Coast

By Jana Balicki – Area Director

CareFest is a week of compassion-related activities that culminates with a day of service, when volunteers mobilize to meet the practical needs of their neighbors in the St. Petersburg area. It's a collaboration of churches, ministries, agencies, businesses, individuals and families with a goal of lifting up our community.

Saturday, September 24th from 7 a.m. to 2 p.m. two thousand seven and seventy-nine (2,779) volunteers and hundred twenty-four (124) volunteer groups participated in completing 107 projects city-wide in St. Petersburg from home repair, painting, constructing an outside environmental classroom, mowing, weeding and cleanup. WestCare's Davis Bradley Community Involvement Center was one of those selected project sites. We were adopted by The Shorecrest Preparatory School's Football team. The team showed up bright an early Saturday morning and spent four hours cleaning and painting the front retaining wall of the building. The young men did a great job and appeared to really have fun with his project. Giving back to the community is one of the valued principles in Recovery and supported by WestCare Gulf Coast residential programs.

Wellness Center Anniversary Celebration

Submitted by The Village, WestCare South Florida

The Village South's Midtown's Wellness Center celebrated its one year anniversary on Tuesday, October 11th. With over 70 staff, alumni, current clients and members of the community, the group enjoyed a speech from guest Eleventh Judicial Circuit Court Judge Jeff Rosinek as well as Fred Downs, Chair of the Ryan White Partnership. Throughout the past year, the MWC has served over 4,292 clients and alumni including Veterans. Multiple meetings, services and activities including smoking cessation, GED classes, CODA meetings, as well as Zumba and art recreation.

Congratulations to the members of the MWC committee and good luck on another successful year of wellness!

Here, There, Wheresoever

By Wendy Ramos
 – WestCare South Florida

The Village South and Gulf Coast Florida were treated to a special visit by members of “The Whosoever” the weekend of October 22nd. The Whosoever is a brotherhood founded by Sonny Sandoval of the platinum selling band, P.O.D. It is led by Sonny, Ryan Ries of Exit Concerts, Brian “Head” Welch, formally of the world renowned heavy metal band, KORN, and X Game’s medalist,

Ronny Fiast of Metal Mulisha. Ryan Ries and members of the travel team shared their stories and their message with clients and The Rep (aka Brandon Kagel) shared his message through his award winning raps.

The nationally-known touring groups makes stops across the country, spreading positive messages and encouragement.

The Rep belts out a rap song for his WestCare audience.



Florida

WC Executive Assistant Wendy Ramos with members of Whosoever and their touring bus.

Graduation: Another Big Step in the Journey

By Dee Wirth – Program Coordinator-Women’s Treatment Services

Nevada

Three members of the Birch-Hildebrand family celebrate their graduation!



Proud graduates Jacklyn R., Eufrasia N., and Cathy Warner.

West Care Nevada’s annual Graduation Ceremony was held at the College of Southern Nevada’s Horn Theater on September 27th. The program lineup included keynote speaker Honorable Judge Cedric Kerns of District Five Hope Court. Additional program highlights included a presentation by the graduates entitled “Lighthouse” which was a success when it made its debut at the 2010 ceremony. Another memorable moments was when a mother, daughter, and son made their way to the stage to accept their certificates of completion . . . the first family ever to complete Nevada programs simultaneously. (see photo) Their success proves that the cycle can be broken and hope became their reality. A family member sent a flower arrangement to the Women’s Campus dedicated to the West Care staff that read, “Thank you for giving us our child back.” True recovery begins with the individual and long lasting recovery is possible when families get involved..



Human Resources

By Michael Shields
– WestCare HR Director



I apologize for missing the opportunity to submit an article for the last issue. As many of you know, we have been hard at work on filling 40 nationwide “AmeriCorps” Member positions across all of WestCare. I am happy to report that all 40 have been filled, and we will soon have 40 Veterans or family members of Veterans helping us to provide services to other Veterans.

I have to say I have been amazed at the level of commitment, compassion, and dedication these folks are going to bring to the table. Without even really knowing about our Mission and Vision, they are living it by just “wanting to give something back” to others.

They are also subscribing to the WestCare “E.D.G.E.” This is something that was developed along with the Mission and Vision as an easy way to remember what we are about as individuals and as an organization. The “E.D.G.E.” in this case, (not to be confused with the guitar player in “U2”) is described as follows:

Excellence: Our first priority is to provide the highest quality service to the people and communities we serve. We value and reward success and are committed to continual improvement in all we do. We have the willingness to succeed, and we have the means to create and foster success for ourselves, our coworkers, and those we serve.

Dedication: We are committed to doing what it takes to get the job done ethically and efficiently. We are committed to hard work. We are passionate about what we do. We are compassionate with our coworkers and everyone we serve.

Growth: We are committed to learning and continuous improvement. We recognize that growth is a dynamic process, not an event. We recognize that the key to success is meeting our goals and building the resources we need to fulfill our mission.

Ethical Behavior: We value and expect integrity in every aspect of our work and will accept nothing less.

Again, as with our Mission and Vision, this acronym helps us focus on being what we need to be in order to do what we need to do! We all should be dedicated to, and proud of, our individual contributions to WestCare’s history of touching the lives of thousands of individuals and families.

Next up: So what is “Uplifting the Human Spirit,” anyhow?



News from Around the Treatment Industry

Courtesy:
jointogether.org

New Campaign Against Drugged Driving

The White House and Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD) have joined forces to create a new campaign against drugged driving. The campaign calls on parents to become more aware of the consequences of teenagers driving under the influence of drugs, CNN reports.

According to the White House Office of National Drug Control Policy (ONDCP), involvement of drugs in deadly motor vehicle crashes has increased five percent over the past five years in the United States, while the overall number of drivers killed in crashes has declined. ONDCP said 23 percent of drivers killed in motor vehicle crashes who tested positive for drugs are under age 25. The article notes 42 percent of drivers killed in crashes who tested positive for marijuana are under 25.

The new campaign includes the Drugged Driving Toolkit, which provides advice for parents of teenage drivers, examples of community activities to raise public awareness of drugged driving, and tips to help adolescents avoid succumbing to peer pressure to take drugs.

“Research shows that drugs have adverse effects on judgment, reaction time, and motor skills – all vital requirements for responsible driving,” ONDCP Director Gil Kerlikowske said in a news release.

“We already know the dangers of driving under the influence of alcohol, and a growing body of research indicates that drugged driving is also a concern – especially for young drivers aged 15-20 who are at particularly high risk for traffic crashes and really need to remain fully alert and focused on driving,” said David Strickland, Administrator of the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration.

Congressman Tours Home Front

By Julie LeFils – *Special Projects Director*

California

Congressman Jeff Denham visits with Janet Moulder inside the veteran's Home Front apartment.



Denham with veteran Amber Leonard, joining Home Front Coordinator Susan Shaw and WestCare's San Joaquin Valley Veterans Director Elizabeth Vasquez.

Last month, WestCare California's Home Front facility was visited by Congressman Jeff Denham. This housing complex for female military veterans was pleased to open their doors for this high-level visitation. Noting that Home Front is operating as the only facility of its kind in the western United States, Denham expressed his gratitude to WestCare for providing such a unique service. The transitional facility has been open for a year, and is currently occupied by eight female veterans and their children from all over California. With the ability to house 20 veterans, Home Front is always looking for new clients. Congressman Denham was able to tour the facility, speak with the women, and learn more about the program as a whole. He was impressed at the achievements thus far, and felt services like this should be replicated around the country. Mr. Denham is certainly in tune with veterans needs, as a former serviceman himself and a member of the House Committee on Veterans Affairs.

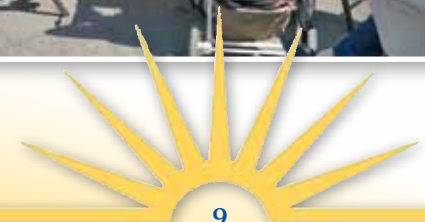


Our Alumni Rock!

By Julie LeFils – *Special Projects Director*

Just because the program is finished doesn't mean the connection should be lost. WestCare California alumni have realized that they have a unique opportunity to give back to others by simply staying active. At the October 7th Alumni Barbecue, they sat back, relaxed, and enjoyed fellowship with each other, the current residential clients, and the upcoming graduates.

They are a positive role model, a support system, and an affirmation that recovery happens. To take it to the next level, they are also selling Live Discount Cards to help raise money for the program. Thank you, alumni, for all that you do.



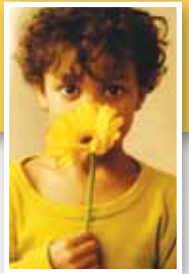
SMART 2 News!

SMART 2 works collaboratively with First 5 Fresno County, Exceptional Parents Unlimited and Babies First. It is funded by a federal grant from the Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Youth and Families and First 5 Fresno County, CA.

Smart 2 Fire Safety

Submitted by Julie LeFils – *Special Projects Officer, Fresno, California*

WestCare California's SMART 2 clients had a great time learning how to "Stop, Drop, & Roll!" In honor of Fire Safety Week, the children were visited by Fresno County Fire Department personnel along with a fully-equipped fire truck. They had fun learning about the importance of fire safety, and even got to use the hose and try on the equipment! Thank you SMART 2 for putting on such an educational and exciting event!



Preschool/School-Age Corner



With tremendous respect and admiration, I thank you.

Phillip C. Leanos,
Fresno SASCA Office

Region One SASCA

Substance Abuse Services Coordinating Agency

Praise For Those In The Trenches . . . From Their Leader

By Phillip C. Leanos – *Fresno SASCA Office*

As the Program Coordinator for the Fresno SASCA office, I would like to take this opportunity to recognize and express my gratitude to the Fresno SASCA office team.

Your team work, dedication to WestCare, and ability to persevere, are truly amazing. Our SASCA department encountered and overcame three major obstacles: A complete office move, a catastrophic data failure, and having to assume the caseload responsibility of the entire Sacramento SASCA office.

These simultaneous obstacles seemed insurmountable at times yet proved to be the cauldron of opportunity which tempered and yielded a solidified SASCA team.

Our department standards include: Leading by example, Demonstrating professionalism, and most importantly, Creating a positive work environment.



WestCare Wellness Watch



Report Finds Energy Drinks Risky for Kids

Researchers Says Poison Centers Are Getting Calls About Caffeine Overdoses in Children

By Brenda Goodman – *WebMD Health News*
Reviewed by *Laura J. Martin, MD*

Feb. 14, 2011 -- A new research review finds that kids are big consumers of caffeinated energy drinks, and experts say the beverages may be giving young users unsafe amounts of stimulants.

The special article, which is published online in the journal *Pediatrics*, sounds the alarm about the increasing number of health problems tied to caffeine use in youngsters. It calls for more caution with the popular beverages, which are often sold in brightly-colored cans with bold graphics and frenetic sounding names that may be particularly attractive to tweens and teens.

According to the review, 30% to 50% of adolescents and young adults report using energy drinks, and consumers younger than age 26 represent half of the rapidly growing \$9 billion market for these beverages in the U. S. These beverages can contain three to five times as much caffeine as an 8-ounce serving of soda.

But a spokesman for the American Beverage Association disagrees with the report, noting that caffeine has been well tested and is generally deemed safe.

Caffeine Overdoses in Kids

The researchers report that in 2008 there were more than twice as many cases of caffeine toxicity reported to the nation's poison centers each year in children as there are in adults.

"I really wouldn't have expected the number of calls that reported caffeine toxicity in children less than age 6," says study researcher Steven E. Lipshultz, MD, who is chair of the department of pediatrics at the University of Miami School of Medicine.

Researchers found roughly 1,200 cases of caffeine toxicity reported to U.S. poison control centers each year in children younger than age 6 from 2006 through 2008.

And roughly half of all caffeine overdoses in the U.S. in 2007 occurred in children younger than 19. "It is shocking," Lipshultz says. It's impossible to know, however, how many of those might have been related to energy drinks because they were not tracked as a separate category in the years covered by the review.

But other countries, including New Zealand and Germany, have documented increasing tween and teen consumption of energy drinks, sometimes with ill effects.

Reported outcomes linked to the consumption of energy drinks in Germany, for example, have included liver damage, kidney failure, respiratory disorders, agitation, seizures, psychotic conditions, high blood pressure, heart failure, and disruptions of heart rhythms, among others, according to the review.

"Children and adolescents are more susceptible to the adverse health effects of caffeine compared to adults," says Mary Claire O'Brien, MD, an associate professor at Wake Forest University School of Medicine in Winston-Salem, N.C.

"Part of that may be that their livers are not used to caffeine consumption regularly. So the first time that kid buys an energy drink that contains 300 milligrams of caffeine and drinks it, he's not like his mom or dad and sits down and has a cup and a half of coffee each morning. He's never been presented with that chemical before, and it's a drug," says O'Brien, who has studied the health risks of energy drinks to kids but was not involved in the current review.

What's more, researchers say, parents may equate energy drinks to soda or sports drinks, when, in reality, they are very different.

Under FDA rules, soda can't contain more than 71 milligrams of caffeine in every 12 ounces.

Energy drinks, on the other hand, are regulated as dietary supplements, a designation that means there are no limits on how much caffeine they can contain. Some are packed with as much as 500 milligrams per serving.

"It's become kind of acceptable," O'Brien says. "You wouldn't put an espresso machine in a middle school cafeteria. Nobody in their right mind would do that. Everyone would be up in arms, and yet they think nothing of putting these products in the vending machines."



For more info on this article, go to:
<http://children.webmd.com/news/20110214/report-finds-energy-drinks-are-risky-for-kids>

Kudos!

WestCare Honors It's Employees

California is Proud to Share its Recent Employee of the Month Honorees with the WestCare Family.

Alicia Ledesma

▶ has been a tremendous asset in her role as Authorization and Reconciliation Specialist. Among a full menu of duties, she is in charges of expense reports, receivables, client funds, bank deposits, Medi-Cal records and a lot more. She is a jewel to her supervisors and co-workers! Her nominator, Mardi Palacios, says Alicia 'continues to work hard to make her accounting life near perfect.'



Patricia Dunne

▶ serves as a case manager in our San Joaquin Valley Veterans Program. She is always promoting our services at various resource fairs and other outreach opportunities, in addition to handling a caseload of 70 veterans! SJVV Director Elizabeth Vasquez calls Patricia: "The busiest person I know!"



Congratulations, Ladies!

Kudos from Florida!

Lisa Marciniak

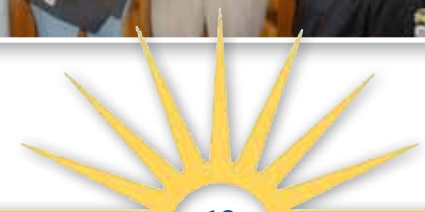
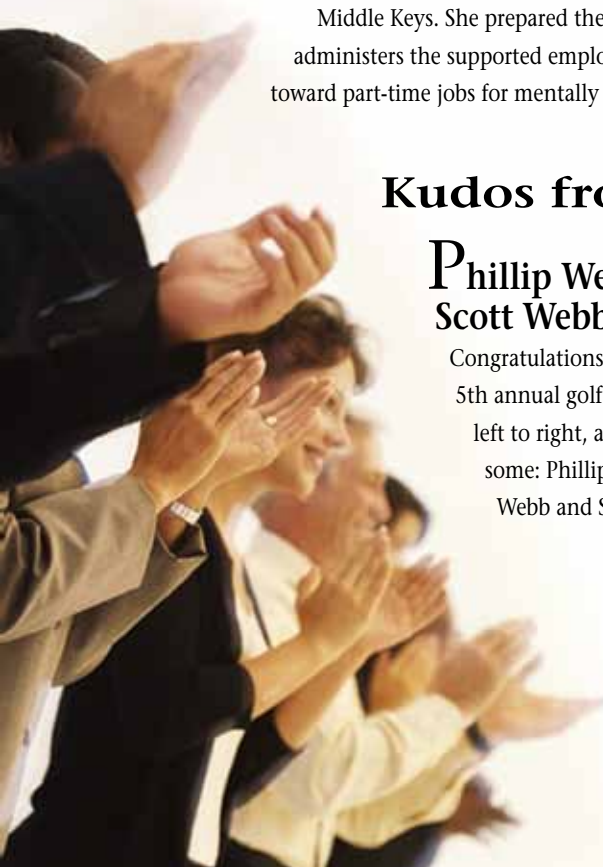
▶ West Care's Guidance/Care Center was the recent recipient of a grant as part of Florida's Office of Homelessness distribution to various projects. Lisa Marciniak, the Care Center's Site Director in the Middle Keys. She prepared the grant application, and oversees and administers the supported employment programs. This \$5,000 grant will go toward part-time jobs for mentally ill clients. Thank you, Lisa, for all you do.



Kudos from Kentucky!

Phillip Web, Robbie Starling, Scott Webb and Shawn Tipton

▶ Congratulations to WC Kentucky for a successful 5th annual golf tournament fundraiser. Pictured, left to right, are members of the winning four some: Phillip Webb, Robbie Starling, Scott Webb and Shawn Tipton.



Happy Thanksgiving

Thanksgiving is a day when many Americans gather together with family for an afternoon of food and football, but just how far do people travel to spend turkey day at Grandma's house? Which state grows the most cranberries, and how big was the world's largest pumpkin pie? Discover the answer to these questions, as well as many more facts about popular Thanksgiving foods and traditions.

Here's a few sample facts –

- According to the Guinness Book of World Records, the largest pumpkin pie ever baked weighed 2,020 pounds and measured just over 12 feet long. It was baked on October 8, 2005 by the New Bremen Giant Pumpkin Growers in Ohio, and included 900 pounds of pumpkin, 62 gallons of evaporated milk, 155 dozen eggs, 300 pounds of sugar, 3.5 pounds of salt, 7 pounds of cinnamon, 2 pounds of pumpkin spice and 250 pounds of crust.

- The National Turkey Federation estimated that 46 million turkeys – one fifth of the annual total of 235 million consumed in the United States in 2007 – were eaten at Thanksgiving.

Go to:

<http://www.history.com/topics/thanksgiving-facts>
to learn more –

Turkey by Bobby Flay

Ingredients:

- 1 whole fresh turkey (17 lbs.), rinsed and patted dry
- 1 1/4 sticks unsalted butter, slightly softened
- 2 Tbsp each finely chopped fresh sage, fresh rosemary, fresh thyme leaves, and fresh flat-leaf parsley
- Salt and freshly ground black pepper
- 3 large carrots, cut into 1-inch pieces
- 3 large celery stalks, cut into 1-inch pieces
- 2 large onions, quartered
- 8 cups warm homemade chicken stock

Directions:

1. Remove turkey from the refrigerator 1 hour before roasting.
2. Mix butter, sage, rosemary, thyme, and parsley in a food processor until smooth; season with salt and pepper.
3. Preheat oven to 450°F. Season the cavity of the turkey with salt and pepper and fill with half the carrots, celery, and onions. Rub entire turkey with herb butter and season liberally with salt and pepper.



Directions: (continued . . .)

4. Put 4 cups of the chicken stock in a medium-size saucepan and keep warm over low heat.
5. Place remaining vegetables and stock on the bottom of a large roasting pan. Place turkey on top of the vegetables, put in the oven, and roast for 45 minutes or until lightly golden brown. Reduce heat to 350°F and continue to roast, basting with warm chicken stock every 15 minutes, about 1 1/4 hours longer. (An instant-read thermometer inserted in the thigh should register 160°F.) Remove turkey from the oven, transfer to a baking sheet, and tent loosely with foil. Let rest 20 minutes before slicing.

Per 4-oz. serving: 240 calories, no carbs, 32g protein, 95mg cholesterol, and 11g fat.

Italian Sausage, Apple and Cornbread Stuffing by Tyler Florence

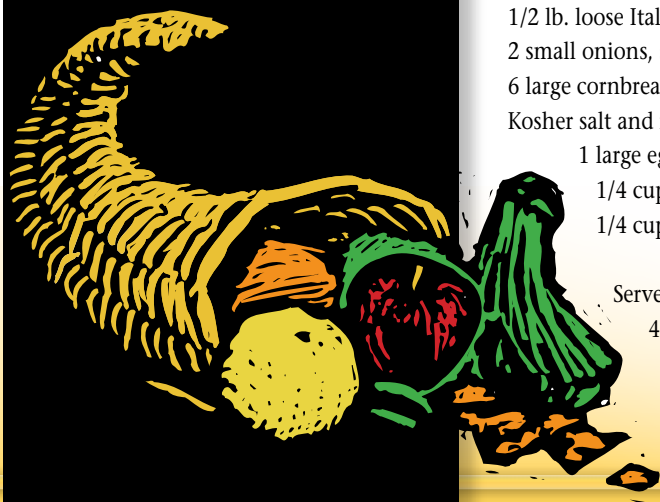
Ingredients:

- 1/2 stick butter
- 2 Golden Delicious apples, peeled, cored, and cubed
- 2 Tbsp extra-virgin olive oil
- 1 Tbsp chopped fresh rosemary
- 1/2 lb. loose Italian sausage (optional)
- 2 small onions, sliced
- 6 large cornbread muffins, torn into bite-size pieces
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper
- 1 large egg, lightly beaten
- 1/4 cup light cream
- 1/4 cup chicken stock

Serves 8. Per serving (no sausage):
450 calories, 61g carbs, 8g protein,
75mg cholesterol, and 20g fat.

Directions:

1. Melt butter in a pan over medium heat and toss in apple cubes. Cook for about 2 minutes to add a little bit of color, then set aside.
2. In the same pan, add the olive oil, rosemary, and sausage, if desired. Cook until lightly browned, then add the onions; cook for 10 minutes or until golden. Scrape into a large bowl; add the apples and cornbread. Season with salt and pepper; toss to combine.
3. In a separate bowl, whisk together the egg, cream, and chicken stock; pour over cornbread. Stir stuffing, season with salt and pepper, and bake inside turkey or in a gratin dish as dressing. (For dressing, bake in a 375°F oven for 30 to 40 minutes.)



News from Around the Treatment Industry

Courtesy:
jointogether.org

Substance Abuse Treatment Providers: Act Now to Get Ready for Health Care Reform

By Thomas E. Freese, PhD

The Affordable Care Act, which will extend health care coverage to currently uninsured Americans, will dramatically change how substance use disorders treatment is funded, and the types of services that are reimbursed. Substance abuse treatment providers must start making changes now so they are ready when the Act is implemented in 2014.

Under the new system, funding for many services that previously came primarily from block grants will now come through Medicaid and the private health insurance system. One of the more immediate and practical challenges will be the major changes that will need to be made to billing systems, so that providers can bill for Medicaid-related services. Instead of focusing on filling beds in their programs, providers will have to track and bill by the specific services they provide.

Another major change will be that substance abuse treatment providers will be seen as part of the larger health care system. Both substance abuse treatment providers and primary care providers will need to look for ways to be more integrated

and collaborative with one another.

Substance abuse treatment providers will need to become much more familiar with the other medical problems that their clients often face, such as diabetes, high blood pressure and asthma. When they see clients who are exhibiting symptoms of these diseases, they will need to link them back to primary care for evaluation and treatment.

Primary care providers will need to become much more comfortable in giving screening and brief intervention for patients at risk of substance abuse, and in knowing where to refer patients who need further help at all levels of risk. This will mean that substance abuse treatment providers will start seeing a broader spectrum of patients – not just those with full-blown addiction, but also those with milder issues that nonetheless need treatment.

Both primary care providers and substance use disorder service providers will need to better integrate their services for medication-assisted treatment for substance abuse as well, in order to ensure that patients who are receiving medication for opioid or alcohol dependence are also receiving

the behavioral services they need.

Health care reform will allow patients to have a much broader choice of providers for substance abuse treatment. They will begin to ask why they should choose Agency X over Agency Y. As a result, substance abuse treatment providers will have to engage and motivate clients to choose them, using data to measure success. They will have to become more visible and competitive in the health care field they will now be a part of, instead of the specialty realm of addiction treatment services.

By starting now to look at billing, integration with health care providers, and how to demonstrate program efficacy to attract patients, substance abuse treatment providers will be better equipped to navigate the new health care system, and to provide their patients with a more comprehensive, better quality of care.

Thomas E. Freese, PhD, is Director of Training for UCLA Integrated Substance Abuse Programs and Principal Investigator and Director of the Pacific Southwest Addiction Technology Transfer Center.

Thanksgiving Non-Alcoholic Beverage

Apple Ginger Sparklers

Courtesy: Martha Stewart.com

Ingredients:

- 1/4 cup Ginger Syrup, recipe below
- 4 1/2 cups sparkling apple cider
- 6 cinnamon sticks
- 6 pieces crystallized ginger

Directions:

1. Place 2 tablespoons ginger syrup in each of six glasses.
2. Fill glasses with ice cubes, pour in cider, and stir to combine. Garnish with cinnamon sticks and fresh ginger, and serve.

Ginger Syrup:

- 2 cups sugar
 - 1 six-inch piece fresh ginger, finely diced
1. Place sugar, ginger, and 2 cups water in a medium saucepan; bring to a boil.
 2. Reduce to a simmer, and cook about 1 hour, until ginger flavor is quite strong. Let cool; strain before using. Store in an airtight container, refrigerated, up to a week. Makes 2 cups.

