

First Fridays Club

May 8, 2009

Mental Health

- NAMI – Pam Beauchamp
 - Family to Family Program
 - Twelve week course held the 2nd and 4th Monday of the month at the South Side Neighborhood Center to understand mental illness. Course includes:
 - *Current information about schizophrenia, major depression, bipolar disorder (manic depression), panic disorder, obsessive-compulsive disorder, borderline personality disorder, and co-occurring brain disorders and addictive disorders*
 - *Up-to-date information about medications, side effects, and strategies for medication adherence*
 - *Current research related to the biology of brain disorders and the evidence-based, most effective treatments to promote recovery*
 - *Gaining empathy by understanding the subjective, lived experience of a person with mental illness*
 - *Learning in special workshops for problem solving, listening, and communication techniques*
 - *Acquiring strategies for handling crises and relapse*
 - *Focusing on care for the caregiver: coping with worry, stress, and emotional overload*
 - *Guidance on locating appropriate supports and services within the community*
 - *Information on advocacy initiatives designed to improve and expand services*
 - An Information Group is held the 2nd Tuesday of every month at 7:15. A caring and sharing session is held afterward.
 - Parents and Teachers as Allies is a new program that trains parents and teachers about mental illness in children and adolescents.

- Mental Health Coalition, Mike Desmond
 - The Mental Health Coalition (MHC) started six years ago by a group of volunteer citizens who felt there was a need to help people with mental illness. “Our community is in crisis and we don’t even know it.”
 - MHC is a citizen advocacy group that looks at gaps in services, provides education programs to schools and businesses, and is very active in getting players together (hospitals, police, sheriff, La Crosse County, NAMI, and everyone who comes into contact with people who have mental illness).

- MHC offers CIT (Crisis Intervention Training) for all law enforcement – to date 35% of patrol officers and jailers have been trained in how to treat/respond to people with mental illness. The local goal is to train 100% of patrol officers and jailers.
- CARE – Community Crisis Center
 - Helped bring people together for a strategic planning session
 - Looking to develop a center for crisis in La Crosse; a place to take people other than jail or the hospital
- RAVE/Independent Living Resources, Annette
 - RAVE – Recover Avenue
 - Staffed by peer specialists who have had experience with mental illness and have gone through a 70 hour training. Peer specialists are people who have “been there, done that.”
 - In a survey, 6 individuals stated that they had been in the hospital at least once per year. After attending and participating RAVE, those individuals have not been hospitalized and have been managing their symptoms of mental illness.
 - RAVE offers socialization, arts and crafts, pool, baking, puzzles, a fish tank, and a meal one time per month.
 - The Art of Recovery show was held at the Pump House and showcased art done by people living with mental illness.
 - RAVE is open Monday through Friday 9-5, holds yoga on Thursday nights, and has a DBSA (Depression and Bipolar Support Alliance) Group one evening per week.
 - RAVE has been open since 2004 and since July of 2008, 225 individuals have used RAVE and RAVE has 360-500 visits per month.