



Join us on September 13<sup>th</sup> at Belle Isle Park in Detroit for Michigan's 8<sup>th</sup> Annual Walk and Rally. The event will begin at 10:00 a.m. and end at 4:00 p.m. The event will include food, live entertainment, children's activities, information on health issues, and much more.

The Michigan Celebrate Recovery Annual Walk and Rally is proud to be sponsored in part by Greater Macomb Project Vox. It is part of a national initiative known as National Alcohol and Drug Addiction Recovery Month, which is supported by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

This year marks the 19th annual observance of Recovery Month,

**Why Would I want To Join The Walk?**

- To show recovery is alive and well!
- To have our voices heard!
- To show that we represent a majority from all walks of life.
- Because we want the medical and insurance community to know that people with addictions deserve treatment.
- Because we want elected officials to know we VOTE!!!

which celebrates people and their families in recovery from substance use disorders and promotes the need for better awareness and financial access to treatment services.

Project Vox will be joining the celebration by additionally hosting an afternoon in the park on Sunday, September 14th at Huron Park in Roseville. The event will include food, games, and entertainment for the entire family and is free.

It will also include a non-partisan table to register potential voters. This as part of the Recovery Voices Count Campaign encouraging people in the recovery community, and those who support them to get out and "Rock the Vote".

**A&E TO PARTNER**

The incredible response to Intervention from viewers, addicts,

their families and the treatment community -- has inspired A&E to create a year long campaign called "The Recovery Project" to generate widespread awareness that addiction is a treatable disease and recovery is attainable. With the help of its partners the National Council on Alcoholism & Drug Dependence and the United States Department of Health and Human Services, A&E will host a mass rally in New York City, produce national public service announcements, and honor recovery delegates from 50 states.

A&E will also support its ongoing commitment to the cause through year-long outreach initiatives including Intervention Town Hall meetings, and prevention education in schools.

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**" Advocacy is about turning personal stories into social action and presenting an alternative perception that helps effect change."**

**From Faces and Voices of Recovery Web Site**

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**Greater Macomb Project Vox is a grass roots effort organized to educate all segments of the community that recovery is not only possible but a reality for many people, and to advocate for change to policies that negatively affect the availability of treatment and resources for the recovering community**

## Spotlight On Our Members... By James Fischer



Dear Reader,

Every issue of our newsletter we spotlight someone, or some organization, that impacts our community in a positive way. The people or organizations that we choose line up with our philosophy and goals; which are to show the public at large that recovery works, peoples live change for the better, and through the process our communities become safer and better places to live. Profiling people who have overcome their addictions is the best way for people to see how this process works. It helps reduce the stigma attached, encourages those who are still struggling, and hopefully inspires the community at large to get involved with the process.

I have been involved with Project Vox for a little over three years and part of my involvement is writing these "Spotlight On" articles for our newsletter. For this issue I was chosen. I didn't realize how hard this would be, to write an article about my recovery walk! So, I will start this article the same way I start my day by giving God the Glory for my changed life and acknowledge that without the strength, courage and determination that He instills in me, I would still be an addict. In my opinion I have been able to sustain long-term recovery based on the path that He has me on. I continue to do the things

that He would have me do for the Glory of His Kingdom. This article is not about me. It is about how God can use people like me to help bring others into the process of living changed lives. I say this understanding, of course, that the paths to recovery are as different and as varied as those who are in recovery and respecting them all.

I have spent 23 years in prison on a variety of drug related offenses. I was an active alcoholic by the time I was 16 and a heroin addict by the time I was 19. I started my use/abuse process at 13 and continued until I was 49.

I got out of prison for the last time in December of 2002. I promptly got drunk and stayed drunk for 9 days. I had no hope and no idea about how to live "life on the outside." I was reconciled to the fact that I was going to spend the rest of my life going in and out of prison. I was scared and alone.

One of my dear friends led me to a faith-based program called "Pathway to Freedom." I entered that program in January of 2003 and my life changed. I developed that most important relationship "with a God of my understanding". Pathway is a ministry of New Life Baptist Church of Fraser, Michigan. The Church has had a ¾ recovery house for men in Mt. Clemens, Michigan for 14 years.

Two months after entering the Pathway program my pastor and dear friend put me in charge of managing our recovery house. I am now it's Ministry Leader and Residential Director.

Through the process of mentoring Pastor Werry has taught me what God's role is in the recovery process, how to deal with the challenges of running a faith-based ministry, and how to effectively communicate to our clients the steps involved in living changed lives.

He pointed out to me that God has a job for

me, that I didn't end up in Pathway by accident and convinced me that to be a more effective voice for recovery that I should go back to school and earn a degree in a substance abuse related field. I am still in school, plugging away, and hope to graduate with a degree in counseling and addiction studies. I have found that when I follow direction that my life gets better. It is my opinion that given to my own devices, I would still be lost. Godly direction and the direction of people in the various 12 step meetings that I attend is the key to my recovery process.

The process of believing that a "power greater than myself could restore me to sanity" came from my attendance at the 12 step recovery meetings. By listening, asking, and doing, then reaping the benefit of action taken, my life began to change. I began to have hope. I began to have faith that my life could change providing I was willing to do the hard work. I began to believe that I could get what I needed to survive "life on the outside" by going to the tables and asking for help. It was a very short leap to going to God and asking for help, and believing that He would help me. He has of course. He instilled in my heart (where He dwells) the courage, the strength, and the determination required to walk in faith.

I want to thank Project Vox for allowing me this opportunity to share a little about my life. It is my fervent hope that someone will read this and come to understand that life does not have to remain hopeless. There is help out there and many people will help to give you strength until you can begin to stand on your own. I was once hopeless and now I am hope filled.

Feel free to contact me at 586-405-2368 or visit our website at [www.pathwaytofreedom.org](http://www.pathwaytofreedom.org) to learn more about our ministry.

**SPECIAL NOTE OF THANKS:**

*Project Vox and Until the Violence Stops: Detroit would like to thank Jim Fischer and his residents at Pathway to Freedom for the invaluable help with the exhibits at recent women's expo. Without them the safe space created would not have been possible.*

## 9th Annual Michigan Substance Abuse Conference

The 9th Annual Michigan Substance Abuse Conference will be held on Sept 8th and 9th at the Lansing Center in Lansing. Donald Allen, Director of the Office of Drug Control Policy will be one of the featured speakers.

The annual conference provides a networking

opportunity for people with a common interest in substance abuse services and related issues. The agenda will be of particular interest to members of the treatment community, law enforcement, criminal justice, medical personnel, policy makers, and the recovery community.

Continuing education hours offered. Please visit <http://www.semca.org> for brochures and registration forms.

## Vox Members Gain Insight Into Brain Chemistry and Addiction



Several Members of Greater Macomb Project Vox participated in a training held by FACES AND VOICES OF RECOVERY in Detroit in early June. The training entitled The Science of Addiction and Recovery was a day-long “train the trainer” focusing on the advances made in being able to examine the brain and how that has led to a further understanding of how it’s biochemical make-up affects people who are addicted

The training was facilitated by Flo Hilliard. Flo holds a Master’s Degree in Health with a specialty in Addictions Counseling from the University of North

Florida. In the last 20 years she has worked as a clinician, lecturer, prevention specialist, video producer and grant writer in the fields of addiction prevention, treatment and recovery.

Vox members will be passing along this valuable education this fall as they provide presentations on the material presented to Families against Narcotics and CARE staff.

For further information on the addiction and the brain please visit <http://www.nida.nih.gov/scienceofaddiction/>.

Left: Vox Member, Betty Risher  
Courtesy of Mark Fainstein

## FALL CALENDAR OF EVENTS

**Sept 8th and 9th**-9th Annual Michigan Substance Abuse Conference, Lansing MI Please visit <http://www.semca.org/SA08ConfBrochure.pdf> for brochure and registration form.

**Sat, Sept 13th-10:00-4:00 p.m.** Celebrate Recovery Michigan!! 8th annual walk as part of National Recovery Month on Belle Isle. Food, live entertainment, childrens ‘s activities, health info and more! Please call NCADD DETROIT at 313-369-5411 for further details.

**Sun, Sept 14th -11-4 p.m.** Project Vox Recovery Fest. Join us at Huron Park on Frazho Rd in Roseville for food, entertainment, activities for the kids, and some good sober fun!!

**Sept 27th-9:00 a.m.-12 p.m.**-Tara Grant Memorial Walk/Run to end domestic violence Stoney Creek Metro Park \$20 entry fee. Please visit <http://www.turningpointmacomb.org/events.php> for registration for and further information.

**Oct 16th-7:45-3:00 p.m.** 6th Annual Keys to Understanding Addiction and Consequences of Use. Presented by Tri-County Prevention Institute for Alcohol and Other Drugs. Recommended for members of youth – serving organizations, faith-based organizations, school personnel, and treatment professionals. Contact Maplegrove Community Education at 248-661-6170 for registration details.

**Oct 16th –6:00 p.m-8:00 p.m.**-Remember My Name– Gathering at Mt. Calvary Community Center in Warren to honor survivors and remember those who have lost their lives as a result of domestic violence.

Below: Project Vox members and CARE staff man information table at Fraser Lions Carnival



## How Women Recover From Addiction Most Replace Addiction With Another Passion in Their Lives

Women who recover from drug and alcohol addiction may not kick the habit just for their children or because they have a sudden "wake up call" about their problem, according to a small new study of former female addicts.

These women – many of whom are over the age of 35 and hold a college degree – took a proactive role in overcoming substance abuse, replacing those addictions with new lifestyles that include school, work, community service and physical exercise.

### Women Face Different Challenges

Women are the fastest-growing segment of substance abusers in the United States: About 2.7 million American women abuse alcohol or drugs, or one-quarter of all abusers, according to the federal Center for Substance Abuse Prevention. But there is little research on women's stories of how they recover from drug and alcohol addiction, according to Ohio University sociologist Judith Grant.

Grant, a visiting assistant professor, spent three years in a non-profit agency in Canada, where she worked as a researcher and educator with more than 300 female addicts enrolled in a recovery program. Many of the women faced different challenges than male addicts and devised unique ways to overcome substance abuse, Grant said.

### Reasons For Quitting Drugs

To document their stories, the sociologist interviewed 12 Canadian women and 14 Ohio women who have been off drugs and alcohol for at least 18 months. She presented preliminary findings at the American Society of Criminology meeting in Chicago.

While this study may not be reflective of all women addicts, it implies that some of the earlier studies may have mischaracterized addiction recovery for women. One concept the analysis refutes is that women abandon drugs and alcohol for the sake of their kids, said Grant.

"Children are important, but if these women

don't recover for themselves, they generally relapse," she said.



### Unearthing Their Real Selves

The women also could not specify a "turning point" that prompted their recovery; for most the awareness of the need to overcome their substance abuse was a slow process, Grant found. And their success at recovery did not hinge on changing their identities from "addict" to "ex-addict," as the literature suggests, but unearthing their real selves. The women viewed using drugs and alcohol as an activity they were involved in, not an identity they had assumed.

"They bring back an old identity from before they got addicted, before the violence and drug abuse," she said. "This is really me now,' they say. 'The blanket is gone.'"

### Replacing Addiction With Another Passion

Half of the women in the study had used a program such as Alcoholics Anonymous or Narcotics Anonymous to overcome addiction, but the other half succeeded on their own. All of the women have replaced addiction with another passion in their lives, Grant said, ranging from physical exercise to volunteer work to school. Some now mentor other women who are overcoming addiction.

The participants began using drugs or alcohol in their teens or early 20s to mask the pain of family violence and incest, according to Grant, who added that all also reported having a family member who was an addict. These experiences produced crippling low self-esteem, a theme particular to these women's stories.

### Addiction Linked With Domestic Violence

"I've never heard a male addict, to this day, in my work, talk about a 'lack of self-esteem,'" Grant said.

Grant hopes her findings will be of use to addiction recovery agencies and other organizations that assist women. The strong link between domestic violence and substance abuse should be acknowledged by addiction recovery centers and battered women shelters, she said, which tend to treat each problem in isolation.

Women in substance abuse treatment are more than five times likelier than men (69 percent vs. 12 percent) to have been sexually abused as children and girls and women are likelier than men to suffer eating disorders, both of which are major risk factors for substance abuse, CASA reports.

United Nations statistics say that one in three women will be the victim of some form of violence. 73 women in the state of Michigan will lose their lives this year as a result of domestic violence.

Source: **Ohio University.**

# Faces & Voices of Recovery's Online Book Club

We've been hearing from advocates around the country who want to read and discuss books together that are important to the recovery community and our recovery advocacy movement. Through online conversation and the exchange of ideas, we hope that the Book Club will expand our growing advocacy network, strengthening our movement. We invite you to submit a book of your choice to be discussed!

Guidelines are simple! Anyone can [submit](#) a book for the Book Club at any time. Books should fit into one of the [book club themes](#) to be considered.

Those themes are writings about long-term recovery and writings about building the recovery advocacy movement.

A Faces & Voices committee will review the suggestions and select the book to be discussed. The selection will be announced in the Faces and Voices eNewsletter and readers will have two months to read the book before the month-long online conversation begins. The [online discussion](#) will be moderated and facilitated by Faces & Voices.

August's selection for discussion is *Let's Go Make Some*

History beginning **August 1st.**

Author Bill White will join the online discussion to contribute and answer your questions on August 22 and August 29!

Please visit [www.facesandvoicesofrecovery.org](http://www.facesandvoicesofrecovery.org) for details on how to make a suggestion for September, and to join the conversation!

*By purchasing this book through the Johnson Institute, Faces & Voices of Recovery receives a small commission. Please visit [www.facesandvoicesofrecovery.org](http://www.facesandvoicesofrecovery.org) for ordering details.*



**Book of the Month!**

**August's Book Of The Month:  
Let's Go Make Some History  
By William White**

## Celebrate Recovery Continued from Page 1

Every September, Recovery Month reminds us of the importance of making treatment accessible, addresses the hurdles some face when seeking treatment, and educates our community that treatment is effective and that recovery is possible.

Studies have shown that treatment is cost effective, with some measurements showing a benefit-to-cost ratio of up to 7:1, with substance use disorder treatment costing \$1,583 per person on average. This is a monetary benefit to society of nearly \$11,487 for each person treated.

In 2005, nearly 77 percent of adults classified with substance use dependence or abuse were employed. Drug use disorders alone are estimated to cost American businesses approxi-

mately \$128.6 billion in lost productivity each year, and alcohol dependence alone is estimated to cause 500 million lost workdays annually.

Reported job problems, including incomplete work, absenteeism, tardiness, work-related injuries, mistakes, and disagreements with supervisors are cut by an average of 75 percent among employees who have received treatment for substance use disorders.

For further information about the Celebrate Recovery Michigan itinerary, location and events please call CARE or NCADD-Greater Detroit at 313-369-5411.



### OUR MESSAGE

- Many people who suffer the effects of addiction can and do get better and lead meaningful and productive lives.
- The ways they achieve this are as many and varied as the people AOD problems affect.
- Shaming and stigmatizing those with AOD problems shows not only a lack of understanding of the problem, but prevents people from seeking help.
- Removing environmental barriers to recovery, which include the promotion of laws and social policies that reduce AOD problems saves money in medical, criminal justice, social services, and productivity costs.
- It is vitally important to promote services that support a recovery lifestyle.

# How To Get Involved!

## Legislative and Community

**Activists:** We have a contingent that writes letters and voices their response to legislation that affects the quality and delivery of care to those suffering from addiction, and their families. It is imperative that the stigma associated with addiction be removed. Examples would be Letters to the Editor, letters to legislatures, etc. Please contact us if you'd like to be added to our email list and receive notice of how you can support Vox's efforts in this area.

## Event Planning Committee

Project Vox strives to be actively involved in the recovery community and organizes several events a year. We participate in National Recovery Month events in September, and host other dinners and events throughout the year.

## 2007 Accomplishments included

Participation in the 7th Annual Celebrate Recovery event, which included a walk and rally downtown. Host to the Science of Addiction and Recovery training facilitated by Faces And Voices of Recovery.

**Speakers Bureau:** We are training a wonderful group of individuals who will be going to treatment agencies and other public forums to discuss what it is like to live a life in recovery, why it important to speak out and how others can get involved. Help us put a face on recovery by speaking out!

**Newsletter:** Contributions are gladly accepted for this newsletter. We hope to keep it chocked full of news about current events and issues facing those living a life in recovery. It's purpose is to share what fellow advocates all over the country are doing, and some valuable resources for how

to "put a face on recovery."

**Web Site and Message Board** Project Vox's web site is being updated with links and meeting information. Web address is:

<http://www.projectvox.com>. Project Vox also has a Yahoo message board that has been set up so that folks can keep posted on Vox events and stay involved. Please join us!! Web site is: <http://health.groups.yahoo.com/group/macombvox>.

**The Community Can not support what it can not See!**

Meetings on ThirdThurs of every month  
5:45 p.m.

Offices of CARE  
31900 Utica Rd  
Fraser MI 48026  
(586) 541-0033  
Please call to confirm future meeting dates

Primary Business Address  
Your Address Line 2  
Your Address Line 3

