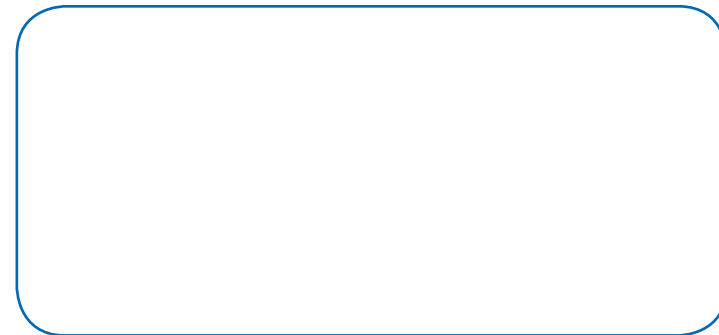


The Pennsylvania Compeer Coalition
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Eagleville, PA 19403



Pennsylvania Compeer Coalition Affiliates 2009-2010

Allegheny County Compeer @ PLEA
412-243-3464

Beaver County Compeer 724-775-4165
Butler County Compeer 724-287-4083
Bucks County Compeer 215-785-2825
Chester County Compeer 610-436-4445
Delaware County Compeer 610-541-0790
Fayette County Compeer 724-438-6738
Compeer Lancaster 717-735-0667
Compeer of Lebanon 717-272-8317
Compeer of the Lehigh Valley 610-435-9651
Compeer in the Central Susquehanna Valley 570-784-9583
Compeer in Philadelphia 215-751-1800
Compeer of Suburban Philadelphia 610-631-1009
Compeer in York and Adams County 717-843-6973
Compeer of Monongalia County, WV 304-296-6091
Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
Office of Mental Health and
Substance Abuse Services 717-772-7926
Compeer International 800-836-0475

New Faces Around the Coalition

Diane Lichtman has joined Compeer of York and Adams Counties as the program director.

Amanda Moffitt has also joined Compeer of York and Adams Counties as an assistant to the director. Amanda graduated from York County School of Technology in 2008 as class president. While in high school, she was a member of the National Honor Society and received a certificate in Allied Health. She is excited to help others and be a part of the Compeer program.

Kim Green is happy to have re-joined the staff of Compeer Lancaster in April 2010 as its new Program Director, having previously served as a Volunteer Coordinator. Prior to Compeer, she worked for a large pharmaceutical company. However, when her entire department was relocated to another state, Kim decided to pursue her calling to work in human services. Already a Compeer volunteer who was dedicated to Compeer's mission of friendship, it felt like destiny when an opportunity arose to join the staff. Now Compeer's Program Director, Kim is honored to be entrusted with leading this wonderful organization and ensuring it will continue to serve the mental health community.

Congratulations to Lori Bonker, program director of Compeer in the Central Susquehanna Valley. The Pennsylvania Compeer Coalition is pleased to announce that Lori has accepted a three year term as Co-Regional Representative for the P.C.C.

Welcome Lori!



Spring 2010

ABOUT Compeer

Embrace Recovery with a Compeer Friendship Program

Compeer is a volunteer service that provides a great benefit to the life of another.

Rise to the challenge of recruiting and retaining volunteers who will make a difference.

Volunteers generate trust, encouragement for maintaining independence and stability through friendship.

Compeer friendships support good mental health and ongoing recovery.

Compeer is an efficient & effective volunteer friendship program, producing positive results for those in recovery!

For information, direction, or assistance, please contact one of our Pennsylvania Compeer Coalition Representatives:

Virginia Mastrine, OMHSAS
717-772-7926

Lori Bonker, Compeer Bloomsburg
570-784-9583

Elaine Callihan, Compeer in Butler County
1-888-329-0468



This publication is made possible by a collaboration between the Pennsylvania Compeer Coalition and the Pennsylvania Office of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services (OMHSAS).

Fifteen-Year Volunteer Gets as Much as He Gives

Interview and article by Jeff Shair

Richard Askew has been an outstanding Compeer volunteer for fifteen years. Since 1995 he has been matched with twenty to twenty-five friends from the program. Originally, he was referred to the program by his case manager to be a friend however after the Compeer staff reviewed his application they decided that Richard would be better suited to be a volunteer. Their decision began a wonderful journey for Richard with Compeer Philadelphia, enhancing his life as well as benefitting the organization tremendously.

However, Richards's involvement with Compeer almost ended abruptly on the night after the initial outing with his first match. He and his friend went to the Mann Music Center to see the Philadelphia Orchestra. After the concert Richard doubted the relationship would work out.

Then his friend said, "Richard, man, thank you for being my friend and thank you for taking me out." These words touched Richard and he thought that maybe he was doing something that made a difference.

He then called his aunt to tell her about the evening and she told him, "Richard, you are helping God's children and God is pleased." Now Richard had the confirmation from both, his friend and aunt, that he was meant to be a Compeer volunteer.

Besides going out with his Compeer matches, Richard volunteers his time working in the Compeer office. He calls people on the waiting list with his friendly voice and sees how they are doing. In addition, he plays an essential role on Social Day when Compeer participants get together to socialize, play games, and have pizza, snacks and beverages. Richard oversees this activity and also serves the food. His main responsibility is to make sure everyone feels comfortable at the function. Yet, Richard gets as much satisfaction helping on Social Day as do the participants.

Richard has also made several presentations on behalf of Compeer and has the gift to inspire an audience every time he speaks. Richard said, "I met so many wonderful people over the years. I thank the Compeer staff as well as the Mental Health Association staff. They went well beyond the call of duty."

He would suggest to people considering becoming a Compeer volunteer, "not to feel sorry for them, but to have compassion for people;" and to say to themselves, "How can I make a difference in this person and walk a mile in their shoes," stated Richard.

Since Richard became a Compeer volunteer, his self-esteem has improved dramatically.

Richard concluded by saying, "My Compeer experience gave my life, meaning, direction and hope. I had paying jobs in the past, but they can't compare to being a Compeer volunteer. I can't put a price tag on working for Compeer."

A Great Outing for Friends

On a beautiful sunny day this past fall, five Compeer friends from Compeer Philadelphia took a historical walk from the Compeer office in center city Philadelphia. It was exciting for many reasons - including the fact that it was a free event.

Many people live in Philadelphia. However, some still haven't visited the wonderful historical places the city has to offer. This historical walk was to visit the Liberty Bell.

Friends brought a brown bag lunch and the Compeer staff provided water and snacks. Not only was it a great way to spend a day but a healthy one too!

This event was planned and led by Ruby Hill, Compeer Philadelphia's Liaison Person.

Seeing the Liberty Bell on posters, in books and even passing by in a car or bus is amazing. Yet standing there and listen-

ing to the park guard tell the whole story of Liberty Bell, makes living in Philadelphia really special. This city truly stands for the beginning of Democracy coming to life. The park guard told the group many special stories about the history of the Bell and they made us extremely proud to live here.

There is so much wonderful "live" history so close to the office that additional walks are being planned.

Two of the friends who participated in the walk were Maureen and Gloria (pictured at right). However, since that wonderful day and

memorable walk, Maureen passed away. This photo is a tribute to Maureen and is very special to Gloria and all of us here at Compeer Philadelphia.



Retreat Brings Fresh Ideas

On April 30, the PA Compeer Coalition held its annual retreat. The 13 Pennsylvania Compeer programs and one West Virginia Compeer program met in State College, Pa., for two days of workshops, strategizing and success stories.

Representatives of each of the programs were joined by Virginia Mastrine of OMHSAS, Lida Riedlinger, executive director of Compeer, Inc., and Eric Larson, a Compeer client.



Ginny Mastrine of OMHSAS and Lida Riedlinger of Compeer, Inc.

Sixteen years ago, Eric was not in a happy place. He was underweight, hearing voices, and not bathing. Eric realized he needed a friend and contacted Compeer in Chester County. The coordinator began the matching process and he was introduced to Charlie. Their friendship grew and the relationship became a tool to Eric's recovery. The Compeer coordinator recommended some jobs for Eric at the Institute for Recovery and Integration. He soon became a residential counselor for peer support and eventually a Certified Peer Specialist.

Lori Bonker, program director of Compeer Bloomsburg, was voted in as the new regional representative for the Coalition, replacing Joe Cruice after completing his term. 14 years ago, Lori began volunteering with Compeer and was matched with her first friend. In 2000, Lori became a Compeer staff member and five years later she was matched with another friend.

A special thanks to Joe for his tenure as PCC Co-Regional Representative, from May 2007 through May 2010. Joe is a powerful leader and terrific coordinator for Compeer promotion and expansion in Pa.!

7th Annual Spring Concert Benefits Compeer

Choirs from three churches and individual performers combined their unique talents to preform at the seventh annual concert in Myerstown, Pa. to benefit Compeer of Lebanon County. The free concert was held in April at a local church. "It's really a nice tradition," said Ida Carvell, Compeer's executive director. A love offering was taken at the end of the concert and a wonderful reception followed.

The participating choirs were from Friends Quentin United Church of Christ and St. Mark's United Church of Christ in Lebanon. Katelyn Umberger, a student from Cedar Crest High School, was a featured soloist. "Most of us are amateur musicians who just love to play," said Jim Biever, who performed several pieces on the piano and organ. His brother, John Biever, is a member of the Compeer board of directors and one of Compeer Lebanon's founders.

Director of Compeer Chester County Honored

Rob Chisholm, founder and program director of Compeer Chester County, received the 2009 "Best Practices" award from the Mental Health Association of Southeastern Pennsylvania (MHASP) on March 16th in Philadelphia. This award, designed and funded by Mark Salzer, PhD, director of the UPenn Collaborative on Community Integration, annually honors an MHASP staff member who serves as a model for how to deliver a particular program

"Rob has made it his mission to transform lives by connecting caring community volunteers with people in mental health recovery," according to the citation read for Rob on March 16. "He inspires, motivates, networks with, and encourages all those he comes in contact with."



"Best Practices" model program by Compeer, Inc., and that Rob won Compeer, Inc.'s Outstanding Compeer Program Director Award in 1994.

Rob's nominators also cited the fact that since he started Compeer Chester County in 1999, he has matched 260 recovering men and women in friendships with community volunteers.

"Rob's vast knowledge of the behavioral health system and resources, and his innovation in program development, as well as his integrity and caring, make him a role model for many," the citation concluded.

Compeer Chester County is a program of the MHASP, supported by the Chester County Department of Mental Health/

It was noted that Compeer Chester County is recognized as a Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities.

Sock Hop Brightens St. Patrick's Day

Compeer of Suburban Philadelphia collaborated with The National Alliance on Mental Illness, (NAMI) and Community Support Program, (CSP) for a Sock Hop with friends and family. The purpose of this event was to offer Compeer, NAMI and CSP members the opportunity to gather together, get to know each other and have fun! The Sock hop just happened to take place on St. Patrick's Day, March 17th which added to the fun and excitement with contests and prizes. There was a dance contest, ice cream social and prizes for those wearing the most green.

The Sock Hop was held at the Welcome House in Upper Darby, PA. Welcome House is a nationally recognized clubhouse that serves adults in recovery from mental illness and those with co-occurring disorders. NAMI, Welcome House and Compeer are all Community Support Programs in practice and principle so it was a natural fit for these programs to come together and host an event like the Sock Hop. This joint venture was the

first of hopefully more events for these friends in Delaware County to gather together and share each others company.

