

busy and keeps him from getting depressed. His job duties are custodian, but he also likes to sell merchandise in the store to customers. All his co-workers brag about what a good job he is doing. Danny is really enjoying his placement, and looks forward to independent work in the future.

By Chastity Hector

Colleagues Visit from Connections

From January 26th thru the 29th we had visitors from Connections Clubhouse in Newton, NC. Chris, Dandron and Zoina drove every morning for the 45 minute from Catawba county to Adventure House.

The Connections Clubhouse is sponsored by CVBH (Catawba Valley Behavioral Healthcare) where they have an average attendance of about 48 members a

day. They have three 18 passenger vans that provide transportation for their members to and from home for socials. They have socials on Thursdays and Saturdays. The TE program provides about 18 members with employment from about 5 placements. There is also Supported Employment and Independent Employment. The housing program is run by the CVBH. As for education there are ABE, Spanish classes, and an Art class. They have three units the Clerical, Snack Bar and Kitchen.

I asked our guests what impressed them about Adventure House. Members Bank was something they thought was interesting. They were interested in the way we keep track of our members for outreach, and will take back suggestions to their Clubhouse. The dining room and kitchen was very impressive, and they praised the food and healthy choices we provide here at Adventure House.

By Eddie Beauregard



Adventure House News

December-January 2009
Volume 22 Issue 4



**ADVENTURE HOUSE
REVIEW OF 2008**

What has happened at Adventure House during 2008. First, we welcomed nine new members. Larry Mincey, Frances Norman, Trey Chapman, Christopher George, Alice Rippy, Patricia McGowan, Daniel Fullove, Roger Rowe and James Burris. We also welcomed back David Walker.

The Adventure House Players also had a good year. Stan Logan the new director and staff member started this year. The AH Players had four performances in the Cleveland County community of the original play "Mental Mart". They also performed at the Adventure House Halloween party and Christmas party.

Some of the Adventure House apartments had renovations done. Park Avenue Apartments got new roofs and an upgrade of their air conditioning units. The refrigerators were also replaced and they had some new kitchen cabinets installed. Marion Street apartments were painted.

The apartments also had some new residents this year, five new people at Charles Road apartments, and two at Park Avenue Apartments. Patricia Wiggs, Dean Hensley, Kelvin Hundley, Teresa Woods and Louise Cooper moved into Charles road, Eddie Wellmon and Dexter Reed moved into Park Avenue Apartments.

Adventure House also received the Lilly Reintegration Award for its Housing Program. We also received a three year accreditation from CARF for the quality of our services.

Adventure House welcomed three new board members. Peg Thornburg whose husband is the president of Cleveland

Community College, Tom Crider, the Executive Director of TACC and John Palembas, the Vice President/General Manager at R&D Lighting.

We also sadly say good-bye to members Loretta Casorio and Henry Petty, they were very good friends and really appreciated what Adventure House stood for. They will be missed very much.

By Eddie Beauregard

**Clubhouse TE Mirrors Local
Economy**

It's been a bad year for Cleveland County. Another 800 workers without jobs showed up in the December unemployment numbers for Cleveland County. January marks the second consecutive month for double digit unemployment rate for the county. The county unemployment rate stands at 12% for January 2009, peaking at a steady climb from 6.4% in January 2008.

Forbes magazine published an article in 2008 utilizing unemployment figures from the Bureau of Labor Statistics and 2007 Census data median income, poverty, education and outstanding mortgage debt in "micropolitan" US towns. The Census labels towns as micropolitan that have an urban core of at least 10,000 people, but no more than 50,000. Shelby, N.C. was branded as the third most vulnerable city in the United States.

Adventure House's Transitional Employment rate has mirrored the county in the past year. One of our long standing TE's at Honeywell (now FAS Controls) has dropped from six 20 hour per week placements in 2006 to only 2 placements at the beginning of 2008. Unfortunately, as their sales dropped, we lost another TE and

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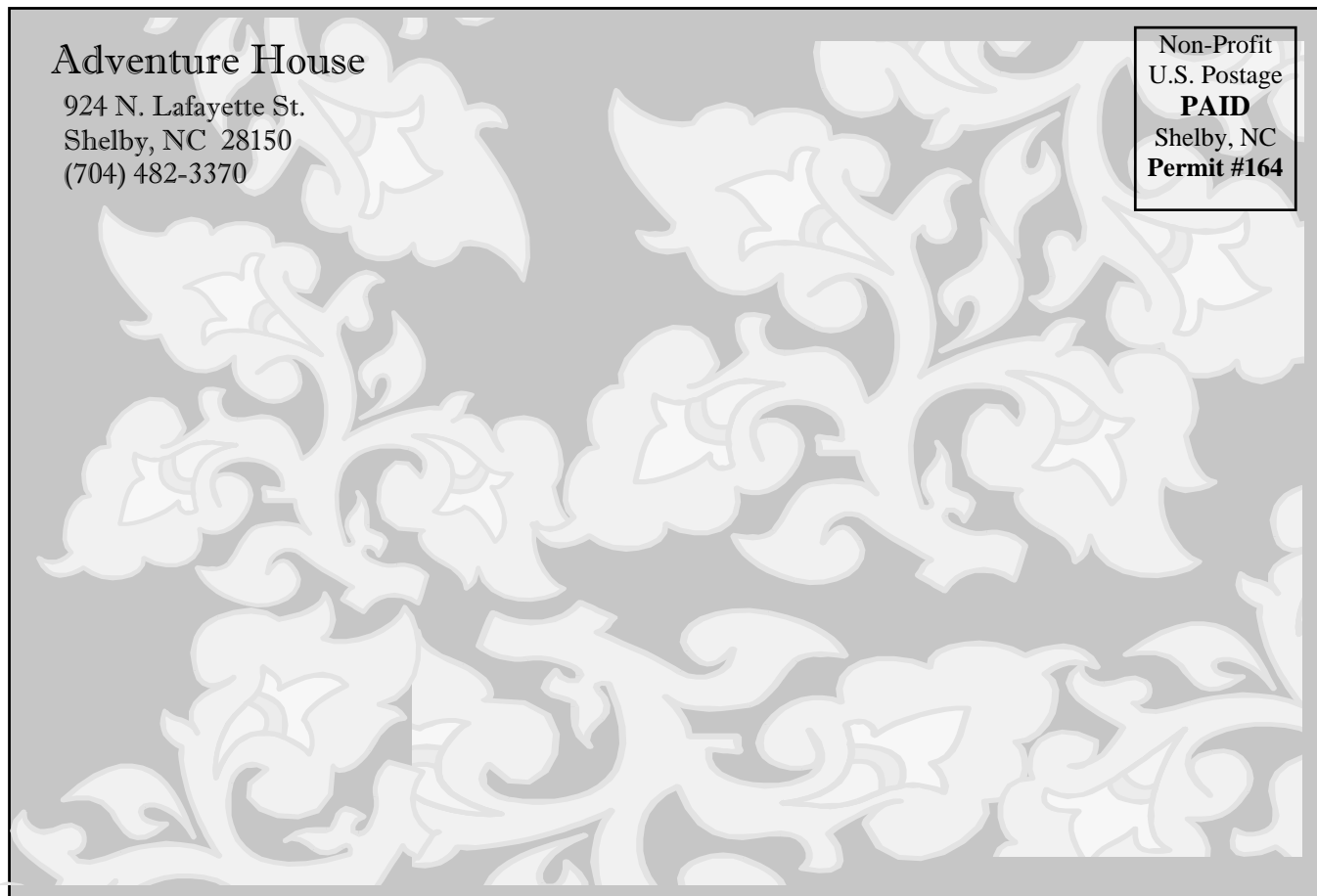
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• **Colleagues Visit from Connections**

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currently hold only one 20 hour per week placement at FAS Controls. The economy also took its toll on another TE at Baxter Corp at the end of 2008. We had 3 members working 20 hours per week when Baxter lost it's main customer. They were very happy with the job we were doing, but along with the majority of their full time employees, we got laid off. We were happy to have gained a TE prior to the 2007 Christmas season at Goody's Family clothing in housekeeping. The TE was everyday and the outlook was good until Goody's experienced their worst Christmas sales ever. We kept the job into the first quarter of 2008 but were laid off. Goody's recently announced they will be closing the store. Another depressing TE loss was a supported Employment position at Applebee's restaurant .We worked there two days a week for about 2 years until being laid off. The reason, once again ,was a drop in sales. Hampton Inn was another devastating loss to our TE Program in 2008.

Until very recently we thought we had a few great replacements for the lost TE's. Cleveland Community College was working with us to place two members in housekeeping. As we worked on the details CCC got a call from the state demanding a 3% budget cut. Oasis Café at Cleveland Regional Medical Center was also eager to put us to work in 2008 until a drop in hospital numbers caused a hiring freeze. There is good news though! We still have a wonderful placement at UA Thrift agencies currently employing 7 members. We made it through a recent management change and look forward to continue serving them as well. AHCSS remains another source for a 6 hour per week TE. Salvation Army continues to keep us busy with housekeeping in the chapel and administrative offices five days a week. Although FAS Controls laid off several dozen full time employees last week, we still have our TE placement there.

Placement opportunities continue to be available regardless of success or failure in previous placements and the desire to work is still the single most important factor determining placement opportunity. The trick

is being creative enough to find those opportunities in the economic climate.

By Bryan Eaker

Breath-Easy-Live-Well

In early December of last year, I had the chance to go through a training with three other staff members. This training was the Breath Easy-Live-Well program that we will soon start at Adventure House. The program is sponsored by the North Carolina Evidence Based Practice Center (NCBPC) and North Carolina Health and Wellness Trust Fund.

During the two day training I learned a lot of information about smoking, and the effects that it has on your body. One of the biggest things for me was, how smoking can affect many medications that people take for a wide range of illnesses. I was shocked to find out how many chemicals are in just one cigarette. We will now take the information that we have learned and share it with the rest of the Clubhouse as we incorporate the Breathe-Easy-Live-Well program into our already existing Wellness Wednesday program.

By Candie Bell

A First for the First

This year we tried something new. The social committee decided to have a New Years Celebration for the first time. Everyone enjoyed a fun evening of celebrating the New Year together with friends. There was plenty of food to enjoy and great music to dance to. For decorations, everyone had party hats, horns and necklaces. All who attended had a great time, and are already looking forward to next year's party. You don't want to miss it!!!!

By Dorothy Wilson

Friends and Family Reception

On Thursday December 11th, Adventure House opened its doors once again for a Friends and Family Reception. Invitations were made and were mailed or hand delivered by members and staff to their friends and family. The Adventure House was festively decorated for the holidays. Refreshments were prepared by members and staff. Served was a variety of sweets, hot spinach dip, sausage balls, coffee, hot cider and cranberry punch. The Executive Director, Tommy Gunn welcomed our guests, and then spoke about our

excellent housing program and the Eli Lilly Award Adventure House received this fall for the Adventure House Housing program. Bryan Eaker spoke to our guests about the Transitional Employment program and the benefits our members have had from it.

The purpose of having Friends and Family Reception is to increase community awareness for our loved ones and friends to become familiar with our program, and the importance of what goes on here on a daily basis. Tours were available so guests could become familiar with our Clubhouse. Everyone is proud of our Clubhouse and our units. We were glad to share our accomplishments and express pride in our program.

By Diana Boswell

Thoughts of Christmas

All through Adventure House and outdoors you could say it was Christmas time on the day we had our holiday lunch. We had at least 100 to 120 people who had a great meal, which consisted of roast beef, green beans, mashed potatoes, gravy, rolls, coconut cake, tea and coffee.

Tommy Gunn was with us and gave a wonderful speech. Some gave thanks through prayer. Tommy also had a gift for us, a very soft blanket with "Adventure House" printed on the corner, it was green with white lettering. Many of the ladies wore festive clothes of red, green and gold. The tables were decorated with fancy table cloths, miniature Christmas trees, napkins, and colorful flatware.

Members and staff worked together while cooking, serving, and cleaning up before and after the meal. Members, staff and Adventure House case managers enjoyed their "Christmas Lunch". Wishing everyone a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

By Elizabeth Grigg

PLAYERS NEWS

On January 12, 2009 the Adventure House Players Trio had the privilege of singing at a meeting of the Shelby Exchange Club at Jackson's Cafeteria. The trio consisted of Joyce Fox, Sheila Wellmon and Phyllis Chitwood. We

were accompanied by Georgiana Wright. Before we sang, Bryan Eaker spoke about the Transitional Employment program at Adventure House. We had dinner and they gave us a plaque for our performance.

By Phyllis Chitwood

Next Players Project

The Adventure House Players are working on a script called "The Interview", which deals with the subject of Transitional Employment (TE) and how important it is to members of the mental health community. TE shows the community that people who have suffered from some form of mental illness can still live productive lives, and have productive careers in any field of the employment.

You would be surprised how many CEO's who run major companies today, have at one time, been hospitalized for a major mental health issue. But with the proper diagnosis and treatment, they live very productive lives.

The play "The Interview", hopes to shed light on this subject and, in a month or two, our cast will take it on the road to several civic organizations and enlighten our community about mental illness. Hopefully, we will find new Transitional Employment placements for our members.

By Stan Logan

INCOME TAX PREPARATION

Its tax time again! Members and staff in the Member Services Unit will be preparing Income taxes for Adventure House members. Members who worked Transitional Employment Placement during the 2008 Year can bring their W2 Forms, and staff will prepare your return. If you earned less than \$12,880 you may be eligible for Earned Income Credit (EIC).

Unit members will participate by making individual folders, typing labels for envelopes, and making copies of each tax return that is prepared. We will begin filling out tax returns during the week of February 16, 2009.

By Beverly Dawkins

WORKING AND LOVING IT

Danny Carroll has started a new Transitional Employment placement at Salvation Army. This is Danny's first TE Placement. He started January 5th. Danny says that he likes the people there and working with people in general. Working keeps him