March 2017

**Quotes of Inspiration**

“You have the power to say, ‘This is NOT how my story will end.”
~Anonymous

“Hardships often prepare ordinary people for an extraordinary destiny. “
~C.S. Lewis

“Strength grows in the moments when you think you can’t go on but you keep going anyway.”
~Anonymous

**American Diabetes Alert Day**

This year, American Diabetes Alert Day is on March 25th. Diabetes is a disease that affects over 25 million people in the United States. It is an affliction that can be managed but it is important to understand the ways to cope and manage Diabetes. The American Diabetes Association utilizes this day to spread awareness and education on the disease.

The most common type of Diabetes is Type 2. This is when the insulin in our body isn’t processed properly. It causes extra insulin to be made leading to high blood sugar levels.

For those that have the disease and were recently diagnosed, it can feel like the changes that need to be made to our diet can be overwhelming. It is also necessary to monitor blood sugar constantly so that they can see what changes are needed to keep blood sugar levels optimal.

Steps that will need to be taken are things such as:
- Understanding how medications can affect blood sugar
- Changing your diet such as minimizing carb and sugar intakes

There are many tools that can be helpful in managing Diabetes that can be found at www.diabetes.org

Additionally, WRAP for Diabetes can be very helpful. Just as with other challenges, WRAP can help identify triggers, wellness tools and early warning signs and serve as a living plan to cope with the challenges you may face.

Are you unsure if you are at risk for Diabetes? You can go to www.diabetes.org and take a risk assessment today.

If you’d like to explore WRAP for Diabetes, come to our Intro class at the Perquimans County Senior Center on March 14th.

For details on Wellness classes, Peer Support and Resource Connections, call us at 1-866-481-5361

**Community Connections**

RI International extends heartfelt THANKS and APPRECIATION to the organizations that provide class locations, presentations, services and referrals.

Our connections with others, provide opportunities and environments that empower people to recover, to succeed in accomplishing their goals, and to reconnect with themselves, others and meaning and purpose in life.
March is Women’s History Month. It is also National Nutrition Month, National Problem Gambling Awareness Month, National Native HIV/AIDS Awareness Day (March 20th), American Diabetes Alert Day (March 25th) and Spiritual Wellness Month.

What we now know is that when it comes to issues of Wellness, it does not benefit us to treat women and men the same. While the diversity of our recovery paths should be given equal respect, “equal” does not mean that they will all look the same.

Within the US and worldwide: women are more affected by issues of intimate partner and sexual violence, females are more likely to be primary caregivers for their children and older generations and deal with economic responsibility which can be a factor for stress and anxiety, females are more likely to graduate from college and graduate schools, make up ½ of the US workforce, and yet the pay gap still exists (according to the White House Council of Economic Advisers). These are just a few of the barriers that women overcome to achieve wellness. Which is why all of these “Months” are so important—we all face different barriers, but Recovery is possible!

It is essential to see the reflection of wellness when you begin your journey. Do not quite see it yet? Look in the mirror. Perhaps you will be the first of many! As Queen Rania of Jordan said, “If you educate a woman, you educate a family, if you educate a girl, you educate the future.”

~By Dayna Farrington, LCSW
Wellness City Clinician

Hi. My name is Gloria D. Edwards. I was born November 6, 1956. I have two beautiful daughters. I raise four of my grandchildren and took in other children to help them in 2006.

I had my first stroke and six more up until seven years ago. I had the heart attack in June 2nd, 2014, and the other one on November 30th, 2014. The stroke made me feel like I was not going to make it. But I refused to give up.

The heart attack was the same way. I refused to give up, I got up and did for myself—and that is by walking. I want to recover so I came to the Wellness City

One of the things I did was walk to the Wellness City. I took all the classes and did more. I help everyone. The Peer Supporters help me when I went to them with a problem. I learned what my goals are, I used my wellness tools and I progressed in my recovery. I took the PET class and passed. I got my license and now I am a Peer Support Specialist.

I have many jobs under my belt, some of them include: house cleaning, cooking, industrial, cosmetology, private nursing aide, assembly in a factory. I choose to be a Peer Supporter. I choose this because of how I was supported. My first Peer Supporter was Devarus, then Pamela, and finally Trish. I thank all of them for supporting me. Now I am very happy.
Community Building Team

My Journey: Judy Strand

My name is Judy Strand. My original story is an ugly one. I came from an abusive, dysfunctional family. I found out years later my foster mom was my dad’s girlfriend. My father took me from my real mother at age two. I was treated very badly, told I was stupid and would have to have a man in my life to survive anything in life. I found out my real mother was alive at eighteen. I have been through a few marriages since then and also abusive. I am in recovery from alcohol and addiction.

The point where my life turned around was when I got the call my boyfriend at the time was in jail. He had been found on the side of the road worshiping the devil. My wake-up call was when they told him to go to jail or AA. I thought I needed to be in AA. My best friend’s family helped me to turn my self-image around. They sort of made me the grandmother of their children. They loved me like I was their own.

AA helped me to learn to talk positively to myself. When I became older I began to fall a lot. I began isolating myself and developed depression. I think I always had depression though. It comes and goes but it became worse. I became afraid to live alone anymore so much so I went into adult care.

Tammy Askew of Trillium came to see me and told me about the Community Building Program a year ago in May. At first I told her no, that I didn’t want to move out. I wasn’t ready. She came back to see me again several months later and I said yes. I met Jennifer Marshall My Peer Recovery Coach shortly after that. We hit it off right away. We have similar stories in some ways and Tammy shared how wonderful she was before I even met her.

I found out the place I had before was open so I put in an application and got in. The three of us moved me out of the adult care home and into my new apartment. We went shopping for everything I needed to start my new life. I am currently working getting reconnected to community resources and taking care of myself. I take all of my medications, attend all of my appointments and I have friends here. We have recently started a Bible study here too. I have had the WRAP twice in the past and it helped me a great deal. Jennifer and I will be doing a refresher and begin the WELL Class soon. I love where I am today and working my plan to stay that way.

My name is Jennifer Marshall. I am a Peer Recovery Coach for RI International in the Community Building Program. I have been working with Judy for several months now. We hit it off right away.

I love working with Judy. She is a ball of energy and very determined to stay in control of her life. Judy and I have been spending time working on getting her reconnected to Nutrition Services, Transportation and Advocating with her Doctors and Providers for her care and supplies she needs to be as independent in her own home as possible.

Judy is attending Bible study and working on developing and maintaining meaningful relationships. Judy and I have made plans to begin a refresher in WRAP and begin the WELL class. I love our time together. She brings a smile to my face and warms my heart every time I see her.
There are many dimensions to being a whole person in recovery. Learning tools to manage mental health challenges or addiction challenges is one important piece of Recovery. But taking care of all aspects of ourselves is important. It’s hard to manage my depression when I’m hungry, and hard to manage my anxiety when I’m sleeping in the woods, and hard to manage my addiction when I am in chronic pain. So, when we talk about Recovery, it’s important to look at all the dimensions of our lives. At RI International, we look at the *Nine Dimensions of Wellness*: Emotional Wellness, Financial Wellness, Home and Community Living Wellness, Intellectual Wellness, Occupational Wellness, Physical Wellness, Recreational Wellness, Social Wellness, and Spiritual Wellness. We look at how we can take extra good care of ourselves in each dimension of our lives.

One of the ways that we take care of our **Physical Wellness** here at Durham Wellness City is by being informed about diseases and infections that can be transmitted through exposure to the blood or body fluids of someone who is infected. These can include: HIV (the virus that causes AIDS), Hepatitis, Herpes, Chlamydia, Gonorrhea and Syphilis. Every few weeks, local agencies come out to Wellness City to provide information about these diseases and to offer free testing for those who would like to be tested. These agencies also provide safer sex supplies such as condoms, dental dams, lubricant, etc. Knowledge is power – if we know how to prevent infection, we can protect ourselves and keep ourselves well, and if we know that we have caught an infection, we can seek out the medical care needed to keep ourselves healthy.

Durham Wellness City just hosted an education and testing event in celebration of National Black HIV/AIDS Awareness Day. Staff and volunteers from the Triangle Empowerment Center came to Durham Wellness City and provided on-site education, safer sex supplies, and testing for HIV and STIs. Any person who chose to get tested was given a goodie bag. Over 60 people attended the event and we all enjoyed pizza and socializing together. People left with a much better understanding of some of the ways that we can all take better care of our **Physical Wellness** as part of our Recovery Journey.
FREE Workshop
WRAP Wellness Recovery Action
18 OR OLDER? YOU’RE INVITED!

New Bern Wellness City
1311 Health Dr., New Bern, NC
Monday, 3/27/17 thru Friday, 3/31/17
10a—12p & 1p—3p
Receive a 20 Hour Certificate When You Attend All Sessions.

For details, please call 252-672-8781
George’s Story

Where the sky meets the water there is an ocean. The sky and the ocean have conspired on our behalf to leave us some mostly dry land. Carol (my wife) and I appreciate that because we enjoy camping by the shore and strolling the beaches.

I gave you the story of a turtle named Ed (in January’s issue) that found his strengths and marched in recovery. I told you at the end about a fish named George that was drowning in the Chesapeake Bay. He was not so much drowning as he was beaching himself. I would contend, however, that we drown in the water and fish drown in the air.

We found George on the beach where waves lapped over him. I picked him up, as he was only two inches long and inquires as to his intentions. He was no talker, but he did roll his eyes, as if he found me tiresome and would I just let him be. Such was his agony and pain. Of course, I would have none of that and I took him with me.

I quickly noted that he couldn’t swim straight. In fact, he was bumping into everything and generally flip-flopping about. That I realized was the source of his despair, he was different from the other sharks. He had given up. And then I said, “You need a good dose of hope to get going on this.” I took him to doctor after doctor, and they all sadly shook their heads. I sat down, there was no hope left in me and George was miserable. I said, “George, what do you think we can do?”

At that moment, I knew I was going to have to let go and give George’s life back to him. I had tried too hard, I saw that, and now I had to let him pick-up the reins to his own life, make his own choices. Suddenly, his eyes brightened. His toothy grin seemed to say that my being there for him was so important and all he would ever need from me. He never did swim straight but he learned that is Ok and he learned to live with lumps and his bumps.

I like George. He lives with us and we will always be friends.

Submitted By: John Wood, CPSS
WRAP CLASS SUCCESS!!

WRAP
WELLNESS RECOVERY ACTION PLAN

Wilmington Wellness City completed its first WRAP certificate class during the month of January. It was attended by 10 participants with 4 of those participants meeting the requirements to obtain theirWRAP certificate.

WRAP focuses on several areas surrounding Wellness and Recovery. They are: Discovering what is meant by Recovery, Five Key Concepts of Recovery, Wellness Recovery Action Planning, and Developing a Wellness Toolbox.

The course which is 20 hours long helps participants develop and create their individualized WRAP plan to use when needed.

Many of the graduates had great things to say about the class and the instructor Dale Lewis-Burnett, WWC lead peer: ‘Recovery is not only about getting back what was lost, It’s also about opening the door to the possibilities that have yet to be discovered.’

~Jeff Steele, class participant.

Meet Our Staff
Mary, CPSS!!

Hi. my name is Mary Crawford-Reese, NCAP. I enjoy writing poems, going to church, helping others, and being involved with community activities. I have learned that as long as you live you can change. You are never too old, and it is never too late to change. I am proud to say that I have eighteen years and counting in Recovery.

My life had been a roller coaster of using drugs and mental health issues for several years. Then one day I decided to stop being a victim and be the victor. I no longer wanted to live the way I was and made up my mind to do things differently than I had in my past. I wanted to be reliable, responsible, and accountable. So I started thinking of what I had to do to get where I wanted to go. Then I started taking steps to get there.

I took classes to get my GED, then took classes to become a Peer Support Specialist. I am proud to say that I am now working at RI International in Wilmington so that I can give back and help someone else realize that we can do things different and get better results than we have been getting.

My words of encouragement to everyone is: I AM A VALUABLE PERSON OF GREAT WORTH—take these words and apply them to yourself. LIFE IS WORTH LIVING, SO LIVE IT.
Our Mission
Empowering people to recover, succeed in accomplishing their goals, find meaning and purpose in life, and reconnect with themselves and others.

Our Vision
Activating the next generation of frame-breaking healthcare innovation to support people beyond their behavioral health needs and succeed in the community where they live, work, and play.

RI International
Is a nonprofit organization offering recovery-based services in Arizona, California, Delaware, North Carolina, Texas, Washington state and New Zealand.
www.riinternational.com

North Carolina Programs

Recovery Response Center

Henderson
300 Parkview Dr., Henderson
Phone: 252-438-4145
Janeen Gordon, RSA II

Durham
309 Crutchfield St., Durham
Phone: 919-560-7305
Joy Brunson-Nsubuga, RSA II

Wellness Cities

Durham Wellness City
401 E. Lakewood Ave, Ste E1-A, Durham
Phone: 919-687-4041
Kim Chansen, RSA 919-702-3314

Greenville Wellness City
2407 S. Memorial Dr., Greenville
Phone# 252-321-0179
Ashley Viverette, RSA 252-214-8555

New Bern Wellness City
1311 Health Dr., New Bern
Phone: 252-672-8781
Joe Villarreal, RSA 252-670-3614

Wilmington Wellness City
1960 S. 17th St., Wilmington
Phone: 910-399-3149
Kris Ludacer, RSA 252-702-7402

RI Outreach

Ashley Viverette, RSA Phone: 252-214-8555
Greenville Office: 252-321-0179
Wilmington Office: 910-399-3149

Outreach Coordinators

Callum Wilkinson
Phone: 252-702-7428
Brunswick, New Hanover, Onslow & Pender

Devarus Smith
Phone: 252-375-0316
Carteret, Craven, Jones, Martin, Pamlico & Pitt

Carter, Craven, Jones, Martin, Pamlico & Pitt

Susan Hall
Phone: 252-876-3645
Beaufort, Bertie, Gates, Hertford, Northampton & Washington

Dave Edmonds
Phone: 252-886-1104
Camden, Chowan, Currituck, Dare, Hyde, Pasquotank, Perquimans & Tyrrell

Community Building Team

Kimberly Talbot, Recovery Services Administrator
Phone: 252-723-6616

In Reach

Amy Corey, Recovery Services Administrator
Phone: 252-450-9184

Find our Wellness City Voice Newsletters, as well as our monthly class Calendars online at