



“One person can have a profound effect on another. And two people... well, two people can work miracles. They can change a whole town. They can change the whole world.”

- Diane Frovlov & Andrew Schneider

Winter 2008

Volume 3 Number 5

IMPORTANT DATES

The Stand Up for Mental Health comedy team will perform

- January 27, 2009 at UAB.
- January 28, 2009 at the University of Alabama.
- January 29, 2009 at Troy.

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Thank You:

Ann Jenkins, Yvonne Jones, Marnell Casten, Adele Morgan, Steve Puckett, Emma Beddingfield & Fannie Hicks for helping with “Comedy for a Cause.”

New Officers and Board Members Elected at the Annual Meeting

On October 4, 2008 Wings held its fourth annual meeting of the Board of Directors. At this time, several historic things happened. Our original founding Board members were concluding the maximum length of service allowable by the by laws, so with regret, a new group of leaders were elected.

Five seats were filled by new Board members to replace those who could no longer serve. Daniel Pitts of Montgomery will represent Region 5, Leigh Few of Jasper will represent Region 7, and Jackie Milton of Sheffield will represent Region 12. In addition the number of at-large seats was increased from one to three, and Beth Blalock of Tuscaloosa

and Marnell Casten of Dothan were elected to fill these at-large seats. Wings currently has ten of its fifteen Board seats filled.

Ann Jenkins of Boaz is our new President, Steve Puckett continues as Vice President, Sara Parfait was elected Secretary, and Vickey Ross Pierson is our new Treasurer.

We are excited about the fresh, innovative ideas that these new people bring to our organization; however, we are very saddened to lose the service of long time mental health advocates such as Fannie Hicks, Nancy Jester, Sylvia Richey, and Roy Willingham. Their service along with the efforts of Donetta Wilson truly helped make WINGS the success it is today.

Division of MI's Fiscal Year 2010 Goals

The Department of Mental Health is beginning the second year of its FY 2010 planning process. Listed below are the identified goals for the Division of Mental Illness. By 2012:

- 25% of acute services (the first 90 days of involuntary treatment) will transition from state hospitals to community-based services.
- State operated extended care units (providing extended care over 180 days) will increase the number of patients discharged by 40% and decrease the number of in house patient days by 40%.
- The number of children and adolescents served will increase by 10% over the FY 2008 level by expanding the continuum of care.



From the Director:
Ronald Hunt

stock market in 1929. It is sort of like a roller coaster ride.

The economy has important implications for consumers everywhere. Because our state government cannot run a deficit (spend more than it receives in tax revenue), the state must cut services. This is particularly devastating, because services are most needed in tough economic times.

Now is the time to vocalize how your services improve your quality of life. Take two Christmas cards and address them to your state senator and state representative. Explain how grateful you are for the services that you receive, and let him or her know what your life would be like without these services. Be polite, humble, and informative. Do not threaten and above all do not make up half truths. Our stories are powerful, and sharing them is even more empowering.

If you need help identifying your state senator and representative, call Emma between 9 am and 1 pm weekdays. 1-888-WINGSAL (1-888-946-4725).

We are living through historic times. Presently, we are watching a new party transition to power headed by the first African American President Elect in our country's history. We are also witnessing one of the worst economic downturns since the crash of the

Stories about Certified Peer Specialists Needed

Half of Alabama's community mental health centers (CMHCs) have not yet hired a peer specialist, and this presents a budgetary problem. In an attempt to save money, DMH is freezing many services that have not yet been started, and this includes a proposed hiring freeze on peer specialists positions that have not yet been filled. Let's tell DMH how important the CPS program is. **Mail stories about how peer specialists have impacted your recovery.** If we can show that CPS is cost effective, we may be able to save these jobs. Mail your stories to:

**Wings Across Alabama
P.O. Box 211286
Montgomery, AL 36121**

**Check Out Our Website:
www.wingsalabama.org**

Membership Application

Mail completed application to:

**Contact: *Wings Across Alabama*
PO Box 211286 Montgomery, AL 36121**

Phone: 1-888-WINGSAL

Phone: 334-395-7616 Fax: 334-395-7618

E-mail: rghwings@bellsouth.net

Become a Member of *WINGS*

We need your help to grow. You are an important part of our team. *WINGS* success depends upon combining the strength of consumers and other supporters throughout Alabama. Together, we are more effective, efficient, and powerful. We need everyone's participation to achieve our mission. We invite you to become part of an organization that appreciates what you have to offer. Consumers on disability can join for \$2.00. Those not on disability can join for \$10.00, and non-consumers can join for \$20.00.

Membership Form—Check One	Dues	
<input type="checkbox"/> Consumer on Disability	\$2.00	Name _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Consumer Not on Disability	\$10.00	Address _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Non-Consumer	\$20.00	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Organization	\$50.00	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Donation	\$	Phone Number _____
Total	\$ _____	Signature _____

We wish you a very joyous Holiday Season. Merry Christmas, Happy Kwanza, Happy Chanukah, and Happy New Year.

Contact: Wings Across Alabama in Partnership with the Alabama Minority Consumer Council and the Alabama Department of Mental Health's Office of Public Information invite you to attend three performances by the

"Stand Up for Mental Health" comedy duo of Alex & Kim in January of 2009.

January 27, 2008 @ 7:00 pm

The Hill University Center Ballroom at the University of Alabama—Birmingham

January 28, 2009 @ 7:00 pm

The Ferguson Center Theatre at the University of Alabama

January 29, 2009 @ 4:00 pm

Troy University (Main Campus)

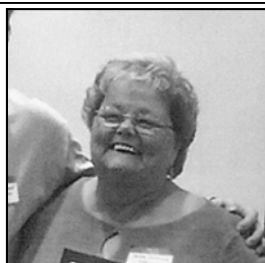


**STAND UP FOR
MENTAL HEALTH**

Counselor and stand-up comic David Granier coaches the Stand Up For Mental Health comedy team to use stand up comedy as a way of building confidence and fighting public stigma, prejudice, and discrimination. These shows look at the lighter side of taking meds, seeing counselors, getting diagnosed, and surviving the mental health system.

Thank you for Participating at Alabama State:

- ADAP
- Lighthouse Counseling Center
- MHA in Montgomery
- Montgomery Mental Health Authority
- NAMI—Montgomery
- RAMP



**Member
Spotlight:
Ann Jenkins**

This month we are highlighting our new Board President. Ann Jenkins lives in Boaz, and

is the mother of six children, the grandmother of twenty grandchildren, and the great grandmother of eight great grandchildren.

Ann is the leader of a support group called Angel's Outreach. Its roots are in the community, and at one time fed low income children. Her work is the outgrowth of a very strong faith that sustains her in times of crisis.

Her goal for WINGS is to develop our organization, and mental health advocacy in general, into a grassroots movement with a sense of unity for everyone across Alabama. Her desire is to create an atmosphere in which consumers act with one voice, so everyone is heard. "Without consumers' voices, our voices cannot be heard."

MISSION STATEMENT :

CONTACT: WINGS ACROSS ALABAMA IS A NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATION FOR CONSUMERS OF MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES WITH A DEDICATION TO MAKING POSITIVE CHANGE IN THE LIVES OF CONSUMERS THROUGH EDUCATION, ADVOCACY, TRAINING, SERVICES, AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE, AS WELL AS THROUGH BUILDING A STRONG NETWORK OF CONSUMERS ACROSS ALABAMA WITH THE RECOGNITION THAT INCLUSION, PEER SUPPORT, TRUE COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT AND PARTICIPATION, SELF-EMPOWERMENT, AND QUALITY MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES ARE KEY INGREDIENTS TO RECOVERY.

“Comedy for a Cause” at ASU was Funny AND Informative


On November 11, 2008 Contact: Wings Across Alabama and Alabama State University sponsored “Comedy for a Cause,” an evening of fun, as well as information. “Comedy for a Cause” was our kickoff of the Campaign for Mental Health Recovery. This campaign is the outgrowth of the anti-stigma grant we have received from the SAMHSA ADS Center. The ADS Center is the Resource Center to Promote Acceptance, Dignity, and Social Inclusion Associated with Mental Health.

That night we had five “twenty-something” consumers share their stories stressing the important role that friendship and acceptance play in their recovery. Tamika and Emma told stories about how friendship helped them restore a sense of normalcy in their lives, so they could dream of new possibilities again. Jeri

shared her experience as an Army soldier and the brain injury she received that ended that career. Kaleb shared his battle with substance addiction and stressed the importance of developing friendships that were healthy and supportive in his choice not to “use.” And finally, Evan shared what it was like growing up with a mother who was diagnosed with Bi-polar Disorder. The event concluded with a comedy show from Ced Delaney of Birmingham and Pat Brown who plays Aunt Agnes on the BET show “Somebodies.”

Our next events will be by the Stand Up for Mental Health comedy team of Kim and Alex. They do stand up comedy routines about life with a diagnosis as consumers of mental health services. They will perform at UAB, Alabama, and Troy University.

Return Service Requested

<p>We want thank Rep. John Knight and the Office of Leadership and Public Policy at Alabama State University for supporting “Comedy for a Cause.”</p>	<p>“Stand Up for Mental Health” will be in Alabama January 27, 28, and 29, 2009.</p>	<p>CONTACT:  WINGS ACROSS ALABAMA P.O. Box 211286 Montgomery, AL 36121-0286</p>
<p>Non-Profit Org. US Postage Paid Montgomery, AL Permit No. 257</p>		