



# Suicide Prevention and Mental Health Awareness Committee of Portage County

QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

FALL 2011

## Taking Steps Towards Hope



Participants take steps towards hope in the 2011 Walk for Hope.

All that is left are memories of a very successful 2011 Walk for Hope. The walk drew 170 participants who took steps towards hope in suicide prevention and mental health awareness. Not only did the walk have a new location at 2501 Main Street but also included a shorter 2 mile course as well as a 5 mile course. Organizers provided an outlet for mental health education to families with a display of local resources and entertainment including David Dall and Friends and Gizmo the Illusionist. Organizers continue to work towards eliminating the stigma associated with mental health illness and suicide prevention, and are very grateful for all their sponsors, volunteers, and participants!

-G. Garske

### An Evening with Bill MacPhee "Living with Schizophrenia"

Do not stress out over the holidays. See helpful tips on page 2.

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Healthy People Portage County's Suicide Prevention and Mental health Awareness Team hosted nationally known speaker and author Bill MacPhee. MacPhee's presentation, "Living with Schizophrenia", was held on Tuesday, October 11, 2011 at 7:00 PM, in the Laird Room at the Dreyfus University Center on the UWSP campus.

Diagnosed with schizophrenia at the age of 24 MacPhee felt his life was over at a time that most people's lives are just beginning. MacPhee's life became a living nightmare and caused the loss of his friends, home, and will to live. With the help of medication, therapy, and support of his family MacPhee began the road to recovery.

MacPhee has since become a successful businessman and CEO of Magpie Publishing, Inc and the creator of *SZ Magazine* – a magazine intended to provide hope and information for people affected by schizophrenia. In addition to publishing, MacPhee travels throughout North America providing inspirational talks about how he pulled himself from the depths of depression to become the successful businessman, husband and father he is today. The presentation was free to attend. The event was sponsored by Healthy People Portage County, Ministry Health Care, and UWSP – Disabilities Advisory Council. Ministry Health Care and Healthy People Portage County also sponsored a free 4 hour workshop for area mental health professionals which featured Bill MacPhee. People who attended the workshop were able to hear Bill's story to better understand schizophrenia. Bill discussed life with a mental health illness, which offered an inspiring message of hope, courage, determination and triumph. 88 people attended the workshop from various disciplines. —M. Nelson



Bill MacPhee addresses audience members.

# ROCC Point - 2011 *Providing Hope Award* Recipient

The 2011 *Providing Hope Award* was awarded to ROCC (Resources, Opportunities, Choices & Connections) Point. ROCC Point is a goal driven recovery center for people experiencing mental health or illness issues. On site peers are available to share their experiences and recovery processes to help support recovery for participants. ROCC Point staff assist participants in setting and achieving goals and assisting participants to develop meaningful relationships and support systems. ROCC Point services include: community skills development, employment related skills, illness management and recovery education, and activities like support groups, cooking, art, gardening, movies, music, games, education, and volunteer opportunities. The award was presented as part of the 2011 Walk for Hope event. ROCC Point is located at 2040 Jefferson Street in Stevens Point and managed by Midstate Independent Living Consultants. Congratulations!



*Pictured are Robyn Siskoff and Cheryl Sabin from ROCC Point with the 2011 Providing Hope Award.*

“Living with the Loss of Suicide”, Survivors of Suicide Support Group meets the first Monday of each month at Saint Michael’s Chapel. Contact Michelle Nelson, MSW, LCSW, CADC for more information, 715.346.5401.



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## **HPPC Suicide Prevention Meeting Schedule 2011**

Friday, October 21st @ 7:45 a.m.—  
Guest Speaker: Scott Rifleman, PC  
Law Enforcement Center.

Friday, November 18th @ 7:45 a.m.—  
Business Meeting, PC Law Enforcement  
Center

Friday, December 16th @ 7:45 a.m. -  
Business Meeting, PC Law Enforcement  
Center

## **Coping with Stress & Depression During the Holidays**

- Keep expectations for the holiday season manageable. Try to set realistic goals for yourself. Pace yourself. Organize your time. Make a list and prioritize the important activities.
- Be realistic about what you can and cannot do. Don't put the entire focus on just one day (i.e., Thanksgiving Day). Remember that it's a season of holiday sentiment, and activities can be spread out to lessen stress and increase enjoyment.
- Remember the holiday season does not banish reasons for feeling sad or lonely; there is room for these feelings to be present, even if the person chooses not to express them.
- Leave “yesteryear” in the past and look toward the future. Life brings changes. Each season is different and can be enjoyed in its own way. Don't set yourself up in comparing today with the “good ol' days.”
- Do something for someone else. Try volunteering some of your time to help others.
- Enjoy activities that are free, such as taking a drive to look at holiday decorations, going window shopping or making a snowperson with children.
- Be aware that excessive drinking will only increase your feelings of depression.
- Try something new. Celebrate the holidays in a new way.
- Spend time with supportive and caring people. Reach out and make new friends, or contact someone you haven't heard from in a while.

- Retrieved October 17, 2011 from [www.nmha.org/index.cfm](http://www.nmha.org/index.cfm)

## **Mark your calendar for these upcoming events!**

- **Teen Screen at SPASH for sophomores, December 6-8, 2011.**