

Since
1960

SKILLS

News & Views

Opportunity...Choice...Support...Recovery

SUMMER 2011

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HIGHMARK® WALK FOR A HEALTHY COMMUNITY

Organizations Unite to Make a Difference

Skills was proud to be a part of Highmark's first Walk for a Healthy Community in Johnstown. It was a great success raising money for 17 non-profit organizations.

Saturday, June 4th turned out to be a lovely morning to take a walk through the streets of Johnstown. Skills had 53 walkers, including five Flat Stanley's, that collectively raised \$3,527 dollars for the Vines of Hope mental health program in Ebensburg. It was a very family friendly event with face painting, a bounce house, and prizes.

Everyone enjoyed themselves. A big thanks to all who participated both in person and with a 'Flat'. Skills will participate in this event again next year!



Walter Trybus, van driver raised the most money of all participants - \$1,005 dollars!

Way to go!



L to R: Julie McBreen with Flat Sandy, Lori Lange with Flat Karry, Sabrina Barnosky with Flat Lisa, and Mary Ann Williams with Flat Jodi.



Computer/Electronics Recycling with the Altoona Curve & the State College Spikes



The recycling night with the Altoona Curve on June 4th was a huge success. Together we kept 3,761 pounds of electronics out of the landfills!

A big thanks to the Altoona Curve!

Coming up, we have a recycling night with the State College Spikes!

Friday, August 26, 2011

State College Spikes vs. Williamsport Crosscutters

Doors open at 6pm - Game starts at 7:05pm

For tickets and more information check out Skills or the Spikes web sites!

www.skillsofcentralpa.org or www.statecollegespikes.com

Discovery Garden Plant Sale



You can visit the Discovery Garden year round, to see the variety of plants and flowers (something is always blooming).

For the fifth year in a row, the Discovery Garden Plant Sale is once again a success story. The plant sale raised more than \$3,400, the largest total in the history of the plant sale. The sale at Legion Memorial Park in Hollidaysburg included items such as annuals, perennials, vegetables, herbs, terrariums, stepping stones, birdbaths, and a hand crafted planter and birdhouses.

All the proceeds from the sale benefited Skills' horticultural therapy program and the Discovery Garden in Hollidaysburg.

Skills is grateful for the support and contributions from local businesses and volunteers who made this fundraiser possible.

A special thanks to all the businesses that contributed:

- ◆ The Home Depot, Altoona
- ◆ Tussey Mountain Mulch
- ◆ Fox Hill Gardens
- ◆ Patchwork Farms
- ◆ Leidy's Greenhouses
- ◆ Warner's Florist & Greenhouse
- ◆ Brubaker's Greenhouses

To all of the volunteers who shared plants from their own gardens, donated items or just came to help for the day — a big thank you!

Sal Pitchell, Teresa Harper, Rene Homer, Colleen Montrella, Amy Cyman, Leslie Smith, Donna Parker, Cyndy Dixon, Rick Faust, Lani Otto, Jen James, Richard Grubb, Shawn Dilling, Nathan Styles, John Wolfe, Karry Carr, and Karen Claton.

Mental Health Awareness

The Candlelight Vigils in Centre County and Cambria County were successful in promoting awareness of mental illness. Both vigils had a wonderful turn out of supporters, great musical entertainment, and speakers who gave inspirational speeches.

Opportunity Centre Clubhouse (OCC) hosted the vigil in Centre County, where about 70 people filled the room in the courthouse annex to listen to speakers from OCC and community representatives. Representatives from OCC spoke about their battle with mental illness and how far they have come on their road towards recovery.

Vines of Hope hosted the Cambria County vigil at the Ebensburg Courthouse and members spoke to the audience about how much the Vines of Hope program has helped them towards reaching their goals towards recovery. At the end of the vigil, Vines of Hope released butterflies to represent freedom from mental illness.



Opportunity Centre Clubhouse presented "Recovery Awareness Awards" to the Case Managers of the MH/ID office and Strawberry Fields. Accepting the awards from left to right are Michelle Melius, Jessamyn Cavanaugh, and George Raymond from Strawberry Fields and Angela Zebo, Luke Ebeling, and Jennifer Gersch from the MH/ID office.



Vines of Hope presented a "Recovery Awareness Award" to Commissioner PJ Stevens pictured above with Tamara Snyder from Vines of Hope.

Skills Spring T.O.P.S. Winners

Congratulations to this Spring's T.O.P.S. Awards winners who were nominated by their co-workers because of their outstanding contributions to Skills! Winners are chosen for their outstanding qualities in the following areas:

- ◆ "T" is for team work: helpfulness, leadership, optimism, and positive attitude
- ◆ "O" is for opportunity: advocacy, extra effort, initiative, and vision
- ◆ "P" is for performance: creativity, motivation, quality, and safety
- ◆ "S" is for support: compassion, commitment, helpfulness, and professionalism

Here are a few things that co-workers had to say about our winners!
Cambria/Clearfield/Jefferson/Somerset

T.O.P.S. Winner: Jennifer Clossin, administrative support assistant

When entering the ATS, Jennifer is the first person to be seen and is always there to help. All of the individuals we serve at the ATS and staff have a special relationship with her. When individuals are having a rough day, Jennifer offers her friendship and helps them turn things around. When things get busy, Jennifer takes on extra responsibilities of providing personal care, helping individuals during fire drills, and even planning Christmas and Halloween parties with the individuals.

York/Adams/Cumberland/Perry

T.O.P.S. Winner: Tina Jacoby, residential service assistant

Tina is strongly committed to the individuals we serve in the community homes. She fills in hours both at her assigned residential program and at others with little notice. She is a team player who shows leadership by helping others with tasks and being flexible. She exemplifies how to get the job done in a fun manner so everyone enjoys the day. With great compassion, she handled an emergency situation that involved a significant injury to an individual. Tina always puts the individuals first and provides opportunities for them to learn and grow.

Blair/Bedford

T.O.P.S. Winner: Melissa Huss, transportation coordinator

Missy consistently goes out of her way to assist others with anything request. She is not only meticulous with the maintenance of the vehicles, but also she jumps at the opportunity to help any department on a moments notice. Whether the job is in the shop, cafeteria, answering phones, or loading skids, Missy is there for as long as she is needed. In addition to her own work, she worked with Skills staff, parents, and other agencies to ensure the individuals we serve arrived at Special Olympics bowling during the winter. Missy does outstanding work and is always ready to lend a hand to anyone in need.

Centre/Clinton/Lycoming

T.O.P.S. Winner: Robin Donley, residential manager

Robin has such passion for her line of work and compassion for the individuals we serve living in the community homes. She is always professional and pleasant and is efficient in returning answers to questions or problems. Robin's positive attitude and support motivates staff to provide the best services for the individuals. Skills is grateful for Robin's influence on the program.

Huntingdon/Mifflin/Juniata:

T.O.P.S. Winner: Brenda Decker, residential service assistant

Since the day Brenda was hired, she has done nothing but help and care for the individuals she supports. She always picks up a shift when needed and hasn't missed a day of work since she's been at Skills. She ensures the individuals she serves get out of the house, participate in community activities, and that they always look their best. No matter what, Brenda is there to lend a hand and enhance the lives of the individuals we serve.



The Overall T.O.P.S. Winner for the year is Robert Walker, residential service assistant from Lewistown

Robert goes out of his way to help in the community home. Although he lives 50 miles away, he attends each individual's birthday party. Robert realizes the importance of leisure activities for the individuals and has taken them fishing, picnicking, and even arranged a train ride in Orbisonia for an individual he supported. He shows his compassion extends outside of Skills, including when he volunteered to buy new winter coats for children sponsored by the community home where he works. Robert cares not only for the individuals but also for the staff and has a great way of bringing smiles to everyone's face.

Boscov's Shopping Pass

Like to shop? Skills is selling 25% off Boscov's shopping passes for \$5 each.

During the "Friends Helping Friends" shopping event, on **October 4, 2011** you can shop at any Boscov's with your shopping pass and receive 25% off your purchases.

Boscov's stores will be providing free refreshments during the event and shoppers can enter drawings to win prizes.

Grand Prizes are:

Flat Screen TV
Diamond Pendant
\$500 Shopping Spree
(each store will give away a \$100 shopping spree)

To purchase a Shopping Pass, contact Lori Lange at llange@skillsgroup.org/(814) 238-3245 or Sarah Shaw at sshaw@skillsgroup.org/(814) 949-4800.

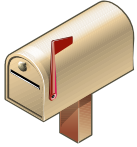


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Skills Annual Penn State Tailgate & Silent Auction

Mark your calendar for Skills upcoming 9th Annual Penn State Tailgate Party and Silent Auction on October 22, 2011 at Celebration Hall in State College.



Penn State vs. Northwestern

Registration will begin at 5:30 p.m., dinner served at 6:00 p.m., and kick off is at 7:00 p.m.

Tickets are \$25 per person (\$30 at the door) and includes tailgate food, beverages, chance to win prizes, an autographed photo with our guest of honor and bidding in the Silent Auction. Limited seating is available so make sure to get your tickets early!

Sponsorship Opportunities are available!

To reserve your tickets or to find out more about sponsorship opportunities, please contact Lori Lange at llange@skillsgroup.org or (814) 238-3245 ext. 321.

Please visit us at our web site:

www.skillsofcentralpa.org

Mission Statement

Skills of Central Pennsylvania, Inc. is committed to creating opportunities, providing choice and support, and promoting recovery to enhance all aspects of people's lives.

Vision

Skills' vision is to be an organization that supports person-centered approaches for providing high- quality, cost effective services.

Skills of Central PA, Inc. is a United Way member agency:

- ◆ United Way of Huntingdon, Mifflin, and Juniata counties.
- ◆ United Way of Laurel Highlands
- ◆ Blair County United Way
- ◆ Centre County United Way

