



Seacoast Pathways is a free and voluntary recovery program for adults living with mental illness. Learn more about us by going to seacoastpathways.com or joining us on Facebook at SeacoastPathways, a Clubhouse.



NH NAMI Conference Hosts Governor, Visionary in Concord

Hosts Governor Sununu, Visionary Pierce
By Darby L

Gov. Sununu I'm not a big fan of conferences. In a former life, I was expected to deliver papers and be on panels. I liked that fine until I learned there were some nasty people in my profession.

Before I came to Seacoast Pathways, I cut back on my public speaking while ratcheting up my public singing and piano playing. I have been very happy with that decision!

Now, when I go to a conference, I go to listen, not speak. Inevitably, though, I expose myself to the dark underbelly of public speaking: listening to *other* people speak, often all day long. So when I signed up for the NAMI NH Annual Conference in Concord, I didn't think I'd stay very long. I thought I might hear what **Governor Sununu** had to say. He has always been a vigorous speaker, and I needed some vigor after arriving late at the Grappone Center because of traffic (mental traffic, which exit, must focus!).

Once inside, I grabbed a coffee and ducked into the conference hall. The governor was just ending his speech, so I still don't know how he was planning to address the shortage of beds for mental health patients. I figured I could ask Joe H, a colleague at Seacoast Pathways, at the break.

Several people left after the governor finished, freeing up places to sit at the round tables that dotted the room. I took a seat beside Jow. (see story page 2). I didn't pay much attention to the the next speaker; I would be leaving soon anyway. I just didn't want to suffer the deep sighs, glassy eyes, and sore tuckus that surely awaited over the next hour.

An hour later, I was still on the edge of my seat. From start to finish, my eyes and hands had raced over the closest thing to a blank sheet of paper I could find — the NAMI Schedule of Events — as I searched for what little white space was left. Alas, I found no space unscrawled. So I laid my pen on the table, and I sat back to listen. . .



See Randy Pierce on page 2

Third Time's a Charm!

By Lauren

On April 21, I competed in my third Special Olympics annual swim competition. I competed in the backstroke, which I never liked.

Surprise: I shocked myself by winning



first place! I then competed in my favorite event which is the breast-stroke, again winning first prize. Whew!

Thanks to Photohead and Jim O'C for coming to cheer me on!



In good company!



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Clubhouse Matters Member Reps

Some momentous changes in clubhouse culture have taken place since the beginning of 2018. Joe, Scott and Lauren returned from two weeks of intensive training in ways to sharpen the focus of our work-ordered day.

Deb G (aka SuperMember) has been representing clubhouse members on the Seacoast Pathways Board of Directors almost since day one. Now another member has come on board to help listen and convey member concern to the board.

When asked why she was interested in becoming a member representative, Erin S has a quick and simple answer: "I want to make a difference."



See Clubhouse Matters on page 2

NAMI Keynote Speaker Randy Pierce, On Positive Adversity

By Joe H

On a Saturday in April, Seacoast Pathways members, staff and volunteers attended the annual New Hampshire chapter of the National Alliance on Mental Illness conference in Concord. The keynote speaker was Randy Pierce, founder of the nonprofit organization 2020 Vision Quest. Randy has been so since he suffered a neurological attack on just about everything he was.

When we think of a person who has undergone a life-changing affliction, the appropriate emotional response from others would seem to be sympathy. Randy's speech, however, transformed our thinking. He said it took him quite some time to change his approach to his affliction, and to ban self-pity in word and deed.

He also spoke of a nurse, whose name he doesn't remember, and how she said to him when he was in the middle of his crisis, "You have a decision to make." At that point, his choice was simple - either wallow in self pity or rise above it. Her words showed him his choice was simple: either wallow in self-pity or rise above it. And rise above it he has, with a determination some would call heroic.

Randy would probably disagree. Time again, he pointed to his guide-dog Quinn as the hero in his story. Quinn cleared the path for Randy to climb mountains and run marathons, as well as tackle the daily training that formed the bond between them.

At the Grappone Center, Randy fought back tears as he spoke of Quinn's untimely death of cancer in 2011.

Together, Quinn and Randy were avid climbers, conquering all 48 of the rugged 4,000+ foot peaks in the New Hampshire White Mountains.

A new dog, named Autumn, is following in



Quinn's paw-prints, partnering with Randy to climb mountains both literal and figurative. Along the way, the distinction between sight — something one can lose — and vision — something it is possible to gain — is critical to Randy's life. It stems from

his understanding that he has run marathons and climbed mountains not in spite of his condition, but because of it. His blindness has given him personal strength and insight into his own character he might never have had.

With time, Randy has also come to understand that this message applies not only to marathon runners and mountain climbers. "The affliction doesn't define you," he says, "What defines you is how you rise above it."

"I can find adventure in all types of activities," Randy adds.

"Somewhere along the path, I discovered that for me, enjoyment and fulfillment lie more in the journey than in the destination."

By maintaining a proper vision, and with the help of a few "guide dogs" along the way, we humans can learn to lead happy and productive lives. It's all in the training.

To learn more about Randy Pierce, [click here](#) or go to 2020visionquest.org/randy-bio.htm.



Like Quinn before him, Autumn is an all-weather guide dog.



Clubhouse Matters from page 1

Erin has very clear ideas about how to achieve that goal. Her priority is sharing members' concerns with the Board while respecting the members' privacy. "If members are not heard, she says, "the clubhouse going to dwindle or collapse."

You can catch Erin most afternoons at the clubhouse; she'd love to listen to what you have to say!

Policy Meeting — April 27 2018

Effective communication was the main topic of discussion at our April Policy meeting.

- While it is OK to hold private conversations about an issue or concern, the only way to take action on the matter is to bring it to the policy meeting.
- If it seems a member is not not aware of or has forgotten the new guidelines for our work-ordered day, other members should feel free to gently remind them or or ask staff to intercede.
- Bad news: Food costs are going up! Good News: Restaurants are stepping in to take up the slack! Thank you to the Pizza Factory and Panera Bread for your generous donations.
- Justin M has announced the start of a new business with a very descriptive name: Justin's Business! He is in the handing-out-samples stage; check 'em out after morning meeting.

WIN A FREE WEEKEND AT MERRYMEETING LAKE!

Please join the forces supporting Seacoast Pathway's mission! A loyal supporter has donated a weekend stay (nights of 9/21 and 9/22, 2018) at her beautiful lake house in New Durham, NH. Chances are \$10 each or 3 for \$20. Tickets can be purchased at the clubhouse or at <https://go.rallyup.com/seacoastpathways> where all details of the house are shown! Or - just check our Facebook page where we regularly post the link.

Ask Us How We Really Feel! The PathSeekers Arts & Literary Supplement

Writing Workshop — Objects in the Room

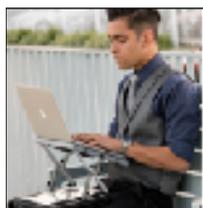
At the weekly Creative Writing workshop, members follow writing prompts supplied by Pathseekers film critic Jim O’C. On a recent Friday, observations on “Objects in the Room” brought many responses!

Three owls, ceramic, ivory colored

This was my contribution to our last yankee swap right here at Pathways. You might think this is a pretty terrible gift and you’d be right. I originally wanted to buy something but then I remembered good ol’ Joe H right here said “you can bring in anything; you don’t have to spend any money, it can be something from your attic.”

I’ll admit this three-owl statue is not the best antique ever, you might even say it’s quite tacky, but it reminds me of my childhood. I used to collect antiques as a kid; I was a pretty strange kid and at one point I had a whole shelf full of figurines like this one. I used to shop at antique and thrift stores with my mom, almost every weekend. I suppose that’s why I like shopping so much today. We usually didn’t spend more than twenty dollars total between that we might find something interesting or better yet valuable.

Last week I started a frugality blog but then realized I’m not very frugal. I save a good amount of money each month. But also I like to spend, somethings I just walk into a thrift store just to have a good conversation with someone and not buy anything. These three owls remind me of three people: my mom, myself and a friendly shop keeper talking about all his interesting treasures available for the right price. — *Scott G*



A laptop is a wonderful thing for Facebook email. It is also a good thing to take with you on the road!

— *Justin*

One recycling bin, big, green, lined

Millions like it all over the country. Just how many tons of recycling does America process each day? There was a time where we didn’t recycle as a nation. People often burned their paper trash.

Now I am thinking about my grandfather, who used to burn paper trash in his backyard “fireplace.” Of course some people didn’t burn their paper trash, they just threw it in with all the other garbage that went in the ground. Even with recycling today, I often wonder why we are not a nation swimming in our own paper and plastic waste. Every time some one of the many millions of people in our country buys something, there is paper or plastic to be discarded. What if a very rich person gave a nation one dollar for every pound of recycled waste we process?

I guess that’s not the point. I love our recycling bin because it reminds me that we do our part here every day. Keep America beautiful! — *Joe*



See *Objects in the Room* on page 4

Gamesmanship

By Scott

I’m not talking Dungeons and Dragons. I’m referring to the practice of role playing to resolve conflict, promote active listening, build relationships, and help a friend in need.

Schools often have role playing activities in classes. Businesses have been known to send their employees to workshops where role playing and learning how to respond in a situation provide necessary skills for the job.

In the clubhouse, we use role playing during our *Get Ready* sessions. *Get Ready* is a pre-employment readiness online module consisting of many worksheets, slides, videos and lots of other tools. Many of the tools are useful not just for work, but for life. To make things less impersonal and more fun, we focus on activities where colleagues get to interact and discuss different subjects.

Conflict resolution was a nice subject to role play. I for one am moderately decent at role playing but when it’s time to resolve a real conflict, I often have a tough time. I’m sure I’m not the only one who stumbles. That is one reason why role playing is so important, simulate a conflict to better equip yourself for the real thing.

“Get Ready” is every Wednesday at 11 am.



WEDNESDAY MAY 2, 2018

Street mural in
Ports-mouth,
artist unknown;
photo by Jon
Gilcreast



Time is a clock you cannot stop. It ticks away, faster and faster until a mountain of memories have formed; its peak grows higher and higher each passing day. Like clockwork people come and people go, every second marking another person. It rises and sets, until at a certain point when it will burn out making the end of time. It will burn out on Day, when 365 memories have formed; its peak grows higher and higher each day. With time, people come and people go, every second counts another person. With time, the sun rises and sets, counting each passing day. Eventually it will burn out, marking the end of time.

People come and people go. An unlucky few will survive longer then others, but they too will succumb to the sun's burning rays. Whether or not they reach their 24-hour mark, the sun will burn out on day 365. That moment will signal the end of all people and the end of time. So enjoy the day, cherish all you have because one day it will be gone. Time is the one thing that can end all other things — and people, too. — *Photohead*

The coffee pot is important because it makes coffee for all of us. I love coffee. When I come to Pathways in the morning, I know Joe or Scott will already have started it, most likely Joe because he wants it so badly to start his day. Our coffee costs only 50 cents for the whole day.

What a great invention! It always is nice to know we have the coffee pot, and hopefully we will always have coffee to brew as well. It's a great perk of membership in Seacoast Pathways. Coffee always gets me up and going for what is to come. Coffee helps me see better than my glasses and I love it. — *Jim O'C*

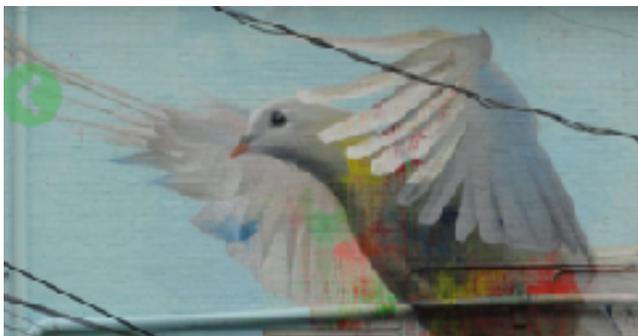


Picture by Photohead
Batchelder Pond, Hampton

Six is Much Better Than Four

Poem By Jon Gilcreast

Six Dollars is much better than four
When you are poor.
Bread is much cheaper than a dear shirt,
When you hurt.
A cheap convenience store bottle of wine
Is a grand gift,
After a grueling, operose nightshift.
Money to disburse in a bustling grocery market
Usually stays in my dirty, old pocket.
Ah, to be rich,
And have a beautiful wife to stitch,
With a maid, a butler, and a gardener.
The people that make life leisurely, not harder.
Stocks to trade, bills all paid, an extravagant paisley shirt,
And no more hurt.
But, I will just have to be mindful.
Six is much better than four
When you are poor.



Mural by Andres Von Chrzanowski
Pleasant St., Portsmouth