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**Mental Health Matters Annual Benefit
 April 29, 2023 in Pictures
 Recognizing Dr. Donna Cohen
 as the SCCCMH Citizen of the Year**



Continued on Page 2

Mental Health Matters 2023 Annual Benefit Continued...



CHAIRPERSON'S NOTES

By Peggy Lounsbury

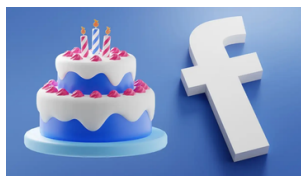
During the pandemic, the SCCCMH Board decided to suspend printing of our newsletter. Today, the newsletter is digital. We send it out via e-mail and post on our website. But we do print some copies for distribution at the clinics. Not printing the newsletter and mailing to 1000 people is a significant savings to the SCCCMH.

The downside of not printing our newsletter: we no longer get people to join and pay dues or make donations. The loss of this revenue has been dramatic. We need you to join SCCCMH and "paywhat-you-will" dues or make a donation.

In addition to the needed revenue, SCCCMH needs members so we have power! When we lobby to elected representatives or to government officials for the needs of people living with mental illness we need to be able say we have over XXX (e.g.,1000) members.

Therefore, we need you to join TODAY! There is no minimum dues. You can join by completing the form in the back of this newsletter, or you can join by visiting our website: www.SCCCMH-Saratoga.org
Thank you for your help...and spread the word, too!

Using Facebook's fundraising tool, you can donate your birthday to a SCCCMH



To donate your birthday, simply click on the fundraising tab on your News Feed. From there, you can select SCCCMH as the charity you want to give to and set your fundraising goal as well as your fundraiser's end date. You can invite your friends directly to the fundraiser, so they can help you celebrate your birthday by helping the mental health community in Saratoga.

SCCCMH TREASURER'S REPORT

By Robert Lounsbury

"Faith is Taking the First Step Even When You Don't See the Whole Staircase."

-Dr. Martin Luther King Jr

Since my previous article in the Fall 2021 Newsletter, we are still dealing with the fallout from the pandemic. As Treasurer for the Saratoga County Citizens Committee for Mental Health, I can tell you we needed to take many leaps in faith to believe we could maintain our financial stability through this crisis. Due to the impact of the pandemic, we are still challenged to provide our regular activities for advocacy and education to support the local mental health community.

Fortunately, in 2022, we were able to resume our yearly major fundraising event the Mental Health Matters Benefit. However, during the 2020-2022 fiscal years, we incurred several losses due to falling short of revenue goals, particularly from membership dues and limited fundraising. As an organization, I am pleased to inform you that we have remained financially stable even with the challenges.

We have monitored, and kept to a bare minimum, expenses and therefore remain a viable non-profit organization for the Saratoga County mental health community. As we are nearing and saying goodbye to 2023, let us all keep in mind the needs of our mental health community and reach into our hearts and feel the faith that will enable us to continue to support the needs of people living with mental illness in Saratoga County.

Please join the SCCCMH and "pay what you will" for membership dues. The membership form is attached to this newsletter. The SCCCMH must continue to advocate for mental health education and advocate for change!

THE VIEW FROM HERE

Advocate follows Recovery from Addiction with Mentorship

This story and video was published on the [Spectrum News Website](#).

In his late teens, Joe Cavallo's life took a dark turn. A traumatic experience pushed him towards substance use and isolation, and legal troubles only added to his struggles. But at a crucial turning point, he found hope in an unexpected place: Hedgerow House.

"My first exposure to recovery and treatment was when I was in some legal trouble around 19, 20 years old and I ended up at Hedgerow House in Ballston Spa, which is a community residence run by RISE," Cavallo recalls.

Cavallo's life took a transformative path when he connected with RISE Saratoga, a leading human service agency providing comprehensive support to address mental health and substance use concerns. RISE's safe housing, personalized assistance and coordinated care became the pillars of Cavallo's recovery journey.

"I decided to take that extra step and really let some men that were close to me and in my life mentor me and kind of take their example and put it into action in my own life." Cavallo said.

The National Center for Drug Abuse Statistics reports more than 70,000 annual substance abuse overdose deaths, a number increasing by 4% yearly. Inspired by his own recovery, Cavallo combats this issue by mentoring others and providing rides to Celebrate Recovery gatherings at Pine Grove Church. His compassion highlights the power of the community and resilience in the fight against substance abuse.

"It's a space where I can be vulnerable and open up to others, but also be able to mentor and guide others in early recovery," Cavallo said.



According to the Recovery Research Institute, more than 20 million Americans are in recovery from substance abuse. Among them is Cavallo, whose life was transformed through his journey with RISE Saratoga. This experience not only changed his life, but also sparked a passion for advocating for others.

"I think for family members or community members out there that may not understand the ins and outs of substance use or mental health disorders, I would just encourage them that anybody can recover. Don't give up on the folks you love," Cavallo urged.

Through Cavallo's own journey of recovery, he has become a mentor and advocate for others.



Citizen of the Year Nominations

The Saratoga County Citizen's Committee for Mental Health is currently accepting nominations for the 2024 Citizen of the Year award. The Citizen of the Year is granted to an individual in the community who has made a significant positive impact on the mental health community in this region.

Please visit the SCCMHC website to submit your nominations. The 2024 Citizen of the Year will be recognized at our annual Mental Health Matters benefit this Spring at the Saratoga-Wilton Elks Lodge. Please see save the date below for more information.

Submit Mental Health News and Views Articles

Consider submitting an article for the "View From Here" column. This is a powerful way to share your experience as a consumer, family member, professional, or advocate.

Also, appreciated are mental health-related news and stories. Articles can be around 150 to 250 words. Submit your articles via e-mail to info@SCCCMH-Saratoga.org.

SCCCMH Grants Available Now

The Saratoga County Citizens Committee for Mental Health awards monetary grants to not-for-profit organizations that provide services or assistance to people living with mental illness in Saratoga County. Awards are generally up to one thousand dollars and are distributed three times a year.

Contact Peggy Lounsbury or visit our website for more information and download an application.

Mental Health First Aid Training

MHANY provides free Mental Health First Aid training to individuals who work with or support the General Public within Albany, Rensselaer, Saratoga, and Schenectady counties. Mental Health First Aid is often referred to as CPR for the mind; it is an evidence-based training that introduces participants to risk factors and warning signs of mental illness along with a 3-year certification from the National Council for Behavioral Health.

You are more likely to encounter someone — friend, family member, coworker, neighbor, or member of the community — in an emotional or mental crisis than someone having a heart attack.

Mental Health First Aid is a 5-step action plan that offers initial help to people with the signs and symptoms of a mental illness or in a crisis, and connect them with the appropriate professional, peer, social, or self-help care.

Anyone can take the 8-hour Mental Health First Aid course — first responders, students, teachers, leaders of faith communities, human resources professionals, and caring citizens.

For more information, visit the MHANYS website: <https://mhanys.org/products/mhfa/>



MHANYS
Mental Health Association
in New York State

The Saratoga County Citizens
Committee for Mental Health

PRESENTS:

CHANGING THE LENS ON SUBSTANCE USE

A public discussion on substance use
and mental health in Saratoga County

DATE:
March 7, 2024

TIME:
6 pm - 8 pm

LOCATION:
Saratoga Springs Library
Harry Dutcher Community Room



Donate to SCCCMH and be entered into a
drawing for local gift cards in
The Love Our Locals 2023 Campaign.



The Love Our Locals Campaign began in 2020 with a focus on supporting Saratoga County businesses and nonprofits, and the goal was to encourage economic growth and investment in the community during the COVID-19 pandemic. Thanks to an outpouring of support for this campaign, it returned in 2021 and again in 2022 and has continued to benefit the country's economy.

For 2023, the Saratoga County Chamber of Commerce is presenting the Love Our Locals \$20.23 campaign, which runs from now through December 31, 2023. After spending or donating \$20.23 or more in support of a Saratoga County business or nonprofit – like SCCCMH, all you have to do is take a photo of your receipt and email it to loveourlocals@saratoga.org.

Each week the Chamber will randomly select winners to receive \$100 gift cards to local businesses. Winners will be announced across the Chamber's social media channels and notified separately via email with details about professionals how to claim their gift card.

thank you



SAVE THE DATE



**Mental Health Matters Annual Benefit
Saturday, April 20, 2024
Saratoga-Wilton Elks Lodge**

JOIN SCCCMH!

Please join SCCCMH now for the new year. As a member of SCCCMH, you will receive our newsletter, and more important, you will help SCCCMH carry-out our mission to be the voice of people living with mental health diagnoses in Saratoga County. The more members we have, the more power we have to influence local and state government.

Please consider a charitable gift to SCCCMH. You can honor or memorialize someone while making a difference in the mental health community.



**Give power and support
to the mental health
community...join today!**

**Help SCCCMH Increase Awareness:
Follow our Facebook Page!**

Please share the SCCCMH Facebook Page with your family and friends and ask them to follow our page!



**Thank You for
Your Support!**

We need the continued support of people like you to help in our advocacy efforts toward improving Mental Health Services in our county and to remove the stigma associated with those who live with Mental Health issues. We provide grant money to agencies that want to start up services or initiatives that improves the lives of those they serve in Saratoga County! Please follow and share our Facebook page to spread the news!

The SCCCMH Newsletter is the official publication of the Saratoga County Citizens Committee for Mental Health, P.O. Box 820, Saratoga Springs, New York 12866 www.SCCCMH-Saratoga.org.

The views expressed in this newsletter represent the opinions of the authors and do not represent the official position or opinions of SCCCMH unless specifically stated.

SCCCMH Board of Trustees reserves the right to decide the content of the newsletter, and reserves the right to review, revise, shorten or deny articles for publication. Articles submitted for publication consideration should not be longer than 250 words unless the author is specifically invited to do so. Also, submitting the copy as a Microsoft Word document or typed within the body of an e-mail message is preferred. Send articles to the Newsletter Editor's e-mail address



For more information, contact:

Chairperson: Peggy Lounsbury

Phone: 518-583-8371 Email: plounsbury@saratogacare.org-

Or visit our website: SCCCMH-Saratoga.org and check out our Facebook Page!

ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP REGISTRATION FORM

Revolving Membership for one year from the date you join SCCCMH

SCCCMH Mission: SCCCMH is a non-profit, charitable organization [501(c)3] whose mission it is to: Program Development and Enrichment: Award grants of approximately \$1000 to agencies and programs in Saratoga County that provide services to people with mental illness or have mental and emotional needs so they can enrich existing programs or expand services.

Education: Provide affordable educational opportunities for mental health professionals and consumers of mental health services.

Advocacy: Advocate for improved mental health care and services by lobbying government and elected officials.

Increase Awareness: Increase public awareness of the needs of individuals with mental illness. For example, increase access to public transportation, decrease stigmas or stereotypes.

Member Benefits: Membership fees support the development of mental health services in Saratoga County through grants, educational opportunities, and lobbying, as well as the publication of the biannual SCCCMH Newsletter.

More Members. More Power. More Benefits.

PLEASE CHECK ONE:

New Member Membership Renewal Remove my information from SCCCMH mailing

First Name: _____ Last Name: _____ Prefix/Suffix: _____

Address: _____ City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

If you want to receive the newsletter and other notices from SCCCMH, please provide your e-mail address:

Email Address: _____

If you are a provider of mental health services and would like to be included in the Saratoga County Network for Mental Health Professionals and Advocates (SCN-MHPA), then check here:

If you would like to participate in a mental health consumer workshop, then check here:

Membership fee is based on a “pay what you will” basis (Check One):

I want to be a member, but I am unable provide financial support.

I want to be a member. I will consider a contribution at a later date.

I want to be a member, enclosed is my tax deductible donation of: \$10 \$25 \$35 Other: _____

MAKE CHECKS OUT TO: SCCCMH. Please do not send cash in the mail.

MAIL TO: SCCCMH, P.O. Box 820, Saratoga Springs, New York 12866

MAKE SURE THE VOICE OF THE SARATOGA COUNTY MENTAL HEALTH COMMUNITY IS HEARD...JOIN SCCCMH TODAY!!