



*"Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful committed citizens can change the world. Indeed it is the only thing that ever has."*

MARGARET MEAD

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## Want to Know What's Been Going On at FACES in 2007?

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[www.facesva.org/pdf/articles/whats\\_going\\_on\\_at\\_faces\\_2007\\_jan2008.pdf](http://www.facesva.org/pdf/articles/whats_going_on_at_faces_2007_jan2008.pdf)

### **Some of *FACES* accomplishments are:**

We provide a bi-monthly Support Meeting for family members that has doubled in size and continues to grow. People can gain support, both emotionally and practically because our families have a wealth of information to share. Participants get a chance to speak in confidence about their struggles and successes. At the support group what we do is personal and one on one help. These meetings are free for all attendees.

We have a monthly Advocacy Meeting with speakers and topics of interest to inform and educate our members and community members. We have had leading members of community services, medical personnel; government agency spokes persons, and various professionals who deal with the many aspects of mental health care and recovery. Some of our speakers have been the following: Dr. Mary Beth Moehl of the Dual Treatment Track of Chesterfield and Colonial Heights; Dr. Cynthia Jones, Executive Director of Medical Home Plus; Valerie Dalton, M.Ed. and Calvin Nunnally Sr. MS, Suicide Prevention Manager for the Virginia Department of Health.

Other activities include:

- Testifying before the Virginia General Assembly on mental health issues.
- Advocating for Mental Health Courts and Diversion Programs in Virginia and for fully funded services.
- Attending numerous conferences and workshops to keep our membership and staff informed and current.

As the result of the "Shattering the Secrecy" conference held in 2006, we have been asked to join the Virginia Department of Health in a new coalition named the Virginia Network of Suicide Prevention Coalition. We will be working with several other groups across Virginia in bringing education and training in suicide prevention. This is a state wide effort to educate through schools, clergy, professionals, and youth Peer to Peer groups.

We have a paid executive director who serves as a full time resource and support person for the community.

We continue to be grateful for the center provided to us by Saint Mark's United Methodist Church which serves as our facility and meeting space.

The newsletter has grown from reaching three hundred and fifty members to an address list of six hundred and twenty, and a readership in excess of 1400.

The web page is up and running and provides information about **FACES** and our activities. [www.facesva.org](http://www.facesva.org).

We also sponsor social events at Central State Hospital for over a hundred patients and staff. The most recent was the Holiday Party.

**FACES** delivered all the Christmas trimmings for 2 parties at Central State Hospital on December 9th. We served lots of homemade foods from chicken salad rolls and deserts to party platters and fresh fruit. We also provided gifts, music and best of all, companionship.

Anne Guthmiller of VCU's music department sang traditional carols accompanied by Demitri on piano. Such beautiful music!

Special thanks go to Darlene Lyon of Mary Kay Cosmetics, makeup was on the wish lists of many patients, Darlene and her Mary Kay crew donated makeup for the woman and toiletries for the men. All were delivered beautifully wrapped. Darlene can be reached at [mklyon@aol.com](mailto:mklyon@aol.com)

Our Central State Hospital guests loved the parties and as always, our **FACES** hosts benefited more from the experience than the patients.

We were also able to provide some Christmas to the STARR Team Families in Chesterfield and we are grateful for the opportunity to take part.

Current projects include:

- Advancing our long term goal to develop Justin's House, a state of the art residential treatment center.

Developing and implementing family education programs has been a major project for this past year and we are proud to announce that we will be offering these classes early in 2008 to family members.

This program was developed by families for families. It was designed to provide a basic knowledge and understanding of brain disorders — what they are, how they are treated, how to obtain services and most importantly to provide families with the knowledge and skill to provide encouragement and support to their loved ones as they recovery.

Recovery for families and their loved ones is possible. In fact with the proper treatment, support services, and time, Recovery is to be expected in the vast majority of instances.

These six classes are meant to provide a basic understanding of the illnesses and a connection which will assist with finding support and services. It should also serve as a reference and resource guide so that families can access the newest and latest research and development in the field of brain disorders.

We host a bi-monthly Consumer Support Group called Friends for Recovery. They are a Peer run group for those who are recovering from mental illness. We are glad that they use the **FACES** Center for their meetings. No fee is required to attend.