



# CHOICES

ACHIEVING RECOVERY THROUGH HOPE, CHOICE, EMPOWERMENT AND COMMUNITY

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## GOVERNMENT LAUNCHES WWW.DISABILITY.GOV

The U.S. Department of Labor recently redesigned and launched Disability.gov with the hope that the 50 million Americans with disabilities will now have the ability to link to thousands of trusted resources on disability-related issues, programs and services. The site includes new social media tools, such as a blog and a Twitter feed, to encourage feedback and spark interaction among visitors. The site features comprehensive information from 22 federal agencies and an array of educational institutions, nonprofits and state and local governments. Topics include benefits, civil rights, community life, emergency preparedness, employment, health, housing, transportation and much more.



## GET TICKETS FOR 'MIRACLE'

Tickets are on sale for the CMH Players production of "Miracle on 34th Street" at St. Clair County at SC4, Nov.5-7, 7 p.m. \$5 for general public. Free if you use services. 810-985-8900.

## CHOICES

CHOICES is a newsletter dedicated to sharing recovery information with people who use Community Mental Health services in St. Clair County. Artists and writers who use CMH services — and their family members — may submit artwork, photography, poetry, articles or story ideas for possible publication. All material published in the newsletter is subject to editing. Submit work to:

St. Clair County CMH  
 Attn: Jim Bloch  
 3111 Electric Avenue  
 Port Huron MI 48060  
 www.scccmh.org  
 Email: jbloch@scccmh.org.

## CMH TO OFFER FREE EVENTS FOR 'MENTAL ILLNESS AWARENESS WEEK' IN OCT.

In 1990, the U.S. Congress established the first week of October as "Mental Illness Awareness Week." The week includes World Mental Health Day on Oct. 10, an effort to make mental health a global priority; this year's theme is "Mental Health in Primary Care."

St. Clair County Community Mental Health is offering a series of events to recognize the special week.

### Friday, Oct. 2

- Paul Miller of WPHM-AM will broadcast from the Galley 6-10 a.m. Miller will *Cont. on page 2*



Local author Cindy Sabotka speaks twice on Oct. 6.

## 'OUT OF THE DARKNESS' WALK IN EAST CHINA TO EDUCATE ABOUT SUICIDE

Since January 2006 in St. Clair County, a person has taken his or her life once every two weeks. According to information collected by the St. Clair County Suicide Prevention Committee, 24 people died by suicide in 2006, 28 in 2007 and 31 in

2008. Twelve people have taken their lives in the county this year through August. On Sunday, Oct. 11 at noon, the St. Clair County Suicide Prevention Committee will hold its second annual 5K walk in East China Park to

raise awareness about suicide. More than 200 people took part in the first walk, held last year. The group raised \$10,000 to share between itself and the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention. *Cont. on page 3*

## MENTAL ILLNESS AWARENESS WEEK CONTINUED FROM PG. 1

talk about the CMH events of the upcoming week and the CMH's role in the community.

### Tuesday, Oct. 6.

- **“Lunch & Learn.” Noon-1 p.m.** Cindy Sabotka, author of the book, “Life is Like a Line,” about her experience with bipolar disorder, presents “The view from my shoes: A business woman’s experience with bipolar disorder.” In the SCCCMH auditorium. Lunch is soup and salad. Free. RSVP at (810) 966-3536.
- **“Becoming an Accidental Author.” 6:30**

**p.m.** Sabotka discusses writing and self-publishing her book. Also, students in the CMH writing class will read from their work. In the SCCCMH auditorium. Refreshments. Free.

### Wednesday, Oct. 7.

- **“What’s new in children’s mental health?” 6:30 p.m.,** with Dr. John Baugh, medical director of St. Clair County CMH. Shelly Cullimore, CMH parent mentor, will provide a parent’s perspective. Door prizes. In the SCCCMH auditorium. Refreshments. Free.

### Thursday, Oct. 8.

- **National Depression Screening Day. 10 a.m.-6 p.m.** St. Clair County CMH and Port Huron Hospital partner to offer depression screenings. Located at the intersection of hallways to Target and Birchwood Cinema. Free.

### Friday, Oct. 9

- **St. Clair County CMH Empowerment Awards. 2 p.m.** Several individuals who use CMH will be recognized for their successes. In the CMH auditorium. Free. RSVP at (810) 966-7814.

## CMH PLAYERS TACKLE SUICIDE

Bryan Day, left, directed John Patrick’s one-act play “Empathy” in a free event and discussion session at SCCCMH on Sept. 22. The play explored the role of friendship and empathy in preventing suicide. Kristin Potthoff starred as the young woman in crisis. Mike McCartan and Marty Snarski co-starred. 70 people attended.



## ‘OUT OF THE DARKNESS’ WALK CONTINUED FROM PAGE ONE

The foundation supports research and education about suicide.

People may register for the walk beginning at 11 a.m. The park is located on M-29 in East China Township at Recor Road. The event is part of “Out of the Darkness” walks taking place across the U.S.

“The day was really great,” said Amy Smith of last year’s walk. Smith sits on the committee and works for St. Clair County Community Mental Health. “Although it was emotional, it really felt good to be part of something that was healing for people.”

Many people are helping Smith put together the walk this year – including Stacy Husson, a Marysville resident who has lost a cousin and an uncle to suicide.

The “darkness” in the title of the walk refers to the stigma and silence that comes with suicide, including the guilt that survivors feel.

Mental illness, especially major depression, is a factor in about 90 per-



**The balloon launch at last year’s “Out of the Darkness Walk.”**

cent of all suicides.

The best way to prevent suicide is to diagnose depression early and treat it. Professional treatment helps about 90 percent of all people with depression.

Experts urge people to keep an eye out for the warning signs of suicide:

- Pulling away from family and friends;
- Sudden changes in personality and routines.
- Talking about suicide; obsessing about death
- Changes in sleeping or eating habits
- Giving away posses-

sions.

If you are or a loved one is in crisis, call the 24-hour CMH Access Center at (888) 225-4447.

The event includes a deejay, a balloon launch and community information tables. The committee will sell hot dogs, chips and soda to raise money for a memorial garden in the park.

For details, visit [www.scccmh.org](http://www.scccmh.org) and click on the Suicide Prevention Committee icon. To pledge money, call Smith at (810) 966-7830.