

## TOWNE HOUSE CREATIVE LIVING CENTER

629 Oakland Avenue • Oakland, CA 94611 • (510) 658-9480 • townehouse@bayareacs.org

A Program of Bay Area Community Services

FALL 2004

### PATHWAY TO WORK

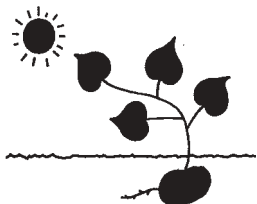
Richard Spiecker has participated in the Towne House, BACS Supported Independent Living, and BACS Employment programs to meet his goals of living independently and



*Richard Spiecker*

returning to work. After moving to California from Illinois in 1998, he came to Towne House the following year, and found that he received the help and support he needed for his recovery. He gained experience and renewed confidence doing gardening and house maintenance with the House and Grounds group.

Richard attended weekly Employment Groups at Towne House to learn job readiness skills. The BACS Employment Program helped him sign up with the Department of Rehabilitation. He had several gardening jobs for individual clients, and last May he started working part-time in the Garden Department at Orchard Home Supply. Richard said, "I felt the Employment Program was efficient and met my needs for employment in a forthright and effective manner. The staff helped me over many employment hurdles and enabled me to overcome many of the fears I had toward being employed. In every way, the BACS Employment Program is a great help for those with disabilities looking for work. I would recommend the program to anyone needing help with employment."



### PARTNERS IN EDUCATION

Since 1972, Towne House has benefited from partnerships with Adult Education Schools. Shortly after its founding in 1969, Towne House quickly grew and needed more staff and opportunities for members to learn new skills. Because of our proximity to two school districts, both



*Pleasant Valley Adult Education teachers Wini Williams, Lois Silvers, Michael Weigand, Jane Swim, and Dorothy Julin*

Pleasant Valley Adult Education from Oakland Unified School District and Piedmont Adult School from Piedmont Unified School District for many years supplied on-site teachers. In September the agreement between the two school districts to have teachers at Towne House from both schools ended, and now all four of our regular teachers are from Pleasant Valley Adult School.

Adult Education teachers have allowed us to offer pre-vocational training in our three groups (food service, house and grounds, and clerical). The teachers work side by side with Towne House mental health workers to build skills in basic cooking,

gardening, janitorial, computer, and office work. In addition, they offer afternoon groups in health maintenance, understanding mental illness and psychiatric symptoms, cooking for individuals, artistic expression, job readiness, exercise, and social skills. These groups have evolved

from interests and input from members, and groups change as needs change.

As students registered with Adult Education, members are able to continue their education in a supportive, safe environment that fosters learning at one's own pace without stressors often found in the formal classroom setting. The teachers' work compliments the clubhouse philosophy by fostering independent living, vocational, and social skills. This rehabilitation/education model provides many members with the skills they need to return to school or work, and to function more independently in the community.

### Towne House Membership 2003/2004

<b>Total Membership</b>	150	<b>Native American</b>	1
Male	104	Other	1
Female	46	<b>Residence</b>	
<b>Age</b>		Central Oakland	68
18-34	37	East Oakland	49
35-54	99	West Oakland	7
55-65	14	Berkeley	16
<b>Ethnicity</b>		Other	10
African American	71	<b>Employment</b>	
Caucasian	60	Placements	14
Hispanic/Latino	10	Volunteers	3
Asian	7		

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## ON BECOMING A PEER COUNSELOR

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Anthony Pinch

### STUDENT TRAINEE

Anthony Pinch started the BestNow peer counselor training program through Alameda County Network of Mental Health Clients in October. He wrote about his reasons for choosing this work.

I am very excited about the BestNow program. It is a mental health peer counseling program that teaches people the basic skills and concepts they need to counsel their peers. In particular, I am interested in helping young adults in stopping the abuse of drugs. I am personally interested in the program for several reasons. Because I used drugs in the past and am familiar with the lifestyle and details of drug addiction, I feel I can relate better to young adult drug abusers. I realize that young adults, or anyone, really want to reach out, talk, and have relationships that are productive and meaningful. I have a belief that people who are suffering with addictions really deserve inspiration and help. Perhaps I can also encourage scholastic discipline, or other good living skills in the people I work with. I do believe that people are generally good inside their soul, and just need to be put to work on creating emotional, physical and spiritual discipline and good activities.

Anthony Pinch  
Member

### INTERN EXPERIENCE

Daniel (Dak) Kildare was an intern at Towne House from February to September as part of BestNow, a program that trains mental health clients to be peer counselors. He is now attending Vista College to earn an AA degree in Social Services. He continues to volunteer at Towne House.



Dak Kildare

While at Towne House I worked primarily with the House and Grounds group. My duties included being a participant in the daily program activities and encouraging participation by doing things with people, not for them. At the top of my positive impressions list was the friendly response and cheery attitude of the members and staff. I was especially gratified upon seeing members successfully complete new tasks, knowing that the experience would serve them for the rest of their lives. On the other side, it was often difficult to get people involved. I had to remind myself that it helped for members to see me get involved, and to set a positive example for them to follow. My relationship with my supervisor was one of support and backup in whatever endeavor was scheduled for the group. BestNow training was most effective in preparing me for this experience.

This internship has been instrumental in my learning to work on my goals, symptom management, and positive work habits. I especially enjoyed the way members interacted with one another, sharing duties and exchanging support in a true community sense. I certainly learned more about cooperation and positive reinforcement at Towne House than I have ever encountered in my previous employment situations. I think that the clubhouse model has a lot to teach us all. Programs such as Towne House provide purpose, structure, and meaningful accomplishment to a most deserving segment of our society. For this reason alone, it should continue to receive our full encouragement and support.

Dak Kildare  
Volunteer

### 20<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL RAFFLE SETS RECORD

This year's raffle earned a record \$4,684 for Towne House. Started in 1984, the raffle has become an annual event. The drawing of prizes takes place on the last Friday in July at the Summerfest spaghetti luncheon. This year donors were asked to buy at least \$20 of tickets for our 20<sup>th</sup> raffle. They also had the option to donate their tickets to members. This resulted in members winning nice prizes, including the first prize of Southwest Airlines tickets. One member writes of her experiences working on the raffle.



Sandi Vargas (left) and Laurie Smith show record raffle earnings.

I truly benefited from the 2004 Summerfest and 20<sup>th</sup> annual raffle. I participated in things that I usually do not do, such as greeting guests, serving lunch, and drawing tickets from the raffle drum. For two months before the event, I worked very hard on the bookkeeping by logging the money from the sale of tickets. It taught me skills that I can use out in the working world. I had a lot of fun doing it, and being able to put the bank endorsement stamp on the back of the checks made me feel grown up.

I came in third place on ticket sales, and won a bag full of nice items. I also won a door prize, a picture frame that holds three pictures, and I put it on the wall in my apartment. So all the hard work paid off. I gained experience, and I did not go home empty handed. Thank you to everyone who supported our 20<sup>th</sup> annual raffle.

Sandi Vargas  
Member

### DONATIONS ACCEPTED

Towne House is fortunate to have many supporters who contribute to our different projects to help members living on limited incomes. Some of the ways you might help are:

**Clothes Closet:** men's and women's clothing and toiletries, small household items for apartments and kitchens, shoes, handbags, art work.

**Library:** books, current magazines.

**Prizes:** jewelry, wallets, journals, pens, coffee mugs, stuffed animals.

**Christmas Gifts:** warm coats, sweatshirts, umbrellas, rain gear, hats, scarves, socks, wallets, back packs, stationary, gift items.

Please call 510-658-9480 for more information.

## ADVOCATING FOR MENTAL HEALTH

On May 27, a delegation of six members and staff from Towne House went to the State Capitol in Sacramento to participate in Mental Health Advocacy Day. Our delegation took a letter signed by Towne House members that stated the benefits of our day program. We requested our State Senator and Assembly members to continue their support and not to cut mental health funding.



*Towne House delegation advocates for mental health in Sacramento.*

Even though our Senator was not in his office and the members of the Assembly were in session, we hand delivered the letters to their offices. At Assemblywoman Wilma Chan's office we met Senior Consultant Joe Landon who listened to everyone's opinions and concerns about two issues. The first was on cutting funds for mental health and the second was the cutting of funds for AC Transit. Mr. Landon thanked us for our visit, and said he would relay our message to Assemblywoman Chan. We also stood outside of the Governor's office, but did not get to see him.

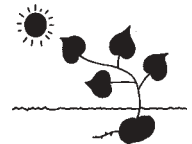
Outside the capitol building there was a lawn full of people from all parts of California rallying for support and asking for adequate community-based care for Californians with mental illness. The trip was fun and also proved to be of educational value. We learned a bit more about how the political process works, and how we can all play a part in the system and advocate for needed services.

*Towne House Members*

## Avenue Boulevard

Like stepping to the sound of guitar strings  
Playing a melody of words and rhythms  
Feeling the timing in my avenue it all seems  
So strange like a bird in flight my avenue is  
A cool and mellow place where I spend my days  
Watching the world go by I see people young  
And old days of rain snow on the avenue  
Boulevard I can reach out and touch the stars  
And travel back to my avenue boulevard where  
Building dreams putting smiles on your face  
Can you feel the groove on the avenue like a  
Saxophone playing a jazz tone telling the story  
Of joy in colors of rain like a new pair of jeans  
And finally somebody got the story right  
The story about me the story about you  
The story about the avenue boulevard.

*Orvell Wilson  
Member*



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## COMMUNITY SERVICE AWARD

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*Garrett Murphy, Towne House member, was honored by the Alameda County Mental Health Board with a Community Service Award in the Consumer category. He received the award at the Alameda County Board of Supervisors' meeting on May 25. Garrett was recognized for producing the Weekly Events Calendar for Towne House members.*



*Garrett Murphy*

Since 1998, Garrett Murphy has been putting together a weekly list of cultural and special events to keep Towne House members aware of what is happening in the community. For

the activities list Garrett researches the internet, libraries, independent weeklies, galleries, community centers, and posted announcements to come up with a list of activities. Included are concerts, ethnic festivals, local farmers' markets, plays in the park, art exhibits, walking tours, poetry readings, and library talks.

After compiling his list, Garrett uses the computer at the library or at Towne House to print up the weekly events calendar. It is complete with addresses, phone numbers, prices, and is available to members every Friday at Towne House just in time for the weekend. He faxes it to other programs for their use as well. Garrett volunteers his time and transportation to put together this impressive list which helps members get involved in the community.

Garrett also contributes to the mental health community by serving as a Vice President of the Board of Directors of the Alameda County Mental Health Association. We at Towne House CLC are proud to acknowledge Garrett's many contributions to the mental health community.

## FRIENDS OF TOWNE HOUSE CLC

Cash donations (except raffle) from November 2003-October 2004

### INDIVIDUALS

Geraldine S. Alvarez  
Walter & Milly Alvarez  
Anonymous  
John Badanes  
George & Larisa Batchelder  
Barbara Beatty  
Mary Boyvey  
Jay & Zela Claiborne  
George & Catherine Cowling  
Garniss H. Curtis  
Klaus Dehlinger  
Mary C. Ferlin  
John & Christine Flaningam  
Donald & Katharine Foley  
Arthur & Vera Gough  
Nathan G. Hale, Jr.  
Craig & Anne Harper  
Betty Helmholz  
Judith Hungerford  
Virginia A. Immergluck  
Douglas W. James, Jr.  
Lane & Dottie Johnson  
Gerry Keenan  
Sharon Knowlton  
Mr. & Mrs. Howard J. Korth  
Annie Mae Lewis  
Keith Lewis  
Harold M. Lipshaw  
Mr. & Mrs. Daniel N. Manaois  
Louise Mandeville  
Helen Matzger  
Marian V. Merrill  
Susan Merrill  
Jay & Sarah Miyazaki  
Susan Monas  
Bethe Moulton  
Priscilla L. Moulton  
Lois Mueller  
Rolf & Dorothy Muller  
Marjorie Nicholson  
George & Carol Nobori

Anna Watts O'Connor  
Fran Ohlsson  
Warren & Camille Parker  
Sarah Perrilliat  
Lindsay Clegg Pierce  
Christina Platt  
Patricia Pope  
Catherine J. Ralph  
Elizabeth Rebensdorf  
Jean K. Reilly  
Janice M. Robinson  
Dr. Richard & Joan Russell  
George & Jacqueline Saito  
Virginia L. Semrau  
Bryan & Julie Sharp  
Jeff & Patty Shimizu  
Joe & Ruth Shimizu  
Clem & Sharie Shute  
Donald T. Smith  
Lee Smithwick  
Joanne Sultar  
Clay & Kathy Sylvester  
Rina Tambini  
Marylin Tracy  
Thomas R. Trautner  
George & Maya Trilling  
Alfred O. Trumpler  
Dr. Christine Vourakis  
Kyle & Susan Weaver  
Arthur & Vivian Weikert  
Patricia & George Wolf  
Ellen March Woods  
Mary Yamamoto  
Phyllis M. Zagone

### CHURCHES

First Congregational Church of  
Berkeley/Ministry of Outreach,  
Mission, & Service

### ORGANIZATIONS

Piedmont Service League

### TO HONOR

**Milly Alvarez**  
by Dick & Pat Buffer

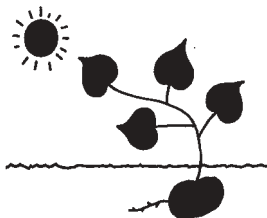
**Donald & Margaret Alvarez**  
by Carolyn W. Barr

**Kirsten Towne Smith**  
by Winifred Clegg Smith

### 20<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL RAFFLE

#### Donations \$100 & Over

Geraldine S. Alvarez  
Jean Alvarez  
Stephen J. Bischoff  
Cadene Burdick  
Vera Butterworth  
Anne Caulfield  
Jay & Zela Claiborne  
Grant & Austra Gauger  
Nathan G. Hale, Jr.  
Barbara MacAuliffe



### MEMORIAL GIFTS IN HONOR OF

#### Tosh Caulfield

by Geraldine S. Alvarez  
Jean Alvarez  
Leon & Catherine Brossier  
John & Rosalie Caulfield  
Cohen Ventures, Inc.  
Dan & Ann Cordoba  
Pat L. Cordoba  
Pamela Edwards  
Robert Edwards  
Kay & Mike Ford  
Rafael Friedmann  
Ray & Lynne Hadley  
Libby Hollinshead  
Kenneth L. James  
Ruth A. Johnson  
Geneva H. Mathis  
Helen Miazga  
Linda F. Morse  
Phillip & Carol Morse  
PG&E Evaluation Group  
Thomas Priestley &  
Peggy Gibbons  
Quantum Consulting, Inc.  
Jason & Katie Roberts  
Thomas & Gretchen Tietenberg  
Prindle A. Vaux  
George & Patricia Wolf  
Dale & Linda Zehner

#### Ivars Abolins

by Austra Gauger

#### Dee Morgan

by Gordon R. Everett

#### James Swim

by Jane Swim

#### Reginald Zelnik

by Harold & Cecile Weaver

## TOWNE HOUSE MAKES A DIFFERENCE ...

In a letter to California State Legislators asking them to support funding for mental health services, members spoke of the benefits of Towne House:

- *Helps in mental health recovery.*
- *A place where we can teach one another what we know.*
- *Gives me a place to belong to.*
- *It's a stepping stone in one's career.*
- *Get a good education in computer skills, including MS Excel, Word, Photo Shop, scanners and typing skills.*
- *Work in groups and meet with people.*
- *Offers a variety of activities to keep alert and active.*
- *Keeps me out of the hospital and safe.*



## Towne House CLC Review

Bay Area Community Services  
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