

October
2015

Winds of Wellness

A Monthly Publication of Wellness Connections Phone (520) 452-0080 • Fax (520) 452-0090

www.wellness-connections.org

Opening of the Willcox Distribution Center

“...that best portion of a good man's life, his little, nameless, unremembered, acts of kindness and of love.”
~ William Wordsworth



Staff and volunteer members will then make up food baskets to be given to those in need.

“Candace has been very instrumental in moving this forward,” said Deanna Bellinger, Executive Director of Wellness Connections. “Some of our members have been hungry, or only get a meal when they come to our programs, so we saw a need for this service.”

Howard Buffett cuts the ribbon for the new Willcox Distribution Center that will help provide food to thousands

The Willcox Distribution Center on Bisbee Ave., Willcox, was made possible through a \$1.2 million

grant from the Howard G. Buffett Foundation. Howard Buffett attended the opening on September 14.

It will serve around 28,000 people in Cochise, Graham and Greenlee Counties and will partner with hundreds of hunger relief agencies.

The new location will mean more people will be served in rural areas throughout southeastern Arizona.

The Community Food Bank of Southern Arizona celebrated the opening of its Willcox Distribution Center, and Wellness Connections was there to mark the occasion.

The new building will serve as a distribution point to more than 20 communities, including Douglas and Sierra Vista where Wellness Connections will act as food pantry centers.

Douglas was officially approved as a food pantry in September, and Sierra Vista is due to open its food bank at its newly remodeled cen-

ter in October.

“Over a year ago we contacted Community Food Bank to be recognized as a food provider,” said Candace Weingart, Douglas Program Manager. “There were a number of steps we had to go through to get that approved.”

Up to two pallets of food will be delivered once a month via the Willcox Distribution Center to both the Douglas and Sierra Vista Wellness Connections centers.

Happy
Fall

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**Wellness Connections**
Where we put the “we” in Wellness

Member Spotlight: Arthur & Carl



Carl

Members Arthur and Carl want to make sure nobody goes hungry.

Which is why they both volunteer to distribute food boxes to those in need around Douglas.

"It's a very satisfying thing to do," said Carl.

Since it opened last year, the Wellness Connections center in Douglas has partnered with the local food bank to provide nourishment to area residents and families.

Arthur has been a food distributor volunteer since the beginning.

"I help put the boxes together and then I go out in the van and help deliver them," he said. "I feel for the people that we deliver to."

A regular attender of the Douglas programs, Arthur believes Wellness Connections has greatly contributed toward the management of his mental health issues.

"It's somewhere for me to go and I've made some good friends," he said.

Carl also enjoys his time at the center, and especially likes volunteering for the food bank.

"It's filling a void since the passing of my wife and it gives meaning to my life," he said. "I very much enjoy helping the food bank."

He is especially pleased that the Douglas center has become a food pantry.

"I think it's very exciting and if they ask me, I'll volunteer for that too," he said



Arthur



Val (staff) and member David, with a bounty recently harvested from Douglas Wellness Connection's gardens

Program in Pictures

Elizabeth (SV Member), Derrick (SV Staff) & Jacqueline (Douglas staff) attending Eric Gilbertson Advocacy Institute for Behavioral Health



Maricela and Braulio showing some love at the Bisbee Animal Shelter

friendship



Nogales members and staff, (L - R) Mikey, Chris (staff), Stevie and Roberto cleaning and preparing their new location



Mental Health In the News

Nearly half of Americans think they have or have had a mental health condition, and yet fewer than two in five have received treatment, according to a recent survey.

About nine in 10 adults feel mental health and physical health are equally important for their overall well-being.

It also revealed that while most people understand mental health conditions like depression are risk factors for suicide, less than half know that anxiety and panic disorders also put individuals at risk.

The survey was carried out by the Anxiety and Depression Association of America, the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention, and the National Action Alliance for Suicide Prevention.

“There’s a significant body of research that demonstrates that individuals suffering from anxiety

disorders and depression face an increased risk for suicidal thoughts and attempts,” said Dr. Mark Pollock, president of the Anxiety and Depression Association of America. “Effectively diagnosing and treating both anxiety disorders and depression, especially when they co-occur, are critical pathways to intervening and reducing suicide crises.”

The online survey polled more than 2,000 U.S. adults in August and also found:

*The vast majority of American adults think suicide is at least sometimes preventable (94%).

*More than half of American adults have been affected by suicide in some way (55%).

*Most adults (93%) would do something if someone close to them were thinking about suicide.

*While most people (67%) said if

they were having thoughts of suicide they would tell someone, men are more likely to say they would not tell anyone.

*Of those who have received treatment for mental health conditions, most thought it was very or somewhat helpful.

“Progress is being made in how Americans view mental health, and the important role it plays in our everyday lives. People see the connection between mental health and overall well-being, our ability to function at work and at home, and how we view the world around us. Respondents want to help a loved one by connecting them to the right mental health treatment and support,” said Dr. Christine Moutier, Chief Medical Officer, American Foundation for Suicide Prevention.

EMPLOYMENT TIP
Offer Your Services ~ Unpaid internships can be a great way to get your foot in the door of an industry. You get experience, an addition to your resume and knowledge of how to improve your skills.

Staff Spotlight: Douglas’ Linda & Valerie

It is not unusual for volunteers to become team members at Wellness Connections. Which is the case for co-workers Linda Sterling and Valeria Gutierrez.

Both Linda and Valeria became Peer Support Specialists after volunteering at the Douglas center, neither having prior knowledge of Wellness Connections.

“I was not aware of the programs,” said Linda. “But a friend of mine was working there and asked if I would be interested in volunteering. After about two months I realized this was something I wanted to do for work.

“I never realized that some of my own past experiences could help other people.”

Linda admits she has both good and bad days, just like anybody else, but

the good outweighs the bad.

“I love all the different things I get to do. Sometimes it can be a bit overwhelming, but I think everyone appreciates what we do. I especially like teaching classes and I’m looking forward to teaching crochet again.”

Linda was one of several staff who attended the grand opening of the Community Food Bank’s Willcox Distribution Center.

“I think it’s amazing,” she said. “I’ve never had to use a food bank, but I’ve seen the lines that form at the Douglas food bank. It’s great that we now have the distribution center and that Wellness Connections will also be a food pantry.”

Valeria also found herself landing a job with Wellness Connections after a friend asked her to volunteer.

“I never knew there was something like that in our community,” she said. “I think it’s really nice and something different from other jobs. I get to give back to the community also.”

When asked why she enjoys working for Wellness Connections, Valeria replies, “Because I am able to help people. When you hear about the things that people go through, it can seem like your own story. So it feels good to be able to use your experience to help others.”





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Wellness Connections' Mission Statement & Overview

Mission Statement:

"Wellness Connections is committed to providing peer-led, life-enhancing opportunities for mental health recovery and wellness."

Overview

Wellness Connections has provided behavioral health and addiction recovery services based on a peer-led model since February 2002. Wellness Connections maintains a qualified staff of Recovery Support Specialists, Peer Support Specialists and Behavior Health Technicians.

The expected outcome for all Wellness Connections' program members is a significantly improved quality of life. Funding is provided through contracts with Cenpatco, the Department of Veteran's Affairs, Bridgeway and the DES Department of Vocational Rehabilitation. Fundraising and grant funding are also pursued in support of Wellness Connections' mission.

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Tax ID#86-1037850*