

Human Writes

STATE HUMAN RIGHTS COMMITTEE NEWSLETTER

Volume 2, Issue 3

Summer 2007

Welcome

Welcome to the seventh edition of Human Writes, a quarterly newsletter from the State Human Rights Committee (SHRC). The purpose of this newsletter is to share ideas, problems, solutions and other items of mutual interest among the Local Human Rights Committees and the SHRC. Please submit your thoughts and ideas to:

DMHMRSAS
Office of Human Rights
P.O. Box 1797
Richmond, VA 23218
SHRC.newsletter@co.dmhmrzas.virginia.gov

A REMINDER LHRC/SHRC Independence

Please keep in mind that local human rights committees (and the SHRC) are independent public bodies. We obtain our authority, roles and functions from the Code of Virginia and the human rights regulations. It is important to the successful operation of the human rights system that all committees remain independent of any provider or the Department. When conducting a meeting or a hearing, the committee is in charge of the proceedings. The committee should set the tone of the meeting or hearing, making certain that all participants and parties feel welcome and heard.

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FYI Revised Human Rights Regulations Update

The State Mental Health, Mental Retardation and Substance Abuse Services Board reviewed and made some changes to the regulations prior to voting to approve the regulations for submission to the Executive Branch for final action at its meeting on May 4, 2007. The regulations are now in the Governor's Office for final approval. The regulations will become 'final' 30 days after the Governor approves them. We anticipate that this will occur by late summer or early fall.

LHRC/SHRC Seminar

The Human Rights Seminar will be held on September 14 at the Holiday Inn Select Koger South Conference Center at 1021 Koger Center Boulevard, Richmond. This seminar is for LHRC and SHRC members. There will be a Reception on Thursday evening, September 13, from 7:00 to 9:00 p.m. The Human Rights Seminar Announcement and registration form is attached at the end of this issue.

The Office of Human Rights will offer separate training sessions for providers at a later time. Check www.dmhmrsas.virginia.gov for more details. Look under "What's New" for information on training and implementation of the revised human rights regulations.

SHRC Hail and Farewell

The SHRC sadly says goodbye to Dr. Michael Marsh and Dr. Joyce Bozeman, each of whom served six years on the committee during which time each has served as Chairperson. We thank them and will miss them. Their replacements have been recommended to the Board and will be introduced to you in the next issue.

It is with great sadness that I share with you the passing of our friend and colleague Dr. R. Michael Marsh on July 15, 2007.

Dr. Marsh retired as Facility Director of Catawba Hospital in 1995 having served in that capacity for 17 years. While at Catawba Hospital Dr. Marsh hired Dr. Reinhard as Medical Director - a fact that he was pleased to share at every opportunity. Prior to employment with DMHMRSAS he was a Medical Service Corps officer serving in a variety of positions in the Army that included working as a clinical social work officer and as a general staff officer in the Headquarters Department of the Army and in the Office of the Secretary of Defense. He has served on the Blue Ridge CSB (now known as the Blue Ridge Behavioral Healthcare) Local Human Rights Committee (LHRC), and provided outstanding leadership and direction to the LHRC as Chair. Dr. Marsh was appointed to the State Human Rights Committee (SHRC) in July 2001 and served two terms ending June 2007. He served as both vice chair and chair during his tenure on the SHRC.

Dr. Marsh was a gentleman in the true sense of the word. His gentle spirit was evident to all who came before the State Human Rights Committee. He was generous in sharing his vast experience and wisdom, though he would be the last to say he was wise. He was a truly modest and humble man who touched the lives of those around him more profoundly than he knew. The Office of Human Rights and the members of the State Human Right Committee were privileged to work with him closely for many years and we are so grateful that we had the opportunity to celebrate his service during the June meeting of the SHRC in Marion. Board Chair, Victoria Cochran presented Dr. Marsh with a resolution at a wonderful dinner at Nan Neese's home the evening before the meeting. Dr. Marsh was so committed to his service on the SHRC that even as his health worsened he attended meetings across the state enlisting the help of his son to drive him to his final two meetings.

There was a visitation and service Saturday, July 21 at the John M. Oakey and Son Funeral Home (<http://www.johnmoakey.com>) in Salem. He will be buried with full military honors at Arlington National Cemetery on Thursday October 4 at 11:00. Everyone is welcome.

Meet The Advocate

Each edition of Human Writes will profile one of the Advocates.

This edition introduces Mark Seymour, Advocate of Region I.

When one meets Mark Seymour, the song “ Suddenly Seymour” from “Little Shop of Horrors “ enters the mind. That Seymour had to feed the carnivorous plant in his flower shop. During moments of frustration, Mark Seymour should feel that he is required to ‘feed and nourish’ the insatiable and demanding needs of the ‘plants’ for which he is responsible. He does not feel frustration, however. He regards himself as a ‘naively optimistic’ person who believes that people will do the right thing if given the opportunity.

Mark views himself as a listener, a problem-solver, and someone who cares. He believes that his education fits well with these qualities as well as in the work he has chosen to do. He entered Wake Forest University in Winston-Salem in 1978 where he simultaneously earned a BA in psychology while working in a psychiatric hospital. He, his wife, and three boys spent the next twenty-three long-suffering years earning a Masters in Divinity. During that time, he also worked as program manager for a day program for individuals with mental retardation, quality assurance manager with Northwestern CSB, chief operations officer and licensed nursing home manager for a skilled nursing home, and executive director of the ARC of Harrisonburg/Rockingham.

Mark is now a Human Rights Advocate assigned to the Commonwealth Center for Children and Adolescents in Staunton and also covers the conveniently-located thirty surrounding counties. He regards himself as an “Emergency Responder” since he doesn't hear anything until a person is in crisis. Resolving these crises provides an opportunity for providers and consumers to learn new approaches and to know that they have support. Especially with children, a major goal of his is to have the consumers feel safe. When they no longer have to look back over their shoulders, they can learn to look forward.

In searching the Rules and Regulations etc. for an answer to a given situation he finds that they often do not fit precisely. Every problem presents itself in shades of gray- never in the black and white of the "Rules". This does not frustrate him. He has learned to pursue the spirit of the law and finds that the letter of the law is always in lower case.

To keep life interesting, he likes to surround himself with people who know more than he does. At present, his goal of life-long learning is met by being a Fellow at the University of Virginia's Sorensen Institute for Political Leadership. To sum up the person who is Mark Seymour, he paraphrases Frederick Beuchner who said “Our work should be at the intersection of the world's great need and our heart's great desire.”

Meet the LHRC Honoree

Each issue will introduce an outstanding LHRC member.

This issue spotlights Randy J. Johnsey, Chairman of the Southwest Regional Local Human Rights Committee. Your nominations are welcome.

LHRC Honoree Randy Johnsey is a member of what is known in Baptist circles as the "Preacher Family". His father, brother, nephew, and self are preachers. During childhood his family moved a lot due to his father's vocation. Currently, Randy is Minister of Music at the church where his father died, and his mother is the pianist and Sunday school teacher.

He received an Associate Degree in Business Administration at Virginia Highlands Community College and a Bachelors Degree in Psychology at East Tennessee State University. He has also attended Radford University working toward Masters in Counseling.

Randy is a person of many and diverse talents which he shares generously. He has won awards for his singing in high school and college. His choices in music are eclectic but mostly gospel. He also plays guitar, bass, and sax – a talent that he credits to his mother, who plays many instruments. He has tutored students in reading, writing, math, and computer skills at the Highland CSB Clubhouse.

After a career in store management, Randy is now on permanent social security disability. In his disability, he has found that his own family has turned against him, except for his mother. In his service as Chairman of the LHRC, he finds that some providers need guidance to meet the human rights needs of their clients. He helps them to achieve more than the minimum requirements. He fosters his relationship with the CSB, encouraging them to meet the people they serve. It is obvious that his commitment to the work of the LHRC is beyond tokenism. He hopes to continue this dedication to the human rights of persons with disabilities.

For general information on the State Human Rights Committee, Local Human Rights Committees, and Human Rights Advocates, and the Department of Mental Health, Mental Retardation, and Substance Abuse Services, please see Volume 1 Issue 1.

Human Writes is a newsletter of the State Human Rights Committee to all Local Human Rights Committees for the purpose of fostering greater news and idea sharing among all of us.

ANNOUNCEMENT

TO: Local Human Rights Committee Members

FROM: Office of Human Rights

RE: 2007 Human Rights Seminar

The 2007 Human Rights Seminar will be held on Friday, September 14 at the Holiday Inn Select Koger South Conference Center at 1021 Koger Center Blvd, Richmond, 23235. **This seminar is for LHRC Members.** Providers and employees of providers are not committee members. (See 12 VAC 35-115, 30 & 250 D1b).

The seminar will include sessions on the following:

- ✓ Overview of the Changes to the Human Rights Regulations
- ✓ How to Run a Meeting
- ✓ How to Conduct a Hearing
- ✓ Consent and Substitute Decision Making
- ✓ SHRC Open Forum
- ✓ LHRC Reviews and Approvals

*Complete this form and return to the Human Rights Advocate with your check or mail to Kli Kinzie, Office of Human Rights, DMHMRSAS, P.O. Box 1797, Richmond, VA, 23218 or fax to 804-371-2308 and mail check. **Deadline: August 28, 2007.***

Human Rights Seminar Registration

I am a Member of the _____ LHRC ___

Name _____ Phone number _____

Address _____

E-mail / Alt Phone Number _____

Please Prepay registration fee - \$30.00. Make check payable to DMHMRSAS.

RSVP: Attending the Reception on September 13? Yes _____ No _____

Hotel Reservation Information for Overnight Stay:

- ❖ If you plan to stay overnight you must make your own hotel reservation.
- ❖ We have a block of rooms at a special rate of \$81.00 plus tax for single and double occupancy. To get this rate you must make your overnight reservation by **August 28**.
- ❖ Rooms are held on a first come, first served basis.
- ❖ Call the Hotel at 804-379-3800 or 1-800-397-1034 or e-mail your overnight reservation at resv@hiselectrva.com.
- ❖ Be sure to mention the 'Human Rights Seminar'. This is how the hotel has posted our event.

You must register for the seminar separately from your hotel reservation.

Important Information:

- ❖ Human Rights Reception with light hors d'oeuvres – 7:00–9:00 p.m. on September 13. (Optional) Meet colleagues from around the state.
- ❖ Seminar check-in on September 14 will begin at 7:45 a.m.
- ❖ The Seminar begins at 8:30 a.m. and concludes at 4:30 p.m. on September 14.
- ❖ Registration fee is \$30.00. Please **pre-pay and advance register**. Mail check payable to DMHMRSAS to Kli Kinzie, P.O. Box 1797, Richmond, VA, 23218 by August 28.
- ❖ Light breakfast and lunch will be provided.

For more information go to www.dmhmrsva.org

Directions to Holiday Inn Select Koger South Conference Center

From Washington D.C. Traveling I-95 South Exit 79* (Powhite Parkway-195). Stay left and follow Powhite to Midlothian Turnpike (Route 60-West). Follow Midlothian Turnpike 2 miles to Koger Center Boulevard. Hotel will be on your right.

From North Carolina Traveling I-95 North Exit 67 Chippenham Parkway. Follow 10 miles to (Route 60) Midlothian Turnpike West. 5 miles to Koger Center Boulevard. Hotel will be on your right.

From Charlottesville Traveling I-64 East Take Exit for I-288 South to Route 60/Midlothian Turnpike (East). Follow Midlothian Turnpike approximately 3 miles to Koger Center Boulevard. Hotel will be on your left.

From Virginia Beach Stay on I-64 West. Follow signs to I-95 (do not take I-295N). Stay on I-95 North to Powhite Parkway 195 (Exit 79).* Follow Powhite Parkway to Midlothian Turnpike West (Route 60) for 2 miles to Koger Center Boulevard. Hotel will be on your right.

*Powhite Parkway is also listed as Route 76 when traveling south of the James River.