



## Celebrating 40 years; providing treatment and hope

From those first steps in 1971, this community's outreach to individuals struggling with addictions has grown and evolved.

From the vision of two Alano Club members and the assistance of Joliet city government, seed money from the city's liquor tax fund allowed for the purchase of a rooming house and the establishment of the Joliet Half-Way House.

The first year on a budget of \$10,642, a staff of two served 83 men. Last year on a budget of \$2.1 million, a staff of 55 served 1,000 men and women.

For now-retired and long-time board president La Joy Booble, there is a great deal of pride in the accomplishments of Stepping Stones, "It was an honor and a privilege to be a part of the journey for more than 30 years, to work with Pete McLenighan, the staff and the board of directors.

"I was happy to see our agency grow and to make a difference in the lives of so many individuals. Personally, I was happy to be able to give back." Having taken the journey to recovery, La Joy was grateful to have worked for a company that paid for rehabilitation services for its employees more than 30 years ago. She recalls there was no help in Will County at that time and that people went to hospitals or treatment centers in suburbs or Chicago.

She has witnessed the change in attitudes and a lessening of the stigma for women. "The old attitude that one should just stay away from the substance was close-minded. We know that it takes a lot of work and a lot of help to stay away from alcohol and drugs. That is what Stepping Stones is so good at doing—providing that help and support."

Virginia Brock, 24 years on staff as case manager at the Recovery Home, retired Director of Extended Care and now part-time counselor, notes there have been significant changes in demographics and that treatment has become more individualized.

She recalls that when she started, the typical person in treatment was between 30 and 50 years old, and employed. The primary addiction was alcohol. Often families and employers were instrumental in getting the individual to address the addiction.

She notes that those entering treatment today are younger and often mandated by the courts to go through rehabilitation.

She points out that drug choices have changed from alcohol, to cocaine and marijuana in the 80s and 90s, to heroin and prescription drugs that are commonly used now.

"We know that what works for one client may not work for another," says Virginia, "Treatment focuses on identifying and addressing an individual's need in all areas. In the past, individuals were not admitted to Stepping Stones if they were taking medications for a mental illness; or if they had a medical condition requiring treatment that would interfere with their addiction treatment. Today seeing that people are getting care for these conditions is an essential part of their addiction treatment."

According to Virginia, today treatment at Stepping Stones is more person-centered. The individual plays a

### Milestones

- 1971 Joliet Half-Way House opens
- 1977 Sheltering Arms opens for women clients
- 1979 short-Term Residential program opens for men/women
- 1982 Intensive Outpatient program added; programs re-designed to treat all drug usage
- 1991 Joliet Half-Way House and Sheltering Arms consolidate to form Stepping Stones
- 1992 Stepping Stones moves to facility on Theodore Street
- 2007 Stepping Stones purchases adjacent facility on Plainfield Road for conference center

greater role in identifying their needs and recovery goals. The counselor is not directing, but collaborating with the individual and their significant others.

Today the focus is on motivating individuals to enter and remain in treatment, she points out, noting that the old "wait until they are ready" approach was ineffective.

"Treatment is based on the view that addiction is a chronic condition requiring ongoing monitoring and support in periods of recovery. Check-ups following discharge from treatment are routine. When an individual's recovery is at risk, we encourage them to re-enter treatment."

With the different levels of care (Intensive Residential Care, Extended Residential Care, Recovery Homes, outpatient services with support groups), an individual can find the right fit for recovery. "There are a lot of connecting threads and people here at Stepping Stones and in the person's life who are able to help them through the process of developing a healthy life: family, employer, healthcare providers, self-help group members and faith-based groups, as well as the criminal court system and the Department of Children and Family Services.

"From the moment I started working here, I loved the work and the people," says Virginia. "It is wonderful to see people make changes in their lives. Here at Stepping Stones, we are on the front lines, working with hospitals, health departments and other agencies to help people change their lives." ~

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## **New president for South West Coalition for Substance Abuse Issues**

Robert Snipes, Director of Intensive Residential Treatment at Stepping Stones, has been elected president of the South West Coalition for Substance Abuse Issues.

The organization began as an offshoot of the Mental Health Consortium in 1976. The coalition's mission is "... to maintain a network of publicly and privately funded treatment and community based prevention providers offering the highest quality of services in the geographical area. Through collaboration and education, the SWC stays abreast of current issues in the substance abuse field and advocates for sound public policy among local, state and national policy makers."

The South West Coalition has 54 individual members representing 37 organizations. Members meet monthly to discuss current issues in the substance abuse field and to work collaboratively to meet the therapeutic needs of the region.

For more information, please contact Robert Snipes at 815-744-4555, ext. 111 or at [rsnipes@steppingstonetreatment.com](mailto:rsnipes@steppingstonetreatment.com)

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***On this 40th anniversary, we are proud to acknowledge our friends and the growing support for the “recovering community.” Forty years ago, there were no events to raise funds for services, nor were there community-wide celebrations for individuals in recovery. We have come a long way, indeed.***

## **Adam Stoner Charity Golf Outing generates \$6,627**

74 golfers participated in the Third Annual Adam Stoner Charity Golf Outing August 27, 2011 at Coyote Creek Golf Club in Bartonville, IL. Organizers Crystal Curfman, Quinn Headington, and Clint Brown were supported by 13 additional volunteers, friends and family members. These awesome and generous people hold the event in memory of Adam, donating the proceeds to Stepping Stones: \$6,627 this year!

Curfman said, “We are honored and proud to be able to host such a successful event where the money goes to a cause that is near and dear to many of our hearts. We look forward to many successful outings to come.”

Executive Director Pete McLenighan joined three other golfers in the four-man scramble. While Pete took some good-natured teasing from friends about not winning any contests, he was quick to note that Stepping Stones was the “winner” because of the support and “big-hearted giving” of the Stoner family and their friends. He also acknowledged the generosity of all of the golfers and the businesses that donated prizes and raffle items.



*(From left to right) Quinn Headington, Pete McLenighan, Crystal Curfman, and Clint Brown stop for a photo.*

## **7th Annual Rally ‘Round Recovery gathers 600**

For 22 years, September has been designated National Recovery Month with rallies, forums, and media campaigns around the country.

The events recognize recovery service providers and individuals in recovery, while emphasizing the need for more services, for changes in public policy, and community support.

In Joliet, the South West Coalition for Substance Abuse Issues sponsors the rally. The Coalition is a group of professional prevention and treatment providers.

Area legislators and community leaders affirmed their support and encouragement of those individuals in recovery and the professionals who make it possible. Representatives from area health and substance abuse treatment providers had informational booths for attendees. It was a day for the family with refreshments and entertainment for all ages including Jim Nesci and The Cold-Blooded Creatures.



*(At left, from the left) Public officials attending the rally were Will County Board members Frank Stewart and Herbert Brooks, Jr.; Joliet City Councilman Mike Turk; State’s Attorney James Glasgow; Executive Assistant to the Mayor of Joliet James Murphy; Rally emcee Tommy Connolly; Will County Board member Ann Dralle; Will County Executive Larry Walsh; and Senator A. J. Wilhelmi.*



*Pictured (at left) Denise Ramos, singer, and (above) District 86 Junior High School Band.*

Plainfield resident, Chicago actor and comedian Tommy Connolly served as emcee. Tommy noted that he was happy to be a part of this year's rally, "Sobriety is where it is at, but you can't do it alone. I couldn't do it alone."

## Stepping Stones is one of three agencies to benefit from Witches' Night Out

There was no full moon on October 27, but the witches descended upon the Joliet Junior College Renaissance Center on Ottawa Street. Approximately 900 arrived with brooms in hand, sporting their "witches' best" attire. They dined, shopped, talked, and danced to the music of the Harvest Moon Band.

They supported their favorite Will County event to benefit women and help them secure their independence, regain their dignity, and become self-sufficient. Recipient agencies were Stepping Stones Treatment and Recovery; Lamb's Fold Women and Children's Shelter; and Spanish Community Center Day Care.

The second annual event featured 60 local merchants and crafters, portrait opportunities, psychic readers, raffles, door prizes, and a fashion show and contests for the best hat, broom and shoes.



(Left) Kathy Mihelich, chair of Witches' Night Out and Pete McLenghan with a \$6,000 check representing Stepping Stones' share of the proceeds. Call it magic or witchcraft, but one thing for sure, the committee outdid themselves. The generosity of sponsors and guests was overwhelming. A special after-the-event surprise came in the form of anonymous donations totaling over \$3,000. We thank our friends and supporters

(Photos at right) Kristen Osgood, a "good witch dressed in white" poses with friend Jennifer Marcinek. Kristen notes that she was a bit naughty and shows off her recent acquisition-Dorothy's red shoes. Witches dining. Witches shopping.



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### Mission Statement

Stepping Stones is dedicated to providing effective treatment for persons suffering from the illness of addiction to alcohol and/or other drugs, even if these persons are unable to pay for the cost of such service.

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*Stepping Stones has been determined by the IRS to be a 501c3 organization and donations are deductible as provided by law.*