



THE TRUTH ABOUT...

Pets and Apartment Living

Pets are important members of many families. Pet owners get companionship, joy, unconditional love and a sense of safety from their animal friends. Not only are they lots of fun to be with, but they make us feel good.

Many of our readers live in apartments and wonder what the best pet would be for them. The debate goes on about what kind of pet is best for people who rent. If you'd ask a number of people for their opinion about this subject, you'd get that many different responses. So *TSI Living* went to a veterinarian about such matters, **Dr. Ron Bezak** of Munhall Veterinary Hospital. We asked him what he thought was the best pet for renters. Dr. Ron answered that question and many more.

"Choose the best pet for your living space, life-style (consider allergies) and budget," advises Dr. Ron. "Like their owners, pets have a unique personality and temperament. So you should match your own temperament and personality with that of a pet. Pets such as small dogs, cats, birds, rabbits, fish and gerbils are good choices for people with limited living space and budgets," he said. "Of course, if you live in a small apartment, you wouldn't want a big dog like a Saint Bernard, since he's going to take all of your floor space when he naps. Or, if you are a person who is unable to take a few walks a day with your dog, you'd want to consider only dogs that are less active. If your budget is tight, consider a short-haired pet to avoid costly grooming. Most cats

don't require regular salon visits. Nor do cats take up a lot of space. They don't require that you walk them, either. However, before adopting a cat, take into consideration the ongoing cost of cat litter. A fish, bird, rabbit or gerbil is a good choice because they don't require routine veterinary care, as do cats and dogs, and that can be costly," said Dr. Ron.

"One year in the life of a cat or dog is comparable to seven years in a human," says Dr. Ron, "so annual checkups are urged for them." Annual exams can catch a problem before it gets costly. The exam includes a distemper shot and an examination. Every three years a rabies shot must be given. Some practitioners stress heart worm prevention medication, flea medicine, etc. Puppies and kittens should see the veterinarian every 3-4 weeks for three visits. Each time, they'll get a distemper shot and an examination. After that, annual checkups are a must.

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Ronald Bezak (above, with **Nikki**), a veterinarian for 27 years, currently practices at **Munhall Veterinary Hospital**, 2114 West St., Munhall, PA 15120. Left: **Max** (Gretchen, Jancey) and **Raleigh** (Janet, Longo).



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From the CEO's Desk



At the end of a hard day, there is nothing like coming home to two wonderful cats. They run to the window at the sound of my car and then wait expectantly at the doorway to greet me. They have no harsh words, no demands and no questions that I can't or don't want to answer. They are full of love and want to communicate that to me with purrs and rubs on my leg. No matter what the stress, a few moments of that and a few good pets with them restore my equilibrium and blood pressure.

Reduction in blood pressure is a benefit of pet ownership that has actually been verified by the medical profession. Pets help us feel loved, and we experience that unconditional positive regard that we all need. They make no judgments on our behavior. When we have a pet and provide care or, in my case, rescue a cat that is dying, we feel a sense of accomplishment which we all need. For these reasons and probably

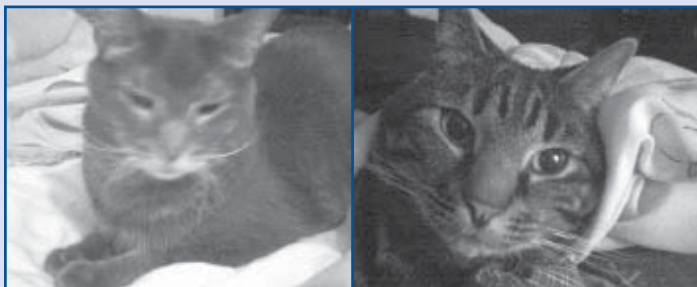
more, having a pet is a good thing for many of us, including those we serve. In the language of **Pat Deegan**, psychologist and service user, it can be "personal medicine" for us (activities or such that produce endorphins and contribute to good mental health).

However, I am not recommending that we all rush out and get a pet. Some of us live in situations that don't allow them. Others can't afford the money it takes to care for them. Still others may not be in a place yet where they want to spend the time taking care of another living creature. If you fall into any of these categories but find yourself wishing that

you could have a pet, consider volunteering your time at any of the animal shelters in Pittsburgh. I have done that, too, and it is most fulfilling for all of the reasons stated above. For at the end of the day, there is nothing like a furry friend.



Sharon Alberts, CEO



Sharon's cats Tommee (l) and Raz-ma-taz, aka Raz (r)

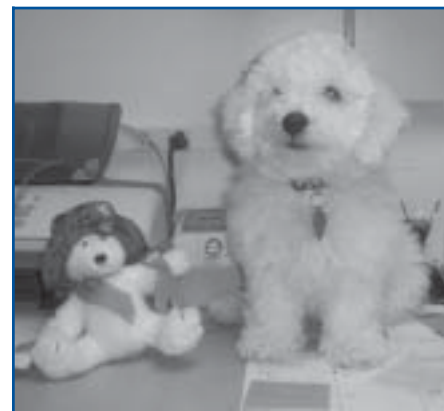
LIVES FOREVER CHANGED

Often we do not realize the difference we make in the lives of people we love and care about. Even less considered may be the impact we have on the fuzzy, feathered, wet or scaly critters in our lives. How often do we "paws" to reflect on how much better and more fulfilling our lives are because of those relationships? What's more amazing is the relationship we have with our beloved pets helps us in more ways than we even realize. Yes, it is true that pets add years to our lives and make them fuller, but what does that really mean? Pets give greater purpose and meaning to our daily lives. Each pet owner knows there is an important "person" that is counting on them to take care of their needs, enrich their lives and genuinely enjoy their

The relationship we have with our beloved pets helps us in more ways than we even realize.

company. The total dependence pets must place upon their owners for all things makes each owner the single most important thing in each of their cute little lives. Pets—without us even realizing—increase our significance. This significance is special, too, because it does not require anything other than the desire to give, share and love. To do this, you do not have to be a certain age or possess special abilities. You only need to choose to be the difference in somebody's life.

(top) **Ginger Brownie Dorin** (Craig Quality); (right) **Zeus** (Maria, S. Braddock)



Giving Makes a Difference



More Than One Way to Give

TSI service users benefit from contributions no matter how they come in. Of course, a personal check is always welcome. Donations such as new bedding, towels, cleaning supplies and other household items are also needed. These items can be dropped off at:

Transitional Services, Inc.
806 West Street, Homestead, PA 15120

If you prefer to send a personal check, please make it payable to Transitional Services, Inc. and mail to the above address to the attention of Gerry Henry. Contributions to TSI are tax-deductible in accordance with IRS regulations. TSI also participates in the United Way Contributor's Choice Program, contributor choice # 172.

WHY I DONATE To TSI...

I donate to Transitional Services Inc. for several reasons. The first reason is that I strongly believe in the TSI mission and values. The second reason is that I have talked to several of the people that were served that have benefitted from monies that were donated. The third reason is that I believe it is better to donate first before asking others to donate.

— Laurie Elliott



For more information on making a contribution to TSI, please contact:

Gerry Henry

412-461-1322 ext. 222

ghenry@transitionalservices.org

You Can Help Animals

There are ways to experience the joys that come along with spending time with pets, even if you don't live with one. "If you aren't sure if you'd like to adopt a pet right now," says **Dr. Bezak**, "try fostering a pet for a month or two, then see if you want to keep him." If you feel that you are not ready to foster a pet, you can try volunteering. Jolienne of Animal Friends states "benefits from volunteering at an animal shelter include meeting people that have similar interests. Volunteers also make a difference in the lives of animal."

Animal Friends serves pets and people through their humane programming. Three such programs are their *Pets as Family*, *Pets as Teachers* and *Pets as Healers*. *Pets as Family* offers adoption services, behavior classes and recreational activities for people to enjoy with their pet. *Pets as Teachers* teaches children to treat animals in a responsible manner as well as *Reading with Rover* and classes and lectures on various topics. *Pets as Healers* offers pet assisted therapy and wellness programs such as hosting Pet Remembrance services and the Red Collar Society and more. Some programs may require a fee.

Animal Rescue League is another shelter that offers a variety of services and opportunities. They provide extensive training if you want to volunteer. One popular volunteer position they offer is to be a cat cuddler.



Sadie (left) and **Chester** (Kathy, Clinical Associate)

For More Information...

*Animal Friends, Pet Adoption
& Resource Center*
562 Camp Horne Road
Pittsburgh, PA 15237
412-847-7000
www.animal-friends.org

Animal Rescue League
6620 Hamilton Avenue
Pittsburgh, PA 15206
412-661-6452
www.animalrescue.org

FROM MY POINT OF VIEW

If you've ever owned a pet in your life, you know the joy they can bring you. They provide such comfort and companionship to the lives they touch.

We all have favorite pets and reasons for choosing the kind of pet we like, whether it was the type of animal you grew up with or the type of pet you always wanted—or you just love all kinds of animals. Here is what some people had to say about why they chose their pets and how owning a pet has changed their lives, as well as some advice for pet owners.



pets



Lesley Broff w/Napoleon & Jude

"I chose my fish because one day I was walking in the Waterfront and I was sad and lonely and saw the pet store. I remembered we were allowed to have fish in our building, and I saw some magnificently colored Betta fish. I was immediately drawn to the ones I now have because of their splendid coloring and their liveliness. I also knew they were easy fish to take care of. Owning my fish has made my life better because it gives me a sense of ownership and belonging that I lacked before. It is also very good for me because I use them for mindfulness activities where I watch them mindfully swimming. This has helped me remain grounded in rougher times. My advice about owning pets is they are a wonderful addition to your life but with them comes a lot of responsibility. You should always have someone who can care for your pet if you go away somewhere or get sick."

Wanda Bush & Candy LEFT

"We had a great dog named Sheba for many years. She died, and we were very, very sad. It took my husband and me a few years to get over it. But in time, it did get easier for us. So, my husband's sister took us to Animal Friends to get us a pet for a Christmas present. We chose our cat, Candy. She seemed just right and ready to come home with us. Candy has made us very happy. She has a good personality. I look forward to coming home and having her there waiting. Always be nice to your pet. Don't ever tease them or pull their tails. You take good care of them, and they will take care of you, too!"

are important to us all!



Mary DeTemple & Tanning

"A dog is a good pet. We always had a dog while I was growing up. Dogs are good protection, and Tanning keeps me company. My advice to others is to spoil your pets."

Colleen Butler & Wimbleton II

"Wimbleton II is my second hamster. My sister helped me pick him out. I like hamsters, because they are cute and fun to watch. Our favorite times are when I hold him. Always make sure your pet has plenty of fresh food and water. Make sure he gets exercise. Wimbleton runs all over my apartment in his exercise ball."

...even to our staff!



Mango (Janniece Ryan, PSH)



Kenai (Janniece Ryan, PSH)



Loki, Apollo, Artemis and Poe
(Shawn, MR Supported Living)



Dusty (Deb, Peer Specialist)



Larry (Janniece Ryan, PSH)



Sabr and Niko (Carol, Fiscal)



Rocky (Camille, Royer)

Healthier Than an Apple a Day

There are many things to think about when deciding about whether or not you'd like to add a pet to your life. You'll have to consider the cost, the time needed to care for the animal, additional responsibilities for feeding and cleaning up after the pet, rental agreements and lifestyle demands. You'll of course be dreaming about all the wonderful aspects of pet ownership. like companionship, fun and that special bond that can be forged between animal and human. What you may not know is that sharing your life and home with a furry, feathered or scaly friend is good for your health.

Reports suggest that unless you're someone who really doesn't like animals or positively can't find the resources to properly care for a pet, pet ownership provides a multitude of health benefits.

Pets reduce stress. Just the act of petting a dog or cat provides comfort. There have been studies that show that people going through stressful situations actually report more comfort from their animals than being accompanied by important people in their lives. Pets create a friendlier, more pleasant environment and provide diversion from the stressful aspects of daily life.

According to both the *Journal of the American Geriatric Society* and the *American Journal of Cardiology*, people with pets have consistently lower blood pressure and lower cholesterol. Even the act of watching fish in an aquarium has shown to lower blood pressure, calm nerves and be an effective distraction

and gives them a reason to recover.

Pets of all kinds help to stave off loneliness and provide a good means to socialize with others. Pets also encourage their owners to be more active and get out and exercise. It's always more fun to walk with a companion than stroll alone. In addition, the unconditional love people feel from their animal friends improves self esteem.

All of these benefits can produce a more relaxed and healthy lifestyle, which in turn decreases the likelihood of unhappiness or other negative feelings. Pet owners are generally three times less likely to suffer bouts of depression than others.

Does all this mean you should run out and adopt a cat, dog, fish or other animal companion? Maybe, but it's important to remember that a pet will depend on you for everything. It's a responsibility that will last the life of the animal and makes quite a commitment. So, if you cannot fit a new animal friend into your household, you could

explore the possibilities of volunteering with animal shelters and organizations in your area to reap the benefits of spending time with a new furry, feathered or finned friend. They'll love you for it.



Italian Greyhounds Charlie (left) and Luna (Sallianne, Coordinator of Clinical and Community Supports)

tion from pain. Evidents suggests that dog owners have a higher survival rate after serious illness than non-pet owners. Studies conclude that the responsibility of caring for an animal motivates people to be more receptive to treat-



Heather Wainer

Heather Wainer joined TSI's Board of Directors in late spring. She works in Human Resources at Carnegie Mellon University (CMU) in the Learning and Development area. At CMU she helps to provide

in-house and online education for faculty and staff in such areas as leadership development, personal and professional development and functional skills training. "It's a great position, because I get to work with a wide range of people across the university," Heather says. "I'm also lucky to work with a group that focuses on effective leadership practices, because we truly practice what we preach."

She believes in focusing on what works within an organization and in identifying and building upon its strengths, rather than pinpointing the negative and trying to force change. Accountability and conscientiousness are very important to her. "You should have faith in the work you do and do everything to the best of your ability; otherwise, you're just wasting time." Being new to TSI, Heather looks forward to taking site visits and meeting with



some of the persons served to see how TSI is helping them. "I'd like to see TSI increase its visibility. At the same time, I'd like to increase and diversify TSI's support base, so that the organization has a reliable, sustainable source of income that will allow it to grow its services."



THE VALUE OF US

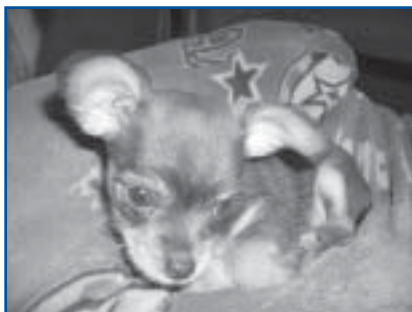
Better with Age

A Generational Perspective

One trend that is common amongst the generations is the adoption of pets. Whether the pets are furry, scaly, wet or virtual, pet owners demonstrate high levels of investment in their pets that is not only monetary but also emotional. Research shows that there are significant relationships and trends amongst pet owners and the generation they are born into.

Studies show that there are long-term benefits of pet ownership for the elderly population. **The bond between pets and humans is strongest as we get older.** Due to many factors, depression in the elderly is common. These factors may include a change in life status, such as: moving from a house into an apartment or residential program, retiring from a job, the loss of a loved one, going through a divorce, experiencing the Empty Nest Syndrome or side effects of medications. A study on pet ownership and pet attachment showed that socially isolated older pet owners were significantly less depressed than those without pets. Another researcher saw a relationship between having pets and fewer visits to the doctor. When we as providers, friends or family members consider long-term care for our loved one, it is important to ask the person if they have a pet and what arrangements have been made or need to be made for their pet or pets. The loss of a pet can be as significant as the loss of a loved one.

Studies prove the positive benefits that the Baby Boomer (Boomer) generation have from the companionship of pets as well. This generation includes anyone born between the years 1946 and 1964. Dr. Diane



Pomerance, a certified grief recovery specialist and author of the book, *Pet Parenthood: Adopting the right Animal Companion*, states, "Companionship of a pet is a big boost for the Boomer generation." Much like the elderly, the healing effects of pets for this generation are very similar. For many Boomers, children going off to college are being replaced by pets.

A growing trend for Boomers is the amount of money they spend caring for their pets. "This year's expenditures will include \$16.1 billion for food, \$9.8 billion for veterinary care, \$9.9 billion for supplies and over-the-counter medications, \$2.1 billion for live animal purchases and \$2.9 billion for pet services, including grooming and boarding." (Seale, 2007) The literature shows that marketing and advertising for pets is aimed at Boomers.



*Maxwell Poppy (left) and Bella Star
(Johnnie, Residential Services Coordinator)*

Generation Xers are the children of the Baby Boomers. While they weigh the decision to have children due to careers or decide not to have children, pets are filling the void. Some Generation Xers opt to have pets in place of children. With the humanization of pets and no children, this generation uses their disposable income to provide their pets with a lavish lifestyle.

Generation Y, also referred to as "Millennial" or "Echo Boomers," is characterized as exceptionally tech-savvy and tend to have virtual pets. A virtual or digital pet is a type of artificial human companion kept for companionship or enjoyment in lieu of a real pet. Virtual pets can be found on various websites, handheld games or computers. The pets can be simulations of real animals or fantasy ones (Wikipedia). These pets can be personalized and made to do whatever the pet owner wants. This generation is sometimes described as over-scheduled. Perhaps adopting a virtual pet does not harm the pet if the person cannot meet the companionship needs. Although there are trends amongst pet owners, it is prudent to remember that diversity exists within generations.

Information from this article was taken from: "Can Pet Ownership Improve the Health of Baby Boomers?" by Dr. Diane Pomerance; "Take One Pet and Call Me in the Morning" by Suthers-McCable, H. Marie, Generations (Summer 2001); "Pet Spending at an All-Time High" by American Pet Products Manufacturing Associations, Inc. (2006); "Boomers Spend Freely on their Pets" by Kathy Seale (2007).

“Beating”^{the} Blues

THE “SOUL” CONNECTION

What do the words Djembe (JEM-bay), Djun Djun (dun-dun), Ashiko (AH-she-koh), Bongo (bong-goh), and Conga all have in common? They are all types of drums used in the new enrichment group offered by the Community Support Program through TSI. The group is coordinated by world-renowned master drummer **Elie Kihonia**, who contracts with TSI to bring this class to life. Every Monday evening at the Smithfield United Church of Christ located in downtown Pittsburgh, members of class assemble to play the drums in a group setting.

In addition to learning how to play a new instrument, the class helps its members learn how to improve their interpersonal communication and reduce stress all through the medium of drumming. Elie combines allegorical storytelling into the lesson plans that address issues of valuing yourself and respect for others. He states that the word drum in Africa means “soul” and that, through drumming, our souls are nurtured and we connect with each other without having to speak. Members have expressed feelings of well being and relaxation after attending just one class. They are able to channel anger, aggression and stress into the physical action of beating the drum. They are also challenged to not only



pay attention to how they are playing as individuals, but to listen to the others as they are playing to make the sound come together as a group. Through this mechanism of playing an instrument, people have an ability to let go of their shyness and enjoy the connection of the group.

The group has aspirations of taking their show on the road in the coming months. Each member is encouraged to bring pieces of

spoken word writings, poems, or songs they may have written, and Elie takes the lead with putting them to a beat. These songs are hoped to be a part of the repertoire in a performance that is taking shape at the time of this article.

If you are interested in participating in the group, or getting more information, contact the Community Support Program at 412-464-4370 x225.

TSI Introduces New Housing Resource Guide



A booklet designed to help persons who are recovering from mental illness and others find decent, safe and affordable housing—***Housing Resource Guide***—is now available. Upon its release, Community Care immediately ordered 30 copies. To receive your complementary copy, please contact us at **412-461-1322**.



ART Wanted

TSI is looking for your art and forms of expression to be used in the upcoming annual report. If you have created a picture, poem, painting, song or some other form of expression that can be shared, please send a copy of your art to **Jennifer Mullins** (412-464-4370 ext. 225) by December 5, 2008.

ART Sake

A Resounding Success

TSI has once again partnered with the Steel Valley Arts Council (SVAC) to display remarkable works of art by the persons we serve. Drawing from the current social emphasis on being “green” and in keeping with TSI’s focus on recovery and renewal, this year’s theme was “Recycle for ARTSake.” Artists who have been participating in the weekly art classes submitted work for display and sale. This year’s exhibit marked the first time TSI service users’ art has encompassed the entire show. However, we did not want that focus to be one that would perpetuate stigma, serving instead to highlight individual talent and interests.

Works of art made from stacks of newspapers bound together with ribbon and duct tape embellished front-page headlines from this past year formed the installation *The Year in Review*. Paintings on canvas, reused window frames painted and decorated to catch the sun’s rays, one artist’s words captured in print on a storm window and illuminated from behind, and a sunny installation comprised of a chalkboard-painted table and flowered and beaded chairs are just a few examples of the work that were on display. Each item created had used materials that are commonly

recycled, such as plastic bottles, wire, wood and newspapers. One of the artists chose a very pragmatic approach by creating what is called a “ready-made.” He used an old boot, a silk flower bouquet and a cardboard egg crate to create a three-dimensional sculpture. This piece was one of the popular items in the show, and guests delighted in its whimsy. Woven hats



The Brown Whale by Prevon Mitchell

were created by an artist who introduced a highly unique style by shredding and weaving plastic shopping bags to make tassels.

The painting *The Brown Whale* was supported by the artists own retelling of his story of how the whale came to be known. Window

frames and chairs from the store *Construction Junction* were revamped with each artist’s unique flair. It was an eclectic showing.

The opening reception, which was held on the evening of Saturday, September 6, 2008, was an empowering experience for many of the artists. There were over 70 guests in attendance throughout the evening; including the artists friends, family, staff, board members and supporters of TSI. SVAC had many members who attended the reception as well. Guests were asked to participate in the opening by signing the “guest book,” which was simply a table that was painted with chalkboard paint and part of the installation named *It’s Easy Being Green*. There were so many guests that the party spilled out onto 8th Avenue, giving the appearance of an impromptu block party at one point. Most every artist was in attendance; and most every one of them was amazed that their hard work was getting so much positive attention. They shared their enthusiasm with one another, and a few were overheard saying that they would begin working on projects for next year’s show. In the grand scheme of things, it is not that far away.



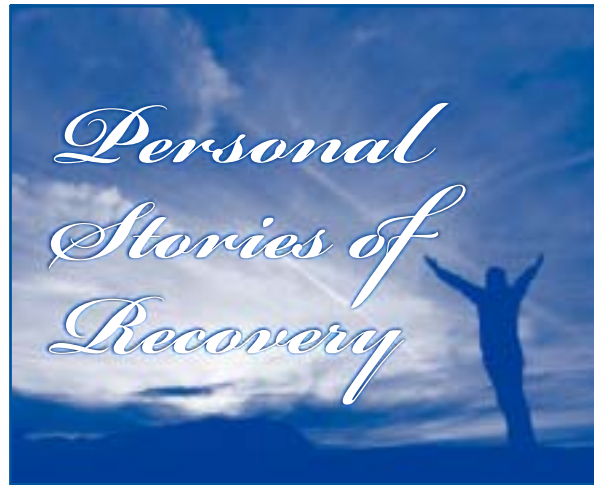
Jackson at the Pittsburgh Zoo. Photo by Kevin O’Connell.

Lions and Tigers and You... Oh My!

For **Danielle James**, teaching visitors to the Pittsburgh Zoo about the animals they come to visit has been a great experience. She’s been a docent (volunteer guide) there for over five months. She chose a position there because of her great love of animals; in addition to her job, she cares for two fish and a bird at home. While she enjoys meeting visitors to the zoo, her favorite part of her job is “mainly the animals. Animals have a great love for people.”

Getting a volunteer position at the zoo was a lot of hard work. “There are three months of classes—a lot of book work. At the end of the three months there’s a test. But after the classes, the reward is interacting with some great animals.”

If you are interested in more information about the Pittsburgh Zoo & PPG Aquarium, check out www.pittsburghzoo.com.



THE WRITTEN WORD IS A POWERFUL TOOL in one's recovery process. Through dialogue exchange or writing personal stories of recovery, the person begins to take ownership of their experiences and can grow past the detrimental effects of living with a mental illness. These stories serve to illustrate how each individual's experience has shaped their lives, and what they are doing to move forward.

***TSI Living** will feature these stories penned by those persons served by our residential programs. Through this article, it is hoped that others living with or touched by the effects of mental illness can gain insight and hope from the stories within and continue to move forward on their path of recovery.*

OVERCOMING YOUR ILLNESS

I was first diagnosed with a severe mental illness in 1995, my sophomore year at the university level. When I first received the diagnosis, it felt as if my hopes, aspirations and dreams would never materialize. The stigma surrounding mental illness in 1995 was much worse than it is today in 2008. It felt as if I'd done something to be ashamed of, something to keep secret. I did not know what to believe, whether or not I could ever recover. Could I ever realize my aspirations? My life has not been easy over the course of the last 13 years. The truth is that mental illness has inflicted an immeasurable amount of pain upon me. The delusions and fears seemed so real to me when I was in the grips of the illness. It is only these last three-plus years that my illness has been under control. It has been a combination of medicine and other support structures which have helped keep me grounded in reality. Many of my dreams and hopes did not materialize, but the same can be said about many people who

do not have a mental illness. I have different goals and hopes now. I try to be a benefit to others, to do good works.

I have had to learn to not fight my illness or the mental health system. I will often talk freely about some of the things I have had to overcome. I have found medication, doctors and support groups which have helped keep me healthy and out of a hospital. I have learned to trust my caregivers instead of being suspicious of them. I understand that the medications I take help keep me grounded and in good mental health. I regularly see a therapist, and we talk about any issues which may be bothering me. I no longer consume alcohol. I live in a three-quarter house, where I am given my own apartment. I pay my own bills and have finally found a rest from the decade-long battle I waged against mental illness. I cannot express how good it feels to be free from the delusions and terror that mental illness causes. I look forward to good health—everything else comes after. I plan to keep doing the things

which have worked for me over the course of these last years.

I would like every person with a mental illness to know that there is hope that they can recover. They, too, can be relieved of the horrors of their illness. A person with a mental illness is often very suspicious of authority figures, often in the grips of a dual illness with alcohol and drugs. The mentally ill I've encountered often believe that there is no hope of recovery. I can testify to the fact that the system is there to help those of us with a mental illness and that a good life is possible. There are a great many people suffering from mental illness. There is no reason for them to be ashamed of their illness. There is no reason to believe that life will never improve for those with a mental illness. Those with a mental illness, however, must make an effort to recover and have hope that they can overcome their illness.

This Just In: Trends Are Not Limited to Fashion Alone

TSI concluded the 2007/08 fiscal year in June, and the service and satisfaction results are now in. The results or outcomes show that individuals served, family members and providers are once again solidly satisfied with TSI's services. Overall, the established goals and expectations were met or exceeded for nearly all program outcomes.

Recalling the definition of quality from the last edition of the newsletter, it is generally defined as "meeting or exceeding expectations." TSI, by meeting nearly all of its program performance goals, has once again shown it is striving to remain a *quality* organization. The 'quality' label is supported by measures as well as direct feedback from stakeholders. Evaluating TSI's service quality requires review of the measurement results and stakeholder feedback. Careful review of these results can reveal things that sometimes occur repeatedly across several years or review cycles. The repeat results are referred to as *trends*. Identifying trends helps TSI better understand what areas of service should be changed or continued.

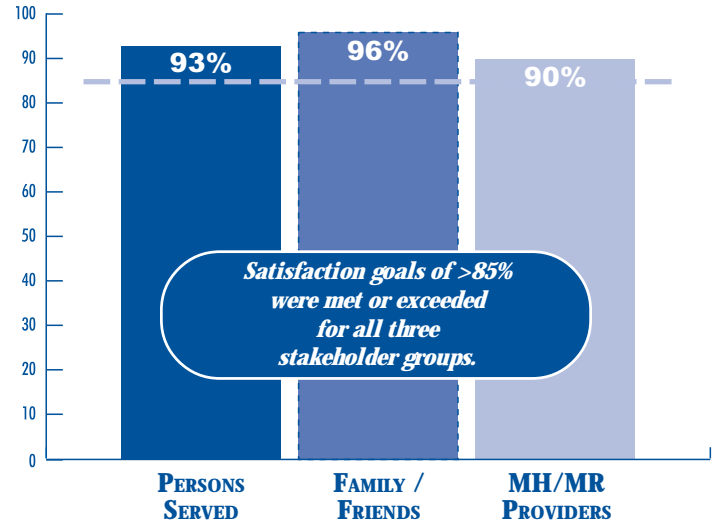
Looking at the chart to the right, two examples of trends can be seen. The MH CRR (on the left) shows an improvement trend, whereas the MH SL side of the chart seems to be showing a declining trend (on the right). Now aware of these trends and others, TSI will work during the next fiscal year to sustain the positive ones and address those that seem to indicate declines. For more information about trends and the overall quality of TSI's programs, call the Administrative Office and ask for **Craig**.

The target of 85% was exceeded for all three stakeholder groups. The target of 65% was only met by MH CRR in fiscal year 07/08.

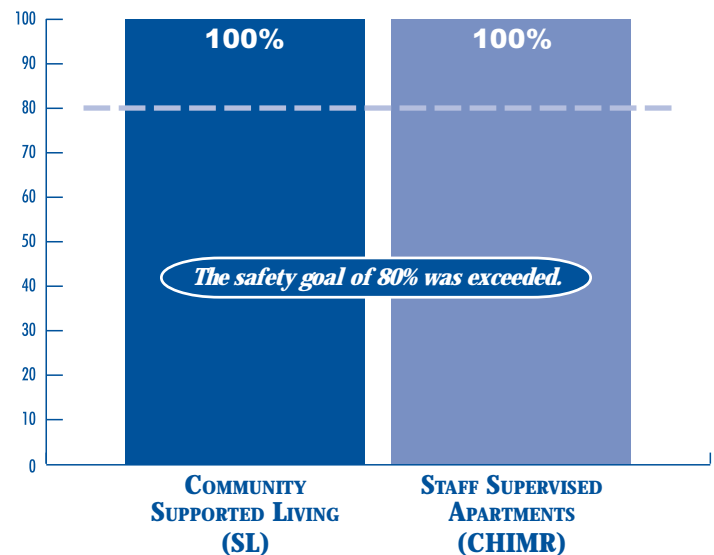


Sharon Alberts, pictured with officials from Homestead, Munhall and Allegheny County, attended a ribbon-cutting ceremony on Friday, Sept. 5, 2008. Sharon is the president for the Homestead-area Economic Revitalization Corporation (HERC). Mon Valley Initiative (MVI) and HERC partnered to build homes throughout the Mon Valley area. MVI also offers education and counseling to first-time home buyers.

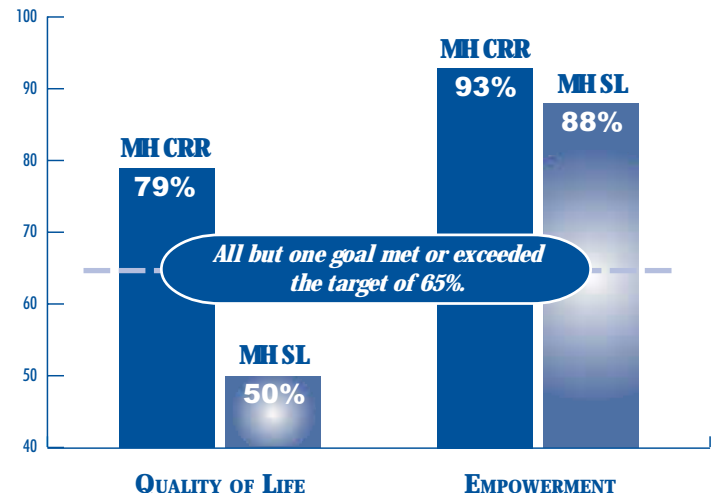
Stakeholder Satisfaction FY 2007-08



Individuals Living Safely in the Community (MR) FY 2007-08



Rehabilitation and Recovery Indicators (MH) FY 2007-08



Pets and Apawtment Living

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Preventative care can save pet owners a lot of worry and money. Dr. Ron gives four tips to keep the doctor away:



Clarabelle
(Janet, Longo)

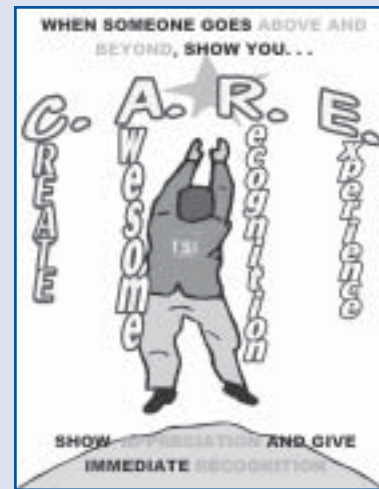
- 1 Read the labels on pet food and products. For example, there are about 20 kinds of cat food on the market, and some have too high a level of ash; these don't protect against urinary tract infections.
- 2 On a routine basis, clean dogs' and cats' ears to prevent ear infections.
- 3 Keep your pet fit and trim. Do not feed pets table food, especially during their first year of life. Extra weight increases the likelihood of arthritis, diabetes and cancer.
- 4 Practice good dental hygiene with cats and dogs. Brush your pet's teeth to extend the time between expensive cleanings at your vet's office. Have plenty of things for your dog to chew on to help keep his teeth clean. Dry pet food also helps to keep teeth clean.

Selecting a pet is a big undertaking. Your needs, concerns, fears, medical history (allergies) and personality should be carefully considered.



Sam (Paul, Royer)

Your decision should take into consideration the amount of responsibility you are willing to take, and the amount of time and money you anticipate spending with the pet. Be realistic when searching for that perfect pet.



Exceeding the ABOVE and Moving BEYOND

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**Transitional
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**Helping People with Mental Disabilities
to Achieve Quality Lives**

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Transitional Services, Inc. has been accredited by CARF for the following programs:

- *Community Housing: Psychosocial Rehabilitation (Adults)*
- *Community Services: Community Living Services*

♦ Mission Statement

TRANSITIONAL SERVICES, INC. is an innovative human services organization transitioning people with mental health and mental retardation disabilities into the community. We are committed to fostering an environment that provides quality services for all of our customers. Through creativity, respect and partnership, we continue to assist individuals in need to gain the skills necessary to be as self-sufficient and independent as possible through the provision of residential and rehabilitative services.

♦ Vision Statement

WE WILL BE RECOGNIZED AS A REGIONAL LEADER in services provision for people with mental health, mental retardation and other related disabilities. We will provide life-changing opportunities for those we serve to grow individually as people, community participants, and to inspire others in their growth and recovery.