

# Union Station News

The Newsletter of the Members and Staff of Union Station Clubhouse

## Members' Dream Vacations



### "My Dream Vacation is Disney World"

If I could choose any place to visit since Mickey and Minnie Mouse got married it has been Disney World. With the dream makeover for establishing a new look that was expensive, Mickey and Minnie met Porky Pig and his friends to think about what the makeover would be like. Me and my friend Ace Goode, have been working diligently to rise before the sun and truly understand that people here made life a lot smoother. The ice cream at Disney World made me come back and want to visit again. Other reasons that I want to visit Disney World include the reputation, the sights, sounds, and comradely and all the festivities. Additionally, my favorite characters include Daffy Duck, Bugs Bunny, and the Road Runner. I hope that one day Wyle E. Coyote will catch his prey in the form of the road runner. Charles E Jones over and out.

By The Charles E J.

### Untraditional Vacation

My dream vacation would be biking the Great Allegheny Passage and Chesapeake & Ohio Canal Towpath. Both trails combined you can traverse from Pittsburgh and right through Connellsville, connecting to the towpath at Cumberland, Maryland the rest of the way to Washington, DC. With the trail going literally through my backyard, there is ample opportunities to make smaller segmented trips or make one larger one which has been dubbed as the "ride of your life". I hope sometime in my life that will be able to see all parts of the trail and not on a computer or television screen.

~Dustin M.

### New York, City of Dreams By Amanda C.



I am writing this article about New York City because I have visited this city many times since the twin towers incident, so many have lost count. At the beginning, I visited New York to see a certain person, but now I go to sight see, shop, go to shows, movies, and eat at interesting restaurants. When I visit New York, I stay in a hotel in the area of 35<sup>th</sup> St, which is considered midtown. An example of a restaurant I visit when I am there is the Cheesecake Factory and Hershey Chocolate Factory. My favorite desert to order when I am at these restaurants is the strawberry cheesecake, and they are humongous. Additionally, I have seen several theatres shows on Broadway, they included Chicago, Kiss Me Kate. In the Chicago production the R&B singer Usher has a starring role. I almost received a rose from him. Furthermore, I viewed the Empire State Building, The Twin Tower Renovation Project, and ground zero. Lastly, I went on a horse and buggy ride in Central Park, rode the Staten Island Ferry, and shopped for gifts at many places in Little Italy. To end, I am glad to visit New York as many times as I have and to keep the tradition going.

### Inside this issue

- Member Stories ..... 1
- Autism Month . 2
- MCO News..... 3
- Recipes ..... 3-5
- COVID-19 / Virtual Support Info . 7

### Meetings on Zoom

- House Meeting:  
Mondays @ 2 PM
- Unit Development Meeting:  
Friday 4/29 @ 2:00 PM

# Autism Awareness / Acceptance Month

## Standard of the Issue:

3. Members choose the way they utilize the Clubhouse, and the staff with whom they work. There are no agreements, contracts, schedules, or rules intended to enforce participation of members.

## What is Autism Spectrum Disorder?

Autism spectrum disorder (ASD) is a complex developmental condition involving persistent challenges with social communication, restricted interests, and repetitive behavior. While autism is considered a lifelong disorder, the degree of impairment in functioning because of these challenges varies between individuals with autism.

Autism affects the whole family. It can be stressful, time-consuming and expensive. Paying attention to the physical and emotional health of the whole family is important. Many national and local advocacy organizations provide information, resources and support to individuals with autism spectrum disorder and their families.

However while autism is a spectrum disorder, what effects one person may not affect another person in the same manner, no two autistic individuals are alike and there is a wide array of experiences one may exhibit.

April is Autism Acceptance Month. For several years until 2021, it was and still is in some cases known as Autism Awareness Month.

I always had the signs from an early age but due to my ability to communicate, I was diagnosed until 1998 with Asperger's Syndrome, although it has since been removed with the last DSM revision, I still get to keep my diagnoses which took a long road to get to that point.

I continued down to a long journey through many services to where I am today. Having a relapse and the COVID-19 Pandemic brought to light my need to drive some of my advocacy skills towards Autism Advocacy, therefore I write weekly blogs, vlogs and manage the website [dust-  
insdynastyusa.com](http://dust-insdynastyusa.com) to share my story along with sharing things from it across several social media platforms.

This year, I am privileged to be a part of Fayette County Behavioral Health Administration's County Leadership Team Autism Subcommittee where I get to share my lived experience to hold an event on April 21st connecting autistic individuals and their families with first respond-

ers.

I also got to go to the March Commissioners reading and stand along a family member of an autistic individual for the reading of the Autism Awareness Month proclamation, proclaiming April as Autism Awareness Month right here in Fayette County. This was planned to happen a few years ago, however COVID halted this.

I proudly accept my diagnosis and wouldn't change anything about it, although it should be noted that Autism is a neurological condition and I have a host of other mental health challenges, which is common for autistics.

~Dustin M.



## My Story on Autism

My diagnosis and opinion on Autism is that it is a biological condition where it affects the genes in one's body. There is a special kind of person that is quite like no other. It allows the person to succeed within their own personal struggles. A main person with Autism has many talents but can be challenged by some parts of life when at work or with people. My nephew who has emotional difficulties was a sweet person who lived to be in his mid-thirties. He eventually went on to be with his lord and saviors. When evaluating situations, I believe there is this condition that can be rectified with love and affection. Autism can have problems and power.

~Charles E. J.

## Buffalo Chicken Mac and Cheese

INGREDIENTS	INSTRUCTIONS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ 16 ounces elbow macaroni, cooked according to package directions</li> <li>◆ ½ cup unsalted butter</li> <li>◆ ½ cup all-purpose flour</li> <li>◆ 3 cups whole milk</li> <li>◆ 1 teaspoon fine sea salt</li> <li>◆ 1 teaspoon ground black pepper</li> <li>◆ 1 teaspoon onion powder</li> <li>◆ 1 teaspoon garlic powder</li> <li>◆ ½ teaspoon ground mustard</li> <li>◆ 2 cups white cheddar cheese, shredded</li> <li>◆ 2 cups monterey jack cheese, shredded</li> <li>◆ ½ cup buffalo sauce, plus more for garnish-optional</li> <li>◆ 2 cups diced cooked chicken</li> <li>◆ blue cheese crumbles for garnish (optional)</li> <li>◆ sliced green onions for garnish (optional)</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. In a large pot or Dutch oven, melt the butter over medium-low heat.</li> <li>2. Add flour and whisk into the melted butter until fully incorporated. Slowly whisk in the milk, about ½ cup at a time, whisking well after each addition. Continue to cook, whisking often, until the mixture is smooth and begins to thicken slightly.</li> <li>3. Whisk in the salt, pepper, onion powder, garlic powder, and ground mustard.</li> <li>4. Reduce heat to low and add the cheddar and Monterey Jack cheeses and stir until melted and smooth.</li> <li>5. Add in the buffalo sauce, cooked pasta, and diced chicken; stir to combine. Continue to cook until warmed through, about 10 minutes.</li> <li>6. Serve warm, topped with blue cheese crumbles and sliced green onions if desired.</li> </ol> <p>~Krysta C.</p>



## Beacon Member and Family Zoom Meeting Calls Continue Into 2022

Beacon Health Options Prevention, Education, and Outreach Department invites you to join us on a Zoom meeting. The purpose of the call is to share information, updates and provide opportunities to network with other Beacon members and family members. The meeting will be hosted by Beacon's Prevention, Education and Outreach staff. We welcome Beacon members and families to join us. All calls are from 1:00 pm - 2:00 pm on the following dates:

- April 25, 2022
- June 27, 2022
- August 22nd, 2022
- October 24th, 2022

One can join via the videoconferencing app Zoom by following the [link](#)  
Meeting ID: 944 1973 2463  
Passcode: 052147

If unable to join by the Zoom link above, please dial in on the specific date at 1:00pm EST 1-646-876-9923 to join by phone. The Meeting ID and Passcode are listed above.

Member trainings will be virtual again this year with plans to hold them on the First Friday of the month at 1:00 PM and the last Thursday of the month at 2:30, beginning in March.

## Beacon Member/Family Trainings Schedule

- ⇒ Thursday, April 28, 2022 from 2:45 PM to 3:45 PM Dr. Matthew B. Wintersteen, PhD from the Thomas Jefferson University, Department of Psychiatry & Human Behavior will be sharing **The 211 is 988?**  
[Registration Link](#)
- ⇒ Friday, April 29th, 2022 from 1:00 to 2:30 PM Rachel Shuster, BSN, RN, CARN, CAAP from Highmark Wholecare and Jennifer Ritchey, RN, CARN will be sharing their recovery journeys in the discussion **“Substance Use in Healthcare: Two nurses Share their Recovery Journeys.”**  
[Registration Link](#)
- ⇒ On May 26, 2022, from 2:30 PM until 3:45 be explaining the Enrollment Process for Medical Assistance.
- ⇒ On Friday, June 3, 2022 from 1:00 PM to 2:00 PM. Dr. Mahmood Usman from Beacon Health Options will be giving some history and a update on COVID, registration on that training will be also available soon.
- ⇒ On Friday, July 8, 2022 from 1:00 PM to 2:15 PM, Kathy Quick, the Executive Director of PHMCA will be explaining **Advance Directives**  
[Registration Link](#)

## Doing What's Important

Life can be challenging, COVID has taught us that more than anything. It has taught us that we need to sometimes do things that we may find unpleasant or unwanted. For me specifically, it taught me that I cannot be act like a child or fight with others to get what I want because I don't like what I have to face.

When we become adults something that has to be understood we cant do what we really want to sometimes. Many times, there's expectations we have to make to get things we need or even protect our mental health.

It can be hard sometimes to do what we don't have to do because we don't want to, however we must understand it is likely expected of us to do it because it has been proven to be beneficial although our brain may not see it in that way.

We may want to express our anger or other dislikes for something thinking we will get things in our favor, and while we may need to advocate for a valid reason, it must be understood that expressing your view or concern for something isn't necessarily the way to get things your way.

Expressing your frustration in an

argumentative manner could likely result in your concern being further dismissed and not validated. It must be remembered that we must always choose our words wisely and think about them before we communicate them in any format.

I have come so far in my journey, but it is an ongoing process that I am learning that I must continue to understand although I don't like what I have to go through in the present moment, what I am experiencing is only temporary and using my coping skills, if necessary the feeling will void itself and I will move on.

It has taken decades of services to get to the point where I can do the things that I am doing in the present moment. There is for sure more growing to do and someday I can close more chapters and open new ones.

Life is what you make it and while you may think where you are is unpleasant, you must always keep your head up and work on Improving yourself and keeping yourself well.

~Dustin M.

## Pecan Rice Pudding

### Ingredients

- 1 quart milk
- 2 ¼ cups uncooked white rice
- ⅓ cup maple syrup
- 1 teaspoon grated lemon zest
- ½ cup pecan halves

### Directions

In a medium saucepan over medium heat, bring rice and milk to a boil. Reduce heat, cover and simmer 25 minutes. Stir in maple syrup, lemon zest and pecans. Pour into serving dishes and chill until set.

~Quinn P.

Spring Blooms!



## Grilled Ham and Cheese Sandwich

### Ingredients

- ◆ 2 Slices White Bread
- ◆ About 2 tablespoons (1 oz) unsalted or clarified butter at room temperature, until melted
- ◆ Dijon-Style Mustard
- ◆ 2 thin slices cooked ham
- ◆ 1/4 cup grated or 2 thin slices Gruyere Cheese
- ◆ Sea Salt and Freshly ground black pepper

3. Pile the ham and cheese on a slice of bread, season with salt and pepper to taste, and then top with the other bread slice, mustard-side down.
4. Melt the remaining butter in a skillet over medium or medium-high heat. Gently place the sandwich in the skillet and let it cook, flipping over until making sure each side of the sandwich is fully toasted.
5. Serve

~Quinn P.

### Directions

1. Place both slices of bread on your work surface.
2. Spread some of the butter on top of each slice of bread, then spread the mustard on top of the butter.

## Maple Baked Apples

### Ingredients

- 4 large apples
- ¾ cup maple syrup
- ½ cup (about 2 ounces) walnut pieces
- ¼ cup golden raisins
- 2 tablespoons unsalted butter, cut into pieces
- Ice cream (optional)

### Directions

1. Heat oven to 400° F.
2. Using a paring knife, remove the cores and trim about a 1/2-inch slice from the bottom of each apple, so they sit flat.
3. Place the apples in an ovenproof skillet or 8- to 9-inch baking dish. Drizzle with the syrup.
4. Divide the walnuts and raisins among

the apples, filling the cavities, and place any extra in the dish. Dot the apples with the butter.

5. Bake until tender, 40 to 50 minutes. If using a baking dish, pour the liquid from the dish into a skillet. Bring to a boil over medium heat.
6. Cook until it thickens slightly, 2 to 3 minutes. Spoon the sauce over the warm apples and serve with the ice cream, if desired.

Tip: Gala and Rome Beauty apples are ideal for baking because they retain their shape.

~Jesse B,

NEED HELP ??

- ⇒ Fayette County Crisis Line  
724-437-1003
- ⇒ National Suicide Prevention Lifeline  
1-800-273-TALK (8255)  
Veterans Press 1
- ⇒ Crisis Text Line:  
Text "PA" to 741-741
- ⇒ Pennsylvania Sexual Assault Help-  
line – 1-888-772-7227
- ⇒ National Domestic Violence Help-  
line – 1-800-799-7233
- ⇒ Persevere PA (COVID-19 Crisis  
Counseling Program) -  
1-855-284-2494

More Helplines are at:

<http://www.unionstationclubhouse.com/hotlines.html>



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A program of Goodwill South-  
western Pennsylvania  
[www.goodwillswpa.org](http://www.goodwillswpa.org)

**Goodwill**  
Southwestern Pennsylvania 

## Virtual Support Groups through MHA of SW Penna.

Contact Heather Mclean  
@ [hmclean@mhaswpa.org](mailto:hmclean@mhaswpa.org) or (724) 433-1359  
for further info.

- **Aging Up Support Group (Transitional  
Ages 18-26)** Every 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Monday of  
every month  
Time: 4:00PM-5:00PM
- **MH Support Group (Mental Health)**  
Every 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Tuesday of every month  
Time: 1:00PM-2:00PM
- **LGBTQ+ Support Group**  
Every 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Tuesday of every month  
Time: 6:00PM-7:00PM
- **The "Anyone" Support Group (For any-  
one wanting to talk)**  
Every 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday of each  
month  
Time: 6:00PM-7:00PM

## Current COVID-19 Information & Resources

- ⇒ Federal Government Re-  
sponse:  
[www.coronavirus.gov](http://www.coronavirus.gov)
- ⇒ PA Department of Health In-  
formation  
[https://www.health.pa.gov/  
topics/disease/Pages/  
Coronavirus.aspx](https://www.health.pa.gov/topics/disease/Pages/Coronavirus.aspx)
- ⇒ Fayette Area Coronavirus  
Needs / Availability Group:  
[https://www.facebook.com/  
groups/211053520110419/](https://www.facebook.com/groups/211053520110419/)
- ⇒ Clubhouse Calendars:
  - ⇒ Public Events
  - ⇒ Stakeholder/Webinar
  - ⇒ Food Distributions

## Lonely? Try a Warm line!

A Warm line is a peer-run hotline that offers callers emotional sup-  
port and is staffed by volunteers who are in recovery themselves.

- Allegheny County Warm line  
(866) 661-9276  
Daily, 9am – 1am (EST)
- Community Behavioral Health  
(855) 507-9276  
M-F 4 – 7 pm (EST)
- Community Behavioral Health  
Philadelphia Warmline  
1-855-507-9276 or 1-855-507-  
3945  
Mon-Fri, 10am-12pm, 1-3pm, 4  
- 7pm (EST)
- Contact Altoona  
(814) 946-9050  
Daily, 7am-11pm (EST)
- Contact Helpline (211)  
(800) 932-4616,  
press 8; 24/7
- Valley Creek Crisis Center  
Warm Line  
(866) 846-2722  
M-F 8am – 10pm; Sat-Sun  
10am-10pm (EST)
- Persevere PA  
COVID-19 Crisis Counseling Pro-  
gram,  
1-855-284-2494; 24/7