# YAHARA HOUSE QUARTERLY JOURNAL



TRANSFORMING THE LIVES OF PEOPLE LIVING WITH MENTAL ILLNESS REPLACING DESPAIR, STIGMA & ISOLATION WITH HOPE, DIGNITY, & COMMUNITY

## 2025 Funding Alert

Yahara House (YH) will not receive any increase in funding from Dane County in 2025. To compensate for cost-of-living increases, we need to bring in new revenue. We could use your help more than ever.

Your contributions help grow the YH community, which is founded on a sense of belonging, inclusivity, and reduction of stigma and bias. YH is a family that supports its members. Your contributions go toward:

- · Training colleagues and members
- Clubhouse International training
- Accreditation
- Member access to resources
- Clubhouse improvements
- Weekend, holiday, & after-hours events

We could also use donations of winter coats, hats, gloves, boots, and scarves for our members.

Donations are tax-deductible, and no donation is too small. Your donation will help us serve our uninsured members while we explore other funding options.

## PLEASE DONATE TO YAHARA HOUSE





## Tokyo Experience

By Karen Nicholas

In November 2024, our colleague Shannon Schaefer visited Sun Marina, the clubhouse in Tokyo, Japan. She got lost trying to find the clubhouse. Fortunately, every street in Tokyo has a police kiosk, and she was able to ask for directions. This turned out to be one of her favorite moments, and even with the language barrier, she made it to the Clubhouse successfully.

Shannon shared that Sun Marina is smaller than Yahara House, with 15 colleagues daily in the clubhouse. Like Yahara House, they have a Transitional Employment Program, a vital piece of any Clubhouse. During lunches there was no designated dishwasher, but each colleague washed their own dishes. They use whiteboards similar to the ones we use at Yahara House.

The Instagram page for Sun Marina featured daily lunches, as well photos of everyday Clubhouse work. Shannon hopes that Yahara House will use Instagram more after seeing how Sun Marina uses the platform.



Advocate Shannon S. with Sun Marina Colleagues

## MEET OUR NEW YAHARA HOUSE STAFF



## Heidi Nass MC Department

#### Why did you choose to work at Yahara House?

After touring, I realized the Clubhouse model just really resonated with my own values; the way I like to be treated, the way I like to treat people. The way people heal is through community.

#### What is your educational background?

My undergrad was in Psychology. I did some graduate work in journalism and have a JD.

## When you were a child, what did you want to be when you grew up?

I honestly don't remember. I have always enjoyed animals a lot, and I like learning. I love drawing and stories.

## If you could meet anyone, dead or alive, who would it be and why?

The Buddha. Because, why not?

## What kind of animal would you want as a pet?

I like the wild ones. I love cats and dogs.

## What is the most rewarding thing about working in the mental health field?

The mind and body always want to heal. There is always potential and a path, it's just a matter of patience, the right environment, and opportunity.

#### What are some of your favorite songs?

My default favorite band is The Talking Heads. My default go-to music is '80s new wave.

## **Medical Health** Pharmacy TEP BY KARL HERRING & DAVE REED

A TEP is a Transitional Employment Position held on a job site and co-managed by employers and Yahara House. Such jobs are of limited term, handed down from one member to the next.



## **Evie Tennant** Café Department

#### Why did you choose to work at Yahara House?

I've always been interested in mental health, and I had heard good things about Yahara House. The side-by-side aspect really stood out to me.

#### What is your educational background?

I have a Bachelor in Psychology.

#### When you were a child, what did you want to be when you grew up?

I always thought I wanted to work with animals and people, or marine biology.

## If you could meet anyone, dead or alive, who would it be and why?

I'd meet my dad's grandpa. I think he passed away when I was a year old, so I never really knew him.

## What kind of animal would you want as a pet?

I'd love to have a Maine Coon cat. Or a wiener dog.

#### What is the most rewarding thing about working in the mental health field?

Being there for somebody to talk about their day or struggles. I have noticed that there are some people who were reserved to talk to me, and now they are more open, which is cool to see growth in that relationship.

#### What are some of your favorite songs?

I really like Lana Del Rey, Reggae music, so Ziggy Marley, and Pink Floyd.

"It's going well," per Karl. "It's a good work environment, with really nice coworkers. I like working in a pharmacy setting. It's interesting.' Karl started working this job on November 7th, and his tenure at the job will end in August

"I help in the back room with disposing of returned medications. I sort the medications and place them in different trash bins," Karl said.

## Day of Giving Thanks

BY DAVE REED

Are you a Yahara House newbie? Have you skipped our Day of Giving Thanks (DOGT) celebrations in the past? Have you somehow never heard of this, our Yahara House annual traditional holiday celebration? Or, really, have you just crawled out from under a rock somewhere?

We celebrate the fall solstice-harvest season-imminent onset of winter football season-American turkey day-welcome back to 4:30 sunsets-celebration of months with a 'V' in them, by cooking up a batch of different foods with and without animal protein--of course, veggies including taters, tart steamed swamp berries, onion and sage-flavored bread casserole, various families' traditional hand-me-down desserts, and other whatnots omitted here but dear to our collective hearts.

Every year on the day before Thanksgiving we celebrate with the best of the best from our Catfish Café. We ignore the weather and come out to see friends, family, associate members, and staff. We sit down to a feast together, and we honor the living and those passed.

DOGT is probably the most traditional holiday we celebrate--but no, wait, that's not true. I mean, we honor all the other traditional holiday celebrations, like the mean summer picnic every Fourth of July. But DOGT seems especially welcoming and traditional. For example, this is the one holiday event in which we permit, accept, welcome, and celebrate as both members and not, and with friends, family, and the invited members of our greater Madison community.

I don't even know when or where the DOGT started. Was it always part of the global Clubhouse movement? Was it a legacy of some ancient social program? Or was it like the expression 'like Topsy, it just grew?'

In loving memory of Dave Reed, a final contribution from a longtime member.





(LEFT TO RIGHT) AARON, ELIZABETH, EVIE, & LAURA PHOTO BY MARK SUCHANEK

But there is a special warmth to DOGT, even as the weather chills, the sun goes down before the 5 o'clock news, and the nights are cold and long. I mean, if no one had started a holiday where we all gave thanks, it seems almost inevitable that someone would have eventually. Further, it also seems obvious that for such an invented holiday as this one, it would also almost have to be at winter's onset.

Anyway, if you've never been to DOGT before, well, you are in for something special. Distant people return, members and staff not seen of late, and current members and staff bring guests, as we celebrate this special day together, and partake in a number of people's favorite family recipes. We also provide substitution foodstuffs for those with unique or modified diets. This special holiday we come together to greet, give thanks, and prepare for what otherwise would be a winter of discontent, but in which we work and plan and help each other through another harvest fall.



## Roller Derby Rec Event

BY JOE BREWER AND BRIAN GILIECK

Our January recreation event was Madison Roller Derby, which was held at the Alliant Energy Veterans Memorial Coliseum. Like Yahara House, roller derby has an eclectic crowd, is family-friendly, and is LGBTQ+ welcoming. And the best part is people are having fun!

Roller Derby is a modern competitive sport that stems from the roller derby of the 1970s. It is a high-speed, full-contact race on skates around a flat oval track. There are jammers who score the points and blockers who try to prevent them from scoring.

Each team has five skaters on the track - a jammer, one pivot (the only person allowed to both jam and block), and three blockers. Two teams compete in a bout, which includes several two-minute jams during two 30-minute periods.

The four teams in the league compete in double-header events. There is a carnival atmosphere with lots of colorful costumes and excitement, even mascots and energetic announcers!



PHOTO BY NATE WALL



## Catfish Café Works

BY DAVE REED

The simplicity of serving the meals in Catfish Cafe belies the work behind it all. There's planning the menus, ordering the groceries, picking them up, putting it all away, cooking the meal, taking orders and serving everyone. On top of this, there's the logistics of running the kitchen, cleaning the space, preparing vegetarian alternatives, putting away leftovers, and doing all the dishes. Then afterward, we clean up and get ready to do it again tomorrow.

Meal prices are very affordable and the money collected per meal sustains the process. The labor costs are cheap, thanks to the Catfish Café department members and the house colleagues who help with shopping, cooking, waiting tables, cleanup, and dish duty crew.

Is that everything? Far from it. Remember that someone cuts those carrots for the salad bar, someone else makes the coffee and notices we're almost out of coffee filters, and yet another someone freezes the ice trays. And the list goes on and on and on!

The Catfish Café department deserves recognition. The next time you sit down and pull up a warm plate of anything, take a moment and think about how it's done.

# Ambassadors

We are Seeking Community Volunteers to Assist in Advocacy, Outreach & Services

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Assist in Advocacy, Outreach & Services
If interested, reach out to japasdo@gmail.com















GRABBING IT BACK
BY SHAGGY DODGE

They sat down not far from the elders who were sitting in a circle. You could hear them crying....sobbing. Trying to grab back the buffalo. Trying to grab the land. Trying to grab back the ceremonies. Trying to grab back the languages. Hanging onto themselves. They feel parts of them are missing. Can't grab those parts back. The ghost people hold onto them very tightly. They don't have the strength to fight for what is theirs. The buffalo is gone. Slaughtered by the ghost people. The lands are crowded by the ghost people. Murdering, slaughtering. They cry for their children. Forced to go to boarding schools. Children being badly abused. Their language beat out of them. Try to make them live like the ghost people. Finding the children in mass graves unmarked. Some lay at the bottom of waters. Never got to be who they really were. You could hear drumming and singing not far away. The elders sat silently. No more crying. Just silence. All that was taken away from them they could not get back. The language they hid deep in their pockets. They held onto what they had left. Their lives taken away. Ended. The elders. They looked really sad. They felt naked with all that was taken away by the ghost people. The elders walked with their heads hanging down.

## ASSOCIATED WITH MY YAHARA HOUSE RECOVERY AND JOURNE'

BY CURTIS L. GREEN 10:50 A.M.11:05 A.M.

From the green to the yellow and the red

Here's another story on the go

By what I have gathered while on this recovery and journey

While in the middle of traffic

Somewhere down the road to recovery

I found myself having anxiety attacks that got in my way

In some way or another

Becoming a bother to me

Altering the process of me coming here for the progress of my recovery So relatively speaking

I had to navigate on how I felt for the safety of my mental well-being

Before yielding to street eight o two easy

While preparing to stop at a sign

Clearing my knowledgeable mind

Because I'm clearly not aware of what's ahead of me

One step at a time is how I would take it at my own pace

But I said to myself I'm ready for destiny on this journey

Because I know that the Yahara House staff and members would be with me faithfully /

The true meaning of a clubhouse and a unified community

Who prioritizes in helping, building and seeing that needs are met

Showing compassion, togetherness and unity

Wherever and whenever no matter how it's needed

Because I know for certain that it comes with open arms and warm greetings

And before this story comes to its ending on red

Creatively speaking

Blessed be the Yahara House and the clubhouse community

For allowing me to share my world of creative expressions of poetry

As this story comes to a complete stop

Earning a noteworthy award with notoriety

For the creative written ability

After getting a knock on my creative door from opportunity