

OCA Newsletter  
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Special Edition 2008  
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We are concerned about the cost of addiction to individuals, families, communities and our state.

The real cost is a financial burden, plus the toll on human lives.

We are working to make everyone aware of the problem and steps toward the solution.

SPECIAL ISSUE

OCA reaches out to inmates in recovery with "Recovery Voices Count"

OCA co-sponsors Rally for Recovery Celebration and Jam

Looking Ahead



Donna Conley, OCA, presents information about "Recovery Voices Counts" to women in the Franklin Pre-Release Center in Columbus.



For "Recovery Voices Count" OCA has set a goal to get 1,000 new voters registered by the October 6 deadline and get 85 percent out to the polls on Election Day. The voter education within the prisons is a starting point for gathering names and contact information for people in recovery who want information about candidates and issues that will help them continue their sobriety after release.

In addition to providing voter information in prisons, OCA is looking for volunteers to man voter registration tables at venues across Ohio urging all eligible voters to register and get-out-the-vote.

Conley said they are looking at recovery community groups, alumni groups, and any kind of event or group where people in recovery come together. She expects to see voter registration tables at many events such as rallies, walks and other activities statewide during September which is National Recovery Month.

Since "Recovery Voices Count" is a non-partisan campaign it is lawful for government agencies and non-profit organizations to participate. OCA is asking county boards that deal with addiction and mental health to consider including voter registration tables when they have booths at county fairs.

"Hopefully, we can encourage health care providers and addiction rehabilitation centers to set up registration tables too," Conley said.

## Voter Education in Prison

*OCA takes "Recovery Voices Count" to Inmates; More Volunteers Needed*

COLUMBUS – As part of a national non-partisan campaign to strengthen the voice of people in recovery from addiction, a statewide grassroots organization introduced "Recovery Voices Count" to prison inmates in recovery and soon to be released.

Donna Conley, CEO of Ohio Citizen Advocates for Chemical Dependency Prevention and Treatment (OCA), explained that "Recovery Voices Count" urges people to make their voices heard through their votes. She taught women at the Franklin Pre-Release Center, 1800 Harmon Ave. how to register to vote and asked them to sign up for more voter education information when they are released.

By law, people incarcerated may not register to vote. But after release, even those convicted of a felony may register and vote, which was a surprise to many of the inmates.

"This is the first time we have had the opportunity to take voter education inside the prison system," said Conley. "There are many people in prison because of their addiction and they need to know about voting for candidates and issues that help people maintain sobriety."

OCA is an advocacy group for all Ohioans recovering from addiction to alcohol and other drugs. "Recovery Voices Count" is a national campaign to help those people, their families, friends and allies participate in civic engagement. The campaign was created by Faces and Voices of Recovery (FAVOR) which named OCA as the organization to lead efforts in Ohio.



A woman reads the OCA brochure about registering, voting and "Recovery Voices Count."

Another part of "Recovery Voices Count" is to educate candidates on issues important to the recovery community and gather data needed to educate voters about the candidates. "Recovery Voices Count" created five questions for candidates which ask if they will support an increase in funding for prevention and treatment, agree to emphasize treatment rather than jail, and vote for a bill to end insurance discrimination.

OCA is sending a pledge card to every candidate running for office in Ohio to determine, in writing, which candidates support prevention, treatment and recovery issues. Results of the candidates' responses will be published in voter information guides in October.

"Our candidate education is designed to help our policy makers understand that the recovery community is a constituency of consequence," Conley said.

Volunteers or anyone interested in more information should contact OCA by phone, 614-486-2430, toll free 1-888-229-1285, or e-mail [advocate@oca-ohio.org](mailto:advocate@oca-ohio.org). More information is available on the web at [www.oca-ohio.org](http://www.oca-ohio.org) or [www.facesandvoicesofrecovery.org/about/campaigns/recovery\\_voices\\_count.php](http://www.facesandvoicesofrecovery.org/about/campaigns/recovery_voices_count.php).



Women help each other sign up to receive voter education material from OCA after they are released from prison.

**REAL PEOPLE.  
REAL RECOVERY.**

National Alcohol & Drug Addiction  
*Recovery Month*

**RALLY FOR RECOVERY!**

**Celebration & Jam**  
*Everyone's invited!*

D.J. Sue Leighton of Mix 97.1

Live bands all day!

Radio Surfers • Full Throttle  
Love Gray • Dysfunctional Family  
Bad Influence • 4bidN

• Dignitaries, awards, food & soft drinks  
• Outdoor Lead Meeting with John G. at 7 p.m.  
• "Recovery Voices Count!" Voter Registration Table

**September 20, 2008**  
10 a.m. - 8 p.m.

**The Woods at Parkside**  
349 Olde Ridenour Rd., Gahanna

You may nominate someone for a Sister Ignatius Excellence in Service Award. Email the name and supporting information to [wasbury@thewoodsatparkside.com](mailto:wasbury@thewoodsatparkside.com)

Event co-sponsored by

OHIO CITIZEN ADVOCATES  
for chemical dependency prevention and treatment

Live music sponsored by

**MeanDog**  
MUSIC PROMOTION

## Looking Ahead

### September is National Alcohol & Drug Addiction Recovery Month

This is the 19th annual observance of a nationally declared month to promote the benefits of "recovery." It is a time to celebrate all the individuals in "recovery," a time to credit treatment providers for their efforts to help people change their lives. People with alcohol and drug use disorder **can** and **do** recover.

Read more at

[www.recoverymonth.gov/2008/default.aspx](http://www.recoverymonth.gov/2008/default.aspx)

### September 8 - 12 Advocacy Week

OCA urges all people to make contact with political candidates this week. Most candidates will be in their home areas to campaign. Please telephone a candidate in your area and make an appointment to talk with them about chemical dependency prevention and treatment. OCA is creating a toolkit for you. It will contain a list of candidates and how to contact them; talking points; the Recovery Bill of Rights; and Candidate Pledge Cards.

For more information about advocacy go to <http://facesandvoicesofrecovery.org/about/advocate/index.php>