

A Publication of Peace River Center

# StreamLines

January 2016 Edition

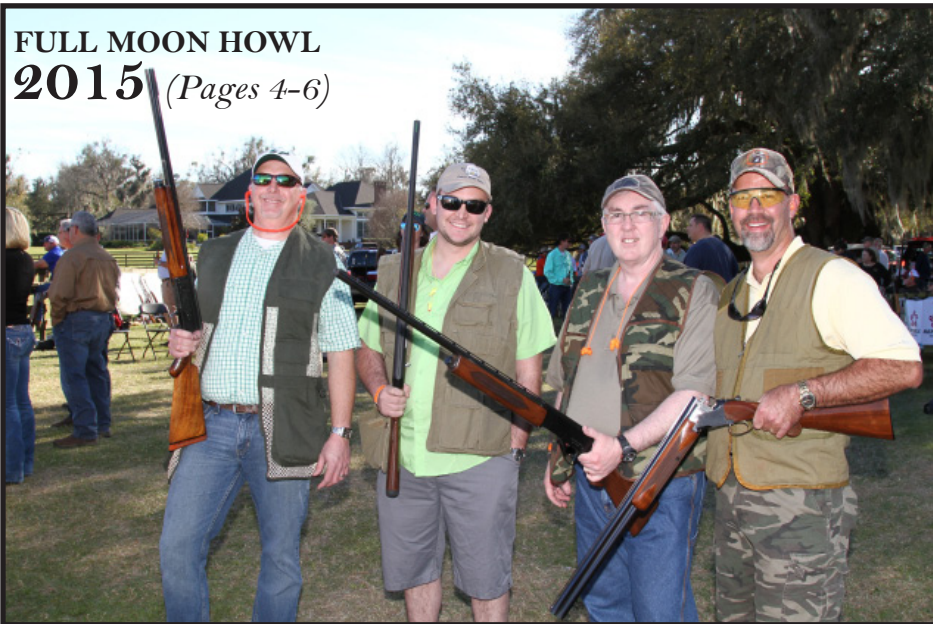


January 2016

# WHAT'S INSIDE

INSPIRATION & UPDATES FROM PEACE RIVER CENTER

## FULL MOON HOWL 2015 (Pages 4-6)



## A LEGO STORY

Play is the language of children. Read about how Peace River Center therapists are incorporating Lego in Parent Child Interaction Therapy.

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*A Message from our*

# CEO

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# &

*Chairman of  
the Board of  
Directors*

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If you would like more information about Peace River Center or have questions about how you can get involved, please call us at 863-519-0575, extension 6886.



# Peace River Center Thrift Shoppe

4419 South Florida Ave. Suite 5, Lakeland, Florida (863) 647-4224

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# FULL MOON

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FULL MOON HOWL 2015 







# OUR WINNING TEAMS



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CliftonLarsonAllen - 2nd Place Men's Team



Harris Seafood Restaurant & Oyster Bar - 3rd Place Men's Team



Land South Group Jr. - 1st Place Junior Team



Eagle Eye Jr. - 2nd Place Junior Team



Outlaw Women - 1st Place Women's Team



Watkins Associated Industries - 2nd Place Women's Team

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# A PASSION FOR MENTAL HEALTH

Alexandria Hall  
HOMETOWN: Lakeland, Florida  
Student at Auburn University

### When did you start to get involved in educating others about mental health?

I began to raise awareness about mental health my Freshman year of high school when the Junior Advisory Board for Peace River Center was created. While participating in that, I learned so much about mental health and the different psychological disorders that people struggle with. That's when my interest in psychology and my passion for mental health began.

### How did bringing Active Minds to Auburn University come about and when did you see that this was something that was needed?

A friend of mine lost a friend to suicide his freshman year of college which led him to begin the process of bringing Active Minds to our campus. He began to reach out to different people on our campus to help with the organization and I immediately jumped on board. I wanted to continue to pursue my passion for mental health. We saw a need for a group like this at our school for many reasons, which included the amount of stress and pressure that college students face. Did you know that 1 in 4 people struggle with mental health and 1,100 college students take their lives each year? These numbers represent a huge population of people, college students in particular, who need to become more aware.

### How has your involvement with Peace River Center impacted you personally?

Peace River Center sparked my passion for mental health awareness. The people who work at Peace River Center opened my eyes and my heart to a population of people who need help - and to an area where I can make a difference in the lives of others.

### What year are you in school and what are you studying?

I'm a senior studying Psychology with a business minor and I'm hoping to pursue a Masters in Business Administration.



*Active Minds, Inc. is a nonprofit organization dedicated to raising mental health awareness among college students.*

**Thank you to Kelley Buick-GMC and to all of our Full Moon Howl sponsors for your continued support!**







Thank you LEGOLAND Florida for donating 30 classic Lego sets to Peace River Center for our Parent Child Interaction Therapy program.

Left to Right: Candace Barnes (PRC), Kate Johnson (LEGOLAND), Todd Dantzler (Polk County Commissioner), Bill Gardam (PRC) Front: Allison Nicola (PRC), Brittany Williams (LEGOLAND)

## A LEGO STORY

**P**lay is the language of children. Play can be fun or hard work depending on life experiences. Jacob is one of those eight year olds who has seen more than his share of tough situations. You see, in Jacob's short life he has experienced homelessness, bounced in and out of his father's custody and ultimately landed in the foster care system. We met Jacob when he came to Peace River Center with Jessica, who was planning to adopt him.

Jacob came to PRC because he had troubling behavior that was fueled by his memories of traumatic experiences. He and his future mom were referred to Parent Child Interaction Therapy where Jacob and Jessica played together under the watchful eye of therapist, Allison Nicola. As Jessica played with Jacob the therapist watched remotely from another room using a headset to coach Jessica on how to play with Jacob. And then it happened.....Jacob's life story unfolded before them as he used Lego bricks to tell it.

He reached for the Lego policeman and relived his memory of police intervening with his birth family. He built a jail where they put his parents and he visited. He chose Lego people for himself and his siblings then reenacted the experience of being taken to different foster homes. And finally he built a solid home with all the Lego kids together again. Jacob's play was a revelation of his own experiences that he processed through play in the presence of his new mother and therapist. Now Jessica's task as Jacob's new mom is to use their play therapy skills at home to make sure that the healing of Jacob's memories continues.

— YOU GIVE. WE GIVE. —

# Quilters for a Cause



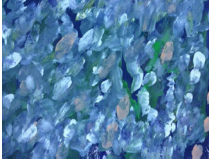
(Left to Right: Ann Johnson, Shirley Dionne, Kathy Anderson, Carol Wiseman)

We have all had the opportunity at some point in our lives to use the skills we have to impact a cause we care so passionately about. The women of Sandpiper Quilters (who are also known as the "Material Girls") have done just that and have taken their love of quilting and great fabrics to invest in the lives of those who need it most. They recently donated 65 handmade quilts to Peace River Center and are already excited to get started on the next batch. In addition to their donation of several lovely quilts, they also auctioned off one of their favorites and raised an additional \$426 for Peace River Center.

## LOCAL JURORS CONTRIBUTE OVER \$6,000 TO PRC VICTIM SERVICES

Did you know those who serve as a juror in the Circuit Court of Polk County can designate their juror compensation to support our Domestic Violence services? Last year, Peace River Center received \$6,240 from local citizens who chose to designate their compensation to fight domestic violence. Thanks to Stacy Butterfield, Clerk of Courts, and all who stand against domestic violence.





## The George W. Jenkins Fund within the GiveWell Community Foundation Awards Two Grants to Peace River Center

Over the years, grants received from the George W. Jenkins Fund within the GiveWell Community Foundation have greatly supported important programs of Peace River Center (PRC). Here are two programs that have excelled with recent grant funding.

### THERAPEUTIC ART PROGRAM

The Therapeutic Art - Artist in Residence project is wrapping up the grant received from the George W. Jenkins Fund within the GiveWell Community Foundation in 2014. Artist Claudia Bloom worked with PRC adult groups including those from FACT, Domestic Violence, Substance Abuse, AIDS/HIV Support Groups, Psycho-Social Rehab and children served by the Community Action Team.

A popular expressive art project within the groups involved painting small pieces of art which were later cut into strips and used for making beads. Each artist wrote a meaningful word or message inside the bead before rolling and stringing it. When completed, each bracelet or necklace held hidden messages of encouragement such as 'I am valuable'. Other pieces of art created by clients now adorn the walls of group rooms and some images have been reproduced into greeting cards.

An enhancement of the project provided art workshops for therapists. Participants learned how to use art during one-on-one sessions with clients. Additionally, therapists were able to schedule private art sessions for them to work with their client alongside Ms. Bloom in her studio. One therapist commented, "I learned more about my client in one art session than I had learned during the entire prior year using talk therapy". Another therapist related that a client had a major breakthrough immediately following an art session. The art project has extended its reach to over 300 clients and will continue to reach more as therapists use their newly acquired skills during therapy sessions.

### LAKELAND DOMESTIC VIOLENCE FURNISHINGS

PRC received a grant in 2015 from the George W. Jenkins Fund within the GiveWell Community Foundation for much needed furnishings for the Lakeland Domestic Violence Shelter, which operates 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Grant funds also provided for the purchase of a bright new playground set for use by children living in the shelter. PRC's two domestic violence shelters provided 12,737 bed nights to victims last year.

The Peace River Center thanks the George W. Jenkins fund within the GiveWell Community Foundation for helping us serve our neighbors in need. You can also help the clients of the domestic violence shelters by donating to PRC's Lakeland Thrift Shoppe, where clients in need can shop for clothing and household goods free of charge.



*A Message from our*

*CEO & Chairman of the Board of  
Directors*

Dear Friends,

After decades, when mental health topics were largely ignored or avoided, recent events have focused attention on the urgent need to expand access to adequately funded mental health care. The reality is that mental health has always been a central driver of our overall health, influencing everything from physical health and employment, to our financial stability and our closest friendships. It is a fundamental part of our well-being and affects every layer of our community. Yet, we often take mental health for granted until something goes wrong. Here at Peace River Center we have experienced many accomplishments and milestones during the past year:

Thanks to our generous supporters, we have been able to focus on Central Florida's mental health and well-being every day. Whether we are supporting a teen in crisis, a new mother suffering from postpartum depression, or helping an entire family get back on its feet, our services have stabilized and transformed thousands of lives during 2015. Our reach across the community has grown thanks to new collaborations with many other agency partners. These partnerships have allowed us to serve more people and to create an invisible web of support throughout the community.

- We celebrated the second year anniversary of implementing our Electronic Health Record System and expanded it to include documenting services provided in the PRC primary care clinic, the Wellness Clinic.
- We started our new Family Intensive Treatment Team program (FITT) that serves children 8 years and under who are involved with the child welfare system and have a family member with substance abuse issues. The FITT Team served over 35 families this past year with the goal of removing the risk from the home rather than the individual.
- We were fortunate to obtain funding to get staff certified in providing Parent-Child Interaction Therapy (PCIT). This is the only evidence-based therapy where both parent and child receive therapy at the same time. PCIT helps children and parents become more confident, calmer and improve their social skills, attention and focus, while strengthening their bond with one another. This allows them to process stressful or traumatic experiences safely.
- Our Victim Services Program was fortunate to receive ongoing funding from Allstate to continue its Economic Freedom Outreach Program that provides training and economic support to help victims of domestic violence make a new start.
- Our partnership with The Citrus Connection continued this past year allowing us to make low cost bus passes available to clients.
- We expanded access to clients by offering Saturday medication clinics and opening our schedules to allow walk-in appointments for therapy and meds management to better meet the needs of clients.
- We successfully launched our first Capital Campaign to support development of the new Lakeland Inpatient Crisis Stabilization Unit and Outpatient services campus.
- And, we were able to continue operating our Primary Care Medical Clinic and Integrated Care Partnership thanks to the wonderful support of the Polk County Indigent Fund and Polk County Commission. Our clinic allows uninsured residents of Polk County to get access to services that often avoid an emergency room visit or hospitalization. The Polk County ½ cent surtax makes these services possible.

As many of you know, a vote to continue the surtax will take place during the November 2016 election cycle. The ½ cent surtax allows the County to fund many programs that are a critical foundation to our community, including, in part, the mental health and medical services provided by Peace River Center and many other agencies across the county. It's a great investment in our community, and one that saves money long term.

None of these critical services would be possible without your ongoing support and partnership. On behalf of our Board, volunteers, professionals, community partners, advisory boards and friends of Peace River, thank you for your continued support.



J. William Gardam  
Chief Executive Officer



Al Dorsett  
Chair, Board of Directors

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