

Simon Voices



Simon Users Speaking

Welcome...

We would like to welcome you to the first issue of *Simon Voices*, which is put together by people who use Simon services. This is the first time that a newsletter has been produced by service users for service users nationally. We aim to bring out four issues a year, one for each season. As you will see in this issue we have some interesting stories and articles all written by people who use the services.



Members of the National Group for People Who Use Simon Services in the Ashling Hotel, Dublin

The purpose of this newsletter is to: - share information, learning and experiences, to highlight issues surrounding homelessness,

'...this newsletter is to give people the opportunity to express their views...'

to give people the opportunity to express their views and to encourage people to be involved in their services.

The idea for the Newsletter came from the 'National Group For People Who Use Simon Services'. This group started in May 2005 and is made up of people from the different Simon

continued on page 2

Olympic Victory for Síle!!

We are proud to announce that long term group member **Síle Nic Niocaill** from Galway Simon recently returned from the Special Olympics in China with a Gold and Silver Medal for Ten Pin Bowling. What a remarkable achievement, recognised by President Mary McAleese at a special function for all the athletes and coaches in Áras an Uachtaráin in Dublin.



IN THIS ISSUE...

Poet's Corner

Two pieces from W.J.P. Shine.

It Really Happened

Service user Shelly tells us her story.

Useful Information

Each Newsletter will have information from different areas. This edition features Galway.

Communities in Ireland. At these meetings we hear about what is going on for people in their area and share ideas. We are an open group and would love to hear your opinions. We welcome new members.



People who come to the group say:

"Nothing to be nervous about, people just like you. We're all in the same boat, nobody is different."

"It changed me. It helps me, mind, body and soul. I look forward to the meetings, to meeting people, to hear what they have to say. I've calmed down a lot."

We currently meet once a month in Dublin. We are hoping to have some of these meetings in different areas in the future. The meetings are held between 10.30am to 3.30pm. Refreshments and lunch are provided and your local Simon Community pays

travel expenses. If you need further information please contact a local staff member.

SIMON VOICES NEEDS YOU

We want to hear from you.

Please send your personal stories, opinions, poems or news to:

National Group For People Who
Use Simon Services,
c/o Simon Communities of
Ireland,
St. Andrew's House,
28-30 Exchequer Street,
Dublin 2.

Tel: 01 671 1606

catri.okane@simoncommunity.com

Poet's Corner

Life Changes

Thought she was my lover
Found out she was a cheat
Set myself a fire
To turn up the heat
Wasn't really bothered
Didn't really care
Thought I'd lost everything
And it wasn't really fair
Then that day I met you
I fell in love again
I thank the Lord everyday
I thank the Lord amen

I Had a Dream

I had a dream last night
And in it everything was all right
There was you and me
Down by the sea
Counting our kids
One, two, three
Full of laughter
And of joy
We had two girls
And one wee boy
When I woke up
It seemed to me



William Shine

That one fine day
That these things will be

by W.J.P. Shine



It Really Happened

Getting Back

I am sitting in rehab, in the women's house, happy to be here and getting my life together and OH! BOY! What a life. I went into Detox on the 8th of November 2006, a Wednesday and what a relief to get in. I was so sick you would not believe it. It was the lowest I ever went, my energy was gone, I was seven stone and could not walk. The pain I experienced through my whole body was a nightmare. I did not think I would make it; my mind was like a black cloud, Jesus! I kept saying, HELP ME! I could not think further than my nose, my mind was disturbed, my words were slurred, my eyes blurred. And my legs were numb. I was a total wreck.

'I could not think further than my nose, my mind was disturbed...I was a total wreck.'

Like a child that had lost everything I cried with pain, my heart ached, my head had many thoughts of hurt and loneliness, insecurity of being on the streets. I wanted my DAD who had recently died, I wanted my CHILDREN and my PARTNER and my JOB which I lost through drink. I prayed to get better. The hospital said if I went on the way I was going I would be dead in a year.

It's amazing what drink can do to you and the lack of food. I drank for 6 months, heavy with barely any food. I had to learn to eat again. The drink controlled me, I had lost my FATHER, PARTNER, CHILDREN, AND JOB, and all I had was PRAYER.



I am now supported in REHAB on the Quays (DUBLIN). They put me back together again, both DETOX and REHAB. The staff are all excellent, I found it hard to adapt at first but they kept at me and I gradually came around to the proper way to do things and accept my mistakes. I found it hard to deal with change, due to insecurity, anxiety and nerves, and the confusion of living a normal life. They put me back on track and I thank them all very much. When the drink hits the nervous system you know you are in trouble.

DETOX, REHAB and AFTERCARE are so important, we don't realize how important, they save lives. I am just 4 months sober now and doing a C.E. Scheme and am on the way to

'DETOX, REHAB and AFTERCARE are so important, we don't realize how important, they save lives.'

getting accommodation and a job and THANK GOD! The get up and go to want all this and leave the drink behind me. Learning the simple things in life are nice again and so easy. We make it so hard on ourselves with abusing drink. I wrote this so others might see and learn how bad I got and all I had left was a PRAYER! And people that cared!

Shelly

(The writer's name has been changed)

Useful Information – Galway

This section features contact information on some services in Galway. Each Newsletter will have information from different areas.

Homeless Services

Galway Simon Community
10 Montpelier Terrace, Galway.
Tel: 091 589415

Galway Simon Day Centre
Seamus Quirke Road.
Freephone: 1800 788887

Galway City Council
City Hall, College Road, Galway.
Tel: 091 536400

Fairgreen Hostel for Homeless Men
Galway.
Tel: 091 568818

Youth Homeless
Galway.
Freephone: 1800 310110

Women's Services

Osterley Lodge
Emergency Accommodation for
Women and Children, Galway.
Tel: 091 521301

Waterside House
Refuge for Homeless Women and
Children, Galway.
Tel: 091 565985

Support Services

Samaritans
Tel: 1850 609090

Aware Helpline
(Support for those affected by
depression) Tel: 1890 303302

Alcoholics Anonymous
Ozman House, Galway.
Tel: 091 767777

Gamblers Anonymous
Galway.
Tel: 091 565207

Al-Anon & Alateen
(Support for adults and children affected
by someone else's drinking), Dublin.
Tel: 01 8732699

The Gaf Youth Café
(Health Advice for young people),
Galway. Tel: 091 534473

Console
(Suicide Bereavement Support), Galway.
Freephone: 1800 201890



View from Spanish Arch, Galway City.



View from Wolfe Tone Bridge, Galway City.

Drugs Services
HSE, Galway.
Tel: 091 561299

Galway Rape Crisis Centre
Helpline: 1850 355355

Information

Social Welfare Local Office
Hynes Buildings,
St. Augustine Street, Galway.
Tel: 091 500800

Citizens Information Centre
St. Augustine House,
St. Augustine Street, Galway.
Tel: 091 560177

MABS
(Money Advice Budgeting Service)
3rd Floor,
The Halls Quay Street,
Galway.
Tel: 091 569349

Community Services
Shantalla Road, Galway.
Tel: 091 523122

Galway Gardaí
Tel: 091 538000

Bus Eireann
Tel: 091 562000

Hospitals

University College Hospital
Newcastle Road,
Galway.
Tel: 091 524222 / 091 544544

Merlin Park Hospital
Galway.
Tel: 091 757631

Contact details for any contributions
or feedback:

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