



# Our Journey

Meaningful, relevant information for our community, published monthly.

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**Welcome to *Our Journey*.** We hope you will find the articles informative and helpful. Your ideas and submissions are welcome! Please also take time to check out the Northern Lakes Community Mental Health (NLCMH) website, the flat screen monitor, information tower, and monthly calendar (in the tower) for more information on topics in this newsletter and more. Join us in the ongoing creation of this newsletter to best serve you!

## Walk a Mile Rally

The tenth annual Walk a Mile In My Shoes Rally will take place on Wednesday, May 14 in Lansing on the capitol lawn. Representatives from each of the 83 counties in Michigan will be represented. Northern Lakes will assist in taking both a flag bearer and a person to make a statement from each of its six counties, with preference being given to those who have not attended before. This is a one-day event, leaving early in the morning and returning the same day. If you are interested, please look in the Recovery Tower in the lobby for a registration/application form – which has details and contact information – and return the form to reception by April 17.



## National Stress Awareness Month

April is Stress Awareness Month. Are you stressed? How can you celebrate Stress Awareness Month, and is it really even something to celebrate at all? I took a look at several articles to get some ideas and I have done stress tests with my therapist. If you have looked into stress and its causes, you know like I do that many of us do not put stress in our life in order to make life more stressful, but rather, life puts it there for us, whether we want it or not. A wedding, purchasing a home or getting a new great job are all wonderful life events but they cause stress, as can the death of a relative. One article I read recommended several positive things to do and, honestly, I would get stressed out trying to schedule them into my life, good ideas or not! Exercise and eating right are good for us and can help in reducing the major health problems stress can cause. One of the best ways of reducing stress is **laughter**. Now this, to me, is a way to celebrate Stress Awareness Month, and how easy! Read a comic, listen to a comedy show (try an old Bill Cosby recording), watch a funny movie... Another article I found, that was not scientific but interesting, looked at responses from over 4000 responders. The article, from the Huffington Post, was delightful and could lead to further speculation, which can also be fun (well, for me, anyway). Near the end there were a few different items, most likely not looked at by researchers but, well turn the page and see what you think. The full article can be read at the link at the end of this article.



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 to receive  
*Our Journey*  
 electronically.  
 Submissions may also  
 be accepted, space  
 permitting.

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 funded by Northern  
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### Mini-Conference

Register now  
 to save your spot  
 at the Mini-  
 Conference in  
 Traverse City on,  
 April 16. The  
 deadline to  
 register is April 11.  
 The form can be  
 found in the tower  
 in the lobby.

Topics:  
 What it takes to be  
 a good neighbor or  
 tenant, dealing  
 with loss, lunch,  
 mindfulness  
 meditation and  
 more. Register  
 now and bring a  
 friend with you  
 (they need to  
 register too)!

## National Stress Awareness Month continued from page 1...

Here are some of the more off-the-wall things uncovered in the article:

	<b>Most Stressed</b>	<b>Least Stressed</b>
<i>Read print paper</i>	<i>Never (+40%)</i>	<i>Everyday</i>
<i>Social Media Influence</i>	<i>A lot (+39%)</i>	<i>Not at all</i>
<i>Pets</i>	<i>1 or more cats and/or dogs</i>	<i>None (+22%)</i>
<i>Superstitious</i>	<i>Very (+64%)</i>	<i>Not at all</i>
<i>Preferred car type</i>	<i>Compact (+65%)</i>	<i>Truck (+30%)</i>

In other words: Chill out and grab a newspaper – it’s good for the soul. Quit worrying about what your friends say and do on Facebook – their lives are just as imperfect as yours. Apparently, they call it "fighting like cats and dogs" for a reason – sure, you love your pets, just be aware that they’re likely to add more stress to your life than they relieve. If you are worrying about black cats, the number 13, or broken mirrors, you’re stressing over nothing – stop. Last, if you have any theory why compact car drivers are stressed and truck drivers aren't, please let us know. We’ve been debating it for days. More at: [http://www.huffingtonpost.com/johndick/stress-awareness-month\\_b\\_3163134.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/johndick/stress-awareness-month_b_3163134.html).



## This and That

**Healthy Michigan begins April 1.** If you do not have medical insurance you may qualify for Healthy Michigan (Medicaid Expansion). You can apply at your local DHS office, online at [www.michigan.gov/healthymichiganplan](http://www.michigan.gov/healthymichiganplan) or call: 855 276-4627 for benefit assistance.

**World Health Day** is celebrated April 7, the founding of the World Health Organization. Each year they focus on a global health issue. This year it is, "Protect yourself from vector borne diseases." A vector borne disease that is common in our area is Lyme’s Disease, which is carried by deer (blacklegged) ticks. These ticks can be out in the woods or, more often, in the tall grasses along a trail, in a field, or on brush at the edge of a road. When you are out hiking, protect yourself and your children and/or pets: DEET can be used to repel the ticks, and you can avoid the tick’s hangouts by walking in the center of trails rather than through the field. Shower when you get home or back to camp and mirror check for hidden ticks in gear or on clothing where they may hide.



**Earth Day** is Tuesday, April 22 and this year’s theme is "Fresh, Clean, and Green." What do you do to keep your life and our earth fresh, clean and green? FRESH: Fresh air is important for your body and Earth’s plants/environment. CLEAN: Clean and sober is something many people work on all the time and Earth needs to be cleaned up and kept clean for nature to flourish too. GREEN: Let’s think beyond the wearing of the green, St Patrick’s Day and Michigan State in March Madness. For the Earth, green is recycling, reusing and reducing or eliminating toxic chemicals. How can you green up your personal life?

**Arbor Day** is Friday, April 25 and in Michigan one of the best trees for planting is the Eastern White Pine, our state tree. Did you ever receive one in school to go home and plant? Other important tree facts: In our area, we need to be mindful and not move firewood. The ash bore beetle is still hard at work on our ash trees. Let’s not make their job any easier – when we build bonfires, we should get our wood locally. Other state arbor trees are: Rhode Island- Red Maple, Texas – Pecan, South Carolina – Cabbage Palmetto, Delaware – American Holly.

