Do You Want To Know More About Why Some Mental Health Meds Might Not Work For You?

Have you been in the mental health cycle of having a medication prescribed to you that didn’t seem to help control symptoms of your diagnosis? Has your prescriber possibly increased the dose two or three times, hoping for a better result and when that didn’t quite do it added one or two or even more medications to your regimen? We may be able to provide you and your prescriber with some very important information that may allow you to reduce the number of meds you are taking, limiting them to those that will work best for YOU!

Each of us comes into the world bearing genes given to us by our parents. Some of these genes control how the cells in our bodies use the many substances that we put into them, whether we are eating, drinking, putting things onto or into our skin, or injecting substances. This includes the medications we use for mental and physical health conditions. Everyone’s genes vary except for identical twins whose genes vary in more limited ways. How one family member may react to a medication can be very different than how a family member or friend, or another client of a health care practitioner, reacts. The healthcare industry is beginning to realize that it is important to have the tools to treat people on an individual level, based on their own genetic ability to react to medications.

NAMI SW WA is partnering with Red Mountain Labs to offer a one-day opportunity to have pharmacogenetic screening that will determine how YOU react. A cheek swab will be sent to Red Mountain testing labs from which our genetic profile will be determined. Information will be shared with your prescriber so you and your prescriber can make better decisions about what mental health medications will work best for you. The value of this test is $300. This test has been approved by many insurance plans including Medicare. You will need to have your prescriber approve the test. We will work with you to get this approval. However, whether your insurance companies have approved this or not, Red Mountain is offering this test at little to no out-of-pocket cost to those who come to NAMI for the test.

Call NAMI SW WA at 360-695-2823 to schedule an appointment for August 26th.
From the Director's Desk

Dear Members and Friends,

July has been a hectic but exciting month for NAMI SW WA. In early July we moved into our new space in Cowlitz County at 109 Allen Street in Kelso and the following week moved into our space at 5411 East Mill Plain, Suite 4, in Vancouver. We invite all of you to visit our new spaces. Much of the month has been spent in rental trucks as we picked up some amazing furniture from generous donors and then divided the furniture between our two office locations.

We are deeply grateful to Kelso City and the City Council for granting our lease in Cowlitz County. They have been very generous by allowing our very low monthly rent and we will share the cost of utilities with several other non-profits from the area, including South Kelso Neighborhood Association. Our team in Cowlitz, led by our very treasured Janie Gislason, has programs going daily in that county. Read more about that in the Cowlitz Corner on page 11 and check the calendar for dates and times.

I particularly want to thank CAESY Education Systems, Inc. for donating an amazing 18-foot glass-covered conference table with 14 comfortable matching chairs, 26 office cubicles, 7 lovely wood desks as well as many other very useful pieces of office furniture. The conference table is now in our Vancouver support group room and has already hosted our July board meeting, our current Family to Family educational class, a number of STRivE and Connections groups, a Resiliency training for adults, and a meeting of our new partners, SHIBA. More about SHIBA on page 4 in this newsletter.

I also want to thank Vancouver Glass Company for generously sharing the cost of transporting the glass for the conference table. Each section of the thick glass was 9x5 feet. We knew that we could not move this; it required experts. We checked around for glass movers and Dale Hackenstad at Vancouver Glass very kindly offered to help us out with his truck, his professional glass handlers and their knowledge of how to move such pieces of glass, keeping them intact. Thanks, Dale.

We also want to thank our very dedicated moving team of staff who have gone home aching many days from the heavy lifting of loading and unloading trucks. We want to give special thanks to the many friends of NAMI SW WA who helped with the move. See the article on page 11.

Very special thanks goes to Jason Harris, our IT specialist who has worked long hours, day and night, to get both spaces up and running with phones, computers, and all the other electronic equipment we need to maintain our operations. He was helped by Scott Brickley, our board Vice President, who has proven to be a tireless NAMI SW WA volunteer.

Last, but certainly by no means the least, we thank The Columbian newspaper for giving us 3 months of free public service advertising space. Our resident family specialist and talented artist, Lyn Pattison, designed the beautiful ads. We are getting lots of calls and visitors because of these ads that focus on a variety of mental health topics. This is a great gift, and we are deeply grateful to The Columbian.

Stop by our offices to say hello!

Best to you all,
Peggy
June 2015 saw the reintroduction of the Jean Lough Symposium. This symposium was first held just after the beginning of this century, but had then been set aside for a number of years. The symposium was named in honor of one of the founding members of NAMI in Clark County who passed away a few years ago. Funding for this important event was provided, in part, by Southwest Washington Behavioral Health Regional Support Network (SWBH RSN) in partnership with NAMI SW WA. Our goal was to bring together individuals, agencies, and representatives from many areas of our communities with interests in issues that affect those dealing with mental health diagnoses.

NAMI believes that community dialogue is essential to breaking down the social walls around mental health disorders and reversing the stigma associated with these chronic medical conditions that affect one in four adults. By hosting the Jean Lough Symposium annually we will create an opportunity for those conversations to happen on a regular basis, providing an avenue for creativity in developing solutions to meet the many needs in our SW WA communities. The hope is that each year, with each new topic of conversation and the resulting group decision to focus on one or two simple solutions, we will see a positive change in how the citizens of southwest Washington view mental health disorders and how those affected by them are served.

This year’s symposium focused on the roles that families play in helping their loved one who suffers from a mental health disorder. We brought 88 people together from the community and randomly assigned each one to a discussion group. Group One discussed the role of the family as a caregiver. Group Two discussed the role of the family as a peer group. Group Three was about the role the family plays as the landlord, and group Four was the role the family plays as the protector. Each role a family plays impacts the ability of the individual to recover and to stay in recovery; these roles also affect the overall health and wellness of the family.

Families can suffer financially, physically, and mentally from filling these many roles. What we wanted to find out was what sort of solutions did the community see for these various roles, because if we can help the family members with some quick, fairly simple, and inexpensive solutions we can also better help those with the mental health diagnoses. Several excellent presentations to set the stage for the discussions, one by Drew McDaniel, MSW on the sociological/psychological costs to families and one by Cassandra Ando, JD on the financial cost to society for inadequate services for individuals and families that has largely resulted in the criminalization of people with mental health disorders. Each workgroup was given an hour to discuss their assigned problem and return to the general assembly with a solution. Workgroup leaders included Ann Donnelly PhD, Ted Engelbrecht, DMin and Jacqueline Noel; Mark Maggiora; and Mike Anderson, Commander Anna Lookingbill, LICSW and Glyn Smyth, Detective.

The participation and the enthusiasm for this process was truly amazing. Each group presented their solution to the general assembly, and voting was conducted to see which solution should be worked on over the next six months. Craig Pridemore, CEO of Columbia River Mental Health, served as facilitator of this part of the process. Oddly enough the first three groups came back with very similar solutions, but it was the peer group that ultimately took the most votes. The chosen solution was a project they call Home Base. Home Base is described as a 24-hour center where individuals can come for socialization, education, training, and peer support. It should include transportation to and from the facility to promote independence, should utilize peer support and other volunteers, and provide a catalyst for opportunities not found elsewhere. By having a 24-hour center it gives those in need a safe place to stay and develop relationships outside their family network while also providing much needed respite to the families who will feel secure knowing their loved one has a positive place to learn and grow. (Continued on Page 4)
At the end of the symposium 20 people signed up to be part of the task force to take steps in finding what we need to do as a community to get a 24-hour respite center going in SW WA.

We are looking forward to seeing what can be done and what progress will be made in the next months. A follow-up meeting to this community conversation will be held in Winter 2016 to review the results.

Jean Lough Symposium Action Item for NAMI SW WA

Another exciting and fairly simple solution came from the symposium group discussing the family as the protector. NAMI SW WA staff thought it was such a great idea that we are working to incorporate it into our various programs. The protector group was led by the team from the Clark County Sheriff’s Office including Commander Mike Anderson, Detective Glyn Smith and Anna Lookingbill, LICSW. The solution from this group was to have each family dealing with a loved one with a mental health diagnosis have the ability to create a Family Safety Plan.

The Family Safety Plan includes a series of steps in which the family and the individual decide together how to handle emergencies when the individual might require hospitalization or might be incarcerated. NAMI SW WA will work with individuals in our educational classes and support groups as well as in our ongoing family support and educational programs to get these in place where possible. These plans, when fully discussed with all members of a family, should provide for a more reasonable approach to crises that happen to many if not most of the families dealing with mental health issues.

We are very thankful to the Sheriff’s Office especially Commander Mike Anderson, , for so willingly taking part in this discussion and helping lead the group to this wise approach for help.

WELCOME, SHIBA!

NAMI SW WA welcomes a new partner, one that will begin sharing space with us the first week in August. We are very pleased to welcome them to 5411 East Mill Plain. Future editions of our newsletter will present more information on ways that we are working together.

SHIBA (Statewide Health Insurance Benefits Advisors) is a volunteer program that provides consumers with free, unbiased information about Medicare and other health care coverage. SHIBA volunteers help clients understand health care coverage options and rights; find affordable health care coverage; evaluate and compare health insurance plans; enroll in low-income subsidy programs; file complaints; and gain awareness of fraud issues.

SHIBA is locally sponsored by Lower Columbia CAP and serves residents of Clark, Cowlitz, Lewis, Skamania, and Wahkiakum counties. Over thirty-five SHIBA volunteers educate and counsel through events such as health fairs and Medicare presentations. SHIBA volunteers are available for in-person counseling Monday-Friday at the Longview office (1526 Commerce Ave); Tuesdays and Thursdays in the Vancouver office (5411 E. Mill Plain). Both in-person and phone appointments are available.

Our SHIBA volunteers come from diverse backgrounds and experiences, but each volunteer has a common goal: helping Medicare recipients understand their coverage, options, and rights.

Anyone with questions can reach SHIBA by calling: 1-800-562-6900.
If a country is to be corruption free and become a nation of beautiful minds, I strongly feel there are three key societal members who can make a difference. They are the father, the mother and the teacher.

A. P. J. Abdul Kalam

To us, family means putting your arms around each other and being there.

Barbara Bush

For there is no friend like a sister in calm or stormy weather; To cheer one on the tedious way, to fetch one if one goes astray, to lift one if one totters down, to strengthen whilst one stands.

Christina Rossetti

The only people who truly know your story are the ones who helped write it.

Unknown

If the family were a fruit, it would be an orange, a circle of sections, held together but separable – each segment distinct.

Letty Cottin Pogrebin

Call it a clan, call it a network, call it a tribe, call it a family. Whatever you call it, whoever you are, you need one.

Jane Howard

**NAMI SW WA AND MURPHY’S LAW ON MOVING**

Murphy’s Law is a popular adage that states that “things will go wrong in any given situation, it you give them a chance,” or more commonly, “whatever can go wrong, will go wrong.” There is a Murphy’s Law for almost every situation. Yes, there is a Murphy’s Law on Moving and NAMI SW WA set out to challenge it during our recent move.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MURPHY’S LAW ON MOVING</th>
<th>NAMI SW WA ON MOVING</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No matter how many boxes you have, you will never have enough.</td>
<td>Not so...with the many boxes we collected and a gift of sturdy moving boxes we were all set. Big thanks to volunteers who helped pack them</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The more your friends promise to help, the more likely it is they will be deathly ill or out of town the weekend you are moving.</td>
<td>Grateful “thanks” to volunteers who materialized on the first day to carry a hundred plus boxes and miscellaneous items.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Whatever it is that you need, it is always in the bottom of a box that has already been taped shut.</td>
<td>Well, there may be some truth in this, not only at the bottom of a box, a box at the bottom of a pile.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Now that you are moving and no longer need it, you will always find something you have been looking for years for.</td>
<td>We did find a lot of things that previously went missing, but we continue to need them (except for the stale cookies).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The tape, the scissors, the markers and the screwdriver all know how to play hide ‘n’ seek.</td>
<td>Our efficient executive assistant caught on to this early, captured and kept track of them.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The thing that gets broken will always be an irreplaceable antique heirloom, never something cheap that you didn’t like anyway.</td>
<td>Nothing broken! “Thank you” to Vancouver Glass for graciously stepping up to move the most valuable and potentially breakable item we were given. The conference table glass top.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regardless of how long the drought has been going on, it will always rain on moving day.</td>
<td>Weeks of drought...poured the night before. Early in the morning it stopped and the sun came out.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You will always lose your checkbook, credit cards, or keys.</td>
<td>No...but there was a call to verify a charge for items purchased in Greece and Germany... We were moving, but not that far...the charges were not ours.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If you stay up all night packing to be ready for the movers, they will be late.</td>
<td>On the second day, Big Al’s moving crew of powerful cheerful guys arrive on-time. They were so flexible and went above and beyond with our challenges. Three cheers for the crew, you were GREAT!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No matter how large the new place is, it will shrink before you move in.</td>
<td>Boxes, boxes, and boxes and desks and chairs stacked in the center of rooms waiting to exhale. We arrive with more than we left with. Due to the generosity of CAESY Educational Systems, we now have a lovely conference table, desks and cubicles for our peer support people and interns, as well as some ‘like new’ desks for our administrative staff and locking file cabinets. Even on exhale, it looks like we will now have ample room to efficiently take care of business.</td>
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To be truthful, there were several issues which we could attribute to Murphy’s Law. We unlocked the doors and were somewhat puzzled, where was the fresh paint, carpeting, and telephone and wireless services? Hum...Murphy’s Law was a work. However, our talented staff technician has been working feverishly to get the technical issues resolved. The contractor and his crew have been burning the midnight oil to resolve the other issues. But at the time of writing, we are still in the middle of rooms, waiting. You will have to tune in next month to see who ultimately wins in Murphy’s Law vs. NAMI SW WA. (Here is a teaser, NAMI SW WA doesn’t like to lose).
WE HAVE MOVED!

COWLITZ OFFICE
109 Allen Street
Kelso, WA 98626

VANCOUVER OFFICE
5411 E. Mill Plain
(Town Plaza)
Vancouver, WA 98661
West Side of Building

We are looking for furniture to furnish our new offices.
- Convection oven
- Refrigerator
- Dishwasher
- Bookcases and storage cabinets

Call us at (360) 695-2823 if you can donate any of these items or would like to donate tax deductible funds.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Day</th>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Time</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MONDAY</td>
<td>STRiVE After Release</td>
<td>1:230 pm</td>
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<tr>
<td>TUESDAY</td>
<td>STRiVE Women's Group</td>
<td>1.00-2:30 pm</td>
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<td></td>
<td>FAMILY SUPPORT 3rd Tuesday</td>
<td>7:30-8:30 pm</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>FAMILY SUPPORT 4th Tuesday</td>
<td>7:30-8:30 pm</td>
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<tr>
<td>WEDNESDAY</td>
<td>NAMI SW WA WALKS and TALKS</td>
<td>11:00 am-12:00 pm</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>STRiVE</td>
<td>6:00-7:30 pm</td>
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<tr>
<td>THURSDAY</td>
<td>NAMI SW WA WALKS and TALKS</td>
<td>12:00-1:00 pm</td>
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<td></td>
<td>CONNECTION Support Group</td>
<td>4:30-6:00 pm</td>
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<tr>
<td>FRIDAY</td>
<td>NAMI SW WA WALKS and TALKS</td>
<td>12:00 pm-1:00 PM</td>
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**MENTAL HEALTH THERAPY** for the uninsured and underinsured. Limited term.

Provided by Janet and Jean

**MENTAL HEALTH MEDICATION CONSULT**

By appointment.

**BENEFITS CONSULT w/ Cindy Falter**

By appointment.

**HELPLINE** - 9-5 Monday-Friday

Vancouver—Call 360-695-2823.

Provides support and resources.

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Vancouver—Call 360-695-2823.

Provides support and resources.

**Psychoeducation and tools for a successful and sustained recovery from mental illness.**

**Support for family of military personnel who are struggling with mental health issues.**

**Support for friends and family of people who have a mental health diagnosis.**

**Peer support group for those affected by mental illness.**
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<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Monday</th>
<th>Tuesday</th>
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<th>Thursday</th>
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<tr>
<td>10:30 - 11:15 am</td>
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<td>11:30 am - 1:00 pm</td>
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<td>Connect Open Support Group</td>
<td>STRIVE Psych-Educational</td>
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**Notes:**
- Peer Support Group for those affected by mental illness.
- By appointment.
- Psychoeducation and tools for a successful and sustained recovery from mental illness.
- Support for friends and family of people with a mental health diagnosis.
- Peer support group for those affected by mental illness.
- By appointment.

**Mental Health Therapy**
- For the uninsured and underinsured. Limited term.
- Provided by Janet and Jean.

**Mental Health Medication Consult**
- By appointment.

**Benefits Consult**
- W/ Cindy Falter

**Consult**
- Provided by Janet and Jean.

**Vancouver**
- Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday

**Helpline**
- Call 360-672-2333.

**109 Allen Street**
- Kelso, WA 98626

**Vancouver**
- Call 360-695-2823.
The RIGHT medication . . .
at the RIGHT dosage . . .
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NAMI is offering a one-day clinic to identify your unique genetic makeup and help your physician make more informed medication decisions.

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9AM—5PM
August 26, 2015

NAMI Southwest Washington
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Covered by Medicare and Most Insurance
Results Provided Regardless of a Patient’s Ability to Pay

Space is Limited. Register TODAY!!
Swallow the Ocean by Laura M. Flynn

This book about growing up with a sick mother in a dysfunctional home, keeps the reader interested, yet not unduly uncomfortable while reading about a difficult family situation. The writer of this memoir was able to do so even though she lived with her mother until age eleven and was affected by her mother’s diagnosis of paranoid schizophrenia.

The story flows as the three daughters in the family play, tell stories, shop when their mother fortresses herself inside the house, and carry on with their lives even while knowing there is something wrong with their mother. They wish she would clean up the house, make regular meals, be on time, and control her rage. Until their mother became progressively worse, she was a good, attentive parent, despite the voices she sometimes heard. Their mother never took medication, never thought she was ill, never lost her anger toward her husband who divorced her while trying to get custody of the girls.

We’ve heard of the resiliency of children; these children demonstrate that trait even though the tragedy of their mother’s life did create echoes in the lives of several of the children.

During their adult years, the sisters had limited contact with their mother who never let them know where she lived, nor accepted their offers to help. They always met in a public place, where they recognized her approach by the familiar coat she always wore. They noticed that her symptoms seemed to decrease as she got older. Eventually they arranged Meals-on-Wheels for her when it was apparent she wasn’t eating properly.

This well-written book, a real-life story, reads almost like fiction. You’ll find it a good read that presents a realistic account typical of families in which a parent is affected by a mental health diagnosis. Reviewed by Nancy Marsh

Haldol and Hyacinths, A Bipolar Life, by Melody Moezzi

This memoir is the author's account of her descent into the nightmare of full-blown, bipolar I disorder. As an Iranian-American female, her tale is an interesting look at her family and culture. As we know all too well, mental illness is "an equal opportunity destroyer." There are no economic, racial, gender or cultural barriers. She tells her tale of terror from a uniquely Iranian/Muslim perspective.

The author's parents immigrated from Iran to the United States to escape the increasingly fundamentalist factions taking over Iran before the 1979 Revolution. Both physicians, they had the benefit of being able to leave the country when so many others did not. They simply would not raise their two daughters under such a regressive regime. There would be no head scarves for their girls.

Despite all the advantages of loving parents, a close extended family, a fabulous education and countless other positives in her life, she ended up in a mental hospital after slitting her wrist in her psychiatrists' waiting room. After checking herself out, she was still able to struggle through law school and pass the bar, but her personal nightmare had already begun before the attempt. This was only her first visit to a mental hospital. The ups and downs, delusional thinking, hallucinations and manic behavior would finally be diagnosed properly, and she would surrender to a lifetime of self care and medication, but only after struggling heartily against such an end.

Although I enjoyed the book, I felt it took a long time for her to reach a point where she really dealt with her illness. In fact, I nearly gave up reading because I was not finding it particularly helpful. She mentioned her difficulties dealing with the early signs of the developing disease, but I would have liked a little less build-up and more of the solution that brought her to acceptance of her condition and the collateral damage it had caused in the life of those who loved her.

An accomplished writer, activist and lawyer, Ms. Moezzi, has taken charge of her life and now advocates for those who suffer from mental illness. She wants the world to know that there is no shame in having a problem with your brain. She is an outspoken critic of many in the mental health field and openly admits, because she lives a rather privileged life, that she has enjoyed the best of care. It is her dream that the book and her voice can help improve the health system so that everyone with mental illness can reach the stage of recovery she has. She includes a word of caution that this disease is unrelenting and self care is of the upmost importance. Reviewed by Susan Correa
Many thanks to those who helped with our moves for two offices including:

- All the NAMI SW WA staff members who worked and volunteered for three weeks straight to make sure we were able to carry on with our normal activities.
- Nancy and Fred Marsh for the loan of their heavy-duty dolly
- All of the many unidentified men in and around 5411 East Mill Plain who responded to Keri Stanberry’s pleas for muscle to help the women who were unloading heavy furniture and equipment from our U-Hauls

**Genetic Testing:** NAMI SW WA Vancouver office: Wednesday, August 26th from 9 AM to 5 PM at 5411 East Mill Plain, Suite 4; by appointment only. For an appointment, please call 360-695-2823.

**Family to Family and BASICS classes to start in September.** If you are interested in attending please call Melinda at 360-695-2823 to preregister.

**CHECK OUT OUR NEW ACTIVITY IN VANCOUVER ON WEDNESDAY, THURSDAY AND FRIDAY.** Join us for a brain healthy walk. Check this month’s calendar for times. We meet at 5411 E.Mill Plain, Suite 4.

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**Hello Cowlitz County Friends!**

Our move continues....

We’re in our new building at 109 Allen Street in Kelso, and we LOVE our new space! It’s so full of possibilities. Another heartfelt thank you to the city of Kelso and everyone that had a hand in making this happen. Progress has been a little slow, to say the least, due the usual struggles of moving.

Our Cowlitz office 4 legged staff, Paco and Daisy, are getting adjusted to their new surroundings. Paco is a 1 ½ year old brindle Shitzu Maltese and Janie’s emotional support companion animal. He’s kind of bashful and stays pretty close to mama. Daisy, his older woman, is about 12 years old, loves everybody, but feels the need to bark at them first. We’re working on this and have had to get a muzzle for particularly busy days. Both dogs are friendly and loving once they get to know the people around them.

On August 6th from 11:00 am to 2:00 pm, we are welcoming Cowlitz county parents to a FREE workshop and lunch on Building Resilient Children. Anyone interested, please call the office at 360-703-6724, and reserve space for yourself, partners, and friends. This program has already been piloted and is getting great reviews.

On a sad note, Eric Chastain, our MSW (Masters in Social Work) intern, and a very special part of our Cowlitz program, has left us. Being active military, he has been sent to Texas for a year of special training. He completes his MSW classes in early August and will then be a graduate of University of Southern California School of Social Work. We look forward to his return to WA and his eventual retirement from the Army. We already miss him and will keep him to his promise to stay in touch with us and visit on his leave.
Help support the one in four Americans who will be affected by mental illness this year.

*Thank you for being part of the team!*

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Vancouver, WA 98668

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