



nami Southwest Washington

National Alliance on Mental Illness

The Official Newsletter of NAMI Southwest Washington

Vol. 14.2

2014

Inside this issue:

BASICS and Family to Family starting	3
New Support Group in Cowlitz	3
DAP Support Group Disbanded in Cowlitz County	3
New Found Hope: In Charla's Own Voice	4
NAMI SW WA WALKS in PORTLAND, Sunday May 18, 2014	5
Peere-to-Peer Facilitators trained	6
Bulletin Board: NAMI Services: Pharmacy Consult, Benefits Consult, Parent Support Group	9

CONTACT US!

Street address:
8019 NE 13th Avenue
Vancouver, WA 98665

Mailing Address:
PO Box 5353
Vancouver, WA 98668

Tel: (360) 695-2823
Fax: (360) 823-1088

Email:
info@namiswwa.org
Website:
www.namiswwa.org
Twitter:
@NamiSouthwestWA

Resources:

NAMI Warm Line
M-F 9am-5pm
(360) 695-2823
Mental Health Ombuds:
(360) 397-8470
(866) 666-5070
Teen Talk: (after 4pm)
(360) 397-2428
Crisis Lines:
(360) 696-9560

JOIN THE ANNUAL NAMI BOARD MEETING: TUESDAY, JANUARY 28th

Tuesday evening at 7 PM NAMI SW WA will open its doors to welcome all NAMI members, volunteers, and other supporters as we conduct our annual board meeting. The purpose of the meeting is to have members vote to approve our NAMI SW WA annual budget, to approve our slate of officers and/or to nominate other members, and to approve the nominations for officers of the board. Voting will be by show of hands.

However, this meeting is also to serve as an introduction to our new office space at 8019 NE 13th Avenue. Please plan to join us at 7 PM.

Current Board members include: Michael Altig, Becky Anderson, Ann Donnelly, Terry Gertson, Nancy Johnson, Tim Kreuger, Victoria Starr, and Stephanie Welty. All have agreed to return to the board. Becky Anderson is from Skamania County and Tim Krueger is from Cowlitz County.

Nominations for new positions on the Board of Directors include Darvin Zimmerman from Clark County and Frank Randolph from Cowlitz County.

Nominations for Board offices are: Stephanie Welty, President; Ann Donnelly, Vice-President; Becky Anderson, Treasurer; and Michael Altig, Secretary. All are continuing in positions they held during 2013 as we proceeded with the consolidation of the three counties that are part of the SW WA Regional Support Network (RSN), internal restructuring with a new Executive Director, and a major move.

Following the business part of the meeting we will honor the many volunteers who worked with us during 2013 and hope that all of them will be present to participate in the meeting. There will be special recognitions made to a small number of people whose help played a significant role in allowing us to significantly expand our services and to conduct our move and many events. We will also honor some corporate donors whose help enabled us to partially fund events.

If you are not planning to attend the meeting you can still participate in the voting process. A paper ballot is enclosed in this newsletter. The ballot includes the nominations for current board members to renew their terms, nominations for new members who have agreed to come on to the Board, and Board officers. There is also space for write in candidates. Our total budget for operations and programs that have already been funded or will be funded during 2014 is \$201,189. Additional programs we hope to fund total \$33,080.

If you want to use the paper ballot which is included with this newsletter please complete the ballot and either scan it and attach it to an email to admin@nami-clark.org, fax it to us at 360.823.1088, mail it by Saturday, January 25th to us at PO Box 5353, Vancouver, WA 98668, or drop it off at our office by 5 PM on Tuesday.

We look forward to seeing you in person!!!

From the Directors Desk

Dear Members and Friends of NAMI,

2014 is firing up with many, many NAMI activities and new initiatives.

Our new intern from USC started in early January. Read about Alyssa on page 7 and stop by to meet her. She is already busy at work with Lyn who also began working with us in late December creating the Parent Center. The Parent Center will support parents as they learn to work more effectively with their children who have a mental health diagnosis. The program will include one-on-one time with Lyn whose many years of experience providing parent support at Catholic Community Services and in various locations in Alaska will be invaluable. They will conduct a parent support group and will also start a support group for teens. Parents with a mental health diagnosis are also welcome to use the services of the Parent Center and participate in any of the activities. Lyn's cheerful willingness to tackle any new problem will serve her well during our planned VISTA Member time with her at NAMI.

Considerable time in January has gone to getting programs started in Cowlitz County. We hope to spend the same amount of time in February working on programs for Skamania. We will kick off Cowlitz events with a community education forum on February 6th (see the article on page 7). A new support group is beginning in Cowlitz County on February 20th. Our two peer facilitators for that group have been the instigators in providing NAMI with a great plan for a twelve week cycle of education and support for groups that will begin in Clark and Skamania counties, as well. If you are looking for support to help you get into or stay in recovery, attend the Cowlitz group and meet facilitators Angie and Melanie.

I have been busy attending many meetings and doing in-service programs with other organizations and agencies in our region. If you know of places where people want or need to hear about NAMI, please let us know.

Please do attend our Annual Board Meeting on Tuesday the 28th. It will be good to meet NAMI members. If you aren't a member you are still welcome at the meeting however you will not be eligible to vote.



Peggy

I believe in pink. I believe that laughing is the best calorie burner. I believe in kissing, kissing a lot. I believe in being strong when everything seems to be going wrong. I believe that happy girls are the prettiest girls. I believe that tomorrow is another day and I believe in miracles.

Audrey Hepburn

**Please don't forget
to join us at our
annual meeting on
January 28th
at 7pm.**



When you are doing caregiving you kind of get lost in the process. I never really thought about what I was getting in to or what to expect when I became caregiver until I was way over my head. I thought my dad would recover but all of a sudden I was having to learn about one condition after another. Now i am at 14 years and counting. I didn't know how haunted I would become by doing this, either. Having done caregiving for such a long time now my advice to anyone who is going to take it on themselves is: 1) Go into it with your eyes wide open. You really can't control what's going to happen. It will unfold the way it wants to unfold. 2) Set aside plenty of "me time". I didn't do enough of that. 3) Keep in touch with friends and/or get out and socialize and have fun whenever you can. Otherwise you will become isolated. I also didn't do enough of this. 4) Remember who you are and don't lose YOU. This isn't easy to do! 5) Good luck. You're going to need it. And hold on tight because the road is going to get bumpy!

BASICS AND FAMILY TO FAMILY STARTING IN JANUARY IN VANCOUVER

BASICS, one of the most popular signature NAMI classes began Wednesday, January 23rd at our office in Vancouver. New participants can still sign up and attend next week and the following four weeks of the six-week class. BASICS is a program designed specifically for parents and other primary caregivers of children or adolescents who have been diagnosed with a mental health condition. It is a great way for parents of small children diagnosed with ADD or ADHD as well as parents/caregivers of older children diagnosed with conditions such as bipolar disorder or schizophrenia because these caregivers all have similar needs: to ensure that the child receives the best services available in order to have a successful school and home life. Becky, Lyn, and Alyssa will be partnering as class facilitators.

Family to Family (F2F), another popular signature NAMI program, will begin on January 27th. This twelve-week class will be held at the VA campus in Vancouver. We still have a few open slots for this program. While it is being held at the VA anyone in the community who has a family member living with a mental illness can attend. At the most recent F2F class that ended in November participants unanimously agreed that they should have taken the class many years earlier because of the many skills they learned and tools they acquired through the peer education available through the class. If you would like to attend, please call us before the class starts. As with BASICS, we may be able to enroll a few people the week after the first meeting but will not enroll anyone after that time. Ellery our MSW intern From USC and Heidi, a vets spouse will lead this course.

NEW SUPPORT GROUP BEGINS IN COWLITZ COUNTY DAP Support Group Disbanded in Cowlitz County

In mid-January NAMI SW WA disbanded the DAP support group that had been meeting in Cowlitz County for a number of years. Tim Krueger, the facilitator, is no longer able to continue facilitating the group, however the group was disbanded for other reasons, as well. If people from that group continue to meet they will not be working under the auspices of NAMI.

Our new NAMI support group will begin on February 20th, meeting from 6 pm to 8 pm every Thursday evening. This group will focus on tools and skills that will help people to move into or remain in recovery. We are very excited about this group that will be duplicated across the SW WA region. Melanie and Angie, the facilitators in Longview, will do a terrific job.

The group will meet at the Cowlitz County Health Department. Please use the main entrance door; all other doors will be locked. A sign will be posted at the door. As with any support group, please be on time...in fact, get there a bit early. When participants arrive late their entrance to the room can disrupt the conversation. Since the room is away from the main entrance, the doors to the building will be locked after 7 when the meeting starts.

We will be getting continuous feedback from participants to ensure that these groups are meeting the needs of all the participants.

New Found Hope: In Charla's Own Voice

Three months ago it was as if the answers to my prayers had finally been received. After class at Clark College one morning I was driving home and came to a stop in a location that I had traveled many times. Out of the corner of my eye I read the acronym NAMI. Squinting to read the smaller print I read the words National Alliance on Mental Illness and my heart melted. It was as if my spiritual guide laid NAMI in my path to relieve my broken heart.

I took responsibility for Jimmy, my younger brother, when he was just 11 years old and recently diagnosed with Asperger's Syndrome because our mother was perplexed about what to do with him. She had fallen into a world of drugs and alcohol.

I was just 21, newly married and had also taken on the responsibility for a stepdaughter who was around the same age as my daughter from a previous marriage. We added another child in wedlock and now we had a family with three babies in diapers, a young "Aspie" boy, and two young parents. Both my husband and I were raised by women with addiction issues.

As you can probably tell, we had our hands full. Things went from crazy to worse when I got the call that my mother was killed in a drunk driving accident. Jimmy was just 13. Shortly after, I got overwhelmed with grief and fell into drugs. I separated from my husband and moved to Arizona with my two daughters; Jimmy decided he wanted to stay with my soon to be ex-husband. This was one of the hardest decisions I have ever made in my life.

Life was the hardest I thought it had ever been over the next almost 2 years. Drug addiction, unresolved grief and, by then, the voluntary surrender of my own two girls was another one of the hardest decisions that I have made in my life.

I spent the next 10 years of my life in and out of addiction. Spurts is what I will call them. Several years clean and sober, in between, and then back to the bottle or marijuana, then clean and sober. Then, my codependency took over. I met a man, an alcoholic on probation for domestic violence. Quickly, I became a victim myself and suffered a major facial fracture and shattered septum. This violence triggered my post traumatic stress disorder. Drinking felt like the only way to feel like I didn't want to die. My anxiety and paranoia only increased every time I had more drugs or alcohol or both. After receiving my second DUI, I had enough! I have children to care for and a brother that desperately needs some love and attention. Getting myself to treatment and getting healthy was the only goal I had and I was willing to do anything to achieve it! This had to stop! It took me some time to get my head clear and pursue my children and Jimmy again.

Treatment was the very first place that I sought help to control my addictions. Then from there, I found patience to get healthy within my mind, body, and spirit. From there, I was then healthy and strong enough to do what I have wanted more than anything: "Assist my little family in repairing their mind, body and spirit".

After many years of not really understanding what was happening with my misdiagnosed brother, Jimmy, I was feeling like I had failed him. He is now 28 years old, and I am still not really sure what to do with him to help him be productive in his own life.

We have gone through several agencies trying to find a place for my undiagnosed "Aspie" brother to find resources, with no luck. We either heard "I don't want to give him a diagnosis" to "Let me refer you to another agency". Between this frustration and the simple fact that broth-

(Continued on page 5)

Are you a

NAMI Member

yet?

Change your

thoughts and you

change your

world.

Norman Vincent

Peale

“How do you know? I mean, how do you really know that you can trust me? “

I don't. That's what trust is.

William Adama

Work spares us from three evils: boredom, vice, and need.

Voltaire

er was running out of patience, now not as willing to jump through the repetitive hoops that were being asked of him. Finally, at NAMI, I was in a place where I was greeted with open minds and pleasant welcoming hospitality.

We (brother and I) were invited back to a meeting where I was told that my brother would find understanding, solace, and friendship. After our very first visit to the meeting, my brother met a man that shares similar interests. He is also willing to sit through the meeting without too much distress. Jimmy has now chosen to volunteer for NAMI a few days a week; my two daughters are also volun-

teering there. We couldn't have happened upon a better place to find acceptance, accountability and help. NAMI has opened many doors for us and I hope to find a way that I can give back as a volunteer, all they have given to us.

This is a resource I have found helpful. If you or a child is dealing with Asperger syndrome or autism spectrum disorder (ASD) you might want to check out this resource: Autism and AS, by Uta Frith, Cambridge University Press, London, UK, 1991 (\$17.95)

For more information on the Internet, look for the "Asperger Disorder Homepage" at <http://www.ummed.edu/pub/o/ozbayrak/asperger.html>

NAMI SW WA WALKS in PORTLAND, Sunday May 18, 2014

NAMIWalks are the biggest NAMI fundraisers. These events help fund NAMI educational programs, support groups and other events throughout the nation. There are over 1,100 affiliates around the U.S. and all participate in the Walks. On Sunday May 28th walkers from SW WA and Oregon will be walking together in Portland; another walk will be held on the same day in Seattle so those members in SW WA who prefer to make the drive to Seattle can walk there.

Every year, regardless of race, age, religion or economic status, mental illness impacts the lives of at least one in four adults and one in 10 children across the U. S. for a total of about 60 million Americans. In 2013 U.S. NAMIWalks raised over \$10 million to support programs and initiatives. Last year NAMI SW WA raised about \$4,500. This year our budget has almost doubled and our goal is to raise a minimum of \$15,000; our hope is to raise twice that amount.

Please help us! If you want to be part of the team that coordinates the activities for NAMI SW WA, call or email us so we have your name and contact information. We are starting to register cor-

porate sponsors, asking for gifts of \$250 to \$15,000 from each. NAMI SW WA gets to keep 60% of any of the sponsorships we register. We are also getting our walking teams together. We need team leaders from all three counties: the provider agencies, faith-based organizations, schools, businesses, civic organizations, and other groups. Members of each team can raise their own money through donations from friends and family with the proceeds coming to NAMI. Team members can walk or be virtual walkers, simply providing a donation. Some walkers ask for a certain number of dollars per mile; others have other gimmicks to help them raise money for this worthwhile cause.

If you own a business or think your employer would like to become a sponsor for the NAMIWalk please contact our office with the information. If you want to head up a team let us know. And on May 18th we will see you in Portland at the meeting place on the east side of the Willamette River for a great trip across two bridges and an enjoyable short walk. Your effort will help us fund all the programs we hope to fund this year.

NAMI Peer-to-Peer Leaders Trained

In January, two NAMI members from SW WA participated in a NAMI OR training class to become Peer-to-Peer mentors. They will join other NAMI SW WA trained mentors as we roll out Peer-to-Peer programs during 2014 in each of the three counties. Peer-to-Peer is just one of the excellent signature programs developed by NAMI over the past decades. Peer-to-Peer is a ten-session class for people living with a mental illness diagnosis. The classes can take place once a week for ten weeks or twice a week over five weeks. All mentors are adults living in recovery.

Peer-to-Peer provides the time and space for people to begin or continue the healing process of living with mental illness. Attendees have the chance to explore and find peace with difficult situations. Class participants bring their collective experiences and wisdom, giving meaning to the course. The peers in the group also learn more about providing support for one another. "Peer-to-Peer is a really great way to learn more about yourself," said one of the people who was just trained.

Check the March newsletter for the rollout of Peer-to-Peer in each county.

Peanut Butter granola

Peanut butter granola. A great way to start your day!

Ingredients

- 1 cup peanut butter
- ½ cup honey
- ⅓ cup canola oil
- 8 cups old fashioned rolled oats
- 1 cup peanuts
- ½ cup flaxseed



Instructions

1. Preheat oven to 350°.
2. In a large pot combine the peanut butter, honey and canola oil over medium heat. Heat just until everything melts together.
3. Add oats, peanuts and flaxseed. Stir until oats are thoroughly covered in peanut butter mixture.
4. Take one half of the batch and spread on a cookie sheet. Bake for 12-15 minutes and be sure to give it a stir every few minutes. Granola will scorch if you don't keep an eye on it.
5. Once it is golden, take it out of the oven. Even if it feels a wee bit tacky, it will continue to dry out after you take it out of the oven.
6. Repeat the process with the second half of the batch.

Store in a tightly sealed jar or plastic container.

*We would never
learn to be brave
and patient if
there was only joy
in the world*

Helen Keller

*Coming together is
a beginning, stay-
ing together is a
progress, and work-
ing together is suc-
cess.*

Shel Silvestein

Bulletin Board

*If you do not hope,
you will not find
what is beyond
your hopes.*

**St. Clement of
Alexandra**

*Hope is like the
sun, which, as we
journey toward it,
casts the shadow
of our burden
behind us.*

Samuel Smiles

 Mental health pharmacist and Board member, Vicki Starr, is available by appointment to conduct medication reviews with any NAMI member within Clark, Cowlitz and Skamania counties. Please call us at 360.695.2823 if you would like to set an appointment with her for either at our site in Vancouver or by telephone. If sufficient people are interested in either Skamania or Cowlitz counties she would also make every effort to set a block of time there to meet in person. This NAMI SW WA service has been extremely helpful to those who have already met with Vicki. She will review all your mental health medications along with all other prescription and/or over the counter products you take including supplements. Because she has worked for many years with mental health medications she is very knowledgeable about day to day management of them. We encourage you to take this opportunity to work with her to reduce side-effects and to get the most from your prescriptions so that you can stay in recovery.

 You can still sign up for BASICS or Family to Family in Vancouver but you must do so by the first week of February. Call our office if you are interested 360.695.2823. Otherwise you must wait until the next classes.

 The first Parent Support group will begin at the Vancouver office on February 5th from 10:30 am to 12:30pm. Call 360.695.2823 and ask to speak to Lyn for more information.

 You are invited to the Cowlitz Community Education Forum on February 6th. The session begins at 7 PM at the auditorium at the Cowlitz County PUD building, 961 12th Ave. in Longview. Four guests will present and discuss with the audience how to best go about accessing a variety of benefits when you or a loved one as been diagnosed with a mental health condition. Call us for more information.

 NAMI's support groups for men and for women who are incarcerated in the Clark County jail will begin in February. These groups will follow the same format as the twelve-week program we have discussed elsewhere in this newsletter. We are very excited about this program that will certainly make jail time a bit more bearable for those inmates living with mental illness.

 Three mental health bills are coming before the WA state legislature. One deals with jails, one with..... and the other with..... We have information about these bills at the office. If you are interested in helping us write letters to the twelve representatives and six senators who represent our three counties, please stop by the office and we will get you involved in this project. Remember, it is working through these sorts of processes that we can all have an effect on both the laws and the people who are elected to work on our behalf.

 If you are having problems with getting signed up for or finding benefits that will help you get services because of your mental health diagnosis, call 360.695.2823 and ask for Cindy. Cindy is our new benefits counselor. Cindy is a long-time volunteer with NAMI who is now partially funded through a special program with Services for the Blind to help us set up this new program. Anyone with a mental health diagnosis can meet with Cindy on Tuesday or Thursday from 11 to 5 PM, during her office hours here. She can help you find the best resources, assist you with completing paper work if you need that help as well as answer questions, and, maybe most importantly find ways that you can get back to work without losing your existing benefits. Because Cindy spends lots of time with each client it is important that you have an appointment to see her.

Help support the one in four Americans who will be affected by mental illness this year.

Thank you for being part of the team!

NAMI Southwest Washington
P.O. Box 5353
Vancouver, WA 98668

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Nonprofit Org.
US Postage
PAID
Vancouver, WA
PERMIT NO.790

Future NAMI Member



National Alliance on Mental Illness

- ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP - \$35.00
 - OPEN DOOR ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP - \$5.00
(No one is refused membership due to economic hardship)
 - DONATION \$ _____
- ★ We are a registered non-profit organization 501(C) (3) and donations are tax deductible.

Name: _____
Address: _____
City: _____
State & Zip: _____
Phone: (____) _____
E-Mail: _____

- NAMI Membership Includes:**
- ★ NAMI National Advocate Magazine, quarterly
 - ★ Washington Friday Facts, weekly e-mail by request
 - ★ NAMI SW WA Newsletter, monthly
 - ★ Member Discounts on NAMI Events & Materials,

Please return your payment and completed form to:

NAMI Southwest Washington
P.O. Box 5353
Vancouver, WA 98668

To use a credit card and join online, go to www.nami.org
Or use your credit card to join or donate at www.nami-clark.org