



nami

National Alliance on Mental Illness

St. Cloud Area



The Official Newsletter of NAMI St. Cloud Area

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Jan-Feb-Mar 2022

Upcoming Education:

Educational Meetings are Free and Open to the Public

Educational Meetings will be on Zoom AND in person. Please visit our website for login details for Zoom.

Jan. 18th

No Education Meeting, Annual Board meeting

Feb. 15th, 6:00 PM

“Central MN Mental Health Services Programs and Services”

Speaker To Come

March 15th 6:00 PM

“St. Cloud Hospital’s Empath Unit”

Dr. Stephen Loos

Here We Are, 35 Years Later..

It’s been almost 35 years since a small group of people in the St. Cloud area gathered to talk about how to help people who live with a mental illness, as well as how to help their family members and friends. Since that April 1987 meeting, when Gerri and Bob Gustafson, Dave and Sandi Jacobson, Mona Becker, Joyce Gelle and interested others met and got down to the business of how to overcome the stigma associated with mental illness, this small group has taken many steps to find help and has led to events that have had a far reaching impact on many lives. (Dave Jacobson has passed away last year, and Joyce Gelle passed away several years ago.)

The grassroots effort started with breakfast meetings in 1987. As Gerri Gustafson says, “We were never short on helpers. People were so happy to find support and understanding.” This group “passed the hat” for donations to advertise their meetings and to publish their newsletters. They looked at what might be the most effective route to bring about systemic change, and from their discussions, they decided to sponsor workshops to offer certification for professionals, to put out brochures with factual information about mental illness and to get involved in the legislative process. The group even participated in local parades.

When Bob Gustafson found teachers for the NAMI sponsored “Family to Family” course, an avenue opened to families which put consumers, family members and professionals on the same page. Gerri Gustafson noted that this course was welcomed by family members because the course helped everyone to talk the same talk. The efforts of the original founders led to a variety of help available to consumers, family, friends, and professionals including resources such as Family Support Groups; an annual conference for professionals, family members and consumers; monthly education programs; quarterly newsletters; and an annual Mental Health Walk, a warm line, and resource tables at many area events.

Since that April 1987 meeting, the group’s name has changed from AMI (Alliance for the Mentally Ill) to NAMI-St. Cloud Area (National Alliance on Mental Illness). As the group progressed and focused on the need to change laws, a decision was made to affiliate with NAMI because of NAMI’s legislative process and the potential impact of legislation for help with mental illness. Over the years, NAMI-St. Cloud Area has sponsored buses to “Day on the Hill” which created the opportunity to meet with legislators to discuss Bills and Laws which deal with mental illness. The group has worked cooperatively with the League of Women Voters when they studied mental health services and conducted interviews of mental health facilities, as well as joined with the Stearns-Benton County Advisory Council to provide information to our County Commissioners and worked with Community Support Programs. When Nick Johnston became the Director of the Central Minnesota Mental Health Center, his efforts supported the work of NAMI-St. Cloud Area.

Mental illness has biological roots and many tentacles. Gerri Gustafson, one of the founding members of the local NAMI, noted the need to be open to new ideas and facts. From the small group that met in April 1987 came ideas and help that continues today and will continue in the future. As Gerri Gustafson said recently of the founding group, “A broad step started on a small note.” Thank you to those who have worked hard to eliminate the stigma of mental illness and who have provided help and resources to many.

NAMI St. Cloud Meetings

Board and Educational meetings are held at the St. Cloud Stand Down Bldg.
722 33rd Ave. North
St. Cloud, MN 56303

CONTACT US!

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Christmas Presents Delivered 2021

NAMI St. Cloud budgeted \$500 this year to purchase Christmas presents, to be given to persons with a mental illness residing in an inpatient or residential facility over Christmas. We purchased and delivered a total of gifts for 105 individuals in the following places: St. Cloud Hospital’s Adult Behavioral Health Unit, Adolescent Behavioral Health, the Empath Unit of St. Cloud Hospital, Northway Intensive Rehabilitation and Refractions IRT of St. Augusta, Behavioral Health Hospital in Annandale, The Inpatient Psychiatric Unit at the St. Cloud VA, and the Adolescent Addiction Services of CentraCare. Our gifts were gratefully received.

Sad News on a Past Board Member and Friend

We learned this week of the passing of past Board member Mike Stringer. Mike served on our board for several years, and was a facilitator of the Family Support Group for a number of years as well. We extend our deepest sympathy to Mike’s family and loved ones.

Education Programs for 2022

Some speakers to be filled in later, watch our website for more details.

- January 18th - No Education Meeting, Annual Board Mtg.
- February 15th - Central MN Mental Health Ctrs Programs and Service
- March 15th - St. Cloud Hospital’s Empath Unit
- April 19th - Suicide Prevention - Lori Bershok MSW, LICSW
CentraCare Suicide Prevention Coordinator
- May 17th - Consumer Panel - Consumers Share their Journey from Illness to Recovery
- June 21st - Metro Bus Services
- July 19th - Lobbying and Legislation
- August 16th - Meet with Area Legislators
- September 20th - 4 County Crisis Services
- October 18th - LGBTQ
- November 15th - Camphill Village
- December 20th - Advanced Psychiatric Directives

Retirement of 2 Board Members

NAMI St. Cloud Area begins 2022 with the stepping down of two of our most dedicated board members; Ruth Wittrock and Cecil Huston. We will greatly miss Ruth’s work as our Treasurer, keeping us on track with finances and budgeting. Cecil has kept us up to date with computer technology and communication. We are grateful to Cecil for continuing to facilitate the Family Support Group and serve as editor of our newsletter.

We can never thank you enough Ruth and Cecil for your dedication to the work of NAMI St. Cloud Area, and those we serve.

Recruiting New Board Members

Two of our long term Board members have resigned for personal/family reasons. They will be sorely missed. We’re seeking replacements who have either personally struggled with mental illness or who have friends or family members who have done the same, or those working in the mental health field, who have a desire to help bring about positive changes in our mental health system. If you are interested, please contact us at 320-654-1259, and let us know how you can help, or if you are interested in joining our team! Please visit our website at namist-cloud.com to learn more.

New NAMI Program - Homefront

An Announcement from NAMI Minnesota:

We are excited to announce the launch of **NAMI Homefront Mental Health Resources for Military Service Members, Veterans and Their Families**, a free online suite of resources designed to increase understanding, communication, wellness and advocacy skills.

When NAMI Homefront was launched in 2014, the program was intended to address the unique needs of families, caregivers and friends of military service members and veterans experiencing PTSD, traumatic brain injury and other mental health conditions.

With this new resource center, we have expanded the reach of NAMI Homefront to include military service members and veterans as well. Users can access the information and support 24/7, both in the U.S. and when stationed overseas.

Accessible through computers or mobile devices, the resource center includes information about:

- Mental health conditions
- Treatment options
- Approaches to increase overall wellness
- Tips for self-care and managing stress
- Communication strategies
- Transitioning from military to civilian life
- Links to helpful organizations and crisis services
- And more!

We’re honored to offer these resources to our military and veteran communities, especially as we recognized Veterans Day Thursday, Nov. 11, and pay respect to all those who have served. If you or someone you know could benefit from these resources, visit homefrontresources.nami.org to sign up today.

Save the Date!

Our Mental Health Walk 2022 will be held at Lake George on Saturday, May 7th. Please be sure to save the date, we look forward to seeing all our friends, old and new!

Thoughts of Suicide?

St. Cloud Area Help	320-253-5555
Crisis Text Line	Text MN to 741741
For emergencies call 911 or call the National Suicide Prevention Line at 1-800-273-8255 (TALK)	

NAMI St. Cloud	320-654-1259 www.namistcloud.com
NAMI Minnesota	888-473-0237 www.namimn.org
NAMI National	888-473-0237 www.nami.org

Resource	Information
St. Cloud Hospital	320-251-2700
Adult Mental Health Unit	320-255-5601
Senior Helping Hands	320-229-3760
Central Minnesota Mental Health Centers	
St. Cloud [1321 13 th St. N] (emergency services: 320-253-5555 or 1-800-835-8008)	320-252-5010
Buffalo [308 12 th Ave. S.]	763-682-4400
Elk River [253 8th St NW, Suite A. Elk River]	763-441-3770
Monticello [407 Washington St.]	763-295-4001
Hope Community Support Program	320-240-3324
County Human Services	
Benton County Human Services	320-968-5087
Sherburne County Human Services	1-800-433-5239
Stearns County Human Services	320-656-6000
Wright County Human Services	763-682-7400
Caritas Family Services (Catholic Charities)	320-252-4121
Independent Lifestyles, Inc.	320-529-9000
Resource Training & Solutions	1-888-477-7032
State Resources	
Mental Health Association of Minnesota	1-800-862-1799
Mental Health Ombudsman	651-431-5201 or 1-800-657-3506
Minnesota Disability Law Center	1-800-292-4150

Four County Crisis Response Team Central MN Mental Health Center Stearns, Benton, Sherburne, Wright Counties	320-253-5555 or 1-800-635-8008
Mental Health Consumer Survivor Network www.mhcsn.org	1-800-483-2007
Minnesota Mental Health Resources for Benton, Sherburne, Stearns, and Wright Counties	www.mnmentalhealth.org

****PLEASE NOTE!****

Due to COVID-19, some of these meetings may be cancelled or changed to an online format. Please contact the group to verify how to attend the meeting before going!

Resource	Information
St. Cloud Area Support Groups	
Family Support Group For family members, friends and caregivers of someone with a mental illness. All ages, all diagnosis! 2nd and 4th Tuesday 7:00pm to 8:30pm Currently meeting via Zoom ONLY, visit the NAMI St. Cloud website, Family Support tab for registration details.	Cecilia Huston Email: fsnamist-cloud@gmail.com
PFLAG Weekly Support Group Mondays 7:00 to 8:30pm St Cloud Public Library	www.centramnflag.com
Hope Community Support Program Groups Depression/BiPolar Support Group (Thursdays-5:30 to 7:30 PM) Schizophrenia Support Group (Wednesdays-2:00 to 3:30 PM) Reach (for friends of those with mental illness).... (1 st Tuesday of every month-6:00 to 7:00 PM) Here & Now Group Thursdays 11 AM	320-240-3324 (NOTE! All Hope sponsored support groups are currently online, please call for further details.)
OCD Support Group Wednesdays-5:00 to 6:30 PM at CMMHC	320-252-6432
National Suicide Prevention Lifeline	1-800-273-TALK (8255)
National Suicide Prevention Hotline	1-800-SUICIDE (784-2433)
Veteran's Linkage Line	1-888-LINKVET (546-5838)
Legal Aid Society	612-332-1441
Salvation Army-Emergency Shelter	320-252-2229
Caritas Emergency Assistance	320-229-4560
Caritas Financial Counseling	320-650-1660
Crisis Connection (Phone Counseling)	Call 211 or 1st Call Minnesota at 1-800-543-7709
The Healing Hearts of Suicide Groups : 1 st Tuesday of each month at Center for Life Transitions, 38 24th Ave. North, St. Cloud — 7:00 - 8:30 pm 3 rd Tuesday of each month at the St. Mary's School in Melrose, 320 5th Avenue SE, - 8:00 - 9:30 pm (Please call Roxann before attending.)	Roxann at 320-248-1563
Albany Depression/Bi-Polar Support Group Mondays 6:30-7:30 pm Albany Hospital Conference Room	Call Hope at 320-240-3324
Mental Health Support Group for Adults In Sauk Centre, Palmer House Hotel (in the back room) Meetings are held each Friday from 2-4 pm	Richard at 320-260-4233
Independent Lifestyles Depression/Bipolar Support Group Mondays 6 - 7:30 pm 215 North Benton Drive Sauk Rapids, MN	320-281-2025
Bridges Parent Support Group Handke Center, 1170 Main Street, Elk River, MN 55330 Meetings are held the third Monday of each month From 6:00—8:00 PM **RSVP is required for adequate childcare and food	RSVP to Sara Pundsack: Sara.Pundsack@co.sherburne.mn.us



**NAMI/St. Cloud Area
Executive Committee
2022**

President
Nick Johnston

Vice-President
Louise Echola

Secretary
Jolene Simmons

Treasurer
Rhonda Karels

National Alliance on Mental Illness-St. Cloud Area

Membership Levels (circle):

\$60 Household \$40 Individual \$5 Open Door (for Low Income)

I would like to make an additional donation: \$ _____ Additional Amount

Membership Information:

(Name)

Address

City

State

Zip Code

Phone

Email

Method of Payment (circle): Check Visa Mastercard AmExDiscover

Credit Card Number

Expiration Date

Signature of Card Holder

CCV Code

Please sustain my annual membership by automatically charging my card for:

___ 3 years ___ 5 years ___ Until I notify You

Please send membership application to:

NAMI Minnesota

1919 University Ave W, Ste 400

St Paul, Mn 55104

Toll Free: 1-888-NAMI-HELPS

To join or renew membership online, visit www.namihelps.org

NAMI-St. Cloud Area
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