



Newsletter

Volume 28, Issue 1

October 2007

Special points of interest:

- Safe Housing
- Family to Family
- Resources
- Shop for A Cause

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Safe Housing for those with Brain Disorders

Elsewhere in this newsletter (Presidents Corner, page 4), you can read about the Mental Health Summit I attended on 8/20/07. This meeting was a turning point for our State’s MH delivery system. I have the privilege to be a part of the team that will make a difference. Governor Perdue challenged the group to come up with a short list of the most important issues needing to be addressed in the next 18 months. Safe Housing was one of those issues. Let me explain.

For proper medication and therapy to work, a person needs someplace to be safe. They need a home. No amount of medication and therapy can overcome the

ever present and real threat of violence and exposure to the elements that confronts someone who does not have Safe Housing. So, in order for any of the other critical areas to be successful, Georgia needs Safe Housing.

I happen to be on the Committee for Safe Housing. What our committee comes up with will go directly to Governor Perdue. So here is your chance. All of you are one voice away from the Governor. I need your help. Let me know what you know about Safe Housing. I need education concerning the existing system, and what can realistically be

done to create a turn-around. I believe that our committee will recommend a pilot program to be conducted for the next 18 months. The outcomes of the pilot program will determine where we go from there.

Wouldn’t it be fantastic if that pilot program were in Gwinnett? What kind of program will work in our county. We don’t have a lot of time to put this together. I’ll be organizing a meeting to discuss this within the next couple of weeks.

Thanks,
 Eric Spencer
 NAMI Gwinnett - President



About Mental Illness

What is Mental Illness: Mental Illness Facts

Fact sheet from NAMI National's Website

Mental illnesses are medical conditions that disrupt a person’s thinking, feeling, mood, ability to relate to others, and daily functioning. Just as diabetes is a disorder of the pancreas,

mental illnesses are medical conditions that often result in a diminished capacity for coping with the ordinary demands of life.

Serious mental illnesses include major depression, schizophrenia, bipolar disorder, obsessive compulsive disorder (OCD), panic disorder, post traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), and

borderline personality disorder. The good news about mental illness is that recovery is possible.

Mental illnesses can affect persons of any age, race, religion, or income. Mental illnesses are not the result of personal weakness, lack of character, or poor upbringing. Mental illnesses are treatable.

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Most people diagnosed with a serious mental illness can experience relief from their symptoms by actively participating in an individual treatment plan.

In addition to medication treatment, psychosocial treatment such as cognitive behavioral therapy, interpersonal therapy, peer support groups, and other community services can also be components of a treatment plan and that assist with recovery. The availability of transportation, diet, exercise, sleep, friends, and meaningful paid or volunteer activities contribute to overall health and wellness, including mental illness recovery.

Here are some important facts about mental illness and recovery:

- Mental illnesses are biologically based brain disorders. They cannot be overcome through "will power" and are not related to a person's "character" or intelligence.
- Mental disorders fall along a continuum of severity. Even though mental disorders are widespread in the population, the main burden of illness is concentrated in a much smaller proportion — about 6 percent, or 1 in 17 Americans — who suffer from a serious mental illness. It is estimated that mental illness affects 1 in 5 families in America.
- The World Health Organization has reported that four of the 10 leading causes of disability in the US and other developed countries are mental disorders. By 2020, Major Depressive illness will be the leading cause of disability in the world for women and children.
- Mental illnesses usually strike individuals in the prime of their lives, often during adolescence and young adulthood. All ages are susceptible, but the young and the old are especially vulnerable.
- Without treatment the consequences of mental illness for the individual and society are staggering: unnecessary disability, unemployment, substance abuse, homelessness, inappropriate incarceration, suicide and wasted lives; The economic cost of untreated mental illness is more than 100 billion dollars each year in the United States.
- The best treatments for serious mental illnesses today are highly effective; between 70 and 90 percent of individuals have significant reduction of symptoms and improved quality of life with a combination of pharmacological and psychosocial treatments and supports.
- With appropriate effective medication and a wide range of services tailored to their needs, most people who live with serious mental illnesses can significantly reduce the impact of their illness and find a satisfying measure of achievement and independence. A key concept is to develop expertise in developing strategies to manage the illness process.
- Early identification and treatment is of vital importance; By ensuring access to the treatment and recovery supports that are proven effective, recovery is accelerated and the further harm related to the course of illness is minimized.
- Stigma erodes confidence that mental disorders are real, treatable health conditions. We have allowed stigma and a now unwarranted sense of hopelessness to erect attitudinal, structural and financial barriers to effective treatment and recovery. It is time to take these barriers down.

Special Thank you!

Because of the generosity of the family and friends of *Tracy Boulware* and *Lindy Spencer*, NAMI Gwinnett was able to print the fourth edition of the Community help booklet. Below is the dedication included in the booklet. To the Boulware Family and the Spencer Family, we want to thank you for remembering our support organization.

Dedication

This edition of the Community Help Book is dedicated in memory of Tracy Boulware and Lindy Spencer. Their families wish to thank everyone who generously gave toward the publication of this Help Book, to honor their loved one.

The Community Help booklet is also on our website at www.namigwinnett.org

Mark Your Calendars!!

This year seems to be flying past us! Now we are looking forward to the holiday season. Yes, the holidays are just around the corner. Starting in October, NAMI Gwinnett has a lot of activities. So dig out a pencil or pen and mark your calendars! Please remember these events can only be successful if you volunteer. Without volunteers to help, these events won't happen.

Date	Event
Tues/Oct 2 7:00 pm	“Mental Health Awareness” celebration - Annual Potluck Dinner Italian dinner will be provided. This is a great time for fellowship. For more details see page 8.
Fri/Nov 16	Annual Thanksgiving Luncheon at the Day Treatment Center If you haven't volunteered to help in the past, you have missed a fantastic time. Volunteer and you will be given a wonderful gift of meeting some amazing people, enjoying a great meal, and having wonderful entertainment! To volunteer contact: Lois Damron at 770-277-0222
Sat/Nov 17 9:30 am – 11:00 am	Decorating the Christmas Tree Each year, NAMI Gwinnett has a beautiful Christmas tree display at the Gwinnett Justice & Administration Building. The Community Help Booklets and the NAMI Gwinnett brochures are available to visitors. This is a great way to people to learn about NAMI Gwinnett. We need volunteers to help decorate our tree. To volunteer contact: Carol McEntee at 770-339-1149
Tues/Dec 4 7:30 pm	Educational/Support Meeting At this meeting, we will wrap the consumer gifts for the two Day Treatment Centers. So bring your scissors, tape, and any extra gift boxes for the gift wrapping party. Support groups will be available.
Sun/Dec 9 2:00 pm - 5:00 pm	Christmas Goody Bag Assembly Each year, NAMI Gwinnett provides the people who attend the Day Treatment Centers both a Christmas gift and a goody bags. These goody bags contain items such as personal care items, socks, pen/pencils and note books. We need volunteers to help assemble these bags. To volunteer contact: Debbie Taylor at 678-376-5071 or Lori Spencer at 770-822-2795
Sat/Dec 29 9:30am - 11:00am	Removal of the Christmas Tree We need volunteers to take down the Christmas Tree at the Gwinnett Justice and Administration Building. To volunteer contact: Daryl Myers at 770-963-2809
Tues/Jan 8 7:00pm dinner 7:30pm Meeting	Educational/Support Meeting Since New Years Day is actually the first Tuesday of January, we are holding the Educational/Support Meeting on January 8.

From the President's Corner

Greetings All,

On Monday, August 20, 2007, I attended a "Summit Meeting" hosted by NAMI Georgia and the Dept. of Human Resources to address the broken mental health delivery system in Georgia. This meeting was a watershed event. I believe the tide has turned, or at least, stopped going out. Below are excerpts from emails that attendees have sent to the NAMI Georgia Board of Directors describing the event. Their heartfelt and eloquent words say it all, so I'll let you get to reading them. I apologize for the length of the articles, but when you begin reading them, you'll wish there were more.

From Nora Haynes, President-NAMI Georgia

NAMI/DHR hosted a Summit that could only have been overseen by God Almighty. And I mean that. It was a miracle. The Governor came and told us he cares. A 'D' has never been acceptable in his home and it is NOT acceptable in his state. He said he was doing a "full court press" to fix the system. It was a very sincere, from the heart message.

I hope the other Board members in attendance will write you a note about their impressions of the day.

From John Richards – NAMI Savannah

I anticipate a great deal of interest in the meeting with Governor Perdue that was facilitated by Nora Haynes, NAMI Georgia President and Georgia DHR Commissioner BJ Walker which took place August 20, 2007, in Atlanta from early morning until late that same day. The focus of the meeting was a 'Summit' on the mental health report card on the state of Georgia by our national organization (NAMI), which resulted in the Grade of 'D' for their assessment of our states delivery of mental health services to our citizens. The meeting was attended by many of the NAMI Georgia

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2007 Membership and/or Donation Form

Sign up for:

- Individual/family Annual Membership \$28.00
 I am unable to pay—please waive \$00.00
 Donation

Method of Payment

- Check
 Cash

Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____

Email _____

NAMI Experience
 the Revolution
 ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ JOIN TODAY!

Become a Member of NAMI Gwinnett

Memberships are available for Individual/Family or Consumers. Additionally, donations are accepted. Donations are tax deductible.

If you prefer, donations and support are accepted on a non-membership basis.

Thank you for your interest and support.

NAMI Gwinnett is a family based, grassroots, self-help and advocacy organization, dedicated to improving the lives of people with severe mental illness.

An affiliate of NAMI and NAMI Georgia

Building a better future for people with mental illness.

NAMI GWINNETT

P.O. Box 464053
 Lawrenceville, GA 30042-4053



The Nation's Voice on Mental Illness

NAMI FAMILY-TO-FAMILY EDUCATION PROGRAM

FREE for family members, partners and friends of individuals with

Major Depression
Bipolar Disorder (Manic Depression)
Schizophrenia and Schizoaffective Disorder
Panic Disorder and Obsessive Compulsive Disorder
Co-occurring Brain Disorders and Addictive Disorders

A series of 12 weekly classes structured to help caregivers understand and support individuals with serious mental illness while maintaining their own well being. The course is taught by a team of trained NAMI family member volunteers who know what it's like to have a loved one struggling with one of these brain disorders. **There is no cost to participate in the NAMI Family-to-Family Education Program.** Over 80,000 people in the U.S., Canada, and Mexico have completed this course. We think you will be pleased by how much assistance the program offers. We invite you to call for more information.

Classes Start: Thursday January 31, 2008

Lawrenceville Presbyterian Church

800 Lawrenceville Hwy

Lawrenceville, GA 30045

7:00 – 9:30 p.m.

Co-Teachers: Brenda Vinson (770.338.0468)

Carol McEntee (770.339.1149)

For caregivers only
Registration required
 Classes limited to 24 people

This NAMI Family-to-Family Education
 Program is sponsored by NAMI

Registration Form for Family to Family Education Program

Mail to:
 NAMI Gwinnett
 Family to Family
 P.O. Box 464053
 Lawrenceville, GA 30042-4053

or
 Email your contact info to:
family2family@namigwinnett.org

or
 You may call Brenda or Carol at the above
 numbers with your Contact information.

 Name

 Address

 Phone

 Email

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Board, Commissioner Walker, Division Director Gwen Skinner and their staffs. Also attending were members of the Georgia Mental Health Services Coalition, members of the governor's staff, several Community Service Board directors, other providers to include Ken Whiddon of American Work, Inc., Senator Groggins, Senator Johnny Grant, Representative Sharon Cooper and others from the legislature. Several sheriffs were in attendance as were other law enforcement and staff. Georgia Department of Community Affairs (DCA) was in attendance with housing as their priority for the homeless mentally ill. A number of leading clinical medical professionals attended to include Dr. Charles Li of GRHS and our board member, Dr. Farrell Braziel who both made significant contributions to the forum.

The tremendous mixture and cross section of leaders in the mental health field and related disciplines impacted by the service needs of this population plus the knowledgeable citizen advocates from NAMI and consumer groups had Governor Perdue refer to us as the 'Brain Trust' for Georgia on the needs of our citizens for appropriate and necessary services and care to ensure we change the "REPORT CARD" from a grade of 'D' to a much better grade. Governor Perdue was presented a detailed report on NAMI nationals process on why Georgia got this grade and our Georgia president, Nora Haynes, gave a passionate presentation on the needs of Georgians to include her son, for appropriate and effective services to ensure the possibility of recovery and return to a full and meaningful life.

Governor Perdue addressed the assembled summit attendees and declared this was to be a "full court press" effort to change the status of the mental health system in Georgia, and claimed personal responsibility as the Governor for the current state of affairs. He also stated that it would not have been acceptable in his family for him to bring a report card grade of that type home and it was not acceptable for Georgia to remain in that status. Governor Perdue made a powerful and heart felt presentation to the assembly and stated that even though he was in the first year of his second term, He considered this his personal responsibility as governor and would treat the situation as if this was his first year as the states senior executive.

After the Governor left the DHR Commissioner turned the summit process over to a professional facilitator from the 'Covey Foundation' and the assembled 'Brain Trust' participants began the process of identifying the problem from all points of interest of the many groups around the table. Several hours were spent in defining all areas of service needs and a list of specific goals were established that had the possibility of improvement by December 2008 if the Governor and legislature could implement the needed actions and resources to improve the system. The various items of 'Battle' were identified as, Continuity of Care, Crisis Intervention, a web based master list of all services in Georgia, establishment and funding for an Ombudsman function, Parity in Insurance coverage for mental health services, Safe housing, Education of society and reduction of Stigma, and several other issues.

The assembled summit members broke out into 'Caucus Groups' and adopted one of the agreed to 'Items of Battle' to be worked into a final proposal for the Governor's action after our next meeting which will be held in Atlanta shortly. The end goal of the 'Brain Trust' is to present to the Governor our recommendations for action the two or three most

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****NEW** NAMI Gwinnett Cell Phone**

678-982-5354

NAMI Gwinnett now has a cell phone to better serve our community. We decided it was time to make it easier and quicker to help those in need. The phone will be manned by volunteers on a rotating monthly basis. We obtained the phone because of the volume of calls we were receiving, so it wouldn't fall on any one person to answer the calls. If you feel that this is an area that you can help us out in please volunteer. We will have a packet with the phone with all the information that you need to perform this very important responsibility. To volunteer please email bod@namigwinnett.org, or support@namigwinnett.org or call 678-982-5354.

The phone will mainly be used to give callers information on how we can help them with our services. For example, about our Support Groups, Educational classes, meetings, etc. The callers also may be referred to a NAMI member that may be able to help or give advice in their particular situation. In the event of a serious crisis we suggest that it may be best to call family, doctor, 911 or the Georgia Crisis & Access Line. The information is listed to the right of this article.

Single Point of Entry


**Georgia Crisis &
Access Line**

1-800-715-4225

Access mental health, addictive disease,
and crisis services 24/7

Online at mygal.com



Sponsored by the
Georgia Department
of Human Resources 

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important and doable items to be accomplished by December 2008, with his leadership and support of the legislature. The entire group left in almost total consensus that this was a great meeting and we were all inspired by the Governor's message and understood he was waiting for us to present the final plan to him which he will act upon. The NAMI Georgia leadership was very grateful for the support and statements of Commissioner Walker who stated she was dedicated to the results the Governor had directed to have accomplished. NAMI members are appreciative of the collaboration and partnership that the Commissioner and Division Director has invested in NAMI as an organization and its individual members. The Governor also praised NAMI and dedicated his efforts to fulfilling the goal of appropriate and available care to all Georgians needing mental health services and supports. We must not let this opportunity to help our citizens, neighbors, and family members slip away. This is a doable change that can be accomplished now with the Governor's leadership. A more formalized public release will be prepared by NAMI and furnished to the media and citizens quickly but I felt this advance information to those I communicate with frequently was required.

From Donna Jones, Director-NAMI Georgia

I will highlight some aspects that were most impressive. First and foremost, the leadership was outstanding. They set the tone of the meeting, which was passionate, serious and optimistic. Our fearless leader, Nora, obviously touched the Governor's heart when she gave her opening statement which presented Joey's life as a touching example of what consumers and their families go through. She issued a challenge to the Governor when she stated that Georgia's "D" in the Grading the States report was unacceptable...just as a "D" is unacceptable for any student. The brilliant combination of her remarks and Mary Giliberti's explanation of the report made Georgia's dire situation abundantly clear. Grades are something that everyone can relate to, Mary said, because everyone has been graded in school.

The state's fearless leader, Gov. Purdum, voice softened as he told us how touching Joey's story was. Could Nora have known that his mother was a school teacher who made it clear that poor grades were unacceptable? He said his mother would accept no excuses for a "D." The Governor looked at Nora directly when he said, in effect, that as a latecomer to the issue and would make no excuses for the "D." One got the impression that he felt that if his mother were with us she would not be impressed that he allowed Georgia to get a "D" on his watch.

Nora and the Governor connected in a "genuine way" that set the tone for an extremely rich and productive meeting. Everyone knew we had our work cut out for us and with the assistance of the Franklin Covey facilitator we broke into caucuses and produced a strong list of 6 "battles we want to win" by the end of 2008 in the area of mental health services in Georgia. Commissioner Walker and Director Skinner were actively involved and will deliver the list of "battles" to the Governor.

At the end of the day hope remained, which is important. NAMI-GA and her affiliates should remain cautiously optimistic!

I'm glad I attended.

Donna

From Mimi Marlowe, Director-NAMI Georgia

Hello Everyone,

Nora's first email about Monday's meeting really set the stage for others to talk about this great day. Diane Reeder and Donna Jones provided more information that describes beautifully what happened and why it happened. John Richards described in even more detail about the events of the day and how it ended. So I won't say much. But I would like to add a few thoughts that have stayed with me.

First of all, I believe Nora's tremendous and inspiring opening that morning set the stage for the reactions that followed, from the Governor and the group. Nora, you are a terrific example of doing what you ask others to do, which, in this case, is to be a warrior. And you did it in a way that invited others, including the Governor, to be on the same side in this war. The analogy of war and battles and fighting the good fight were terms that were used a lot Monday and by some people that I believe have previously been on different sides of the line drawn in the sand. This time it looked like everyone was on the same side and wanting to fight the true enemy...a Georgia MH system that is so broken that it results in poor or no services, a true loss of human dignity, and the ultimate price being paid by people...losing their lives.

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Fun night of Food, Fun, and Entertainment!

October 2, 2007

7:00pm

We talk about so many serious issues in NAMI, it's time to sit back and enjoy a night of just spending time together!

October 2nd is our annual Pot Luck dinner! This year our theme is Italian Night. NAMI Gwinnett will provide: Yummy spaghetti, Italian bread, and amazing salads, plus drinks for all to enjoy! Everyone will enjoy dining together with Italian decor and candle light too!

The Hospitality Committee would like to invite all to bring their favorite Italian dishes. Some are bringing pizza, for an example, so if you have a great Antipasto salad, Lasagna, Ravioli, or even spaghetti please bring it so we can all enjoy!! Recipes would be appreciated too! We will also need amazing desserts as well.

While we are dining together October 2nd, our very talented consumers will entertain with song, music and poetry. Many will have their artwork displayed as well. If you are a consumer and would like to entertain or have your artwork displayed, please contact Lori Spencer by either emailing at lspencer2795@yahoo.com or call at 404-542-2795.

This is a wonderful way to kick-off Mental Illness Awareness Week that will start the following week (October 7-13). We will have information about MIAW that night that all can use the following week to educate everyone around them about mental illness and fight stigma!

So this is a night that you can't miss! Please come out and have a night of fun and joy with everyone that loves you and understands you like no one else can!

Article written by: Lori Spencer Hospitality chair

In memory of Lindy Spencer

Grandmother of Amanda & Erica Spencer

Mother to Eric Spencer,

and Lori's best friend.

Lindy had a wonderful, loving heart for her family.

She cherished her family above all else.

This was written down about Lindy by her mother, Isabel:

She shall not grow old as we that are left grow old, Age shall not weary her, nor the years condemn. At the going down of the sun and in the morning, we shall remember her.

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Nora to the Governor:

"When my son, Joey, had his first break in his freshman year at college, he didn't get an early diagnosis and stabilization. Instead we had to try and work within a very complicate, unresponsive system. Many departments touched Joey but they didn't, and don't, work together."

Mary Giliberti (NAMI National) to the Governor:

"I got into this work because of tragedy but I stay because of hope. I want to explain why we used a report card and what it means for Georgia. I also want to tell you about some good things happening in Georgia such as CIT and the peer specialist program. Most urgent need is an investment in the system (like studying is needed to get a good grade)."

Governor to the group:

"I feel like I'm late to class and that leads to bad grades. My mother, a school teacher, would never imagine me coming home with a D. And I wouldn't be able to make excuses such as the teacher is not a good teacher, or the content is too hard, or others in the class keep me from learning. So I'm taking this D as my grade and it is unacceptable and I'm going to do better.

Today is a chance to help us plot that course. My MH Health Commission and the work being done at the Atlanta Regional Hospital is a good start.

My goal is to earn the Hope Scholarship, if not get on the Dean's List. I'm not just hear to make a speech. This has been on my mind and it will stay on my mind after I leave."

Back to Eric

I believe Governor Perdue. I was there. To continue Nora Haynes' "warrior" mantra, it is now time for us to shift our axis of attack from convincing the state there is a problem that needs to be fixed, to identifying and fixing the most critical problem. The committees are addressing six areas of concern. I happen to be on the Safe Housing Committee. I need your help. Please see my other article concerning that Committee located on Page 1.

Eric Spencer

President – NAMI Gwinnett

Congratulations to Family to Family Graduates Summer 2007

We would like to congratulate the following graduates of the Summer 2007 Class:

Frank. C. Bate, Glenda Brown, Joan D'Andrea, Linda and Ray Droган, Janet Fienemann, Nancy and Ray Longmire, Nancy Malone, Faye and Bill West.

You were a joy to teach and we learned so much from you. As we hope that you learned understanding and support of your loved ones, while maintaining your own well being.

Thanks! Debbie Taylor and Carol McEntee

Resources for Assistance With Mental Health And Other Related Issues

Health Care for Those Without Insurance

Good Samaritan Health Center

located on Club Dr. in Duluth

(678) 280-6630

www.goodsamgwinnett.org

dental and optometry clinics also available

Partnership for Prescription Assistance

1-888-4PPA-NOW

www.pparx.org

*for assistance with psychotropic as well as other types of medication

Social Security Administration

1-800-772-1213

www.ssa.gov

Dept. Of Family and Children Services (DFACS)

Food Stamps and Medicaid

446 W. Crogan St. Lawrenceville

(678) 518-5500

Buford (770) 614-2500 Norcross (770) 638-5790

Co-Operative Ministries (a group of churches that work together to provide food, utility and limited prescription assistance)

Lawrenceville (serves Lawrenceville and Dacula residents)

176 Church St. (770) 339-7887

Lilburn 5329 Five Forks Trickum (770) 931-8333

Norcross 2275 Mitchell Rd. (770) 263-8268

South Gwinnett 1200 Athens Hwy Grayson (770) 985-5229

North Gwinnett (serves Suwanee, Buford, Sugar Hill)
70 Wiley Dr. (770) 271-9793

Organizations & Associations

National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI)

www.nami.org

information helpline: 1-800-950-NAMI (6264)

TTY: 1-888-344-6264 call Monday-Friday 10am-6pm Eastern time

Georgia Mental Health Consumer Network (GMHCN)

1-800-297-6146

www.gmhcn.org

Depression and Bipolar Support Alliance (DBSA)

1-800-826-3632

www.dbsalliance.org

Mental Health Association Of Georgia

(404) 527-7275

www.nmhag.org

Bazelon Center for Mental Health Law

www.bazelon.org

Georgia Psychiatric Association

(404) 298-7100

www.gapsychiatry.org

Georgia Advocacy Office

1-800-537-2329

www.thegao.org

Carter Center Mental Health Programs

(404) 420-5165

www.cartercenter.org

Suicide Hotlines

1-800-273-TALK (8255)

1-800-799-4TTY (4889) TTY

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★ *Macy's Shop for a Cause* ★

Every year NAMI Gwinnett has a fundraiser to raise money so we can purchase presents for the attendees of Beacon Place and Five Points. The fundraiser is called, "Shop for Cause," and it is a fun way to raise money for this worthy cause. The consumers that attend these programs may not receive presents if NAMI did not give them these gifts.

Here is how this fundraiser works: On October 13, 2007 NAMI, along with many other nonprofits, will man tables in Macy's at the Mall of Georgia. At this table we will sell \$5 dollar coupons to Macy's customers that will allow them to save money in many ways all throughout the store that day. I will need volunteers to help me man the table. Our shift is from 10:00 am – 3:00 pm on October 13th. We will need 4 people at the table at a time. People can sign-up for two hour shifts.

We will also receive the coupons before October 13th, so you can sell them to your friends and family before the big day as well. Please consider either pre-selling tickets, manning the table, or purchasing a coupon.

Any questions..... Call Lori Spencer at 404-542-2795 or email me at lspencer2795@yahoo.com

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Suicide Prevention Action Network

www.spanusa.org

For the Artist in All of Us

www.vsaartsga.org

www.recoverythroughart.com

www.poetrysz.net

www.theawakeningsproject.org

Vocational Assistance/The World of Work

www.reintegration.com

Georgia Dept. Of Labor, Vocational Rehabilitation Services

2111 Beaver Run Rd., Suite 160

Norcross (near tag office)

(770) 729-5400

www.dol.state.ga.us

www.ajcjobs.com

These are just a handful of the resources I have personally come across in my recovery journey. There are more– I will bring them to you in another installment, where I will focus on wellness/recovery tools and other resources of interest to us consumers. I hope you and your family will find the above list helpful. Take care!

Jennifer Garrison, C.A.R.E. Facilitator



The Nation's Voice on Mental Illness

We're on the web

www.namigwinnett.org

“A Delicate Balance”

by Jennifer Garrison, C.A.R.E. Facilitator

Earlier this year I found myself, for the sake of my health, needing to take a hiatus from NAMI. To do so included resigning from the Board of Directors, as well as suspending my involvement on the Advocacy Committee. I stopped facilitating for the C.A.R.E. Peer Support Group as well. I spent two months away, trying to recuperate my body, mind, and spirit.

Once I decided to rejoin my fellow Facilitators, I also realized how quickly I could be drawn back into doing so many other things. I needed to prioritize; I concluded that I would simply volunteer where I felt I could do the most good. That includes the peer support group, as well as assisting with seasonal projects. Of course, I will continue to write and proofread for the newsletter. The most difficult part for me is letting go of my ideas and plans involving the Advocacy Committee, at least for now.

Despite these changes, there is a much broader lesson I have had to learn. I have a great passion for NAMI, and for the people I have met through it. However, I feel that I need to “expand my horizons”. This does not, by any means, imply that I am leaving NAMI! What I mean is simply that mental health has become my world, thus depleting my spirit. To replenish that spirit, and to regain a true sense of myself beyond bipolar disorder, I must implement other activities into my life.

Although I participate in several artistic endeavors, I have found the solitude of it extremely dissatisfying. While seeking employment, I have been exploring various volunteer activities outside the mental health arena. I am also a part of a group that meets to play Scrabble on the weekends, as well as a writer’s group. The amateur orchestra I’m in reconvenes this fall. These groups provide a social outlet, as well as a way for me to express my artistic side without being alone. Seeking out a suitable church is another one of my goals.

My hope is that as a NAMI member and volunteer, you are staying in touch with your spirit, however you may do so. Of course, there is much important work to be done. Together, we can accomplish it. But please, don’t forget to care for your mind, body, and spirit as well.

NAMI Gwinnett now has our own domain on the web. The new address is **www.namigwinnett.org**. It is so much easier to remember than our old web address. With the new domain we have email capability. The Board of Directors each have an email address. We have also given addresses to the various committees, programs, etc. This should make it easier to reach the correct people for your situation. The addresses we have as of now are listed below:

Board of Directors		Programs and Committees	
President—Eric Spencer	eric.spencer@namigwinnett.org	Newsletter	newsletter@namigwinnett.org
1st Vice President—Jeff Lee	jeff.lee@namigwinnett.org	Advocacy	advocacy@namigwinnett.org
2nd Vice President—Miriam Ferguson	miriam.ferguson@namigwinnett.org	Family to Family	family2family@namigwinnett.org
Treasurer—Carol McEntee	carol.mcentee@namigwinnett.org	Family support	support@namigwinnett.org
Recording Secretary—Joy Jeannott	joy.jeannott@namigwinnett.org	Hospitality	hospitality@namigwinnett.org
Corresponding Secretary—Debbie Taylor	debbie.taylor@namigwinnett.org	Fundraising	waysandmeans@namigwinnett.org
Director—Bruce Bufano	bruce.bufano@namigwinnett.org	General Information	info@namigwinnett.org
Director—Alan McDaniel	alan.mcdaniel@namigwinnett.org	NAMI Care	namicare@namigwinnett.org
Director—Diane Turman	diane.turman@namigwinnett.org	Board of Directors	bod@namigwinnett.org

October 2007

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1	2 Pot Luck	3	4 SAFE	5 SAFE	6
7	8 BOD meeting	9 Support	10	11 SAFE	12 SAFE	13 Shop for a Cause
14	15	16 Support	17	18 SAFE	19 SAFE	20
21	22	23 Support	24	25 SAFE	26 SAFE	27
28	29	30 Support	31			

November 2007

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1 SAFE	2 SAFE	3
4	5	6 Education/ Support	7	8 SAFE	9 SAFE	10
11	12 BOD meeting	13 Support	14	15 SAFE	16 SAFE Thanksgiving Luncheon	17 Decorating of Tree
18	19	20 Support	21	22 Thanksgiving	23 SAFE	24
25	26	27 Support	28	29 SAFE	30 SAFE	

December 2007

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1
2	3	4 Support /Gift Wrapping	5	6 SAFE	7 SAFE	8
9 Goody Bag Assembly	10	11 Support	12	13 SAFE	14 SAFE	15
16	17	18 Support	19	20 SAFE	21 SAFE	22
23	24	25 Christmas	26	27 SAFE	28 SAFE	29 Removal of Tree
30	31					

Schedule of Events

Annual Potluck Dinner

"Italian Theme"

October 2, 2007

7PM

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Shop for a Cause

October 13, 2007

10:00am-3:00pm

Macy's Mall of Georgia

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Educational (Speaker) Meetings

*** Meal at 7pm before meeting***

November 6, 2007

Speaker: TBD

~

Support Meetings

NAMI C.A.R.E. and NAMI Family Support

Every Tuesday

~

SAFE

"Survivors Achieving Functional Equilibrium"

Thursdays and Fridays

8:00pm

~

Board of Director Meetings

Oct. 8, 2007

Nov. 12, 2007

7:00pm

~

Thanksgiving Luncheon

November 16, 2007

Day Treatment Center (GRN)

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Decorating of Tree

November 17, 2007

Gwinnett Justice and Administration Center

9:30am-11:00am

~

Christmas Gift Wrapping

December 4, 2007

7pm

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Goody Bag Assembly

December 9, 2007

2pm-5pm

The Spencer's Home in Dacula

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Removal of Tree

December 29, 2007

Gwinnett Justice and Administration Center

9:30am-11:00am

~

Family to Family Class

January 31 2008 – April 17, 2008

NAMI GWINNETT

P.O. Box 464053
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This newsletter published quarterly by NAMI-Gwinnett, Inc. It attempts to present a variety of views on issues relating to mental illnesses with depression, bipolar and schizophrenia as primary interests. Ideas and articles are welcome. Articles do not necessarily reflect the views of NAMI. The right to edit material is reserved. Deadline is the 1st day of December, March, June, and September. Email articles and ideas to: newsletter@namigwinnett.org or mail to: Newsletter, NAMI Gwinnett, P.O. Box 464053, Lawrenceville, Georgia 30042