



GRASSROOTS

Newsletter for the National Alliance on Mental Illness- Huntsville

medical news

Pay Attention to Your Physical Health (As well as your Mental Health)

People with Serious Mental Illness (SMI), on average, have a shorter life-span than the person who doesn't.

According to a study done in 2006 by the National Association of State Mental Health Program Directors, the average person with SMI dies 25 years earlier than the general population.

The causes of death are much the same in both groups, but it was noted, people with SMI are generally in the lower socioeconomic strata. They don't have access to the best medical care and their physical complaints are often not taken seriously.

Longevity can be improved by attending to the major causes of physical illnesses: cigarette smoking, obesity, and diabetes. All are treatable.

People with SMI are at higher risk for serious physical illness than the general population because 75 percent of SMI patients are tobacco dependent and obesity and diabetes are side-effects of medications used to treat SMI.

What can be done?

Health workers need to focus on their patient's physical health as well as their mental health. Wellness work shops can be offered for good nutrition and for cessation of smoking. Medical professionals need to develop guidelines for standard testing for glucose levels, weight, etc. Patients must insist that their doctor pay attention to their physical concerns as well as their mental ones.

Remember: good physical health + good mental health = Improved Longevity.



Events Calendar

All NAMI Huntsville Meetings are held in The United Way Building 701 Andrew Jackson Way, Huntsville, Unless otherwise announced.

Tuesday, March 3

7:00pm — Support Group
Facilitator — Cletus Harper

Tuesday, March 17

6:00pm — Board Meeting
NO EDUCATION PROGRAM

Tuesday, April 7

7:00pm—Support Group
Facilitator: Daniel LeBas

Tuesday, April 21

6:00pm—Board Meeting
7:00pm—Education Meeting
Speaker: Douglas A. Wright, Attorney
Topic: Social Security, SSI
Family Trusts



Membership Matters

It is true that you don't have to be a dues paying member to receive NAMIH services, but it is also true that membership donations are what help make NAMIH services possible. NAMIH needs you.

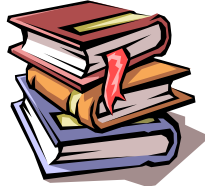
Are your dues due? Look at your Newsletter label.

| | |
|---------------------|---------------|
| Mr. & Mrs. John Doe | 12-31-09 |
| 100 Any Street | |
| Anytown, MI 22222 | |
| | ↑ |
| | Your Due Date |

Lives at Risk:

A book review

-Ruth Karr



This book is new to our NAMIH membership library it is up-to-date, even though it was published in 1996. It's authors, psychiatrist Bert Pepper and clinical social worker Hilary Ryglewicz, were the vanguard team in developing better treatment methods for people who are challenged by dual diagnosis (co-existing) disorders of substance abuse and mental illness (SA/MI).

Dr. Pepper was a guest speaker at NAMIH's 1985 conference at UAH which drew broad attendance from throughout Alabama! (At that time, we knew of Ryglewicz/Pepper's work through their quarterly newsletter *Tielines*.) Their approach to "co-occurring treatment for co-occurring disorders" is now the nationwide trend in SA/MI treatment practice.

Using three young people as examples, the authors explore the facets of myriad human/social problems of young adults who are not "making it" in our society because of mental, emotional and behavioral disorders. These complex problems challenge the individuals, their families, and education, criminal justice, public assistance, mental health and substance abuse treatment systems.

The final chapter of the book offers ways that all can work together to create a more meaningful quality of life, and quality of society, in general.



NAMIH Awards Program

At the Volunteer Brunch in December, these annual awards were presented: to the following *NAMIH Stars*:

To: Howard and Sarah Fry-*The Joanne Davies Distinguished Service Award*

The first time in NAMIH Awards history that the DSC was given two years in a row to the same recipients.

To: Joe Keweza- *NAMIH Outstanding Service Award* (with our thanks to Mrs. Keweza for being there to see Joe honored).

To: Jose Olivero, New Horizons Recovery Program of the Madison County MH Center- *The Fred Habeeb Mental Health Professional Award*

The Mental Health Center of Madison County,
NAMIH Community Service Award

Anne Rooks, MHCMC Director, Adult Services, and Brian Davis, MHCMC Executive Director sent beautiful expressions of thanks for these two awards, and will post them on their new websites, they say.

Heartiest thanks to the awardees for their well deserved work and honors!



MAY Rummage Sale Kleening Kloset Klutter

Are your closets and Garage overstuffed? NAMIH is here to help!

Closets first, one by one. Empty all contents onto a bed. Carefully inspect each article objectively. If it hasn't been worn or used in the past two years, "de-clutter" and recycle it to a big NAMIH rummage sale pile. Next, go through that pile and make sure it's all clean, and without stains or tears. Separate that pile into two (between fall/winter and spring/summer stuff.)

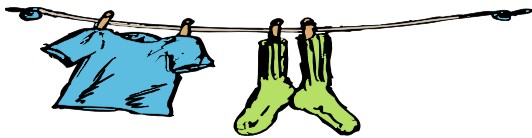
The donation of spring/summer stuff should be brought to the Rummage Sale site on Wednesday. The other pile (fall/winter) stuff should be boxed and held until the 2009 Fall sale, as NAMI will have very little storage space at the office in the United Way Building. Let's save that storage space for outside donations to NAMIH.

Guys, do the same thing in the garage as you and your better half has done in all closets. Recycle (Cont'd, see top of page 3)

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items to our rummage sale if you no longer use them! But find storage space at home if they are for the fall/winter (seasonal stuff) sale.

There now! Don't you already feel Spring Cleaning is halfway done?? NAMI is happy to help you de-stress by resolving your Clutter Anxiety Disorder (CAD)! Besides, during this economy downturn year, NAMIH can provide a charitable donations receipt for your 2009 tax return!



The Historical or is it the Hysterical Rummage Sale?

This article is a reprint from the 1990's when Rosemary Mc Mahan was NAMIH Office Manager. Rosemary, now a Presbyterian Minister, was a guest speaker at our 2007 Candlelight Vigil. Enjoy -The Editor

A Different Perspective

By Rosemary McMahan

I used to have the luxury of manning the NAMIH office during Rummage Sale time; however, I never realized what a luxury that was! In my two years' involvement with NAMIH, I have placed ads announcing the sale, but this time I got to *experience* it first hand. For those of you who only read about our sales or think they are easy, let me as a "first-timer" describe this semi-annual production to you.

On Wednesday, I arrived at First Christian Church at 7:50 AM to find Peggi DeLeuil and Ruth Karr already there. Immediately, the unloading began. (I didn't even get to finish my coffee!) Car load after car load after truck loads were emptied by NAMIH volunteers. Charlie Chisam and Jess Jones played Hercules as they drove all over town picking up donated goods. Carl Wipperman drove from Decatur to lend a hand. The large church hall waiting like a cold, dark cave, filled up with boxes and bags of clothes, furniture, kitchen goods, toys appliances, purses, books, hats, coats, records, jewelry and more. Slowly I realized that all these wonderful donations had to go somewhere. My two comments for the day were, "Where does this go? And "I can't believe you do this twice a year!" Lucky for me, I had to pick up my children from school (I knew they would come in handy one day). I left

at 2:15 while the others worked on. I have never been so tired in my life . . . until the next day.

On Thursday, I didn't even to try to beat Peggi or Ruth to work. I arrived at a leisurely 8:15 to find several people already sorting and stacking. The chaos of yesterday was beginning to find form as clothes were sorted by gender, shoes by size, books by type. Kitchenware lined several tables, and vases occupied orderly places next to neatly stacked baskets. We spent the remainder of the day organizing and pricing. Wilma Powers and I were awarded the "coveted" position of sorting and uniting curtain panels, comforters, pillow cases, bed sheets; a rather tedious job resulting in sore arms! Helen Chisam regained her childhood in a corner of the room where she sorted and priced toys and played with one or two. (She was especially fond of the ones that made noise.) Mary Reeder frantically priced a zillion baskets as George Wade checked all our electrical donations. James Stiles made a masterpiece display of shoes and purses while BeBe Brown, Julia Joiner, and Betty Clayton were everywhere at once. My two comments were "How much should I charge? And "I can't believe you do this twice a year"! On my way out I saw Linda and Gene George, as once again, my kids saved the day. I was on my way to pick them up. I have no idea what time the rest of the gang left, but I was a zombie the rest of the day.

On Friday the sale day! People lined up like horses at the racing gate. What mayhem! What confusion! What a *relief!* So many buyers came! I worked a couple of hours, bagging items as purchasers checked out and Eileen Fink and James Stiles managed to add prices in their heads, while making change, amidst all the noise. I saw Marge Humphrey, Mary Hilliard, Lillian Clift, Sharon Troncally and Dorette Schlidt controlling crowds and keeping customers happy. Needless to say Ruth and Peggi kept order throughout the day.

On Saturday, honestly, the last place I wanted to be on that beautiful, crisp autumn day was the NAMIH Rummage Sale. I got there about 11:00AM and helped bag items. Wood had replaced Eileen as money-taker (a job I think he secretly loves!). The crowd was smaller but just as busy, and while our mountains of goods had shrunk in size, there was a lot left. I shared, with Wood, some of the rummage sale-consumer-educational-tidbits-of wisdom I had learned from yesterday's workers and reflected upon that breed apart: the rummage sale devotees. By mid-afternoon, the Breaking-Free Rescue Mission arrived to take our leftovers. We got to work boxing items, taking down tables, scrubbing spots off the floor, and loading Mission trucks. Lessie and Jess came back to help as did June Crouch, Vasso and David Toon,. My comments for the day were "Didn't we just haul all that stuff in here?" and "I can't believe you do this twice a year!"

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If this sale sounds like “Nightmare at the NAMIH Rummage Sale”, and you are congratulating yourself on avoiding that mess, please think again. While I want to stress the painstaking labor that goes into this sale, I also want to emphasize the great sense of accomplishment when it’s over. For those of us who participated, I think we felt like our time was well spent. Without these sales, you would not be reading this newsletter, without the profits, you would not have an office to call when you need information, or materials to read. Without these profits NAMIH would be able to operate as a support group, period. The sale was work, but it was fun, leading to a bonding and a sense of unity. We laughed, we teased, we pulled together for the simple purpose of continuing our meaningful work in this community. *But it is unrealistic to continue to expect the same people to be the only ones who give their time and talent.* This spring I will be participating in this sale again and I hope that each of you will too. For now I am going to sleep . . . on a pair of sheets I don’t have to price!

The Spring Rummage Sale dates will be announced in the April Grassroots. We are waiting for facility date confirmation.



Join NAMI Huntsville

Become a partner. Help NAMIH realize our goals to support, educate and advocate on behalf of individuals with mental illness and their families.

MEMBERSHIP FORM

NAME _____

ADDRESS: _____

CITY/STATE: _____ ZIP: _____

PHONE: _____ EMAIL: _____

\$20 individual

\$30 family

New

Renewal

Donation \$ _____

I have taken the Family-to-Family class

**Mail check to: NAMIH, 701 Andrew Jackson Way
Huntsville, AL 35801**