



nami

National Alliance on Mental Illness

Columbus

Our Area's Voice on Mental Illness

With more than 1,200 affiliates, NAMI is America's largest grassroots mental health organization dedicated to improving the lives of all individuals affected by mental illness.



Inside This Issue

Frankly Speaking	2
Upcoming Events Calendar	3
Hear Ye, Hear Ye	3
NAMI Walk/5K Run	4
"This is Why I Walk"	5
SOS/Application	6



NAMI Columbus
 P.O. Box 8581
 Columbus, GA 31908
 (706) 320-3755



Board of Directors
 Frank Dunford, *President*
 Amy Zabel, *Vice President*
 Doris Keene, *Secretary*
 Vanessa Ridgley, *Treasurer*
 Charles Clark
 Paul Morris
 Wayne Pruski
 Vacant

Buddy Coiner, *Advisor*
 David Wallace, *Advisor*
 Clay Baum, *Advisor*



Georgia Crisis & Access Line
Single Point of Entry to access
mental health, addictive disease
and crisis services 24/7/365
1-800-715-4225



Peer Support "Warm Line"
 1-888-945-1414 (toll-free)
 The Georgia Mental Health Consumer Network operates a state-funded, consumer-directed "warm line" for anyone struggling with mental health issues, 24 hours a day



AmericanWork, Inc.
 Columbus ACT Team
 706-641-9663

NAMI WALK/RUN
Annual Fundraiser for NAMI
Monthly Education Meeting
Frank Dunford, Presenter
October 20th, 2014
6:00 P.M.

Frank will be discussing the annual NAMI Run/Walk fund raising event. You will be able to find out how you can get involved in supporting us by walking or running and raising some much needed funds for NAMI to keep our missions strong! Many are not aware of what a wonderful and uplifting experience this is each year for all of us. See you then!

If you are able, please bring a refreshment for our goodies table!



ODDS AND ENDS FOR OUR NAMI FRIENDS!

Tune in to the "Ranger Joe's God & Country Show" on WRCG-1420 AM. The broadcast is every other Thursday from 4:00 - 5:00 pm. Some of our members are featured on the program regularly, and we want to encourage YOU to call in with questions. Here's a link: <http://tunein.com/radio/WRCG-1420-s22345/>

ATTENTION: Some of you may not be receiving your newsletter because it's going into your spam/junk folder. PLEASE add news@namicolsinc.org to your contacts, so it's recognized as a valid and accepted email.

Wayne Pruski has begun a "computer kindness" program for consumers who do not own a computer. Please donate your unwanted computers and/or computer parts to us. Wayne and his team will do their best to assemble your donations into working machines to help others! Thanks!

Don't forget about Market Days each Saturday morning in Uptown Columbus. Volunteers are needed. Please contact info@namicolsinc.org to help out with this amazing outreach project to our community.

Our final total on the Logan's fundraiser was \$689.31! Another one is coming up on November 4th. Mark your calendars NOW and make plans to make more money while filling your tummy!

Frankly Speaking



Dear family,

Fall has meandered in on the heels of an exceedingly humid summer. Our little piece of Earth is cooling and soon the harvest moon will light the sky and evoke the spirits of Halloween. This time of year we all look forward to the NAMI Walk/Run, which will take place on November 1st.

We have a renewed energy this year that has sparked an influx of volunteers. These dedicated individuals have my undying gratitude for reviving our organization and giving us hope for the future. We are hopeful that some of the projects that we have been waiting to complete for so long may now have a chance to become a reality. As we turn our attention to the walk in November, please take every opportunity to talk to people about it and what it means to us all – and ultimately, to society.

We also have an upcoming election that involves a crucial board position in the NAMI Columbus organization. Since I will be vacating the president's position in December, we have already formed a nominating committee consisting of three of our board members: Doris Keene, Amy Zabel, and Charles Clark. This committee will bring forward the candidate of their choice for our consideration as president. I'm asking the board to then consider creating an executive director position in accordance with our bylaws and, in turn, hire me for a salary of \$0 which precisely matches my current salary. (There's a joke in there somewhere.) It is important for everyone to remember that regardless of who we choose as president, the executive director will be the nerve center of our organization and everything would flow through this new position rather than the position of president.

Our new leader will have plenty of responsibilities without having to be burdened with extra things that the executive director can handle. Please assist us by sending all inquiries, requests, and other necessary communications now and in the future to the new executive director at info4@namicolsinc.org.

Thanks!

Frank Dunford

President
NAMI Columbus

Upcoming Events

October 2014	November 2014
5 Peer to Peer Fall Class Begins 5-11 Mental Illness Awareness Week (MIAW) 8 National Day of Prayer for Mental Illness Awareness and Understanding 10 National Depression Screening Day 13 MEETINGS AS USUAL (New Horizons OPEN on Columbus Day) 20 Monthly Educational Meeting	1 NAMI Walk/Run - Atlanta (Piedmont Park) 4 "Raising the Steaks" #2 – Logan's Roadhouse 20 Monthly Education Meeting LET'S TAKE THE LARGEST GROUP EVER THIS YEAR FROM NAMI COLUMBUS! COME ONE, COME ALL!

"Open" Support Groups:

Every Monday night, 6-7:30 pm

Family/Friend and NAMI Connection Recovery Support Groups

Both meet at New Horizons CSB, 4411 Rosemont Drive

Every Saturday 1-2:30 pm

NAMI Connection Recovery Support Group

Meets at The Bradley Center's Multipurpose Room

HEAR YE, HEAR YE!

Please make plans **NOW** to attend the

***NAMI Georgia Annual
Walk and 5K Run***

***Piedmont Park
Atlanta, Georgia***

***Saturday, November 1st, 2014
MORE INFO ON THE NEXT PAGE!!***



What: NAMI Walk and 5K Run in Atlanta will bring together people impacted by mental illness from across the state of Georgia. Teams of families, businesses, churches, and other groups will join together to raise funds, build awareness for NAMI, and to celebrate mental illness recovery. The funds raised will go to help support programs in the community.

Where: Piedmont Park in Atlanta, GA. Transportation will be provided from Columbus (bus, van, and carpool). We will send another email with details about where and when to hop on the “NAMI Columbus Bus” or you can caravan with us or meet us there. The transportation details are still being finalized.

When: November 1st, 2014. We will leave Columbus at approximately 8:30 am and return approximately 5:30 pm. Registration begins at 10:00 and the Walk begins at 11:30 am.

How to Participate:

1. Register to walk at: <http://namiwalks.nami.org/columbustrailblazers> .

NOTE: make sure during the registration process to select: “I am walking to support NAMI - COLUMBUS”.

2. Donate to our walk at: <http://namiwalks.nami.org/columbustrailblazers>.

3. If you are registered to walk or are making a donation, please participate in fundraising to encourage and challenge others to donate by having them visit <http://namiwalks.nami.org/columbustrailblazers> or by using the tools provided when you register to walk (such as your own fundraising page).

Any questions or comments?

Please email info4@namicolsinc.org or call [706-320-3755](tel:706-320-3755)

YOU ARE NOT ALONE

“This is Why I Walk”

(anonymous testimonial)

For the past 2 years I've shared Facebook notes about why the NAMI Walk is so important to me. Looking back at them now, it's a chronicle of how much my friend has been through in that time. Two years ago, she was in the same place that she'd been in for much of the time I've known her – chronically suicidal, wanting desperately to die but knowing that those feelings and the voices telling her to do it were a symptom of her mental illness. My note that year was about the 3 AM phone calls, and the incredibly insensitive (and dangerous) responses she got when she tried to reach out for help. By this time last year, she was in a very different place – lost in a period of psychosis, unable to have any kind of conversation that made sense – the result of professionals' failure to take her (or me) seriously as the voices took over and she started to lose control. My note last year was about my realization of just how strong the stigma and discrimination against mental illness really is – that somebody fighting for her life and sanity could be so easily dismissed as “just trying to get attention.”

Soon after I wrote that note, she stopped talking completely for several months. I still called her every few days, carrying on a one-sided conversation to the sound of her breathing, or sometimes crying. Those conversations made me cry too – wondering what she was experiencing, and how isolating it would be to not be able to tell anyone. When she eventually did start talking again, her version of reality was very different from mine – she would have conversations that sounded totally rational, but none of what she was talking about was accurate. Any attempt to question this usually resulted in her shouting at and hanging up on me. This lasted for a very long time...long enough that I started to wonder whether the friend I knew was “gone” for good. A few months ago, I finally started to see glimpses of the “old” her – not always, but more consistently as time went on. The downside was that she was relatively happy in her imagined reality, but extremely depressed during the times she was lucid and realized what was happening. That's where we still are – and hopefully the progress continues.

So what, then, is the theme of this year's note? For me I guess, it's the realization of how strong, powerful, and all-encompassing mental illness can be. It's also the understanding of how important support and human connection are throughout that process. I'm not going to romanticize it, maintaining this friendship has been incredibly challenging and frustrating for me at times – trying to not take things personally, to not get defensive, to stay calm and rational in conversations that are anything but. Trying to figure out how to respond to her has been a huge learning curve, and a lot of trial and error. But then I think – that could just as easily be me in her shoes. What would it be like to fight constantly to maintain some control of your thoughts and your life, and instead of having people recognize that incredible effort, having them walk away instead (I mean, who needs that “drama” in their life, right)? That's her reality. Sometimes now, when I can tell she's struggling, I tell her how proud I am of how far she's come, how hard she's fought to get back to where she is now...it usually makes her cry, which obviously isn't my intention, because nobody recognizes that fact.

She is patronized, ignored, ridiculed even...but rarely appreciated or respected. Why is it that we can laud cancer survivors for how hard they've fought, and all they've overcome, but we don't think or talk about mental illness that way? There was so much conversation about mental illness recently following Robin Williams' death, but it's already fading away...and that can't happen. He may have been the public face of it, but statistics say that 1 in 4 adults in the US will deal with a mental illness at some point in their life. As I've talked about my friend's experiences (with her blessing), I've seen the “No kidding, me too” phenomenon in full force. People have shared their own stories with me, about themselves, their family, their friends...stories I never would have known without having that conversation. Mental illness is a part of all of our lives in one way or another, and it shouldn't have to be a secret. NAMI works to fight the stigma of mental illness, and to raise awareness of the need for improvements in the mental health system. I walk because I hope to support a future in which people like my friend will have an easier path to walk.



Columbus

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Our Area's Voice on Mental Illness



Many people find their way to our classes by first attending a support group. If you are a NAMI Columbus "long timer" (we don't want to call you old), please attend either of the two weekly NAMI Connection support groups or the weekly Family support group. Newcomers can use your wisdom and hard-earned experience. Sharing a message of recovery gives the hope they are searching for. Many people tell us that the NAMI motto "**You Are Not Alone**" is the initial feeling they realize at their first meeting. If you are willing to train to be a support group facilitator, let us know!

I want to support NAMI Columbus and NAMI's mission.

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone Numbers (do not enter a number if you do not want to be listed in the Membership Directory (members only).

E-Mail (Please include so we can be green and email you our monthly newsletter.)

Please check type of membership desired:

- Individual Membership \$35 Dues
- Professional Membership \$50 Dues
(Individual and Professional Dues are for one year and are tax deductible.)
- \$3 Open Door Membership (financial hardship)**
- I am not joining at this time, but I would like to make a contribution of \$ _____. (Thank you!!!)

✂ Please Cut and Mail ✂

NAMI National, NAMI Georgia and NAMI Columbus are dedicated to eradicating stigma and improving the lives of persons with mental illnesses thereby also benefiting their friends, family and community. Catch the wave and be a part of change.

NAMI Columbus is one of the largest affiliates in Georgia. We are a 501(c)3 non-profit charitable organization. Dues and donations are tax deductible. Membership includes a subscription to our monthly newsletter, membership directory, and access to immediate news on advocacy, treatment and support issues from our national, state and local organizations.

Please make checks payable to:
NAMI Columbus
P.O. Box 8581
Columbus, Georgia 31908

You can also join safely online at www.nami.org/join (\$35.00 by credit card).