

NAMI Boulder County

Circle of Support

National Alliance on Mental Illness, Boulder County, Colorado

Issue No. 192

- For all those touched by mental illness -

September 2007

Dust off your walking shoes: Join us on September 22 for the NAMI Colorado Walk for the Mind of America

Friends and affiliates of NAMI Colorado will join together on September 22, along with other nonprofit groups, in the second annual NAMI Colorado Walk for the Mind of America at Robert F. Clement Park in Littleton. Registration will begin at 7:30 a.m., but you can use the registration form in the brochure in this newsletter to sign up ahead of time and reserve your place. The walk begins at 9:00 a.m. The course is 1.4 miles.

The money raised by the NAMI Walk will help provide funds for the following programs in Boulder/Broomfield counties:

- Mental Illness Awareness Week
- Family-to Family classes provided free to participants, including all course materials
- Colorado Visions classes for families with children suffering with mental illness (also free)
- Support for Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) Training for law enforcement officers
- Community education programs on mental illness
- And more

We encourage you to get pledges from friends, family members, co-workers and all those from whom

you've bought Girl Scout cookies, Gold C booklets, etc. Use the donation form included with this newsletter to tally your pledges and donations.

You can walk as an individual or as part of a team. If you are walking for a team sponsored by another non-profit group (for example, Girl Scouts, Chinook Clubhouse, Soft Voices Drop-In Center) 50% of the pledge money you raise will go to your non-profit and 30% will remain with NAMI Boulder County. It is a great way to raise money not only for our affiliate, but also for other groups you are involved in.

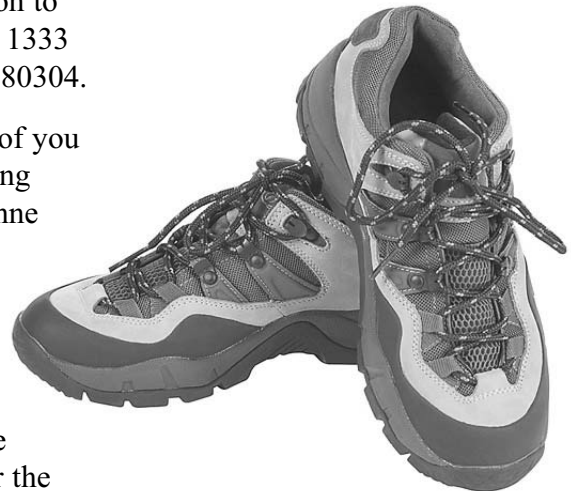
If walking is not your cup of tea, you can help support the NAMI Walk by sending a donation to NAMI Boulder County at 1333 Iris Avenue, Boulder, CO 80304.

As an incentive for those of you who are interested in raising money for this cause, Joanne and Alan Kelly are once again donating a gourmet dinner for two to any Boulder or Broomfield County participants who collect more than \$1,000 in pledges for the walk. Last year's winners of the

dinner for two were Marty Dick, Anne Weiher and Greg Coleman. Anne Weiher also won the statewide award for collecting the most donations.

While one of the goals of the event is to raise money for NAMI Colorado, its affiliates and other non-profit organizations, an equally important goal is to raise awareness about mental illness. Your participation in this event can help show Coloradans how important this issue is.

For more copies of the NAMI Walk brochure or donation form, please contact Greg Coleman at gccoleman@coldwellbanker.com. Happy walking!



NAMI BOULDER COUNTY

1333 Iris Avenue, Boulder
303-443-4591

www.namibouldercounty.org

~

Board of Directors

President, Alan Kelly

Vice-President, Nancy Coleman

Secretary, Laura Hadaway

Treasurer, Bill Kauffman

Sharon Bowyer, Greg Coleman,

Valine Demos, Susan Gallagher,

Bob Hadaway,

Elizabeth Kauffman, Joanne Kelly,

Bev Melius, Phoebe Norton

Reg Saner, Cathy Stiers

Christine Vigorita, Anne Weiher

~

Friends of NAMI

We are most thankful for your past and continuing friendship, but our list has grown too large for this small space. Please know how much you mean to NAMI Boulder County.

~

Office Manager, Sharon Bowyer

Volunteer Coordinator, Barbara Connors

NARSAD Cards, Cathy Stiers

Newsletter, Joanne Kelly

Contributing writers for September:

Barbara Connors, Reg Saner,

Alan Kelly, Greg Coleman

Anne Weiher

President's Corner

Following Joanne as board president is somewhat daunting. My talented and capable wife has set the bar high for the next president, (that would be me). I am thankful we have a great board, as this year will be a busy one. We already have many exciting activities happening this fall (see the list below). Remember we are always looking for volunteers to help with these events. See Barbara Connors' column on the next page for more information.

This summer Joanne and I went to the NAMI national convention in San Diego and came back energized and excited. NAMI is doing lots of good things all across the country, and it was exciting to be with the people who are making things happen in mental health. NAMI continues to be the nation's voice on mental illness by providing critical testimony on many health care bills before congress and various state legislatures. NAMI is also working hard on mental health issues for veterans. There were many workshops and seminars on veteran's issues, particularly post traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). Here is a shocking fact: More veterans of the Vietnam War have died of suicide since the war than died in the war itself. I hope the statistics from Iraq are not as grim.

At the convention we learned about some of the medical advances happening in the mental health field. These advances, particularly in gene research, gave us optimism about the treatment of mental illnesses. New and better drugs will be coming along soon. However, as we all know, new drugs take a long time to be developed, tested and approved, and as we watch our loved ones suffer with mental illness, it is tough to have to wait. We left the conference feeling optimistic, and we hope more Boulder people can attend next year's meeting in Orlando. Together we can make a difference.

Alan Kelly

Upcoming events

September 5 - Family-to-Family class starts (12 -week class)

September 14-October 12 - Colorado Visions class, Friday mornings 9:00-11:30. 5 classes.

September 18 - NAMI Boulder County Board Meeting 6:30 p.m. Christ the Servant Lutheran Church, Louisville. Feel free to join us.

September 22 - NAMI Colorado Walk for the Mind of America, 7:30-11:00 a.m., Clement Park, Littleton (see article on page 1)

September 22 - Innovations in Mental Health 2007 Conference (jointly sponsored by NAMI), 11:30 a.m. Regis University, Denver

September 23 - NAMI Colorado Annual Meeting, 11:30 a.m., Regis University Student Center, Denver

October 7- 13- Mental Illness Awareness Week, NAMI Boulder County to host booth at Farmers' Market on Oct. 7

October 16 - NAMI Boulder County Board Meeting 6:30 p.m. Christ the Servant Lutheran Church, Louisville. Feel free to join us.

October 18 - Interfaith Conference 8:30 a.m., Christ the Servant Lutheran Church, Louisville. (see article on page 4)

Volunteer Corner



*Barbara Connor,
NAMI Boulder
County Volunteer
Coordinator*

It's time to WALK! You'll find the details in the article on the cover of this newsletter. But I wanted to take this opportunity to encourage you to participate. If you like to walk, enlist some friends and do it together. If you are not a walker, consider volunteering at the event or making a donation to sponsor someone else who is walking. If you need registration forms, they are available for downloading from the NAMI Colorado Web site: www.namicolorado.org. You

can also contact me and I will send you the forms. You can reach me at 303-665-2190 or 303-710-0701 (cell) and by email at blconnors@comcast.net.

This summer, NAMI Boulder County has been hosting an information table at the Boulder Farmer's Market. Many thanks to Board member Nancy Coleman for organizing this effort and to volunteers Annie Briggs, Greg Carey, Jeanne Dolan, Jan Dobbs, Lynn Dyba, Patty Jansen, and Joan Wolfer for their assistance. We still need three volunteers for September 29 and two volunteers for October 6. If you can help, please contact me at the phone numbers and/or email above.

On October 18, NAMI Boulder County, in conjunction with the Boulder County Mental Health Center, Boulder County Aging Services, and Foothills Behavioral Health is hosting a day-long conference for faith leaders. See the article on page 4 for details. We will need several volunteers to help with setting up and breaking down the conference and serving lunch. If you can assist us on that day, please contact me. Even if you can't volunteer on the day itself, please encourage the leaders of your faith community to attend.

I look forward to being in contact with you soon.

Attend the NAMI Colorado conference/annual meeting September 22-23

After the NAMI Walk for the Mind of America at Clement Park on Saturday, Sept. 22, you'll need to make a beeline for Regis University, where lunch will be served, followed by the opening session of the Innovations in Mental Health 2007 Conference. The conference, which is jointly sponsored by NAMI Colorado, features many informative workshops organized in three tracks. One of the tracks is designed for consumers and family members, one focuses on law enforcement and CIT and the third is for mental healthcare providers.

The conference continues on Sunday, with a keynote address by former Detroit Lions quarterback Eric Hipple. Eric is now the outreach coordinator for the University of Michigan Depression Center.

Also on Sunday is the NAMI annual meeting, which starts at 11:30 a.m. Be sure to attend so you can cast your ballot for three state board candidates from Boulder: Joanne Kelly (who has been serving as a temporary appointee on the state board since May 2007), Anne Weiher and Phoebe Norton (to learn more about Phoebe, see the article on

page 4). If you cannot attend the annual meeting, please fill out the proxy form you will receive in the mail. Once you've signed the proxy form, send it to the NAMI Boulder County office at 1333 Iris Ave., Boulder, CO 80304. Please make sure it arrives at the office by September 21.

Cost for the conference is \$70 for both days or \$35 for one day. Reduced rates are available for consumers and seniors. There is no charge to attend just the annual meeting. You'll find more information and a registration form at www.namicolorado.org.

Encourage the leaders of your faith community to attend conference

Clergy and lay leaders from all faiths in Boulder and Broomfield counties are invited to participate in a one-day conference on October 18 to learn about mental illness. Participants will be given tools and resources that will help them deal effectively with consumers and family members with confidence.

The conference, entitled “Mental Health and Faith Communities: Sharing the Promise of Hope and Healing,” is sponsored by NAMI Boulder County, the Mental Health Center Serving Boulder and Broomfield Counties, the Boulder County Aging Services Division and Foothills Behavioral Health.



We now have conference brochures available, and a mailing went out recently to faith community leaders on our list. However, we think these busy clergy members and their staff will be much more likely to attend if someone from their congregation reinforces

the importance of the event and the benefits of attending. If you would be willing to help us get information about the conference to the leaders of your church or synagogue, please call Barbara Connors at 303-665-2190 or 303-710-0701 (cell) or contact her via email at blconnors@comcast.net. She will send you brochures to hand deliver to your faith community leaders.

Learn more about the conference at the Web site www.namibouldercounty.org/interfaith

Meet NAMI Boulder County's newest board member

At the August 21 board meeting, Phoebe Norton was appointed to fill the remaining term of Patty Jansen, who resigned to take better care of her health. Phoebe has a life-long passion for providing high-quality mental health services to people with major mental illnesses and their families. In September 2002, she retired from 20 years of service as executive director of the Mental Health Center Serving Boulder and Broomfield Counties. She had an older sister with schizophrenia, who recently died. Phoebe serves on the board of the Boulder County Public Health Department and the St. John's Housing Foundation.

“I am very honored to join the board of NAMI Boulder County,” said Phoebe. “Over the years, I have been very impressed with NAMI's strong and effective advocacy for services for people with major mental illnesses and their families. Now that I have been fully retired for more than two years, I think I have the distance and perspective I need to become re-involved as an advocate.

“As a ‘would be’ advocate, there is no group better for me than NAMI! I strongly support NAMI's current services and political agenda. And I am coming with hopes for an additional agenda. I have

been increasingly upset by the decrease in funding in Colorado for mental health services in the past years and the concomitant increase in state-level administrative requirements costing millions of dollars. And it's not just the increased costs of administrative requirements that upsets me, it's the deadening effect that too many bureaucratic requirements can have on the creative and caring human spirit of mental health workers who feel a ‘calling’ to this very important work. NAMI could have a powerful effect in helping our state to free up millions of dollars for services and build a re-invigorated state-wide mental health system.”

An open letter to administrators at the University of Colorado

The tragic events at CU this week have been made even more tragic by the decision of the administration to place all employees from Chinook Clubhouse on paid leave because one individual with a mental illness committed an unspeakable act of violence. As a consumer and faculty member (non-tenure) at CU, I am enraged by this decision. Many times in my life I have been discriminated against, looked down upon, and treated as less than human because I live with a diagnosis of bipolar disorder. Members of my own profession, other psychologists, have attributed my normal reactions to situations to my illness and have treated me as a second class citizen. I know that at times my illness has prevented me from acting in a truly "rational" manner,

but I also know that I have made important contributions to society and to the university. I now believe that my job and livelihood are in jeopardy. The chancellor stated that the university would "continue to conduct background checks on a number of existing employees." Will I be subjected to such a check because I have used the university insurance to help defray the costs of my biologically based illness? Will the information gained from such a search lead me to lose my job and credibility? I fear it will.

My heart goes out to the friends and family of the young man injured and violated in the senseless attack on Monday. But my heart also goes out to those members of Chinook Clubhouse and the many other individuals such as

myself who live with serious mental illness, whether they be university professors or individuals who struggle less successfully with their mental illness. When society tolerates the discrimination of a few, it only serves to perpetuate existing stereotypes and stigmas, and it lessens the value of us all. The events at CU this week only serve to remind us all that stigma is alive and well in our community. I hope that the administration will begin to address the more fundamental issue of the need for education about mental illness as they plan for how to make the campus safe for not just the many but the few.



Anne W. Weiher, PhD

NAMI Boulder County supports CIT training for police officers

NAMI Boulder County Board Member Sharon Bowyer (far right) has been coordinating our participation in the Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) trainings for local police and sheriff departments for two years. Board Member Joanne Kelly (left) shared her family's story at a recent CIT training session. Also pictured are Boulder County CIT organizers Sergeant Scott Williams from the Boulder County Sheriff Department and Sergeant Mark Heyart for the University of Colorado Police Department. Board Members Nancy Coleman and Laura Hadaway have also been very active with the program. NAMI Boulder County will participate in two more CIT trainings before the end of the year.



Bughouse Square

by Reg Saner, Board Member

It was the summer of 1956. In answer to my question, Red Grisetto – born and bred in the Windy City – had said of the plaza off Chicago’s Michigan Boulevard, “Oh, that’s Bughouse Square. It’s where all the crack-pots go to yak at anybody who’ll listen.”

At a nearby bench I had plumped down to lunch on the cheap (a wholewheat bagel with cream cheese) when the man’s tone caught my attention. Of the half dozen or more other speakers scattered around the plaza, he was the only one Red might not have called a “nut.”

Grey-haired, Afro-American, he seemed perhaps fifty, fifty-five, wore a baggy tweed suit-coat that didn’t match his pants, and had stuffed one pocket with what looked like leftovers from his own lunch. Yet behind wire-rimmed glasses the

brown eyes shone with intelligence, while his manner seemed that of a schoolmaster addressing small children for whom difficult things must be kept very, very simple.

“Why,” he oratorically asked no one in particular, “do I bother to stand here talking?”

At that I pricked up my ears. Why indeed?

“I do it,” he explained, “because ignorance will hurt me.”

His defensive mission, therefore, was to enlighten. And the enlightenment – what form did it take? I’ve forgotten, perhaps mercifully. Yet ever since then I’ve cherished the pure genius of his explanation, “. . . because ignorance will hurt me.”

After all, isn’t one of NAMI’s main aims based on exactly that insight? Most of us have personal knowledge of how harmful misinformation about

mental illness continues to be, sometimes hurtful in the extreme. Even today we find people saying such things as, “It’s all in the mind,” meaning more imaginary than real, or ascribing schizophrenia to sin, Satan, and demons. Finally, there’s the huge fact of the nation’s inadequate provision for mental health care.

More than once, therefore, I’ve reflected on that lunchtime moment in Bughouse Square. Although my life since then has been spent among learned men and women, many brilliant, including four Nobel laureates, none ever said anything so unforgettable as did a shabbily clad fellow my friend Red would probably have called a bum.

One speaking out “because ignorance will hurt me.” I have never heard anything truer.

Free Colorado Visions class

For: Parents and caregivers of children and adolescents with brain disorders.

When: September 14-October 12, 2007. Friday mornings 9:00-11:30. 5 classes.

Where: Longmont

Contact: Ann Taylor, 303 776-3199

Topics include: A better understanding of various brain disorders. Effective communication tools. De-escalation exercises. Recognizing behavior patterns. Dealing with problematic behaviors. Problem solving. IEP and the school. Parent/caregiver burnout and coping skills. Resources available. *Preregistration required.*

Are you interested in attending a new support group?

If you are interested in participating in a new support group, please give us your name, phone number, and address. If we have enough interest, we will contact you with the date and location. We hope to have this support group up and running in the next few weeks.

Please email Anne Weiher: anne.weiher@colorado.edu or call her at 303-442-9209 (evenings) or 720-839-4139 (during the day).

Education and Support Groups

NAMI CLASSES IN BOULDER COUNTY

On-going free education and support classes offering information on brain disorders, how to cope, and how to advocate. We keep an ongoing list for these classes. For information or to reserve a place, call us at 303-443-4591.

- ▶ **Family-to-Family Class** – A free 12-week program for family members, friends or caregivers who have a loved one with a brain disorder.
- ▶ **Colorado Visions** (formerly Visions for Tomorrow) – A free multi-week program consisting of workshops for caregivers of children and adolescents with brain disorders. Next class starts September 14. Call today to reserve a place.

FAMILY SUPPORT

- ▶ **NAMI Family Education and Support Group**
We are currently considering reviving the Boulder Support Group. Please let us know if you are interested in participating. If you need support, please call 303-443-4591.

CHILDREN AND ADOLESCENTS

- ▶ **Parents Experiencing Challenging Kids Support Group (PECK)** - Meeting times vary.
Contact Harriet Austin at 303-284-9863 or austinhb@hotmail.com for dates and locations.

DEPRESSION AND BIPOLAR DISORDER

The first two groups meet at Longmont United Hospital, Gaugin Room, 1950 Mountain View.

- ▶ **Depression and Bipolar Support Group**
Mondays, 7:00-9:00 p.m.
Contact Diane Dworkin-Wagner at 303-682-2911
Email: dykane100@hotmail.com
- ▶ **Depression and Bipolar Support Group**
Wednesdays, 7:00-9:00 p.m. Contact Barbara at 303-443-0985 or Vanessa at 970-532-4973.
- ▶ **The Robert D. Sutherland Center for the Evaluation and Treatment of Bipolar Disorder**
Contact Dr. Alisha Brosse, Associate Director, at 303-492-5680 for information about a 6-week psycho-education group and an on-going skills training group (www.rdsfoundation.org)

OBSESSIVE COMPULSIVE DISORDER

Support group for people with OCD, their families and friends. First and third Wednesdays, 7:00-9:00 p.m. Mental Health Center, Norton Room, 1333 Iris Avenue, Boulder. Contact Brent, 303-422-9704, Arlene, 303-670-9691, or Ilene, 303-938-1360.

OBSESSIVE COMPULSIVE ANONYMOUS

(www.ocdcolorado.com) and **SOCIAL PHOBICS ANONYMOUS** (www.healsocialanxiety.com). For further information on both groups, call John at 303-325-3143

CHINOOK CLUBHOUSE, BOULDER

Chinook Clubhouse is a program dedicated to enhancing the recovery of men and women with mental illnesses. It provides opportunities for members to live, work, learn, and socialize while contributing their talents in a community of mutual support. The Chinook Clubhouse works with the Colorado Division of Vocational Rehabilitation to offer transitional employment opportunities. Call 303-440-4842 for information (www.chinookclubhouse.org).

"SOFT VOICES" DROP-IN CENTER, LONGMONT

Resource and friendship center for adults with mental illness. Tuesdays, 10:00-noon; Thursdays and Fridays, 1:00-3:00. 5th & Kimbark, downstairs. Art sessions led by Mimi Farrelly meets on Fridays, 1:00-3:00 p.m. For more information, contact Gil at 303-776-0410.

Everyone is welcome to participate!

INTERNET RESOURCES

Visit the NAMI (national) Web site at www.nami.org
Visit the NAMI Boulder County Web site at www.namibouldercounty.org

If you need help finding information online, contact the sources below. Service is confidential and available for free.

Consumer Health Resource Library

Located at Longmont Hospital, 1950 West Mountain View Avenue, Main Entrance. Call 303-651-5112 for hours.

Grillo Health Care Information Center

Located at Boulder Public Library, 11th and Arapahoe, Main Branch, 2nd floor. Call 303-441-4174 for hours.

NAMI BOULDER COUNTY BOARD

Board members meet the third Tuesday of the month, September through June at 6:30 p.m. at Christ the Servant Lutheran Church, 506 Via Appia, Louisville. Meetings are open to all who would like to attend.