



NAMI lane county

National Alliance on Mental Illness

...your local voice on mental illness

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A PUBLIC LECTURE

Uncovering the Mysteries of a Disabilities Application

Successfully obtaining disability benefits can be difficult and discouraging. Please join us for a very empowering two-hour presentation on disability advocacy.

It is our goal to restore confidence in your ability to navigate this social service niche as well as you do some of the others you encounter.

After participating in this presentation, you will be much better prepared to advocate for your disabled family member or client right away. Let us help you make sense of the process and avoid common mistakes. Learn how you can officially represent someone throughout the application process.

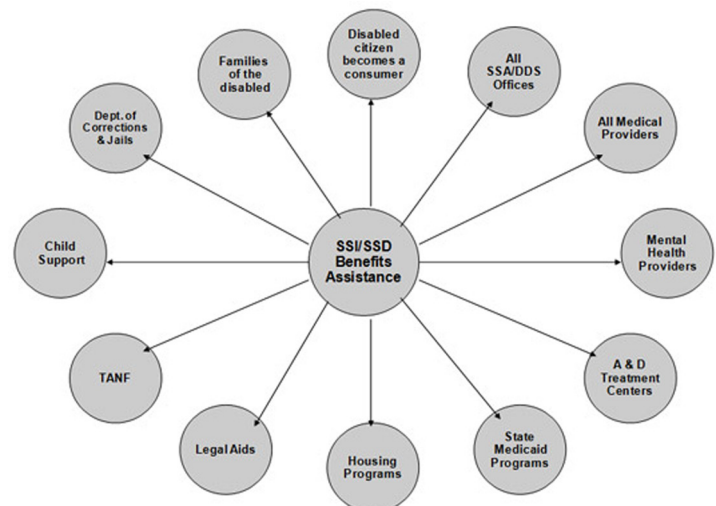
Our guest speaker, Mellani Calvin, has been a non-attorney disability representative since 2004. She has worked with over 1200 people with severe disabilities. She began two new disability related businesses in 2010.

It is her personal mission to help the general public understand that they can have a very positive impact on the outcome of a disability claim. It does not have to take years to help someone obtain disability benefits.

Date & Time: **Wednesday, March 21st from 6:00 - 8:00 PM**
Place: **Lane County Behavioral Health System (2411 MLK, Jr. Blvd.)**

The constellation of service providers and benefits agencies for the disabled.

Source: Disability Benefits—Training and Consulting website.



NAMI News Briefs

Best wishes, Bob!

Our steadfast volunteer leaders often push on when their health requires they take a break. They (and we) like to think that they are invincible. But eventually the human body's messages can't be ignored. That is the case for our current President, Bob Trimble.

Bob has resigned in order to take a well-deserved and much-needed break. We wish him all the best and hope he will get the TLC he deserves. He will be sorely missed.

In the few months until a new President is elected at the May 5th Annual Meeting, the Executive Committee will manage the President's duties so that Vice President, Sue Sammis, can continue as Consumer Liaison.

Family to Family Course Begins April 3rd

The spring Family to Family course is a great opportunity to gain knowledge, insight, and empathy for your loved ones or friends living with mental illness.

This life changing 12 week course covers illness behaviors, brain functions, crisis, recovery, and care for the caregiver. There are 3 group workshops focused on problem solving, improving communications skills and empathy.

This is a safe, comforting class environment with people who understand and support each other. Classes will meet every Tuesday evening beginning April 3rd, from 6:30-9:00pm, through June 19th, at the Lane County Behavioral Health Building in room 198. Call or stop by the new office today at 541-343-7688 to pre-register. Space is limited.

New NAMI Office

The new NAMI office is located very close to the old one, about half a mile to the west, and not far from the Laurel Hill Center. If you're coming from downtown Eugene, go north across the Ferry St. Bridge, turn onto the ramp going to MLK, Jr. Blvd. Go past the stop light, and turn left onto Centennial Loop. Turn right just past Birth-to-Three and follow the parking lot around to the left.

February Donations

Walter Davis

Daniel Zaklan

Florence Alvergue

Marcia Peterson

Margaret Bennett

—thank you!



The library at the new NAMI office is not only a rich resource of books, videos, and other literature about mental illness but it's also a warm and bright place to sit on a winter day.



VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT

In appreciation of...

I've just leafed through the first-ever NAMI LC newsletter I've received via email. Nice job, everyone!

Hats off to these NEWSLETTER contributors:

1) to Sherry, to Jose, and to the many volunteers who, month after month, get our newsletter to us! Many Thanks!

2) To Pete Ruby for his steady and informative reviews of books and other media! His work shows us that we are not alone with our concerns and that resources to help us are available on loan from NAMI Lane's library.

3) To Diane Magoto for her recent articles keeping us informed about developments in the mental health field, and to Jeff Magoto for his steady hand behind the production of the NEWSLETTER in digital format.

In addition to these NEWSLETTER contributors, there are numerous other dedicated volunteers working "behind the scenes" at NAMI Lane. Readers of the NEWSLETTER may not know this, but there are volunteers managing our library, caring for our free clothing distribution effort, teaching courses, facilitating support groups, answering our office phones, helping inform local police, organizing lobbying visits to the legislature in Salem, bringing speakers to our area, monitoring our funds and keeping everything in order with the IRS. And let's not forget those who organize the annual Christmas gift distribution to residents in local facilities, nor those who make the annual Holiday dinner and the annual summer picnic possible!

From a volunteer who is "taking a break" due to personal reasons having nothing at all to do with working with NAMI, won't you consider giving a bit of your time to our cause?

—Allen Sellers

NAMI Lane County

Board of Directors

President: Bob Trimble (on leave)
 Outgoing President: Nancy Nameth
 Vice President: Sue Sammis
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 Finance Director: Scott Diehl
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 Education Chair: Sally Diehl
 Consumer Liaison: Sue Sammis
 Nominations: Susie Caldwell
 At large: Serena Slape, Collin Alspach

Staff

Executive Director, Jose E. Soto, III
 Office Manager: Sherry Bierwirth

Volunteers

Book Reviews: Pete Ruby
 Webmaster: Larry Cummings
 Newsletter: Jeff and Diane Magoto
 Foundation Chair: Dave Howard
 Dignity Project: Richard and Eloyce Enloe
 ...and many others

The mission of NAMI Lane County is to improve the quality of life of persons with mental disorders and of their families through support, education and advocacy.

Phone Bill Assistance! The Oregon Telephone Assistance Program (OTAP) can help you with your monthly phone bills if you qualify for assistance. To qualify,

1. You need to be on at least one of the following plans: Food Stamps, Temporary Aid to Needy Families (TANF), Supplemental Security Income (SSI), Certain State Medical Programs or Medicaid

2. In addition, you need to have service with a participating phone company.

You could receive up to \$13.50 in credits for your phone bill. In addition, you may be given a credit on one half the fee (up to \$30) for new phone installation.

Application: Oregon Public Utility Commission Website at: www.rspf.org

Conversion Syndrome and Mass Hysteria

Dr. Scott Mendelson

http://www.huffingtonpost.com/scott-mendelson-md/mass-hysteria_b_1239012.html

Article
Summary
by
Pete Ruby

You may have heard in the news lately that there is a strange phenomenon which is affecting girls at a high school in New York. These girls have developed symptoms such as jerking movements and vocalizations like a person who has Tourettes Syndrome.

After ruling out environmental contamination and other factors, medical professionals decided that this was a rare case of *conversion syndrome*, sometimes called hysteria. This seems to be a situation, not of psychological disturbances or neurological problems, but of a temporary mental illness.

Conversion disorder at Leroy High School has now affected 15 students. Twelve students developed the symptoms last fall. Neurologists say that the twitching, stuttering and strange sounds cannot actually be stopped using the will power of the students.

This disorder is most commonly found among teenage girls. Often times one girl is trying to respond to certain stresses. Mendelson says that “the disorder is driven by subconscious attempts to convert a strong and unbearable emotional or sexual thought into something more socially acceptable.”

Others may show similar physical displays due to anxiety and fears associated with their mental connection to the first girl who had the symptoms. It is something like catching a cold but on a psychic level. People begin to reinforce this behavior with others and the hysteria spreads. It may be that teenage girls experience a lot of peer pressure and complicated networks which can contribute to the conversion disorder.

The article describes other historical examples which have been witnessed throughout the world.

Culture bound syndrome, hysteria and *mass psychogenic illness* are other terms that are used at times instead of conversion disorder. Mendelson says that under the right conditions hysteria can erupt in any culture. The Salem Witch Trials seem to have been a situation of hysteria among some women.

The symptoms tend to subside in a few weeks but have been seen to extend up to a year. The girls at Leroy H.S. are utilizing psychiatrists, psychologists and medication to help them.

This is such a bazaar situation to read about. It is amazing how our stress, anxiety and reactions can have such a powerful affect upon others. Learning more about conversion disorder, a short term mental illness, may help those with long term mental illness problems.

Funding opportunity...

*Thanks to (your name could be here) for their \$75
sponsorship of this issue of our newsletter.*

If you were to venture into Room 505B of our church's fellowship hall at noon on the first Sunday of the month, you would find a congenial group helping themselves to refreshments placed attractively on a table in the corner of the room.

You would see that both new and regular attendees were met with a smile and often a hug as well. You would immediately sense that it was not just a friendly environment, but also an environment in which friendships were being developed. At 12:30 p.m., everyone would settle into a chair at one of the four tables that were carefully arranged in an open circle.

This group is known as Hope's Nest. It is a support group for those living with a mental illness, which is sponsored by our church. Although it is offered from a Christian perspective, all religions are respected and those of all faiths are welcomed.

The purpose of Hope's Nest is to provide a welcome and spiritually nourishing environment that will provide benefits to the attendees far beyond just acceptance and having the opportunity to contribute. Its purpose includes reinforcing the understanding that God is with us, even in our most difficult times.

As these meetings begin it quickly becomes apparent that they are much more than just a social event. They start with a reading of the guidelines of Hope's Nest. This is followed by asking each person to give their name and briefly state how well they are dealing with their mental health issues that day.

The next 30 minutes are devoted to a group discussion concerning a topic from the Bible, such as one of the attributes found in "The Fruit of the Spirit" (Galatians 5:22-23), and what application it could have in their lives.

After a 10-minute break, the group begins a time of sharing. Each person is given the opportunity to describe their high and low points plus a description of something positive that they did for another person during the previous month. After sharing, each person has the option of asking for "feedback" from others. Frequently, the feedback includes reference to a Biblical passage, which often gives comfort. Tears, prayer and laughter are all important parts of this discussion.

In a recent questionnaire given to the attendees, some of the responses to the question, "What meaning does Hope's Nest have for you?" included:

"I found fellowship.....an opportunity to problem solve....a place to talk about issues not discussed in any other church group."

"...to see that other Christians do experience mental illness just like me."

"I find hope....being with people with many of my same problems and being able to openly discuss them."

"...finding I am closer to God."

"It is comforting knowing that what I say will not be judged, but accepted."

"I gain understanding and support... finding a Phone Pal."

"I so appreciate discovering that people with a mental illness diagnosis can be healthy and live happy lives."

Prayer requests are written on cards throughout the meetings and are placed in a basket. When the gathering has concluded at 2 p.m., attendees have the opportunity to take a card home with them in order to remind them to include the request in their prayers during the following month.

Having the privilege of meeting with this group every month has been a highlight in our lives. For sure, we are looking forward to attending Hope's Nest next month and throughout 2012.

Hope's Nest

By

Susan and Gunnar
Christiansen,
NAMI Orange
County,
Trinity United
Presbyterian
Church,
Santa Ana, CA

March Calendar

| Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday |
|--|---|--|--|--|
| Feb 27 <i>See the next page for a listing of education and support groups.</i> | 28 <i>Dual Diagnosis Anonymous, 2-3, LHC.</i> <hr/> <i>Dual Diagnosis Anonymous, 6-7, Florence.</i> <hr/> <i>NAMI Connection, 6:30-7:30, Cottage Grove.</i> | 29 <i>NAMI Connection, 3:30-5:00, Springfield.</i> | Mar 1 <i>Consumer Only Friendship Group, 10:00, Cottage Grove</i> <hr/> <i>Dual Diagnosis Anonymous, 2-3, LHC.</i> <hr/> <i>NAMI Family-to-Family Support Group (for graduates of F2F Class), 7:00-8:30, LCBHS.</i> | 2 • Office Closed <hr/> <i>NAMI Connection, 12-1, SLMH, Cottage Grove.</i> |
| 5 | 6 <i>Dual Diagnosis Anonymous, 2-3, LHC.</i> <hr/> <i>Dual Diagnosis Anonymous, 6-7, Florence.</i> <hr/> <i>NAMI Connection, 6:30-7:30, Cottage Grove.</i> | 7 <i>NAMI Connection, 3:30-5:00, Springfield.</i> | 8 <i>Consumer Only Friendship Group, 10:00, Cottage Grove.</i> <hr/> <i>Dual Diagnosis Anonymous, 2-3, LHC.</i> <hr/> <i>NAMI Friends and Family Support Group, 7:00-8:30, LCBHS.</i> | 9 • Office Closed <hr/> <i>NAMI Connection, 12-1, SLMH, Cottage Grove.</i> |
| 12 <i>DBSA, 7:00-8:30, First United Methodist, Eugene.</i> | 13 <i>Dual Diagnosis Anonymous, 2:00-3:00, LHC .</i> <hr/> <i>Dual Diagnosis Anonymous, 6-7, Florence.</i> <hr/> <i>NAMI Connection, 6:30-7:30, Cottage Grove.</i> | 14 <i>NAMI Connection, 3:30-5:00, Springfield.</i> | 15 <i>Consumer Only Friendship Group, 10:00, Cottage Grove.</i> <hr/> <i>Dual Diagnosis Anonymous, 2-3, LHC.</i> <hr/> <i>NAMI Friends and Family Support Group, 7:00-8:30, LCBHS.</i> | 16 • Office Closed <hr/> <i>NAMI Connection, 12-1, SLMH, Cottage Grove.</i> |
| 19 | 20 <i>Dual Diagnosis Anonymous, 2:00-3:00, LHC .</i> <hr/> <i>Dual Diagnosis Anonymous, 6-7, Florence.</i> <hr/> <i>NAMI Connection, 6:30-7:30, Cottage Grove.</i> | 21 <i>NAMI Connection, 3:30-5:00, Springfield.</i> <hr/> <i>NAMI Board Meeting, 4:00-6:00, New Office.</i> <hr/> <i>NAMI Public Lecture: Uncovering the Mysteries of a Disabilities Application, 6:00-8:00, LCBHS.</i> | 22 <i>Consumer Only Friendship Group, 10:00, Cottage Grove.</i> <hr/> <i>Dual Diagnosis Anonymous, 2-3, LHC.</i> <hr/> <i>NAMI Family-to-Family Support Group, 6:30-8:00, Florence.</i> <hr/> <i>NAMI Friends and Family Support Group, 7:00-8:30, LCBHS.</i> <hr/> <i>NAMI Friends and Family Support Group, 7:00, Cottage Grove.</i> | 23 • Office Closed <hr/> <i>NAMI Connection, 12-1, SLMH, Cottage Grove.</i> |
| 26 <i>DBSA, 7:00-8:30, First United Methodist, Eugene.</i> | 27 <i>County Consumer Advocacy Council, 1:00-3:00, LCBHS.</i> <hr/> <i>Dual Diagnosis Anonymous, 2:00-3:00, LHC.</i> <hr/> <i>Dual Diagnosis Anonymous, 6-7, Florence.</i> <hr/> <i>NAMI Connection, 6:30-7:30, Cottage Grove.</i> | 28 <i>NAMI Connection, 3:30-5:00, Springfield.</i> | 29 <i>Consumer Only Friendship Group, 10:00, Cottage Grove</i> <hr/> <i>Dual Diagnosis Anonymous, 2-3, LHC.</i> <hr/> <i>NAMI Friends and Family Support Group, 7:00-8:30, LCBHS.</i> | 30 • Office Closed <hr/> <i>NAMI Connection, 12-1, SLMH, Cottage Grove.</i> |

We invite our readers to submit their own articles, photos, stories or anecdotes: Have you read or seen something recently that you'd like to share or respond to? Have you heard about policies or practices in other regions that we in Lane County should know about? Where do you turn to learn about new therapies or medications? Please send submissions to the NAMI office or by email: office@namilane.org.

NAMI Groups Eugene- Springfield

NAMI Friends and Family Support Group 2nd, 3rd, 4th and 5th Thursday at Lane County Behavioral Services (LCBHS), 7:00.

NAMI Family To Family Support Group (for graduates of F2F Class) at LCBHS, 1st Thursday, 7:00.

NAMI Connection Wednesdays, in Springfield, 532 C Street, 3:30-5:00.

Cottage Grove

NAMI Friends and Family Support Group Our Lady of Perpetual Help Church at 19th & Harvey. 4th Thursday, 7:00.

Consumer Only Friendship Group Fleur de Lis Patisserie, 616 Main St, Thursday mornings, 10:00.

NAMI Connection—Peer Facilitated Support Groups Tuesdays, Healing Matrix, 632 Main St, 6:30; Fridays, South Lane Mental Health, 1325 Birch Ave, 12:00.

Florence

F2F Support Group Laurelwood Community Center, 1137 Maple St., 4th Thursday, 6:30-8:00.

Community Groups

DBSA (Depression/ Bipolar Support Alliance Group) First United Methodist Church (FUMC), 1376 Olive Street. 2nd and 4th Mondays, 7-8:30. Call Lola Mitchell at 541-344-4341 for details.

County Consumer Advocacy Council, 4th

Tuesday at Lane County Behavioral Services, Rm. 198, Eugene, 1:00-3:00.

Eugene Dual Diagnosis Anonymous (Mental illness and drug addiction) Laurel Hill Center (LHC), Tues. & Thurs. 2-3, 2145 Centennial Plaza. Call Stacey Paulsen at 541-485-6340.

Florence Dual Diagnosis Group Apostolic Pentecostal Church, 1525 12th Street, Suite 28. Tuesdays 6-7. Call David

Holopoff at 541-997-9289 for information.

Oregon Family Support Network For families with children with emotional, behavioral, or mental health needs. Call 541-342-2876 or 800-323-8521.

Suicide Bereavement Group For those who have lost a loved one. Meets once a month on Wednesdays. Call Darlene at 541-747-2084 or check website: www.jenniferbakerfund.org.

Support Groups Moving to New NAMI Office in April

There have been a lot of changes for the Lane County chapter of NAMI this year. The biggest change being the relocation of the NAMI office, which I am sure many of you read about in last month's newsletter.

Another big change will come in April when the Friends and Family Support Groups, which meet on the 2nd, 3rd, 4th (and 5th) Thursdays of each month, will move to the new location at 76 Centennial Loop, Suite A, in Eugene.

The support group for graduates of the Family to Family (F2F) course will continue to be held at the Lane County Mental Health (LCMH) building, due in part to the size of this group.

Thoughtful consideration was given to this choice prior to coming to a final decision and we believe that there are many benefits to holding the support group in the new space, for example:

- The homey and welcoming environment.
- No more waiting outside hoping that someone will happen by and let you in.
- Accessibility of the wonderful resource materials available through NAMI.

In an attempt to have a successful transition, facilitators will be offering to bring guests over to the new location in March, following the support group.

We will also be placing informational signs on the door at LCBH which will include directions to the new office. We are very excited about these changes and look forward to seeing you soon.

Please call the NAMI office at (541) 343-7688 during normal business hours if you have questions or concerns.

—Ronni Price

Web Spotlight

Lance Armstrong's *Living Strong* website has dramatically expanded its coverage of mental illness. Their articles and research reports are very readable. Here's a snippet from an article about early signs of mental illness.

- Hallucinations
- Persistent Odd Beliefs
- Uncharacteristic Mood for Circumstances
- Self-destructive Behavior
- Inability to Get Along With Others
- Lack of Self-worth
- Inability to Hold a Job
- Inability to Follow Basic Instructions
- Lack of Empathy
- Lack of Self-care

Read more: <http://www.livestrong.com/article/75883-ten-signs-mental-illness>.

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NAMI Membership/Donation Information

Annual membership benefits include:

- Local, informative monthly newsletter
- State and national membership magazine
- A voice on vital advocacy issues
- Representation on state and local boards
- Tax deductions

- Voting Membership, \$35.00/year
- Newsletter subscription only, \$15/year
(Available only for members of NAMI Affiliates outside of Lane County)
- Sponsor: \$100/year, Company/Association
- Low Income Membership, \$3.00/year
- General Donation, \$ _____
- Donation in memory of _____
- Anonymous gift, \$ _____

(Please make checks payable to: NAMI Lane County • 76 Centennial Loop, Suite A • Eugene, OR 97401)

Name: _____

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Email: _____

City: _____ State _____ Zip _____

*Do you prefer to receive your newsletter in printed form
(via USPS) or electronic form (via email)?*

Contact me about volunteering, donating money,
products, or services.

printed

electronic

UPCOMING EVENTS

March 21st. Uncovering the Mysteries of a
Disability Application 6-8 p.m.

April 3rd-June 19th. Spring F2F Course.

April 14-15th. Connections Support Group
Facilitator Training.

April 18th. Crisis Intervention Training for
Families.

May 5th. Annual Meeting and Bylaws Vote.

May 20th. Tenth annual NAMI Northwest
Walk in Portland.