



nami

National Alliance on Mental Illness

NORTH CENTRAL FLORIDA

March 2006 • Vol.5, No. 3 Serving Alachua, Bradford, Columbia, Dixie, Gilchrist, Levy & Union Counties

NEW MEETING PLACE ~ MARCH MEETING

NAMI of North Central Florida will have a new meeting place starting with the March 13th meeting. We will meet at Trinity United Methodist Church, 4000 NW 53rd Avenue, at 7:15 p.m. Enter through the Educational Building door, under the drive-up portico, and take the elevator or stairs on your right to Room 224 on the second floor. Go down the hall straight ahead and the room is on the right.

Marcia Brant and Judy Bousquet will be our speakers at the next meeting. They will speak on various aspects of suicide and resources available to the public through the Crisis Center. Marcia facilitates meetings for the Survivors of Suicide group and is a long time volunteer of the Crisis Center. Judy is an active advocate of survivors of suicide and a member of our NAMI NCF group.

WRITING WORKSHOP FOR NAMI MEMBERS

A committee from NAMI NCF is working with a facilitator to develop a process writing workshop for NAMI members and one to be offered later for consumers. Process writing may be a new concept to many of us. Process writing is NOT Freshman English. It is NOT about how to write sentences or where to put punctuation marks. It IS about the process of reflecting on moments of our

lives and using writing to examine or explore those moments.

Each of us in NAMI has many moments upon which to reflect. We all have lots of experiences to examine and explore. Each of us explores and examines our experiences in ways that are helpful to us. NAMI people who would like to try out process writing will have the opportunity to participate in a 6 week

session sometime this summer beginning in June. Details are being worked out by a committee and will be announced as they develop.

Sharon Hildebrand, PhD., who will facilitate the process writing workshop, will further explain the concept and answer questions at the beginning of our March 13 meeting.

IMPORTANT MEMBERSHIP CHANGES

If NAMI North Central Florida is important to you or to someone you know, it is time to show your support by becoming a member or renewing your membership. You will want to note some changes that have been made.

Many NAMI chapters throughout the country are raising their dues and going to an annual membership payment date. At our last meeting, our board decided NOT to raise our annual dues. Fees will continue to be \$35 for a family membership or individual membership. We also decided to have a student membership fee of \$10.

In keeping with NAMI Florida, our board voted to have **membership dues paid during the first quarter of the year.** Therefore, if you would like to be a member of NAMI NCF, **your dues should be paid between January and March of the current year.** For this year only, 2006, anyone who has paid dues between July and December 2005 will be "grandfathered in." However if you paid your dues between January and June of 2005, you are asked to pay dues before the end of March.

What are the benefits of becoming a member? With your payment you join NAMI National which entitles you to

significant benefits, not the least of which is a subscription to NAMI Advocate, "The Nation's Voice on Mental Illness." This quarterly journal is full of information on advocacy, treatment, legislation, and family support. In addition you become a member of NAMI Florida and will receive publications that help us know trends on mental illness issues in Florida. Perhaps most important, as a member of NAMI North Central Florida you will be actively supporting advocacy, education, and treatment issues in your local area. Your dues help pay for this newsletter, for books and videos put in our lending library, for the NAMI NCF web site, training for education and support groups, printing of posters, signs, labels, flyers, brochures and stationary, stamps and PO Box rent, grants, advertising, and Christmas donations to area residences for the mentally ill. Your membership will enable the NAMI organization at every level to be strengthened for the important tasks before us.

Please use the membership application form on the back of this newsletter. Pay your 2006 dues today!

FIRST ANNUAL NAMI WALK

The First Annual NAMI Walk in Gainesville will be Saturday, April 1, 2006 in Westside Park, Gainesville! You can actually walk, or simply hold down the fort in lawn chairs at the event site. (The picnic table/lawnchair contingency seems to be growing!) There will be free event T-shirts and free food for everyone. The purpose of this event is about visibility of our local advocacy efforts to improve mental health care, a summit of solidarity with local providers who will walk with us, and asserting a "nothing to hide" philosophy. It is absolutely NOT about money like some other charity walks are. Money is completely secondary and perhaps irrelevant, although it will help fund our programs. It is important that NAMI members like you participate in public along side providers from Meridian, Vista, FACT, DCF, CIT and other community care providers. These providers have already committed themselves to participating.

The enclosed flyer can be used to increase NAMI visibility in our community, and therefore help educate the thousands of family members experiencing what you do. Post the flyer on church bulletin boards or as a worship service insert, put up a copy in store windows, use it as a "coming out" tool to invite neighbors into a dialog about the unavoidable medical nature of mental illnesses.

Please go online to register so that we know how many T-shirts to print and how much food to order. Remember that donations are not necessary, but registration and participation will greatly help the cause of NAMI in Gainesville and North Central Florida.

The April 1 event in Gainesville will be followed by a statewide NAMI gathering April 4 in Tallahassee. The online registration website for Gainesville to use for our local walk was provided by NAMI Florida, so that is why the April 4 date appears. A few of us will be going up to Tallahassee, but everything else is focused here in Gainesville. We look forward to your participation in the event, if you are able.

Proclamation Presented by Alachua County

Alachua County Florida A Proclamation

**declaring "5000 Friends of Florida Families Day"
in Alachua County, Florida**

- Whereas*, every day, mental illness and addictions affect thousands of families across Florida; and
- Whereas*, affordable treatment of mental illness and addictions is not within every family's reach; and
- Whereas*, Florida ranks 47th in funding for mental health treatment and 35th in addiction funding; and
- Whereas*, by funding Florida's responsibility for community mental health and addiction services, the Legislature can clearly declare its commitment to our children, elderly and working poor; and
- Whereas*, community based mental health and addiction services are a critical part of our statewide health care system.

Now, therefore, through the authority vested in me by the Board of County Commissioners of Alachua County, Florida, I do hereby proclaim "February 14, 2006" as "5000 Friends of Florida Families Day" in Alachua County, Florida and ask all citizens to join in the support of the 5000 Friends of Florida Families and to sign a pledge card supporting families in crisis.

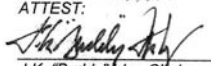
Duly proclaimed this 14th day of February, A.D., 2006.



CHAIR, BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
OF ALACHUA COUNTY, FLORIDA

By: 
Lee Pinkoson, Chair

ATTEST:


J.K. "Buddy" Irby, Clerk

WIRED resources!

This series of articles is to help our members and friends become aware of all that is available to us through our NAMI North Central Florida website:

www.NamiNorthCentralFlorida.org
or
www.NAMIGainesville.org

Each article will feature one of the various resources that are available to those of us with internet access.

Links to Quick Resources - Of special interest may be the Crisis Panic Button. Press it and you will find:

- When to call for help;
- Steps to follow when you need help;
- What to do if a mental illness leads to interactions with a forensic situation;
- What to look for if you suspect someone is considering suicide.

Also included in this section of the website are Resources and Information for the North Central Florida area; a link to NAMI National, a link to NAMI Florida, and other useful information you should read BEFORE a crisis situation.

Our affiliate is indebted to our co-president, Bruce Stevens, for designing and keeping our website up to date.

Volunteers at Work

Our co-presidents, Joan and Bruce Stevens are presenting an anti-stigma presentation to a class of Occupation Therapy at the University of Florida.

CIT Training Class

The next CIT training will be March 27th through March 31.

Family to Family

The next Family to Family classes will begin Wednesday, August 16. This is a 12-week course for families of individuals with severe brain disorders (mental illnesses). The course is taught by trained family members. All course materials are furnished at no cost to participants. The course discusses the clinical treatment of mental illnesses and teaches the knowledge and skills that family members need to cope more effectively. We are now adding names to the waiting list. For information call :

Michelle 352-332-9881
Dianne 352-378-1798
NAMI Voice Mail 352-339-8640

People with a Mental Illness Enrich our Lives...

This is one of a series of informational bits about people throughout history who have had or whose family members have had a serious mental illness.

Ruth Graham (daughter of Ruth and Billy Graham) writes about her many years of suffering with depression, drugs, eating disorders and thoughts of suicide in her 2004 book "In Every Pew Sits A Broken Heart," Church was never the comfort for her that it seemed to be for others. An adult with a tragic life behind her, she was finally able to talk about it. Being the daughter of a famous preacher she felt she should not have problems. Through the steady love of her family she was able to feel God's forgiveness. Her message today is that being a Christian doesn't guarantee us a perfect life. She hopes her story will give those who want to serve others a place to start in knowing what to do and say.



Ruth Graham

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<http://www.naminorthcentralflorida.org>

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**NAMI North Central Florida
 Membership Application**

Dues Should Be Paid During 1st Quarter of the Year

Name _____

Mailing Address _____

Telephone Number _____

Email Address _____

Mail to Pat Warnock, 5424 SW 91st Terrace, Gainesville, FL 32608.

Checks made payable to NAMI North Central Florida.

Membership (Voting)

_____ Individual or Family (\$35)

Student Membership (Voting)

_____ Individual (\$10)

Organizational Membership (Non-Voting)

_____ Organizations (\$50 or more)