



# NAMI News

## Frederick County, Maryland

ISSUE 33  
P.O. BOX 1853  
FREDERICK, MD 21702

### National Alliance on Mental Illness

JANUARY/FEBRUARY  
2009



#### Special points of interest:

⇒ *At a NAMI family support group you'll meet others who are going through similar experiences. Share, learn, and realize you're not alone. See Calendar on Page 5 for details.*



⇒ *NAMI Family To Family class begins on January 15 at 6:30 pm. See Calendar on Page 5 with separate article for details. This is a great opportunity to learn and grow in a structured environment.*

THE NAMI Basics Education Program, developed in 2007, is designed to serve families with children who have mental illness.

This course is similar to the Family To Family Education class, but it has been compressed into six sessions, each 2.5 hours in length. There is a flexibility in that the course can be held once a week for six weeks or twice a week for three weeks to accommodate the schedules of the

parents and caregivers. Topics for the class include:

- ◆ It is not your fault – mental illnesses are brain disorders
- ◆ The biology of mental illness – getting an accurate diagnosis
- ◆ Treatment works – an overview of treatment options
- ◆ Acknowledging the strains of family burden and the impact of mental illness on each family member

- ◆ Understanding the mental health school, and juvenile justice, systems
- ◆ Building an advocacy team for the child

□ NAMI Basics teachers need to be a parent of a primary caregiver of an individual with mental illness who began experiencing symptoms before age 13.

□ Teacher training will take place January 23-25.

□ If you are interested in becoming a teacher, please call Fran Wenner at 301-663-9414.

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#### In Our Own Voices

I FEEL SOLITARY, driving to my scheduled In Our Own Voice (IOOV) training on this chilly, dark November morning. En route early this Saturday to Annapolis, which is my new state's capital, I think of how I am becoming myself in Frederick, Maryland. I've only lived here for one and one-half years, but with the sup-

port of NAMI, I have been able to make a difference not only in spite of my mental illness but also because of it. Still, driving to a weekend seminar in a new city, I do feel isolated.

Then I arrive at the hotel, and I meet people like myself. The other trainees, 11 of them, are folks living with mental illness. So are

the two trainers. We are all similar in another way: We want to make a difference.

We are gathered to hone our presentation skills by speaking "in our own voice" about our dark days, treatment, methods of coping, and our successes, hopes and dreams. The target audience is individuals who

*Cont'd on Page 3—See "...Voices,"*



*“Mental illness is nothing to be ashamed of, but stigma and bias shame us all.”*  
—Bill Clinton

## Kudos: New Members—Donations—Renewals

WE WELCOME new members: Judy Bradley, Kathryn Prescott, Sylvia Bellefleur, McCamie DeArmon, Patricia Mitchell, Frederick Donovan, Donna Burns, Jonathan and Elizabeth Tross.

We express our great appreciation to the following who have made donations to NAMI Frederick: Ira Steinberg, Linda Milburn, Murray Bennett, Barbara Manos, Philip Anderson, Paula Paolini, Leonard Amerise, John and Sharon Wenner, Leslie Taylor, Nancy Davis, Sila Alegret-Bartell, Linda Powell, James Jeffery, Linda and Dennis Coyle, Addie Null, JJ

and Virginia Hemley, Roy Lieberman, Fran and Fred Wenner, Luke and Linda VanGosen, Sylvia Bellefleur, Ramona Yanike, Barbara Lowry, Dave Pendleton, and Brian and Anna Keller in memory of David VanGosen.

Thank you to those who have renewed their membership: Mona Weinberg, Mary Held James, Sue Barney, Fran and Fred Wenner, Michael and Darlene Foster, Jo Ellen Gluscevic, Nancy Davis, Al and Connie Koenig, Addie Null, Jon and Betsy Kenas, Maria Fontaine and David Brlansky, and Crystal Griffin.

## *The Soloist* Premiere Postponed—but See the Clips

ORIGINALLY SCHEDULED for release during Thanksgiving, the movie *The Soloist*, about a homeless violinist living with schizophrenia, has been postponed. It will instead premiere on April 24, 2009.

NAMI previously has reviewed the book and the making of the movie. The book is now in paperback as a movie tie-in. Paramount Studios has postponed the premiere to put it at the beginning of the summer box office season, when movie-

going reaches its peak. The release originally was postponed until March, but don't be fooled if you see that date on some promotional materials.

The movie stars Robert Downey, Jr., and Jamie Foxx, who won an Academy Award for his performance in *Ray*. Its website is up and running at the link [www.soloistmovie.com](http://www.soloistmovie.com), where promotional, advance film clips now can be viewed—for those who can't wait.

## Resources

**SCHIZOPHRENIA**—a challenge for all who experience it. It has been trying for Jane Hennessy, the author of *Rebecca's Rose*, and her family. *Rose* is the story of Hennessy's sister's struggle with schizophrenia and the impact the experience had

on her family. Hennessy has presented the book to two NAMI affiliates and conducted a workshop at the NAMI PA Annual Conference. The book is available from the publisher, [authorhouse.com/book-store](http://authorhouse.com/book-store), and [Amazon.com](http://Amazon.com).

**ASIST**—No, that's no misspelling. It's the acronym for Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training. The course is being offered January 12 and 13 at Hood College. See the registration form included in this issue of NAMI News.

...Voices

*Cont'd from Page 1*

want to know what it is like to live with mental illness. They might be health professionals, a school group, part of a faith community, law enforcement, or any of many other folks who would want to hear the straight scoop from people like us. A video presentation and some discussion of experiences and perspectives are other parts of an IOOV presentation.

The twelve of us are destined to graduate from the intensive two-day program. Another benefit is getting to know one another informally, for instance, at mealtimes. To my surprise, I have several warm conversations with Vince and David, who are there for the same reasons I am. Also in common among us is the fact that we all hail from Frederick.

Upon our return to our home town, we will be working together. I am no longer alone!

The weekend goes by quickly. After the graduation ceremony, there are hugs all around, and—too soon—goodbyes. However, among me and David and Vince, it is more like: “See you soon. We’ll have a good time working together!”

I drive home in the half light of Sunday evening, not feeling as apart as I had upon setting out. Now I know that with In Our Own Voice, many voices speak as one, and none of us is alone.

—Susan T. Holt



Vince, David and Susan gather together to celebrate new bonds forged.

TO SCHEDULE a 90-minute IOOV presentation, please call the Frederick County IOOV coordinator, Susan Holt, at 301-694-3510. Please leave your name, the name of your organization, phone number, and a time when you can be reached.

*“As we sail thru life,  
don’t avoid rough  
waters, sail on because  
calm waters won’t  
make a skillful sailor.”*  
—Anonymous



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## NAMI Notes

NAMI OF FREDERICK COUNTY is pleased to welcome Susan Holt to the **Board of Directors**. Susan recently took the training to present the NAMI “In Our Own Voice” program and she has also volunteered to help with the local newsletter. Thank you, Susan, for sharing your talents with NAMI.

The NAMI **Board of Directors** enjoyed putting together small stockings to give to Way Station members at their Christmas Party on December 24.

Three people from Frederick were trained by NAMI Maryland to

serve as **“In Our Own Voice”** presenters. This unique program helps people understand what those with mental illness are going through during the journey of recovery. They are available to give their ninety-minute program to groups throughout Frederick. If you are involved with an organization looking for educational programs, please contact Susan Holt. (See article by Susan.)

A two-day training on **“Mental Health First Aid”** will be given on February 18 and 19 from 8:30 a.m. until 4:00 p.m. at Evangelical Reformed United Church of Christ, 15

West Church Street, Frederick. For more information, call Fran Wenner at 301-663-9414. To register for the course, call the church office at 301-662-2762. Registration is limited.

Our thanks are extended to **Gordon Taplin** and **Grace Swan** who taught the recently completed Family To Family Course. There were twenty-three graduates of this twelve week course.

Don't forget to mark your calendar for the 2009 **NAMI Walk** which will be held Saturday, May 2, at 11:00 a.m. at the University of Maryland, College Park.

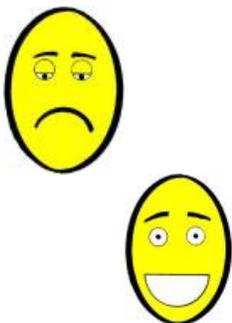
## Communication Skills From NAMI MD

### Interacting With Someone Who Has Mental Illness

- ◆ Remain Calm; speak slowly
- ◆ Maintain safety and space
- ◆ Acknowledge apparent feelings
- ◆ Give concise, clear and direct instructions
- ◆ Address feelings of delusions / hallucinations
- ◆ Be helpful, supportive and validating
- Avoid** the following:
  - ◆ Talking in a loud, demanding voice or arguing
  - ◆ Staring, laughing, ridiculing, yelling or touching
- ◆ Blaming the person for the behavior
- ◆ Giving choices; can increase confusion
- ◆ Showing frustration; might increase agitation

In Frederick County, **dial 211** for a mental health emergency.

*People grow through experience if they meet life honestly and courageously. This is how character is built.*  
—Eleanor Roosevelt



### The Person Might:

- Appear agitated, fearful or threatening
- Believe delusions
- Deny his/her illness
- Have trouble concentrating
- Be over-stimulated
- Have poor judgment
- Be preoccupied
- Be withdrawn

### So You Need to:

- Remain calm and accepting
- Remain simple and direct; do not argue
- Not try to convince otherwise
- Be brief; repeat when necessary
- Be soothing; limit input
- Avoid judging; not expect rationality
- Gain attention first
- Gain trust slowly; do not approach too quickly

## Schedule of Events

- ⇒ January 1 – **NAMI Support Group** for family members of those with mental illness, 7:00-8:30 p.m., at Good Shepherd Lutheran Church, 1415 W. 7th St., Frederick. For information call Fran Wenner at 301-663-9414.
- ⇒ January 6 – **NAMI Frederick Board of Directors meeting**, 7:00 p.m., Office.
- ⇒ January 15 – **Family To Family Class** begins at 6:30 p.m., All Saints Episcopal Church.
- ⇒ January 18 – **NAMI Support Group** for family members of those with mental illness, 2:00-3:30 p.m. in the Community Room at 4 East Church Street, Frederick. For information call DeDe Pucino 301-831-3764.
- ⇒ February 5 – **NAMI Support Group** for family members of those with mental illness at Good Shepherd Lutheran Church, 7:00-8:30 p.m. at 1415 W. 7<sup>th</sup> St., Frederick.
- ⇒ February 15 – **NAMI Support Group** for family members of those with mental illness, 2:00-3:30 p.m., Community Room, 4 East Church St., Frederick.



### NAMI Family To Family Class Begins January 15

THE NAMI Family To Family class for family members/caregivers of those with mental illness will begin on Thursday, January 15, and run for twelve consecutive weeks. The class will be held from 6:30 – 9:00 p.m. at All Saints’ Episcopal Church, 106 West Church Street in downtown Frederick.

Family To Family provides information, insight, understanding, and empowerment to family members, and the class is taught by trained NAMI family members who have relatives with mental illness.

Registration is limited, and the class is filling up. You are encouraged to call Family To Family Coordinator Carol Officer at 301-371-5899 as soon as possible. There is no charge for the class, and all materials are provided.

## January 2009

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
				1 Family Support	2	3
4	5	6 Board of Directors	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15 Family to Family (F2F)	16	17
18 Family Support	19 Martin Luther King, Jr. Day	20	21	22 F2F	23	24
25	26	27	28	29 F2F	30	31

## February 2009

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
1	2	3	4	5 Family Support F2F	6	7
8	9	10	11	12 F2F	13	14 Valentine's Day
15 Family Support	16	17	18	19 F2F	20	21
22	23	24	25	26 F2F	27	28

# NAMI of Frederick County, Inc.

## Annual Membership Application

New       Renewal

Name(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

### Dues:

- Individual or Family \$35.00
- Limited Income \$3.00
- Institution or Business \$35.00

### Donations:

\$500 \_\_\_\_\_ \$100 \_\_\_\_\_ \$50 \_\_\_\_\_ Other \_\_\_\_\_

Please return this panel & check to:

**NAMI of Frederick County**  
**P.O. Box 1853**  
**Frederick MD 21702**

### Optional:

Self-identified race/ethnicity: (Circle one)

Caucasian   African American   Hispanic/Latin  
Asian/Pacific Islander   Bi-Racial

To help us plan programs, please indicate your experience with mental illness:

- as an individual
- as a parent (age of child \_\_\_\_\_)
- as a mental health professional

**For more information call: 240-379-6186**

## NAMI of Frederick County

P.O. Box 1853  
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Phone: 240-379-6186

NAMI websites: <http://nami.org>  
[www.namifcmd.org](http://www.namifcmd.org)



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