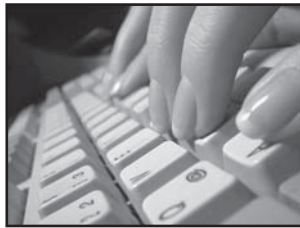


## NAMI-WC looks to expand services

### *New offices a major plus in efforts*

We hope that by now you have made visiting our new office one of your priorities for 2010. We have added two Connection recovery support groups, which began meeting here in November. This is in addition to the two support groups held at MountainHouse. We also provide space for the weight management program and support groups from other organizations.

Our library is now up and running, and we would be happy to receive any books on mental health that you may have to donate. Our computer room for consumers is set up and is ready to



be used by NAMI members to check their email, research job possibilities, or do research on mental health-related issues. We also have a video room, veterans' resources, and our new job counseling program is gearing up.



our library, and help at the front desk. Now that we have the extra computer available, they will be able to help us with research projects as we move into grant writing to help us to fund all of these new

services.

We have been working hard to build our volunteer team and keep them coming back—not to bribe you, but some are very good bakers who bring great treats. They have been busy helping to label brochures, inventory

We are already doing more outreach in order to work with other organizations and to reach those who have lost their community support/case management and would benefit from our support groups. We hope that some of those in our groups and education classes will someday be interested in taking NAMI

– *Continued Page 2*

## Upcoming speakers

We have two interesting speakers lined up for our upcoming general meetings. At the January 19 meeting, Kris Parks will be speaking on the push for state legislation prohibiting the death penalty for anyone deemed mentally incompetent when committing a homicide.

At the February 16 meeting, Curtis Venable of Pisgah Legal Services will speak on mental illness and the law.

## Job coaching program up and running

The job coaching partnership between NAMI and Jewish Family Services of the Jewish Community Center has gotten off the ground.

This new service will enable NAMI consumers to receive free assistance in preparing for their job search. Clients can receive assistance in identifying their skills, writing a resume, or beginning the search process. (We emphasize that at present this is strictly a coaching program and we not an employment agency with job contacts in the community.)

**Testament  
To The  
Program  
– Page 2**

– *Continued Page 2*

### Long-time WNC advocate Betty Lane dies

More on Betty, who along with her husband, Dan, were instrumental in establishing NAMI NC and NAMI-WC, can be found on page 5.

# New Career Development Program Really Works

After hitting a rough patch in New York, I moved to North Carolina this fall to be closer to family. I found NAMI through an internet search for support groups. At the first meeting I attended, a call for volunteers went out, and I began helping at the new office space (located at 356 Biltmore Ave, check it out!). I had a lot of free time on my hands and it was good to get out of the house. After leaving my last job due to mental health issues, I had been unemployed for over a year. My COBRA was running out and I was facing the risk of falling into the marsh of pre-existing conditions.

Christine approached me one day with the chance to be a “guinea

pig” for NAMI WNC’s new career development program. I jumped at the opportunity. I began meeting with career counselor/magician Mort Stein. He helped me rework my resume and draft a few cover letters. He also coached me extensively on interview techniques; so the next time I’m asked “Why did you leave your last position?” I don’t answer, “Oh, I went crazy” but rather, “I had to leave due to some health issues and they were unable to hold the position for me; however, I have kept busy through freelance and volunteer work as well as professional development.” Fancy, right?

I was able to put all of my new

skills into work at the 2009 Asheville Homecoming Job Fair. I was one of over 2000 applicants looking for work, but instead of slipping away in the crowd, my new found confidence helped me make a positive impression on several potential employers. This confidence carried over into interviews; I was prepared for most of their questions, my voice didn’t shake as it had in past interviews, and my hands were only a little sweaty.

I am happy to report that I start my new job on Monday. It is full time and includes health benefits after 90 days (gigantic sigh of relief). I am one very happy guinea pig.

–Jessica Ryan Davis

## Expand

– From Page 1

training to become group facilitators and instructors so that we can offer even more groups and classes in Western Carolina.

And more outreach and advocacy means that we must purchase more materials to give out at public meetings, as well as to providers and other organizations. Our newsletter alone goes out to over 800 people. Many of these are not members, but need to know what is going on in the mental health community. We encourage them to become members at the \$3 Open Door level to help us keep the information flowing and to tell us how we can be of more help to them.

NAMI must grow. We must grow to meet the rising challenges left by the disintegration of North Carolina’s mental health system. We must have the resources to fill the gaps and to do what we need to do, and we need you to help with our efforts. Please join NAMI-Western Carolina if you haven’t already. Your membership now is good thru the end of 2010. Please volunteer to help us with our projects. We must all pull together and enable NAMI to do all that it can for consumers and families in our area to learn about and learn how to handle the difficulties caused by mental illness to ourselves and to our loved ones and friends.

Please come by and meet us, donate your time if you can, and take advantage of what NAMI has to offer.

## Job Coaching

– From Page 1

In December, with the assistance of NAMI-WC Executive Director Chris Smith, JFS job coach Mort Stein assisted the first client. This individual came to her initial meeting with the enthusiasm and motivation essential to success. Identifying the key skills that make her marketable represented the key first step before we began preparing her resume.

Although unemployment rates are high in the area, we know that jobs are constantly becoming available. Our coaching will enable an individual to be in a strong position to take advantage of the ideal job when it comes along. We hope that this will be the first of many clients that we can eventually help enter productive employment and gain increased financial independence. For more information about this program, contact Chris Smith at 505-7353 or cijp1860@yahoo.com.

## Stay current with our website

Our website is now up-to-date and includes all current program information on classes, trainings, meetings and support group schedules. Please check [www.namiwnc.org](http://www.namiwnc.org).

# NAMI offers free education in Asheville

## Family-to-Family

NAMI-WC will sponsor the acclaimed, free 12-week Family-to-Family class for families and caregivers of individuals diagnosed with a severe mental illness from 6 to 8:30 pm on Mondays from February 22 to May 17 in Asheville. Western Highlands Network funds this course, which helps caregivers understand and support people with serious mental illness while maintaining their own well-being.

Up-to-date facts about schizophrenia, bipolar disorder, clinical depression, panic disorder, obsessive-compulsive disorder, anxiety disorder, and co-occurring addictions help caregivers understand and support people with a serious mental illness. Trained family members teach the course, which balances education with self-care, emotional support, and empowerment.

NAMI Family-to-Family includes coping skills, handling a crisis and relapse, listening and communication techniques, problem solving, rehabilitation, community resources, advocacy, as well as fighting discrimination and stigma.

Call instructors Bill and Bonnie (828) 707-2937 or email



## Board news

The board welcomes Audry Mercer as its new Corresponding Secretary. Audry is a long-time NAMI member and a graduate of the Family-to-Family class.

The board met on Saturday, January 9, to discuss updates and other changes to our affiliate's by-laws. These include possibly expanding the number of board members to include at large members as well as officers. A notice describing the proposed changes and announcing a meeting to vote on the amended bylaws should be coming soon.

## W.R.A.P. group to start soon

Our first Wellness and Recovery Action Plan (W.R.A.P.) group will start on Thursday, January 21. The class will run from 3 to 5 p.m. for six weeks. Pre-registration is necessary, and enrollment limited to eight. For information, please call Christine at 505-7353. This class will be offered again starting in May.



bkinschner@aol.com for more information. A course description is also available at the NAMI national website at [www.nami.org](http://www.nami.org). Because the class size is limited, early registration is required.

## NAMI Basics

NAMI Basics, consisting of six 2-hour sessions, is for parents or caregivers of children or adolescents who showed symptoms of a mental illness before the age of 13, regardless of their current age. The course is taught by trained teachers who are also the parent or other caregiver of such individuals. The course covers medication, the biology of mental illness, diagnoses, and treatment, and empowers its participants to effectively advocate for their children.

Classes will be held on Tuesday and Thursday evenings, March 2-18. Call instructors Donna (828) 684-5477 or Jeannie (828) 664-1146 to find out more. A course description is also available at the NAMI website at [www.nami.org](http://www.nami.org).

## Your computer can live again

Give your computer a second life by donating it to Western Alliance Center for Independent Living to benefit people with significant disabilities. Western Alliance will recycle and refurbish the equipment. This saves our environment and benefits people who otherwise could not afford a pc or printer.

Equipment may be left at Western Alliance at 108 New Leicester Highway, Mondays through Fridays, 8:30 am to 5 pm. Donations are tax deductible. Call 298-1977 or check [www.westernalliance.org](http://www.westernalliance.org).

## Upcoming events

- Peer employment training. Western Highlands Network is offering Peer Employment Training January 18-22 & 25-29 from 8 a.m.-12 noon. A graduation ceremony will be held the afternoon of January 29 at 501 Biltmore Avenue (MAHEC) at 1 p.m. Applications at [www.westernhighlands.org](http://www.westernhighlands.org). There is a \$50 fee for this training.
- MAHEC (Mountain Area Health Education Center) Mental Health Wednesday Webinar Series will present Using Peer Support Services to Enhance Recovery, on Feb. 3 from 12:15 to 1:15 p.m. Among issues discussed will be ways to use peer support services, the definition of peer support, strengths and barriers to implementing peer support, and how to use peer support to enhance recovery. Speaker: Christine Smith, Executive Director, NAMI-Western Carolina. Fee is \$10. For information/registration, call 828-257-4475, go to [www.mahec.net](http://www.mahec.net), or mail request and payment to MAHEC registration, 501 Biltmore Avenue, Asheville, NC 28801.
- Western Alliance Support Group offered the first and third Monday of the month for those who have graduated from the Peer Employment Training program. The group meets from 5:30 to 7 p.m. at Western Alliance, 108 New Leicester Highway, Asheville. For information, call Rosemary at 828-298-1977.

## Training opportunities

Don't miss these upcoming opportunities to be trained in NAMI's signature support and education programs:

<b>Family to Family:</b> .....	January 2010 – Raleigh, NC March 2010 – Pine Knoll Shores, NC
<b>NAMI Basics:</b> .....	February 2010 – Raleigh, NC March 2010 – Pine Knoll Shores, NC
<b>In Our Own Voice:</b> .....	May 2010 – Hickory, NC
<b>Support Group:</b> .....	February 2010 - Raleigh, NC (This for family members and caregivers)
<b>Peer to Peer:</b> .....	April 2010—Raleigh, NC
<b>NAMI Connection:</b> .....	March 2010 – Greensboro, NC Exact dates and locations of these training classes will be announced later.

***When You Need ... housing, hounseling, bridge meds until your doctor's appointment, or Someone to talk to ....***

### **Call Western Highlands Network**

Western Highlands Network, 356 Biltmore Ave., Asheville, NC 28801, [www.westernhighlands.org](http://www.westernhighlands.org) manages mental health, developmental disabilities and substance abuse services in Yancey, Transylvania, Rutherford, Polk, Mitchell, Madison, Henderson and Buncombe counties.

For routine needs or daytime emergency, call 828-225-2800 or 1-800-951-3792 (toll free).

For emergencies after hours & weekends, call 828-252-4357 or 1-800-951-3792.

## A huge thank you to our volunteers!

- To Ray Carter and Christine Smith for helping find the best deals on office equipment and furniture, for schlepping it all into the office, and for setting it all up.
- To Charlotte Street Computers for the free refurbished computer for our consumers.
- To Cindi Sutherland, the Osadas, the Mills, Jim Duffy, the Pitts, and the Hoys for contributions to our office in the form of cash donations, gifts, or loans of artwork and equipment.
- To our November/December office volunteers: Shane, Jesse, Karen, Leslie, Karim, Matt, and Susie for their many hours helping with office tasks, especially putting labels on brochures—not the most exciting work, but needed. Good company, hot coffee, good times! PLEASE JOIN US!
- To Tracy Mixson for finding the much-needed, long-awaited chairs for support groups.
- To Marlene, Charles, and Brandon Wooten for picking up and delivering furniture and also offering rides to bring people to our support groups.

## Sing Along with Richard

Talent is not required. If you like to sing, you're welcome to the 7 to 8:30 pm second Thursday of the month Sing-Alongs with musician Richard Sackett in the community room of the North Branch of the Asheville Buncombe County Library, 1030 Merrimon Ave, just south of Beaver Lake. The next session will be on February 11. Admission is free; donations are accepted to cover songbooks and rental. Call 777-0783 for more information.

# Condolences to Betty Lane’s family

We extend our deep sympathy to the family of Betty Lane, the wife of Daniel “Dan” Lane, Jr., who died on December 2. Betty and Dan, who were married for 54 years, were instrumental in establishing NAMI NC and NAMI-WC, and for decades worked tirelessly to carry out NAMI’s mission of education, advocacy, and support. The Lanes received NAMI NC’s Lifetime Achievement Award in 1985.

was a role Betty thoroughly enjoyed. Betty felt she was here on earth to help, and she loved talking to people and sharing ideas. A strong advocate, she worked to improve treatment and housing for consumers. Betty was a teacher, a peace advocate, and loved drama, travel, and music. She sang in the choir at First United Methodist Church of Waynesville, where her memorial service was held.

Asheville, NC 28814 or Waynesville First United Methodist Choir Fund, P.O. Box 838, Waynesville 28786. Condolences may be sent to Dan Lane, 88 Polk Street, Waynesville NC 28786.

### In memoriam

Thank you for donations made to NAMI-WC in honor of Betty Lane, K. Wilcox, and J. Klingler. We appreciate your thinking of us at this difficult time.

Greeting people at NAMI meetings

Memorials may be sent to NAMI Western Carolina, P.O. Box 8046,

## Help needed with rideshare

NAMI is attempting to coordinate rides to our meetings and support for those without transportation. If you need a ride, or are able to provide a ride to another NAMI member, please call 828-687-6901. At this time we particularly need drivers. Please help! We try to match riders and drivers within their own neighborhoods. Thank you!

## Join NAMI today!

NAMI-WC depends on you to further our mission to improve the quality of life for all persons affected by a serious mental illness. Your membership means that you care about what we are doing in advocacy, education, and support, and share our vision for a better world for people with mental illness and their families. Especially now with the frustrations

and challenges of “Mental Health Reform,” advocates need to be heard.

Your dues are shared with NAMI national and NAMI NC and entitle you to receive publications and information from all NAMI levels. If you’ve not renewed or joined yet, please do so today. Thank you for making a difference.



### Contributors

Contributing Writers

Jessica Ryan D

avis Jim Pitts

Sharon Pitts

Florence Rowe

Christine Smith

Copy Editor—Bob Hoy

Design & Layout—David Cornwell

## Join or Renew Your Membership

I would like to be a member of NAMI-WC and am enclosing my check for membership and/or contribution.

Please check if: new  or renewal

\$35.00 One-year Membership (Individual and Family)

\$3.00 Open Door Membership for those with limited means

\$ \_\_\_\_\_ Additional Contribution

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ EMail \_\_\_\_\_

Mail checks payable to NAMI WC.; P.O. Box 8046, Asheville, NC 28814 NAMI Western Carolina is a 501(c)3 non profit corporation. All contributions are tax-deductible.



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## Support – Education – Advocacy

NAMI WESTERN CAROLINA is an affiliate of the National Alliance on Mental Illness, the nation's largest grassroots mental health organization dedicated to improving the lives of individuals and families affected by mental illness. Members are families, friends and people living with mental illnesses such as major depression, schizophrenia, bipolar disorder, obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD), panic disorder, post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and borderline personality disorder.

NAMI WESTERN CAROLINA welcomes families, friends and people with a mental illness to meetings at 10 am the first Saturday and 7 pm the third Tuesday of the month at Mountainhouse, 225 E. Chestnut St., Asheville. (Parking in the rear, use the side entrance) Call 687-6901 for information [www.namiwnc.org](http://www.namiwnc.org).

NAMI CONNECTION is a recovery support group for adults with mental illness, regardless of diagnosis. Trained individuals, who also are in recovery and understand

the daily challenges, offer encouragement and support. Group meets at 10 am the first Saturday of the month at Mountainhouse. For information, call 828-505-7353. NAMI BASICS is a new education program for parents/caregivers of children and adolescents living with mental illness. Trained teachers or other caregivers with similar experiences with their own children teach this free six-week class. Facilitator: Sharon Pitts, 258-5359 [sharonpitts1@gmail.com](mailto:sharonpitts1@gmail.com)

NAMI FAMILY-to-FAMILY EDUCATION is a free 12-week course of facts and support for families/caregivers of persons with a diagnosed mental illness. Trained family members teach the 2½-hour class. Early re-registration is required. Coordinator: Florence Rowe, 299-9596 [rohau@charter.net](mailto:rohau@charter.net)

IN OUR OWN VOICE offers free presentations by people with mental illness in recovery to dispel stigma; includes video, personal testimony and discussion. Coordinator: Tracy Mixson, 232-0438, [psychodog@charter.net](mailto:psychodog@charter.net).

*NAMI gives peer-to-peer support, not led by mental health professionals  
All meetings are held at Mountainhouse, 225 E. Chestnut Street, Asheville, unless otherwise indicated.*