

Support Advocate Educate

**Summer 2015
Newsletter**

MEETINGS

7:00-8:00 p.m.

1st Tuesday is Care and Share

3rd Tuesday is Informational

Meeting Place:

Schmid Innovation Center

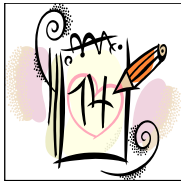
900 Jackson St., Dubuque

Upcoming Events—Mark Your Calendar

Tuesday, **July 21** — **Linda Duffy**, Child Health Specialty Clinics (see below)

Tuesday, **August 18** — **Sonia Kendrick**, Feed Iowa First (see below)

Tuesday, **September 15** — **To Be Announced**



July Speaker

Linda Duffy, Child Health Specialty Clinics, will provide information on Pediatric Integrated Health and the Children's Mental Health Waiver along with other services offered by CHSC. Child Health Specialty Clinics is part of Iowa's statewide public health system that provides family-centered, community-based, coordinated systems of care for Children and Youth with Special Health Care Needs (CYSHCN) and is administered through the University of Iowa Department of Pediatrics.

August Speaker

One woman is trying to change Iowa's food system and the way we eat, one garden at a time.

"I want to teach people to work and feed themselves," said Sonia Kendrick, executive director and founding farmer of Feed Iowa First, located in Cedar Rapids.



Founded by Kendrick in 2011, the organization has grown its own fruits and vegetables and donated thousands of pounds of food to area pantries and Meals on Wheels.

www.feediowafirst.org

**October 4-10, Mental Illness
Awareness Week**



**NAMI DUBUQUE/
ASBURY EAGLES CLUB
BURGER NIGHT!!!**

NAMI Dubuque will be holding a fundraising "Burger Night", sponsored by the Asbury Eagles Club, on **Thursday, October 8**, from 5-8 p.m. at the Asbury Eagles Club. We will begin selling tickets near the end of August. Tickets are \$7 for adults and \$4 for children 10 and under. Tickets will be available at the NAMI office during open hours from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. (call first to be sure office is open). Tickets will also be available at the September 1st Support Group Meeting and the September 15th Educational Meeting from 7-8 p.m. Please call the NAMI office between 10 a.m. and 2 p.m. at 563-557-6264 for further information.

In order to make this a successful fundraiser for NAMI, we will need approximately **eight volunteers** to help that evening to take orders, serve food and drinks, and clean up afterward. We will also need help selling as many tickets as possible, so let us know if there is a large group you may be able to sell tickets to (your bowling league, book club, church group, etc.) Please contact the NAMI office (563-557-6264 or namidbq@gmail.com) or speak with any NAMI board member if you are able to help in any way with this fundraiser!

ANNUAL FAMILY PICNIC

NAMI Dubuque held its annual Family Picnic at Flora Park on Tuesday, June 16. Though the crowd was a bit smaller than in other years, a good time was had by all. The weather was great and there was plenty of good food. There were a number of grandchildren in attendance, which always makes a picnic fun! The annual picnic allows members to set aside the “work” of NAMI and simply enjoy getting to know one another on a personal level in a relaxing and beautiful atmosphere. Thanks so much to Liz and Rich Robertson and Ann Gartner for their work in organizing the Family Picnic this year!

FIRST ANNUAL SUMMER NATURE TREK!

This past June, NAMI Dubuque along with Four Mounds, Dubuque County ISU Extension, The Dubuque Rescue Mission Wellness Garden and Chuck Isenhardt, debuted a new way to trek in Dubuque. Local foods’ coordinator Carolyn Scherf (Dubuque County ISU Extension) brought Sonia Kendrick of Feed Iowa First, to the event as the keynote speaker to talk about farming, her experience with PTSD, and how she uses the earth to help ease symptoms of anxiety. The event was held at Four Mounds, off Peru Road, which provided the public with the keynote speaker’s message, a hike around Four Mounds, along with garden and farming demonstrations. The event was a success and we hope to stay connected with the new partnerships we made in our efforts to help support our communities’ mental health needs.

GOVERNOR FINISHES WORK OF 2015 SESSION

On July 2, the 2015 legislative session officially came to an end when Governor Terry Branstad took action on several bills. The 2015 Legislative Session will be remembered as a difficult one, with disagreement about how much to increase education spending driving session into overtime. Ultimately schools went home with an increase of 1.25%. Gas taxes were increased to pay for road maintenance and construction. Iowa's limited medical marijuana laws were not expanded, fireworks were not legalized, and fantasy sports betting remains illegal. Kids under 14 are not allowed to use handguns after an NRA-backed bill failed to get support in the Senate.

The biggest news this session came from two actions taken by the Governor early in session, both of which did not require legislative approval but certainly got legislative attention. When the Governor presented his budget during the first week of session, he rolled out a plan to close two of the state's four Mental Health Institutes (Mt. Pleasant and Clarinda). Legislative attempts to keep the facilities open failed, and both are in the process of being shut down and patients are currently being transferred.

The second action to send shock waves through the Legislature was the Governor's move to turn over the state's Medicaid system to private managed care companies. The Department of Human Services issued an RFP during session, hoping to award a contract to 2-4 managed care organizations (MCOs). Eleven companies

submitted proposals, and DHS hopes to have an announcement sometime late summer. Some legislators were upset that they were not consulted, and that the timeline is too fast (managed care companies will need to be up and running by January 1, 2016). As a representative from one managed care company said, “Yes it can be done this quickly, but it can be done better with more time.”

With all the issues that legislators were faced with this year, what may be the most remarkable is that they were able to find a middle ground at all. Legislators will be battle-worn after this session, so now would be a great time to remind them how much you appreciate the work they do.

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A CALL FOR ASSISTANCE TO NAMI DUBUQUE MEMBERS

By Steven Sprengelmeyer, Board Member

I am writing this article as the newest NAMI Dubuque board member, serving since February 2015. The organization has seen significant improvements in the last year, having our most successful Iris Days campaign, raising the most money in the history of NAMI Dubuque! In addition our new NAMI website is now up and running (namidubuque.com)!

While these improvements are impressive, the reason for my writing is due to a concerning downward trend in meeting attendance. The attendance at our monthly Care & Share/Connection Support Group meetings (7-8 p.m., 1st Tuesday each month) has been quite low. In addition the attendance at our Educational Meetings (7-8 p.m., 3rd Tuesday each month) has also been quite low. I am requesting that NAMI members reading this newsletter become involved in helping us, the NAMI board, in our attempts to increase attendance and involvement.

The backbone of the NAMI organization is to be a grassroots organization providing advocacy, support, and education regarding issues of mental illness that impact society. If you are concerned about issues of mental illness that are not being addressed in our community, please contact the NAMI office (563-557-6264 or namidbq@gmail.com) or any NAMI board member with your concerns. If you are aware of a service or program or an individual who has been helpful, please let us know, as others might benefit from that knowledge as well.

NAMI Dubuque is an all-volunteer organization and we would be appreciative of any or all members who could give any amount of time to help us address the issues and needs in the Dubuque community. Thank you for your assistance regarding these matters.

NAMI MEMORIALS

Thank you to past president Barbara Gormley and friends for their memorial gifts totaling \$1,225.50 in memory of her husband John and son Steven.

Thank you to Mr. and Mrs. Ron Lucas and friends for their memorial gifts in the amount of \$344.00 in memory of their son David.

Thank you to the Dubuque Bomb Squad Roller Derby team for their \$100 donation in memory of Casper, a league member from Michigan, who committed suicide. The Bomb Squad commemorated Casper at their meet on May 18 by selling turquoise ribbons for fans to wear to promote suicide awareness and prevention. The Bomb Squad upcoming meets are on Saturdays, July 25, August 8 and September 12. All meets are held at the Courtside Sports Bar & Grill.

NAMI members offer our sympathy upon the losses of these family members and friends.



DONATIONS TO NAMI

Thank you to Roger and Vickie Julian for their \$275 donation to purchase a much-needed additional storage cabinet for the office.

Thank you to Andy and Debi Butler for their \$1,000 donation to help defray office rent for 2015.

Thank you to Douglas Cheever for his \$300 donation, and to Wartburg Seminary for their donation of \$105 raised through their DVD sale.

We would also like to acknowledge Gary Dolphin, Perry Araeipour and Judy Nemmers for their \$100 donations.

GRANTS



NAMI has received \$3,211.96 from the Dubuque Racing Association for the design of a new website and updated computer equipment.



NAMI has received \$2,250 from Mercy Medical Center to purchase brochures and educational materials.

Mental illness affects many families, that is why there is NAMI.

NAMI Dubuque

is a grassroots organization serving individuals afflicted with mental illnesses, their families and the community, using support, education and advocacy to eradicate the stigma and to improve the quality of life for those who have been affected by these brain disorders.

NAMI Dubuque is an affiliate of NAMI Iowa (www.namiiowa.com) and of NAMI, the National Alliance on Mental Illness (www.nami.org).

If you no longer wish to receive the newsletter...call the office or leave an email message .
563-557-6264, namidbq@gmail.com

MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION

Renewal notices are now mailed to each member when their anniversary date comes due.

Family/Individual—\$35 Consumer—\$3

Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____

Email _____

Mail this with payment to: NAMI-DUBUQUE, 900 Jackson Street, Suite LL5-2B, Dubuque IA 52001-5006



NAMI Dubuque participated again in the annual **Project Concern's Changing Minds** free community-wide mental health resource fair. The event was held Tuesday, May 12 from 2:30-7:30 at the Grand River Center. The event commemorates May National Health month. This year the Changing Minds committee and Iowa University partnered to offer continuing education units (credits) for those social workers and nurses who attended all three sessions. The sessions were open to the public as well with more than 200 total attendees.

More than 20 mental health care providers, as well as many mental health support groups, staffed tables with information on a variety of mental health issues. NAMI Dubuque had a booth with educational materials. Also offered to those interested were some of the newer NAMI Dubuque awareness items such as the Help and Hope wristbands and buttons that promote breaking the silence. NAMI Dubuque T-shirts were also for sale. As was the case last year, the booth was very popular with the people attending the resource fair. Many NAMI educational materials were picked up from attendees, including those representing other mental health agencies. We had to go back to the office after the first hour to replenish supplies, indicating how highly the mental health community in Dubuque thinks of NAMI mental health resources. One participant commented that she stops by the booth especially because of the information provided.

Three breakout sessions were offered at multiple times between 2:30 and 5:30. A short summary of the topic, as well as the objectives of each presentation, were made available to the attendees prior to the sessions. This is a requirement when awarding CEUs and was also very helpful to those people attending who do not have a formal medical or social work background. A question and answer period followed the breakout sessions and the keynote speeches.

The breakout sessions and the summary of information presented included:

STIGMA: What Role Do You Play? Presented by: **Jean Hartel**, MA, LISW and **Diane Heiken**, RPh. **Please note Diane Heiken is a NAMI Dubuque member.**

Recognizing how mental health stigma affects individuals and families with mental illness is an important step in consciously committing to lessening that stigma within our community. Understanding that stereotypes and media can influence our attitudes and beliefs and that this can further encourage or discourage a person's or family's decision to seek treatment is relevant when reviewing treatment options and timing. It is important to recognize that mental health is a public health issue much like assuring the quality of drinking water or preventing and managing infectious diseases.

Actively supporting the mental health system within our community contributes to its positive progression by promoting awareness, acceptance, and inclusion, while potentially decreasing the financial and human costs associated with outcomes such as incarceration, substance use, and emergency room visits. Realizing that knowledge is power, it is important for those that are involved in our community mental health system and those individuals and families affected by mental illness to share the news about mental health in an effort to raise awareness and educate others when opportunities arise.

Mental Illness: Banishing Myths and Building Facts
Presented by: **Julie C. Homb**, MA, LMHC, CVSP

Dispelling the myths and building the knowledge base regarding the complexities of mental health is a distinctive need in the United States. In today's society, curbside conversation about physical ailments is welcome, while the yearning for meaningful discussion regarding mental illnesses remains fulfilled only by rhetoric and penny ante clichés. An informed answer to this call begins with the pruning of our misinformed associations and the reconstruction of an understanding based in fact. Determining where to begin and what messages to send begins with the very people who are intimately involved in this crisis in their everyday lives. Professionals, families, and those personally affected by mental illness were welcomed to join in this talk. "Banishing Myth and Building Fact" addressed the myths, informed listeners of the facts and assisted them in the development of their own toolkit of truth.

You are Not Alones: Becoming a Care Giver Presented by: **Megan Esch**, LMHC, CRC, CADC

The toll that mental illness takes on families is often unspoken and leaves family members feeling overwhelmed, scared, and frustrated with a system they don't understand. Whether offering emotional support, financial assistance, or providing supervision and daily care, family members in caregiving roles face unprecedented emotional, mental and physical stress. Most families generally have little prior knowledge of mental illness and report feeling ill-prepared to deal with the stress that accompanies the initial onset of major mental illness. The truth is, you are not alone. Families and friends were invited to join the discussion on caring for a loved one with mental illness. Discussion included learning about local resources available, how to manage and adjust to your changing role, and learn about the value and importance of self-care.

The Keynote topic; Recovery: Treatment and Support Options, was presented by NAMI Dubuque Board member **Umesh Chakunta**, MD and **Susan Whitty**, MA, ARNP.

Dr Chakunta discussed the role of a Mental Health Professional in diagnosis and treatment planning as well as the dangers of avoiding mental illness treatment. It is important to recognize when individuals in a serious mental health crisis may need hospitalization. An explanation was also given of the difference between residential, in-patient and out-patient treatment and when each is most effective.

Susan Whitty discussed the role of social services organizations in case management and potential housing assistance as well as learning about psychosocial treatments and their effectiveness.

Both talked about the role medication plays in treatment as well as recognizing that care and support for family and friends of the mentally ill is equally important.

NAMI Dubuque is proud to be a part of Project Concern's Changing Minds annual event. Please mark your calendars for **May 2016** when another Changing Minds Event will be held.

MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS MONTH

Each year millions of Americans face the reality of living with a mental health condition. During the month of May NAMI brings particular awareness to mental illness. Each year we fight stigma, provide support, educate the public, and advocate for equal care. Each year the movement grows stronger. We believe that these issues are important to address year round, but highlighting these issues during May provides a time for people to come together and display the passion and strength of those working to improve the lives of the tens of millions of Americans affected by mental illness.

NAMI Dubuque held the following events in conjunction with Mental Health Awareness Month in an effort to raise awareness of mental illness in the tri-state community:

- May 1st, 2nd, and 15th – Iris Days – NAMI volunteers were stationed at various grocery stores distributing silk irises and mental health information. The tri-state community donated a total of \$4191.50 to support our continued efforts to support, educate and advocate for those in our community affected by mental illness.
- May 4th – Pizza Ranch Tip Night – NAMI volunteers waited and bussed tables for tips during buffet hours at Pizza Ranch. A NAMI display table was in view for customers to see, with brochures and other NAMI literature available to all. A total of \$286 was donated that evening.
- May 11th – NAMI members Debi Butler and Clairia Sieverding staffed a NAMI display table over the lunch hours at Senior High School. Debi and Clairia answered students' questions and distributed mental health information, raising awareness of mental health issues among the high school population.
- May 19th – In conjunction with Mental Health Awareness Month, NAMI's monthly educational meeting featured a DVD presentation of Pete Earley, author of "Crazy: A Father's Search Through America's Mental Health Madness", describing his attempts to help his son Mike after he is denied treatment during a psychotic break and is arrested. He explains why jails and prisons have become our new asylums, why this is wrong, what we need to do to turn mental health back into a health issue instead of continuing to make it a criminal justice problem.

Also in attendance at this special meeting were former NAMI Dubuque Presidents Barbara Gormley, Mary Pat Breitfelder, and Shirley Healey, who were congratulated for their service to NAMI Dubuque and our community.



Breathe Easy with AIR

What is Air?

AIR (Anonymous. Inspiring. Relatable) is the new NAMI app, a free, mobile-based social network designed for individuals living with mental health conditions and their family members/caregivers.

NAMI AIR is intended to provide another way for people to find and give support, to connect with others through smart phone and computer tablet.

- AIR encourages users to anonymously share their stories and receive feedback in the form of social interactions such as "like," "hug" and "me too."
- Also allows users to access information on how to get help, learn more about NAMI and connect with the NAMI HelpLine.
- AIR facilitates personal connections with others who may be going through, or have been through, similar situations. Users are anonymous but not alone.

How do I start using NAMI AIR?

After AIR is downloaded through the Apple and Android App Stores, users will start by creating an account and selecting a group to join.

- Individual living with a mental health condition
- Family member or caregiver

What posts you see are determined by the path you chose (for example, If you am a caregiver or family member, the stories you see on your feed will also be from caregivers or family members). You can "toggle" between these two groups—so you can choose to engage in one group, then select the other, allowing you to interact in both communities. However, you will not be able to interact in both at the same time.

How do users know that my information is safe and confidential?

Users don't create any sort of username while signing up. All posts are completely anonymous. The only information you give is your email address. Email addresses are only used for sign in and in case of an emergency. So you can be assured that your posts and participation are completely anonymous.