



**nami**

National Alliance on Mental Illness

# Polk County

## News & Views

*A Monthly Publication of NAMI Polk County, Inc.*

Volume 1: Issue 0411

April 2011

**Inside this issue:**

NAMI Polk SSI Fair	1
NAMI Annual Meeting	1
13th Annual Family Café	2
Peer Recovery Program	3
Youth Peer Conference	3
New NAMI Staff	3
Membership Form	4

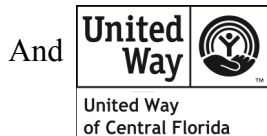
**Supported by:**

Publix Super Markets Charities

Dept. of Children and Families

The City of Lakeland

NAMI Polk Members



**CONTACT US:**

NAMI Polk County, Inc.  
 1090 US Hwy 17 South  
 Bartow, FL 33830  
 Tel: (863) 533-4411  
 Email:  
 namipolk@juno.com  
 Websites:  
 www.namipolk.com  
 www.namifl.org  
 www.nami.org

**NAMI POLK SOCIAL SECURITY FAIR PLANNED**



NAMI is pleased to announce its SSI/SSDI Application Assistance Training. This training is geared toward mental health individuals who are unable to complete the Social Security Application process without professional help.

We have scheduled this second event in a two-part series. We have invited Social Security professionals to present an overview of their services to prospective mental health clients who have not yet completed their applications for social security benefits.

Potential clients could meet with Social Security professionals who can be hired to help them through the application process. Potential clients will also be able to collect the names, addresses and phone numbers of these professionals.

A representative will also be on hand from the Center For Independent Living.

**The date for the fair is Saturday, May 7, 2011, 9am—4pm at St. David’s Episcopal Church, 145 E. Edgewood Drive, Lakeland, FL.**

For more information contact the NAMI Polk County office at 863-533-4411, or email [namipolk@juno.com](mailto:namipolk@juno.com).



**NAMI POLK ANNUAL MEETING SCHEDULED**



The NAMI Polk County Annual Meeting will be held on Monday, May 16, 2011 at St. David’s Episcopal Church, 145 E. Edgewood Drive, Lakeland, FL. We will be meeting in the Parrish Hall. The Board Meeting will begin at 6:00 pm and the Annual Meeting will commence at 7:00 pm and is open to the public.

Please contact the NAMI office by **May 13, 2011** if you plan to attend. Please call: **863-533-4411** or email: [namipolk@juno.com](mailto:namipolk@juno.com). There will be door prizes!

**BLUEBERRIES ARE COMING!!!**



The NAMI Polk Annual Blueberry Sale is being planned for mid-May. We will be selling fresh gourmet blueberries produced locally by Clear Springs Blueberries. Details will be forthcoming! If you are interested in purchasing some of these delicious blueberries, please email us at [namipolk@juno.com](mailto:namipolk@juno.com) and type “Blueberries” in the subject line of your email. We will add your name to our list and contact you via email with the cost, dates, times and locations. **The blueberry sale benefits the work of NAMI Polk County, a United Way of Central Florida partner agency.**

**FAMILY  
Support Groups**

**Lakeland Family Group**

Currently Suspended  
Leaders Needed  
Please Call to Volunteer  
(863) 533-4411

**Lake Wales Group**

New leadership Needed  
To volunteer call the NAMI office

**Young Families Parent Group**

May 9 :6:30pm  
1st Presby. Church, room 321  
175 Lake Hollingsworth Dr.  
Leader is Joni Smithson, LMHC  
See article below right.

**CONSUMER Groups:**

**Kids Support Group**

May 9; 6:30pm  
1st Presby Church  
175 Lake Hollingsworth Dr.  
Leader: Melissa Brown, LCSW

**Winter Haven Groups**

Wednesdays 2-3:30pm and  
Thursday nights 7-8:30 PM  
Sweet Center Green Room.  
1201 First Street S.  
Winter Haven  
Leaders: Elizabeth, Randall  
and Laura

**Lakeland**

The three Support Groups listed  
below meet at the  
Jeanene Brown Drop-In-Center.  
2326 Edgewood Drive:

1. *Panic & Anxiety Mon. 3pm*

2. *Depression & Bipolar Support  
(DBSA) Tue. 7pm &  
Sat. 12 noon*

For more info call  
Drop In Center  
(863) 413-2788

Female Sexual Abuse Survivors  
1st & 3rd Wed. 6-7:30pm  
Peace River Center's  
Rape Recovery Resource Center  
413-2708 Childcare provided.

**NAMI Polk County  
Board of Directors**

Diana Arthur, Pres.  
Barbara Hoffman, V.P.  
Dr. Anne Tyson, Treas.  
Carol Hoffman, Sec.  
Neal Dwyer  
Dr. Richard Marshall  
Joyce McInerney  
Maureen McIntire  
Elizabeth Newton  
Margaret Parry  
John Ruffin  
Anne Weeks  
John F. Wendel

**Staff**

Melissa Songer,  
Executive Director

Annette Brown,  
Administrative Assistant

**STRESS OF CAREGIVING: WHAT ABOUT YOU?**

(Copied from The National Family Caregiver's Association)

**Spring is a good time to remind yourself about the basics of self care. Following are great tips from The National Family Caregiver's Association:**



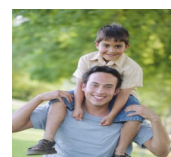
- ◆ Choose to take charge of your life. Don't let your loved one's illness or disability take center stage.
- ◆ Remember to be good to yourself. Love, honor and value yourself. You're doing a very hard job and you deserve some quality time, just for you.
- ◆ Watch out for signs of depression and don't delay in getting professional help when you need it.
- ◆ When people offer to help you, accept the offer and suggest specific things that they can do.
- ◆ Educate yourself about your loved one's condition. Information is empowering.
- ◆ There is a difference between caring and doing. Be open to technologies and ideas that promote your loved one's independence. Don't do for them what they can still do for themselves.
- ◆ Trust your instincts. Most of the time they will lead you in the right direction.
- ◆ Grieve for your losses then allow yourself to dream new dreams.
- ◆ Stand up for your rights as a caregiver and a citizen.

**Articles and other information and resources are available online at [www.nfcares.org](http://www.nfcares.org)**

**THE 13th ANNUAL FAMILY CAFÉ – June 3-5, 2011  
Featuring the Governor's Summit on Disabilities**

The Annual Family Café provides a venue where individuals with all types of disabilities and their families from all regions of Florida can gather information about available services and how to best access them. It offers families access to policy-making officials, opportunities to find support by networking with other families, and exposure to a range of public and private resources on a grand scale.

You can register online at [www.FamilyCafe.net](http://www.FamilyCafe.net)



**NAMI Polk  
Parents/Kids  
Support Group**

An ongoing parent and kids support group meets twice a month on the 2nd and 4th Monday nights. The location is the First Presbyterian Church, 175 Lake Hollingsworth Drive, Lakeland. Meeting times: 6:30pm—7:30pm. Walk-ins are welcome to attend support groups and no registration is required. Group schedule for the rest of the year is as follows: May 9 (last night of group for this session).

Parents meet under the guidance of Joni Smithson to discuss successes and concerns and network to develop strength and support from the group experience. Kids meet under the guidance of Melissa Brown and play therapeutic games focused on social skill building. Both adults and kids develop meaningful friendships within the groups.

Exciting News!!! A prize will be given on the last night of group to the lucky raffle ticket holder.

The Family Café is also proud to offer families limited Financial Assistance, which can provide for complimentary accommodations at the Disney Coronado Springs. Assistance is based on available funding and awarded by lottery. If you receive financial assistance, your room reservation will be made by The Family Café. If you do not receive assistance, you will be responsible for making your own reservations at the Disney Coronado Springs or elsewhere in Orlando. You can contact the hotel reservation line at 407-939-1020.



**NAMI Polk Welcomes New Executive Director, Melissa Songer**

With more than 25 years experience in nonprofit and public services, Melissa Songer, MPA, has expertise in grant writing, strategic planning, program development, evaluation, data analysis, group facilitation, and organizational development. Melissa was employed by Peace River Center from 1987-1998 where she was Director of Planning and Evaluation. Over the past decade she has worked in child welfare, county government, and in other nonprofit settings. Prior to being hired as Executive Director for NAMI Polk County, she was employed by Hillsborough Kids, Inc. as a Business Analyst and Contract Manager.



**NAMI Polk also Welcomes Annette Brown, Administrative Assistant**

Annette Brown has over 20 years administrative and office management experience. Annette has strong financial, analytical and marketing skills. Annette has also worked extensively with brain injured adults and the special education population with the Board of Education in Fairfield County prior to relocating to Polk County. Prior to joining NAMI Polk County, Annette worked as Customer Service Rep for Lockheed Martin Corporation from 2006–2010. Annette is also a Florida Notary.



**\*\*\* NAMI POLK COUNTY \*\*\***

**PEER TO PEER RECOVERY EDUCATION COURSE  
WINTER HAVEN**

**PEER TO PEER WINTER HAVEN SESSIONS ARE CURRENTLY UNDERWAY. SESSIONS ARE BEING HELD:**

**Thurs. nights —March 24, 2011, until May 19, 2011**

**6:00 PM—8:00 PM**

**Cost: FREE**

**WINTER HAVEN HOSPITAL**

**Behavioral Health Division**

**GREEN ROOM**

**1201 First Street South**

**WINTER HAVEN, FL 33880**

**Contact :**

**Elizabeth Newton at: [enewton777@verizon.net](mailto:enewton777@verizon.net)**

**or the NAMI Polk office at 863-533-4411**

**or email: [namipolk@juno.com](mailto:namipolk@juno.com)**



**2011 FLORIDA PEER YOUTH CONFERENCE  
MAY 7–8, 2011  
ALTAMONTE SPRINGS, FLORIDA**

- ▶ FREE Backpack for all Registered Attendees
- ▶ Every Mom will get a special gift for Mother's Day
- ▶ Learn how to Advocate & learn your Rights
- ▶ Network with your Peers
- ▶ Panel Discussions
- ▶ Ask the Doctor
- ▶ Bowling
- ▶ Movie & Popcorn
- ▶ Pizza by the Pool

**PRIZES INCLUDE:**

- ⇒ 3-day pass to **Universal Studios**
- ⇒ 4-day pass to **Disney World**
- ⇒ Gift Cards
- ⇒ **Orlando Magic** T-Shirts & Basketballs
- ⇒ Nintendo Wii
- ⇒ Two-night Hotel Stay and more!!

For more information and to register, visit [www.floridapeernetwork.org/scc](http://www.floridapeernetwork.org/scc). Sponsorships are available, which cover hotel, registration and meals

**Peer to Peer is a FREE 10 week educational course for persons living with mental illness that focuses on recovery while establishing and maintaining wellness. Topics include: the biological basis of all major mental illnesses, coping strategies, relationships, and advocacy. Class participants also complete a Relapse Prevention Grid and Psychiatric Advance Directive.**

**Get Free Printed Material About Mental Health from SAMHSA**

SAMHSA has redesigned its home page to correspond to the Agency's [eight Strategic Initiatives](#) and has launched a new [publications store](#) that increases user's ability to access the behavioral health resources they need. [Explore the New SAMHSA.gov](#)

or Current Resident

National Alliance on Mental Illness—Polk County

Page 4



National Alliance on Mental Illness

# NAMI Polk County

Please enroll me as a member of NAMI

Fee includes membership to NAMI National, NAMI Florida and NAMI Polk and is valid for one year from enrollment date.

Membership fee enclosed:  \$50 Member (Family or Friend)  \$5 Consumer  \$75 Professional Membership

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

CITY \_\_\_\_\_ STATE \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE \_\_\_\_\_ E-MAIL \_\_\_\_\_

NAMI is a non-profit organization. Your tax deductible contributions help ensure the continuation of the vital services NAMI provides to the community. Gifts of all sizes are welcome !

Professional members will receive an additional membership form which requests detailed professional information.

**Please make checks payable to: NAMI Polk County, Inc. and mail to : NAMI Polk, 1090 US Hwy 17 South, Bartow, FL 33830-6026**