



MUSIC FOR MENTAL HEALTH

NAMI Far North welcomes Tami and Dave Gunter to the January 21, general meeting at 6p.m at the Bonner General Health Classroom. Their lively musical program will surely be a welcome pick up for our winter days. Feel free to bring a friend or two, there are plenty of chairs.

Tami and Dave Gunter, "Bridges Home", are dual lead vocalists, multi-instrumentalists and purveyors of tasty Americana, Celtic, Roots and Originals.

Their music sparkles with richly textured vocal harmonies, accompanied by guitar, tenor ukulele, clawhammer-style banjo, octave mandolin, Celtic harp, Irish Whistle, bodhran, stomp box and resonator guitar.

Their concerts feature an engaging blend of musical styles, from high-energy Celtic to low-down Delta Blues, served up with classic singer-songwriter rock, stirring American folk melodies, hauntingly beautiful ballads, original songs and finely crafted instrumental duets. See their website:

www.bridgeshomemusic.com

CO-OCCURRING MENTAL ILLNESS AND ADDICTION DISORDERS

Victoria Purviance, LCPC -DE Adult Behavioral Health, Region I Region I Clinician, will present a program on co-occurring disorders at the NAMI Far North general meeting on February 18 at 6p.m. at Bonner General Health.

Victoria has a nursing degree with two years' experience in psychiatric nursing. She has managed medical offices, been a foster parent for troubled adolescents, and has practiced nursing in developing countries. She has a Bachelor of Science in Psychology and a Master's degree in Counseling with seven years counseling experience in the treatment of co-occurring disorders. She has taught education classes about

the addictive process. She is currently a Licensed Clinical Professional Counselor and designated examiner for the State of Idaho and is currently employed as an adult mental health clinician in the Ponderay office. She is personally aware of the devastating effects of co-occurring illness on families having spent the last six (6) years as the guardian of a child with Fetal Alcohol Effects and Reactive Attachment Disorders.

YOU ARE NOT ALONE: Family-to-Family Class Provides Education, Support and Hope

NAMI Far North is pleased to announce the presentation of the next Family-to-Family course. It will be conducted on Mondays from 6-8:30p.m. at the Panhandle Health Building, 7402 Caribou St., Bonners Ferry from February 9 through April 27, 2015. Co-Teachers Gini Woodward and Candice Kelly welcome you to join the Family-to-Family community and will be happy to answer your questions. The class is free and limited in size, so it is important for you to register first to ensure availability of course material for you. Please call 208-267-5638 for additional information.

Family-to-Family is an educational course for family members over the age of 18, caregivers and friends of individuals living with mental illness. It provides critical information and strategies related to caregiving, preparedness and emotional resiliency, taught by trained family members who facilitate presentations, opportunities for discussion and skill-training workshops in a series of 12 sessions of 2.5 hours each.

The curriculum of Family-to-Family incorporates up-to-date information about a range of mental illnesses, including co-occurring mental illnesses and substance use disorders, the impact of mental illness on the brain and current research on treatment, medications, and side effects. There is no cost to participants, each of whom will receive a 3-ring binder containing all course material, plus a certificate of completion at the end of the course.

Course material becomes a toolkit of information and a primer in developing

skills to help you manage mental health crises, solve problems and communicate effectively. It will also assist in the development of self-care strategies and in locating appropriate local support and services for yourself and your loved one living with mental illness.

As a participant in Family-to-Family, you will gain comfort in knowing you are not alone. Mental illness is a disease like any other, and as such is treatable. There is hope for families and individuals that recovery is possible. Family-to-Family will give you an opportunity to receive compassion and reinforcement from others who relate to your experience, and to experience the encouragement that comes from mutual support while having a positive impact on others.

NAMI Far North has presented Family-to-Family in Sandpoint and/or Bonners Ferry since 2008 as part of its mission to improve the lives of individuals living with mental illness, their family members and friends. The feedback from these courses has been consistently positive, with participants telling us that what they learned during the course and the support and camaraderie they experienced gave them not only renewed hope, but also skills that strengthened their ability to provide care for their loved ones.

A reflection of the effectiveness of Family-to-Family in reducing the burden family members and friends experience as a result of the mental illness of a loved one is that it was designated as an Evidence Based Practice in 2013 in the National Registry of Evidence-based Programs and Practices (NREPP) by The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. SAMHSA is the agency within the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services that leads public health efforts to advance the behavioral health of the nation.

NAMI Far North is the affiliate of the National Alliance on Mental Illness serving Boundary County and Bonner County since 2007 with the mission of improving the lives of individuals living with mental illness. In addition to Family-to-Family, NAMI Far North provides monthly (except December) education and support meetings for everyone, including facilitated support groups for family members (in Sandpoint

and Bonners Ferry), twice-monthly NAMI Connection support groups for individuals living with mental illness, In Our Own Voice (IOOV) presentations by individuals living with mental illness who speak of their illness, diagnosis, treatment, recovery and hope, and speakers for other community forums. NAMI Far North also supports Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) training for law enforcement, maintains a Facebook page and web site and distributes a printed and electronic bi-monthly newsletter. Monthly meetings are on the third Wednesday, in the classroom of Bonner General Hospital from 6 till 8:30 p.m. For further information, contact www.namifarnorth@yahoo.com or 208-597-2047.

Ruth J. McKnight, J.D.
Member, Board of Directors
NAMI Far North

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

NAMI Far North is a safe place where people understand.

Your story is important to me. When I hear how you and others are relentlessly pursuing hope and help through unselfish dedication and determination to rise above the daunting challenges associated with brain disorders, I am inspired to work harder to make a difference in people's lives.

I can relate to the person(s) who come to NAMI Far North family support group who were painfully fragile and confused about a loved one's behaviors. Many of these people, over time, finally got an accurate diagnosis, a decent treatment plan, and successfully navigated the new terrain.

I've been very encouraged in 2014 to see the significant improvement in our members' lives and my own through the practice of mindfulness, which has no bad side effects that I can see. It comes more easily with time, practice, patience and a whole lot of self-forgiveness. The other day I decided to mindfully eat an ordinary lunch of canned chili, saltines and an apple. It turned into a glorious feast. Not only did I more fully appreciate the flavors but also heightened my senses to the sounds around me (no, I wasn't drug enhanced). Having calmed my brain with this mindfulness practice, I was able to move forward and be more productive for the rest of the day.

A friend of mine said, "Mindfulness helps manage stress. Stress initially triggers the mania of wanting to do everything and not being happy unless I get all the tasks completed. Unhappiness

with my own performance then triggers depression, which makes me feel as if I should just give up doing anything."

One universal predictor of success in coping with stress, transformation, and recovery from illness, is the support from family, friends, and health care providers. We at NAMI Far North are here to be supportive. Please come to our family and consumer groups in 2015 and share your story. We may not be able to solve all problems, but we are there to listen and extend a supportive hand.

—Amber Snoddy, President
NAMI Far North

CONNECTION: Is Music Therapeutic for You?

Hi, my name is Jan Burt. I struggle with and am in recovery from manic-depression, O.C.D. (Obsessive Compulsive Disorder) and a Mixed Anxiety Disorder.

Music is extremely therapeutic to me. It goes down deep into my soul, makes me laugh, cry, dance, feel at peace, etc. There are a few songs that I heard during very bad times of my life and when I hear them now I am taken right back to the incident. It make me feel angry and a little depressed when I recall negative memories. If it is a song with a positive memory it brings happiness. I am sure you can all relate.

I remember when I got home from my first mental hospitalization in 1996. I was still in a very deep depression. Dan took me to church and during the music I heard a song and the words were talking about God's love. Tears started streaming down my face because I could not feel His love or the love of anyone in my life at that time. My depression blocked love for a time...

A few years back when I was driving I heard the song "Dance with my father" by Luther Vandross. It was all I could do to drive safely as the tears flowed while thinking about my dad, missing him since he had died and wishing I had spent more time with him or called or written more. I dare you to You Tube that song and see if you can listen to it without crying.

Songs like that encourage me to show love and encouragement to those I care about because I don't know how long they will be around and I don't want to live with regret after they are gone.

What songs bring tears to your eyes or make you happy or laugh or dance? Music with various instruments like guitars and drums make me want to dance. Music even helps me clean house faster.

Old traditional Christmas music makes me feel happy and loving to friends, family

and even strangers. Even if some of my Christmas memories were not good; the music drowns those memories out. It seemed like most of Sandpoint was happier during the Christmas season.

Different songs from different decades bring back lots of different feelings. I am 59 years old so when I hear songs from the 60's I am taken back to my childhood which was quite tumultuous at times. It is good to process all those memories so I can grow from them.

Romantic love songs bring out the love in me.

Not all music is therapeutic for me because I don't like all kinds of music.

Classical music puts me to sleep. Since I have sleep issues I can listen to it at night to put me to sleep.

If you have any questions, comments or ideas for a future article or just want to chat please call me at 208-263-7928 or email at dannjanburt1@gmail.com

—Jan Burt,
NAMI Far North Connection facilitator.



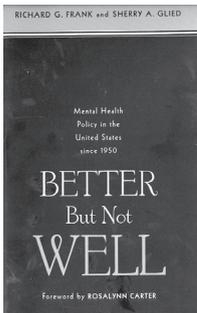
BOOK SHELF

Nellie Bly took an undercover journalist assignment to pretend to be insane to investigate reports of brutality and neglect at mental asylums. After a night of practicing deranged expressions in front of a mirror, she checked into a working-class boarding-house where she feigned insanity so well that everyone was convinced. She was then examined by several doctors, who all declared her to be insane, too.

Committed to an asylum, Bly experienced its dire conditions firsthand: horrible spoiled food; the patients mistreated and abused; unclean and unsanitary conditions. Furthermore, speaking with her fellow patients, Bly was convinced that some were as sane as she was. After ten days, Bly was released from the asylum with her editor's help and in 1887 she published her experience in book form as



Ten Days in a Mad-House. It caused a sensation and brought her lasting fame. More importantly, thanks to this book, living conditions for the insane were improved and funds for their care were



increased. In *Better But Not Well*, Richard G. Frank and Sherry A. Glied in 2006 examined the well-being of people with mental illness in the United States over the previous fifty years, addressing

issues such as economics, treatment, standards of living, rights, and stigma. Marshaling a range of new empirical evidence, they first argue that people with mental illness—severe and persistent disorders as well as less serious mental health conditions—are faring better today than in the past. Improvements have come about for unheralded and unexpected reasons. Rather than being a result of more effective mental health treatments, progress has come from the growth of private health insurance and of mainstream social programs—such as Medicaid, Supplemental Security Income, housing vouchers, and food stamps—and the development of new treatments that are easier for patients to tolerate and for physicians to manage.

The authors remind us that, despite the progress that has been made, this disadvantaged group remains worse off than most others in society. The “mainstreaming” of persons with mental illness has left a policy void, where governmental institutions responsible for meeting the needs of mental health patients lack resources and programmatic

authority. To fill this void, Frank and Glied suggest that institutional resources be applied systematically and routinely to examine and address how federal and state programs affect the well-being of people with mental illness.

Editor’s note: These two books reveal perspective snapshots regarding treatment for mental illness in 1887 and 2006. What is the snapshot of 2015 and beyond? Speak up. NAMI Far North has a lending library of books that may be checked out at monthly meetings. If your bookshelf is overflowing we gladly accept book donations which are relevant and up to date.

From **Thomas Insel, NIMH director** on January 12, 2015 in part...“What caused this to happen?” is usually one of the first questions asked by patients and their families following a psychotic episode, suicide attempt, or manifestation of any serious mental illness. Modern scientists and clinicians point to a mix of genetic and environmental factors but these explanations are rarely satisfying and do little to stem the tide of guilt, shame, and blame that surrounds mental illness.

This information may be useful in populations, but it is of little help in explaining cause for any individual. Our minds seek explanations to reduce the mystery and pain of mental illness, but in truth, we are early in our search for understanding how, when, and where these disorders develop. Even for most forms of cancer, the data suggests the “cause” is “bad luck”.

What does this have to do with mental illness? The link starts early. In fact, between weeks 4 and 24 of gestation, the

human brain is generating 100,000 cell divisions every minute – arguably a faster rate of cell division than any other organ at any other time in the lifespan. Curiously, cancer is not an outcome except in rare cases, presumably because mutations hitting cell cycle genes are quickly suppressed. But could other mutations that influence excitability or connectivity or even survival be affected, leading to changes in brain architecture that years later emerge as psychopathology? A new NIMH program on somatic mutations will investigate this question as a potential cause of mental illness.

President Lincoln’s famous line that “a tendency to melancholy is a misfortune not a fault” comes to mind. “Bad luck” is not particularly satisfying as an explanation of cause, A new report for cancer serves as a useful reminder that we really know too little about “what caused this to happen” when someone we care about develops a mental illness. And the real cause may be something that is, unfortunately, out of our control.

For references and to read the entire article on the internet <http://nimh.nih.gov/about/director/2015/>

TAKE A SEAT AT THE TABLE

Please save the date June 17, 2015 for NAMI Far North’s fundraiser event. Enjoy a fun evening of food, silent auction and live auction of painted chairs, etc. donated by local artists and businesses. Yes, we need your donated chairs and artists to decorate them. Contact Amber Snoddy or Lynn Pietz for more information call 208-597-2047



BECOME A MEMBER OF



Far North

Membership in NAMI Far North entitles you to membership in NAMI and NAMI Idaho. You will receive the NAMI Advocate magazine as well as the NAMI Far North Advocate newsletter.

Name _____
 Address _____
 City, State, Zip _____
 Phone _____
 Email _____

Optional Information:

I AM A: _____ CONSUMER _____ FAMILY MEMBER _____ FRIEND
 _____ MENTAL HEALTH PROFESSIONAL _____ OTHER

Directory:

The NAMI Far North membership directory is intended to facilitate communication and support among NAMI Far North members. It will only be distributed to NAMI Far North members who are current in their dues and who have consented to have their names and contact information published in the directory. It will not be distributed to anyone else for any purpose.

Would you like to be listed in our directory? _____ YES _____ NO

Make checks payable to NAMI Far North and send to:

NAMI Far North • P.O. Box 2415 • Sandpoint, ID 83864

You may also give your application and check to a NAMI Far North board member at a monthly meeting.

MEMBERSHIP TYPES (check one)

- INDIVIDUAL / FAMILY MEMBERSHIP (\$35.00 annual fee)
- PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIP (\$35.00 annual fee)
- OPEN DOOR MEMBERSHIP (\$3.00 annual fee)
(full annual membership for individuals and families on limited income)
- SCHOLARSHIP MEMBERSHIP (full annual membership is paid by anonymous donor for individuals and families unable to afford the Open Door Membership)
- I want to make a tax-deductible donation to NAMI Far North

NAMI FAR NORTH 2014 CALENDAR

<p>JANUARY 2015</p> <p>1/21 Regular Monthly Meeting Bonner General Hosp. Classroom 6 pm: Tami & Dave Gunter, Music! 7-8:30 Family Support 7-8:30 NAMI Connection</p> <p>1/26 Bonners Ferry Family Support Panhandle Health District 6-8:30 pm</p> <p>FEBRUARY 2015</p> <p>2/4 NAMI Connection Sandpoint Gardenia Center 11:30 Lunch 12-1:30 Support Group</p>	<p>2/18 Regular Monthly Meeting Bonner General Hosp. Classroom 6 pm: Victoria Purviance, Co-occurring Disorders 7-8:30 Family Support 7-8:30 NAMI Connection</p> <p>2/9, 16, 23 Family to Family Bonners Ferry Panhandle Health District 6-8:30 pm</p> <p>MARCH 2015</p> <p>3/4 NAMI Connection Sandpoint Gardenia Center 11:30 Lunch 12-1:30 Support Group</p>	<p>3/18 Regular Monthly Meeting Bonner General Hosp. Classroom 6 pm: to be announced 7-8:30 Family Support 7-8:30 NAMI Connection</p> <p>3/2, 9, 16, 23, 30 Family to Family Bonners Ferry Panhandle Health District 6-8:30 pm</p> <div style="border: 2px solid black; padding: 5px; text-align: center;"> <p>YOUR MEMBERSHIP IS VITAL TO THIS GRASSROOTS ORGANIZATION</p> <p>Send your completed application (page 3 of this Newsletter) and membership dues of \$35 (Open Door membership: \$3) to NAMI Far North, P.O. Box 2415, Sandpoint, ID 83864."</p> </div>
--	---	--



PO Box 2415 • Sandpoint, ID 83864
email: namifarnorth@yahoo.com
Website: www.nami.org/sites/namifarnorth
(208) 597-2047

Gini Woodward, Editor
Donna Brosh, Graphics

If you do not wish to continue receiving this newsletter, please email namifarnorth@yahoo.com

NAMI Far North meets the third Wednesday of every month from 6:00 to 8:00 p.m. at the Bonner General Hospital Classroom.



For more information about NAMI, please go to www.nami.org

Find help. Find hope.

P.O. Box 2415
Sandpoint, ID 83864

