



### Housing and Companion Animals- Know your rights

As many of us know, companion animals make a huge difference in the quality of life of individuals living with mental illness. People often confuse service animals with companion animals. Under the American with Disabilities Act, a service animal is defined as a dog or miniature horse that performs a task. An example of what is considered a task would be a dog who lets their owner know that they are about to have a seizure, a dog that lets their owner with diabetes know when their blood sugar is too high, or a dog who supports a vet with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder.

Many individuals living with mental illness have what are considered emotional support or companion animal. These animals provide a valuable support to their owners through their very presence in their lives. They are often help a person living with depression, anxiety, and many other disorders. Because they do not perform a specific task such as those listed above, they are not covered under the Americans with Disabilities Act. For housing purposes, they are covered under the Fair Housing Act.

#### **Under the Fair Housing Act, you have certain rights and responsibilities regarding your companion animal. They include:**

##### ***Your Rights for a companion animal as a reasonable accommodation:***

exemption from breed, weight and no pet restrictions; you cannot be charged a pet deposit or pet rent; and you do not have to disclose why you have the companion animal.

***Your Responsibilities:*** you must have your animal under your control at all times; you may be asked for a verification of your disability (not the specific disability) as a reasonable accommodation (examples of verification include a letter from a third party who is in a position to know about the individual's disability such as SSI/SSDI, a doctor or medical professional, a peer support group or a non-medical agency); and you are responsible for any damage that the animal causes while you live at that residence, even though you did not have to pay a deposit.

Whether you are looking for housing, advocating for yourself or your loved one, or have been living in your housing for years, it is important to know your rights. It also important to cite the correct act when asking for a reasonable accommodation of a companion animal.

For more information about your rights please contact

**Silver State Fair Housing Council toll free at 1 (888) 585-0990.**



## Unmasked Gala Volunteer Party

Join us on Sunday, October 8, 2017 for a fun afternoon of volunteering, food and music! As we make final preparations in October for our 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Unmasked Gala, we are hosting an event for volunteers and community members to show their creative side by helping us to prepare for the event.

The event is from 11am to 3pm at the Carson Sheriff's Office at 911 E Musser Street, Carson City NV 89701.



### Fall NAMI Basics for our Western Counties

NAMI Basics is a 15 hour, free and confidential six session course for parents and caregivers of children and adolescents who live with mental health challenges.. NAMI WNV will offer three different forms of our NAMI Basics course this fall in Carson and Douglas Counties:

- NAMI Bases y Fundamentos** (Basics in Spanish) will be taught in Gardnerville.
- NAMI Basics for Professionals** will be taught to the Washoe Tribe.
- NAMI Basics** (English) will be offered in Carson City.

Call our affiliate line for information on English courses: 775 440-1626  
Para informacion en espanol: 775 230-5268



## **NAMI Trainers on the Move!**

**With financial assistance from the Rural Children’s Mental Health Consortium, the Nevada Governor’s Council on Developmental Disabilities, and a private donor, NAMI WNV was able to send three candidates to Arlington, VA for our April NAMI Train the Trainer event. NAMI WNV candidates were certified to train for two programs critical to our deep rural outreach: NAMI Basics and NAMI In Our Own Voice.**

**The first two NAMI Basics trainers in NV are from NAMI WNV! Laura O’Neill and Linda Porzig will offer Basics teacher trainings in Elko in September. They will offer a second training in Las Vegas in the fall, where they will also train teaching teams from Pahrump and Mesquite.**

**Evelia Duncan was certified to train presenters for NAMI In Our Own Voice. Evelia will join veteran IOOV trainer, Mark Burchell, from NAMI NNV to offer an IOOV presenter training in Elko in September.**

**In September our NAMI Family-to-Family trainers will train a group of volunteer Family-to-Family teachers from NE NV in Elko. NAMI WNV frontier counties are coming alive with mental health education and advocacy.**



## **NAMI WNV Connection Hubs**

As our NAMI Connection program expands throughout the rurals, we want to make sure our dedicated volunteers have support in running and maintaining these valuable support groups. After speaking to several facilitators, we are putting their feedback into practice with the development of NAMI Connection Hubs. Our first step was to develop a NAMI Connection Facebook Group for our affiliate that allows them to get support from other facilitators in our affiliate. We are working to fully set up the Hubs and will have more information coming out to NAMI Connection Facilitators in the coming weeks.

# SUICIDE: Top 5 Myths & Reducing the Risk

## Top 5 Suicide Myths

### MYTH

“People who suicide are weak or cowards.”

### FACT

The person who is considering suicide is suffering immensely, which takes great strength to bear. Suicide is not an 'easy way out', physically or emotionally.

### MYTH

“People who suicide are brave and honourable.”

### FACT

While some cultures do consider suicide an honourable act in certain situations, we also must be careful not to glamourise or glorify suicide. For that reason there are strict regulations about how suicide should be reported in the media.

### MYTH

“People who suicide are all mentally unwell.”

### FACT

90% of people who suicide are found to have a mental illness, but 10% do not. Some of those people may not have a mental illness, but perhaps did have a sudden loss (job, finances, relationship, loved one). Others may have come to the decision to take their life after much consideration of their circumstances.

### MYTH

“People who suicide are selfish.”

### FACT

Usually when people think this, it is because they are focussing on the feelings of the friends and family left behind. What we know is that the person thinking about suicide is in such a degree of suffering that they consider the pain of living to be worse than the pain caused to friends and family. In many cases the person feels like a burden to others and thinks 'they'll be better off without me'. Suicide is not a selfish act.

### MYTH

“People who suicide want to die.”

### FACT

The majority of people who have attempted suicide, say that they did not want to die. But they did not want to continue living with the suffering they were in. Most people also state they are glad they did not die.

## President's Message

### 2017 Legislative Session

One of my personal heroes is Eleanor Roosevelt, who once said, "A woman is like a tea bag – you can't tell how strong she is until you put her in hot water." With just the substitution of NAMI for the female references, we have now described the performance of NAMI – northern, southern, western, and state board – as a team – during the 2017 legislative session.

Led by Robin Reedy as our Advocacy Committee chair and myself as our registered lobbyist, together our team fought proposed budget cuts and poorly structured peer legislation, and supported improvements to legal definitions and various services. Our presence, in bright blue NAMI t-shirts, and our informed and passionate voices were recognized and heard. Many thanks to those of you who participated through attendance, testimony, phone calls, and emails. Bills that we followed included: SB192, SB177, SB50, SB27, AB440, AB366, AB194, and AB46. You can learn about them by visiting <https://www.leg.state.nv.us/App/NELIS/REL/79th2017/Bills>

### Welcome Laura O'Neill

**Now, here's some great news!** Thanks to the financial support of sponsors, gala ticket-purchasers, and members (and to the fact that we on the board are skinflints), and to the support of Kathy Bartosz and Partnership Carson City, last month we made the momentous decision to hire our first staff member – Laura O'Neill. Laura and her family have recently moved to northern Nevada; she comes to us from being professional staff for the NAMI Washington county in Oregon. A peer herself, she knows the value of education and support on the journey of mental illness. Laura's experience and insights are invaluable as we grow our capacity for education, advocacy, and support in the rural and frontier counties. Please join me in welcoming Laura O'Neill.





## **NAMI Family-to-Family Extravaganza for HCC**

NAMI WNV will offer our popular Family-to-Family in both English and Spanish in Lyon County over six Saturdays in September and October. Family-to-Family is a twelve session, free and confidential course for family members and partners of adult individuals who live with mental illness.

**Call our affiliate line for information on the English courses: 775 440-1626.**

**Para informacion en espanol: 775 230-5268**



## **Western Nevada**

*Presents the 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual*

# **UNMASKED**

## **Masquerade Ball**

**With performance by author and comedian Dave Mowry**

**Thursday October 12, 2017**

**The Governor's Mansion, Carson City**

**Cocktail Reception 5pm**

**Dinner Served 6pm**