



ADVANTAGE

Support Groups...

During the COVID-19 pandemic, you should contact the person listed for each group below to ask whether the group is holding in-person meetings, virtual meetings or whether meetings have been temporarily suspended.

Depending on the virus, changes can occur at any time.

Mood Disorders Group for Women Only — Archbold. The group meets twice a month — the 2nd Tuesday at 6:30 p.m. and the fourth Tuesday at 11 a.m. at the ADAMhs Board office on State Route 66 south of Archbold, T-761 SR 66. Contact: Connie at 419-789-3646 or Jammie at 419/770-9488.

NAMI Four County. For family members and friends of persons with a mental illness. Meets both in-person and virtually the 1st Tuesday each month at 7 p.m. at the ADAMhs Board office. Contact: Lou at 419-393-2515.

Survivors After Suicide. For anyone 15 or older who has lost a loved one to suicide. Meets the first Thursday of the month at 7 p.m. at the Four County ADAMhs Board, T-761 SR 66, Archbold. For more information, contact Amanda Waldfogel, LSW, at 419-419-4767 or awaldfogel@arenewedmindservices.org.

NAMI's heroes....

NAMI would like to thank all of the staff who work at agencies in Defiance, Fulton, Henry and Williams counties that serve persons living with a mental illness and their families for their dedicated service during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The trying times of staying at home, keeping social distance, wearing a mask and more have certainly changed the way that they have done their jobs, but it hasn't changed their commitment to helping individuals and families who continue to need their help and support.

NAMI Ohio recently printed hundreds of these signs (right photo) for agencies all across the state. The signs read: *Those living with mental illness and their families consider the people working here our HEROES. Thank-you!!!*

Please see **NAMI heroes** on Page 8

Will it last beyond the coronavirus?

Telehealth emerges from COVID-19 concerns about social distancing

A truly major crisis causes change of necessity whether the change is wanted or not.

Almost overnight the coronavirus crisis brought routine face to face appointments with behavioral health professionals to an end. But within a matter of days those encounters were replaced with telehealth visits for nearly all therapy sessions and most case management.

“For the most part, we didn’t have a lot of choices,” explained Ruth Peck, CEO of Recovery Services of Northwest Ohio. “So, we transitioned to Zoom group meetings and it has worked fairly well.”

At Maumee Valley Guidance Center, Dawn Miller, the clinical director, said, “Some clients were resistant to trying telehealth at first for therapy, but once they tried it, they embraced it.”

Many clients at behavioral health agencies in the area were already accustomed to video telemedicine with their doctors and nurse

practitioners, but COVID-19 concerns expanded telehealth dramatically as clients were reluctant to visit offices for face to face appointments.

Eventually, about 90 percent of Maumee Valley’s outpatient therapy services were either done by televideo or telephonic appointments and about 75 percent of case management as well.

However, telehealth doesn’t work for all services. For example, A Renewed Mind Behavioral Health and Recovery Services both operate residential recovery programs. Also, many clients periodically need to have medication checks or lab work done that require going to the office.

Other clients, particularly those served by The Center for Child and Family Advocacy, need face to face appointments because they offer the privacy that might be missing if they live in an abusive situation or with a family member who is non-supportive of their seeking help.

Please see **Telehealth well-received** on Page 3



Heroes at the PATH Center in Defiance....From left: Kimberly Adkins, cook; Amy Herren, housing navigator; Susan Cheeseman, program manager; and Alicia Ricker, housing navigator. For pictures of staff at all seven Four County locations receiving the Heroes’ sign, please go to NAMI Four County’s website: www.namifourcounty.org.

Annual deaths from drugs, alcohol, suicide top 150,000 in U.S.

In 2018, the combined U.S. death toll caused by synthetic opioids, cocaine, other psychostimulants, alcohol and suicide totaled 151,964 and experts are concerned that “deaths of despair” may well increase in the wake of COVID-19.

The report from the Trust for America’s Health and the Well Being Trust suggested that an additional 75,000 Americans may die this year by suicide, drugs or alcohol due to the pandemic.

Specifically, in 2018 deaths related to alcohol (37,329) were up 4% from the year before. The only group that did not increase in 2017 was people aged 17 and younger. Their rate was the same.

Even though drug-induced deaths dropped in 2018 compared to 2017, there were sharp increases in deaths involving synthetic opioids (up 10%), cocaine (up 5%) and other psychostimulants such as meth, ecstasy and prescription simulants (up 22%).

Suicide rates in 2018 were highest among males (23.4 per 100,000), rural residents (19.7 per 100,000) whites (16.8 per 100,000) and Native Americans (14.1 per 100,000).

Benjamin F. Miller, PsyD., with Well Being Trust, said, “Quite simply, too many Americans are dying from preventable causes.”

New type of schizophrenia drug shows promise in early trials

A new first-in-class antipsychotic that has a completely different way of treating schizophrenia than currently available medications has shown long-term (6 months) efficacy and a good safety profile in patients.

Currently referred to as SEP-363856 (Sunovion Pharmaceuticals), it is described as a potential game changer for treating schizophrenia, according to data published online April 15 in *The New England Journal of Medicine*.

Perhaps the best news is that it did not appear to cause weight gain, affect blood lipids or cause any of the other side effects that are associated with current treatments. However, the drug is only in the early stages of testing and longer studies with more people need to be completed with the results replicated before it could even be considered for to FDA approval.

Concerning rates of suicidal thoughts in 9 and 10 year olds

Brace yourself for these facts as reported online March 11 in *Lancet Psychiatry*. About 8% of 9 and 10 year olds in the United States report having suicidal thoughts and 2 in every 100 report a suicide attempt.

The report was based on a nationally representative observational study of 7,994 children.

Though suicide is the second leading cause of death among children 14 and older, Sophia Frangou, M.D., PhD, and professor of psychiatry at the Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai in New York, said, “I think the rate of suicidality is (an) important finding because it is more frequent than anybody expected.”

She added, “Generally speaking, suicidality in children is relatively rare.”

How to develop a healthier brain

Participating in active leisure-time things such as gardening, walking and dancing is associated with a slowing of brain aging by

research updates...

four years, according to research that was to be presented at the April meeting of the American Academy of Neurology.

The findings were confirmed by neuroimaging of more than 1,500 participants. It showed that those who engaged in more physical activity had a larger brain volume — about 1.4 percent more.

So, rise and shine, put your walking shoes on, get out and enjoy the morning!

Baby aspirin may prevent some things, but not dementia

A large, randomized, five year study published online March 25 in *Neurology* found no benefit to a daily low dose aspirin if the only goal was to ward off dementia.

It was thought that aspirin’s anti-inflammatory properties could prevent or delay the onset of various types of dementia. More than 19,100 healthy adults between the ages of 65 and 98 were randomized to either receive the low dose aspirin or a placebo for just under five years. All were dementia-free when the study started. At the end: There was no difference between the two groups.

Suicide: Attempts more common and lethal; risk peaks at night

Two recent studies on suicide. The first was published online April 22 in *JAMA Psychiatry*. It found that between 2006 and 2015 US suicide attempts became more common and lethal in certain subgroups of the population.

Specifically, suicide acts increased in females, teens, and adults 65 to 74 years old.

Overall, suicidal acts increased 10% during the study period and the fatality rate increased by 13%.

The researchers urge prevention approaches, including: teaching coping and problem-solving skills early in life, promoting connectedness, and developing policies that strengthen economic supports to mitigate suicidal behavior for all groups.

The other study published in the March/April issue of the *Journal of Clinical Psychiatry* found the risk for suicide is higher at night than any other time of the day.

The risk of dying by suicide between midnight and 6 a.m. was roughly three times higher than at other time of the day. Why is that?

The investigators suggest that social and family supports are minimized if you are awake and everyone you know is asleep. The person is isolated since no one is there to stop the person planning suicide.

Lead author Andrew Tubbs said, “It is clearly dangerous to be awake when reason sleeps.”

Tests can spot Alzheimer’s, but no treatment

Various cognitive tests and biomarkers are able to identify some patients with Alzheimers dementia, but there isn’t much in the way of effective treatments to provide symptom relief.

Please see *Alzheimers* on Page 3

If you need to contact
The Advantage, please
email
Lou Levy, the editor,
at ...
louandrene@artelco.net
or call — 419/393-2515.

Alzheimer's treatment

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Dr. David Bennett of Rush University in Chicago authored an editorial on the research. He noted that the screening tests, while somewhat effective, are not able to make the identification of Alzheimers dementia early enough in the illness when the treatments might be more effective.

research updates...

They suggest three steps be taken to prepare for the coming mental health crisis.

First: Plan for the inevitability of loneliness as communities socially distance. Use digital technologies to lessen the impact of social distancing.

Second: Have plans in place to watch for, report and intervene, especially when it comes to domestic violence and child abuse.

Finally: Bolster the mental health system by training non-traditional groups to provide psychological first aid and helping teach the public to check in with one another and provide support.

Lower blood pressure & cognition

An online study published May 19 in the *Journal of the American Medical Association* suggests that lowering blood pressure with medication is linked to a significant reduction in the risk of dementia or cognitive impairment.

Some 14 studies that each involved at least 1,000 persons and continued for at least a year were reviewed. Lowered blood pressure was associated with a seven percent reduction in cognitive impairment. Some 96,000 people participated in the 14 studies.

COVID-19 and mental illness

Some public health experts are already saying that while social distancing may slow the spread of the coronavirus, the virus has already done short and long-term damage to public mental health.

In an online April 10 *JAMA Internal Medicine* article, they referred to mental health as the next pandemic. The authors say that the COVID-19 pandemic will likely result in substantial increases in anxiety and depression, substance use, loneliness and domestic violence and possibly even child abuse as schools have closed.

Psychiatry should prepare for COVID-19 aftermath

Dr. Joshua Morganstein, president of the American Psychiatric Association, recently told colleagues, "If history is any predictor, we should expect a significant tail of mental health needs that extend for a considerable period of time."

He explained that protracted fear and uncertainty, elements of isolation, anger, misinformation, and faltering confidence in government and institutions may alter perceptions of risk. And, ultimately, it's the perception of risk, not the actual risk, that will determine how people behave.

Dr. Morganstein added that in times of crisis, it's helpful to keep in mind and act upon the five essential elements of "psychological first aid" — safety, calming, self and community efficacy, social connectedness, and hope/optimism.

Telehealth well-received by clients and staff as an alternative for face-to-face appointments

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Beth Gerken, the executive director at The Center, explained victims of family violence – both children and adults – need a safe place to talk. "With telehealth, they may be literally within earshot of their abuser (at home)."

And, for some clients with anxiety issues, in-person appointments are preferred.

"Our services aren't one size fits all," Peck explained. "Our services are client-driven, so if someone wants to come into the office, that's what we do."

Fewer cancellations

However, agencies report that there have been fewer cancellations since using telehealth during the coronavirus crisis.

Connie Planson, the CEO at Maumee Valley, explained that telehealth has removed some barriers for clients and made it easier to access services – particularly in rural areas.

Transportation is no longer an issue for clients who don't have a car. Likewise, when the client can have an appointment

from their home, finding reliable childcare is no longer a concern.

In fact, Planson said one of the agency's therapists was working with a pregnant client who was very resistant to Zoom therapy sessions and wanted to continue in-person sessions.

"However, as the client opened up to the Zoom sessions, it allowed the therapist to see a new perspective on the client in her environment and how she interacted with her children," she said. "Consequently, Zoom allowed us to work on parenting and co-parenting skills with her children's father, preparing the children for the new baby."

After a few sessions, she was

comfortable and didn't have to arrange childcare to keep an office appointment.

Technology challenges

However, there have been some technology challenges with the expanded telehealth usage from clients' homes.

Agencies report uneven dependable broadband coverage across all four counties.

"Sometimes the service to the Hicksville, Pioneer and Montpelier areas is spotty and other times the service is fine," Planson reported.

It's an issue that Matt Rizzo, the CEO of A Renewed Mind, said has been brought to the attention of Congressman Latta.

"If we can solidify (broadband) connectivity and provide telehealth equipment (such as laptops or tablets) that allow teleconferencing with video, this will help telehealth's effectiveness, efficiency and consequently longevity," Rizzo continued.

Please see **Medicaid change needed** on Page 4



Connie Planson
CEO & president of
Maumee Valley Guidance
Center

Telehealth is on the rise

Amid COVID-19 restrictions and concerns about social distancing and minimizing face to face encounters as much as possible, telehealth has become increasingly popular and accepted by both providers and patients.

A recent NAMI Ohio news release noted an exponential increase in the use of telehealth by some of the state’s largest providers.

For example, Akron Children’s Hospital did about 100 telehealth sessions with patients in all of 2019, but after the coronavirus hit this year, they did 1,700 screens in April alone.

Nationwide Children’s Hospital in Columbus had 36,000 behavioral health appointments in just two months this year.

And, a recent Ohio Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services provider survey found that telehealth appointments have resulted in an increased level of engagement in services and a higher rate of patients keeping appointments.

So, a well-received change in how patient appointments occur seems like it might be a change that will remain an option long after the coronavirus pandemic has ended. Right? Well, not so fast.

The nearly overnight switch to telehealth for most patients happened because of the pandemic; however, it was made possible by a temporary change in healthcare reimbursement policy. In other words, without the change in Medicaid reimbursement policy that had to be approved at both the state and federal levels providers would not have been able

Medicaid change needed for telehealth

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During the coronavirus crisis, state and federal Medicaid rules were temporarily changed so clients who don’t own and cannot afford tablets and smart phones that allow video conferencing could use their telephone to do telephonic appointments from home.

However, once Ohio’s coronavirus-related state of emergency is lifted by the governor, this temporary rule change will end. As it ends, the telephonic appointments that have made many behavioral health services easier to access will also end since Medicaid will no

But it may be ending soon for some....

to get paid for telephonic appointments. (Appointments using the telephone without any video.)

When Ohio Governor Mike DeWine lifts the coronavirus state of emergency as he eventually will, the approved temporary change in reimbursement policy (or Medicaid waiver) will end. And when it does, that option for patients will also end since providers will no longer be paid for providing telephonic appointments.



Terry Russell
executive director
NAMI Ohio

Supporting the change

Lori Criss, the director of the Ohio Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services, feels the waiver needs to be made permanent – something that would require both state and federal Medicaid approval.

NAMI Ohio executive director Terry Russell agrees.

“(We) support anything that will expand access and provide mental health care to those who need it. We also understand that there are many individuals who still

longer pay for telehealth services that don’t include video.

For telephonic telemedicine to continue, the Medicaid waiver that was approved quickly as an early response to COVID-19 will have to be made permanent.

At Maumee Valley, Miller reports, “Clients have seen a benefit in how services can easily fit into their life. Compliance with treatment has never been higher and we are able to keep clients engaged who previously would have dropped out of treatment due to barriers in their lives. More people are now getting help.”

need to be seen in-person by providers and that telehealth must be used as an expansion of rather than a replacement of these critical services,” he said.

He added that NAMI Ohio has advocated with the Ohio Department of Medicaid that the waiver be extended “so that services will continue to be accessible to all.”

Russell and NAMI Ohio encourage everyone to advocate for the waiver to be extended.

“Members, friends and clients can contact their legislators and local mental health leaders to share their experiences and talk about the impact telehealth has had on their treatment,” Russell said.

Who to contact, what to say

The four county area is represented by three different state representatives and two different state senators. If you are not sure who your state representative and state senator are, go to this website: www.legislature.ohio.gov and enter your home address under the heading: *Who represents me?* It will automatically give you the names and contact information of your state representative and state senator.

The basic message: *The Medicaid waiver that allows reimbursement for telephonic telemedicine has worked well during the COVID-19 crisis. It has increased access to mental health services by removing barriers such as the need for transportation to appointments and should be made permanent.*

STABLE program....

Continued from Page 7

Once the STABLE account is created by the qualifying person with the disability or a parent, legal guardian or designated power of attorney, there are several saving and investment options to choose from, including an FDIC-insured savings account. The four investment options are offered through a company called Vanguard. And, as with any investment, the value of the money placed in the investment can gain or lose value. However, earnings are tax-free.

Fees are charged for STABLE accounts. Ohio residents are charged a \$2.50 monthly fee and Vanguard charges an annual asset-based fee that ranges from 0.19 percent to 0.33 percent.

For more information on STABLE accounts, go to: www.stableaccount.com.

ADAMhs Board revenue for new fiscal year uncertain due to impact of coronavirus

The start of the new fiscal year is less than two weeks away; however, the Four County ADAMhs Board is still unsure about how much state funding and local property tax revenue it will receive because of the impact of the coronavirus on state revenue and second half property tax payments.

Local property taxes account for 55% of the board's budget and state funding is nearly 31%.

recently told board members.

Additionally, the number of families impacted by lay-offs and furloughs will likely result in more than the usual number of property tax delinquencies in July, he explained. That will reduce the board's property tax revenue later this summer when those distributions are

Rob Giesige, ADAMhs Board CEO, explained that for the first four months of the 2020 calendar year overall state revenue was some \$866 million below what had been estimated. The bulk of that shortfall was cut from the final two months of state funding to school districts, higher education and state agencies. Funding for direct behavioral health services was spared, he said.

However, state income, sales and use taxes will likely continue to come in below estimates for some time because of the economic impact of the coronavirus situation. "We will not know how that will impact our state funding for awhile," he

made.

State funding and local property taxes make up more than 85 percent of the ADAMhs board's annual revenue. Property taxes account for roughly \$4 million a year or 55 percent of the board's budget. State funding is about \$2.7 million a year or 31 percent, and federal funding (10 percent) accounts for the rest.

The ADAMhs Board has already approved nearly all of next year's service contracts totaling some \$6.25 million. It was noted when the contracts were approved that the board was doing so under the assumption that a similar level of state and local funding would be available.

Giesige has said that if state and local funding is significantly reduced, then the contracts will need to be adjusted to bring board spending in line with anticipated revenue.

It will likely be July or August until he has a clear picture of how board revenue will be impacted by the virus. And, depending on how long it takes the state's economy to recover, the uncertainty could linger even longer.

Suicide prevention grant

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this year.

The local Coalition was formed 10 years ago. Among the programs that it supports are community Mental Health First Aid trainings, the Four County LOSS team, Crisis Intervention Team trainings for law enforcement, the monthly survivors' support group, the Signs of Suicide program and more.

For additional information about the Coalition, please visit its website: <https://4countysuicideprevention.org>.

Suicide awareness bike ride to benefit NAMI, area vets

After spending much of spring at home because of the coronavirus restrictions, area motorcyclists have a reason to ride

on Saturday, July 11 and support suicide awareness as well as efforts to help veterans in need.



4th annual suicide awareness bike ride... Julie Deeds (left) and her son, Justin, lead last year's suicide awareness bike ride from the Wauseon VFW parking lot. This year's ride is scheduled for Saturday, July 11, and it will also leave from the Wauseon VFW parking lot with kickstands up at 11:30 a.m. Last year's event raised \$4,000 that was shared by NAMI Four County, Maumee Valley Guidance Center's veterans outreach program and the Keller Assists Veterans in Crisis (KOVIC) program.

Julie Deeds, her family and friends are hosting the 4th Annual Suicide Awareness Benefit Ride in memory of her husband Dennis Deeds.

Last year's ride raised \$4,000 that was split between NAMI Four County to support free community Mental Health First Aid trainings, Maumee Valley Guidance Center's veterans outreach program, and the KAVIC (Keller Assists Veterans in Crisis) program.

Registration for this year's ride starts at 9:30 a.m. on Saturday, July 11 at the Wauseon VFW Hall, 1133 N. Ottokee St. with kickstands up at 11:30 a.m. The cost is \$20 per rider and \$10 for passengers and non-riders.

A silent auction, raffle, door prizes and food are planned, pending any restrictions that might be required due to COVID-19.

Any last minute changes that may be required will be posted on the NAMI Four County website — www.namifourcounty.org.

Life experiences, faith point the way to an inspiring mission in rural northwest Ohio

Donna Robinson spent the first 10 years of her childhood growing up in a fairly typical family in Kansas.

However, the next 22 years of her life in northwest Ohio took a number of disturbing and difficult turns that provided the experiences and lessons that led to what has now become her passion – albeit in a place she would have never imagined.

A licensed addiction counselor in Recovery Services of Northwest Ohio’s Life Without Drugs program at the Juvenile Detention Center near Stryker, Donna also facilitates a weekly support group at Inspirations Point south of Archbold for teenagers and adults who are dealing with addiction and mental health issues as well as family problems and legal issues.

Earlier this year, she explained how her journey brought her to this point in her life with NAMI members and others.

Following her family’s move to Toledo when she was 10, her family broke apart. Eventually, her mother and siblings moved in with her mother’s boyfriend in central Toledo where she was abused and began skipping school regularly. At 16, she left her mother to live with her father, but as soon as she turned 18, she got a job and her own apartment.

A couple of years later, she got married. She and her husband had two sons together. However, within several years they both had addiction problems, including cocaine use. For her husband,

mental health problems also developed as attempts with rehab never seemed to work for him.

After 12 years of drug use and abuse, Donna said she was tired of it.

“I hadn’t really been religious before,” she explained, “but I kept hearing: ‘God has a better life for you if you just accept it.’” So, she quit the drugs and started college in 1992 when she was 32 years old -- earning an associate’s degree from the University of Toledo.

However, as 1994 was drawing to a close her husband’s mental health and addiction problems were rapidly getting worse, and he completed suicide. The next year, an aunt died and before summer was over her brother was killed in a traffic accident.

“In less than a year, I lost three people who were very important to me,” she recalled. “It was traumatic.”

But during all this, Donna got her first

job working in addictions at COMPASS in Toledo where she was involved with their detox and women’s program.

She was able to complete her bachelor’s degree in social work in 2003 at Lourdes College and turned an internship at Toledo Hospital into a full time job. Five years later, just as the Great Recession was starting, she took a new job with Connecting Point working with teenagers. However, the agency closed in 2009.

Two years later, her faith led her to a job

Please see *Experiences, faith* on Page 7

New men’s AA group meets Saturday evenings in Defiance

Weekly open discussion AA meetings for men are held every Saturday in Defiance from 7 to 8 p.m. at the Dream Center, located at 1935 E. Second St.

During the coronavirus social distancing restrictions the group met virtually using an online platform on the Zoom cloud. However, the group planned to resume face to face meetings in June.

However, for the most up-to-date information about the group, use this link — <https://xchurch.tv/small-groups/>. Then, look for “MBK Our Meeting.”

According to one of the leaders, about 30 men participate each week, including some who are part of A Renewed Mind’s residential program for men in Napoleon.

Group members are encouraged to participate in a once a month Dream Center community service event called First Saturday Serve. About 100 volunteers serve the community by dropping off meals, helping with landscaping, doing minor car repairs, and other things.

To find a complete, up-to-date listing of northwest Ohio AA meetings, please go to this website: www.toledoaa.com. For a similar listing of northwest Ohio NA meetings, please go to this website: <http://natoledo.com>.



Donna Robinson. During the day, Donna is a counselor for Recovery Services of Northwest Ohio’s Life Without Drugs program at the Juvenile Detention Center near Stryker. After hours, she operates Inspirations Point south of Archbold on State Route 66.

Mental Health Crisis Hotline

800-468-4357

For more information, check these websites:

The American Foundation for Suicide Prevention

<https://afsp.org/>

Four County Suicide Prevention Coalition

<http://4countysuicideprevention.org/>

Experiences, faith lead to Inspirations

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at the Juvenile Detention Center — one she said she really wasn't sure that she wanted.

"I didn't think I could do it or would even like it," she explained. "It was so far from Toledo and working with teens in a detention center.... But, I was wrong. I love it. God led me there for a reason."

After a couple of years at the Juvenile Detention Center, Donna explained the reason was becoming clearer.

Once the teens complete their time at the JDC, they leave with no local, on-going support...something like Alcoholics Anonymous provides for adults.

"I felt that was a missing piece," she said.

So, in 2014 Inspirations at Turning Point Church, located along State Route 66 south of Archbold at the corner of County Road V, began as a free support group for teenagers struggling with addictions, anxiety and depression, as well as legal and family issues. Eventually, adults asked if they could come and they are also welcome.

Four years later, Tommie Clair, the grandparent of a teenager who Donna had helped at the JDC, asked how he could help

as the support group was out-growing the room that they used in the church.

It just happened that a building next to the church was available, so Mr. Clair paid the rent for a little more than a year and purchased computers. The Inspirations Point office and meeting room became a reality."

"Most of our participants have depression or anxiety," Donna said. "They have some type of pain in their background."

Their weekly support group is faith-based; however, participants are encouraged to take medications and comply with recommendations from their doctor or other behavioral health professional.

The group meets every Wednesday evening at 7 p.m.

Additionally, outpatient counseling for teens and some adults is also provided.

So, what's next?

Donna said she would like to see a residential recovery center in the area for 13 to 19 year old males. "I'm just waiting for someone to provide the building."

Note: The telephone number of Inspirations Point is 567-454-7987.

Suicide prevention coalition gets \$5,500 grant

Earlier this year, the Four County Suicide Prevention Coalition received a \$5,500 grant from the Ohio Suicide Prevention Foundation to support a number of community conferences. However, due to the COVID-19 restrictions those conferences were canceled.

Still, the Coalition has found ways to continue many of its initiatives.

The LOSS (Local Outreach to Survivors of Suicide) team has responded several times since March when they have been asked to support families whose loved one completed suicide. Instead of sending a multi-person team to the location, during the pandemic a LOSS team family survivor member has

called the bereaved to offer support and understanding. The family is also mailed a packet explaining a variety of local resources that may be helpful for family members and friends of the deceased.

The monthly survivors of suicide support group has continued to meet virtually while groups of 10 or more are prohibited from meeting in person.

And, Tonie Long, the ADAMhs Board representative to the Coalition, reports that planning continues for a community readiness assessment on suicide prevention later

Please see **Suicide prevention grant** on Page 5

NAMI Four County meetings & programs

For the rest of 2020, NAMI Four County meetings will be offered in-person and virtually.

In-person attendance at the ADAMhs Board is limited to 10 persons to maintain social distancing, and pre-registration is required by calling Lou Levy at 419-393-2515. Face coverings are required for the in-person meetings and tables, door handles, etc. will be sanitized before the meeting.

Zoom cloud will be used to attend virtually. The meeting link will be posted for each meeting on our website in the "Meeting" section.

Decisions about the August picnic and December holiday party will be made at the June meeting and posted on the NAMI website.

NAMI Four County does not meet in July.

Tax-free saving, investing program for persons with disabilities

Qualified individuals with disabilities who want to save money and invest up to \$15,000 a year without losing needs-based benefits such as Medicaid or SSI may be able to take advantage of a program administered by the Ohio state treasurer's office.

The program, called STABLE (State Treasury Achieving A Better Life Experience), has been available to Ohio residents for nearly four years. It was established by an act of the U.S. Congress to allow persons who have a diagnosed disability that began before they were 26 to save more than the \$2,000 a year that was previously allowed before disability-related benefits were jeopardized.

Under the act, STABLE accounts can grow to a lifetime limit of \$482,000. Contributions to STABLE accounts can be made by family members, friends and other financial accounts.

However, the funds can only be used by the eligible recipient for certain types of expenditures. Allowed expenses include: basic living expenses, housing, transportation, assistive technology, employment training, education, health and wellness, financial management, and legal fees.

Please see **STABLE program** on Page 4

Health Partners of Western Ohio is accepting new patients at its health centers in Bryan and Defiance.

Patients will have access to primary care providers, behavioral health counselors, dental and chiropractic services, and the pharmacy team.

A full service dental clinic is at the Bryan office.

Services are provided on a sliding fee basis and most insurances, including Medicare and Medicaid, are accepted.

Call 567/239-4562 (Bryan) or 419/785-3827 (Defiance).

NAMI Four County thanks our heroes

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Locally, NAMI Four County placed the signs at seven locations; however, our heroes aren't just found at those locations.

They can be found at more than 35 locations throughout Defiance, Fulton, Henry and Williams counties where dedicated people continue to make sure that counseling and therapy, medications and lab work, housing and transportation, case management, and encouragement are provided even in these difficult times.

Time running out to get your NAMI meat raffle tickets

With the drawing to be held Wednesday, July 1, you still have some time to support NAMI Four County and possibly win a quarter of beef or a meat package from Jacob's Meats or Edgerton Meats.

But you need to act fast.

Tickets are \$10 each or 3 for \$20. To get tickets, call Nathen Henricks at 419-438-2626.

NAMI Four County 2020 Membership Form

Now is the time to join the nation's largest advocacy group for mental health.

(Note: Dues are for 12 months from the date of payment, not for the calendar year. So, dues paid now will not expire until this time next year.)

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

PHONE (daytime): _____ (evening) _____

E-MAIL ADDRESS: _____

Membership Levels: ___ \$60 family ___ \$40 individual ___ \$5 individual, limited income

Please mail your 2020 NAMI Four County dues to:

NAMI Four County, Lou Levy, membership, 14165 State Route 637, Paulding, Ohio 45879.

Check out NAMI Four County's updated website.

www.namifourcounty.org

Photos, Links to Service Providers Serving the Area, Free Class Schedules, Support Group Meeting Times & Places, Information on Mental Health, and Links to Other NAMI and Mental Health Websites

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