

DBSA West Hill and Valley Newsletter: June, 2011

MARK YOUR CALENDAR FOR OUR Q2 EDUCATION MEETING: On **Sunday, June 5, at 3:00pm in the Red Oak Room**, Julie Stone, from the DuPage County People's Resource Center (PRC) will discuss their program that puts computers in the hands of people who need them, regardless of income. PRC's goal is to help eliminate the "digital divide" by helping people achieve mainstream wages and a career path -- long term solutions to escaping poverty. The PRC receives donated computers and provides computer classes in neighborhood training sites. Qualified individuals who complete the training receive a computer from the PRC.

OUR ANNUAL PICNIC IS COMING! Our picnic will be held on **Sunday, July 17th at Seven Gables Park in Wheaton, from 12pm to 5pm**. This is a very nice event featuring sparkling conversation, great food, and all-around good fellowship. More information will follow soon.

MONTHLY BOARD OF DIRECTORS REPORT

Bank Account Balances

Checking Account Balance	\$1,259
Emergency Medical Fund:	\$5,139

Dues Paying Members

Individual	20
Family	18
Total Dues Paying Members	38

Newsletter Distribution

Email Recipients	277
Hardcopy Recipients	67
Total Recipients	344
Last Email Date	5/25/11
Last USPS Mailing Date	5/25/11

Last Board of Directors Mtg	5/15/11
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This month's article is [Making the Most of Your Medication Appointments](#). I found this on the website of the National Empowerment Center, an organization dedicated to empowering people who have been labeled with mental illness. I think it is a very good reference document to have, and I hope you like it. The author describes 5 Strategies to implement that can improve the quality of your med appointments:

Strategy #1 Learn to Think Differently about Yourself

You are an expert on yourself and your mental health issues. It is up to you to notice the effects of your medications and to discuss them with your psychiatrist. Be proactive and learn about your mental health issues and medications. Use the list of questions in this brochure to get clear about what information you need. Ask your psychiatrist any questions you may have about your medications. Consumers have the right to determine what risks they are willing to take and to question the efficacy of these medications over the long term. It takes more than the right medication to get well and stay well, but medications can alleviate enough of the symptoms to allow you to engage other coping strategies on your positive journey of recovery.

Strategy #2 Learn to Think Differently about Medication

Medications are a powerful tool to deal with the symptoms of mental illness, but they are not the only tools and they are not a cure. Exercise, eating well, avoiding alcohol and street drugs, friends, spirituality, art and nature are some other tools that consumers have found can be helpful. Taking medications is a personal choice. Knowledge of the medications you are taking can be very empowering. There are many sources of information including your psychiatrist, information sheets available from your pharmacist, drug-inserts provided by the pharmaceutical company, books available on the internet or at the library. Armed with knowledge about your medications, you can feel more confident in having a thoughtful and productive discussion with your psychiatrist.

Strategy #3 Think Differently about Psychiatrists

Due to rising health care costs, psychiatrists have less and less time to study charts and meet with their clients. Information that you can provide about your history and medications can be helpful. It is useful to keep your own record of the medications you have tried, for what symptoms, at what dosages, and for what period of time. When a new medication is discussed, you can easily check whether you have taken it before and with what results. Doctors aren't perfect and may sometimes be wrong. If you are in doubt about your care, discuss your concerns.

Strategy #4 Prepare to Meet with Your Psychiatrist

Since psychiatrist appointments are very short, it can be useful to make notes, in advance, of the concerns or questions you would like to discuss. The more specific you can be about your issues and/or symptoms the better. Track your experiences with your medications since your last appointment and summarize them before your meeting. Make an agenda for the meeting.

Strategy #5 Take Charge of the Meeting

At the beginning of the appointment, state your agenda. Take notes during the meeting, or immediately after the meeting, to remind yourself of the information the doctor gives you. If you wish, ask permission to tape record the meeting. Some psychiatrists may be uncomfortable with this request, but respectfully explaining your reasons for wanting a recording may eliminate the resistance. Another option is to bring a friend or support person since "two heads are better than one" when it comes to recalling information.

Please help DBSA West by becoming a dues-paying member.

DBSA is an all-volunteer organization dedicated to improving the lives of people living with mood disorders and their loved ones. Our primary focus is on providing support groups for persons dealing with depression and bipolar disorder and their friends and families.

We are constantly looking for ways to make people aware of our group, which means we spend money on postage, printing and distribution of our information. When you become a member of DBSA, your \$20 individual and \$30 family annual dues payments help us pay for the production and mailing costs of our newsletters and brochures. Please see the sign up form at the end of this newsletter.

Our Officers:

President: Bernadette Knudsen, beesnees1@sbcglobal.net

Vice President: Norma Wimunc, nwimunc25@earthlink.net

Treasurer: Mary Paganoni, marypaganoni@aol.com

Secretary: Bob Steinmetz, bob@steinmetzmail.com

Our Support Group Facilitators:

Sunday: Bernadette Knudsen, beesnees1@sbcglobal.net and Linda Dougherty

Sunday (young adult): Alex Steinmetz, alexsteinm@gmail.com

Wednesday: Norma Wimunc, nwimunc25@earthlink.net

Thursday: Bob Steinmetz, bob@steinmetzmail.com

Support groups meet at **Good Samaritan Hospital**, 3815 Highland Ave in Downers Grove. Here is our schedule for the next few weeks. Since schedules are subject to change, always refer to www.dbsawest.org for the most current information regarding room assignments.

DBSA West Support Group Meetings May-June, 2011

Day	Date	Time (pm)	Location	Group
Sun	5/15	1:00-3:00	Red Oak	Patient
Sun	5/15	1:00-3:00	Black Oak	16-25
Wed	5/18	7:00-9:00	White Oak	Patient
Thu	5/19	7:00-8:30	White Oak	Caregiver
Sun	5/22	1:00-3:00	Red Oak	Patient
Sun	5/22	1:00-3:00	Black Oak	16-25
Wed	5/25	7:00-9:00	White Oak	Patient
Thu	5/26	7:00-8:30	White Oak	Caregiver
Sun	5/29	1:00-3:00	Red Oak	Patient
Sun	5/29	1:00-3:00	Black Oak	16-25
Wed	6/1	7:00-9:00	White Oak	Patient
Thu	6/2	7:00-8:30	White Oak	Caregiver
Sun	6/5	1:00-3:00	Red Oak	Patient
Sun	6/5	1:00-3:00	Black Oak	16-25

Day	Date	Time (pm)	Location	Group
Wed	6/8	7:00-9:00	Birch	Patient
Thu	6/9	7:00-8:30	White Oak	Caregiver
Sun	6/12	1:00-3:00	Red Oak	Patient
Sun	6/12	1:00-3:00	Black Oak	16-25
Wed	6/15	7:00-9:00	White Oak	Patient
Thu	6/16	7:00-8:30	White Oak	Caregiver
Sun	6/19	1:00-3:00	Red Oak	Patient
Sun	6/19	1:00-3:00	Black Oak	16-25
Wed	6/22	7:00-9:00	White Oak	Patient
Thu	6/23	7:00-8:30	White Oak	Caregiver
Sun	6/26	1:00-3:00	Red Oak	Patient
Sun	6/26	1:00-3:00	Black Oak	16-25
Wed	6/29	7:00-9:00	White Oak	Patient
Thu	6/30	7:00-8:30	White Oak	Caregiver

DBSA West – Suburban Chicago

We've been there. We can help.

BECOME A DUES-PAYING MEMBER: Print this form and mail it with your check to the address below:

Your annual dues (\$20 for an individual and \$30 for a family) will help us in our mission to provide support, friendship, hope and information for individuals with depression or bipolar disorder and to their friends and families.

Type of membership: Family (\$30) Individual (\$20)

Type of newsletter: US Mail: Email

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____

Email Address: _____

Make checks payable to: DBSA West

Mail checks to: DBSA West
 PO Box 4646
 Naperville, IL 60567

Thank you for your generous support!