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Our New Hours:
Monday-Thursday
10:30 AM—3 PM

*NorthStar provides a
safe and welcoming
environment where
members
participate in a
peer-supported
community promoting
independence,
confidence, wellbeing,
and recovery.*

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THE COMPASS

NAMI NorthStar

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NorthStar Strategic Planning by Peter Katon

NorthStar held its first strategic planning meeting on June 24th in Southeast Portland, at a beautiful outdoor garden patio. The day kicked off with a boxed lunch catered by Noah's Bagels. Following lunch and brief introductions, NorthStar's program director Todd Steele summed up the purpose of the retreat that was attended by 12 members and four staff: "A strategic plan gives a group a focus, it's the hub that makes the program work."

The organizational planning model used at the retreat was influenced by Jim Collins' book "Good to Great," staff member Todd Steele shared with the group. This well known book analyzed factors that make businesses like GE and IBM thrive.



Continued on page 3

Oaks Bottom Wetlands Hike by Thalia Begun



Ever been to Oaks Bottom Wetlands? It's our very own wildlife and nature sanctuary right along the Willamette River across from the Ross Island Bridge. It's easy to live for years in the city of Portland without knowing how many hidden green-space gems we are lucky enough to have within the urban area.

On Friday, June 17th, an intrepid band of nine NorthStar members and staff communed with nature and got a good workout. This event marked a landmark first wellness program event for our young NorthStar program. Wellness is a focus of our program. People with mental health challenges die on average 25 years earlier than the general population; it's hard to say why. But there is no question that community, exercise, and a relaxing environment can work wonders on our health.

Four of our hike's participants had just purchased new hiking trail shoes from Next Adventure (through our health/wellness mini-grants) and were anxious to field test them.

Continued on page 2

Peer Support Specialist Training by Michele Moss



In early June, nine NorthStar members trained for a full week to become certified Peer Support Specialists (PSS). NorthStar staff member extraordinaire Thalia Begun initiated and organized this opportunity. The course was taught by instructors from Project ABLE, a consumer-run nonprofit in Salem. Thalia, who has recently completed the Peer Support Specialist training with Project ABLE in Salem, saw this as an important opportunity. "It's a wonderful time for peers," Begun said, "because the system is beginning to embrace the recovery model, and we see so much potential for our combined wisdom and advocacy to create positive change. We are also creating a strong peer community, which is invaluable."

Peer Support Specialists work alongside fellow individuals who deal with mental health challenges, and who have requested one-on-one peer support in their recovery. The Peer Support Specialist has wisdom, insight and strength gained from personal experience that can provide hope and guidance to others in recovery.

The Peer Support Specialist curriculum began with a historical overview of the treatment of people with mental illness, and was followed by a comparison of the medical model and the recovery model. The medical model is based upon a clinical perspective to stabilize those with mental illness. In contrast, the recovery model focuses on a broad, holistic view with emphasis on empowerment, hope, individualization, peer support, respect, responsibility, self-directedness and strengths-based strategies. These ideals make up the 10 principles of recovery. The course also examined issues of trauma, cultural awareness, stigma and discrimination against those with mental illness. Boundaries and issues of confidentiality were also explored. The course was intensive and provided a well-balanced framework and understanding of the essence and approach to peer support.

NorthStar member and Peer Support Specialist trainee Betty Davis said the training was "absolutely fabulous." Jason Ingram, another trainee, was pleased with his newly earned certification. Participant Ken Lynn offered "It was a thoroughly enjoyable experience with a group of new friends, and inspiring to know about some of the progressive changes in the recovery model."

The participants waited less than a week to learn that they had all successfully passed the certification exam. Thank you to Project ABLE for traveling to Portland to share their wisdom with us. Stay tuned for the future of Peer Support in Portland. This is only the beginning.

Oaks Bottom Hike, continued from page 1

Half of us started out on the north end of the refuge and walked through the wetlands to the Springwater Corridor. The other half walked from the south end—near the amusement park—and met up with the rest of the group. Todd, Michele, Andy and their group were excited to report a great blue heron sighting on their way up the corridor. The great blue heron is Portland's city bird.

The sun and fun did us well. After we became one larger group, we took a rest-and-refuel break near the refuge's tadpole pond. This area contains some wonderful shady grass circles with rock benches and interesting artistic obelisks. It was a wonderful setting for eating tasty trail mix and taking group pictures.



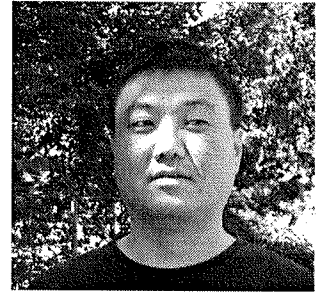
We were blessed with good weather. Unfortunately, the Cliffside Trail was closed due to a landslide and we were unable to go to the overlook and the heron pond—alas, more adventure for the future. Nonetheless, the day was declared a great success and we unanimously agreed to make hiking a regular event for NorthStar. We enthusiastically intend to gradually increase the duration and difficulty of our hikes, and, of course, to connect to the natural beauty within our urban backyard.

Member Spotlight: Andy Moon

By Thalia Begun

Andy Moon joined NorthStar in May of this year. As a volunteer for NAMI Multnomah, he heard about the clubhouse, but didn't know that it was right next door. He literally stumbled into NorthStar, and "was pulled in and given a lot of opportunities right from the beginning. A lot was going on." Andy finds it fulfilling to be involved in the clubhouse because he loves being part of a team, and finds it exciting to be a part of the development of something new and just beginning.

Andy grew up in Bloomfield Hills in Michigan. He came to Portland less than 5 years ago, because "I have always been fascinated by the west. I just didn't know that I would end up in the Northwest."



He likes Portland a lot. "I like all the different neighborhoods, especially Hawthorne. I like to ride my bike there." He also enjoys the beauty of the city. "Portland is pretty, with lots of green, and the rivers."

Andy is a volunteer with NAMI's In Our Own Voice Program. He speaks to the public about the trials and triumphs of his journey with mental health challenges. He brings his outgoing nature, his optimism, open-mindedness, and sense of humor to his work.

Andy enjoys helping people. He is looking forward to becoming a Certified Peer Support Specialist, and plans to take the next training in August. "I especially like working with people who are affected directly or indirectly by mental health challenges. I benefit because it is a therapeutic process personally, and it keeps me connected to deal with my own issues." He brings a message of hope to others. "I have dealt with what feels like having no way out. There are times when things keep repeating, and it seems impossible to break out of those cycles. I want to tell people that there is hope for change, no matter how bad things seem to get."

As a member of NorthStar, Andy hopes to find a long term job that he enjoys.

In his free time, Andy plays first base on a local softball league called Underdog Softball. His favorite pro baseball teams are the Seattle Mariners and the Detroit Tigers. He also enjoys taking yoga classes at the gym. In the future, Andy hopes to have a house "with a couple of dogs running around."

Strategic Planning, continued from page 1

The group divided into three smaller groups in order to delve into two challenging questions: What are the core values of NorthStar? And what is the core purpose of NorthStar? Todd explained that the values of an organization are what drive it and motivate it to move ahead. Each small group reported to the larger group the values they feel are central to NorthStar. The participants came up with dozens of values which were recorded on a flip chart. The following six values were most agreed upon: recovery, community, opportunity, peer advocacy, compassion and hope. In response to the question about the core purpose of NorthStar, the following ideas were generated: "meaningful work as part of recovery," "a place to go for support," "self actualization," and "working together for meaningful work, integration and recovery."

The group as a whole was asked to think about what NorthStar might be like five years from now. Some of these adventurous goals included: NorthStar's brand name is known nationally; one-third to one-half of membership are working; NorthStar has a successful literary magazine; NorthStar members' self-identity moves from disability to wellness; more room and space for all NorthStar activities; and NorthStar plays an influential mental health advocacy role.

The Strategic Planning event concluded with reflections from each participant on their experience of the day. Many shared that today was just the beginning of important planning work, and that there needs to be further planning meetings to help NorthStar develop to its potential. NorthStar member Ken Lynn said: "Magnifique! It's good to see there really is member involvement in every step of the process." Similarly, Silas Matthies felt that his concerns and suggestions were heard. Duane Haataja enjoyed the visioning exercise called BHAG or Big Hairy Audacious Goal, which resulted in a long list of ambitious goals for NorthStar, including the possibility of NorthStar becoming multiple satellite locations in the future.

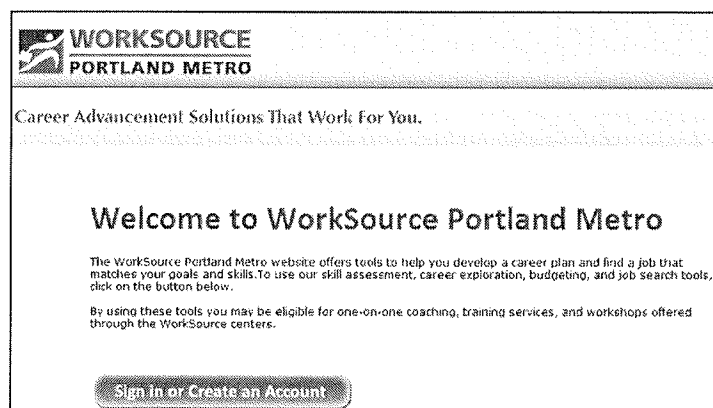
WorkSource Welcome Process

by Anna Gottman

I recently had the opportunity to learn about and complete the registration process at WorkSource Oregon. WorkSource offers an extensive jobs database and many free in-house workshops such as basic computer skills, job search and interviewing skills. WorkSource also offers grants for short term training and further educational coursework such as Career Pathways certificates at Portland Community College.

NorthStar staff member Peter Katon assisted me with completing the majority of the registration process, aka the "welcome process," online. The online registration process takes about two hours and begins at the website:

www.worksourceportlandmetro.com. The first screens ask for basic registration information including: name, address, phone number, veteran, seasonal migrant or selective service registration status, if applicable.



After completing the basic registration questions, the next step is to complete the iMatchSkills® profile. The profile includes recording of work history, job duties, education level, and experience. This information allows the creation of a basic employment profile and resume that guides WorkSource staff in matching a person to jobs for which he or she is qualified. The profile you create in iMatchSkills® also allows you to match yourself to current job listings posted with the Oregon Employment Department.

After completing the iMatchSkills® profile, the next step in the registration process is taking an initial skills assessment in math and reading. This assessment, also known as the WIN assessment, can be completed on-line as well. It is helpful to have a calculator handy for the math portion of the exam.

After the WIN assessment, the next and final step in the process is to go to a local WorkSource center for an in-person staff debriefing. I went to WorkSource Portland Metro Central which is located just off of N. Alberta Street between Vancouver and Williams St. Before the debriefing, I was asked to present a photo I.D. to the receptionist. It can be a state I.D.

or a driver's license, and must include a date of birth. The I.D. is not required to be current, nor is it required to be from Oregon.

The staff debriefing involves meeting with an employment specialist to discuss interests in employment and/or training. It's helpful to walk in with an idea of what kinds of jobs and training one is interested in. The employment specialist also helps sign job seekers sign up for workshops. Workshops include job-search, resume writing and Microsoft Office proficiency. All workshops are free! A workshop called Training Preparation teaches how to apply for grants through WorkSource for further training and college coursework.

NorthStar staff and members are happy to provide assistance with the WorkSource registration process. The NorthStar clubhouse has several computers that can be used to complete registration. Additionally, WorkSource centers have staff and computers available for people to register. In addition to computers, WorkSource centers make available to job seekers copy and fax machines for employment-related purposes, including career research and job applications. I found Worksource staff members to be professional, friendly and helpful. Stay tuned for future articles on Worksource workshops in upcoming issues of The Compass!

WorkSource centers are easily accessible by bus, and are generally open 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday through Friday. There are seven WorkSource centers in Portland. I attended the WorkSource center at 30 N. Webster St. Suite E, Portland OR 97217. To find additional WorkSource centers near you visit the website: www.worksourceoregon.org.

The Quiet Room: A Journey Out of the Torrent of Madness by Lori Schiller and Amanda Bennett

Reviewed by Silas Matthies

The Quiet Room is an amazing, even-handed account of one woman's descent into serious mental illness, and her hard-won recovery from it. In this book, Lori Schiller, who suffers from Schizo-Affective Disorder, demonstrates astounding courage and perseverance in the face of an overwhelming condition that had capitalized her entire life.

An intelligent, pretty young woman, Lori's life changed during the summer before her last year of high school. The grim reality of living with psychosis is brought to horrifying life by Lori's description of her

Continued on page 5

About Informational Interviewing by Anna Gottman

An informational interview is a job search strategy to help you get a clearer view about a career that interests you. It is also an important step in building a network of professional contacts. Before scheduling an informational interview, it is helpful to learn as much as you can about the career field and organization(s) that you plan on learning about. A great resource for this is the Oregon Labor Market Information System (www.olmis.org) or individual company websites. To find someone to interview: you might start by checking with family and friends and ask if they know of someone who works in the field that you're interested in exploring. When requesting an informational interview, let your contact know that you would appreciate 15-20 minutes to meet with them and learn more about their occupation. An informational interview is not a job interview, its purpose is to help you learn about a new field and find out if the field might right for you. Once you complete the informational interview send a short 'Thank You' card to your contact.

Before meeting with Juliet at Outside Public Contact, I had a list of informational interview questions ready. I've transcribed my interview below and hope that you find this example helpful when you are ready to learn more about careers that interest you.

Anna: What is Outside Public Contact (OPC) for time share marketing?

Juliet: We rent booths at large major fun events such as the Bite of Oregon and the Oregon Jazz Festival.

Anna: What skills does your company look for?

Juliet: We want outgoing, self- motivated and hardworking people.

Anna: What qualifies a person for this job?

Juliet: No experience necessary! What qualifies a successful OPC is to be self-motivated, hardworking, outgoing, and have fun while you do it!

Anna: What kind of pay range can be expected for this job?

Juliet: The pay ranges from \$100 to \$500 plus per week during the busy season. The harder you work the more money you make.

Anna: What are the best and worst aspects of the job?

Juliet: The best is that there's no limitation to the amount of money you make. The harder you work the more money you make. Also, the working environment is high energy and lots of fun. Everyone is like family. The team work is what creates each individual success. The worst part of the job is rejection: out of every five people you pitch to four will say 'no,' but the one 'yes'[makes it worth it].

The Quiet Room, continued from page 4

illness's initial manifestation. Among other things, Lori says that, while watching the news on TV, "when Walter Cronkite appeared on the screen, he began talking directly to me. As he spoke, he gave me great responsibility. He told me of the problems of the world, and what I must do to fix them." In addition to delusional thinking, Lori experienced auditory hallucinations. While hospitalized, she says that "[as] I sat in the Quiet Room [solitary confinement], the Voice that spoke to me was as clear and real as any other voice around me . . . [the Voice said] 'Come to me . . . Come to hell with me.'" Peers coping with similar symptoms will relate.

In this book, for Lori a turning point occurred when she was prescribed a new, experimental antipsychotic. She says, "When the Voices reared up and roared, it was as if they hit a glass shield, crashed and fell away."

Her therapist, Dr. Doller, says of Lori's recovery: "It was when she finally began to say, 'I'm very sick. I need help,' that she began to learn to cope." As someone coping with mental illness, I can echo this sentiment; acceptance of my mental illness was critical to my recovery. Peers will see hope in this book. Lori's struggles with her illness will resonate with others who have been there—I know that they did with me. Toward the end of the book, Dr. Doller says, "What is there in any human being's experience to prepare him or her to cope with a broken brain?" *The Quiet Room* doesn't provide answers to this question, but is a riveting chronicle of one woman's attempt to cope, and cope successfully.

The Compass

A Newsletter of

NAMI Multnomah

NorthStar

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NorthStar is located next door
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The Compass

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Volume 1, Issue 4
August/September 2011

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Upcoming Events at NorthStar!

- ⇒ **New Member Orientations:** Tuesdays and Thursdays, 10:30 a.m. An opportunity for prospective members to visit and learn about our programs.
- ⇒ **Career Mapping Workshops:** Saturday, September 3rd. A fun and interactive opportunity for members to explore their natural gifts and career interests. This workshop will help lay a strong foundation for determining the next steps for pursuing employment and training goals. Limited to 6 people. Please call to register.
- ⇒ **Silver Falls Hike:** Friday, August 26th. Join NorthStar for a full day hike at beautiful Silver Falls State Park. Please call for more information.
- ⇒ **Open House:** Saturday, October 1st. NorthStar and NAMI Multnomah invite you to learn about our programs and get connected. This event is in recognition of Mental Illness Awareness Week.

The views expressed in The Compass belong to the individual authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of NorthStar or NAMI Multnomah.

www.northstarportland.org

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NORTHSTAR

NorthStar is a mental health recovery program for adults living in the Portland metro area who have a mental illness. Spearheaded by NAMI Multnomah, NorthStar is based on International Center for Clubhouse Development (ICCD) model of psychosocial rehabilitation and standards. NorthStar will seek certification as an ICCD Certified Clubhouse. NorthStar provides people living with the effects of mental illness an evidence-tested approach for respect, hope, stability, and resiliency.

Mission Statement: NorthStar provides a safe and welcoming environment where members can participate in a peer-supported community, promoting independence, confidence, wellbeing, and recovery.

Programs, Services and Functions

- **Community** - First and foremost Clubhouses provide a community. Much more than simply a program, or a social service, a Clubhouse is a community of people who are working together toward a common goal. NorthStar operations are structured around the work-ordered day. Social programs are offered evenings, weekend, and special events outside the regular workday schedule. NorthStar is a place to belong, to feel welcome, and to feel needed. It is a safety net in a world of stigma and instability.
- **Clubhouse Work** - Members and staff work side by side to accomplish daily goals. Broken down, NorthStar has Creative Writing/Design, Clerical/Outreach, and Health and Wellness units. In-house activities support the functions of the community. Providing members with the opportunity to return to paid work is a core feature of the clubhouse model.
- **Employment** - Clubhouses provide a unique program of employment consisting of Transitional, Supported and Independent Employment.
- **Education** - Members and staff assist in tutoring, establishing educational goals and assistance with applications. NorthStar helps connect members to education programs at high school, college, and graduate levels, as well as helping members pursue desired certifications.
- **Personal Goal Development** - With a person-centered approach, peer support and meaningful relationships, members are encouraged to set short-term and life goals, and they work to achieve those aspirations.
- **Advocacy** - Staff assist members in negotiating the court system, housing, education, benefit planning, employment, taxes, networking, health care, and hospital intakes. Members are connected with the resources they need.
- **Outreach** - Keeping in touch with members who are absent is important to the clubhouse community. This outreach can include simple phone calls, emails, home visits, or visits to the hospital. Members also represent NorthStar at community events, and are involved in creating outreach materials for the clubhouse.

Did you know?

- *It has been reported that as many as 40% of those imprisoned in Oregon have a mental illness.*
- *Per inmate per year it costs \$41,975 at Multnomah County Jail and \$24,665 at Oregon State Prison.*
- *A typical 12-day psychiatric hospital stay in Multnomah County costs approximately \$12,000.*
- *Costs due to loss of life are unquantifiable. Studies show that 10% of persons with mental illness commit suicide.*
- *Costs per year per member for ICCD Clubhouses are \$3,532.*

Why the ICCD Model?

- **Higher Employment** - Studies show clubhouse members have higher rates of employment, longer job tenure, and higher earnings than other programs.
- **Reduced Hospitalization** - A study supported by the ICCD showed clubhouse member hospitalizations reduced by 67.6% and the lengths of stay in the hospital reduced by 97.5%.

- **Reduced Incarcerations** - Involvement in the criminal justice system diminished substantially during and after clubhouse membership.
- **Improved Wellness** - Members participating in a structured ICCD exercise program were found to have significant improvements in aerobic and mental health and perceived improvements in their physical and social functioning.
- **Reduced Cost of Services** - Clubhouses cost less than other models of service delivery, one-third the cost of the Individual Placement Services (IPS) model, about half the annual cost of community mental health centers and substantially less than the Assertive Community Treatment (ACT) model.

Clubhouse Success

- *Clubhouses have been around since 1948 and were started by people who had mental illnesses, making it the oldest, on-going vocational rehabilitation program in existence.*
- *At clubhouses, members experience themselves as valued contributors who are wanted, needed and appreciated. This is a deeply needed resource in the state of Oregon.*
- *Clubhouses offer those with mental illness a place and a program where the focus is on ability not disability.*
- *The ICCD model focuses on lifelong support recognizing that individuals with chronic mental illness may have relapses.*
- *Currently there are 400 ICCD certified Clubhouses in 28 countries.*
- *NorthStar would be the first ICCD certified clubhouse in the state of Oregon.*

❖ See ICCD Website: www.iccd.org

NorthStar Support

NorthStar has already garnered significant community and/or financial support from the following organizations:

- Avel Gordly Center for Healing
- Cascadia Behavioral Health
- Central City Concern
- Eli Lilly Corporation
- NAMI Multnomah
- NAMI Clackamas
- Providence Behavioral Health

NorthStar needs funding, members, in-kind services and supplies and convinced political leaders to become a reality. The start-up phase requires \$120,000 and approximately \$400,000 per year thereafter to operate the services. **Your interest and support can help make NorthStar in Oregon sustainable!**

For further information or to contribute to NorthStar, contact:

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NAMI Multnomah is the local affiliate of the National Alliance on Mental Illness, the nation's largest grassroots mental health organization. Our mission is to improve the quality of life for people with mental illness and their families through support, education and advocacy. We do this by providing weekly support groups, education programs, and resource information, all at no cost for family members and individuals seeking to cope with mental illness. This past year our volunteers contributed more than 10,000 hours a year to our classes (211 participants) and support groups (4,861 participants), IOOV presentations (1,007 attendees), 120 hospital visits reaching 720 consumers and responding to over 1,500 inquiries for resource information. The multiplier effect on lives revitalized by hope and healing is far beyond that number. All of this has been accomplished with only 1.1 FTE paid employees.



June 2010