

**NAMI Portage-Wood Counties
Officers and Board Members**

President:

Andrea Mora
Wisconsin Rapids
715-321-6672
namiportagewood
counties@gmail.com

Vice President:

Samantha Varga
Plover
715-347-6001

Treasurer:

Linda Froehlich
Stevens Point
(715) 572-7135
lfroehlich2301@gmail.com

Co-Secretaries:

Kristi Ahrens
Paula Wolf
Stevens Point

Board Members:

Marvin Lutz

Andrea Mora

Sam Varga

Linda Froehlich

Kathy Hartman

John Hartman

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Aubrey Hill

From the Editor

As the seasons shift from summer to fall, nature reminds us that change is both natural and beautiful. The trees let go of their leaves, not in loss, but in preparation for what's ahead. In the same way, we too can embrace change in our lives, even when it feels difficult. Change allows us to grow, to find new perspectives, and to see ourselves in a different light. Just as autumn brings cooler air, golden leaves, and crisp new beginnings, we are reminded that transitions can open the door to strength, healing, and renewal.

Living with mental illness does not define who we are, just as a single season does not define the year. We are more than our challenges, more than our hardest days.

Like the trees that stand tall through every season, we carry resilience within us. Fall shows us that transformation is possible—that letting go and moving forward can be a powerful act of courage. No matter what you are facing, you have the strength to weather change, and you deserve to embrace every season of your life with hope. And always remember, you are not alone.

—Andrea



Community Gathering for World Mental Health Day

Join us at McMillan Library in Wisconsin Rapids on **October 8th from 5:00–7:30 PM** as we come together to recognize *World Mental Health Day*. This special evening will feature an open mic, where community members are invited to share poems, stories, songs, or performances such as dance, that highlight mental health and lived experiences. If you'd like to participate, email us for the signup sheet—we'd love to include you. The event will also include resource tables from local organizations, free food (while supplies last), and activities for all ages. Come learn more about NAMI, connect with your community, and help us Lend Your Voice for Mental Health.

NAMI Portage and Wood Counties Annual Meeting on October 27

We are pleased to announce that our Annual Meeting will be held on Monday, October 27, 2025, from 6:00–7:00 PM at Saint Paul's Lutheran School in Stevens Point (1919 Wyatt Ave). This gathering is an important opportunity for members to come together, hear updates, and stay connected with the work of NAMI Portage and Wood Counties. Light refreshments will be served. Not yet a member? See the information on page 2 to learn how you can join and be part of our mission.

What is NAMI?

The National Alliance on Mental Illness is the nation's largest grassroots mental health organization

It was started in 1979 in Madison, Wisconsin by two mothers who were looking for help with their sons. NAMI provides advocacy, education, support and public awareness for people whose lives are affected by mental illness. (www.nami.org).

The NAMI Wisconsin mission is to improve the quality of life and promote recovery for people with a mental health condition.

NAMI Portage-Wood Counties, our local affiliate, offers support groups for families or individuals led by trained facilitators.

We also offer classes and events that are free to the public. These are funded through memberships, donations, fundraising and grants.

Monthly Mental Health Speakers

NAMI Portage and Wood Counties along with Suicide Prevention Portage County offer a free Mental Health and Wellness Speaker on the third Monday of each month. It takes place from 6:00–7:00 p.m. in Stevens Point at the Midstate Independent Living Consultants building located at 3262 Church Street in Stevens Point.

There are a few changes to our lineup for the rest of the year. Please see the updates below. *Side note – The November speaker is our very own Andrea Mora, Board President of our affiliate!

September 15: Morgan Grassl – *Coping Skills Managing Anxiety*

October 20: Melissa Neidfeldt – *Self Care (Mindfulness)*

November 17: Andrea Mora – *Five Steps to Living Well with a Mental Illness*

For many, attending one of our Monday night speakers is their very first introduction to NAMI—and often, the first time they truly feel seen, heard, and understood. It's more than just an event; it's a space where real connection happens, where stories resonate, and where healing begins. Some have even found lifelong friendships that started with a single evening of shared understanding.

We invite you to join us for one of this year's speaker nights. Whether you're looking for support, inspiration, or community—you belong here, and we can't wait to welcome you.



Become a Member of NAMI Portage-Wood Counties

Did you know that by becoming a member of NAMI Portage and Wood Counties, you're not just supporting those living with mental illness and their loved ones—you're helping create a stronger, more connected community? Your membership gives you access to the programs and services we offer, while also helping us continue our mission of providing hope, support, and education to those who need it most.

Memberships start at just \$5, and every dollar goes directly to our local affiliate—right here in our community.

Ready to join us? Visit namiwisconsin.org/membership, select our affiliate, and become part of the movement today.

Join a support group and take care of you!

SUPPORT GROUP for PEERS

(those living with a mental health condition)

Stevens Point

First Thursday of each month

St. Paul Lutheran Church

1919 Wyatt Avenue

6:15–7:45 p.m.

Contact:

Linda • 715-572-7135 or if you need
transportation

Wisconsin Rapids

Third Wednesday of each month

McMillan Library

490 East Grand Avenue

6:00–7:30 p.m.

Contact:

Andrea • 715-321-6672 or

Sammie • 715-203-3073

Marshfield

Fourth Tuesday of each month

Faith Lutheran Church

207 South Cherry Avenue

6:00–7:30 p.m.

Contact:

Suzanne • 715-712-2196 or

Dixie • 715-897-1108

SUPPORT GROUPS for FAMILY AND FRIENDS

*(those with a loved one living with a mental
health condition)*

Stevens Point

First Monday of each month

NAMI Family Support Group

St. Paul Lutheran Church

1919 Wyatt Avenue

(Door 3, lower level)

6:30–8:00 p.m.

Contact:

Kathy • 715-254-5452 or

Marvin • 715-592-4522

Wisconsin Rapids

Second Monday of each month

NAMI Family Support Group

McMillan Library

490 East Grand Avenue

6:00–7:30 p.m.

Contact:

Lisa • 715-572-5797

Kathy • 715-254-5452

Wisconsin Rapids Support Groups

NAMI Portage and Wood Counties is here for you. Each month, we offer two support groups at McMillan Library in Wisconsin Rapids: Family Support Group (second Monday of the month) and Peer Support Group (third Wednesday of the month). Both meet in a private room from 6:00–7:30 PM.

Our **Peer Support Group** is a safe, welcoming space for anyone living with a mental health condition. Led by trained facilitators who have walked similar paths, these groups provide understanding, encouragement, and a genuine sense of belonging. Here, you don't have to explain yourself—others simply understand. Through shared stories and supportive conversation, participants find connection, build confidence, and are reminded that they are never alone on their journey.

Our **Family Support Group** offers comfort and encouragement for family members, partners, and loved ones of those living with mental health conditions. Guided by trained volunteers who know these experiences firsthand, the group provides a place to share openly, gain practical insight, and draw strength from others who truly understand. Families leave with not only emotional support, but also resources, strategies, and the reassurance that hope and healing are possible. Together, we learn, grow, and support one another every step of the way.

For more information, please visit our website: www.namiporagewoodcounties.org.

Join Us As A Volunteer!

At NAMI Portage and Wood Counties, volunteers are at the heart of everything we do. There are so many meaningful ways to get involved—each one offering the chance to bring hope, raise awareness, and strengthen our community. Whether you want to share your personal story, become a trained support group facilitator, teach a class, or help out at community events, your time and talents can truly change lives.

As a volunteer, you'll be part of a team that provides education, advocacy, and support to individuals and families affected by mental illness. NAMI Portage and Wood Counties is a volunteer-led nonprofit, powered by passionate community members who care deeply about mental health—and we would be honored to have you join us.

If you're ready to make an impact, reach out to us at 715-544-9653 or email namiporagewoodcounties@gmail.com. Together, we can build a stronger, more supportive community.





Portage and Wood Counties

P.O. Box 21
Stevens Point, WI 54481
715-544-9653

FIRST CLASS MAIL

Sept-Oct 2025 Newsletter

Check out our website namiportagewoodcounties.org
Facebook NAMI Portage-Wood Counties, like us on Facebook and see our inspirational posts.
Call NAMI Portage and Wood Counties 715-544-9653

Your Membership Helps Support NAMI Portage and Wood Counties

Membership includes regular mailings from NAMI Portage and Wood Counties, NAMI Wisconsin, and NAMI National. Donations and membership fees are tax deductible.

Make checks payable to NAMI Portage and Wood Counties. Mail with this form to:
Linda Froehlich, Treasurer, 4309 Heffron Street, Stevens Point, WI 54481 (715) 572-7135

Date: _____

Name: _____ Organization, if applicable _____

Address _____ City _____ State _____ Zip code _____

Telephone Number: (____) _____ *E-mail Address: _____

*The NAMI Portage and Wood Counties newsletter is sent by e-mail. ☐ Check here if you would prefer to receive a hard copy

Please select your type of membership:

☐ Household Membership \$60 Names in household: _____

☐ Full Membership \$40 ☐ Open Door Membership \$5 ☐ Donation Only \$ _____

☐ Please accept my \$ _____ donation in addition to my membership.

Lend Your Voice for Mental Health: A World Mental Health Day Gathering Wednesday, October 8th

Free Light Supper ● Entertainment ● Resources ● Lived Experiences

5:00pm-7:30pm

McMillan Memorial Library
All Purpose Room & Theater
Wisconsin Rapids



Portage
and Wood
Counties

Walk for Hope

A walk for suicide prevention and mental health awareness



September 13th
Lake Pacawa Park

Registration at 9:00AM walk starts at 10:00AM