

November 2022

GOC GAZETTE



Gainesville Opportunity Center

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GOC at NAMI Walk

The annual Gainesville NAMI Walk is one of the most important community events of the year for mental health awareness. The GOC was out in force and had a tremendous presence at the event. We had Members, staff, and our Board representing us.

One of NAMI's major focuses is helping both individuals and families of people living with mental illness. It is important for individuals not to feel alone, and it is important for families of people living with mental illness to know there is hope. NAMI Gainesville runs two signature support groups throughout the year. Their "Peer-to-Peer" program is an 8-week course designed for people living with the disease. Their "Family-to-Family" group educates loved ones about mental illness and how they might best help.

Mental illness is the leading cause of work related disability in the United States. It is often viewed as a moral failing or a choice, instead of the illness that it is. Instead of judgment and ridicule, people living with mental illness need medical attention and support services. People living with chronic mental illness can live and work independently. They can and do lead meaningful and fulfilling lives.

Support services like the GOC are very important to individuals and our community. One of the common symptoms of mental illness is a reduction in daily life activities. When untreated, this can lead to unemployment, homelessness, and other community problems.

Along with the GOC and NAMI, there were community support partners from all over Gainesville and beyond. Hospital staff, therapists, and police officers came out to connect with each other. Each entity, like the GOC, provides a different piece of the puzzle when dealing with mental health issues. Together, we can solve that puzzle and help people move forward.

And yes, there is hope.

Thank you, NAMI, for all that you do for our community. We are proud to call you a partner.



DJ Elio Piedra brought the fiesta to the NAMI event. Having fun is a great way to combat mental illness, and he truly brings the fiesta wherever he goes. He is pictured with GOC Board member Mercy Quiroga and GOC Member David Montague.

Hurricane Ian

For the first time this year, the GOC had to enter hurricane mode. At one point the models predicted Hurricane Ian would hug the Gulf Coast, make landfall at Cedar Key, and trek through directly to Gainesville. We activated our emergency plan, which calls for us to close when a local state of emergency is declared. During this time, authorities did not want people traveling. By staying open, the GOC could have endangered public safety. That being said, the GOC still provided services to Members. Before the storm, we helped Members get the supplies they needed. During the time the GOC was closed, staff called Members to check on them. We also had Zoom meetings where our Members could participate.

Fortunately for us, we did not take a direct hit. Fort Myers was not so lucky. There is a Clubhouse in Fort Myers, Hope Clubhouse, made up of people just like us at the GOC.

Many of their Members sustained damage, as did the outside of their facility. Their carefully cultivated garden and all of their landscaping was destroyed. Some Hope Members lost everything. Hope Clubhouse was closed for a few weeks, but it is now open.

The GOC did what we could to help. Staff and Members organized food and supplies. GOC Executive Director Deidra Simon personally delivered them to Fort Myers.



There will always be Hope



The Clubhouse Model is designed to connect people. Hurricane Ian allowed us to connect with people in need outside our immediate community. Thank you to Clubhouse International for providing this wonderful model we all follow. No matter how tough things get, there will always be Hope.

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Member Spotlight: Susan Thomas by David Stevens

Meet Susan! Susan started coming to the GOC to meet new friends, find a job, and have something to do during the day. Susan says the GOC keeps her busy and feeling productive. It also helps her to be around other people so she does not isolate at home.

Susan started coming to the GOC in 2015. A state employment agency sent her here to help break her isolation habits. Through the GOC, Susan has met new people, made friends, and participated in a wide range of work-related activities. The GOC has supported her in many ways, including interacting with her employers and advocating on her behalf.

At the GOC, you will find Susan cooking, cleaning the general Clubhouse, and doing office work such as working on the daily newsletter and PowerPoint slide show. You will also find her entering van mileage into a spreadsheet. She has also tried new recipes at home from meals that she enjoyed at the GOC such as picadillo and cream of beef! Susan says she keeps coming back to the GOC “Because I feel like it’s helpful to me and I see my friends!”

Recently, Susan acquired a job through one of our partners: Challenge Enterprises. She works at the Federal Courthouse cleaning the bathrooms, dusting, and emptying trash. During her job interview, GOC Development Director Brett Buell spoke to Challenge Enterprises about her dedication and work ethic. Susan felt confident to get this job because she is already completing important tasks at the GOC.

The GOC also helped Susan with enrollment at Santa Fe College. She is working towards an AA degree and, eventually, a Bachelor’s Degree in social work. Susan likes the feeling of giving back and wants to help others. The GOC has assisted Susan by having a volunteer tutor her in math.

Susan says things are great for her. She has a job, feels productive, and is doing well in her classes! Susan says, “The GOC is recovery through work—and it works!”



Susan is always willing to help. At the GOC she works in our kitchen and office units.



Susan participates in a wide range of activities at the GOC. Here she is supporting NAMI at the NAMI walk.

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Updates

GOC Fall Fest Nov 4

Thank you to our great sponsors! We will see you at the Fall Festival Nov. 4 from 11am to 6pm!

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New Job

Congratulations to David Montague who is working again. We are grateful for our partnership with Culver's.



Receipt Scanning

As part of our work day, our Member take every receipt and scan them to a computer file. That way we have records for our audits and verification that the GOC is using our money as intended. No job is staff only or Member only. We all work together.



Mark's Pottery

At the GOC, it isn't always that our Members are learning from us. They have skills and experiences as diverse as any community.

Mark Lyons taught us how to make Capodimonte flowers, a tradition originating in Naples, Italy. Along with the artistry of sculpting, the flowers have to be fired at a precise temperature in order to harden.

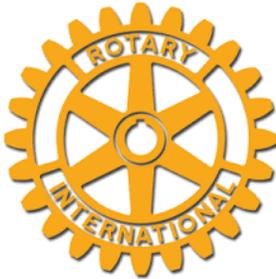


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If you work for a business that's part of the United Way, you can donate pre-tax through your employer. The United Way has a sign up period near the end of the calendar year. Think GOC!!!!

When you shop on Amazon, think of GOC!



Any and all help is appreciated. Simply search for us on Amazon or click the images to the left and to the right. (Wishlist-> <https://tinyurl.com/yum48cu3>)



Please use our email info@goclubhouse.org as the recipient.

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NAMI Walk Pictures



GOC Member David Stevens with Dr. George Teaford of UF Shands Psychiatry.



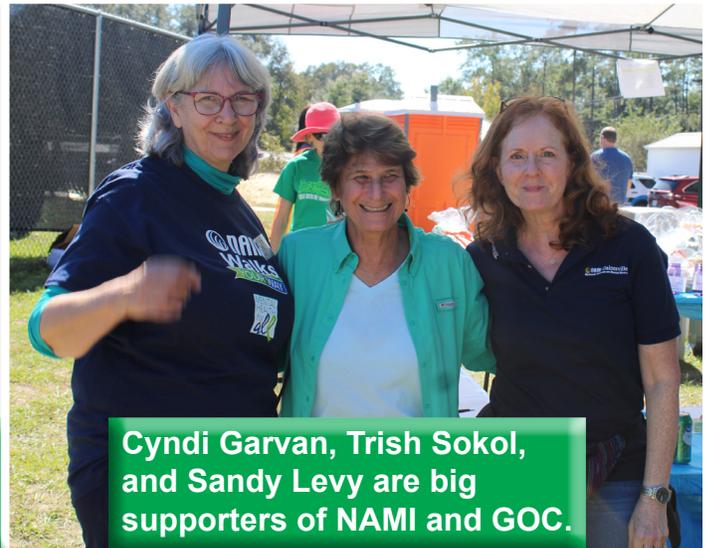
GOC Board Chair Mike Conlon and his wife, Debbie.



Kim Sugar enjoyed dancing to DJ Elio's fiesta of musical tunes.



Executive Director Deidra Simon and Program Director Maggie Hannon share a moment.



Cyndi Garvan, Trish Sokol, and Sandy Levy are big supporters of NAMI and GOC.



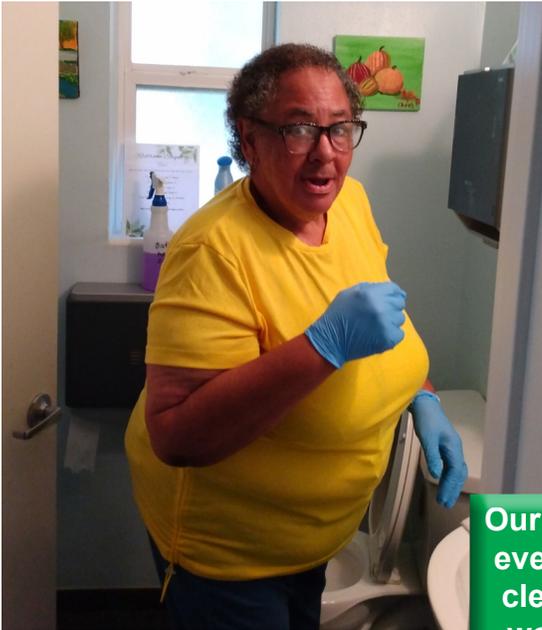
Kim Sugar and Pat Bateman went to every table to talk about the GOC.



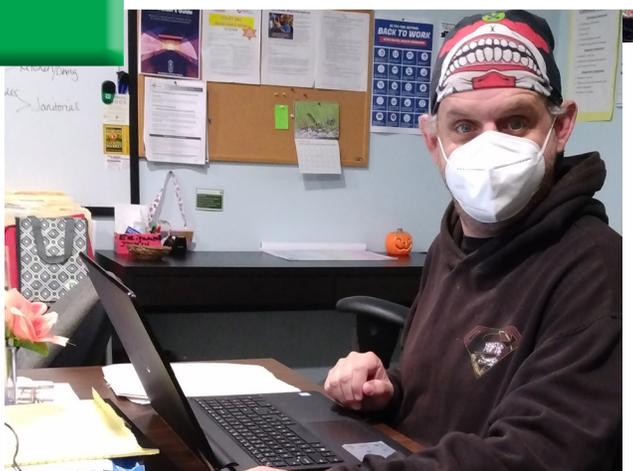
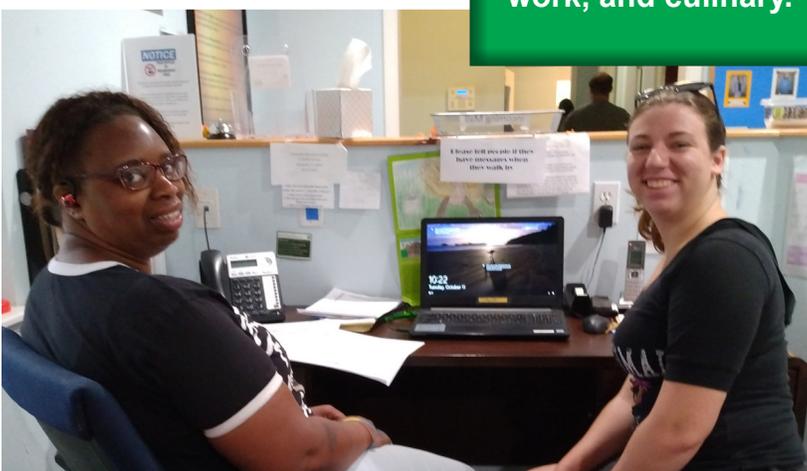
Corporal Shelley Postle, a Police Co-Responder starts the walk with GOC Member John Smith.

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Month in Pictures



Our Members are involved in every job at the Clubhouse: cleaning, gardening, office work, and culinary.



GOC GAZETTE

Monthly Calendar and Events

November 4 Fall Festival
 November 5 Social Saturday
 November 11 Veterans Day Activities 10am-2pm
 November 19 Social Saturday
 November 24 Thanksgiving 10am-2pm
 November 25 Art Walk

Newsletter Credits:

Brett Buell
 Producer / Writer/
 Layout/Photos

Rob Ellis
 Photographer

Marie Fishman
 Photographer

Reid Schreiber
 Editor and Layout

David Stevens
 Writer

John Smith
 Photographer

David Turull
 Layout/Consultant

Weekly Meetings

Monday 2:00 pm- House
 Tuesday 2:00 pm- Culinary, Wellness, Garden
 Wednesday 1:00 pm- Computer Workshop
 Wednesday 2:00 pm- Website
 Wednesday 3:00 pm- Newsletter
 Thursday 2:00 pm- Wellness
 Thursday 2:00 pm- Adobe/Media

Daily Events and Meetings

8:30 am Clubhouse Opens
 9:00 am Breakfast starts
 9:30 am General Membership Meeting
 9:45 am Unit Meetings
 10:00 am Work Day commences in Office,
 Culinary, Media and Garden
 12:00 pm Lunch
 1:00 pm Work Day Continues
 4:30 pm Clubhouse closes

Birthdays

Nov. 5 Alexis Henderson
 Nov. 6 Jeff Davidson
 Nov. 6 David Delotelle
 Nov. 12 Andy Bernard
 Nov. 13 Akeem Johnson
 Nov. 20 John Smith



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