

The Club Gazette

SEPTEMBER 2026

Blue Earth County Adult Mental Health Community Support Program

Second Step Clubhouse Mission:

Second Step believes that persons with mental illness have the right to reach their full potential and to have fulfilling and productive lives in the community.

<u>INSIDE THIS ISSUE</u>	<u>Page</u>
<u>Anxiety Continued</u>	2
<u>Volunteer Recognition</u>	3
<u>July & Aug Activities</u>	4
<u>Activities Continued Article by Donald S</u>	5
<u>Membership Process for Second Step</u>	6
<u>NAMI: Support Groups</u>	7
<u>Employment Support with Abby</u>	8
<u>Description of Activities</u>	9
<u>Calendar of Events</u>	10

ADDRESS

421 E Hickory St. Suite 404
Mankato, MN 56001

PHONE #

507-304-4414

HOURS:

MONDAY - SATURDAY

1:00 to 5:00

SUNDAY

1:00 to 4:00

WEBSITES

www.sccbi.info

www.blueearthcountymn.gov

<https://namimn.org>

Anxiety derailing your day? Get to know the 5-4-3-2-1 grounding technique - a simple exercise for calming the mind that can alleviate anxiety in minutes.

Clinically reviewed by Dr. Chris Mosunic, PhD, RD, MBA.

(NAMI MN Article)

In an unpredictable world, it's easy to get caught up in stress and anxiety. Grounding techniques offer a practical way to pull your focus back from what's worrying you and return you to the present moment. They're especially helpful for calming the body's fight-or-flight response and achieving a more balanced state of mind.

Why are grounding techniques helpful?

Stress and anxiety have become common, almost daily, experiences for most of us. Between work deadlines, social responsibilities, and life's uncertainties, it's no wonder many of us feel on edge. That's why learning effective ways to calm your mind in stressful situations is so essential for maintaining your mental health.

This is where grounding techniques come into play. By shifting your attention from unsettling thoughts to the here and now, these exercises provide quick relief from anxiety and contribute to your overall mental wellbeing.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

The 5-4-3-2-1 grounding technique using your five senses

- The 5-4-3-2-1 technique is one of the easiest mindfulness strategies designed for managing stress and anxiety, as it can be done almost anywhere and at any time. It's also one of the most effective. Using the five sense to ground you in the present moment, this is how it works.

1. Name 5 things you can see

- Take a moment to spot five things in your immediate environment. Whether it's a basic office chair or a cherished family photo, the goal is to really see the details—like color, form, and texture. By diverting your focus to your sense of sight, you disrupt the cycle of anxious or stressful thoughts.

2. Name 4 things you can touch

- Concentrate on the sense of touch to further ground yourself. Become aware of three things you can feel. They could be the fabric of your clothes against your skin, the texture of an item you're holding, or the solidity of the floor under your feet.

3. Name 3 things you can hear

- Close your eyes and listen to the ambient noises around you. They could be anything from a fan humming to birds singing, or people talking in the distance. Identifying these sounds helps steer your mind away from inward worries and more toward the world around you, anchoring you in the present moment.

4. Name 2 things you can smell

- Take a deep breath and identify two distinct smells around you. They could be the welcoming aroma of fresh coffee or the clean scent of hand soap. Tuning into these smells helps shift your focus from looping thoughts to your immediate surroundings, reinforcing your connection to the present moment.

5. Name 1 thing you can taste

- Finally, focus on your sense of taste. You might want to take a sip of water or simply focus on the lingering flavor of toothpaste in your mouth. Centering on this final sense completes the cycle and firmly brings you back to the present moment.

Tuesday, September 29th

2:30 - 3:30

Recognizing our Second Step Clubhouse Volunteers



Our Clubhouse Volunteers help keep the club open on days when Clubhouse Staff are out due to being sick, on vacation, taking a group of members on an outing, and on Sundays & Holidays.

Join us on Tuesday, September at 2:30 - 3:30 to help recognize our Volunteers and thank them for what they do!

Snacks & punch will be provided

CURRENT VOLUNTEERS:

Billy F / Chris M / Dale A / Daryl M / Eva B / Jen L / Jon M / Kathi B
Kristi G / Lola M / Mary S / Maurice B

Clubhouse Activities in July and August

Article written by Mary S

I will start with July Fish-Nic when we went to the Waterville Fish Hatchery. They had captured some fish and a big snapping turtle to show us in the Hatchery when we arrived.

Fishing was a bit slow, even the Hatchery workers came down and attempted to get a bite so we could reel them in; they also got skunked. Finally Jamie caught one! After about an hour of fishing with only one fish caught we decided to head back to the Hatchery where Mike was manning the Black Stone Grill and cooking burgers and dogs. Even Eric and Reese took turns flipping burgers. We brought enough food so the Hatchery workers could eat with us.

The Hatchery workers were telling us about the new facility that will be built in the future. After eating and cleaning up we went upstairs and saw a video about how they harvest, fertilize and hatch the eggs. Very educational video and had time for questions and answers.



On the 18th we piled in the van and went to Albert Lea for a 10-County Picnic. We got there early and we helped set up tables and chairs. I'm so proud to be a Blue Earth County club member! We weren't asked, we just pitched in. What a beautiful park, the water was like glass. We ate burgers and hot dogs, chips and really juicy watermelon finished off with a cookie. If you still had a sweet tooth, the games cornhole, ring toss and Hi/low prizes were candy, Little Debbie's and soda. The pinwheels and bean bag games were a hit. Thanks to Reece, Pam and Kathi for checking out the park and reporting back with pictures. Mike took us in the van to see the homes around the lake before we left town. Some of the other highlight of the trip were seeing the wind turbines, aka wind mills, along with the population of Manchester of 52 people. Oh, the solar panel farms were interesting to see, imagine cleaning all those panels.



One group that is new at the Clubhouse is Dungeons and Dragons. There will be a game on Friday, September 18th.



Area History

Written by Donald S.

History affects geographical names across southern Minnesota. LeHillier, Mankato, Blue Earth, Faribault, and Le Sueur are all names with the origin in local history.

In the 1750s, before the American Revolution, French Voyager named Pierre Lesseur (he has a city, a county and a river named after him) let a group of French explorers into this area. He built a Fort named LeHillier (now the name of suburb of Mankato) on the bank of what became known as the Blue Earth River, near Mankato. No one knows the exact location of this Fort today. The river had deposits of blue clay on its banks, giving it the Dakota name Mahkato or Blue Earth. Mankato is a misspelling of this word. There is a river, a county, and a city called Blue Earth today.

Faribault is also a geographic name with its origin in history. Faribault was the name of 2 French fur traders in the area (a city and a county bear this name).

Second Step Clubhouse Membership Application Process

1. **Schedule a tour of the Clubhouse by calling (507-304-4414) or emailing the Clubhouse Coordinator, Mike Hildebrandt, at: mike.hildebrandt@blueearthcountymn.gov. Scheduling a tour is a very important first step which allows prospective members to learn about the Clubhouse program, ask questions, and learn about the membership application process. Planning ahead also allows Clubhouse staff and members to prepare for your tour.**
 - ⇒ Tours are scheduled Monday – Friday 1:00-2:00. We will accommodate additional times/ days if necessary.

2. **After completing their Clubhouse tour, prospective members may decide whether they want to apply for membership. If membership is desired, applications may be filled out on the day of the tour, or completed and dropped off on a later date.**
 - ⇒ *(International Standards of Clubhouse Programs – Membership-Standard #1) Membership is voluntary and without time limits. This Standard means that becoming a member is a choice, and we respect the right of every prospective member to decide whether or not to apply to for membership.*

3. **Membership applications are processed to ensure the prospective members meets the qualification criteria for Clubhouse membership.**
 - ⇒ The Clubhouse Coordinator will notify potential members whether their application for membership was approved.

3. **Applicants who qualify for Second Step Clubhouse Membership:**
 - ⇒ May begin attending the Clubhouse program.
 - ⇒ Must set up a time to attend a New Member Orientation within the next month.
 - ⇒ Orientation times scheduled each month:
 - 1st and 3rd Tuesdays from 4:00 - 5:00 &
 - 1st and 3rd Thursdays from 11:00 - 12:00
 - ⇒ Orientation covers more information regarding the Clubhouse Standards, Working Together Agreements, Clubhouse Member Responsibilities & Rights, Daily Structure, Daily Guidelines, and use of our VINE Fitness Membership.
 - ⇒ After completing Orientation, the new member will have the option to get a key fob, which allows them to enter the VINE building through the side door.

NAMI FAMILY: MANKATO

This is a peer-led support group for family members of a person living with mental illnesses.

GRACE LUTHERAN CHURCH
110 N 4TH STREET, MANKATO MN 56001
BLUE EARTH *back door*

Meets simultaneously with NAMI Connection: Mankato

In person participants are strongly encouraged to wear masks and follow COVID-19 protocols, including social distancing. Individuals should stay home if they have any symptoms of illness or have been exposed to COVID-19. Group size limit is 17 participants



2ND & 4TH
THURSDAYS
6:30:00 PM - 8:00:00 PM

WITH
DIANE GERLACH
No registration needed

For more information,
contact Kirsten Weiss
651-645-2948
EXT. 127

NAMI CONNECTION: MANKATO

This is a peer-led support group for adults (18+) living with a mental illness.

MEETING LOCATION:
Grace Lutheran Church
110 N 4th Street, Mankato MN 56001
Blue Earth County *back door*

Meets simultaneously with NAMI Family Mankato

In person participants are strongly encouraged to wear masks and follow COVID-19 protocols, including social distancing. Individuals should stay home if they have any symptoms of illness or have been exposed to COVID-19.

Group size limit is 17 participants



2ND & 4TH
THURSDAY
6:30:00 PM to 8:00:00 PM

WITH
CHRISTINE MYERS
No registration needed

For more information,
contact Kirsten Weiss
651-645-2948
EXT. 127



1-651-645-2948
1-888-NAMI-HELPS

www.namimn.org
namihelps@namimn.org



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EMPLOYMENT DISCUSSION & ACTIVITIES

Abby will be at the 2nd Step Clubhouse every

Thursday, September 10th at 2:00

Thursday, September 24th at 2:00

of the month from 2:00 - 3:00.

All are welcome!

Everyone and anyone who just wants to hang out! Not looking for work, Come anyways!

Are you retired? Tell us about your work experience!

Potential Topics of Discussion:

- You are not able to work currently. How can you prepare yourself for work in the future
- When is it appropriate to disclose a personal disability to an employer?
- Are on Social Security Disability benefits and considering employment but are concerned about losing your benefits?
- What do you want to know about employment?
- Are there specific jobs you want to learn more about?
- Are you working and have questions about your current job?

What is IPS?

Individual Placement and Support (IPS) is a model of supported employment for people with a mental health illness.

IPS drives to empower people. Not to tell them where they must work or what types of services they must receive. Employment specialists try to understand what is most important to each person and what motivates each person.

Contact Us

Abby Frantsen

IPS Employment Specialist
Blue Earth, Nicollet, and Le Sueur County
507-420-1271

afrantsen@mymrci.org



CLUBHOUSE OUTINGS AND ACTIVITIES THIS MONTH



STRETCHING WITH CHRIS

Mondays at 1:30

EMPLOYMENT DISCUSSION WITH ABBY

2nd and 4th Wednesdays at 2:00

MONDAYS SUPPORT GROUP AT 2:30

*** CREATIVE EXPRESSIONS ***

Wed, Sept 9th and 13th at 2:00

Making bracelets and necklaces

Friday, Sept 11th at 2:00

Diamond Art

10 COUNTY ACTIVITIES

Tuesday, Sept 22nd - U Of M Arboretum

(Be at Clubhouse at 9:00 to ride in van)

SECOND STEP CLUBHOUSE ACTIVITIES

Saturday, Sept 12th out to eat at Legends @ 11:00

(Be at Club by 10:30 for ride)

Friday, Sept 18th at 2:00 - Dungeons & Dragons

Thursday, Sept 24th at 2:00

Employment Jeopardy Game with Abby

Tuesday, Sept 29th Volunteer Recognition at 2:30

Thank your volunteers and have some snacks and punch

SECOND STEP CLUBHOUSE TOURNAMENTS

(sign up the day of the event)

- 8-Ball - First Saturday at 1:30
- Pfeffer Cards - Second Saturday at 1:30
- 9-Ball - Third Saturday at 1:30
- Skip-Bo - Sunday, September 20th at 1:30
- Hand & Foot: Fourth Saturday at 1:30



Second Step Clubhouse

Fish-Nic Activity:

Tuesday, September 15th

Levee Park, St. Peter

Details to be announced



**X-Box and Games
available to use at
the Clubhouse
during Social Rec
times**

SEPTEMBER 2026

Sunday 1:00-4:00	Monday 1:00 - 5:00	Tuesday 1:00 - 5:00	Wednesday 1:00 - 5:00	Thursday 10:00 am - 5:00	Friday 1:00 - 5:00	Saturday 1:00 - 5:00
		1 Zoom @ 2:30	2	3 OPEN 10:00-5:00	4	5 Eric
		1:00 <u>Work Units</u> 2 - 5 <u>Social Rec</u> 2:30 <u>Clubhouse Meeting</u> 4 - 5 <u>Orientation</u>	1:00 <u>Work Units</u> 2 - 5 <u>Social Rec</u> 4:00 <u>Volunteers Meeting</u>	10:00 to 1:00 <u>Work Units</u> 11-12 <u>Orientation</u> 1 - 5 <u>Social Rec</u>	OPEN 1:00 - 4:00 1:00 <u>Work Units</u> 2 - 4 <u>Social Rec</u>	1 - 5 <u>Social Rec</u> 1:30 
6	7 LABOR DAY	8	9	10 OPEN 10:00-5:00	11 Eric	12 Mike
OPEN 1:00 - 4:00	OPEN 1:00 - 4:00 1 - 4 <u>Social Rec</u>	1:00 <u>Work Units</u> 2 - 5 <u>Social Rec</u> 4 - 5 <u>Orientation</u>	1:00 <u>Work Unit</u> 2 - 5 <u>Social Rec</u> 2:00 <u>Jewelry Making</u>	10:00 to 1:00 <u>Work Units</u> 11-12 <u>Orientation</u> 1 - 5 <u>Social Rec</u> 2:00 <u>Employment Discussion with Abby</u>	1:00 <u>Work Units</u> 2 - 5 <u>Social Rec</u> 2:00 <u>Diamond Art</u>	11:00 Out to Eat "Legends" 1:30 <u>Pfeffer</u> 
13	14 Zoom @ 2:30	15	16	17 OPEN 10:00-5:00	18 Mike	19 Eric
OPEN 1:00 - 4:00	1:00 <u>Work Units</u> 1:30 <u>Stretching</u> 2 - 5 <u>Social Rec</u> 2:30 <u>Support Group: "Discussion cards"</u>	OPEN 1:00 - 4:00 <i>Fish-Nic</i> See details at Club 1:00 <u>Work Units</u> 2 - 4 <u>Social Rec</u>	1:00 <u>Work Unit</u> 2 - 5 <u>Social Rec</u>	10:00 to 1:00 <u>Work Units</u> 11-12 <u>Orientation</u> 1 - 5 <u>Social Rec</u>	1:00 <u>Work Units</u> 2 - 5 <u>Social Rec</u> 2:00 DUNGEONS & DRAGONS	1 - 5 <u>Social Rec</u> 1:30 
20	21 No Zoom	22	23	24 OPEN 10:00-5:00	25 Eric	26 Mike
OPEN 1:00 - 4:00 1:30 	1:00 <u>Work Units</u> 1:30 <u>Stretching</u> 2 - 5 <u>Social Rec</u> 2:30 <u>Support Group: "Discussion cards"</u>	10:00- 3:00 10-County Activity - U of M Arboretum 1:00 <u>Work Units</u> 2 - 5 <u>Social Rec</u>	1:00 <u>Work Unit</u> 2 - 5 <u>Social Rec</u>	10:00 to 1:00 <u>Work Units</u> 11-12 <u>Orientation</u> 1 - 5 <u>Social Rec</u> 2:00 <u>Employment Jeopardy Game with Abby</u>	1:00 <u>Work Units</u> 2 - 5 <u>Social Rec</u>	1 - 5 <u>Social Rec</u> 1:30 
27	28 Zoom @ 2:30	29 No Zoom	30			
OPEN 1:00 - 4:00	1:00 <u>Work Units</u> 1:30 <u>Stretching</u> 2 - 5 <u>Social Rec</u> 2:30 <u>Support Group: "Discussion cards"</u>	1:00 <u>Work Units</u> 2 - 5 <u>Social Rec</u> 2:30 VOLUNTEER RECOGNITION Snacks will be provided	1:00 <u>Work Units</u> 2 - 5 <u>Social Rec</u>	ACTIVITIES IN "BOLD" SIGN - UP IS REQUIRED PRIOR TO DATE OF ACTIVITY Call (507-304-4414) for information and/or sign up for an activity.		