



NAMI Contra Costa

The Family's Voice On Mental Illness

January, 2004

The NAMI Contra Costa Newsletter is available on the web at: www.namicontracosta.org

NEW COMMITTEE PROPOSED

A new committee has been proposed to be added to the NAMI-CC roster of committees.

It would be a committee to manage and coordinate efforts to offer support to folks that have a loved one in the Napa State Hospital. It would be called the Napa State Hospital Support Group (NSHSG). NAMI-CC currently has about nine family members in the facility. It will be an invaluable resource now and in the future to any family that has a loved one in the NAPA facility.

This proposal will be discussed at the NAMI-CC Board of Directors January meeting.

CRESTWOOD HEALING CENTER ON TRACK

The Crestwood Healing Center in Pleasant Hill is at the capacity allowed at this stage. In mid-January the next increment of clients will begin to arrive and the facility should have about forty residents by early summer. The NAMI-CC plea for exercise equipment has gotten results. A full sized pool table, a first rate ping pong table and numerous stationary bikes and tread mills are in place. If you have any you would like to add to the mix, room will be found.

The first classes for the NAMI Volunteer Brigade will be held this month. Contact xnamicc@aol.com

REBECCA WOOLIS THE JANUARY SPEAKER

Rebecca Woolis is the author of , *When Someone You Know Has a Mental Illness*, that has become a virtual standard in working with the mentally ill. First published in 1992 by Penguin Putnam, Inc., the book has been updated and revised and is available in most book stores.

Rebecca has been the Program Director at the Bonita House in Berkeley which specializes in working with cases that have a dual diagnosis.

She last spoke to the NAMI-CC General Meeting in May of 2001. The membership has found her to be one of the most engaging and informative speakers over the years. The meeting always ends promptly at 9:00 pm but all questions will be answered for those who choose to stay.

BILL SHINN TO SPEAK

Bill Shinn, former Commander of the Martinez Detention Facility (Jail) will discuss the list of speakers from the law enforcement field that will be addressing the General Meetings throughout 2004. Bill is a member of NAMI-CC and has been on its Board of Directors.

JANUARY GENERAL MEETING

Thursday, January 15, 7:00 pm

GUEST SPEAKER

Rebecca Woolis
Author of
When Someone You Know Has A Mental Illness

ALSO

Bill Shinn
Bill will highlight the programs in 2004 that will feature Law Enforcement officials who will discuss the problems of the mentally ill in the Criminal Justice System.

**WHERE:
MT DIABLO MEDICAL CENTER**

2540 East Street
Concord, CA
925-682 8200

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NAMI-CC Care and Support Groups

Central Contra Costa County

1st Tuesday of each month, 7:30-9:00 p.m., Hillcrest Congregational Church, 404 Gregory Lane, Pleasant Hill.

Contact Dave Kahler 925- 676-5771 or e mail: dk122932@aol.com

3rd Monday of each month, 7:15-9:00 p.m., John Muir Hospital, Downstairs. The meeting has been moved from the Aspin Room to the Sterns Conference Room. Mary Olowin, MD and Gloria Hill. Contact Gloria Hill 925- 957-5146.

West Contra Costa County

4th Monday of each month, 7:00 p.m., 10203 San Pablo Ave (Idaho Apts.), Conference Room, El Cerrito (across from Black Oak Motors). Contact Gloria Hill 925-957-5146.

East Alameda County

2nd and 4th Monday of each month, 7:00-8:30 p.m., St. Claire's Episcopal Church, 3350 Hopyard Road. Pleasanton.

Contact Rev. Meg Brogan 925- 462-4802, and/or Russell and Donna White.

Antioch Support Group

4th Monday of each month, NOTE: The meeting has been moved from the 2nd Monday to the 4th Monday at the Antioch Police Station at 7:00 p.m. Call Mae Bragen at 925-458 1438

SELF-INJURY SUPPORT GROUP

(Consumer)

For self-injury sufferers to talk about ways to change these behaviors and resolve the feelings brought on by trauma.

CALL: Veronica 925-676 5313

BIPOLAR CHILL (Client Run)

Manic Depression Support Group

Wednesday, 7:00-8:30 p.m.

710 Broadway #3G, Walnut Creek

Contact Lisa or Scott- 925-743 1160

NEW BIPOLAR GROUP

Where: The Central Clinic, 1420 Willow Pass Road,
Concord. Behind the Hungry Hunter

When: Every Monday at 7:00 pm to 8:30 pm

Contact: Marian Gugliemo 925-646 5788

Colette O'Keefe 925-646 5624

RECOVERY, INC. (Self Help Mental Health)

Mondays, 7:30 p.m. Kaiser, Walnut Creek

Saturdays, 2:00 pm to 4:00 pm

Lilac Building, Room 2

Contact: Iris Richards, 510-482 5808

NEW HOPE

**SUPPORT GROUP FOR PARENTS OF
ADOLESCENT CHILDREN**

WHERE: Lafayette-Orinda Presbyterian Church
49 Knox Dr., Lafayette, 925-283 8722

Call: Dani Hamilton, 925-855 8486 362 1574

FAMILY ADVOCATE HOURS

Gloria Hill, Contra Costa County Mental Health Advocate hours are:

Mondays 12:30– 3:30 at 957 5146. Tuesdays all day at 957 5146. Thursday morning at 957 5146.

After 1:30 on Thursdays at 646 5844 or 646 5480 which is not a voice mail number. The best way to reach Gloria is to page 925-476 2618 any day of the week or leave a message on the voice mail. Gloria requests that she not be called at home unless it is an emergency and all other numbers and the pager have been called.

NAMI-Contra Costa
National Alliance for the Mentally Ill

OFFICERS:

David Kahler, President
(925) 676 5771 dk122932@aol.com

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(925) 825 4700 tdillingham@phoenix-programs.org

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PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

David Kahler

Why is it that a society that can land men on the moon, produce the Salk vaccine, invent the internet and connect the entire globe to it offers a disjointed, disorganized, dysfunctional system of care to the mentally ill.

The easy explanation is that the American society has never understood just what mental illness and its attendant problems are all about. Take a quick look at Edward Shorter's *A History of Psychiatry, 1997*, (reviewed in the October NAMI-CC newsletter) and it becomes obvious that as widespread as mental illness is, it is a distinct minority of the population, a minority that is not politically organized, does not begin to be able to purchase budgetary favors and has been virtually been politically impotent.

There is no such thing as a politician or public official that will not give you his rapt attention as you describe the train wreck that is our system of care. But when it comes to allocating the budget, issues that touch every voter like education, congestion on Highway #4 and public safety emerge to take precedence.

We would do well to remember that our frustrations with the system are not the fault of the folks that work in the system. It is far greater than that. It is a societal, systemic problem that has existed since the early days of the republic.

None of this alters the fact that each NAMI-CC family has a loved one who has serious mental health issues that must be dealt with TODAY. That is where NAMI comes in.

NAMI provides the information and education that a family must have if the resources are to be found to help that family member to recover. More than that, NAMI provides the support on a daily basis to cope with the challenge that is mental illness.

2004 will be NAMI Contra Costa's 26th year. We have our work cut out for us.

NAMI FAMILY TO FAMILY EDUCATION COURSE

The FREE, 12 week, NAMI-Family to Family Education Course for family members of individuals with serious mental illness starts soon. Sign up now for up-to-date information about illnesses of the brain and their treatment, coping skills and the powers of advocacy. The classes are taught by trained NAMI family members. There is no course at any university or college that offers a comprehensive course on mental illness and how to cope with the terrible problems.

Classes begin:

Concord- Mon., February 2, 2004

Danville- Thur., February 12, 2004

Lafayette- Wed., March 3, 2004

CALL: Doris Watson
925-682 7195
E mail: F2Fmom@aol.com

VANCOUVER HOUSE

There is a slot open on the committee that oversees the Vancouver House in North Concord. You would learn a great deal and know that you were really helpful. It would take just one hour each month. Call Gloria Hill at 925-957 5146.

NAMI Contra Costa

Mailing Address:
P.O. Box 21247
Concord, CA., 94521
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Fax: 925-476 1444
E Mail: xnamicc@aol.com
Web Site:
www.namicontracosta.org
namicalifornia.org
nami.org.

DRUG ABUSE COMMON IN JAILED TEENS

By Karen Cohen

A study by Northwestern University researchers shows that about half of teens in juvenile detention have two or more psychiatric disorders and substance abuse disorders.

The study also found that the most common combination was substance abuse disorders and attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) or behavioral disorders, which affected almost a third of 1,829 teens examined. Almost half also had anxiety disorders, affective disorders or both. More than one of 10 teens had a substance abuse disorder and a major mental disorder, such as psychosis, manic episode or major depressive episode.

Among 305 teens with major mental disorders in the current study, more than half of girls and almost three fourths of boys also had a substance abuse disorder.

"Treating these youth is a real challenge," Abram said. "Their disorders may get them into trouble. But detention centers were never designed to be mental hospitals," she said. The study was conducted at the Cook County Juvenile Temporary Detention Center in Chicago. The facility was selected because it is typical of other urban detention centers nationwide.

On an average day, more than 106,000 teens are in custody in U.S. juvenile facilities. Nationwide, there may be as many as 47,000 detained juveniles who have two or more types of psychiatric disorders. More than 12,000 have both a major mental disorder and a substance abuse disorder. The authors suggest that mental health professionals must collaborate with the juvenile justice system to better screen detainees for psychiatric problems and divert youths with major mental disorders who are not community threats to treatment facilities.

MENTAL HEALTH INITIATIVE COULD RAISE 600 MILLION

The Mental Health Services Act could raise as much as \$600 million to ensure public mental health programs have proper funding. The money will bolster federal, state and local funding for mental health programs that are traditionally poorly funded and help to correct a nationwide disparity. A recent RAND Corporation survey of 45,247 parents shows that a child in Massachusetts is more than twice as likely as a similarly needy child in California to get care. That is under the current underfunded situation. There are plans to cut even more, virtually devastating the system.

NAMI-CC, NAMI California, The California Psychiatric Association and the Mental Health Association of California strongly support this initiative.

To help gather the necessary signatures; call or e-mail Andy Schneit

925-280 0408

925-788 2352

925-676 5771

Andy_schneit@yahoo.com

THIRD MONDAY JOHN MUIR SUPPORT GROUP CHANGES LOCATION

The 3rd Monday Support Group led by Dr. Mary Olowin and Gloria Hill at John Muir Hospital has been switched from the Aspin Room to the Sterns Conference Room on the lower level. The group starts at 7:15 pm. Attendees may bring their mentally ill young adult family members.

WILL YOU VOLUNTEER?

To make your membership in NAMI-CC work, you have to be involved. You will find great benefits in your support of your loved one.

Would you like to:

1. Write an article for the newsletter?
2. Help with a fundraiser?
3. Tell "Your Story" to groups and classes.
4. Train to be a Family Education class Co-Teacher?
5. Train to be a Support Group Co-Facilitator?
6. Set up a NAMI Information display in a CC library?
7. Contact your local newspaper each month and place NAMI-CC announcements?
8. Join one of our standing committees?
9. Provide transportation for members to attend the monthly meetings?
10. Write letters to community agencies?
11. Write a book review for the monthly newsletter?
12. Help prepare mailings (2 hours)?

Please indicate your interest and mail to:

Andy Schneit, Membership Chair
3625 Springer Court
Walnut Creek, California
94598

(Cut out the above address and paste it on an envelope)

NAME

ADDRESS

CITY/STATE/ZIP

TELEPHONE/ E MAIL

MYTHS ABOUT SUICIDE

People who talk about suicide won't do it. Almost everyone who commits suicide gives some clue or warning.

Anyone who tries to commit suicide must be crazy. It isn't as simple as this. Suicidal thinking isn't necessarily a sign of mental illness. In young people depression is almost invariably behind suicidal thinking.

If people really want to kill themselves, nothing will stop them. What they usually want is for the pain to stop. The impulse to end it all doesn't last forever. Sometimes it doesn't last for long at all, particularly if things in the person's life change.

People who complete suicide didn't seek help. More than half of the people who commit suicide have been to their doctor for help in the six months before their death.

Talking/asking about suicide may give someone the idea. The opposite is true. Discussing suicide openly helps people talk about their feelings and look for other ways to stop the pain.

APPLY NOW TO HEAD UP A COMMITTEE

Two of the most interesting and rewarding committee chairs are still open. The Government Relations and the Public Relations committees are open and looking for leadership.

Being on the Government Relations committee will introduce you to the leading elected and appointed officials in the county. Many of the communications we send to those officials we hand carry to their offices so as to know their staff on a first name basis. The time required is not inordinate and you are assured of meeting some very interesting people.

The Chair of the Public Relations Committee will come in contact with Editors of the Contra Costa Times, The Chronicle and the assignment editors of the five local television stations. It is one of NAMI-CC's missions to educate the public about the problems and opportunities in the mental health field. For more information call or E Mail Dave Kahler:

925-676 5771

xnamicc@aol.com

UPCOMING ARTICLES FOR 2004

- Should you disclose a psychiatric disorder to a perspective employer? The Pros and Cons.
- How the Section 8's work.
- A facility profile on the Mt. Diablo Pavilion.
- Where and what are the homeless shelters in Contra Costa County.
- The progress on the Canciamilla Law.
- A facility profile on the Napa State Hospital/Prison.
- How ambulances are paid for conveying 5150 subjects to the Regional Medical Center.
- How to run your own drug testing program at home.
- Dental care problems in the mental health community.
- Review of the 5150 process.
- Profile on psychiatrist Franz Wasserman and his 50 + year career helping the mentally ill.

All these and more will be featured in the NAMI-CC monthly newsletter.

NOW IS THE TIME TO

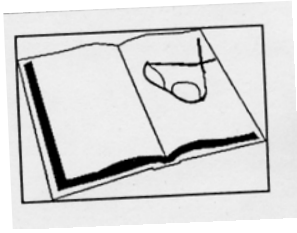
RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP

**A self-addressed envelope has been
inserted in this newsletter for
your convenience. Use the form on page 8.**

If you prefer to pay by credit card you may call:

925-280 0408 or 925-676 5771 or xnamicc@aol.com

BOOK REVIEW



Review by Mae Bragen

Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder, Help For Children and Adolescents, Mitzi Waltz

This is a basic book that steers you on a course of understanding your child's OCD and finding the roadway to successful treatment. Included are how to negotiate the school system to get the best possible special education. Transition to higher education and the work world is explained, as well as other aspects of independent living.

Should I Medicate My Child, Lawrence H. Diller, MD

This book presents a balanced perspective regarding children's behavior problems that may seem insurmountable. Dr. Diller suggests a thorough evaluation before making the decision regarding medication. He recommends behavior strategies such as trying structure and discipline for your child first. Medication should be tried when all other options have failed. The second half of the book discusses medications in some detail.

The Music Of Madness, Tracy L. Harris

A personal journal of a talented musician afflicted with Schizoaffective Disorder. This young woman had ongoing, unwavering support from her family. As you read this book you journey with her through her hallucinations and delusions, her joy of music, her reminiscences, and her autobiographical accounts of her life, all beautifully described. In the end she found a psychiatrist who could work with her, adjust her medications, and understand how to help her move toward recovery.

Invisible Plague, The Rise of Mental Illness 1750 to the present., E. Fuller

Torrey MD and Judy Miller

Dr. Torrey, well known as an advocate for NAMI and the mentally ill, writes another book about the plight of the mentally ill. He theorizes that research indicates that insanity has been steadily increasing over time. He traces how the mentally ill were treated throughout history, but describes cases primarily in the western world. Very little is known from his historical account about other parts of Europe, Asia, the middle east, and Africa. He does not discuss the influence of the mass immigration to this country from other parts of the world. But, in general, this is a very interesting, well written and informative book. He cites genetics, urbanization, stress and other factors as causative.

Out Of Its Mind, Psychiatry In Crisis, a call for reform. J. Allen Hobson MD, and Jonathan A. Leonard

The theme of this book is one we are all too familiar with; that when the patients in the mental hospitals were discharged several years ago community services were not available to care for them. Another contributing factor to the social ills that were created was the influence of psychoanalysis.

The book generates further interest in its discussion of research on dreams, psychosis, and brain science.

Most of all, the authors call for reforms in the treatment of the mentally ill by attracting doctors to the field of psychiatry by broadening the function of psychiatry. If there were more psychiatrists they could do more than just monitor medications. They could form relationships with their patients by spending more quality time as therapists or advocates. The authors offer many suggestions for implementing these reforms. We would all hope that the medical schools pay attention to these proposals.

BITS AND PIECES

INCUBATORS FOR CATASTROPHE

There are some 300,000 people in American prisons that suffer from severe mental disorders, 3 to 4 times the number in mental hospitals. Human Rights Watch reports that the penal system is "not only serving as a warehouse for the mentally ill, but is also acting as an incubator for even worse illnesses and psychiatric breakdowns."

EARLY DETECTION

"The impact of untreated bipolar disorder on a person's life is huge," said Richard C. Birkel, Ph. D., NAMI Executive Director. "Early detection and treatment can prevent years of illness-driven choices that produce devastating individual losses."

ABOUT NAMI

As The Nation's Voice on Mental Illness, NAMI leads a national grassroots effort to transform America's mental health care system, combat stigma, support research and attain adequate health insurance, housing, rehabilitation, jobs and family support for millions of Americans living with mental illness. NAMI has over 220,000 members nationally, 14,000 in California alone and 421 family memberships in Contra Costa County representing over 1000 persons. NAMI-CC is the second largest affiliate in the state and has been for several years. We are fortunate to have a large, effective support organization in our county.

DONATE A CAR TO NAMI-CC

Get the generous tax deduction and avoid the classified ad, smog, DMV hassle. NAMI handles it all and you get the deduction. E mail xnamicc@aol.com or 676 5771

**LETTERS TO THE
EDITOR**

Dear Editor:

I want to thank NAMI for the help they gave my son in the early part of April. After his coverage through Kaiser ended, he had no idea where to turn to continue his treatment. I was out of the country and unable to offer help.

So he looked in the Yellow Pages for organizations that work in the mental health field and found the number for NAMI.

He was connected to a NAMI member who told him he would have to get into the county system which his Medi-Cal would pay for. She not only explained just how to get into the system but also gave him a ride to the clinic and helped him with the papers and forms, something that would have been a real challenge for him.

He didn't get a case manager but he continues to get help from his NAMI friend which has been a real life saver. She has helped him learn about his medications and why they are important. This is the first time he has had an agreeable attitude toward treatment and the taking of medications. For that I am most grateful.

He now has a treatment plan, has a bank account and is sharing an apartment. I deeply appreciate the help NAMI gave him.

Ann Marie Foster

JANUARY DONATIONS

IN MEMORY OF

Linda Marowsky

Dorothea and Daniel Kaufman

Doris Marowsky

David Kahler and Family

In Honor of:

**The commitment, energy, creativity,
concern and generosity of**

Gloria Hill

From: Mary Olowin

IN HONOR OF

**The Dedication of
Doris Watson and her
Work in the Family to Family
Program**

**From: Brian and Donna
Weise**

IN THE NAME OF

Terry Johnson

From: Sharon Hill

Donald Britt

**HAS MADE A MOST
GENEROUS DONATION
TO NAMI-CC**



DONATION FORM

Make check payable to NAMI-CC
Mail to: Treasurer, NAMI-CC
P.O. Box 21247, Concord, CA., 94521

Name

Street Address

City State Zip

E Mail: _____

Use Donation For:

NAMI-CC General Fund

NAMI-CC Housing fund

Family to Family Program

NARSAD (Research)

Other _____

In Honor Of: _____

In Memory Of: _____

COMMENTS

Comments for the newsletter should be sent to:
E mail: x nami@aol.com
Fax: 925-476 1444 or mail to:
P.O. Box 21247
Concord, CA., 94521
All letters are subject to abridgment and those unpublished can be neither acknowledged nor returned.

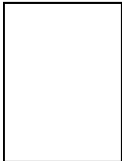
**E SCRIP
PRODUCING
\$500 MONTHLY**

You won't find an easier way to help NAMI-CC and raise funds to aid the mentally ill than the E Scrip program. Call Ann Pereyra, 925-937



January, 2004

**NAMI Contra Costa
P.O. Box 21247
Concord, CA.
94521**



NAMI Contra Costa

Our purpose is to support families, to educate ourselves and the public, to advocate for better treatment, and to support legislation which helps those with neurobiological brain disorders.

General membership in NAMI-CC is \$40 per calendar year. Dues paid from January to October provide membership for the current year. Dues paid in October, November and December provide membership for the following year.

Your dues support our affiliate, and should be mailed to our P.O. Box 21247, Concord, CA., 94521. Dues also include your membership in NAMI California and NAMI National.

Your dues entitle you to receive the NAMI Contra Costa newsletter, the NAMI-California publication "The Connection," and the NAMI National publication, "The Advocate." You are a member of each of the three organizations for the one membership fee. If you are solicited for membership or special gifts from the State or National organization, give generously if you can, but all gifts are voluntary and do not entitle you to membership in NAMI Contra Costa.

To continue to receive the newsletter after the first two complimentary copies, please return an application for membership with your check. You will be most welcome at the monthly General Meeting and all the support meetings throughout the month.

APPLICATION FOR NAMI-CC MEMBERSHIP

Make check payable to NAMI Contra Costa
Complete this information cut-out and return it to:
Treasurer, NAMI-CC
P.O. Box 21247, Concord, CA. 94521

Name _____
Street _____
City _____ State _____ ZIP _____
Phone _____ E-mail _____

My membership is: New A Renewal

- Mental Health Client \$ 20.00
- General Membership \$ 40.00
- Professional Member \$ 50.00
- Century Club \$100.00
- Lifetime \$500.00

If you would like to volunteer for projects, please describe your area of interest: _____