



NAMI Contra Costa

National Alliance On Mental Illness

Contra Costa's Voice on Mental Illness *March, 2009*

The NAMI Contra Costa Newsletter is available on the website: www.namicontracosta.org
E mail: xnamicc@aol.com

NAMI BOARD ADDRESSES MHSA OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE

The dissatisfaction over the turmoil with how Proposition 63 (MHSA) is being administered has grown white hot.

At the February 14, 2009, NAMI Contra Costa Board of Directors meeting, it reviewed the process and what has been achieved in the four years since the passage of the Proposition 63.

The Board then voted to support a "Memorandum of Family Concerns" in which the Family Steering Committee was severely critical of the current situation. The memorandum also made several suggestions.

Board member Teresa Pasquini and NAMI member Annis Pereyra took the Board resolution (See the resolution on Page 5) to the MHSA's Oversight and Accountability monthly meeting in Sacramento.

They found that the concerns expressed in the motion have been expressed by other counties. They also found that other organizations have expressed their apprehensions over how the Act is being

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SPECIAL ELECTION

\$460 MILLION AT RISK IN SPECIAL ELECTION

The State Legislature is going to give the voters the choice to take \$460 million from Prop 63 monies over two years.

The original law strictly restricts the proceeds from Prop 63 to be used only in the mental health field. The rationalization is that the historic budget crisis is so acute, that it would be justified to borrow \$460 million from the MHS funds.

What was to be the transformation of the underfunded mental health system, may be lost to the General Fund.

The special election will be Tuesday May 19, 2009, just 74 days from the publication of this newsletter. The loss of the \$460 million would be horrendous.

General Meeting

MARCH

**Thursday,
March 19, 2009**

Doors open at 6:30 pm for NAMI Walk registration, library and manned information tables

Topic

Mindfulness and Centering Strategies to Enhance Therapy.
See article in February, 2009 NAMI newsletter

Speakers

Dr. James Bramson
Clinical Psychologist

Barbara Kaplan
Health Educator
Yoga and Meditation Teacher

Josh Wilson
Doctoral Psychology Intern

Location

John Muir Medical Center
Concord Campus

2540 East Street, Concord
925-682 8200

www.namicontracosta.org
E mail : xnamicc@aol.com

NAMI Board Meeting

The NAMI Board meets the 2nd Saturday of each month. See the website for details

NAMI-CC Care and Support Groups

Central Contra Costa County

1st Tuesday of each month, Now In Its 10th year. 7:30-9:00 pm Hillcrest Congregational Church, 404 Gregory Lane, Pleasant Hill. Contact Peggy Luna, Dave Kahler 925- 676-5771 or E mail: xnamicc@aol.com

3rd Monday of each month, 7:15-9:15 pm, John Muir Hospital, 1601 Ygnacio Valley Road, Walnut Creek Campus, downstairs in the Stern Conference Room. The group is facilitated by Dr. Mary Olowin and Gloria Hill.

Call: Gloria Hill 925- 957-5146.

NAMI Tri-Valley

2nd Monday of each Month: 7:15—9:00 pm Livermore Public Library, 1188 S. Livermore Ave., Livermore.

Contact support facilitator Marsha McInnis, marsha@nami-trivalley.org or 925- 980 5331

4th Monday of each month, 7:00—8:30 pm St. Claire's Episcopal Church, 3350 Hopyard Road, Pleasanton

Contact Russell or Donna White. russdonnawhite@comcast.net 925- 455 6901

Family Support Group

For families with a mentally ill loved one, Meets Monthly

Pastor Heather Hammer

San Ramon Valley United Methodist Church

902 Danville Blvd., Alamo

925-837 5243

BIPOLAR CHILL (CLIENT RUN)

Manic Depression Support Group

Wednesday 7:00—8:30 pm

710 Broadway #3G Walnut Creek

Contact Lisa or Scott 925-743 1160

TRI-VALLEY BIPOLAR (Consumer Run)

Bipolar and Depression Support Group

Wednesdays, 7:15 pm to 8:45 pm

St. Claire's Episcopal Church, Pleasanton

Contact: Bob Hogan: 925-462 5481

NEW HOPE

BIPOLAR SUPPORT GROUP

For parents of children and adolescents diagnosed with a mood disorder.

Lafayette:

2nd Monday of each month

7:00 pm to 9:00 pm

Lafayette-Orinda Presbyterian Church Room #4

Contact: Annette 510-733 0577 or

Joani 925-962 9952

www.newhopesupportgroup.com

SELF-INJURY SUPPORT GROUP

(Consumer Run)

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

Call: Veronica 925-945 7871

H.E.L.P.

Hope, Encouragement, Love and Prayer

Support group for those coping with a mental illness and/or their families and friends.

Time: Last Monday of each month 7:00—9:00 pm

Where: Christ the King Church, Parish Hall

199 Brandon Road, Pleasant Hill

Contact Joe or Pam Appel 925-947 0269

FAMILY ADVOCATE HOURS

Gloria Hill, Contra Costa County

Mental Health Advocate

Monday - Friday 9:30 am - 6:00 pm

925-957 5146

NAMI-Contra Costa
National Alliance on Mental Illness

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Richard Derrico Behavioral Health Court
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Connie Steers Consumer Relations
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Newsletter Group

Bob Newell Caroline Jackson
Rich and Yvonne DeAndre Fran Martin
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Dick Hunter Sean Kleen

E mail: xnamicc@aol.com
Website: namicontracosta.org
Phone: 925- 465 3864

Newsletter Deadline: 20th of Each Month

**PRESIDENT'S
COLUMN**

By Al Farmer

The nation, the state and Contra Costa County are facing hard times. If the Contra Costa County Mental Health Administration doesn't receive some more funding soon, it may be forced to close down critical clinics and further reduce services. This will result in more and more people turning to NAMI for guidance and support.

Thus, if we are able to continue to provide free services and support to families and to the consumers, **it is most important that all NAMI members renew their membership for 2009 as soon as possible.**

The membership application renewal form can be found on the last page of this newsletter. So, please complete this simple form and send a check for only \$40 for a family membership or \$20 for a consumer membership and mail it to our treasurer at the enclosed address. Many thanks in advance for your prompt attention to this matter.

On the subject of fundraising, we are currently in the process of putting together walk teams for the upcoming Bay Area NAMI Walk in Golden Gate Park on Saturday May 30, 2009. **The NAMI Walk is our most important fundraising event** which allows us to provide free critical programs such as Family to Family, In Our Own Voice and Peer to Peer.

(The President's Column is continued on page 7, column 1)

**GENERAL
MEETING**

Thursday, March 19, 2009, **Mindfulness and Centering Strategies to Enhance Therapy**, Dr. James Bramson, Clinical Psychologist, assisted by Barbara Kaplan, Yoga and Meditation Teacher, Certified Yoga Therapist, Health Educator and Josh Wilson, Doctoral Psychology Intern

Thursday, April 16, 2009, **Talk Therapy: How It Helps People With Mental Illness**, Judy Feins, MSW, LCSW, Psychotherapist, private practice, Berkeley

Thursday, May 21, 2009, **Issues in Healthcare Reform: Benefits for the Mentally Ill Under a Single Payer System**, Pat Snyder, Legislative Consultant for League of Women Voters; Chair of CCC Chapter of Health Care for All

Thursday June 18, 2009 **Pediatric Psychopharmacology**, Dr. Michael Levin, Behavioral Pediatrician and Child Psychologist.

Thursday, July 16, 2009, **PLAN** (Planned Lifetime Assistance Network of California), Julie Hoffman to discuss a unique special needs trust concept;
www.planofcalif@aol.com.

Thursday, Aug. 20, 2009 **Understanding and Coping with Post-Traumatic Stress Following Military Deployment: Help for Individuals and Family**. Carol Salacka, Psychologist, Concord Vet Center, Readjustment Counseling Services, Lt. Col., US Army (Ret), and Nathan Johnson, MSW, US Marine Corps, 2001 to 2004

Information: (925) 933-4012

NAMI BOARD ADDRESSES MHSA

(Continued from page 1)

administered.

To add to the general dissatisfaction with the MHSA is the threat of the May 19 Special Election where the voters could approve the transfer of \$460 million from the MHSA to the general fund.

If approved, it would cause immediate harm to the most vulnerable in the state who rely on Medi-Cal for their most basic mental health services.

It would exacerbate the cash crunch counties are already experiencing in the current economic downturn by forcing them to direct sharply declining MHSA dollars into Medi-Cal and other mental health services.

It would threaten counties' ability to continue providing services to more than 200,000 new clients who have been served with MHSA funding.

Family Steering Committee

The "Memorandum of Family Concerns" said "There have been enormous sums of MHSA dollars flowing into Contra Costa Mental Health. The programs created are serving approximately 200 FSP (Full service Partnerships). The committee has been unable to find reliable, available statistics to demonstrate the dollar amount that has been spent on these 200 FSP's for an estimation of the expense per enrolled FSP.

The committee has concluded that, based on fiscal data we have been given, the results are questionable."

Some of the other conclusions the committee made were:

- Huge sums of MHSA funds were expended to serve so few consumers (known as Full Service Partners)
- Inability to find meaningful resources of financial data in a form that is simplified and easily readable by the general public
- Housing program that has run out of vouchers and has not provided for target goals, especially Transitional Age Youth
- Lack of housing resources for those who are unable to live independently
- Unreasonable expenses on Planning, Administrative Supports, and Consultants
- State guidelines that were not accurately interpreted, forcing funding only on new programs which created a 2-tier system, when funds could have been used to enhance existing services and to serve the previously underserved
- Lack of evidence of evaluation for implemented programs, lack of oversight, lack of collaborative efforts to include family members, thereby reducing involvement

Questions raised included:

- Do we need to change and restructure programs?
- Do we need to change providers to ensure more cost effective results?
- Do we need to re-evaluate the focal populations?
- What is the real cost per FSP that is being spent to deliver Cadillac services for the few at the expense of the many resulting in the "two tier" system?
- Why hasn't the Housing Coordinator been hired, why haven't family members been hired? How much money is being spent on augmentation for FSP's who need to be in a B&C setting?

VOLUNTEERS

By Kay Derrico

Many dozens of volunteers powerhouse our all volunteer organization. A number of folks have taken on new duties, increasing our outreach and strength.

Volunteers have begun manning information tables at our monthly General Meetings. The Clubhouse table is represented by Susan Jordan, Family to Family by Julia Bonacich, Peer to Peer by Lisa Bruce, and the NAMI Walk table by Barbara Scott.

Also now at the General Meetings are Fran Martin, Library Services Coordinator, and Steve Gallion, our Greeter Coordinator.

Thomas Cloney is NAMI-CC's Family to Family Coordinator, while Naomi Chamberlain has agreed to be our Faith Community Outreach Representative and will work with the Contra Costa County Interfaith Council. Roger Gregory is heading up Membership. Lisa Bruce, Peer to Peer Coordinator, has announced the success of the first classes for consumer education.

NAMI-CC is now represented at the Behavioral Health Court by liaison Rich Derrico who participates weekly at Court and Dale Brodsky who has spearheaded the Christmas Santa Bags for BHC clients.

Although we have many volunteers, we would love to have and need many more. Whatever time or whatever interest you have, there is a space for you. There are one-time-only jobs (such as bringing cookies to a General Meeting) as well as ongoing small jobs, such as setting up chairs. There are several open chairperson jobs: Scrip, Newcomers, Veterans' Liaison, Volunteers Coordinator, and Refreshments Coordinator. To add your energy to NAMI, call 925-933-4012, fill out a sign up slip at any General Meeting, or email kayderrico [@comcast.net](mailto:kayderrico@comcast.net).

Editor's Note: *The letter below is the motion from the NAMI Board of Directors to the MHSA Oversight Committee discussed in the article on page 1, column 1.*

NAMI Contra Costa
National Alliance on the Mentally Ill
 P.O. Box 21247
 Concord, CA, 94521
 925-465-3864

February 17, 2009

Messrs. Tom Green and Larry Poaster, Co-Chairs
 Mental Health Funding and Policy Committee
 MHSA Oversight and Accountability Commission

RE: CONTRA COSTA COUNTY'S MHSA FAMILY STEERING COMMITTEE'S
 MEMORANDUM OF CONCERN DATED FEBRUARY 9, 2009

Dear Messrs. Green and Poaster:

The Board of Directors of NAMI Contra Costa has received a Memorandum of Concern dated February 9, 2009, drafted by the MHSA Family Steering Committee for our county. The NAMI CC Board voted, at its February 14, 2009 meeting, to fully and strongly support the concerns stated in the FSC memorandum. Additionally, our Board would suggest that the MHSA OAC take immediate steps to address the issues that have been raised in Contra Costa County. We assume that these concerns are not unique to our county. We would expect to find similar problems throughout California. We believe the failure to serve more consumers and families must be remedied immediately.

NAMI Contra Costa supports the NAMI California MHSA Position Paper dated 12-31-04. Several members of our Board and affiliate have responded by recognizing the importance of proper implementation of the MHSA. Our affiliate also accepted the challenge, issued by Ralph E. Nelson Jr. MD., former NAMI California Board President, in the Spring 2007 edition of NAMI California Connection, which stated, "We need to put more pressure on our county mental health officials and boards of supervisors to transform the entire county mental health system."

Members of our affiliate, both consumers and family members, have spent hours attending meetings, forums, conferences and stakeholder sessions with the spirit and hope of collaboration with the policy makers and providers of our county. Our NAMI Board proudly provided a 30th Anniversary Presentation to our Board of Supervisors, this past October, to inform and enlighten our community, on the value of our service to the county. We had several consumers join our celebration and commitment to work together towards achieving wellness, resiliency and recovery.

At the December 2008 General meeting, our affiliate hosted a discussion, where we welcomed Rose King and Dede Ranahan to address the flaws and challenges of the MHSA program implementation, with specific emphasis on the two tiered system. Prior to that meeting our affiliate arranged frank discussions with members from three of our Board of Supervisor's staff. Ideas were exchanged for course correction around the implementation problems, both statewide and locally. We included a meeting with our county's Mental Health Director, Donna Wigand, and the Program Manager of the MHSA, Sherry Bradley.

(This letter is continued on the next page)

SAVE THE DATES

Annual Mental Health Conference, presented by Menlo Park Presbyterian Church, Sat., May 2, 2009, Menlo Park Presbyterian Church, Menlo Park,

FnJPramann@comcast.net

2009 Conference on Mental Health & Spirituality, presented by California Institute for Mental Health, June 1 and 2, 2009, Marriott Oakland City Center, Oakland, mhastie@cimh.org and mtarver@peersnet.org.

NAMI 2009 National Convention (Our very own NAMI-CC Veronica Vale will be presenting a workshop on self-injury.) July 6-9, 2009; San Francisco Hilton and Towers;

San Francisco; Information, registration, www.nami.org

NAMI Walk 2009
Saturday morning, May 30, Speedway Meadows, Golden Gate Park, San Francisco. Contact Barbara Scott at (925) 689-9380 or barbarajeane39@astound.net or www.namiwalkSFbay.org

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These sessions were informative and proved the need to push harder for more careful oversight and accountability. We believe the Contra Costa County Family Steering Committee has attempted to do just that with their Memorandum of Concern.

With an economic environment that promises draconian cuts to health and welfare services, the promise of the MHSA must be kept. We are anticipating a State Budget that may include a \$227 million dollar assault on that promise. Our county is facing a 3.5 million dollar reduction to the mental health department budget, for the current year. This is one of many cuts, approaching 30 million dollars, faced by our county over the past 6 years. These reductions include clinic closings, staff reductions, pharmacies closed, and programs and services eliminated. Increased consumer and family suffering has been the resulting consequence. NAMI CC supports a policy change which provides flexibility for the use of MHSA funds. We must employ these funds with efficiency and accountability for the greatest impact. The State must fulfill their obligation to fund the approved programs.

NAMI CC appreciates the hard work and effort that has gone into the planning and implementation of the MHSA, both statewide and locally. However, we are disappointed in the expense and outcomes. We want to be part of the solution to the problems before our state and county. NAMI families are accustomed to problem solving. We believe that stigma and discrimination continues to prevent the family voice from being heard. We are currently being given token seats at the table with no real influence over the local policies and implementation of new programs. This was not the intent or spirit of the MHSA. NAMI CC supports a policy change that guarantees the end of all discriminatory practices and includes improved oversight of the stakeholder process. This process must remain pure and without conflict of interest in order to assist in system transformation.

Our affiliate includes consumers and family members who continue to experience the trauma of homelessness, hospitalizations, incarceration, isolation, and despair. Our stories and pain must be given value. We are committed to the promise of partnership with all who wish to end the issues that prevent a life of dignity and respect for all.

Sincerely,
The Board of Directors of NAMI Contra Costa

Cc: Dede Ranahan, NAMI California; Donna Wigand, Mental Health Director, Contra Costa County; the Contra Costa County Mental Health Commission; the Contra Costa County Board of Supervisors; the Contra Costa Times.

CLUBHOUSE REPORT

The Herb Putnam Clubhouse is open for business and thriving. It is a great place for consumers to work on their computer skills, have lunch and help with all that goes on. The Clubhouse now has its own checkoff box in the donations section.

President's Column

(Continued from page 3)

It is through these programs NAMI is able to educate and provide vital support for families and consumers.

The NAMI Board of Directors is currently forming a team for the NAMI Walk and we would very much appreciate your support for our team by sponsoring the team or by sponsoring an individual team walker.

It would also be wonderful if you could join us in this great activity. We will be providing a free picnic for our NAMI members and there will be live music and inspirational speeches and entertainment.

If you are unable to attend, you can be a virtual walker by sending a check or credit card data to:

NAMI Walk Bay Area
3020 El Cerrito Plaza #195
El Cerrito, CA 94530

You can also register free online at www.namiwalksfbay.org.

Be sure to indicate that your tax deductible contribution is on behalf of NAMI Contra Costa. For more information call (800) 556-2401

MARCH DONATIONS

New Century Club Members

Dan and Teresa Pasquini

Dick and Nancy Owens

In Memory of:

Herb Putnam

Tom and Linda Ryan
John and Mary Munson

A Donation:

Louise E. Diracles and
Kramer B. Klabau

A Donation:

Laurence Byrne
% PG & E Campaign
for the Community

DONATION FORM

Make check payable to NAMI-CC
Mail to: Treasurer, NAMI-CC
P.O. Box 21247, Concord, CA,
94521
NAMI-CC Tax ID # 68-0209474

Name

Street Address

City State

Zip _____

Phone: _____

Use Donation For:

- Peer to Peer Program
 NAMI-CC General Fund
 Family to Family
 Housing
 IOOV (In Our Own Voice)
 Herb Putnam Clubhouse

E mail address:

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

If you need Support, Guidance
and Information:
**First Tuesday Support
Group**
Tuesday, April 7, 7:30 pm
Hillcrest Church, 404 Gregory Lane
Pleasant Hill See Page 2

Stamp

NAMI Walk 2009

A great family day in one of the world's greatest parks with a free picnic. It is the major NAMI Contra Costa fundraiser of the year.

Speedway Meadow, Golden Gate Park, San Francisco, Saturday, May 30, 2009

NAMI Contra Costa

The annual membership dues are \$40. This makes you a member of NAMI National, NAMI California and NAMI Contra Costa. You are automatically a member of all three organizations.

If you are solicited for membership or special donations from the State or National organizations, give generously if you can, but all such donations are voluntary and would be over and above your membership in NAMI Contra Costa.

Dues paid in October, November and December provide membership for the following year.

Send your membership application to:

NAMI Contra Costa
P.O. Box 21247
Concord, California
94521
E mail: xnamicc@aol.com
This Monthly Newsletter is Published by: NAMI
Contra Costa

Affiliated with NAMI National and
NAMI California

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
E Mail Address: xnamicc@aol.com

Name _____

Street _____

City _____ State _____ ZIP _____

Phone _____

E-mail _____

Membership is: New A Renewal

<input type="checkbox"/> Mental Health Client	\$ 20.00
<input type="checkbox"/> Dual Affiliate	20.00
<input type="checkbox"/> General Membership	40.00
<input type="checkbox"/> Professional Membership	50.00
<input type="checkbox"/> Century Club	100.00
<input type="checkbox"/> Lifetime	500.00