



NAMI Contra Costa

The Family's Voice On Mental Illness

May, 2004

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

MAY

GENERAL MEETING

Thursday, May 20, 2004
7:00 pm

GUEST SPEAKERS

Speaking on the Worst Budget Crisis in the County's History and How It Will Affect Your Family!

Suzanne Travano
Care Management Administrator
Contra Costa Mental Health Division

ALSO

Merlin Wedepohl
Executive Director, Shelter, Inc.

How to Get Housing For Your Loved One

WHERE:
MT DIABLO MEDICAL CENTER

2540 East Street
Concord, CA
925-682 8200

BUDGET HAWKS CIRCLING YOU MUST CONTACT YOUR SUPERVISOR AND JOHN SWEETEN NOW!

Dr. William Walker, the Health Services Director has announced that the County Administrator has asked his Department to submit a plan that would show reductions of nearly \$25 million. From the budgetary standpoint, the county and state have been cutting what little fat there was in the Mental Health Division. At this point the muscle is gone and the budgetary chain saw is ripping into the bone. What is being bantered around the corridors of power is the unthinkable. Dr. Walker is to be credited with being an experienced and skilled administrator capable of defending his Department. But he cannot do it alone.



Dr. William Walker
Director
Health Services

The families that depend on these services must speak up in force and make it clear that these are life and death matters with no margins of error.

(Continued on page 5, column 2)

SOLD! **HOME VALUES ESCALATE IN POET'S CORNER**

By Dick Owens

The real estate values in the Poet's Corner area have been even more robust than the general real estate market. This comes as a relief to those who were convinced that the opening of a mental health facility would have a negative impact on the values of their homes. The sales prices on the homes from Patterson Boulevard to Pleasant Hill Road, from Boyd Road to Oak Park Boulevard have more than kept up with the general real estate market. Julia Bonacich, active in Pleasant Hill real estate, says Poet's Corner is on the verge of setting records. Homes on Roberta



Julia Bonacich

(Continued on page 5, column 1)

THE 21ST ANNUAL HUMAN RACE

The Human Race will be held at Heather Farm Park in Walnut Creek, Saturday, May 8 from 8:00 am to 1:00 pm. NAMI-CC will offer free burgers, hot dogs and refreshments for all. Bring the whole family!

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Now in Pleasant Hill

Rally for Mental Health Initiative . .5

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

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

Contact: Russell or Donna White E mail: russdonnawhite@sbcglobal.net 925-455 6901

TRI-VALLEY BIPOLAR (Consumer Run)

Manic Depression Support Group

Wednesdays, 7:15 pm to 9:00 pm

St. Clair's Episcopal Church, Pleasanton. Krista Radojevich 925- 462 1248

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

NAPA STATE HOSPITAL SUPPORT GROUP (NSHSG)

Meets the 2nd Saturday of each month, 9:30-11:30 am.

WHERE: Hospital's Volunteer Center Conference Room

For Information: Gene Schulting 925-933 1151

Donna White: 707-451 8341

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 Guglielmo 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

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

Kay Derrico, 1st Vice President
(925) 933 4012 vder123@aol.com

Terry Dillingham, 2nd Vice President
(925) 825 4700 tdillingham@phoenix-programs.org

Marilyn Capener, Secretary
(925)254 5090 marilyncap@aol.com

Coralie Reed, Treasurer
(925) 376 0880 coralie@dafg.com

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Mailing Address:
P.O. Box 21247
Concord, CA., 94521
Phone: (925) 646 5798
E Mail: xnamicc@aol.com
Web Site:
www.namicontracosta.org
namicalifornia.org
nami.org

PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

David Kahler

As every member knows only too well. . . NAMI does considerable good for the families that have a mentally ill loved one. NAMI Contra Costa has grown in 26 years from just a few families to 422 family memberships that effectively represents over 1000 individuals.

To insure that tremendous growth continues, it is imperative that each new member make the commitment to pass his/her knowledge and experiences on to TWO other families. That would result in exponential growth that would insure that there will always be a strong NAMI-CC.

It was interesting to see that the concerns about real estate values dropping if a mental health facility opened in the Poet's Corner neighborhood were way off the mark. We knew that to be the case in Fremont, Berkeley, Richmond, Vallejo and Fairfield and other areas that have had such facilities for years. But it is good to see \$889,000 sales prices in the immediate neighborhood.

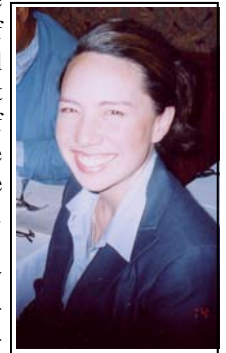
If you are one who has never written to or called your supervisor, now would be the time to break that nefarious record and write a short letter advising him or her that the direct services in the mental health field were under developed, under funded and under performing BEFORE this historic budget cataclysm hit us. The letters absolutely do count and they result in political muscle that money can't buy. Please write now.

We will gather at Heather Farm Park NEXT Saturday morning, go for a nice walk and enjoy a pleasant BBQ. Be certain you get your pledge sheets signed, collect the amount pledged and turn the sheet in. For the really early arrivals, the Lions Club of Pleasant Hill will be serving a pancake breakfast. Bring the whole family!

We are all looking forward to Dr. Moutier's presentation at the June General Meeting. She has had considerable experience in the problems of medication non-compliance.

RISPERDAL RESEARCHER TO ADDRESS JUNE MEETING

Dr. Christine Yu Moutier will speak at the NAMI-CC General Meeting in June. One of the issues she will deal with is the great challenge of medication non-compliance. The introduction of Consta™ is a major breakthrough in the management of medications. It will allow the patient to have the ease of dealing with the medication but once every two weeks.



Originally trained as a classical pianist at Vassar, Christine Yu Moutier went on to study medicine at the University of California, San Diego. She trained in Psychiatry at UCSD as well, receiving additional training in Women's Mental Health and Consultation-Liaison Psychiatry. Now she balances her roles as Associate Residency Training Director for UCSD's Psychiatry Training program and her role as Medical Director of the Inpatient Psychiatry Unit at the San Diego VAMC. She is also the mother of two children.

She was one of the investigators for the development of Risperdal® Consta™, and was involved with both the 12 week and 1 year trials.

NAMI CALIFORNIA PRESIDENT TO WALK IN NAMI/LOS ANGELES WALK

Chet Watson, President of NAMI California will be walking in the 1st Annual NAMI/LA WALK May 22, 2004. He and all of us would appreciate your pledges of support. You can do so by going to this secure online link:

nami.org/walkdonation.cfm?=-621

THE MT. DIABLO MEDICAL PAVILION

There are just two hospitals in Contra Costa County that treat acute psychiatric patients. Patients in the county system go to the Contra Costa Regional Medical Center in Martinez. Those that have their own private insurance would probably go to the Mt. Diablo Medical Pavilion in Concord.

John Muir/Mt. Diablo Health System offers complete inpatient and outpatient mental health programs and services through the Medical Pavilion. It is a fully accredited, 73-bed psychiatric hospital located in Concord. The Medical Pavilion offers the full continuum of psychiatric treatment for adults, children and adolescents who are experiencing psychiatric or behavioral problems. For those who are dependent on alcohol or drugs, they also offer a full array of substance abuse treatment programs. The Medical Pavilion has been treating patients in its state of the art facility since 1993 and has helped thousands of people recover from mental illness. They are committed to treating individuals seeking treatment with dignity and respect in the least restrictive and most supportive environment possible. They develop a personalized plan for each person based on their problems and needs.

The Medical Pavilion is located at 2740 Grant Street in Concord, California, 94520. Their phone numbers are 925-674 4100 or 800-680 6555.

13th ANNUAL CONSUMER/FAMILY PICNIC

Preparations are well under way for the annual summer picnic at the Pleasant Hill Park on Friday, June 17. There will be awards, a raffle and plenty of food and drink for all. To volunteer E mail:

xnamicc@aol.com
925-676 5771 or 925-686 5237

TORLAKSON ADDRESSES THE SSRI ISSUES

Senator Tom Torlakson has taken an interest in the SSRI- suicide issue. He recently convened a meeting of psychiatrists, the Crisis Center, the Mental Health Division and NAMI-CC.

Terry Leach, one of his staff who is both an R.N. and a graduate from law school, made the point that the lawmakers in Washington are not going to take action.

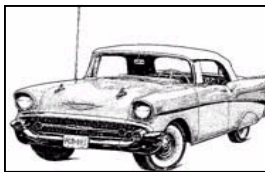
It was agreed that there is much more to be known as to whether SSRI's (Prozac, Paxil, Zoloft and Cefexa) present any increased danger of suicide. In the March NAMI-CC newsletter, J. John Mann, M.D. of Columbia University argued that "the SSRI's do vastly more good for depressed people than non-treatment."

Ms. Leach sent out a study that presents the opposite viewpoint. It is by Peter R. Breggin and it appeared in the *Ethical Human Sciences Journal*. He feels that SSRI's commonly cause or exacerbate a range of abnormal behavioral conditions which can result in suicidal and other forms of extreme abnormal behavior.

Senator Torlakson will continue to study the issue from the state's viewpoint as to whether additional label requirements should be asked to be added to the containers.

DONATE A CAR

The NAMI-CC car donation program is one the most effective ways to help NAMI to help the mentally ill. Because we DO NOT advertise in other publications and have no paid employees, all of the proceeds go to help those who need it most. NAMI handles the DMV and



smog hassle. Just E mail:
xnamicc@aol.com or call 925-676 5771

DREAMCATCHERS EXPANDS TO PLEASANT HILL

By Nathaniel Hoffman,
Contra Costa Times.

Elizabeth Schweickert is holding down a steady job at the Crestwood Healing Center in Pleasant Hill. The enthusiastic receptionist is also a resident of the new mental health rehabilitation center and one of the first participants in a vocational training program that will soon lead her to live independently. "I've been in the system since I was 14 years old," said Schweickert, now 38.

The program is called Dream Catchers and is run by Crestwood Dream Catchers Foundation, Inc., a nonprofit arm of Crestwood Behavioral Health, Inc. that helped 167 adults and young people with a wide variety of disabilities—including mental health disabilities—to start productive jobs in 2003.

"Our process is to detect and search for undiagnosed abilities," said E.J. Hullana, Dream Catcher visionary and administrator. Hullana, who founded the program about four years ago with Patricia Blum, executive director of community programs for Crestwood, said his clients have faced a lifetime of diagnosed disabilities and his job is to find their strengths and help clients apply them.

Participants in Dream Catcher at other Crestwood facilities have worked for supermarkets, real estate agencies, movie theaters, auto shops and gyms.

Hullana said the Pleasant Hill center is the first to hire its own residents. He said part of the Dream Catcher mission is to change the way the public views mental illness. "We train the community to see our clients as people with disabilities," he said.

The Dream Catcher program is part of the overall treatment plan at Pleasant Hill's Crestwood Healing Center. "I like to think about it as providing people with the possibility to achieve their goals" said Cindy Mataraso, program director for the Healing Center. For more information call 925-938 8050.

SOLD!

POET'S CORNER HOMES ESCALATE IN VALUE

(Continued from page 1)

Avenue have sold for as much as \$699,000 and even \$899,000, prices one could only dream about a few years ago. The real estate professionals I spoke with reported that the presence of the Healing Center is simply not a factor. When the subject is mentioned, the buyer quickly moves on to factors they find of more interest. Below are listed some examples of the prices:

404 Beatrice Road	\$501,000
103 Hawthorne	525,000
106 Patterson Blvd.	522,000
215 Pleasant View Road	575,000
180 Whittier Road	578,000
70 Liahona Court	599,950
342 Boyd Road	577,000
216 Powell Avenue	521,000
516 Masefield Drive	470,000
41 Bruce Court	436,000
15 Oakvue Court	510,000
510 Beatrice Road	505,000
7 Elliott Drive	810,000
408 Roberta Avenue	699,000
218 Poshard Street	695,000
525 Shelly Drive	693,000
Roberta Avenue	889,000



Crestwood Healing Center
550 Paterson Boulevard
Pleasant Hill

YOU MUST CONTACT YOUR SUPERVISOR AND JOHN SWEETEN NOW!

(Continued from Page 1, column 2)

In Dr. Walker's Report he said the county's budget shortfall is estimated at \$53 million, approximately 16% of the general fund revenues. This is a countywide problem of which the Health Services Department share is \$25 million to \$34 million.

The County and the State have gotten us into a fiscal dilemma of historic proportions. Years in the future students of political science will use California's finances as an example of how not to manage a society.

However, we are now at the point that changes will have to be made. It is the mission of those who advocate for a mentally ill loved one to make certain that the few resources that have been available do not fall victim to these unthinkable cuts.

CURRENTLY AT CRESTWOOD

By Pam Wycoff, Director

Crestwood Healing Center update: Our census is improving at the Center and County staff are working very hard at identifying consumers that would benefit from the program and referring them. We have two consumers that are currently attending school at DVC and two consumers participating in Adult Education programs to get their GED's.

We also have two consumers currently working in our vocational program for a wage and several others participating in the pre-vocational program offered at the Center. We wish to thank all of the NAMI members that have always been, and continue to be so supportive of the Healing Center.

FRIDAY, MAY 7 SUPPORT THE MENTAL HEALTH INITIATIVE

The Mental Health initiative has gathered sufficient votes to be placed on the ballot in November. The challenge now is to educate the majority of voters to vote yes on this vital issue. The initiative would raise over \$600 million for California's mental health system. This is a first of its kind and it is imperative that it pass.

There is much you can do to help. Friday, May 7 there will be a rally at Todos Santos Park in Concord at 12:00 noon that will be covered by the media, as all the leading politicians and officials will be in attendance. It is important that there be a strong showing to impress the decision makers that this is serious issue that cannot be left on the back burner. There will also be workshops in the morning and afternoon and a reception in the evening at the Concord Sheraton Hotel. For information call:

925-957 5143 or
E mail: xnamicc@aol.com

**NOW IS THE TIME YOU
MUST CALL AND WRITE
YOUR SUPERVISOR!**

\$8 Million may be cut from the
Mental Health and Psych Services.

The decisions will be made between
now and late June. Now is the time to
do what you can.

**COUNTY BOARD OF
SUPERVISORS**

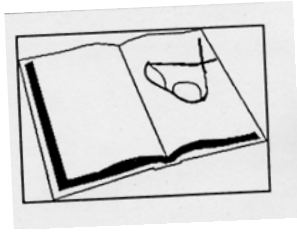
John Gioia, 1st District
11780 San Pablo Ave., #D
El Cerrito, CA, 94530 510-374 3231

Gayle B. Uilkema, 2nd District
651 Pine Street, Room 108A
Martinez, CA. 94553 925-335 1046

Mille Greenberg, 3rd District
309 Diablo road
Danville, CA., 94526 925-820 8683

Mark DeSaulnier, 4th District
2425 Bisso Lane, #110
Concord, CA, 94520 925-646 5763

Federal Glover, 5th District
315 East Leland road
Pittsburg, CA, 94565 925-427 8138



Mae Bragen, Librarian

NEW CHILDREN'S BOOKS ADDED TO NAMI-CC LIBRARY

The Contra Costa Public library system shows over 200 titles dealing with mental illness. Many of them are seriously out of date. NAMI-CC tries to buy and make available to its members the new books on mental illness as they become available. A member can borrow such books from the library which is set up at each General Meeting. Some of the most recent books are:

Bipolar Not ADHD; The unrecognized epidemic of manic depressive illness in children by George Isaac.

The Explosive Child: A new approach for understanding and parenting chronically inflexible children by Ross Greene

The Ups and Downs of Raising a Bipolar Child. A Survival Guide by Judith Lederman

From Defiance to Cooperation: by John F. Taylor, Ph.D.

The Bipolar Child. A guide to childhood's most misunderstood disorder. By Demetri Papolos, M.D.

Bipolar Disorders: A guide to helping children and adolescents. By Mitzi Waltz.

Survival Strategies for Parenting Children with Bipolar Disorder: by Geroge T. Lynn.

NAMI-CC TO SHARE PROFITS

NAMI-CC is now participating in the Bid4Assets' Charitable Giving Program.

Bid4Assets is a leading online auction site where serious buyers and sellers meet to find high-end assets such as land, cars, jewelry, artwork, coins, timeshares, computers, inventory and more from government, non-profit organizations and private sellers.

They have several types of auctions (e.g., Affinity Auctions, Shared Revenue Auctions and Straight Donation Auctions.)

The bidder merely designates what part of the proceeds are to go to the charity. This is another important and easy way to get money to support the mentally ill, no small thing in this era of budgetary crisis!

To become involved, just visit their website:

[Http://www.bid4assets.com](http://www.bid4assets.com)

STANFORD SEEKS SUBJECTS FOR PAID STUDY

Stanford University is seeking participants with schizophrenia or schizoaffective disorder for paid research at Stanford University. Researchers are conducting observational research on individuals with those two disorders.

Study participants stay at the Stanford Hospital overnight, have an MRI scan, diagnostic testing, and donate blood. Participation is confidential.

All study-related costs (which would run several thousand dollars if done privately) are paid by Stanford University. Participants who complete the study receive \$250.00

Call today to determine your eligibility:

650-723 1428

All calls are confidential!

BITS AND PIECES

The most expensive medication ever manufactured is but a fraction of the cost of a stay in a psychiatric facility. This should be inscribed on a plaque and placed on the desk of every decision maker in the land.

Dr. Mark Baxter, Medscape.com

The threat of heightened violence is present only in a *very small minority* of individuals with severe and persistent mental illness. Yet the consequences of that violence extend beyond those directly affected by it, whether through being physically harmed or incarcerated for an act caused by uncontrolled symptoms. This extra violence "increases public fear" and prevents acceptance and inclusion of people with psychiatric disabilities in society.

(Dr. Jeffery Swanson, Duke University)

Mental illness can be ignored simply because it can be ignored, unlike a broken arm, an ever growing cancer or kidney failure. Medical illnesses must be dealt with. As long as the behavioral problems of a mental patient are not acute, the tendency is to accommodate, not to treat. This creates a situation where the majority of the population have practically no knowledge or understanding of mental illness. This results in a serious lack of political and budgetary support.

(James Puffer, Legislative Aid, Sacramento)

Brain scans ID schizophrenia by comparing brain activity in two parts of the auditory cortex. Scans of those areas allowed scientists to predict with 97% accuracy who was schizophrenic. (MedScape, AOL, April, 2004)

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

MAY DONATIONS

Dear Editor:

I am writing to thank you folks at NAMI in Contra Costa County for the great help you extended to our family.

After years of responding to behavioral problems while my son was going through high school, things finally got completely out of hand.

Never once did we or the school authorities consider the fact that the underlying problem might be some sort of mental illness. After losing a succession of jobs he simply did not come home one night. We had no idea where he was for over a year.

Then we got a call in January of 2001 from the jail in your county. They said he had been taken from the regular jail and put in some sort of psychiatric ward and they wanted more information on him.

At the suggestion of our family doctor we contacted the NAMI website. There we found your chapter listed. We called and within a couple of hours were talking with one of your members that has had experience with the Criminal Justice in your county.

We got the phone and fax numbers of the psych team in the jail, the Public Defender, The D.A.'s office and the mental health people. We got our son out and into treatment in Lodi and after about a year into a job that he likes working with his friends. Thank you so much NAMI.

Toni and Jim Long,

COMMENTS

Comments for the newsletter should be sent to:

E mail: xname@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.

IN MEMORY OF:

Sarah Hoppe

From:

Paul and Virginia Mohler
(Now of Red Bluff, CA.)

IN MEMORY OF:

Ruth Hoffman

From:

Mr. and Mrs. Peter Hoffman
Joseph M. Fox III
Shirley Ann fox

A NEW MEMBER TO THE LIFETIME MEMBERSHIP CLUB

David Tom

NEW MEMBERS TO THE CENTURY CLUB

Richard and Yvonne DeAndre
Phoenix Programs
Josephine C. Carson
James E. Carson

A SPECIAL THANKS TO:

Monarch Mechanical



DONATE A BIKE

NAMI-CC has had requests for bicycles in operating condition. If you have one you would like to donate, contact the E mail address or the phone number listed below. Another good donation would be fishing poles, rods and tackle. For more information call or E mail Marti Wilson:



xnamecc@aol.com
925-938 8050

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

Phone: _____ E Mail _____

Use Donation For:

- NAMI-CC General Fund
- NAMI-CC Housing fund
- Family to Family Program
- NARSAD (Research)
- Other _____

In Honor Of: _____

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

Have You Renewed Your
NAMI MEMBERSHIP?

Stamp

THE HUMAN RACE SATURDAY MAY 8
Heather Farms Park, Walnut Creek Free BBQ

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

NOTE: You can also pay by credit card.
E mail: xnamicc@aol.com for instructions