



NAMI Contra Costa

The Family's Voice On Mental Illness

OCTOBER, 2004

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

OCTOBER

General Meeting

Thursday, October 21, 2004
7:00 pm

GUEST SPEAKERS

Dr. Carl Drake
Psychiatrist

William Shryer, LCSW
Clinical Director
Diablo Behavioral Healthcare

WHERE:
Mt. Diablo Medical Center
2540 East Street, Concord

Map and directions available at:
www.namicontracosta.org

CARL DRAKE, M.D. WILLIAM SHRYER TO SPEAK AT GENERAL MEETING

Dr. Drake and Mr. Shryer specialize in the treatment of Bipolar Disorders. In the upcoming presentation, it will be shown how a more client centered approach can and does work. The concept of intently listening to and treating the patient like a family member is their unique approach.

In the field of psychopharmacology (the medications that allow patients to be emotionally stable), there are great areas of disagreement and confusion.

Weight gain, diabetes and other health related issues will be discussed. The still misunderstood diagnosis of Bipolar Disorder will be reviewed with special attention being paid to how many other diagnostic categories frequently go along for the ride. This known as the "Spectrum".

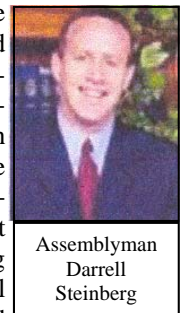
Why it is so important to understand the Spectrum and how to initiate treatment will be another focus of the presentation.

There will be an extended question and answer period.

DARRELL STEINBERG TO BE THE SPEAKER AT 26th ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION

Darrell Steinberg, Assemblyman from the 9th District will be the featured speaker at the NAMI-CC 26th Anniversary Celebration at the Concord Hilton, Sunday, October 10.

Mr. Steinberg is the State's leading proponent of the historic Proposition #63. The proposition that would bring more than \$1 billion in funding to California's mental health system. Frequently the figure is quoted as being \$700 million, but with the matching grants from the Federal Government, it would be over \$1. billion.



Assemblyman
Darrell
Steinberg

Note: The Anniversary Celebration will be Sunday, October 10. Make sure you have your R.S.V.P. check with your dinner selection sent in. See page 5 for the details.

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NOVEMBER MEETING

The date for the November General Meeting is changed to Thursday, November 11 which is the second Thursday instead of the usual third Thursday.

Steinberg was twice named Legislator of the year by the California Psychiatric Association. This year he authored 25 bills that were approved by the Legislature. Two have been signed into law and the others are all on the Governor's desk awaiting his signature.

He has been elected to three terms representing the 9th District.

(Continued on page 6, column 2)

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 Aspen 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

FAMILY SUPPORT GROUP (NSHFSG)

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

ALANON SUPPORT GROUP

For those supporting one who is dually diagnosed

Wednesdays 7:30 to 9:00 pm

Holy Shepherd Lutheran Church

433 Moraga Way, Orinda

Contact Kay: 925- 933 4012

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

When: The 2nd Monday of every month at 7:00 pm

Where: Lafayette Orinda Presbyterian Church, Rm. #4

E mail: newhopelopc@hotmail.com or 925-934 1216 (Nancy)

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:

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Phone: (925) 646 5798

E Mail: xnamicc@aol.com

Web Site:

www.namicontracosta.org

namicalifornia.org

nami.org

PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

David Kahler

By the time you receive this newsletter, you will not have much time to get your R.S.V.P check with your dinner selection in for the 26th Anniversary Celebration. For the last minute procrastinators, the NAMI-CC e mail address could be the final way to communicate. (xnamicc@aol.com) Leave your phone number and you will be called shortly.

There will be an important rally for Proposition #63 Wednesday, October 13 in Martinez. It will be at the Local #1 Building at 20 Blum Road near Highway #4. It will be a fundraising affair, so come prepared. For more information, e mail: xnamicc@aol.com

One of our country's problems is that about half of the eligible voters don't take advantage of their franchise. If you have some friends that are in that category, it shouldn't be too difficult to persuade, intimidate or cajole them into taking the trivial time required to visit their polling place on November 2 and vote for Proposition #63.

The NAMI-CC website is now receiving over 5000 hits per month. It is bringing us into contact with folks that we never would have been able to help. The last twelve NAMI-CC newsletters are always on the site available to be printed out. The newest newsletter goes up on the web the first of each month. So it is available a few days before you receive your printed version in the mail. One nice feature is that newcomers can get maps to the support groups and the General Meeting.

During this historic budget crunch, NAMI educational, informational and support services are more needed than ever. The greatest favor you can do a family that has a loved with a mental illness is to steer them to the NAMI-CC website:

www.namicontracosta.org

There they will immediately get effective information that will help them to help their loved one to recovery.

DUAL DIAGNOSIS SPECIALIST IS NOVEMBER'S SPEAKER

Dr. Aaron Chapman will be the speaker at the General Meeting, Thursday, November 11, 2004. That is the second Thursday instead of the regular third Thursday. The hospital has a scheduling conflict, so a change, just for November, had to be made. In December we return to having the meeting on the third Thursday.

Dr. Chapman is the Medical Director of the South of Market Mental Health Services Clinic. It is the largest outpatient clinic in the San Francisco system. He specializes in the care of chronically and persistently mentally ill patients. He is very familiar with the intractable problems of those with a dual diagnosis. He treats the whole range of psychiatric disorders from bipolar to schizophrenia.

Dr. Chapman received his degree from Temple University in Philadelphia. He trained in psychiatry at the Stanford University of Medicine prior to going to work for the city of San Francisco.



Dr. Aaron Chapman

FAMILY TO FAMILY WINTER CLASSES BEING ORGANIZED

The twelve week FAMILY TO FAMILY classes are now being organized for the winter months. It is an educational program that will give you a sound background in what your need to know about mental illness and how to cope with it. The classes fill quickly, so it is wise to reserve a spot early. Call Doris Watson, 682 7195 or E mail F2Fmom@aol.com

#1.6 MILLION MORE IN MENTAL HEALTH CUTS

Donna Wigand, Director of the Mental Health Division gave the NAMI newsletter some background on the drastic cuts that have occurred.

In the spring of 2003 came a reduction of \$3 million. In July of 2004 another \$3.5 million was cut. Now in September, another \$1.6 has been taken away. There have been budget cuts in the past, but never anything to compare with these reductions.

And that is not the end of the cuts. Wigand says that she has been ordered to cut another \$2 million by early November.

The areas most effected would be the Adult Mental Health Services. The Children's Mental Health Services was more affected by the earlier cuts. Wigand said that the 2003 cuts were all in the Adult Services area while the July 2004 cut was primarily in the Children's area.

When asked how much relief the yield from Proposition #63 would bring, she estimated that about \$15 million might be the first years contribution.

The Mental Health Division is part of the County's Health Department whose Director is Dr. William Walker. The cuts for the entire Health Department come to \$24 million which is approximately 12% of its budget. The CFO Pat Godley said that about 20% of those cuts came from the mental health programs.

In a September 24 Contra Costa Times article by Peter Felsenfeld, Dr. Walker was quoted as saying "this is not something I want to do. But I see no alternatives at the present time."

The latest cuts put in jeopardy the Contra Costa Mental Health Mobile Response Team. The team operates under the auspices of the Seneca Center. The members of the team make house calls to families having a psychiatric emergency. When successful, prohibitively expensive hospitalizations are avoided.

A BEAUTIFUL NIGHT II SCHEDULED FOR MARCH 19, 2005

By Marlene Weiss

It started with a dream. In 2001, NAMI members Gloria Hill and Val Meredith attended the Music Festival for Mental Health, an annual event that raises money for NARSAD (Research). It was at this fundraiser that the seeds were planted.

Why not have a similar event to raise money to form a non-profit corporation whose goal would be to open a supported residential housing facility in this county? They told NAMI member Ann Reynolds about their dream and she graciously offered her beautiful Piedmont home for the event.

On October 12, 2002, over 400 people attended the lavish party, aptly entitled, "A Beautiful Night" (ABN). They danced under the stars to the music of Greg Franks orchestra and dined on a multi-course buffet catered by Paula LeDuc.

The event raised over \$260,000, which became the seed money for the foundation of the ABN Housing Project. ABN has an active board of 15 members, meets monthly, and recently had a retreat to redefine its goals and objectives.

The ABN Property Committee has been actively searching for rural acreage in Contra Costa County. Donations to this project may be sent to: ABN Housing, P.O. Box 2201, Orinda, CA, 94563. For information call Gloria Hill at 932-9673(home) or 957-5146, her work number.

Save the date - on March 19, 2005, ABN will hold its second lavish fundraiser at the home of Ann and Jon Reynolds. Our last event sold out. If interested in attending or contributing to this gala evening, phone Marlene Weiss, 280-0676 or mhpres@aol.com

POET'S CORNER STILL RESTIVE BUT LOSING STEAM

Raheem Hosseini wrote a series of articles for the Contra Costa Exclusive about the current situation in the Poet's Corner area. It was clear that much of the ferocity the group had in the fall of 2003 was gone.

The scurrilous and illiterate flyers have disappeared but some of the diehards still insist that the mentally ill are very dangerous people. The fact that similar facilities have been in quiet residential neighborhoods for decades seems to escape their notice.

It's instructive and amusing to see ladies in their later years visiting the Healing Center without any awareness of danger. They need to call Bruce Weisenburger find out how dangerous the residents are. Of course he is not exactly a font of knowledge on the subject.

There have been a few walk-a ways (about 7) since the facility opened. The remnants of the protestors group took that as their opportunity to heckle the Planning commission and the City Council. Ben Paredes asked that the security be improved not being aware that the walk a way is much more likely to be harmed than do any harm.

The Mayor, Chuck Escover seems to feel that much to much has been made of the walk a ways. He sees that the facility receives many more visitors than the facilities that are far removed from the area.

Recovering mentally ill people need to be as close to their homes and neighborhoods as possible. The visits from family and friends is a critical part of the treatment program.

Victoria Maat was on the interim Neighborhood Oversight Committee (NOC). She said the elections to decide who would be on the five-person committee was a "complete debacle". Maat says the NOC has been taken over by a few forceful personalities.

When the center opened in 2003, the new arrivals had to literally cross a picket line of misguided protesters.

BYCYCLE NEEDED

Zeba Rahimcاده needs a bicycle for one of her clients. Call 925-646 5768 or xnamicc@aol.com

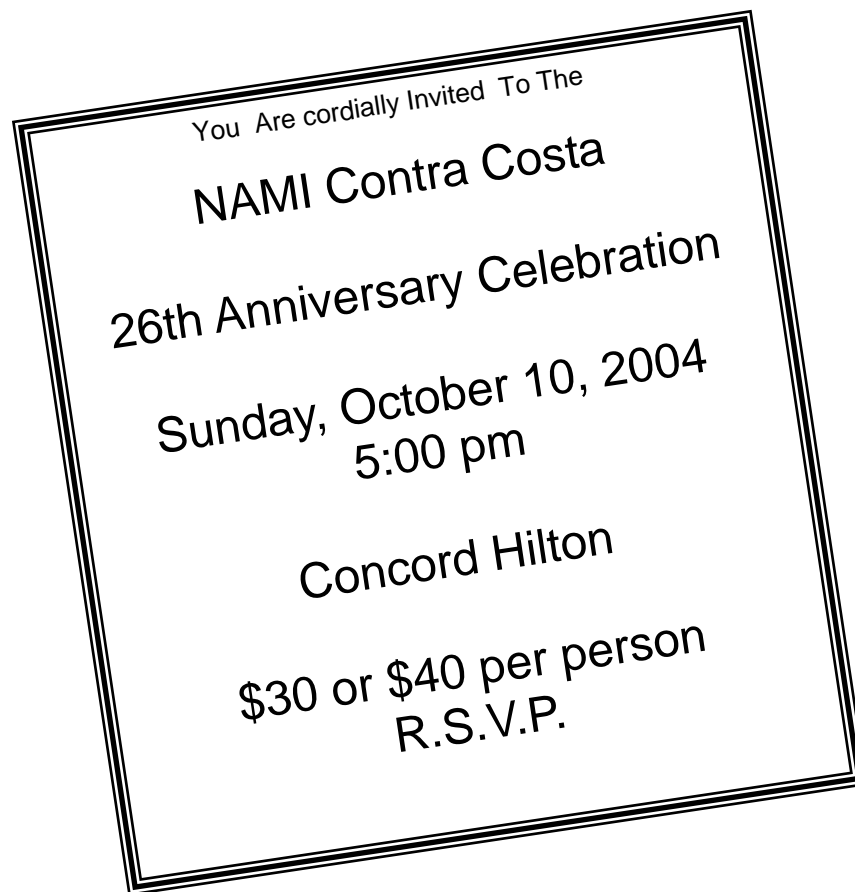
NAMI Contra Costa's 26th Anniversary Celebration

Assemblyman Darrell Steinberg, the state's leading proponent of Proposition #63 will be the featured speaker at the 26th Anniversary Dinner.

Twenty-six years ago a few families gathered together to see if they could help each other. Each of the families had a loved one that had been diagnosed with a serious mental illness. From that inauspicious beginning, NAMI Contra Costa has grown to be one of the largest and most effective mental health support organizations in the nation.

Sunday, October 10, 2004 we will gather together to celebrate the achievements and the companionship over those many years. For more information about this event: E mail: xnamicc@aol.com or call 925-676 5771 or www.namicontracosta.org

R.S.V.P. To: NAMI-CC Treasurer, P.O. Box: 21247, Concord, CA., 94520
Please note your dinner selection on your check.
Act now as seating is somewhat limited



ROSEMARY CHICKEN

\$30.

Boneless Chicken Breast marinated with Rosemary, Balsamic Vinegar and Madeira Wine, pan seared and served with a Shallot Glaze complemented with Apricot Rice Pilaf.

ROASTED PRIME RIB OF BEEF

\$40

Certified Angus Beef rubbed with Herbs and Spices and slow roasted to medium rare for tenderness served with Shallot Au Jus and Horseradish to complement, accompanied with a Baked Potato with Sour Cream and Chives.

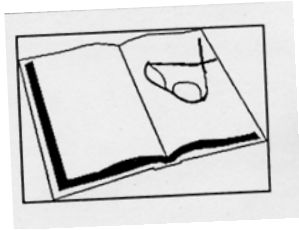
VEGETARIAN WELLINGTON

\$30

Puffed Pastry with Grilled Vegetables with Smoked Mozzarella cheese on a bed of roasted Tomato sauce. This is their own award winning dish!

Please note your dinner selection on your check

BOOK REVIEW



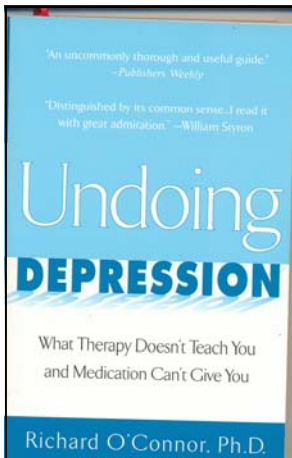
Mae Bragen, Librarian

Undoing Depression. What therapy doesn't teach you and medication can't give you. By Richard O'Connor, Ph.D., 340 pages, \$14.00

William Styron, author of *Darkness Visible* and *Sophie's Choice* said "Undoing Depression is distinguished by its common sense, its humanity and its absence of dogmatism. It is a balanced and persuasive work that explores the dark predicament of depression and the pathways toward help".

Like heart disease, says psychotherapist Richard O'Connor, depression is fueled by complex and interrelated factors: genetic, biochemical, and environmental. In this refreshingly sensible book, O'Connor focuses on an additional factor, often overlooked: our own habits. Unwittingly we get good at depression. We learn how to hide it, how to work around it. We may even achieve great things, but with constant struggle rather than satisfaction. Relying on these methods to make it through each day, we deprive ourselves of true recovery, of deep joy and healthy emotion, of the feeling of being alive in the world. And ultimately we make things worse.

The author says "Depression becomes for us a set of habits, behaviors, thought processes, assumptions and feelings that seem very much like



**DARRELL
STEINBERG
TO BE THE SPEAKER AT
26th ANNIVERSARY
CELEBRATION**

(Continued from page 1, column 3)

of the State Assembly, which includes most of the capital city of Sacramento. Steinberg's hard work and dedication have brought him an array of public recognition. He has been honored in each of the last three editions of *California Journal's* which recognize legislators who represent "a pattern of conduct, and outlook and demeanor that exemplifies the best kind of public service." The nonpartisan magazine named Steinberg "Assembly Member of the Year" for 2004 and also honored him as the Assembly's top member in the categories of integrity, best problem solver and hardest working.

Steinberg gave a stirring oration on behalf of Proposition #63 at the August NAMI California Conference in Burlingame. He is a remarkable man and our most effective standard bearer for Proposition #63.

our core self: you can't give those up without something to replace them and without expecting some anxiety along the way."

The first part of the book explores what we know about depression. The author states that six million elderly persons suffer from mild to severe depression and 75 per cent of them go untreated. "Depression in the elderly tends to get dismissed as inevitable. Yet much can be done for the disorder".

He describes depression as a disorder that is a "whole person" illness. The depression itself can make a person feel it's useless to seek help. Yet a very high per cent of those that get into treatment enjoy a good success. One of his many observations is "the opposite of depression is not happiness, but vitality. The ability to experience a full range of emotion.

**BITS AND
PIECES**

Hearing Voices is not a lifestyle choice. Delusional thinking is not a matter of personal convictions. Most of the people living on the streets are not there as a consequence of not competing well in a competitive economy. While a lack of affordable housing is part of the equation, it's not a very big part. Homelessness, with few exceptions, is about *untreated illness*.

America's mental health facilities are pathetic. The cost of providing services is controlled mostly by having them be unavailable.

Good care would be good for patients and their families, good for the community and society as a whole. Unfortunately it's not good for the third-party health insurance industry, and it's not a good deal for states with budget problems. In both cases, non-care—evading the costs of and responsibility for providing mental health care, is too easy and the down side of noncare is borne too quietly and out of sight by patients and their families.

Mental illnesses are not self limited diseases. Getting well and having a life worth living becomes less likely the longer you've been ill. Being depressed for a month doesn't carry as ominous a prognosis as being depressed for a year. The chances of having another psychotic break are directly proportional to how many you've already had. There's every reason to believe that the way to recovery is good and early care.

(The above four bits are by Mark Vonnegut)

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Dear Editor: A Poem

Loose Cannons

We roll around the decks
of the ship in high seas,
loose, too loose.
We bang into the rigging,
rails, sails, masts, flammables,
preserves, and kettles of
simmering or stagnant,
past-their-prime
stinking fish.

In calmer seas, we fall asleep
in the rigging or the crow's nest,
enjoying the tides and the
serenades of the gulls.
Unfettered and untethered,
we write our Letters to the Editors.
I say Hooray
for the Loose Cannons,
the keepers of the seas
of positive change.

©Peter Bray , Benicia

Dear Editor:

I am writing to thank NAMI
for putting the newsletter at the Social
Security office where I came across it.
I had been wanting to locate a support
group but was not having any success. I
was able to go to the website and on to
the meetings. It's been a big help.

Betty Dumas, Martinez

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 nei-
ther acknowledged nor returned.

SPECIAL DONATIONS

From:

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Monarch Mechanical

Judith A. Raykovich
%Clorox Giving Campaign

Raymond Laferte
Armand Crosby
Kurt Williams
Mr. and Mrs. Hal Young
Dorothy Higgins



WAYS TO SUPPORT NAMI IN ITS EFFORTS HELP THE MENTALL ILL.

- Donate a car.
xnamicc@aol.com
- Join the Scrip program. You
won't find an easier way. 1-
800-801 4973.
- Donate bikes. We will find a
good home for one you no
longer have use for.
- Volunteer to be a visiting
companion.

OCTOBER DONATIONS

In Memory of

Matt Buscemi

From:

Mr. and Mrs. Ralph Buscemi
And Family

Professional Flooring
Carolyn Daniels
Jerry and Roberta Hoobler
Christopher Borg

In Memory of

Terri Lynn Schneider

From:

Gene and Lily Schulting

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

NOVEMBER MEETING
Date changed from the regular third Thursday to the
second Thursday, November 11, 2004
Due to a scheduling conflict at the hospital.

Stamp

26th Anniversary Celebration
Sunday, October 10, 2004, 5:00 pm
Concord Hilton
Details on Page 5

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