



NAMI Contra Costa

National Alliance On Mental Illness

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

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

General Meeting

OCTOBER

Thursday,
October 15, 2009
7:00 PM

Doors open at 6:30 for NAMI-CC information tables and library materials checkout

Topic:

After Suicide: How to Survive the Nightmare

Speaker:

**Susan Moore,
M.A.**

Grief Counseling Director,
Contra Costa Crisis Center

also

The sale of children's picture book, *Adventures of Little Eagle*, to benefit consumer recreational activities sponsored by NAMI-CC Recreation Committee

Location

John Muir Medical Center
Concord Campus

2540 East Street, Concord
925-682 8200

During the Construction, use the
Emergency Room Parking Lot.

START OVER!

SPECIAL MENTAL HEALTH COMMISSION MEETING

The Mental Health Commission met September 3, 2009, in Martinez, to consider the Administration's proposed 20 Allen Street project and explore other alternatives.

In the last hour of the three hour meeting, Dr. William Walker said "We have had an interest in that land any way . . .it is valuable land next to the hospital . . . Start the whole planning process over from the beginning."

Some at the meeting were startled at the prospect of recreating the proposal in the face of a December 31 deadline on the option on the 2.2 acre property.

Teresa Pasquini, as Vice Chair, facilitated the meeting.

She then presided over a motion
(Continued on page 5)

COUNTY HOSPITAL **CCRMC** **HAS NEW** **CEO**

By Sharon Madison

The Contra Costa Regional Center has a new CEO, Anna Roth. Dr. Jeff Smith has left the hospital to become the County Administrator in Santa Clara County.

Anna is local, having been born in Dublin. She later worked at Napa State Hospital while attending nursing school at Napa College.

(Continued on page 5)

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 Olwin 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

DUAL RECOVERY ANONYMOUS

Every Tuesday 5:45 pm to 6:45 pm
John Muir Center for Recovery Classroom B
2730 Grant Street, Concord
Contact: Zula 925- 212 2241

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

Dual Diagnosis Support Group

Wednesdays: 3:30 pm
1420 Willow Pass Road. Concord
2nd Floor Facilitator: Bob McKinnon
Bipolar Support Group
Tuesdays 1:30 pm 1420 Willow Pass Road, Concord

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. 2nd and 4th Tuesday 7:00 pm
Call: Veronica 925-945 7871

NEW HOPE

BIPOLAR SUPPORT GROUP

For parents of children and adolescents with a mood disorder.
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

H.E.L.P.

Hope, Encouragement, Love and Prayer

See page 6 for specific hours

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

Time: 2nd Monday of each month (With the exception of September 21 which is the 3rd Monday) 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

Thursdays: 2:00 to 6:00 pm
925-646 5844

Emergency County Cell Phone:
925-963 6229

NAMI-Contra Costa
National Alliance on Mental Illness

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

Newsletter Deadline: 20th of Each Month

**PRESIDENT'S
COLUMN**

By Al Farmer

Young people who drop out of high school frequently have very limited prospects for the future and when they are afflicted with severe mental illness, they tend to self medicate with alcohol or drugs.

This is a recipe for disaster and many end up in jail or prison. However, there can be light at the end of the tunnel for those fortunate enough to become involved with a Behavioral Health Court Program.

At NAMI Contra Costa's general meeting on September 17th, we were very fortunate to have Marty Wilson PH.D., a forensic psychologist employed by the Sheriff's Department speak to us.

She is the team leader for the Behavioral Health Court Program. At the meeting several dual diagnosed consumers in the program told stories about their mental illness, drug abuse and how they got their lives back on track through participation in the Behavioral Health Court Programs.

We all owe a great deal of thanks to Marty Wilson and Behavioral Court Judge Joni Hiramoto for their diligence and patience in helping these young people avoid incarceration and overcome their drug dependency.

It is unusual to find a judge willing to meet with each dually diagnosed violator once a week to monitor their strict compliance with court requirements and to offer praise and encouragement for their progress.

Many thanks to Marty Wilson and Behavioral Court Judge Joni Hiramoto for their commitment and support for this amazing program!!

**General
Meeting**

Thursday, November 19, 2009.
Obsessive Compulsive Disorder,
Speaker: Jeff Bell, KCBS radio anchor, afternoons, Monday through Friday. Author of *Rewind, Replay, Repeat*. The new classic on OCD.

Note: The November General Meeting will not be in Concord 1. It will be in the Leshner Auditorium.

Thursday, December 17, 2009.
Dr. Johanna Ferman, M.D.
Medical Director, Contra Costa Mental Health, Adult Services

Thursday, January, 2010.
Psychois as a Continuum:
How to assess risk and find the right treatment regimen as soon as possible. Speaker: Dr. Demian Rose, M.D., Ph.D., UCSF Department of Psychiatry, Medical Director, Prodrome Assessment Research and Treatment Program.

CLUBHOUSE
***An Autumn Evening
In the Garden***

Join the Putnam Clubhouse for an evening of great food, friends, member stories and prizes.

Dinner will be at 6:00 pm. The \$50. donation includes one raffle ticket and admission to the presentation. \$30 of the dinner price is deductible.

Centre Concord
5298 Clayton Road
Concord

INFORMATION: 925- 691 4276

WORDS FOR TOMMY

By Connie Steers

Our mental health family mourns the loss of our brother, friend, trusted helper, son, husband, and big “dog Daddy” Tommy.

Staff, members of MHCC’s (Mental Health Consumer Concerns) West County Wellness and Recovery Center and Tommy’s family first learned of his death early Monday, September 21, 2009.

To staff, friends, associates, and all who knew him, Tommy was a big, sweet bear of a man. Along with his large physical stature, he stood out in so many ways. He was one of the first to greet newcomers and old friends at the Center.

He was smart, skilled, generous and quick to offer help. Business neighbors in the area at the Asian Pacific Family Resource Center and at the Food Bank knew him as friendly, warm, and resourceful.

Tommy also stood out as someone who had clear goals, searched tenaciously for ways and resources to achieve his goals, and kept up the search in spite of obstacles. He believed that hard work, daily effort, and the power of prayer, good will, and the abiding love of family, friends, and the creator would help him realize his dream to get into independent living.

For Tommy, independent living and having his own home, was the rock upon which he would rebuild his life. His family and friends could visit. He could spend weekends with his dogs. He could remake his life in his own vision.

While Tommy was grateful for having spent much of his recovery life with, as he said: “the

best,” Ms. Shirley (Shirley’s Room and Board), Tommy truly heard the Recovery message.

He was one of our “Best and Brightest,” someone who tried out the tools and concepts of Recovery that he learned from Kat (M.) Renee, his peers, and visitors, like myself, and especially, from Teresa Pasquini, in her role as a concerned Mom.

Tommy’s life and actions spoke eloquently that real recovery must combine the essential elements of a safe shelter, food, water, cutting-edge medications, care, hope, inspiration, and the assurance from others that one matters.

When Tommy was at the very edge of realizing his dream (he found a wonderful Reality company and an affordable apartment near the Center), the required “first and deposit” amount threatened the dream. Yet once again, NAMI-CC, along with a matching check from Janet Marshall Wilson, J.D. saved the day and Tommy moved into his home.

He was so thankful to NAMI-CC, its Board of Directors and to Janet Wilson for helping his goals and his dream come true.”

Tommy, like so many of our loved ones, also suffered from and ultimately died from complications of Mental Illness.

We will always remember Tommy for his beautiful, gentle, and compassionate ways.

Our thoughts and prayers are for his mother, father, family, wife, dogs, and all of his brothers and sisters at MHCC and the West County Wellness and Recovery Center.

Mental Health Matters!



THIRD MONDAY SUPPORT GROUP

By Gloria Hill

The support group was started by Mary Shearer, a long time NAMI- CC member. Early on, Mary was able to get Dr. Mary Olowin to help her facilitate the group. It began meeting at the long gone, Walnut Creek Psychiatric Hospital, in the late 90's.

Mary Shearer gave the group up when her family stressors got to be too much. Gloria Hill then took over for her. When the Walnut Creek Psych Hospital closed, the group was moved next door to the John Muir Medical Center to the basement in one of the meeting rooms.

The group has met there for about 10 years in various rooms and currently is in the Epstein Room.

Dr. Olowin accepted a position as the Chief Kaiser psychiatrist for the Diablo Region last year. She became overloaded with work and patients so she had to resign from our group in August.

A new psychologist has joined the group as the co facilitator. Her name is Dr. Carolyn Hokanson. The group has been well attended for many years and hopefully can continue in the same location.

I would like to express my sincere thanks to Dr. Mary Olowin for all the many hours she volunteered to attend the group and give her time to the people who needed her help. She is a wonderful, caring person who is truly dedicated to helping others by giving of her time. We all miss her, but thank her for all the time she donated to our families and NAMI- CC.

FAMILY TO FAMILY IN RICHMOND

Grace Lutheran Church which is a church of the Greater Richmond Interfaith Program (GRIP) and pastored by Sandra Dager, is hosting this years second NAMI Family to Family Program.

At the opening class, Contra Costa County Supervisor, John Gioia, made some very insightful welcoming remarks about the need for mental health family support in Richmond and West Contra Costa in general.

One of the two mental health clinics in Richmond has been closed leaving only one at the 38th Street Clinic.

The Family to Family classes will run for the next 11 weeks, every Thursday evening, from 7:00PM until 9:00PM.

The families attending are very grateful to have this opportunity to learn more about mental illness, how to take care of themselves and to help their loved one with this illness.

The program will provide a certificate at the completion of the program. Anyone that is interested in becoming more informed or a mental health family advocate should attend. NAMI training and membership will provide internet access to current local, state and national mental health information regarding children, adults and the elderly. There is also a free monthly news magazine.

If you have any questions, email family2familyrichmond.nami@gmail.com, E mail: xnamicc@aol.com, or call 510-237 9277.

CCRMC HAS NEW CEO

(Continued from page 1)

She began her medical career working in Contra Costa County at Merithew Hospital the predecessor to CCRMC.

Anna worked throughout the hospital in medical, surgical, psychiatric services and in the emergency unit. She was there for the opening of the psychiatric unit in the present hospital in January of 1998.

In 2000 she was the Director of Nursing for Solano County Mental Health. This was followed by a return to CCRMC working as a Medical Supervisor.

During this time she became involved with system redesign analyzing the systemic problems. She also attended UCSF Graduate school and was granted her Masters in Health Polices and Systems.

During this period, her own family had significant health problems and she experienced the system as a family member. She said it gave her a whole new layer of insight into her professional specialty.

In 2007 Anna went to Harvard University for a year and received a masters degree in Public Health.

In December of 2008 she was appointed to the office of Chief Operating Officer and then on September 1, 2009 became the Chief Executive Officer.

Son of Fran Martin GUY T. CHRISTMAS 1963-2009

Guy Christmas died unexpectedly on September 3, 2009, in his home at Phoenix Apartments, where he resided for the last 7 years.

Guy was the son of Fran Martin, stepson of Paul Martin, Grandson of Dawn Christmas. His father was Millard G. Christmas. He was born January 14, 1963.

Guy enjoyed the friendship of the other residents, who considered themselves family. He will be greatly missed by these friends

Guy often attended the Putnam Clubhouse, where he liked helping in the kitchen and participating in the many other activities. He enjoyed family gatherings and vacations at Konocti Resort at Clearlake.



Guy Christmas

He enjoyed camping, fishing, swimming and canoeing on the Russian River. He like to write and kept journals.

He had a close and loving relationship with his Mom, Fran Martin, as well as his grandmother, Dawn Christmas, father, Millard G. Christmas and stepfather, Paul Martin. He had many aunts, uncles and cousins, who loved him dearly.

Prior to his illness, he was a member of the wrestling team in high school. He was on a club swimming team for several years. At 15 he began the symptoms of schizophrenia.

(Continued on page 7)

Nominating Committee

The nominating committee is accepting nominations for Officers and Board members to be presented for election at the November general meeting. The person being nominated must consent to having his name placed in nomination. That person must be a paid member of NAMI-CC.

Contact Coralie Reed at: coraliered@comcast.net

SSI HIT AGAIN

SSI/SSP grant levels have been reduced several times (four total) within the calendar year (no other program got hit so many times in one year):

1. FEDERAL COST OF LIVING ADJUSTMENT GIVEN THEN WITHHELD: The federal cost of living adjustment was allowed to go through on January 1, 2009 – but was subsequently taken back and withheld as of May 1, 2009 (per revised budget 2008-2009 passed in February 2009)

2. STATE COST OF LIVING ADJUSTMENT SUSPENDED THEN ELIMINATED: The state cost of living adjustment due June 1, 2009 was previously suspended (cut) in the previous budget – and in July 2009, the State cost of living adjustments were permanently eliminated effective June 1, 2010 (the date the suspension would have been lifted)

3. STATE PORTION OF SSI/SSP GRANT REDUCED PERMANENTLY: The state portion of the SSI/SSP grant levels were reduced by 2.3% effective July 1, 2009 (per revised budget 2008-2009 passed in February 2009). That meant grants were reduced to maximum of \$850 for eligible individuals and \$1,489 maximum grants for couples (rates for Cash Assistance Program for Immigrants or CAPI which are based on the SSI/SSP grant levels somewhat, were similarly reduced).

STATE PORTION OF SSI/SSP GRANT LEVELS FURTHER REDUCED PERMANENTLY: The revised 2009-2010 State

(Continued in the next column)

START OVER

(Continued from page 1)

that would have some of the commissioners meet with the CPAW (Consolidated Planning Advisory Workgroup) and prioritize options for how to best employ the funds that are available.

The NAMI Contra Costa Board of Directors has not taken a stand on the project, either for or against, pending the development of more information.

Sandy Kleffman summed up the Administration’s 20 Allen Street proposal as, “including a 16-bed, locked facility for those who require acute care, a 16-bed unlocked crisis residential unit where people could stay up to 30 days and an around-the-clock urgent care center for those who need prescription refills and other after hours help.”

One of the commissioners described the project as “grandiose.” One of the family members described it as “the largest commitment to enhancing and improving the care for the mentally ill in the history of the county. To defeat it would be a pyrrhic victory.”

The next Mental Health Commission meeting will be Thursday, October 13, 2009, 4:30 pm at the Concord Police Building. The Commission meets the second Thursday of each month. The public is urged to attend.

Budget passed in late July further reduced the state portion of the SSI/SSP grant levels were reduced again, by \$5 for individual grants (meaning the maximum grants for individuals would be reduced from \$850 to 845 or a cut of 0.6%) and for couples from \$1,489 to \$1,407 per month (the lowest level allowed by the feds). Those go into effect November 1, 2009.

BOSTON MARKET NAMI FUNDRAISER SATURDAY OCTOBER 17

From 4:00 pm till closing you can enjoy a delicious meal and have 15% of the cost of the meal donated to NAMI-CC to help the mentally ill. The donated funds will go to the NAMI Recreation fund.

The Boston Market is centrally located in Pleasant Hill at 2180 Contra Costa Boulevard.

Clip the coupon shown below and present it at the time of purchase.



INNOVATION LAUNCH EVENT

Contra Costa Mental Health is soliciting ideas from the community to develop Innovative Projects that will lead to the funding of novel and creative Mental Health practices and approaches. Ideas must contribute to learning that will help transform our community’s Mental Health system.

TIME: 4 to 6:00 pm,
DATE: Wednesday, October 7
LOCATION: 651 Pine Street, Room 107. Martinez
INFORMATION: 925- 957 5150

SAVE THE DATES

National Day of Prayer for Mental Illness Recovery and Understanding, Tuesday, Oct. 7, 2009
 Labyrinth Meditation Walk, drop in between 3:00-6:30 PM, Walnut Avenue United Methodist Church, 260 Walnut Avenue, Walnut Creek.

An Autumn Evening in the Garden, Oct. 14, Putnam Clubhouse fundraiser. Dinner, educational talk, member stories, raffle. Call Tamara (925) 691-4276 for tickets.

MHSA CPAW
 (Consolidated Planning Advisory Committee),
 Thursday, October. 15,
 3:30-5:30 PM
 2425 Bisso Lane,
 1st Floor Conference Room,
 Concord

GUY CHRISTMAS

(Continued from page 5, column 3)

In 1979 he moved to California with his mother and brother, Tim. He lost his brother in a traffic accident in 1981.

Despite suffering from his illness, he earned his GED.

He had sad times and happy times the last 7 years. He appeared to be in a good place lately. He is now at peace, free of his sadness and safely in the arms of his Lord.

His mother said "I loved him so very, very much. My days will be empty without him. I miss his many daily calls. My heartache is unfathomable and I know I will be forever heartbroken."

OCTOBER DONATIONS

In Memory Of:

Guy Christmas

From: Mae Bragen
 Dave Kahler
 Dick Owens
 Walter and Mary Cannon

Special Project

Gloria Hill
 Al Farmer
 Teresa Pasquini
 Dave Kahler

Donations

Sandra Duncan
 PG & E Corporation
 Campaign for the Community

 Heather Quisenberry
 Chevron Humankind Employee
 Funds

Donations

Alison R. Buckles
 Susan M Henderson
 Back of America
 United Way Campaign

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

Use Donation For:

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

 Name

 Street Address

 City State

Zip _____

Phone: _____

E mail address:

Phone: _____

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

For Support and Information:
**First Tuesday Support
 Group**
 Tuesday, October 6, 2009
 7:30 pm Hillcrest Church,
 404 Gregory Lane, Pleasant Hill
 925- 676 5771
 See Page 2

Stamp

The Herb Putnam Clubhouse

An Autumn Evening in the Garden
 An evening of great food, friends, member stories and prizes.
 Wednesday, October 14th, 2009 6:00 pm
 See page 3 Contact Tamara: 925- 691 4276

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