



NAMI Contra Costa

Contra Costa's Voice on Mental Illness *September 2006*

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

September General Meeting September 21, 2006

7:00 pm

SPEAKER

Steven Rader, M.D.

Topic

“A Serious Talk About
Serious Mental Illness”

John Muir Medical Center
Concord Campus
(Note: Formerly Mt. Diablo
Medical Center)
(Go to the website for map)
www.namicontracosta.org

2540 East Street, Concord
925-682 8200

NAMI VISITS MENTAL HEALTH COURT

NAMI-CC hosted a group from the county's Criminal Justice System to a visit to the Mecca of Mental Health Courts, the Santa Clara County Mental Health Court.

In the group were Judge Mary-Ann O'Malley, Brian Haynes, Deputy District Attorney, Carol Nixon, Probation Department, Marti Wilson, Forensic Community Liaison, Tim Chon, Pleasant Hill Police Department, Ron Turner, Concord Police Department and NAMI member and practicing attorney, Dale Brodsky.



Judge Mary Ann
O'Malley

(Continued on page 4, column 1)

NAMI-CC APPOINTS A DIRECTOR

President Art Honegger has announced that the NAMI Contra Costa Board of Directors has appointed Katherine Ranft to be its Director.

Ranft has been on the Board since January of this year. She is already the Director of the K.I.D.S. program which is an orientation seminar for families who have a youngster that has a mental illness.



Katherine is a graduate of Vanderbilt University where she studied psychology. After graduation, she worked in various areas in the health field.

Katherine Ranft
New Director for
NAMI-CC

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The Bipolar Child

CONFERENCE ON BIPOLAR CHILDREN

William Shryer is presenting a conference at the University of the Pacific featuring the authors of the *Bipolar Child*, Demetri and Janice Papolos.

(Continued on page 4, column 2)

Free Classes on Mental Illness

Family to Family

Over 1400 persons have been graduated from the Family to Family classes on mental illness. Join their ranks and be informed on mental illness.

E mail: mfoverby@yahoo.com

Call Marie Overby: 925-284 5240

NAMI-CC Care and Support Groups

Central Contra Costa County

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

3rd Monday of each month, 7:15-9:15 pm, John Muir Hospital, Downstairs in the Stern Conference Room..
The group is facilitated by Dr. Mary Olowin and Gloria Hill. The Consumer Group will not be meeting.

Call: Gloria Hill 925- 957-5146.

East Alameda County

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

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

CONSUMER RUN BIPOLAR SUPPORT GROUP

Where: 1420 Willow Pass Road, Concord. 2nd floor

When: Every Tuesday, 6:00 pm to 7:30 pm

Contact: Chris Dodd: 925-646 5549 Marian : 646 5788

TRI-VALLEY BIPOLAR (Consumer Run)

Manic Depression Support Group Wednesdays, 7:15 pm to 9:00 pm St. Claire'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: 925-945 7871

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

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: Bill Schrader, 707- 433 9250

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

NEW HOPE

SUPPORT GROUP FOR PARENTS OF BIPOLAR

ADOLESCENT CHILDREN (7-17) With Bipolar/Mood Disorders
When: The 2nd Monday of every month at 7:00 pm Where: Lafayette Orinda Presbyterian Church, 49 Knox Dr., Lafayette Call: Annette Seelig 510-733 0577 or Joani: 925-962 9952 E mail: 3kids1dog@comcast.net

Website: www.newhopesupportgroup.com

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.

**PRESIDENT'S
COLUMN**

Art Honegger

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National Alliance for the
Mentally Ill

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Julia Bonicich K.I.D.S. Program

Katherine Ranft K.I.D.S. Program

Two things to keep in mind for your friends in need:

First, Family to Family classes start soon, so anyone interested needs to call Marie Overby at 925-284-5240 pronto!

Second, Peer to Peer classes are also to begin soon. Any interested consumers, please call Lisa Bruce at 925-787-7627 or Lisa Honegger at 925-200-0979.....also pronto!

Many thanks to Piyanooch and Isamu Tsujimoto for becoming lifetime members! We are also grateful to Pat Wright for her generous donation to NAMI- CC.

The best news of all for this month is that NAMI Contra Costa has hired a part time director, our very first in 29 years. We are so very fortunate to have Katherine Ranft take on that position. Katherine is currently a board member (soon to be replaced) and is a graduate of Vanderbilt University. She is doing an exceptional job with her ten year old son Michael and his illness.

We have recently received books donated to our library from George Snow (72 Hour Hold) and Collette O’Keeffe (Stuart, A Life Backwards). Collette presented a review of her book in the August newsletter.

We are all saddened by the passing of NAMI stalwart supporter Joan Sorisio. We will miss her dearly.

NAMI-CC is making a major effort in the grant application field. If you are interested in that field, this would be a great opportunity to get some real hands-on experience. You will definitely learn a lot!

On an up note, Lisa Honegger took a group of her consumer friends from Kirker Court apartments to an Oakland A’s baseball game. The tickets were compliments of A’s manager Ken Macha and Debbie Gallas of his office. Thank you!

**NAMI-CC
APPOINTS A
DIRECTOR**

(Continued from page 1, column 3)

Katherine was born and raised in a suburb of Philadelphia. Her father is an English professor. She is the third oldest of six children, one of whom was diagnosed with bipolar disorder.

Katherine skipped her senior year of high school and went directly to Temple University in Philadelphia. She was then awarded a scholarship to Vanderbilt University. There she graduate with a Bachelor of Arts in English and a minor in psychology.

After graduation she traveled through Europe, backpacked in the mountains of Colorado, worked in Aspen and spent a winter in Fairbanks, Alaska.

Katherine is the mother of a ten-year old boy name Michael. A valuable part of her experience has been navigating the public school system and securing the necessary services for her special needs son.

She is also the current Director of the K.I.D.S. Family Education Program. Will be offering a six-hour seminar for families who have children with psychiatric disorders. K.I.D.S. will serve as an orientation to the mental health field.

The program is made possible by a grant secured by Julia Bonacich from the Intero Foundation.

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Concord, CA., 94521
Phone: (925) 465 3864

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www.namicontracosta.org
namicalifornia.org (State)
namicontra.org (National)

NAMI VISITS MENTAL HEALTH COURT

(Continued from page 1, column 2)

After watching some of the morning session, Judge Manley invited the group into his chambers and explained how the Mental Health Court was begun and just how it works.



Judge Manley

It is one of NAMI-CC'S top priorities to get a Mental Health Court for Contra Costa County.

Some have the impression that a Mental Health Court is too easy and coddles the accused. The first three cases the group saw were led away to jail in handcuffs. They had not followed the instructions of the court. Those that followed had made progress and were counseled by the Judge and given a round of applause by those in the courtroom.



Brian Haynes

Deputy District Attorney
Mental Illness
Litigation Unit

The Mental Health Court of Santa Clara County is the first of its kind in California. It was established in 1998 to serve mentally ill defendants as well as those with co-occurring disorders. The court has been featured in the *New York*

Times and serves as a model for interested practitioners from around the nation. It demonstrates that a collaborative model of judicially supervised treatment is applicable to the mentally ill.

The court's literature states that it is the mission of the court to

(continued in the next column)

to have a court that is informed and educated in the challenges of mental illness will go a long way towards stopping or at least slowing the revolving door process where the patients are caught in a never ending process that is neither good for them nor society. If we spend more on the front end of a psychiatric case, we will spend a lot less further down the line.

The Santa Clara Mental Health Court "believes that it is the responsibility of the Court to develop close collaborative relationships with its public and community partners that include clients and their families, to be creative in designing an effective system that promotes wellness and recovery regardless of obstacles." The court has received many federal grants that seem to affirm this ideal.



Marti Wilson
Forensic
Community Liaison

CONFERENCE ON BIPOLAR CHILDREN

(Continued from page 1, column 2)

The conference will be held on September 15th and 16th at the University of the Pacific, Stockton, California. This will be the first of a series of conferences to be offered annually.



William Shryer

This unique two day presentation will provide attendees an opportunity for quality, fully accredited, continuing education in a scholarly environment.

For More Information:

www.dbhness.com

FIRST TUESDAY SUPPORT GROUP HOSTS UNIFORMED COP

As far as we know, NAMI-CC's First Tuesday Support group is the first support group in the state to have a uniformed police officer attend the group to answer the criminal justice questions that inevitably come up.

The Pleasant Hill Police Department has furnished the group with Officer Peter Agnost who fields the questions about what a 5150 is and how best to use one when the family feels they cannot handle the situation.



Peter Agnost
Pleasant Hill
Police Department

It has been advised to not call for a 5150 until you know what it is and how best to cooperate with the police to assure your loved one has the outcome you had in mind.

This NAMI-CC group has been meeting the first Tuesday of every month for about ten years. It meets at the Hillcrest Congregational Church at 404 Gregory Lane in Pleasant Hill in lecture room number 10. The meetings begins at 7:30 pm and ends promptly at 9:00 pm. The baby sitter will not be kept waiting.

Many have found the group to be a real life saver with practical information that can be implemented in their loved one's case.

The Hillcrest Church will also be the site of one of the Family to Family classes this month.

CRIMINALIZING MENTAL ILLNESS

THE TRANS-INSTITUTIONALIZATION OF THE MENTALLY ILL

By Judge Steve Leifman

Editor's Note: In the last two decades, Contra Costa County has drastically reduced the case load in the state hospitals while the population of the mentally ill in the jail and prison system has significantly escalated. This inhuman disregard for the interests of these troubled people goes unchecked while little or no notice is taken by those in the decision making hierarchy. Every NAMI-CC member would do well to ask their elected officials how they feel about this process.

We have a mental health crisis in our communities, in our state, and in this country. Every day our courts, jails, and law enforcement agencies are witness to a parade of misery brought on by the consequences of untreated mental illnesses. Our police, correctional officers and courts have become the lone responders to persons in crisis because of untreated mental illnesses. Our jails and prisons now function as the largest psychiatric facilities in the country.

In 1963, legislation was signed that was intended to create a network of community-based mental health providers that would replace failing and costly state hospitals and integrate people with mental illnesses back into their home communities with comprehensive treatment and services. President Kennedy signed an authorization of \$3 billion to support this movement from institutional to community-based treatment. Not one penny of this authorization was ever appropriated.

Hospitals closed as more light was shed on the horrific treatment of people with mental illnesses at state psychiatric hospitals, along with the hope offered by advances in psychotropic medications, a flurry of federal lawsuits were filed. The result was the de-institutionalization of state psychiatric hospitals. Unfor-

KEY VOLUNTEER POSITIONS OPEN

Have you ever wondered how grant writers, those that create the application, work their magic and raise thousands of dollars?

If you join NAMI-CC's Grant Application Committee, you will quickly learn where the foundations that make these grants are and what criteria they use to determine which grant applications they will accept and fund.

NAMI-CC will pay for classes and materials that will teach you the things you need to be a good grant writer. This knowledge that will stay with you for a lifetime and help many people along the way. E mail the NAMI address for more information:

xnamicc@aol.com

Or

925-676 5771



tunately, there was no network of community mental health facilities to absorb these displaced patients.

Instead, we ended up with trans-institutionalization of people from state psychiatric facilities to correctional institutions and made our jails the new asylums. We have seen more homelessness and police injuries, more police shootings of people with mental illnesses and critical tax dollars wasted. We have made having mental illness a crime.

(From Enews-Treatment Advocacy Center)

DR. WEIGOLD REPORTS TO MENTAL HEALTH COMMISSION

Dr. Scott Weigold, Chief Psychiatrist of the Psychiatric Emergency Services at the Contra Costa Regional Medical Center in Martinez spoke to the Mental Health Commission at their July meeting. What he had to say was candid and alarming.

He pointed out that California Medical Services is the regulatory body that oversees the hospital. Their audits and our compliance with their audits determine the eligibility to bill Medi-Cal and Medi-Cal.

Our performance has been a regulatory time bomb and now we are standing at ground zero.

On April 24, 2006, CMS delivered a 34 page statement of deficiencies based up on their survey in November, 2005. The Medi-Care status was suspended as part of this action and the Medi-Cal status is currently under review.

"Is this news?" he asked. "No," he said. They have been aware of the problems in psychiatry for some time. He said that Psych is dysfunctional on many levels. They have communication problem, leadership problems, financial problems and philosophical problems. He said they have competency problems.

Our performance has been a regulatory time bomb and now, we're standing at ground zero. We must set aside our pride and anger and rejoin the family of HSD (Health Services Department). The family itself will need to make some changes to welcome back psychiatry or we will surely relapse and fail.

BOOK REVIEW



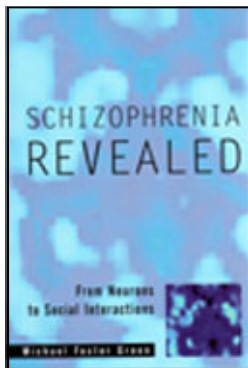
Mae Bragen, Librarian

Schizophrenia Revealed, by Michael Foster Green, Published by W.W. Norton, New York, 2003, \$19.95.

Review by Nancy Owens

This book represents a breakthrough in books for the non-professional that are factual and effective, yet readable. He explains the disorder itself, the resources needed to treat it and the outcomes that might be expected. For example his description of schizophrenia:

“To make sense of this illness, we need to grasp what goes wrong in the brain and what goes wrong in the community. This book will revolve around three key aspects of schizophrenia: neural connections, neuro-cognitive deficits and functional impairment. Our understanding of each of these aspects has grown considerably in the last decade.



Schizophrenia is essentially a disorder of neural connections and these neural problems lead to neuro-cognitive deficits. The neuro-cognitive deficits lead, in turn to misinterpretations and confusion and eventually to functional impairment.”

You probably would not expect a book on schizophrenia to be a page-turner. This book is.

He has a chapter on the Development of Schizophrenia. In it he says,

“Unappreciated until recently was that the onset of illness is not really the beginning of the illness at all; it is the final step on a very long path. For schizophrenia, it is necessary to think in terms of *risk or predisposition* as opposed to onset. Once we start looking for risk factors, we find that they can start very early in life.”

“People are born with a certain genetic predisposition for schizophrenia. Some have more of a predisposition than others, there are no guarantees as to who will develop the disease.”

Green says that about a third of the those with schizophrenia have a good outcome. It is one of the world’s leading causes of disability. It is in the top five for young people.

The book is helpful and instructive.

Editor’s Note: Below are comments about *Schizophrenia Revealed* by William Shryer, Clinical Director, Diablo Behavioral Healthcare.

This book is a masterpiece. Never in graduate school at UC Berkeley was I assigned a book that is so clearly written. *Schizophrenia Revealed* covers a vast and fascinating subject with clarity and provides to the reader insights that are so badly needed.

My goal for years has been to get the concept of disorders of the brain having something to do with whether or not you were breast fed, bottle fed or bonded with your binkie out of the thinking of clinicians everywhere. This book validates the science behind what has been discussed for years, but that many fought due to not wanting to give up the psychoanalytic turf. Schizophrenia is a variation in brain development.

Some are seriously impaired others not so much. It appears more and more as if the vast majority of our current diagnostic labels are in fact brain problems that are genetic, run in families and vary tremendously in the level of difficulty they bring to the person so impacted. We all owe the author Michael Green a debt of gratitude for providing us with a real gem.

BITS AND
PIECES

CHOICE

The establishment also tends to ignore the science on insight into illness. They talk about “choice,” disregarding studies showing some people are unable to choose. The most common cause of nonadherence to treatment is actually not side effects, stigma, or medication cost, but a lack of insight into illness. That can seriously interfere with a patient’s ability to weigh meaningfully the consequences of various treatment options.

(Taken from a TAC article by Mary Zdanowicz)

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

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Street Address

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Phone: _____

Please Use Donation For:

NAMI-CC General Fund

Family to Family

K.I.D.S. Program

LETTERS TO THE
EDITOR

Dave/Peggy, et al: Not having written up a profile before, and, at Dave's suggestion, I'm attaching a draft of the one I've done on James. I'm totally open to any suggestions that you may have, and want you all to know that attending the NAMI support meetings has been an absolute life saver for me, as I'm learning it has for many others in such situations. James is such a lost soul, there are times when I love him fiercely, times when I feel so sorry for him and so helpless, and times (seldom, thank God!) when I could honestly say I hate him. The hardest part of this is coming to the realization that I will never again experience the son I had 3 or so years ago, and the fact that the only outlet in his life now is his work. Lines from an Irish poem "Lord, Thou are hard on mothers / we suffer in their coming and their going" - "going" takes on a whole new definition here.

Many thanks for all the excellent work you're doing, it is truly appreciated.

Teresa

Walnut Creek

COMMENTS

Comments for the newsletter should be sent to:

E mail: xnamicc@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.

SEPTEMBER DONATIONS

Joan Sorisio
1931—2006



In Memory of

Joan Sorisio

From Pat Wright

In Memory of

Joan Sorisio

Edward J. Ritelli

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John and Stacy Swain

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Coralie Reed

Peggy Luna

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Sandra M. Duncan

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

*Renew Your
Membership Now.*

Stamp

Free Classes on Mental Illness
Family to Family Classes
Fall Classes Begin in September
Seating Is Limited: Call now: 925-284 5240 or 676 5771
E mail: mfoverby@yahoo.com or xnamicc@aol.com

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

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

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City _____ State _____ ZIP _____
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NOW**

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