



NAMI Contra Costa

The Family's Voice On Mental Illness *April, 2004*

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

DRASTIC CUTS ON THE WAY 6 MILLION TO BE SLASHED FROM THE MENTAL HEALTH BUDGET

It's not over till it's over and this is only the beginning. However it looks as though \$6 million will be slashed from the \$90 million Mental Health Division's budget. The Health Department has asked the Division to present a budget reflecting a \$6 million reduction. It will be presented in mid-April and will go on to the budget sessions in June. This is easily the worst Budget crisis in memory.

Children's Mental Health will be hit worse than some of the other areas. More County money has been used in the Children's budget than in the Adult budget. This will result in greater cuts than elsewhere in the Division.

The efforts of the Mental Health advocates, including the Coalition to not cut the already vulnerable system has fallen on deaf ears.

(Continued on page 7, column 2)

HELEN THOMSON AGAIN YOLO COUNTY SUPERVISOR

Champions of term limits and LPS reforms found that the two can present a dilemma. Helen Thomson, who represented Yolo County for six years was forced to move on, leaving the efforts to make the laws more effective to her successors.

Thomson is now on the board of Supervisors in Yolo County. She continues her efforts on behalf of the mentally ill. They recently went through NAMI's PACT Manual, page by page, to tailor it for Yolo County.

(Continued on page 4, column 1)

CRESTWOOD CENSUS SLOWLY INCREASES

The number of residents at the Crestwood Healing Center in Pleasant Hill finally went past the 30 mark. The facility which opened in October of last year was authorized 20 residents to begin with.

On January 10 they were authorized 20 additional residents. However, during the months of January, February and most of March, the census ranged in the low 20's. The week of March 22 the number went past 30 and it is assumed that in the next few days, it will be in the mid 30's. The next program is scheduled to open April 10 with another 20 residents. Pam Wycoff, the Director says she is guardedly optimistic.

APRIL

GENERAL MEETING
Thursday, April 15, 2004
7:00 p.m.

GUEST SPEAKERS

**Speaking on Mental Illness
In Children**

Kathi McLaughlin
Chair, Children's Committee
Contra Costa Mental Health Commission

Ruth Ormsby
Director, Children's Mental Health
Contra Costa County

Mike Cornwall
Psychologist and Therapist

WHERE

Mt. Diablo Hospital
2540 East Street
Concord
925-682 8200

IN THIS ISSUE

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First Tue. & 3rd Mon.
- Survival Guide 3**
Available on the Website
- Napa Support Group 5**
- Injectable Risperdal 6**
Approved by FDA

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

2nd and 4th Monday of each month, 7:00-8:30 p.m., St. Claire's Episcopal Church, 3350 Hopyard Road. Pleasanton.

Contact Rev. Meg Brogan 925- 462-4802, and/or Russell and Donna White.

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 925-676 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 Horn 707-451 8341

NEW BIPOLAR GROUP

Where: The Central Clinic, 1420 Willow Pass Road, Concord.

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

NEW HOPE

**SUPPORT GROUP FOR PARENTS OF
ADOLESCENT CHILDREN**

WHERE: Lafayette-Orinda Presbyterian Church Room #4
49 Knox Dr., Lafayette, 925-283 8722

WHEN: 2ND Monday of each month at 7:00 pm

Call: Nancy Weckel 925-934 1216 or newhopelopc@hotmail.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.

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 marilynncap@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

"These are the worst of times, these are the best of times" is the way Dickens begins his classic *The Tale of Two Cities*.

The same could be said of the situation NAMI-CC finds itself in during the worst budget crisis in the last few decades. The more the already strained mental health services are cut, the more imperative the NAMI-CC services become.

The cuts in Children's Mental Health particularly will leave a younger population, both the children and the parents, in an exceedingly difficult position. NAMI-CC has as its challenge to do everything we can to bridge the gap. Coping with mental illness is never easy, but a young couple generally has less income and fewer resources than they would have later in life. So they have less to work with as they confront the issue of their loved one's mental health dilemma.

The speakers at the General Meeting this month have a wealth of experience in the Children's mental health area. There will be a raft of new books on children's issues in the library to complement the discussion.

In an era of money scarcity one way to cut overhead expenses would be to combine the Drug and Alcohol Division with the Mental Health Division. That is the way it is organized in many other counties including Fresno County.

They should be combined into one department for more than just budgetary reasons. Problems with addiction occur in over 50% of the mental health cases. To separate the two areas never should have happened. It made no sense then and it makes less sense now. There should be one Division called *The Department of Troubled People*. Whatever the problem, emotional, psychiatric, addiction, etc., would be dealt with in a seamless and effective manner. Mention that to your Supervisor.

A DATE TO SAVE

NAMI-CC members, Ann and Jon Reynolds who graciously hosted "A Beautiful Night" fundraiser in 2002, now invite you to stroll the paths of their lovely private garden on Saturday, May 15, 2004, between the hours of 10:00 am to 4:00 pm, at 120 Requa Road, Piedmont. The cost is \$5.00 per person and 1/2 of the proceeds will benefit A Beautiful Night's Housing fund for people with mental illnesses. There will also be other gardens nearby to tour. For more information call:

Ann Reynolds
510-547 2950

JAY AND MARY HOPPE MAKE MAJOR DONATION

Jay and Mary Hoppe, NAMI-CC members, have made a substantial donation to NAMI-CC in the memory of their daughter Sarah. Sarah was 30 years old and had suffered from schizophrenia for many years. She lived with her parents and was found to be a wonderful, thoughtful, funny person in spite of the torments of this terrible illness. Jay and Mary's letter finished by saying "she was gone before we knew she was missing. We miss her terribly."

SURVIVAL GUIDE NOW ON THE WEB

The *Survival Guide*, recently published by NAMI-CC is now available on the website. It is the set of instructions that anyone just getting started as a caregiver has to have.

Print it out and follow the instructions and you will find that things will go much more smoothly. It suggests keeping a journal, a set of permanent files, and creating a one page summary among other things. It suggests a strong support group which NAMI-CC offers the First Tuesday and the Third Monday of each month. See page 2 for details.

HELEN THOMSON

**SUPERVISOR
YOLO COUNTY**

(Continued from page 1, column 1)

Thomson virtually took the assembly by the scruff of the neck and got them to debate and consider the badly overdue LPS reforms. First with AB 1800 and later with AB 1424, 1423 and 1421. 1424 has already proved to be vital in getting the family's information considered in Competency Hearings. This was covered by John Dawdy's talk at the March General Meeting.



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NOTE: Starting with this issue we will occasionally have an article that will feature an important figure from the past.

Thomson's interest in the mentally ill is a yard wide and runs deep. It began at the age 15, when as a member of a family of eight, she went to work in a mental health facility in Arlington, Massachusetts. This led to her attending McLean School of Nursing which specializes in the training of psychiatric nurses.

Later she married a psychiatrist, Cap Thomson, who was the Director of the Mental Health Division in Yolo county for many years.

She was first elected to public office in 1974 when she ran for the Board of Education. Later she won a seat on the Board of Supervisors, the office she currently holds again.

Her work on the mental health laws while in the Assembly represents the most significant effort in that field since the passage of the Lanterman-Petris-Short act in 1967. There has been no member of the California State Legislature that has done more to advance the interests of the mentally ill than Helen Thomson. This will be remembered.

HELP BUSINESS HELP NAMI THROUGH eSCRIP

By Dick Hunter

Many merchants want to support the work of NAMI-Contra Costa. All they need is a "go ahead" from you.

Grocers such as Safeway, Andronico's, Diablo Foods and Lunardi's. Merchants like Sharper Image, Eddie Bauer, OfficeMax and Big 5 Sporting Goods. Restaurants, including Carrows, The Duck Club, Coco's and Round Table Pizza. Automotive businesses, such as Big O Tires, AAMCO, and Pep Boys. And, service firms like Merry Maids, Terminix and TruGreen ChemLawn. All, and hundreds more community-minded merchants in local and distant communities, participate in a program known as *eScrip*, donating a percentage of their sales income to qualified community organizations.

Electronic Scrip Incorporated, which administers the program, is a California-based corporation dedicated to establishing relationships between commerce and community -- to provide resources to qualified organizations and projects. Since 1999, over \$70 million has been distributed to groups and schools.

How do you get involved? Easy. Merely register as a participant. It costs you nothing. The purchases you make on your credit cards (or grocery loyalty cards) automatically instruct participating businesses to make their donation in your name to the qualified recipient of your choice. And, the donations can be quite sizeable, even over a short time. Periodically, you'll receive a report from *eScrip*, summarizing the sources and amounts triggered by your participation. (For a list of all business participants, access the internet address: www.escrip.com)

Many NAMI members report that their day-to-day transactions generate contributions well over the yearly cost of their own NAMI membership. The e Scrip program is far and away the easiest way to support NAMI-CC in a really big way.

NAMI thanks the many businesses that participate in this important effort and urges you to register with *eScrip* today. It's easy. Here's how:

Computer Access:

www.escrip.com

Click on "Sign Up" near the top of the screen page.

On the next screen, click on the "Group ID" and enter 137145323, or, using the "Group Name" search, enter NAMI/Contra Costa.

Click on "NAMI/Contra Costa" on the next screen, then follow the instructions.

Telephone Access:

If computer access is not available to you, call NAMI-CC's coordinator Ann Pereyra on 937-4369

PROGRAM HELPS CONSUMERS

This year, the Wellness Recovery Action Plan (WRAP) Program celebrates its third anniversary. WRAP offers weekly self-help and recovery skill-building support groups throughout our county. A team of trained peer facilitators assist individual mental health clients to identify coping strategies that enable them to prevent relapse and promote wellness.

These cost-effective groups prevent expensive hospitalizations. Clients are referred to the program by their physicians and other service providers, as well as by fellow group participants. The Wellness Recovery groups are rapidly growing in size, which has already necessitated the need for additional groups. Sharon Kuehn, Aaron Kling and Cyndie Staton are active in the program. For information call: 925-957 5147.

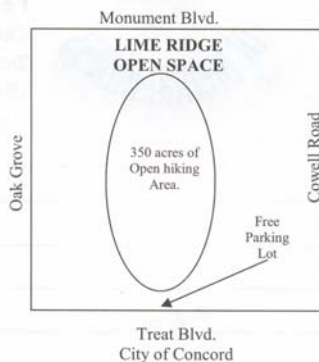
EXERCISE PROGRAMS AND SITES ABOUND

The need for exercise is a challenge in a nation that has an epidemic of obesity. One of the frequent side effects of some medications is weight gain. All too frequently, the doctor does not emphasize the need for exercise.

Contra Costa residents are fortunate to have virtually unlimited trails and parks where areas to exercise are nearby and accessible.



Soccer fields are in most neighborhoods and hiking trails run through most areas. The trails in the Limeridge area are located in the very center of Concord. 150 acres of all weather trails in the area bounded by Treat, Oak Grove, Monument Boulevards and Cowell Road.



NAPA GROUP CELEBRATES FIRST YEAR

The group that has been supporting families that have a loved one in the Napa State Hospital began in March, 2003. Three months ago they became one of the NAMI-CC committees. Several of the original families were already NAMI-CC members and Gene Schulting, a long time NAMI-CC member felt they needed some official organizational structure.

They meet the 2nd Saturday of each month (Check information on page 2). They deal with a wide range of topics, e.g., treatment philosophy, social work services, diet and nutritional services, CONREP (Conditional Release Program), mail handling and vocational services program.

Anyone who has a loved one in the Napa State Hospital needs to be a part of this group. For more information: Call Gene Schulting 925-933 1151 and/or Donna Horn, 707-451 8341, E mail: xnamicc@aol.com

CNN TO RUN SEGMENTS ON MENTAL ILLNESS

CNN through Comcast filmed two five minute segments of a discussion with NAMI-CC about mental illness and how to cope with the challenges. The show is "Local Edition" with Jack Hanson as the host. They will be shown 25 minutes and 55 minutes after the hour in some time periods during the month of April.

FAMILY TO FAMILY TRAINING

The sessions will be May 21 and 22. For more information call: 925-682 7195/ 925-676 5771 xnamicc@aol.com

DONATIONS NEEDED FOR NEW FACILITY

The Crestwood Healing Center is actually three facilities in one. The first unit that opened in October, six months ago, is the MHRC where the consumer gets the most attention and support.

The next unit will open April 10. It will provide independence with support. It will be the Adult Residential Facility and Marti Wilson will be its Director.

NAMI-CC had a drive to provide all kinds of equipment for the MHRC. It was a smash success. We would like to repeat that success by asking everyone who can to donate the following items:

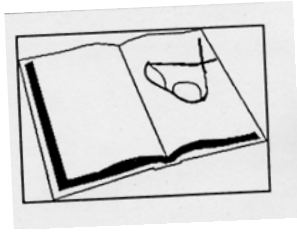
- A weight bench
- Hand weights (Various sizes)
- Exercise mats
- Exercise balls
- Sony Walkmen (Much in demand!)
- Fitness apparel, e.g. headbands, wrist bands, workout sweats, athletic shoes, etc
- Fitness posters (Framed, if possible)
- Outdoor equipment, for going to the park such as softballs, bats, variety of gloves, basketballs, soccer balls, tennis rackets and balls

Anything you can donate will be much appreciated!

Just drop off your donation to the Crestwood Healing Center:

Marti Wilson
ARF Program Director
925-938 8050 ext. 36

Crestwood Healing Center
550 Patterson Avenue
Pleasant Hill

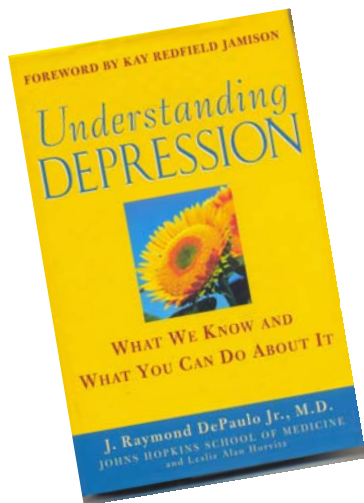


BOOK REVIEW

Understanding Depression, by J. Raymond DePaule, Jr., M.D. with Leslie Alan Horvitz. 296 pages, \$24.95, available from the NAMI-CC library.

In the foreword by Kay Redfield Jamison, author of *the Unquiet Mind*, she concludes by saying “None of us has a choice about becoming depressed. We do however have a choice about becoming informed about our illness. *Understanding Depression* is the best place to begin the process of becoming informed.”

Dr. DePaulo of the prestigious John Hopkins University School of Medicine shows you how to find out if what you’re coping with is, in fact depression. He then examines the full range of proven therapies, both mainstream and alternative, that are currently available. He shows that people with depression are two to four times more likely to have a heart attack.



Is this an important connection? His answer is yes. It is just another reason not to ignore this painful dilemma.
(Continued on page 7, column 2)

**FDA APPROVES
RISPERDAL
CONSTA**

From NAMI California

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has approved RISPERDALTM CONSTATM (risperidone long-acting injection) for the treatment of schizophrenia. It is the first long-acting, newer generation (atypical) antipsychotic to be approved by the FDA. The treatment uses advanced technology to deliver and maintain therapeutic medication levels in the body through just one injection *every two weeks*.

This addresses a major challenge in the treatment of schizophrenia and helps patients, clinicians and family caregivers know with certainty that patients received needed medication for this serious brain disorder. As many as 75 percent of patients with schizophrenia have difficulty taking their oral medication on a regular basis. This may lead to the worsening of symptoms.

This new, injectable medication is already in use in Contra Costa County and will be a major aid in difficult medication programs. ConstraTM will be distributed by Janssen Pharmaceutica Products, L.P.

“By providing consistent levels of medication during a two-week period, ConstaTM eliminates many of the peaks and valley that you get with a medication that you have to take daily.” said John Kane, M.D., executive of the Zucker Hillside Hospital and professor of psychiatry at the Albert Einstein College of Medicine in New York.

**DONATE A CAR
TO NAMI-CC**



You get a generous tax deduction and will avoid the DMV, smog and classified ad hassle. xnamicc@aol.com
925-676 5771

**BITS AND
PIECES**

The reality of arguing in Sacramento is that unless the right kind of pressure is being applied, the issue will be ignored. That’s the reason the mental health community has been ineffectual. They have not had the organization that the mentally retarded or the developmentally disabled groups have had. Politicians can count votes.
(Excerpted from the Treatment Advocacy Newsletter, February, 2004)

From an economic perspective, jailing people with severe mental illnesses may make sense: It’s much less expensive to house someone in prison (at a cost of around \$29,000 annually) than it is to house them at a state hospital at costs of well over \$100,000 a year). It is also politically more difficult to cut prison budgets and risk appearing soft on crime, than to cut mental health funding.
(The above was excerpted from an article by Ann Dubay, American Online)

The largest mental health facility in Contra Costa County is the Jail in Martinez. It was designed to house 360 inmates when it opened in 1980. It now averages between 700 and 1000 prisoners. Approximately 16% of them are mentally ill which would be about 112 inmates. The mentally ill are housed in the M Module which has only 45 beds. The other 67 remain in the general jail population

**HAVE YOU
RENEWED YOUR
MEMBERSHIP?**

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Dear Editor:

I am writing to thank the NAMI organization for the help they recently extended to my daughter. She was homeless and bi-polar in the City of Concord and finally called us in Iowa. We checked the web and found the Contra Costa chapter and their phone number.

With one phone call, she was put in touch with the Mental Health branch in your county. After a rough start, she is doing much better and talks of returning home when she is able.

I thank God that we found your phone number.

Grace and Rudy Wood

Dear Editor:

We have a nine year old boy who has been quite difficult for the last two years. I can see now, that when the possibility that the explanation might be mental illness, we resisted the thought. We were in denial.

Finally we were urged to go to the monthly meeting in Concord. We met several people there that said they had similar problems and had been working with them for a years. We joined that night, took out three books and plan to take the next Family to Family class.

I have passed on the information about NAMI to two neighbors who have also had similar problems. Thanks so much.

Betty Cane

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

DRASTIC CUTS ON THE WAY

(Continued from page 1)

Supervisor Mark DeSaulnier wrote to Mike Cornwall, Chair of the Mental Health Coalition in response to the plea for "no cuts in direct services" in the mental health system. In the letter he said "I would like nothing better than to be able to reassure you about the future funding of programs, but I would be less than frank with you if I made that suggestion." "the struggle of county governments to stay afloat may have only just begun. There are no easy answers to our budget shortfall and more questions arise each day."



BOOK REVIEW

(Continued from page 6, column 1)

DePaulo's observations are confirmed by a recent article in the Wall Street Journal by Tara Parker-Pope. She reported, "patients with depression have as much as a 70% higher risk of having a heart attack." And depression can increase the chance of dying in the months after a heart attack by as much as 3.5 times. One study showed patients taking Zoloft had 20% fewer problems than the average.

The author makes a survey of what people knew about depression and how they responded to it. He draws on the great doctors, Hippocrates (c. 460-370 B.C.) and Galen (c. A.D. 130-200) and shows depression has always been with us. It went by different names, e.g., melancholia, but it has always been there.

He makes an interesting comment on the DSM IV. "However, what began as a manageable classification system that helped clarify symptoms, has grown exponentially without obvious breakthroughs to justify the rapid expansion of categories. This can make the field more confusing not less."

APRIL DONATIONS

CENTURY CLUB MEMBERS

Jay and Mary Hoppe

John C. Hurst

Gerald and Rosette Koch

Allan and Lynda Chasnoff

IN MEMORY OF:

Sarah Hoppe

A Generous Donation From:
John and Sandra Munson

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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 _____

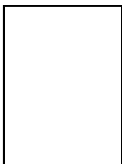
Use Donation For:

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

In Honor Of: _____

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**Have You Renewed Your
NAMI MEMBERSHIP?**

**NAMI Contra Costa
P.O. Box 21247
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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