



# NAMI Contra Costa

*Contra Costa's Voice on Mental Illness*      **AUGUST, 2007**

The NAMI Contra Costa Newsletter is available on the website: [www.namicontracosta.org](http://www.namicontracosta.org)

General Meeting  
**AUGUST**  
 Thursday,  
 August 16, 2007

7:00pm

A Panel

Topic:

**Dual Diagnosis,**  
 The Challenge of Co-occurring  
 Disorders of Mental Illness and  
 Substance Abuse

The Panel: Rebecca Woolis, MFT, Program Director, Bonita House, author of *When Someone You Love Has a Mental Illness*; An Anonymous Representative from Dual Recovery Anonymous, Oakland; Nina Farraris, MA, MFT, Program Manager, John Muir Behavioral Health Center.

John Muir Medical Center  
 Concord Campus  
 (Note: Formerly Mt. Diablo Medical Center)  
[www.namicontracosta.org](http://www.namicontracosta.org)

2540 East Street, Concord  
 925-682 8200

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CCRMC PSYCHIATRY  
**A STATEMENT  
 FROM MILES  
 KRAMER**

Editor's Note: *Miles Kramer is the Director of Psychiatry & Detention Health. Mr. Kramer came to Contra Costa County in November, 2003.*

CCRMC psychiatry is on the mend! During my time with CCRMC psychiatry, one of our greatest challenges has been the absence of dedicated and involved physician leadership. This spring, we brought in a contractor in an attempt to solve this difficult staffing and leadership problem. This proved to be unsuccessful.

During this period, Dr. Akindele Kolade, MD, assumed the role of Medical Director of hospital psychiatry; a position that had been vacant for over four years.

In April Anne Pato was hired as the department's compliance and quality administrator. On June 15th, Traditions Behavioral Health, ([www.tbhcare.com](http://www.tbhcare.com)) took over CCRMC's contract and the tide turned.

Dr. Charles Saldanha was hired by TBH as the Chief Psychiatrist. Ten new doctors were brought on board. TBH then hired almost all of our existing contractors.

From the very first day of the TBH contract, CCRMC's

(Continued on page 4, column 1))

**A LETTER  
 FROM THE  
 PRESIDENT  
 OF NAMI CALIFORNIA**  
 Ralph E. Nelson Jr. MD

Hopefully the court ordered state hospital pay raise will stop the drain of mental health care providers from the state hospitals to the prisons and beds will become available once again at the California state hospitals.

(Continued on page 5, column 1)

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**BEHAVIORAL  
 HEALTH  
 COURT NOW  
 OPERATING**

Much to the credit of Judge Mary Ann O'Malley and Marti Wilson, the Behavioral Health Court (Mental Health Court) is in full operation. It will deliberately begin with a few cases and increase the volume as the kinks are worked out.

**History**

It was reported in this newsletter last September that a group from Contra Costa County led by Judge O'Malley visited one of the most successful of all Mental Health Courts in Santa Clara.

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# 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, Dave Kahler, or Willie Mack 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. 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

### **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

### **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.

Call: Veronica 925-845 7871

### **NEW HOPE**

#### **BIPOLAR SUPPORT GROUP**

For parents of children and adolescents diagnosed with a mood disorder.

#### **Two Meeting Locations:**

Lafayette:

2nd Monday of each month  
7:00 pm to 9:00 pm

Lafayette-Orinda Presbyterian Church Room #4

Contact: Anette 510-733 0577 or  
Joani 925-962 9952

Concord:

Last Monday of each month— 7—8:30 pm  
Dr, Philip Shains' Offices-2630 Salvio St. Concord  
Contact: Leslie 925— 518 6684

[www.newhopesupportgroup.com](http://www.newhopesupportgroup.com)

### **NAPA STATE HOSPITAL FAMILY SUPPORT GROUP (NSHFSG)**

Meets the 2nd Saturday of each month

Where: Hospital's Volunteer Conference Room

For Information: Bill Schrader 707-433 9250

### **FAMILY ADVOCATE HOURS**

Gloria Hill, Contra Costa County Mental Health Advocate

Mondays: 12:30—3:30 pm Tuesdays All Day: 925-957 5146 Thursday Morning: 925-957 5146

After 1:30 pm 925-646 5844 Pager: 925-476 2618 Any day of the Week.

**NAMI-Contra Costa**  
National Alliance for the Mentally Ill

**OFFICERS:**

**Art Honegger**

*President*

925- 754 7216

Fax: 925- 754 6899

SKIIDER@aol.com

**Caroline Jackson,**

*1st Vice President*

925- 687 7052

Caroline.jackson@juno.com

**Kay Derrico 2nd Vice President**

925-933 4012

vder123@aol.com

**Janis Schoepke Secretary**

925-229 3883

j\_schoepke@yahoo.com

**David Kahler Treasurer**

925- 676 5771

Fax: 925-476 1444

dk122932@aol.com

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**PRESIDENT'S  
COLUMN**

BY ART HONEGGER

The State NAMI Convention is being held at the Irvine Marriott September 28<sup>th</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup>. These are very informative and inspirational events and should be attended by all who are able.

We are sorry to learn that stalwart NAMI CC member Anna Garcia is leaving California. Anna has been a dynamo in many of our activities, including NAMI CC Steering Committee member for the '07 NAMI Walk, had taken the Peer to Peer Mentor training to co-facilitate the September class series, and held the position of NAMI Walk '08 Executive Committee member representing our Affiliate. Thank you, thank you, Anna!

This leaves open a very important position, namely that 2008 NAMI Walk Executive Committee member. Anyone interested is encouraged to contact me as soon as possible, as the Executive Committee is already planning for next year's Walk. Best way to reach me is 925-200-0978. We will also be needing a co-chair for the Walk, so keep that in mind.

As Chair of the Peer to Peer program, Bonnie Leys is doing a terrific job at mustering the troops and preparing for the September class series. I'll say it again, anyone interested in taking the class should contact Bonnie immediately:

[bonnieleysj@lmco.com](mailto:bonnieleysj@lmco.com)  
or 925-754-6987.

Lastly, you need to sign up soon for the September Family to Family class series by contacting Marie Overby at 925-284-5240.

**FREE CLASSES  
ON MENTAL  
ILLNESS**

**NAMI' Contra Costa's  
Family to Family  
Classes**

The September, Family to Family classes will be held in Lafayette. Space is limited, so reservations should be made now.

It is a twelve week course that gives an in-depth look at all the aspects of mental illness, how to manage it, and the resources that can provide help and support. Many have found the course to be a life saver.

The course began in Vermont twelve years ago and is now offered in all 50 states. NAMI Contra Costa has graduated more than 1600 NAMI members and non-members since it started in the county eight years ago. You DO NOT have to be a NAMI member to take the course.

The course offers a wealth of practical, useable information you must have to effectively help your love one.

For more information and reservations contact Marie Overby:

925-284 5240

925-676 5771

**NAMI Contra Costa**  
National Alliance for the Mentally Ill

P.O. Box 21247  
Concord, California  
94521

Phone: 925- 465 3864  
E mail: xnamicc@aol.com  
Website:  
[www.namicontracosta.org](http://www.namicontracosta.org)

**CCRMC PSYCHIATRY**  
**A STATEMENT**  
**FROM MILES**  
**KRAMER**

(Continued from page 1, Column 2)

crisis stabilization unit was fully staffed for the first time in years.

Inpatient psychiatry is currently staffed with Locum Tenens (Temporary) psychiatrists but TBH's recruitment is on going and we're confident they will hire two new inpatient-attending psychiatrists shortly.

For the first time in my tenure at CCRMC, I am convinced that we will be successful in renewing our psychiatric services. The regulatory and staffing challenges that have plagued us in the past few years are on the mend. Our new administrative structure has been rebuilt, is competent and now working effectively.

Physician leadership is now restored and we now have a formal structure for quality improvement and monitoring.

The Hospital Department of Psychiatry also has new leadership. Dr. Edward Davis-Rodriguez, an adult psychiatrist in the Richmond Ambulatory Care clinic was elected as the department chair, bringing new leadership, positive energy and a renewed dedication to quality and innovative patient care.

Additionally, we have a new program manager position for psychiatry social services rounding out a solid new administrative structure.

The past few years have been difficult. Many good people have moved on, we've lost 20 of our priceless inpatient beds and the system has struggled with staffing, regulatory compliance and assaultive patients.

(Continued in the next column)

**PEER TO PEER**  
**CLASSES**

A nine week course of Peer to Peer classes is scheduled for the fall in Concord. The presenters will be Lisa & Chris Bruce, Betty Kohn and Connie Steers.

Final arrangements are being made for the location and course dates. The full details will be printed in the September edition of the NAMI newsletter.

This course created and administered by NAMI National has been an enormous help to consumers across the nation. The course and the materials are free.

Please register for the course by calling Betty Kohn at 925-427-7700 or Connie Steers at 925-673-8673.



Contra Costa Regional Medical

Today, things are improving and careful planning has led to a new and vital structure.

Staff development needs are being addressed with on-going training and the environment on the units is hopeful.

I'm confident that the months and years to come will see the complete renewal of CCRMC psychiatric services.

**FEDERAL**  
**ADVOCACY**  
**NEEDS REFORM**

Editors Note: This article has been excerpted from Treatment Advocacy Center's Enews.

An appalling case of federally funded patient "advocacy" run amok was exposed just this month. On May 3, Robert Bruce of Caratunk, Maine, testified before the state legislature about his 25-year-old son, William. The young man had been a patient at River-view Psychiatric Center from February to April 2006, where he had been committed after assaulting his father.

Mr. Bruce and his wife were afraid of their son and begged the hospital to medicate him with the antipsychotic that had previously quelled his paranoia. But William wanted to leave the hospital.

Advocates from the Disability Rights Center, Maine's federally funded P&A, pushed for his release despite dire warnings from psychiatrists ("I find myself extremely concerned about this young man's potential for violence," reads one of many explicit notes in the medical record).

Nonetheless, the advocates insisted that William was "competent" for discharge and openly coached him--as a lawyer would his client--on how to placate the doctors so they'd let him go. William prevailed, and River-view discharged him on April 20.

Exactly two months later he murdered his mother with a hatchet. In his wrenching testimony before Maine legislators, Robert Bruce emphasized "the role that the patient advocates played."

In the wake of the Virginia Tech shooting, there has

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**A LETTER  
FROM THE  
PRESIDENT  
OF NAMI CALIFORNIA**  
Ralph E. Nelson Jr. MD

(Continued from page 1, column 3)

With beds at our state hospitals not being used because there is no one to take care of the patients is untenable. This is especially horrific because consumers who have been deemed incompetent to stand trial have been languishing in our county jails since January of 2007 when most admissions to the state hospitals were severely curtailed.

However, this does not address the root of this evil. The state of California is remiss in not assuring the mental and physical health care of its mentally ill citizens not only in the prisons and state hospitals, but in our communities.

It is the governor's and the state legislature's responsibility to firmly assure that there are adequate training institutions and faculty to train enough mental health providers to meet the needs of our state. Raising wages for the mental health care providers in the state hospitals and the prisons will only steal more of these people from the local communities which do not have enough mental health providers to meet their needs.

This should have been addressed long before the Mental Health Services Act was passed and now we are in the middle of one of the worst mental health care crises this state has ever seen in all its history.

Not only has the lack of state resources caused many of our

(Continued in the next column)

**BEHAVIORAL  
HEALTH  
COURT NOW  
OPERATING**

(Continued from page 1, column 3)

The Santa Clara Court is the Mecca of all Mental Health courts. It is under the direction of Judge Steven Manley. The court is a high volume operation.

There are more than 200 mental health courts in the county, which have proven highly effective in reducing jail time for mentally ill offenders who tend to serve significantly more time than other inmates. Equally important, these courts have resulted in meaningful treatment for mentally ill offenders and frequently have resulted in the provision of more services and housing.

The Contra Costa Behavioral Health Court (BHC) is essentially a voluntary sentencing court. This means that once an arrestee has been found guilty or has agreed to a plea bargain, s/he will be referred to the BHC for sentencing. Sentencing will typically include probation and other alternatives to incarceration, case management and treatment for mental illness and/or substance abuse and referrals for other services including housing, vocational services, transportation and

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mentally ill adolescent and adult offspring to become residents of jails, prisons and forensic portions of the state hospitals, but once they are incarcerated, they usually end up suffering inadequate or life threatening care. This type of treatment of mentally ill consumers is simply not acceptable!

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fulfilling the conditions of the sentence.

The fact that 19% of the Contra Costa Jail population suffers from a mental illness has made the Sheriff's Department activists in seeking a more effective way to address the problem. It is generally agreed that psychiatric patients should be in a psychiatric facility, not a jail/prison system.

As a result of lobbying by the State Sheriff's Association, the State Legislature allocated \$45 million for programs that would provide alternatives to sentencing for the mentally ill.

The Contra Costa Sheriff's Department submitted an application to the Corrections Standards Authority (CSA) and won a grant of \$1.5 million for the implementation of a Mental Health Court.

The goals stated in the grant application were:

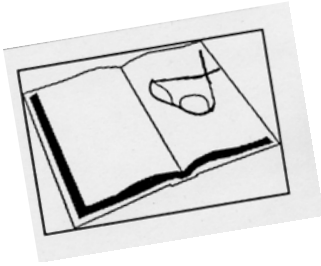
- Reduce the population of mentally ill in jail
- Stabilize individuals, increase functionality
- Provide treatment options
- Comprehensive services and care
- Prevent re-arrest

The court is currently presided over by Judge Joni Hiramoto. It has been operating on Mondays at 3:00pm, since April, 2007. The clients make frequent court appearances.

The BHC team is made up of:

- Public Defender Ilean Baltadono
- District Attorney, Brian Haynes
- Probation Officer, Ron Peterson
- Forensic Liaison/Team Leader, Marti Wilson
- Mental Health Specialist, Candace Kunz-Tao
- Deputy Sheriff, Brian Tripp

## BOOK REVIEW



### EFFECTIVE BOOKS ON

# OCD

## Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder

Jeff Bell, one of the two anchors on KCBS, Monday through Friday, 2:00pm to 7:00pm has drawn considerable attention to the Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder. He tells his incredible personal story in his just published book; *Rewind, Replay, Repeat*. (Published by Hazelden Publishers, 2007, 358 pages, \$15.)

The author of the classic on OCD, Judith L. Rapaport, M.D. is quoted as saying, "A page turner for anyone interested in OCD. Beautifully written and gripping in its intensity, it takes the reader on the perilous adventure of the fight against OCD." It is an imperative book for anyone concerned with OCD. Three other excellent books on the subject are:

- *The Boy Who Couldn't Stop Washing*, Judith L. Rapaport, M.D., A Plume Book, 1990, 262 pages, \$15.
- *Tormenting Thoughts and Secret Rituals*, Ian Osborn, M.D., Dell Publishers, 1998, 325 pages, \$12.95.
- *Let Go Of Clutter*, Harriet Schechter, McGraw-Hill, 2001, 195 pages, \$16.95.

## Clubhouse Report

by Richard Hoff

In recent reports in this newsletter, several Clubhouse Board members have described progress in our effort to establish the first Clubhouse in Contra Costa County.

A Clubhouse, as developed according to a proven model that has been implemented in 400 locations throughout the world, is a membership-based community where people living with persistent mental illness come to rebuild their lives. Participants share ownership and responsibility for the success of the organization. They work in a unique partnership with a small staff, building on their strengths instead of focusing on illness.

The Clubhouse provides an accepting place to spend the day, valuable work to perform within the organization, opportunities to socialize with friends and co-workers, and access to employment within the wider community.

There is no fee for becoming a member of the Clubhouse. Membership is for life and provides ongoing support. Considerable information regarding the Clubhouse concept and plans for starting one locally can be obtained:

[www.ccclubhouse.org](http://www.ccclubhouse.org) <http://www.ccclubhouse.org/>

or at the

NAMI-Contra Costa website.

There are a number of essential items that must be obtained if we are to develop a successful Clubhouse. Funding is probably the

most important.

We have begun a program of soliciting funds from individuals. This effort has been wonderfully bolstered by the challenge grant offered by Herb and Beverly Putnam wherein they will match individual donations up to \$50,000.

We have been able to raise more than enough in actual donations and pledges during the past few months to meet this challenge. Donations and pledges at this time total more than \$110,000.

Thanks to all of our donors! We will be acknowledging them by name in a future report (except for those who wish to remain anonymous).

Because of your generous support, we are now in the process of hiring our first executive director. A job announcement of this important position is posted on our website.

In addition to funds received from individual donors, we also need some sources of institutional funding, longer-term grants of the sort that charitable foundations can provide.

Thus, we are looking to develop grant-writing skills and to seek support from foundations like the California Endowment. Another vital need is to find a suitable location. We can begin, if necessary, in a small way with a starting space of 800-1000 square feet. Eventually we will need a location that is up to 5,000 sq ft and includes a complete kitchen facility.

We expect to locate in the Concord area. To support this effort and to provide the necessary help required to make our first Clubhouse a success, we are seeking volunteers to help solicit funds and to suggest potential sites. Volunteers should contact Board President Betty McCabe at

# UPCOMING SPEAKERS

By Kay Derrico

NAMI Contra Costa holds a General Meeting the third Thursday of every month. The featured speakers are specialists in their field.

In the past we have had speakers such as Jacqueline Persons, author and editor of books on Cognitive Therapy and the therapist featured in Jeff Bell's new book *Rewind, Replay, Repeat*.

**September General Meeting,** September 20. Speaker: Dr. Steven Hinshaw, Professor and Chairman of the Psychology Department, UC Berkeley. Dr. Hinshaw does research on ADHD and many other disorders.

**October General Meeting.** John Dawdy has been the Hearing Officer in Contra Costa County for nearly 15 years. He will speak on the best way for a family to handle a hearing and the related problems.



(925) 627-4216.

If you would like to make a tax-deductible contribution to the project, please make your check payable to NAMI-CC Clubhouses and mail it the Clubhouse address: CC Clubhouses, 89 Stowbridge Court, Danville, CA 94526. You can also donate on line:

<http://www.ccclubhouse.org/>  
[www.ccclubhouse.org](http://www.ccclubhouse.org)

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# AUGUST DONATIONS

A Donation  
 AT & T  
 Matching Grant Program

A Donation  
 Helen and John  
 Mitchell Foundation

A Donation  
 Keith Wright

A Donation  
 Jess and Mary Baker

Continued from page 4, column 3)  
 been murmuring on Capitol Hill of forthcoming proposals to better equip state mental health systems to manage the severely mentally ill.

President Bush has already appointed HHS secretary Mike Leavitt and Education secretary Margaret Spellings to conduct an inquiry on what went wrong.

Unless SAMHSA miraculously reforms itself quickly (and Congress could help things along by prohibiting P&A's from lobbying state legislatures on mental health laws), a much less overbearing federal role might be the best thing to hope for from this process.

It is disgraceful that, to date, the lead federal agency on mental health care has not been able to grasp the complexity of severe mental illness and has failed to keep its watchdog component from harming the vulnerable souls it is entrusted to protect.

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## 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

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Street Address \_\_\_\_\_

City State Zip

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Use Donation For:

- Peer to Peer Program
- NAMI-CC General Fund
- Family to Family
- K.I.D.S. Program
- Housing

NAMI Contra Costa  
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**FIRST TUESDAY  
 SUPPORT GROUP**  
 Now In It's 10th Year  
*Everyone welcome!*  
 Hillcrest Congregational Church  
 404 Gregory Lane, Pleasant Hill  
 Information on Page 2  
 E mail: xnamicc@aol.com  
 925-676 5771

Stamp

**Free Classes on Mental Illness**  
**Family to Family Classes**  
 Will Begin in September  
 Space is limited, Register now.  
 Marie Overby: 925- 284 5240 Email: mfoverby@yahoo.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  
 94521  
 E mail: xnamicc@aol.com

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Affiliated with NAMI National and NAMI California

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 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

Mental Health Client \$ 20.00  
 Dual Affiliate 20.00  
 General Membership 40.00  
 Professional Membership 50.00  
 Century Club 100.00  
 Lifetime 500.00