



NAMI Contra Costa

Contra Costa's Voice on Mental Illness *May, 2008*

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

HORRENDOUS BUDGET CUTS THREE CLINICS TO CLOSE

The Contra Costa County mental health system is in the process of taking a devastating financial hit of truly historic proportions.

The February newsletter quoted the Director of the Health Services Department, Dr. William Walker as saying "it's going to be terrible." He said that at the Mental Health Commission, January meeting, giving the audience a three month advance warning about the massive budget cuts that were in the making.

Three clinics are to close, one adult and two children's

NAMI WALK SATURDAY MAY 31

The NAMI Walk 2008 is shaping up to be the greatest Walk ever. There will be vans leaving from the Central Clinic in Concord at 7:30 am the morning of the walk. (A \$15. donation is appreciated)

For the first time, there will be a free, Bar B Q picnic after the walk.

Come, have a great time and help demolish the stigma against mental illness. There is a detailed map on page 6 of this newsletter that will show you just how to get there. For more information:

Free Classes

FAMILY TO FAMILY

If you have a loved who is mentally ill, you need the education, information and support this class can offer you. Call:

925-284 5240

xnamicc@aol.com

General Meeting

MAY

Thursday, May 15

7:00 pm

Speaker

Dr. Michael Minzenberg
Psychiatrist and Neuroscientist
University of California at Davis
UCDMC
See page 7

Topic

Early diagnosis and
preventive treatment of
psychotic illness for ado-
lescents and adults

John Muir Medical Center
Concord Campus
(Note: Formerly Mt. Diablo
Medical Center)
www.namicontracosta.org
E mail : xnamicc@aol.com

2540 East Street, Concord
925-682 8200

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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 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.

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

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

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

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

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

NEW HOPE BIPOLAR SUPPORT GROUP

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

Lafayette:

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

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 925-945 7871

H.E.L.P.

Hope, Encouragement, Love and Prayer

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

Time: Last Monday of each month 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

Richmond Support Group

Richmond Health Center 100 38th St. Room 2400

2:00 pm to 3:30 pm

Matthew Luu, LCSW 510- 374 7500

FAMILY ADVOCATE HOURS

Gloria Hill, Contra Costa County

Mental Health Advocate

Monday - Friday 9:30 am - 6:00 pm

925-957 5146

NAMI-Contra Costa
National Alliance on Mental Illness

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

**PRESIDENT'S
COLUMN**

By Al Farmer

The NAMI walk kick off luncheon was a resounding success. It was "sold out" with an attendance of 114 enthusiastic supporters.

We now have 86 teams signed up for the NAMI Bay Area Walk and have donations and sponsorship for more than \$100,000.

NAMI Contra Costa is planning a free Bar-B-Q, so this will be a great opportunity to get together with NAMI friends. There will be a presentation by Jeff Bell, an outstanding news commentator and author of the book "Rewind, Replay, Repeat". Robert Villanueva a dynamic "In Our Own Voice" training instructor from NAMI National will also speak to us.

Please plan to come out to Golden Gate Park on May 31st to support our teams! Remember that this is NAMI'S primary source of funds.

As some of you may have heard, Yvonne Nair has resigned her position as Director of the new Contra Costa Club House. She has been offered an executive position in San Jose with a firm dealing with substance abuse. This is an area in which she has had many years of experience. This was an offer too good for her to refuse.

Yvonne has been a prime mover in setting up and establishing our new club house as a functioning unit at 3024 Willow Pass Road. She hired Tamara Hunter, who has taken training in the clubhouse model and is experienced in clubhouse operations. Yvonne wrote the successful John Muir grant for \$100,000. She has

GENERAL MEETINGS

Thursday, June 19, 2008,

Disability Benefits, Cassandra Kolto, Patient Financial Supervisor, Benefits Specialist, Contra Costa County Mental Health Administration, practical, how-to information.

Thursday, August 21, 2008,

Contra Costa County Behavioral Health Court: Successes & Updates, Martha Wilson, Ph.D., Forensics Community Liaison; Lt. Mitch LeMay, Contra Costa County Sheriff's Dept.

Information: (925) 933-4012
Send questions for presenters to:
kayderrico@comcast.net

equipped the new clubhouse with furniture and new computers. Yvonne and Tamara have brought in a number of new members for vocational and socialization training and treated them with love, care and respect.

I have had the pleasure of working with Yvonne for the past several months and she will be sorely missed.

On behalf of NAMI Clubhouse members, supporters and friends, we wish to thank you, Yvonne, for your tireless efforts in getting the new clubhouse "up and running" and for your significant effort in obtaining Clubhouse grants. Our very best wishes to you in your new endeavor!

NAMI Contra Costa
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HORRENDOUS BUDGET CUTS THREE CLINICS TO CLOSE

(Continued from page 1)

clinics. There will be deep cuts in the staff that will result in significant unmet needs.

John Cullen, the County Administrator explained: revenues had steadily increased over the last few years. From 1998 to 2006 revenues and expenses increased at about 8% annually and have now slowed. The general fund has been increasing at a rate of 8.7% annually.

Next year it is expected revenues and expenses will decline by 4%. Therefore there will be budget cuts on a scale not seen in recent decades. Cuts totaling \$51.7 million.

**There may be
another round of cuts
needed.**

Dr. William Walker

In an e mail (April 4, 2008) sent to his staff, Dr. Walker said "I wish I could tell you that the Board will listen to the testimony and restore the cuts. I don't expect that. The county's budget deficit is staggering and must be addressed. There is no surplus left to throw at the shortfall. And after the State budget is finalized in late summer, there may be another round of cuts needed."

There were many impassioned pleas to not make the cuts at the board of supervisors meeting, April 22, 2008. Al Farmer, president of NAMI-CC said "the families are the first and the last line of support. It is not academic for them. It is the destiny of their loved one that is at stake."

A MESSAGE TO THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

Note: Teresa Pasquini, a member of the NAMI Board of Directors and the Mental Health Commission, addressed the Board on April 22, 2008. She was speaking ONLY for herself.

I am the mother to an amazing son, who has suffered from mental illness since he was 16. My son has been hospitalized over 20 times in the past 10 years. My family, Contra Costa County and Kaiser have been involved in a public private partnership during that time. It has been a *failed* relationship that has cost us all financially. But the greatest cost has been to my son's health, both mental and medical and an immeasurable cost to his liberty and human rights. I can not, in good conscience, support, even the concept of a PHF (Psychiatric Health Facility), which has been conceived through a myopic administrative view.

Our County Administrator tells us that a convergence of storms necessitates a budget that will prevent our ability to care for the most seriously mentally ill in our country. A California Health Line article dated April 14th declares a new cycle of crisis for our Mental Health System. I assure this Board that the 30 or so family members at a NAMI support group, that I attended last night, know about crisis and converging storms. The stories shared there are unimaginable, the pain unbearable, the powerlessness, obvious. I am here today to speak out for those who can not join me at the podium and ask you to unanimously reject the proposal to close down the Psychiatric Inpatient unit at the Contra Costa regional Medical Center.

While we are about to close clinics, lay off staff and eliminate a safety net for many children, adults and the elderly, how can this Board possibly consider spending millions of dollars to build a new facility?

Closing Ward C and the new CSU is not a plan that is fiscally sound. This county spent millions to correct the problems that were identified by the CMS Audit. We were told that the new medical model, under Title 22, would be a great opportunity to provide necessary medical treatment that often goes undiagnosed.

Now we are being told that we don't need that level of care and that a PHF staffed with psych techs and LVN's will be sufficient. We are now being told that this plan will save a million dollars per year. Where does that number come from? Has anyone figured out how much we spend on IMD's, that are not properly monitored and MHRCs that are not properly monitored? These are facilities that are paid for out of our general fund dollars.

I urge the Board to ask for sound evidence that this proposal is certain to work, before you give your approval. If it can be shown that the PHF will actually improve outcomes and not leave patients' in harms way, then I would support the plan. But, we must be certain that before you take the drastic step of closing down our hospital psych unit, that you will be creating truly equal alternatives.

The mental health system in this county is fragmented and broken. It needs to be reorganized with clear and concise goals that are determined before the project starts. The first priority should be the best way to assist the patients, not just the best deal.

Editor's note: You can reach Ms. Pasquini: at xnamicc@aol.com

BEHAVIORAL HEALTH COURT MOVES

The Behavioral Health Court Program has moved to 835 Castro Street in Martinez at the corner of Castro and Green Street.

They are making steady progress, now have 20 clients and the data is very encouraging.

This new space is for the staff and the clients. There are several things that would help to a provide congenial ambience:

- A distinguished couch
- Living room chairs
- Coffee tables
- End tables
- Floor lamps
- Table lamps
- Plants (Real and fake)
- Outdoor patio table
- Patio chairs
- Barbeque
- Refrigerator
- Wall accessories (Pictures)
- Art supplies
- Pool table
- Games & Book shelves

Call: 207 6321 or 676 5771

NAMI CALIFORNIA ANNUAL CONFERENCE

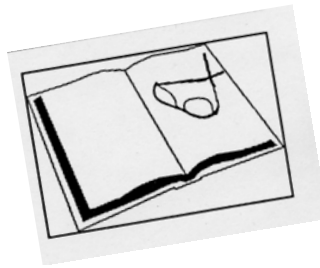
AUGUST 22 & 23

San Francisco Airport Marriott
650-692 9100

NAMI California
916-567 0163

www.namicalifornia.org

BOOK REVIEW



A SCHOLAR SPEAKS OF HIS SCHIZOPHRENIA

By Anne Reed

As compassionate family members of the mentally ill, we often seek out information to help us understand, both intellectually and emotionally, the path on which we find ourselves. One such resource is “The Center Cannot Hold: My Journey Through Madness” (Hyperion 2007). It is a deeply personal account by Elyn R. Saks of her struggles, failures and successes in the grip of schizophrenia which took root in her mid-teens.

Ms. Saks is by all accounts an accomplished scholar, serving as Associate Dean at my alma mater, the University of Southern California Law Center. Her memoir integrates her education, adroit humor and facility of language to paint a clear, starkly honest picture of her battles with her disease. Because of, and in spite of, her illness, she has managed to forge deep personal relationships with those inside and outside the mental health community. These relationships form the heart of her story.

Like Ms. Saks, my brother is a warm, loving, funny person who happens to be chronically ill. My family refuses to let

schizophrenia be the sole definition of his life. However, I have often wondered whether he views the disease as an “accident of being” or something that is the “essence” of him. Ms. Saks explores these questions from the consumer’s point of view with startling insight.

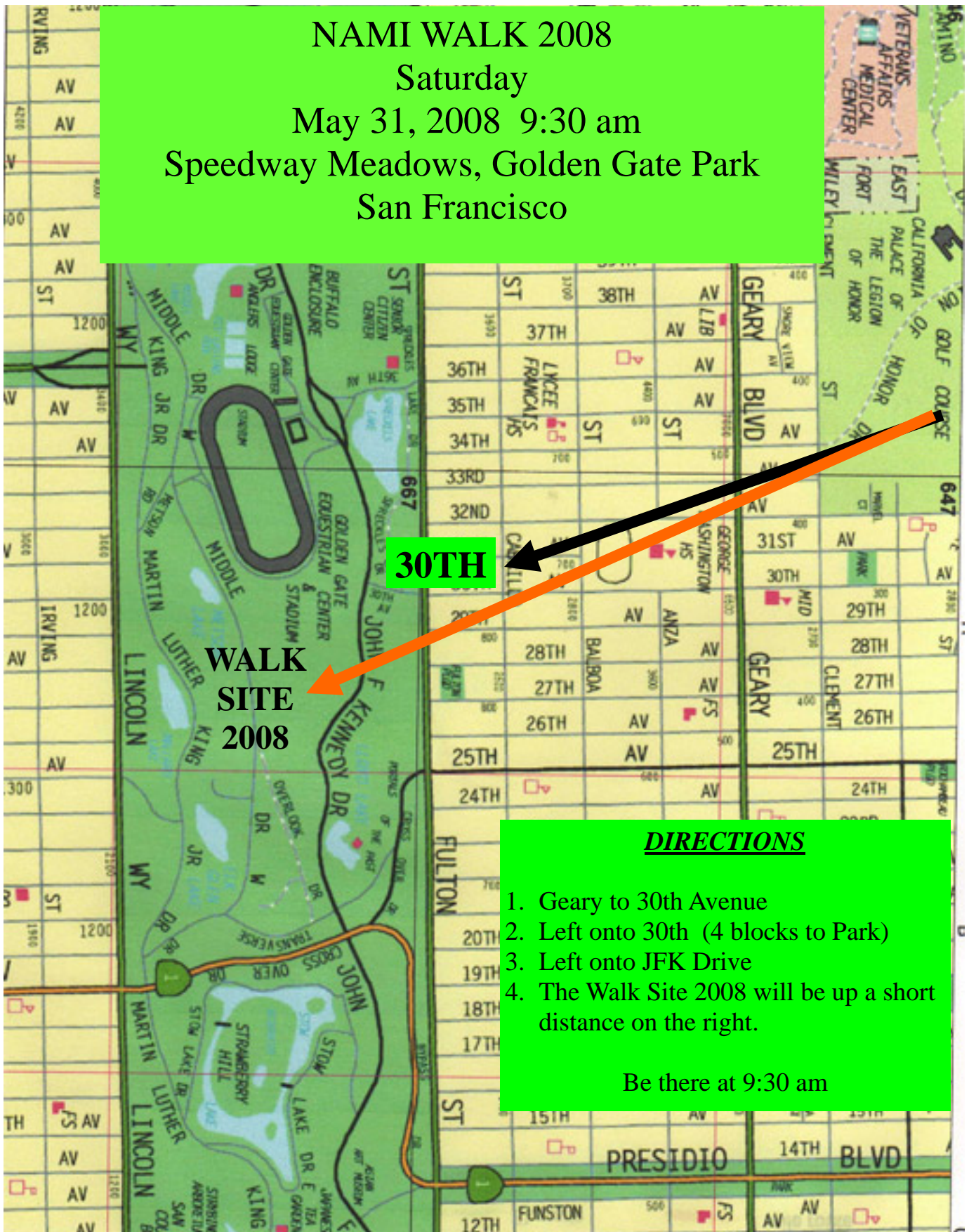
Equally as important, this book is interwoven with candid reflections on patient rights, medication and psychoanalysis. She speaks openly about her struggles to maintain a façade of normalcy in the face of the ever-present storm of schizophrenia. And she issues a challenge to the families, a call to arms to ensure that a mental illness diagnosis is not an “automatic sentence to bleak and painful life”, devoid of pleasure, joy and accomplishment.

Throughout her life, Ms. Saks has struggled to find her personal center, a consciousness and an equilibrium through which she can achieve balance. More often than not, we family members must act as a stable, external center in the constantly morphing world of our siblings, parents, spouses, children and friends. Some autobiographies resonate more than others. For me, Ms. Saks’ words have infused hope – a hope that I am one small step closer to understanding my brother’s journey – and understanding – an understanding that I must hold my own center in order to support him. Most of all, it has reinforced my belief in my brother as one of life’s heroes.

This book has been named one of *Time Magazine’s* Top 10 Nonfiction Books of 2007 and is part of NAMI-CC’s substantial resource library. If you would like to borrow it, or would like to donate books to share with others, please contact our librarian at:

xnamicc@aol.com

NAMI WALK 2008
Saturday
May 31, 2008 9:30 am
Speedway Meadows, Golden Gate Park
San Francisco



30TH

**WALK
SITE
2008**

DIRECTIONS

- 1. Geary to 30th Avenue
- 2. Left onto 30th (4 blocks to Park)
- 3. Left onto JFK Drive
- 4. The Walk Site 2008 will be up a short distance on the right.

Be there at 9:30 am

MAY GENERAL MEETING
U.C. DAVIS
RESEARCHER
TO ADDRESS
MAY MEETING

Dr., Michael Minzenberg is a member of the Early Diagnosis and Preventive Treatment of Psychotic Illness Clinic (EDAPT Clinic) for adolescents and adults. The clinic is engaged in a range of research seeking to increase our understanding and improve outcomes for people with serious mental disorders with psychotic symptoms.

Dr. Minzenberg is a psychiatrist and has an MS degree in Neuroscience. His specialty areas are in cognitive dysfunction in the schizophrenia-spectrum and in personality disorders, including borderline personality disorder. Although he will not be addressing borderline personality disorder in his presentation, he will be happy to respond to questions in this area after the presentation.

For information on Dr. Minzenberg's numerous articles and publications, see:

www.ucdirc.ucdavis.edu/people/minzenberg.php

MEDICATION
INFORMATION

Get reliable information from pharmacist Steven Progzal, a NAMI-CC friend and supporter of the mental health community. Send your questions to:

stevenprotzel@safeway.com

Remember, always check with your doctor!

MAY DONATIONS

In Memory of:

Chris Bruce

From: John E. and Debra L. Buxbaum
 Carolyn Daniels
 Nancy Mino

In Memory of:

Craig Fletcher

From: Julie O'Brien and Michael Curley
 Carol Westberg
 Ransom Norris
 Lynn Fletcher

Donations

Mary Olowin
 Mona Rusk

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
- K.I.D.S. Program
- Housing
- IOOV (In Our Own Voice)

 Name

 Street Address

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Phone: _____

E mail address:

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

First Tuesday
Support Group
 One on One support
 An introduction to the Family to Family Program
 Sign up for Family to Family
 Se page 2 for details

Stamp

NAMI Walk 2008
Saturday, May 31, 2008, 9:00 am
 San Francisco's Golden Gate Park
FREE picnic
 xnamicc@aol.com 925- 676 5771

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:
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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