



NAMI Contra Costa

National Alliance On Mental Illness

Contra Costa's Voice on Mental Illness May, 2009

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

General Meeting

MAY
Thursday,
May 21, 2009

Doors open at 6:30 pm for NAMI Walk registration and manned information tables

Speaker

Pat Snyder
Legislative Consultant
League of Women Voters

Topic

Healthcare Reform
Benefits for the mentally ill
under a single payer plan

Note: See the article on page 6 of this newsletter

Location

John Muir Medical Center
Concord Campus

2540 East Street, Concord
925-682 8200

www.namicontracosta.org
E mail : xnamicc@aol.com

PATTY DUKE TO BE NAMI WALK GRAND MARSHALL

Patty Duke, Academy Award winning actress, best selling author and mental health advocate extraordinaire, will be the Grand Marshall at the 2009 NAMI Walk.

The Walk will be Saturday, May 30 at Speedway Meadow in San Francisco's Golden Gate Park. Check in time is 9:00 am and the start time will be 11:00 am.

There will be a NAMI-Contra Costa picnic after the Walk which all NAMI-CC members are invited to attend. It will be a great family day with plenty of time for San Francisco sightseeing afterwards.



Patty Duke

You can register on-line at www.namiwalksfbay.org. For up to date information: info@namiwalksfbay.org.

You may e mail NAMI-CC at: xnamicc@aol.com.

Note: *The NAMI Walk is the major fund raising effort of the year.*

CRITICAL SPECIAL ELECTION MAY 19

The Governor has called a special election to be held May 19. It is intended to resolve the \$42 billion shortfall that had the legislature in turmoil.

The county has been through budget crunches in the past, but with the economy in the worst shape it has been in since the 1930's and the mismanagement of the legislature finally reaching crisis proportions, the mental health system stands to lose the promise that Proposition 63 once made.

There are six propositions on the May 19 ballot. The one concerning the mental health system is 1E. It would divert \$465 million from the Proposition 63 (Now called the Mental Health Services Act, MHSA) for use in the General Fund. It was written into the law that the funds raised by Prop 63 could ONLY be used

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NAMI-CC Care and Support Groups

Central Contra Costa County

1st Tuesday of each month, Now In Its 10th year. 7:30-9:00 pm Hillcrest Congregational Church, 404 Gregory Lane, Pleasant Hill. Contact Peggy Luna, Dave Kahler 925- 676-5771 or E mail: xnamicc@aol.com

3rd Monday of each month, 7:15-9:15 pm, John Muir Hospital, 1601 Ygnacio Valley Road, Walnut Creek Campus, downstairs in the Stern Conference Room. The group is facilitated by Dr. Mary Olowin and Gloria Hill.
Call: Gloria Hill 925- 957-5146.

NAMI Tri-Valley

2nd Monday of each Month: 7:15—9:00 pm Livermore Public Library, 1188 S. Livermore Ave., Livermore.
Contact support facilitator Marsha McInnis, marsha@nami-trivalley.org or 925- 980 5331

Family Support Group

For families with a mentally ill loved one, Meets Monthly
Pastor Heather Hammer
San Ramon Valley United Methodist Church
902 Danville Blvd., Alamo
925-837 5243

BIPOLAR CHILL (CLIENT RUN)

Manic Depression Support Group
Wednesday 7:00—8:30 pm
710 Broadway #3G Walnut Creek
Contact Lisa or Scott 925-743 1160

TRI-VALLEY BIPOLAR (Consumer Run)

Bipolar and Depression Support Group
Wednesdays, 7:15 pm to 8:45 pm
St. Claire's Episcopal Church, Pleasanton
Contact: Bob Hogan: 925-462 5481

Dual Diagnosis Support Group

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

SELF-INJURY SUPPORT GROUP

(Consumer Run)
For self-injury sufferers to talk about ways to change these behaviors and resolve feelings brought on by trauma.
Call: Veronica 925-945 7871

NEW HOPE

BIPOLAR SUPPORT GROUP
For parents of children and adolescents with a mood disorder.
2nd Monday of each month
7:00 pm to 9:00 pm
Lafayette-Orinda Presbyterian Church Room #4
Contact: Annette 510-733 0577 or Joani 925-962 9952
www.newhopesupportgroup.com

H.E.L.P.

Hope, Encouragement, Love and Prayer
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

FAMILY ADVOCATE HOURS

Gloria Hill, Contra Costa County
Mental Health Advocate
Monday - Friday 9:30 am - 6:00 pm
925-957 5146
Thursdays: 2:00 to 6:00 pm
925-646 5844
Emergency County Cell Phone:
925-963 6229

NAMI-Contra Costa
National Alliance on Mental Illness

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Newsletter Deadline: 20th of Each Month

**PRESIDENT'S
COLUMN**

By Al Farmer

NAMI WALK Appreciation awards and top honors were given to the top ten NAMI Bay Area Walk Team Leaders.

Three of the top 10 were from Contra Costa County. The top award went to **Bret Adams** (representing the John Muir Walk Team) with donations totaling above \$9,000.

Close runner ups were **Heather Quisenberry** and **Phillip Lolonis** bringing in about \$6,800 each. Our hats go off to all three team leaders. NAMI Contra Costa's primary source of revenues comes from the NAMI Bay Area Walk which allows us to offer all of our free services to Contra Costa County.

Last year's NAMI Walk brought us more than \$27,000 which is particularly important in these hard times. We have the 2009 Bay Area Walk coming up on Saturday May 30th in Golden Gate Park. It is especially critical that NAMI Contra Costa bring in as much revenue as possible from this year's walk. So please support your favorite NAMI Walk Team Leader through your donations.

Or better yet plan to join our walk on May 30th to show your support by "**Walking for the Mind.**" You don't have to be a physical walker. You can be a virtual walker by simply making a donation to your favorite team walk captain. To make a donation, you can go on line to www.namiwalkSFbay.org and make your donation by credit card or simply send your check to:

NAMI Walk Bay Area-Contra
Costa
3020 El Cerrito Plaza #195
El Cerrito, CA 94530

**GENERAL
MEETING**

Thursday, May 21, 2009.

Issues in Healthcare Reform: Benefits for the Mentally Ill Under a Single Payer System, Pat Snyder, Legislative Consultant for League of Women Voters; Chair of CCC Chapter of Health Care for All.

Thursday, June 18, 2009.

Pediatric Psychopharmacology, Dr. Michael Levin, Behavioral Pediatrician and Child Psychologist.

Thursday, July 16, 2009.

Who Will Care When I Am Not There. Julie Hoffman; special needs trust specialist, protecting benefits, using Personal Support Specialists. See:

www.planofcalif@aol.com.

Thursday, Aug. 20, 2009.

Understanding and Coping with Post-Traumatic Stress Following Military Deployment: Help for Individuals and Family.

Carol Salacka, Psychologist, Concord Vet Center, Readjustment Counseling Services, Lt. Col., US Army (Ret), and Nathan Johnson, MSW, US Marine Corps, 2001 to 2004.

Important Notice

The front parking lot at John Muir Hospital, where the General Meetings are held, will be closed until December. Use the parking lot by the Emergency Room off Port Chicago Highway.

FAMILY TO FAMILY
VITAL
CLASSES
ON
MENTAL
ILLNESS

The Spring session of the Family to Family classes will begin May 13 at the Hillcrest Congregational Church in Pleasant Hill.

The classes and the materials are entirely free. It is one of the services that are paid for by the annual NAMI Walk.

The students learn about diagnosis, treatments, the system of care, medications and how to manage them and much more.

Over 1200 have been graduated from this remarkable program. For more information:

Tom Cloney, Director
 tmclone@gmail.com
 510- 223 6873
 925- 676 5771

FUNDRAISER

What: A NAMI-CC, Sweet Tomatoes fundraiser for consumer recreation activities

Where: Sweet Tomatoes, 40A Crescent Dr., Pleasant Hill

When: Any time between 5:00 and 8:00 PM, Wednesday, May 13, 2009

Who: Any person can be part of this fundraiser to help consumers gain access to recreational activities.

Questions? Contact Steve Gallion, Recreation Committee Chair, (925) 381-5504

CRITICAL
SPECIAL
ELECTION
MAY 19

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to strengthen the chronically underfunded mental health system. Proposition 63 would never have passed if that promise had not been made to the voting public.

Lou Correa, State Senator, wrote in the Official Voter Information Guide:

“Five years ago, California voters made the decision to invest in our public mental health system. Through the Mental Health Services Act, Proposition 63, Californians were clear in their commitment to expand community mental health services. Following 40 years of neglecting the mentally ill, in 2004 voters turned a new page and passed Prop 63 and thereby began to rebuild California’s mental health system. Even in this difficult time, we ought to respect the will of the people.

The MHSA is changing lives. More than 200,000 people have received mental health services. Among those, nearly 20,000 children, youth, adults and older adults are getting the proper help, medication, therapy, housing and transportation, for them to recover from severe mental illness. Nearly 40 percent of these individuals had at least one emergency room visit before they enrolled in the MHSA program. After they participated in the programs, fewer than 10 percent visited the emergency room.

These MHSA programs are saving the state valuable resources by reducing pressure on our overburdened jails and prisons. People who have received

Mental Health Services Act services are much more likely to seek treatment and not be incarcerated. These programs have been shown to reduce homelessness, hospitalization, out-of-county home placements and school failures, further providing relief to strapped counties, school districts and hospitals.

Additionally, the Mental Health Services Act is the foundation for future mental health programs, providing early intervention and treatment. The Act’s emphasis on early intervention and treatment will help these children before their symptoms become debilitating.

Shifting Mental Health Services Act funds away from these programs will prevent us from serving even more people. I recognize how difficult the current fiscal climate is. However, Mental Health Services Act programs are working and save the state money. We need to preserve programs that are effective and respect the will of the people.”

Of the \$465 million that 1E would take from MHSA funds over two years, about \$15 million would be Contra Costa’s share. Funds that could finance the much needed programs and restore some of the services that have already been cut.

Shane Goldmacher wrote an article for the CC Times on May 4, 2009 where he said “the entire architecture of the ballot pact that emerged was heavily shaped by leader’s desire to please– or at least neutralize the state’s most powerful political players.

Now, some of those very interest groups, protected in the budget deal, are bankrolling the campaign to ratify it.”

“The energy companies have given more than \$1 million, led by Chevron with \$500,000. The teachers Association has contributed \$7 million.”

CLUBHOUSE REPORT

CLUBHOUSE EXPANDS

The Putnam Contra Costa Clubhouse is proud to announce the addition of 1284 square feet to its original 2400 sq. feet facility in Concord. The expansion provides space for an exclusive dining area, a media arts lab, the library, the flower station and a new business office.

The Clubhouse will be hosting its second annual BBQ picnic on June 26th at 3:00 PM at Cowell Park in Concord. Everyone is invited! For more information call Tamara Hunter at (925) 691-4276.

In just 15 months the Clubhouse has grown to 137 members. Members worked 4,089 hours during the first quarter of 2009, with an average daily attendance of 23 in March. That is why 1,284 square feet were added to the facility.

Dan Cooper, staff generalist, was hired in mid-January. He has a BA in English and taught English at Mt. Diablo High School in Concord before coming to the Clubhouse. Dan is a writer and an excellent cook.

In support of John Muir Health's partnership with the Clubhouse, Liz Stallings (COO of John Muir Behavioral Health Center) presented a \$100,000 contribution to the Clubhouse at its first year anniversary celebration in February.

Dr. Scott Weigold

ANTIDEPRESSANTS AND THEIR USES

Editor's Note: Dr. Weigold is the former Chief Psychiatrist on the Psychiatric Emergency Unit (Now called the CSU, Crisis Stabilization Unit) at the CCRMC (County Hospital). This is an abridged article. Dr. Weigold's entire article can be read on the NAMI website:

www.namicontracosta.org

This series of articles is intended to help inform people who are taking psychiatric medications.

Antidepressants

Today's antidepressants are generally easy and fairly safe to take, but this has also led some to think that they are entirely safe or that they can be taken in haphazard ways and still be effective. The first principle of all antidepressants is that it takes somewhere between 2-8 weeks for ANY of these medications to begin working. For this reason, it is important to remain in close contact with your prescriber during that time. These first weeks are a very critical time and it is not uncommon to need additional appointments or other support during this time.

Antidepressants are not "as needed" medications. They cannot be effective when taken "only as needed" or "when I have bad days." To be useful, they have to be taken every day on a regular schedule. If you have stopped an antidepressant for more than a few days, ask your physician about how to properly and safely restart the medication. If you feel your depression is getting worse or your medication is not working as well as you'd like, do

NOT increase the dose on your own. You need to contact your prescriber about how to obtain more benefit, and maybe that will include a dose increase.

For anyone who has experienced a Major Depressive Episode (MDE), stopping antidepressants early, dramatically increases the chances of a rapid return of the depressive symptoms. In general, antidepressants should not be stopped for at least 12 months after the full remission of symptoms.

If one has experienced one MDE, the lifetime chance of another is about 50%. After two MDE's, the chance of another is about 75%. After 3 or more MDE's, the chance of another is over 90%. For this reason, many patients choose to stay on antidepressants for life.

All antidepressants include some risk of causing a "manic" episode (the "up" side of Bipolar Disorder), but that risk is obviously greater in those previously diagnosed with Bipolar Disorder. If you experience (or your friends/family notice) excessively good mood, grandiose beliefs, fast speech, decreased need for sleep, restlessness, excessive silliness or irritability, report it to your physician immediately.

There is conflicting evidence about which antidepressants may have more risk of inducing a manic episode, but no one really knows which antidepressants have more or less risk. For this reason, more and more psychiatrists are avoiding prescribing antidepressants to anyone with a diagnosed bipolar disorder unless the patient is also taking a recognized "mood stabilizer." This mania-inducing effect can also result from sleep deprivation or "light therapy" and herbal remedies for depression can also be culprits.

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ANTIDEPRESSANTS AND THEIR USES

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Several medicines can be used to augment depression treatments, but are rarely used as monotherapy for depression.

Thyroid supplements are well-known to be useful adjuncts for depression. Lithium is a well-documented depression adjunct. Stimulants like Ritalin, Adderall, and Cylert can be used, but only in specific rare circumstances.

Some antipsychotics are used as adjuncts for depression, but they have serious and potentially permanent side effects. Personally, I am not in favor of using antipsychotics as adjunct treatments for depression, and I do not believe they are appropriate as monotherapy for depression. In particular, quetiapine (Seroquel) and olanzapine (Zyprexa) are very sedating and can cause tremendous weight gain.

If used in addition to obesity-causing antidepressants, the result can be catastrophic. Antipsychotics can also cause diabetic reactions (even in people with no history of diabetes), which can be severe and even fatal. There is also the risk of short-term and even permanent movement disorders with antipsychotics.

(The conclusion of this article will appear in next months issue)



MAY SPEAKER

ISSUES IN HEALTH CARE REFORM

Benefits for the Mentally Ill Under a Single Payer System

Universal healthcare is a “hot topic,” discussed and debated across the U.S. Pat Snyder, Ph.D. and RN, Chair of Health Care for All-Contra Costa, is an advocate for single payer reform in California (SB810) and is following our national dialogue.

She will help us become more familiar with the topic, tell us what the term “single payer” means and discuss benefits of a single payer system for the mentally ill and the general population. She will also tell us how we can work to improve and promote health and health services for all.

Dr. Snyder saw problems years ago with the healthcare delivery system and is keenly aware that the problems have escalated, causing major hurdles to struggle against when attempting to improve the nations health care system.

Dr. Snyder, who has been actively working on health care reform for six years, comes to us with an insider’s perspective with years of healthcare work. She has been a psychiatric nurse, a nursing administrator, and at one time worked in the Psychiatric Unit, Highland Hospital, Oakland. For more information:

Health Care For All,
www.healthcareforall.org.



E mail NAMI-CC
xnamicc@aol.com

SAVE THE DATES

NAMI Walk 2009
Saturday morning, May 30, Speedway Meadows, Golden Gate Park, San Francisco. Contact Barbara Scott at (925) 689-9380 or barbara-jean39@astound.net or www.namiSFbay.org

2009 Conference on Mental Health & Spirituality, presented by California Institute for Mental Health, June 1 and 2, 2009, Marriott Oakland City Center, Oakland, [information, mhastie@cimh.org](mailto:information_mhastie@cimh.org) and mtarver@peersnet.org.

NAMI 2009 National Convention (Our very own Veronica Vale will be presenting a workshop on self-injury.) July 6-9, 2009; San Francisco Hilton and Towers; San Francisco; Information and registration, www.nami.org



**LETTERS TO THE
EDITOR**

To The Editor:

I just spoke to my son's social worker at Atascadero State Hospital because I wanted to make sure I would be included in his next team meeting (by conference call).

She said it would probably be only her and me and my son, as the staff has been cut so low, one of the two psychiatrists on the unit is required to take a month off. The other will have his hands full.

No other staff will have the time to sit in on the meeting. She didn't even know that his current doctor had prescribed a new anti-depressant over a month ago!

She was glad to hear we will be meeting at the capital next month. But says we have to do more. They are not able to meet all the needs of the patients and they expect more cuts. She doesn't understand how they can possibly continue this way!

State inspectors will be there next week to check things out and report. Will they tell the truth or write a report which makes it appear that all is well?

We need to do more!

A Mother in Yuba city

COMMENTS
Comments for the newsletter should be sent to:
xnamicc@aol.com
Fax: 925-476 1444 or

P.O. Box 21247
Concord, CA., 94521
All letters are subject to abridgment and those unpublished can be neither acknowledged nor returned.

MAY DONATIONS

In Memory of:

James Grant
Father of Gloria Hill

From: Kay Derrico
Dave Kahler
Dick Owens
Walter and Mary Cannon

Gloria has requested that donations be directed to the Clubhouse and/or Bonita Farm Program

Donations
Sandra Duncan % PG & E
Alison R. Buckles % B of A
Susan Henderson % B of A

Donation

From:

Janet Wilson
Director
Patient's Rights Advocate

Mental Health Consumer Concerns

Car Donations:

Herbert Moore Jr.
Roger Gregory
Joyce Steingas

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
- Housing
- IOOV (In Our Own Voice)
- Herb Putnam Clubhouse

E mail address: _____

Phone: _____

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

If you need Support, Guidance
 and Information:
**First Tuesday Support
 Group**
 Tuesday, May 5, 7:30 pm
 Hillcrest Church, 404 Gregory Lane
 Pleasant Hill *See Page 2*

Stamp

NAMI Walk 2009

A great family day in one of the world's greatest parks with a free picnic. It is the major NAMI Contra Costa fundraiser of the year.

Speedway Meadow, Golden Gate Park, San Francisco, Saturday, May 30, 2009

NAMI Contra Costa

The annual membership dues are \$40. This makes you a member of NAMI National, NAMI California and NAMI Contra Costa. You are automatically a member of all three organizations.

If you are solicited for membership or special donations from the State or National organizations, give generously if you can, but all such donations are voluntary and would be over and above your membership in NAMI Contra Costa.

Dues paid in October, November and December provide membership for the following year.

Send your membership application to:

NAMI Contra Costa
 P.O. Box 21247
 Concord, California
 94521
 E mail: xnamicc@aol.com

This Monthly Newsletter is Published by: NAMI Contra Costa

Affiliated with NAMI National and
 NAMI California

APPLICATION FOR NAMI-CC MEMBERSHIP

Make check payable to NAMI Contra Costa
 Complete this information cut-out and return it to:
 Treasurer, NAMI-CC
 P.O. Box 21247, Concord, CA., 94521
 E Mail Address: xnamicc@aol.com

Name _____

Street _____

City _____ State _____ ZIP _____

Phone _____

E-mail _____

Membership is: New A Renewal

<input type="checkbox"/> Mental Health Client	\$ 20.00
<input type="checkbox"/> Dual Affiliate	20.00
<input type="checkbox"/> General Membership	40.00
<input type="checkbox"/> Professional Membership	50.00
<input type="checkbox"/> Century Club	100.00
<input type="checkbox"/> Lifetime	500.00