



NAMI Contra Costa

Contra Costa's Voice on Mental Illness *November 2006* *
102806

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

Regional Medical Center

PSYCH WARD TO CLOSE

The Contra Costa Regional Medical Center (The County Hospital) is going to close one of its two psychiatric wards. The ward to be closed will be Ward D.

There have been two wards; Ward D (20 beds) and Ward C (23 beds) for a total of 43 beds to serve a county with a population of over 1 million persons.

They explained that the patient census has been averaging around 31. The estimated costs of placing the 8 patients elsewhere would cost \$2.7 million. They would be placed in hospitals out of the area and away from family and friends.

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MENTAL HEALTH COURT

MOVES TOWARDS REALITY

By Marti Wilson, PH.D.
Forensic Community Liaison

A convergence of ideas and energy from NAMI, County Mental Health, Jail Mental Health, the court system and the Sheriff's Department has resulted in a strong movement toward the development of a mental health court.

Judge Maryann O'Malley, supervising judge of the superior court and the next presiding judge, is currently preparing the calendar for a potential mental health court. A countywide steering committee coordinated by Marti Wilson, Forensic Community Liaison from the detention mental health unit is meeting to design and implement the mental health court.

Fortunately, the state Corrections Standards Authority (formerly the Board of Corrections) has issued a request for proposal (RFP) asking county sheriff's departments to apply for MIOCR (mentally ill offender crimes reduction) funds for the operation of such a court. The multidisciplinary steering commit-

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November General Meeting

Thursday 7:00 pm
November 16, 2006

SPEAKERS

Dr. Scott Weigold
Chief Psychiatrist
Psych Intake Regional Medical Center

Officer Peter Agnost
Pleasant Hill Police Department

Jack Funk
Assistant District Attorney

Susan Davis
Clinical Mental Health Specialist

Topic

"The Anatomy of a 5150"
How They Work and What Happens
Afterwards

Also:

Debbie Tate
Director of Clinical Affairs
Bay Area Research Institute
"The Incredible Value of Clinical
Trials to YOU! (See page 7)

Note: There will be no General Meeting in December

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

2540 East Street, Concord
925-682 8200

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, 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

CONSUMER RUN BIPOLAR SUPPORT GROUP

Where: 1420 Willow Pass Road, Concord, 2nd Floor
When: Every Tuesday, 6:00 pm to 7:30 pm
Contact: Chris Dodd: 925-646 5549 or
Marian: 646 5788

TRI-VALLEY BIPOLAR (Consumer Run)

Manic Depression Support Group
Wednesdays, 7:15 pm to 9:00 pm
Clair's Episcopal Church, Pleasanton
Contact: Krista Radojevich 925-462 1248

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

BIPOLAR CHILL (CLIENT RUN)

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

NAPA STATE HOSPITAL FAMILY SUPPORT GROUP (NSHFSG)

Mets the 2nd Saturday of each month
Where: Hospital's Volunteer Conference Room
For Information: Bill Schrader 707-433 9250

ALANON SUPPORT GROUP

For those supporting one who is dually diagnosed
Wednesdays 7:30 to 9:00 pm
Holy Shepherd Lutheran Church
433 Moraga Way, Orinda
Contact: Kay 925-933 4012

ANTIOCH SUPPORT GROUP 2ND WEDNESDAY OF EACH MONTH

Sutter Delta Hospital—Hospitality Room
7:00 - 8:00 pm
Craig Cross 925-625 1271
hendrxrl@netzero.net

NEW HOPE SUPPORT GROUP SUPPORT GROUP FOR PARENTS OF BIPOLAR ADOLESENT CHILDREN (7 TO 17)

Where: Lafayette Orinda Presbyterian Church
49 Knox Dr., Lafayette
Annette Seelig: 510-733 0577 or Joan 925-962 9952
E mail: 3kids1dog@comcast.net

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

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**PRESIDENT'S
COLUMN**
BY ART HONEGGER

On Thursday October 19th the Crestwood Healing Center hosted an open house to celebrate the opening of their third program there, called Pathways.

There was robust attendance including several dignitaries. Crestwood presented NAMI Contra Costa with a certificate of appreciation for our persistent efforts to gain approval for the facility in Pleasant Hill. The approval by the City Council would likely not have occurred without our support. Thank you, NAMI members!

We now have two NAMI Bay Area Walk coordinators for the upcoming event May 12, 2007 (mark your calendars!). They are Anna Garcia (925-779-1340) and Bonnie Leys (925-754-6987). Please give them a call if you are interested in helping with organization of walk teams.

We also have a NAMI CC Volunteer Coordinator, Craig Cross (925-783-6633). Craig is looking for volunteers to assist several committees, and I urge you to contact him if you are interested in learning more about the activity involved.

You received desperately needed help when you first came into contact with NAMI. There was no charge to you. As you are able, it is incumbent upon you to give back what was so freely given to you. Thank you in advance for doing so.

Some of the functions for which Craig will be seeking volunteers include:

(Continued in the next column)

FREE CLASSES
**FAMILY TO
FAMILY
CLASSES**

The Family to Family program will resume in January, 2007. More than 1500 persons have graduated from this NAMI Contra Costa program. The program provides classes, once weekly over 12 weeks. There is no charge for either the classes or the materials. Call Marie Overby: 925-284 5240 or E mail: mfoverby@yahoo.com

**DECEMBER
GENERAL MEETING**

There will be no General Meeting in December. The next meeting will be January 18, 2007.

1. Librarian. Mae Bragen has faithfully handled the librarian duties for the last 10 years. Thank you Mae for your many years of dedicated service!
2. Website savvy assistant.
3. Grant writing committee. You will learn a lot on this one!
4. Membership Committee.
5. Volunteers to staff the NAMI office at Crestwood.

There are many other opportunities, so please contact Craig. 925-783 6633

NAMI Contra Costa
P.O. Box 21247
Concord, California
94521
E mail: xnamicc@aol.com
Websites:
www.namicontracosta.org
www.nami.org.

CRESTWOOD OPENS THIRD PROGRAM NEW PROGRAM AND THIRD YEAR CELEBRATED

The Crestwood Healing Center held a dual celebration, to mark the opening of their third and final program and also to celebrate its third year of operation.

The new program is called the "Pathways." It will compliment the other two programs. It will deal with clients they are going to return to society in the near future.

When fully occupied, the facility will have a capacity of 80. It features many amenities that are helpful in the recovery process; exercise room, computer lab, quilting classes.

It has been a real success.

PSYCH WARD TO CLOSE

(Continued from page 1)

This represents a different emphasis in the system. A handout given to hospital employees stated "Acute hospitalization is an important but very small component of the ideal system of care." So the plan will be to add beds at sub-acute facilities and use Proposition #63 funds for expanded and improved Outpatient Services.

Donna Wigand reported on these plans at the Mental Health Commission meeting October 26. The facilities will be Neireka, Nevin House and the Pathways at Crestwood.

THE 2007 SLATE NOMINATING COMMITTEE SEEKS CANDIDATES

The NAMI-CC nominating committee is seeking candidates for the Board of Directors and for those who would like to serve as officers.

The membership will vote on the 2007 slate at the November General Meeting.

It is important that any one who has their names submitted has given approval to the person who submits the name.

For information, contact Coralie Reed at 925-254 7100 or 376 0880. or xnamicc@aol.com

PHOENIX CHANGES NAME

Phoenix Programs has changed its name to Anka



At The Crestwood Celebration

Left: Cindy Mataraso, Administrator
Right: Art Honegger, President, NAMI-CC



At The Crestwood Celebration

Left: Vic Montoya, Contra Costa Mental Health
Older/Adult Program Chief
Right: George Lytal, President, Crestwood Behavioral

Grief: The Unrecognized Parental Response to Mental Illness In a Child

By Peggy MacGregor

The normal grief response of parents to the death of a child of any age is well documented in the literature. This response has unique qualities because of the special nature of parent-child relationship. Parents whose son or daughter develops a serious mental illness experience this same grief, but often it is not recognized or validated by society and either is not addressed by mental health professionals or is misperceived as evidence of pathology. As a result, healthy expression of parental grief over a child's mental illness is seriously inhibited, and problems, both for parents and the patient, are exacerbated. This article describes some common elements of parental bereavement, losses experienced with mental illness, the consequences of ignoring grief and appropriate interventions.

In traditional medical settings is an underlying worldview that values family interactions and recognizes that serious illness involves many kinds of loss. In the world of mental illness, however, family relationships often seem to be viewed with deep suspicion at worst and uncertainty at best. Why is it that a discipline whose major focus is feelings, thoughts and relationships has nothing to say to parents about grief and loss?

I was left with the belief that most of the psychiatric world does not acknowledge family grief and is not really prepared to deal with mental illness as an honest family tragedy

If normal grief as a

response to mental illness is not recognized in parents, then many of them are being misunderstood and misaddressed at a core level. Such misunderstanding is seriously disabling to both family and patients because it can interfere significantly with a parent's ability to move forward emotionally and deal effectively with the uncertainty that lies ahead.

**Often the safest target
for anger is oneself.
(expressed as guilt or
depression)**

Guilt is present in any grief experience but exaggerated for parents by their heightened sense of responsibility for the well-being of a child. The inability to protect their son or daughter results in a serious loss of self-esteem, and parents often have irrational thoughts that they contributed to their child's illness by not noticing symptoms early enough, by choosing the wrong doctor or any number of reasons.

This response is exacerbated with a disease whose cause and course are not well understood, but even though parents have done nothing to cause the illness, they often believe that somehow they would have been able to prevent it.

Unrealistic guilt is also increased by the feeling of powerlessness. Active involvement of parents as members of the treatment team has been documented as a very helpful intervention.

Research has firmly established that social support is crucial to a health outcome, because grieving is a social event. That is, it requires interaction and validation from others. The alternative, unaddressed grief, can have powerful, negative and damaging consequences.

The level of pain experienced seems to be more intense partly because it is misunderstood and it tends to complicate other life events. Grieving individuals can find that their distress becomes chronic, their ability to cope effectively diminishes and they get stuck in one aspect of their grief— sometimes anger, sometimes guilt, sometimes despair.

Parents, in their highly vulnerable emotional state, may also experience silence as blame or lack of validation. Mental health professionals who do not acknowledge the loss and the appropriateness of the parental grief response can unintentionally send a negative message.

Serious mental illness can represent a tragedy to all members of a family, but it does not have to be unending. Times of loss offer everyone the opportunity to deepen emotionally, to grow in maturity, to experience spiritual healing and to connect with one another as human beings. These tasks are not easy, but they are significantly more complicated for individuals whose psychic energy is being drained by defending themselves from the message that no loss has occurred or that their normal responses are abnormal. One of the first responses that parents need is acknowledgment and

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MENTAL HEALTH COURT

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tee is preparing the grant application, which is due on November 6, 2006. Contra Costa County may qualify for up to \$1.5 million for an 18-month grant.

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

The mental health court proposal being considered would essentially be 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 mental health court 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 assistance with fulfilling the conditions of the sentence.

The grant award decisions will be made in January of 2007. The steering committee is optimistic that Contra Costa County is competitive for this funding but is also exploring other long term funding options.

GRIEF:

(Continued from page 5)

validation of their loss so they can begin the long process of coming to terms with the possibilities of what their son or daughter is facing. The help that this can provide to the son or daughter is inestimable.

Parents on their own can become familiar with the literature about grief and loss. They can seek a counselor who is trained in this area. As parents begin to recognize the validity appropriateness of their feelings, it should become easier for them to share with others. It is helpful to pursue social support from friends, family, self-help groups and spiritual groups. Because of the intensity and duration of parental grief, it is unrealistic to depend on just one resource.

Mental health professionals must not continue to ignore this issue. Parents of mentally ill children need education about and confirmation of their grief. They need information about their child's illness to address their feelings of powerlessness and decrease their sense of guilt. They also need connection with others who are like them to reduce their sense of isolation.

Mental illness has many unknowns, but the grief of parents has been with us since the beginning of time. Mental health professionals who are knowledgeable and experienced in the healing process of bereavement can offer much to suffering families and families are entitled to this help. One does not have to know the future or the cure to be truly present to parents of mentally ill children in their grief and pain. It is at the very least and the very most, a humane and healing response.

WELLNESS FAIR

By Kay Derrico

NAMI-CC members and consumers will participate in the "Wellness City Challenge" by hosting two friendly booths where the public will find free pencils and candy, lots of information, and people who can chat about our programs and resources. Additionally NARSAD cards and silver ribbon pins will be sold.

When: Sunday, November 12, 7AM-11AM

Where: Heather Farm, corner of Ignacio Valley Road and (North) San Carlos Drive, Walnut Creek.

Events:

- 7:00 AM--Interfaith Program
- 7:00-11:00 AM--booths on local health resources, give-aways
- 7:30 AM—FREE, healthy breakfast by Walnut Creek Restaurants
- 7:30-11:00 AM-- live music by local bands
- 9:00 AM--3K/5K walk/run (no registration required)

NAMI contact person:

Kay Derrico
vder123@aol.com or
 (925) 933-4012

Detailed information:
wellnesscitychallenge.com

K.I.D.S. PROGRAM

The K.I.D.S. Program is expanding its volunteer base. Computer literate members are needed.
 E mail: xnamicc@aol.com

CLINICAL TRIALS SIGNIFICANT MEDICAL WORKUPS

One of the best things you can do to monitor your health is become involved in a clinical trial. You usually get a good medical workup providing you with information you would not otherwise have.

The Bay Area Research Institute is currently accepting subjects for a research study to evaluate an investigational drug for people aged 48 to 65 with symptoms of depression. Study related diagnostic procedure, laboratory tests and study medication will be provided to you at no cost.

Debbie Tate, Director of Clinical Affairs will be speaking at the November 16, General Meeting.

Bay Area Research Institute
Lafayette, California
925-283 9006
www.bayarearesearch.com

CLINICAL TRIALS **BIPOLAR I** **SCHIZOAFFECTIVE**

NCIRE (Northern California Institute) will be running a genetic research study on Bipolar I and Schizoaffective. Qualified participants receive \$100.00 for the interview, completion of questionnaires and a blood sample.

Principal Investigator
William Byerley, M. D.
1-800-730 4022
1-866-585 5409

NOVEMBER DONATIONS

In Memory Of:

Joan Sorisio

From: Tom and Nancy Uhlman

In Memory of:

Joan Sorisio

Art Honegger and Family

William and Margaret Wagner Jr.

In Memory Of:

Joan Sorisio

From:
Sblend and Elizabeth Sblendorio
Lucy V. Tulanian

In Memory Of:

Donald Carl Nasoni

Cheryl and Robert Olsen

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:

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

New Century Club Member

Dale L. Brodsky

New Century Club Member

Bonnie Leys
Antioch

A Donation From

Jody S. Kruse
Chevron Employees'
"People Making A Difference Campaign"

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



Stamp

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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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