



*Sonoma County's voice
on mental health*

March 2010

NAMI Sonoma County is an affiliate of the National Alliance on Mental Illness, a grassroots family and consumer self help organization.

NAMI Sonoma County's mission is to provide education, support and advocacy for all people affected by mental health challenges.



**Human Race is coming
May 8, 2010!
See back cover for details.**

NAMI Sonoma County collaborates with community partners to increase public and professional awareness of mental health challenges and eliminate stigma. We strive to positively impact mental health systems and offer hope to families and individuals living with mental illnesses.

Welcome to NAMI



NAMI Sonoma County Board of Directors:

Doug Stephens (President)
 Dave House (2nd Vice President)
 Molin Malicay (1st Vice President)
 Peter Lloyd (Treasurer)
 Ron Shaw (Secretary)
 Corinne Muelrath (Past President)
 Courtney Puckett
 Richard Doran
 Esther Lemus
 Marlene Mahan
 Mary Thompson-Jaqua
 Steve Bair

A New Year- From the President

Another year has passed, but an even brighter year is ahead. Recently, NAMI Sonoma County had the unique opportunity to give testimony to the Senate Committee on Budget and Fiscal Review. The governor wants to add a measure to the June ballot that would raid our MHSA Prop 63 funds and redirect them to the State's general fund. The amount to be redirected this coming fiscal year is \$452,300,000. **That's right, almost half a billion dollars.** Dollars that go to providing services to you like Family to Family, Peer-to-peer, NAMI connections, our warm-line, services to our veterans and more. Taking that MHSA money away would seriously cripple NAMI Sonoma County operations.

What do we need to do? **We need to continue our letter writing campaign**, which is the most effective way to have our concerns heard by our legislators. Please continue to write those letters and get them to us however you can. We will make sure they are delivered to the right people in Sacramento.

NAMI Sonoma County is growing in ways we never thought possible. Our state NAMI office has recognized us as one of the premier affiliates in the state. We will continue to provide our signature NAMI Connections, Peer-to-Peer programs and will be expanding our Family-to-Family and Familia-de-Familia programs through the capable hands of Dr. Bill Simon.

Additional goals for 2010 will be:

- To expand our outreach to Veterans at the local Community Based Outpatient Clinic and the Rohnert Park Vet Center.

-Hopefully we will start at least one Family-2-Family class for the veterans of the 235th Engineering group that just returned from Afghanistan.

-The Family-2-Family program has added a PTSD component and National is bringing out a new brochure aimed at Vets and their families.

-All of this outreach is due in part to a Memorandum of Understanding between the Veterans Administration and NAMI.

- To increase our membership. Always a continuing goal.
- To increase our support, which is already phenomenal.
- To make ourselves better known in the communities we serve.

-On the 18th of January (Martin Luther King Jr. Day) we participated in an outreach program in conjunction with Community Baptist Church

-We will be making presentations to the Hispanic Chamber of Commerce
 -Bring our story to the community to help end stigma.

- -And continuing our involvement with local Law Enforcement agencies
- We have added new staff, Jill Boyer, who will be working on providing us with the best volunteers available and a more comprehensive database of members and supporters.

Thank you for your support,

Doug Stephens
 President



Thank you to all our wonderful Volunteers!

Patience and Persistence in Work and Life

Article #2 By Max Leroux

“...believing in yourself again and acknowledging what you want out of life can help rebuild it – even give it greater purpose and depth.”

Life events, such as a mental illness diagnosis, can feel like an insurmountable obstacle and a setback. It doesn't have to be so. Being able to 'pan' back far enough away to gain perspective, believing in yourself again and acknowledging what you want out of life can help rebuild it – even give it greater purpose and depth.

In my own experience, my illness and breaks were like a reset button on my life being pushed repeatedly – until I took the “right” steps to change course in life; cared for my health, accepted support, got working and gave back. Up until then, life simply wasn't “clicking.” Anybody that has experienced first hand, or perhaps through a loved one, what it's like to be hospitalized, stripped of your freedom, rights, choices, and physically restrained - all the while immersed in total confusion, amidst others dealing with similar experiences - knows if this all can be avoided, so much the better.

Patience and persistence are the keys to getting through the time it takes to get it all “clicking” again. In the beginning, I wasn't very patient. I did not want to be on meds, hated my dependence on them in order to trust myself and the experiences I was having, and the side effects weren't much fun either. So, I went off my medications on occasion, tried self medicating the problems away, and even repeatedly attempted to strong-arm my sense of self – what was left of it – to overcome my symptoms and be “normal.”

The results? I was hospitalized again and again – luckily, for that matter! What I learned was that I HAD to be on meds and follow the “rules” – at least until a cure is

found. Also, the illness, unchecked, does and will ALWAYS kick my butt.

A big part of my recovery is keeping busy with worthwhile activities. Again, for me, that meant going back to work and navigating the ins and outs of Social Security. Anyone who's dealt with this system would agree it needs vast improvement. I got it all, from nasty letters to psychiatric evaluations, in order to work my way back into successful, gainful employment – using THEIR system!

Persistence is key, it turns out. Navigation is possible, and really, one can get good help from Social Security and local agencies – such as Buckelew Programs!

The results? Full time work and I kept my health benefits – It's possible with patience and persistence.

Finding and/or creating the right work environment takes time, but it makes recovery last. In the early stages of my recovery, I bounced around from job to job until I paused and outlined what I wanted out of a career, and created a life mission. For me, it was balance, purpose and achievement. I then found a place – Buckelew Programs – with a philosophy and purpose I believed in and discovered an environment there where I could journey through my life mission - rebuilding it with purpose and depth.

Sincerely,

Max Leroux
Employment Specialist
Buckelew Employment Services



"I can say with assurance, that this donation is having a ripple effect of great good for many people living with mental illness."

Tools for Transition

We have some exciting news from the Tools 4 Transition Program. From the Cardinal Newman and Ursuline Alumni Associations, we received gift cards of more than \$1300 to buy supplies for our program in December! They also gifted us with lovely bags of toiletries. We've received supplies from Cardinal Newman families in past years, through the efforts of Anne Del Monte, and this year's gift brings their support to a new level.

We also received twelve large, beautiful 2010 calendars from the Center For Spiritual Living, Santa Rosa. It felt wonderful to include those in our boxes.

Kristine and Marlene have been organizing putting together boxes for people going into new living situations since about 2001. You may know that in our boxes we include household items including

sheets and blankets, a pillow, flatware, scissors, kitchen dishes, glasses, toiletries, towels, pots and pans.

meet in Kristine's garage two to three times per year. When we complete a set of boxes, we all feel a great sense of satisfaction. On a



Bill Rousseau, Kristine Siebert, Marlene Mahan, and Jeff Bertole.

With this help, now we can buy a NEW blanket, sheet set and towels for all of our people! Most of them are starting out with practically nothing for their apartment. It is wonderful for them to feel our support of them towards their independence.

We've have assembled a team of volunteers who

rainy day in January, we made a record 20 boxes! I can say with assurance, that this donation is having a ripple effect of great good for many people living with mental illness.

Marlene Mahan

Shown in picture above:
Marlene Mahan
Kristine Siebert



Tools for Transition Volunteers



Putting donated items into the boxes.

NAMI SC Book Club

“Everyone is welcome to attend this book group. We are family members, consumers, mental health professionals, service providers, and members of the general public.”

The NAMI Book Group held its first meeting on Saturday, January 30th at the Rincon Valley Library and was facilitated by Sue Tichava and Joan McCue. We had a fascinating discussion of Elyn Saks’ *The Center Cannot Hold*. The group found many topics of interest, a few of which included: the use of restraints, descriptions of schizophrenia, descriptions of what it is like to hear voices, the need for friendships, family support—or lack of, the need for “talk” therapy, and the importance and power of words. One of the most agreed upon comments was an appreciation of Elyn Saks’ courage in writing this book that vividly illustrates the lived experience of schizophrenia.

An educator who attended the group said she thought this book should be required reading in high school.

Everyone is welcome to attend this book group. We are family members, consumers, mental health professionals, service providers, and members of the general public. We read books whose topic is mental illness and discuss them in order that we may facilitate the following:

- * Stigma busting, raising awareness regarding

stereotyping of people with living mental illness;

- * Stimulate dialogue regarding mental illness in our community;

- * Learn about the world of mental illness through reading books and imaginatively entering into the lives of characters or writers;

- * Reach an understanding of a view point different from our own;

- * Foster an interest in the

Mark and Mary Jaqua will facilitate the **April 17th** meeting.

We have selected Pete Earley’s *Crazy: A Father’s Search Through America’s Mental Health Madness* for our second meeting. If you wish to purchase your copy at Copperfields you will receive a 20% discount by identifying yourself as a NAMI Book Group member.

Membership in the book group is free; all you need



Members of the NAMI Book Club

reading of books whose subject matter is mental illness.

Our next meeting will be April 17th from 2:00 until 3:30pm, at the Rincon Valley Library. The group has agreed that a variety of locations is desirable and that the facilitators will determine the location.

to do is send me an email. JoanM707@Comcast.net. Please put NAMI Book Group in the subject line.

Joan McCue

“We must insist that our local state legislators vote for mental health, which means voting to save lives.”

Help Save Mental Health Care

California needs to protect and strengthen existing mental health services in local communities. We need to invest in proven, cost effective treatment and support for recovery.

I am a person living, successfully, with multiple mental illnesses. There is hope for most people living with a mental illness but we need to keep our funds flowing to Sonoma County and local services providers. Prop 63 (the Mental Health Services Act [MHSA]) funding is crucial to providing those services. Without these funds we will see a growth in serious mental health crises. Already 27% (about 200) of our jail population consists of people with serious mental illnesses. Many of these people have done miniscule crimes that would be better treated outside of the jail. The jail has become the largest County mental health provider at a cost much higher than people who receive care in other situations.

Tough times require wise decisions. Budget priorities must not be penny-wise and pound foolish. We must insist that our

local state legislators vote for mental health, which means voting to save lives.

Many issues are competing for attention and funds are limited. With so many other interests, individuals and families affected by mental illness we urgently need the voices of others in our communities to fiercely join their own in speaking out for Sonoma County’s mental health care system and for the thousands of individuals whose lives hang in the balance.

Mental illness does not discriminate. It can strike anyone at any time. It affects Democrats and Republican alike. Of the 466,741 (2008 population estimates) 25% of the population of Sonoma County (116,685) will suffer with a mental illness in 2010. You probably know one of those people.

The governor and our legislators must stand together to save mental health care.

We must send them that message now.

NAMI, the National Alliance on Mental Illness, the nation’s largest grassroots organization dedicated to helping individuals and families living with serious mental illness, has made the state budget crisis its top priority, both in California and nationwide.

But we can’t do it alone.

Too often, mental illness is overlooked, marginalized, trivialized or stigmatized.

The result has been a mental health crisis, while states have struggled to build modern systems of care.

The progress made in the past is now at risk. We need the help of others to save it in order to save lives. Preserving California’s funding for mental health services and supports is essential for the future of our people.

For more information, please contact NAMI Sonoma County visit www.namisoco.org or call 707-527-6655.

Thank you,

Doug Stephens



Mental Health Resource Guide

Mental Health Services

NAMI Sonoma County 527-6655
1717 Yulupa Ave
Santa Rosa CA 95405
www.namisonomacounty.org

Resources, referrals, classes, support groups, for family members and for clients. Library, warmline; no-charge and no referral needed Monday-Friday, 9 AM-3 PM, with some evening classes.

Psychiatric Emergency Services (PES) 576-8181
3322 Chanate Rd
Crisis services, transport to hospitals, 23 hour stays

Access Team at Chanate 565-6900
(Entry to Sonoma County Mental Health)
Alexander Valley Regional Medical Center 894-4229
Alliance Medical Center 431-8234
Jewish Community Free Clinic 585-7780
Petaluma Health Center 559-7500
Russian River Health Center 869-2849
Santa Rosa Free Clinic 546-6479
Sonoma County Indian Health Project 521-4545
Southwest Health Center 547-2222
Sonoma Valley Health Center 939-6070

Client Centers/Clubhouses

Chanate Hall (County Mental Health client) 565-4900
Interlink Self-Help Center 546-4481
Russian River Empowerment Center 604-7264
Wellness and Advocacy Center 565-7800

Client/Consumer Classes

Chanate Hall (for clients of Sonoma County Mental Health) various classes and groups; for more info 565-4900

Clutterers Anonymous- for cluttering and hoarding disorder Flora 565-4850

DSLCL (Disability Services and Legal Center) Tools for Stability and Support led by Melva Freeman 528-2745

Depression/Bipolar Support Group 526-5126

Interlink Self-Help Center-Peer counseling, dual diagnosis, art and many other classes 546-4481

NAMI- Art: Tuesdays at 2 PM; client support group: Connections Thursdays at noon at the NAMI office

Recovery, Int. Self-help through Will training 823-5122

Russian River Empowerment Center - Peer led classes in wellness and creativity 604-7264

Smart Recovery - Self-help program to develop life management and recovery skills to overcome addictive behavior. Imagine full recovery without life-long meetings.
www.isrinc.org 415-223-3914

Wellness and Advocacy Center 565-7800
Many classes, groups, music jam, art, poetry, creative writing, activities for transitional age youth, and more. Some Spanish.

Family/Friends Help and Support

Borderline Personality Disorder Group (for friends and family members of a loved one with BPD) contact Diane Benedict at 526-3775

NAMI Warmline- 527-6655 Empathic listening, resources and referrals, 4 days weekly, 9-3 PM

Family Support Groups- Drop-in support groups for friends/family, that are facilitated by family members. Learn problem solving, how to access services, how to support your loved one and yourself!

Cloverdale- Facilitated by Harry Martin. For times and location 894-2535, or 894-4760

Guerneville-1st and 3rd Mondays, Facilitated by Kathy Smith. Empowerment Center, 16229 3rd St, 869-0056

Petaluma- Facilitated by Stuart Slater and Kathleen Billings. 1st and 3rd Tuesdays, 6-7:30 PM, 151- 2nd St., in Petaluma, 410-7114

Santa Rosa- Facilitators vary. Every Thursday, 2-3:30 PM, and 2nd and 4th Wed from 6-7:30 PM at the NAMI office, 1717 Yulupa Ave, 527-6655

Santa Rosa -Mondays 4:30-6 PM, 3333 Chanate Rd., client must be served by Sonoma Cty Mental Health. Focus on Dual Diagnosis. Facilitated group. 565-4935

Sonoma -Facilitated by Sylvia Chloe, MFT. 283 2nd St, Sonoma 996-2930



Upcoming Events

Human Race 2010

Connect with NAMI Sonoma County At THE HUMAN RACE

Herbert Slater Middle School, 3500 Sonoma Ave. Santa Rosa, CA 95405
Saturday, May 8 Opens at 6:30 AM

Come and walk or run or just hang out with us and help support better mental health in Sonoma County.

Get a NAMI T-Shirt by signing up someone to contribute.

More Info:
NAMI OF Sonoma County (707) 527-6655
Human Race: www.humanracenow.org

BOOK CLUB

NAMI SC Book Club April, 17th 2010, 2 PM at the Rincon Valley Library, see page 5.



NAMI Human Race 2003

*Thank you for
your support!*



RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

NON-PROFIT
U.S. POSTAGE PAID
SANTA ROSA, CA
PERMIT NO. 229
DATED MATERIAL

NAMI National Alliance on Mental Illness
Sonoma County
1717 Yulupa Ave.
Santa Rosa CA 95405
707-527-6655
namisonomacounty.org