

*Effects of Depression on Living,
a Talk By Dr. Stephen Shuchter*

By James Starek
NAMI Staff Member

Dr. Stephen Shuchter, Director of the UCSD Gifford clinic, stated in his presentation at NAMI's February advocacy meeting, "Depression slides everything back to less mature and earlier levels of development." For the depressed person, a myriad of difficulties follow; identity becomes distorted, coping mechanisms fail, and the natural course of problem solving is altered.

Throughout the evening, Dr. Shuchter focused largely on how the symptoms of depression translate into dysfunction in the major areas of our lives. Dr. Shuchter acknowledged the turmoil these symptoms create, particularly in interpersonal relationships, but he also offered hope for treatment. "We don't even know what causes it," he declared, but he affirmed, "It is the rare person we cannot help."

However, attempts at helping or intervention by a loved one or family member can be an arduous and often complex task. Ordinary qualities that exist in a spouse or loved one are turned into their worst form when one of the individuals is depressed. Dr. Shuchter stated the importance for families "to identify the manifestations of depression so they can help the person to recognize that this represents a *current state*, not an existential reality that is unchangeable and inexorable." Knowledge is imperative and the key to not only intervention, but understanding the overall dynamics depression generates in oneself and in others.

He concluded, "For all depressions, probably 90% of people can get some substantial help" and added, "If you have to be depressed, be thankful that it is now."

**NAMI San Diego's
First Thursday Advocacy Meeting
March 3, 2005**

BENEFITS:

What (and Whom) You Need to Know

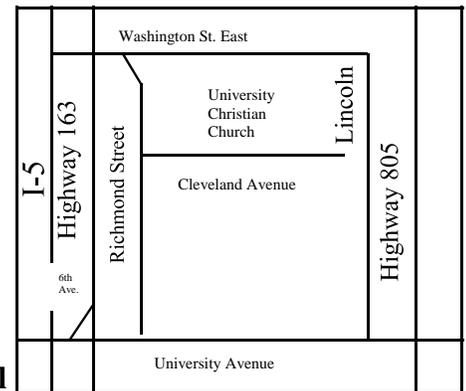
Dan Melcher has worked in the SSI advocacy field at the Legal Aid Society of San Diego for over 25 years and is now considered an "SSI guru." He worked with other advocacy groups in making major legislative changes in the SSI program and was cited for his contributions in the United States Senate Report on Social Security Disability Benefits Terminations in 1982. Dan currently educates the community about the SSI process, represents clients in the application, reconsideration, and hearing processes, supervises and trains SSI Advocates, and maintains relations with Federal, State, and County agencies – as well as all of the administrative responsibilities of being a program manager.

Dan is an old friend of NAMI, and we welcome him back.

**University Christian
Church Friendship Hall
3900 Cleveland Ave
San Diego, California**

Program:

- 6:30 p.m.:** Business and Advocacy
- 7:00 p.m.:** Program
- 8:15 p.m.:** Ask the Doctor
- 8:45 p.m.:** Karen Gurneck Farewell



Our recent past president, Karen Gurneck, is moving to Washington, D.C. in April to join her husband, Dr. Alan Abrams, who has taken on a challenging new position with Georgetown University and St. Elizabeth's Hospital. Please join us as we say a big thank you and a sad farewell to Karen at our March 3rd Education Meeting.

February At-a-Glance

By Bettie Reinhardt
Executive Director

Stigma Bear Protest

The protest against the Vermont Teddy Bear (VTB) Company's bear in a strait-jacket grew to include a January 22 article in the *New York Times* and called for the company's CEO to resign from the board of trustees of the largest hospital in the state. The brown teddy bear was dressed in a white strait-jacket embroidered with a red heart.

For \$69.95, the 15-inch stuffed animal came with its own "Commitment Report," which read: "Can't Eat, Can't Sleep, My Heart's Racing; Diagnosis -- Crazy for You!"

NAMI Vermont initiated the protest and organized a coalition of Vermont mental health advocates, supported by NAMI National. VTB agreed to meet before Valentine's Day with Vermont leaders on February 1 and NAMI National leaders on February 8.

However, although VTB apologized, stating no intent to offend and recognizing "the serious nature of mental illness," they did not withdraw the bear from the market until they were virtually sold out. VTB dropped mention of the bear from radio commercials and from the front page of the VTB Web site, their primary point of sales nationwide. However, the bear was still featured in the Valentine's Day section of the site as long as significant sales continued.

In light of VTB's actions, NAMI Vermont and NAMI National cancelled the "consciousness-raising" meetings and will ask for more substantial recompense from the Teddy Bear Company. If you wish to send personal stories or comments, the address is:
The Vermont Teddy Bear Company
6655 Shelburne Road
Shelburne, VT 05482

Peer-to-Peer Project Report

While Peer-to-Peer continues, the two-year Peer-to-Peer project funded by The California Endowment (TCE) has been completed. What follows are excerpts from the final report to TCE. The complete

"Our organization has changed significantly because we have many more active consumer members, volunteers, staff members, and Board members..."

report is available upon request. Mary Lou Erwin continued as Education Director after being hired on January 26, 2003. Eric McElroy "tried the job out" by volunteering to do some of the activities until agreeing to employment as the Program Coordinator. Complete renovation of the primary classroom space was a much more involved process than any of us who have been involved in remodeling/renovation projects in other settings would have dreamed. The renovation was completed by month 12 and has been well worth both the money and the blood, sweat, and tears. Not only is it a pleasant and functional room but making it accessible has made it possible for at least two people in wheelchairs to participate in the classes.

Three PtP mentors were trained to train other mentors in February of Year 1. They trained 15 consumer leaders (mentors) in October of Year 1 and 15 consumer leaders from San Diego County in August of Year 2. They invited trainees from Orange and Ventura counties and trained 10 consumer leaders from those counties during the August, 2004 training. (Their local affiliates reimbursed us for the direct cost of their training.) We provided PtP education and support services for 73 consumers in Year 1 and to 120 consumers in Year 2. Although we held more classes in more areas of the county during Year 2, the class sizes were smaller.

To the question "To what extent has the target population, staff, or specific community groups benefited from your grant activities"? we answered that:

1. The target population, consumers, have benefited in a variety of ways: real knowledge about their illnesses with resulting decreased feelings of shame or guilt and increased self-determination, enhanced self-esteem demonstrated by their volunteering to become mentors and venturing into the work force, increased coping skills, increased use of peer support, and, most important, an increased capacity to hope.
2. PtP leaders have additionally made reintegration steps based on being compensated for their valuable work and the recognition that they took on challenging work – successfully.
3. One large mental health contractor in the county has been so impressed by the gain in stability of some of the program graduates that it has made PtP participation a hiring criterion.

Our organization has changed significantly because we have many more active consumer members, volunteers, staff members, and Board members and consequently have more energy and focus on our mission of helping improve the quality of life of everyone affected by mental illnesses. We have learned that a consumer-run program can be successful and, in fact, to be completely successful, must be consumer run.

There is strong commitment from all of the regional NAMI affiliates (San Diego, North Coastal, and North Inland) to develop funding for and to continue PtP. The affiliates have joined together for the first time to host a 'NAMIWALKS for the Mind of America' event in April and have agreed that a minimum of 50% of the event proceeds will be used for county-wide programs. Peer-to-Peer tops that list. We are currently writing grant proposals that will leverage this fundraising to continue the PtP program and expand it into the Latino community.

The Advocate

NAMI San Diego, a non-profit organization, provides education, support services, and advocacy to improve the quality of life of everyone affected by mental illnesses.

NAMI San Diego is an affiliate of NAMI and NAMI California

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Articles received by the 15th will be considered for publication in the following month's newsletter.

The opinions expressed in the newsletter do not necessarily reflect those of NAMI San Diego.

To register your opinion, call Bettie Reinhardt at 619 584-5564 or write to P.O. Box 710761, San Diego, 92171 or fax to (619)584-5569 or email at exudir@namisandiego.org or contact any of the people mentioned in the articles.

Sally's Update

NAMI Leaders Get Resolute on Goals

By Sally Shepherd
NAMI San Diego Board President

Bettie Reinhardt, Executive Director, and I have just returned from attending NAMI's National Leadership Institute in Arlington, VA. Board members, presidents and executive directors from all over the country attended the Institute. There is nothing like hearing what others are doing to strengthen our resolve to build even stronger, more effective affiliates! (So come to our National meeting in Austin, Texas in June, or our state meeting in Irvine in August!)

Here are just a few "sound bites" from the meeting.

- NAMI has adopted a very strong stance on the issue of mental health screening for children and adolescents. Screening is not about "labeling" or discrimination. It is about providing early intervention and treatment. Screenings require parental consent and must be voluntary. Children identified as requiring mental health services must immediately be linked to and offered appropriate treatment and services. NAMI supports the Keeping Families Together Act to end once and for all the need for parents to relinquish custody of their child in order to obtain services.
- NAMI continues to build relationships with universities and researchers to identify and implement evidence-based interventions in the field of mental health.
- With funding from National, the Crisis Intervention Training for law enforcement officers program is being implemented around the

country. Statistics show that in communities where the training has been offered, 90 % of mentally ill offenders do not go to jail.

- In 1999, there were 3 mental health courts in the country. Now there are 110. (We now have an active workgroup on mental health courts in San Diego. Let me know if you are interested in participating.)
- Remain in touch with our legislators. Proposition 63 was a great victory in California, but other states have also scored significant achievements. Minnesota now has a law providing for legal review of denials

by insurance companies. NAMI Utah is helping to develop and implement models of care for integrated health and mental health services.

- One workshop provided detailed information on one of the most misunderstood laws impacting mental health: the HIPPA

(privacy) laws. If you would like a copy of the handout, contact our office.

- Bettie's presentation on our Latino Task Force was very well received and encouraged many affiliates to increase their focus on diversity.

There were many opportunities for networking. We met our new state president, Dr. Ralph Nelson (he is a family member), and we are working on setting up an open meeting with him in the San Diego area.

"There is nothing like hearing what others are doing to strengthen our resolve to build even stronger, more effective affiliates!"



NAMI San Diego Meeting Schedule

NAMI San Diego

4480 30th Street
San Diego, CA 92116
(619) 543-1434 or (800) 523-5933

NAMI C.A.R.E. Support Group

Consumer Support Group
Thursdays, 6:00 - 7:30 p.m.
NAMI San Diego Meeting Room
NAMI-SD Office, 4480 30th Street

Morning NAMI-SD Support Group

Third Tuesday, 10:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.
NAMI-SD Office, 4480 30th Street

Sibling and Adult Children's Group

Second Wednesday, 7:00 - 9:00 p.m.
Scripps Well Being Center
Adjacent to the UTC Mall
Call Monica Astorga at (858) 483-9370

Clairemont NAMI Support Group

Second Monday, 7:00 - 8:30 p.m.
St. David's Episcopal Church (Library)
5050 Milton St., (619) 276-4567

La Jolla NAMI Support Group

First Tuesday, 7:15 - 9:00 p.m.
La Jolla Presbyterian Church
Enter on Eads Avenue, Room #9
(858) 457-5057

South Bay - Spanish

First Monday, 6:00 - 8:00 p.m.
South County Family Resource Center
690 Oxford Street, Chula Vista
Call Luz Fernandez (East County clinic)
(619) 401-5500

New support groups for families and caregivers of children and adolescents

La Mesa Group

2nd & 4th Tuesday, 6:30-8:00 pm
Lake Murray Evangelical Free Church
5777 Lake Murray Boulevard, La Mesa
1st Floor, Fellowship Hall
Peggy & Bob Chambers: (619) 464-0476

San Diego Group

1st & 3rd Wednesday, 7:00-8:30 pm
NAMI San Diego Office
4480 30th Street, San Diego CA 92116
Sue McCoy: (619) 277-6224
Karen Malsack (858) 560-0030

La Mesa

Second Wednesday, 6:30 - 8:00 pm
San Carlos Library
7265 Jackson Drive
Contact Karen Robinson, (619) 698-4711
E-mail: krsd@cox.net

NAMI Patton

c/o Patton State Hospital
3101 E. Highland Avenue
Patton, CA 92369
Tel: (909) 425-7000 Fax: (714) 963-9961
Third Sunday, 11:45 a.m. - 1:15 p.m.
Administrative Meeting Room

NAMI-SIT

Schizophrenics in Transition

Board Meeting
1st Wednesday at Noon
144 Copper Avenue, Vista 92083
(760) 941-2153 or
(858) 481-7069

NAMI-SIT includes the following :

- Copper Hill Living & Learning Center
- Creative Arts Consortium
- Friends
- Advocacy Works
- MIXTECA Garden

NAMI North Inland

P.O. Box 300386
Escondido, CA 92030-0386
(760) 745-8381

Education Meeting

Second Tuesday at 7:00 pm.
Bradley Center (Kinesis North)
474 W. Vermont Ave, Escondido
(760) 745-8381 or 1-800-523-5933

Tuesday Share & Care Meeting

Every Tuesday Except the 2nd Tuesday
of each month., 4:00 - 5:30 pm.
at Joslyn Senior Center
210 East Park Ave, Escondido
(760) 745-8381

Weekly Share & Care in Fallbrook

Wednesdays, 5:00 - 6:30 p.m.
Fallbrook Healthcare Foundation
Corner of Mission and Fig
Call for address (760) 745-8381

NAMI North Coastal

P. O. Box 2235
Carlsbad, CA 92018
(760) 722-3754

Education Meeting

Third Thursday, 7:00 p.m.

St. Michael's by the Sea Episcopal Church
Parish Hall, 2775 Carlsbad Blvd.
(760) 722-3754 or (800) 523-5933

Education Meeting followed by

1. Share & Care,
2. Share & Care/Living with Spouses
at 8:30 p.m.

Share & Care

Fourth Tuesday - 5:00 - 6:30 p.m..
North Coastal Mental Health Clinic
1701 Mission Avenue, Oceanside
(760) 967-4475 or (760) 722-3754

Share and Care

Second Thursday at 12:30 - 2:00 p.m.
Tri-City Medical Center, Behavioral Health
Unit, 4002 West Vista Way, Oceanside
(760) 639-1433

Share and Care

Second Thursday at 6:00 - 7:00 p.m.
Tri-City Medical Center, Behavioral Health
Unit, 4002 West Vista Way, Oceanside
(760) 940-7396

TARA Borderline Personality Disorder Support Group

First Tuesday monthly at 6:30 - 9:00 p.m.
Carlsbad Community Church
3175 Harding Street, Carlsbad CA 92008
(760) 729-2331

Legislative Update

By Caroline Hamlin

Parental Consent Act

A particularly insidious bill, the Parental Consent Act (HR 181), has been introduced by Representative Ron Paul of Texas. This piece of legislation would prohibit the use of federal funds for mental health screening of children. Anti-psychiatry groups who support this bill claim that the President's New Freedom Commission on Mental Health mandates screening without parental consent. Nothing could be further from the truth. Goal 4 of the Commission report supports screening; it does not mandate it.

NAMI strongly opposes HR 181 and will strive to set the record straight. NAMI itself supports screening of high risk children on a voluntary basis and with parental consent.

The need for prudent screening of children is clear. In our country 10% of children and adolescents have mental illnesses, but only 20% of them are identified and receive treatment. Suicide is the third leading cause of death for 15 to 24 year olds. Ninety percent of those who commit suicide have a diagnosable and treatable mental illness (Surgeon General, 1999).

Moreover, youth with mental illness have the highest school dropout rates of any disability group (US Dept. of Education). We encourage all our members to contact their members of Congress to oppose HR181. All House and Senate offices can be reached through the Capital switchboard at (202) 224-3121 or contact your local legislators at their home offices.

LPS Conservator?

If you are a private LPS conservator and struggling with the emotional toll that often accompanies this role, you can find support at a new group formed by the conservator's office. The group meets the last Wednesday night of each month, 5 – 7:30 pm. RSVP for location and more information to 619.692.5669.

Walk Kick Off

Union Bank Sponsors Walk Luncheon at Marriott

Kathy McKernan
NAMI Walks Chair

More than the expected 120 persons filled the KICKS meeting room at the Marriott in Mission Valley on Tuesday, February 15, 2005 for the inaugural NAMIWALK Team Captain Kick-off Luncheon hosted by sponsor Union Bank of California. Attendees representing San Diego, North County Coastal, North County Inland and Riverside County affiliates braved grueling traffic to participate in this exciting event.

There was standing room only as Karen Gurneck, Past-President of NAMI San Diego, opened the program by welcoming all in attendance. After a very quick lunch, Sally Shepherd, President of NAMI San Diego shared her personal involvement with NAMI.

Sally's husband, Brian Shepherd shared that to him, NAMI is like a life preserver for a drowning person. Kathleen Guerro then related her family's struggle with mental illness, their lack of knowledge, and the tragic consequences that resulted. She continued to relate how much NAMI helped the entire family, allowing them to assist their son on the road to recovery. There were few dry eyes in the house as Wendy McNeill shared her heroic experiences in overcoming the challenges and stigma of mental illness with the assistance of NAMI.

Walk Chair Kathy McKernan encouraged all in attendance to follow her family's example of setting up a team, registering online, sending out letters and emails to offer loved ones, friends and acquaintances the opportunity to finally be able to "do something" and become part of the solution to end

stigma and improve lives of those with a mental illness.

National NAMI Walk Consultant Steve Leonard shared that the most important secret to having a successful walk is having a letter writing and/or e-mail campaign. In his decades of experience planning and managing walks, the walkers that did this early in the walk preparation both recruited more walkers and had more donations than those that do not participate fully.

"...[the] secret to having a successful walk is having a letter writing and/or e-mail campaign."

The program was concluded by Presenter Sponsor and CEO of Continental Litho, Steve Tomacelli, who assured all attendees that if they distributed all the material his company had printed so far (22,000 walker brochures, 2,000 walk posters and 2,000 team sign-up posters) he would supply us with more!

What a wonderful opportunity the walk is giving all those interested in issues surrounding biological brain disorders! Won't you join the Greater San Diego Area NAMIWALK for the Mind of America? To receive walk materials and obtain more information on participating in this landmark event, contact your team captain, affiliate leadership or Kathy McKernan at (951) 894-4182 or (760) 550-0419, or email katmckernan@verizon.net.



Join "Walk" Online!

By Patrick Cremeens
NAMI Staff Member

It surprised me to see how easy it was to register online for the 2005 NAMI Walk! In my opinion, things like this usually require patience and a third eye. But the website literally "walks" you through each step, effortlessly. No special skills or knowledge are required, if you are just comfortable with using your computer on the internet.

First I logged onto the NAMI San Diego website (www.namisaniego.org). At the bottom of the homepage is the logo for NAMIWalks. Click on the "more info" button, and you are on your way. You can proceed to sign up as a walker on an existing team, form a new team, or simply register as an individual walker. We hope to see many of you joining the NAMI San Diego team this way!

After you enter your personal information to sign up as a walker, you can also create your own personal page for the Walk. Hey, this is fun! On this page you can make a statement as to why you are walking and why you support NAMI (or any other vital info you want to share). You can even include a photo of yourself or your family! Then you just email the link for your personal page to anyone. Send it in an email to family, friends, coworkers and neighbors, and ask if they will make an online pledge to support your walking.

Trust me --- I am not often impressed with the design for websites, homepages, online activities, etc. So when I tell you this was quick and painless, it's no exaggeration. From start to finish, this took me all of 10 minutes.

Give it a try, and I think you will agree with me how easy this is to accomplish. Within a few minutes, you can start sending your own personal Walk page to everyone in your email address book!

By the way, you can always register to walk with us the old fashioned way, too! Just call me at (619) 584-5564 ext. 105 and let me know you want to register for the NAMI San Diego team --- no computer required!

your community Resources

NAMI C.A.R.E. Group

Consumer Support Group
NAMI San Diego Meeting Room
4480 30th Street, San Diego, 92116
Thursdays: 6:00 - 7:30 p.m.

Client Warm Line

1-800-930-9276
Daily: 5:00 p.m. - 11:00 p.m.
Call us. We are fellow consumers of mental health services who have been there, done that. Listening and talking are what we like to do.

Patient Advocacy Program

5998 Alcalá Park, AW 304
San Diego, 92110-2492
(619) 260-7660 or 1-800-479-2233
Monday - Friday: 8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

The Consumer Center for Health Education and Advocacy

1475 Sixth Ave., 4th Floor, San Diego, 92101
Toll Free: 1-877-734-3258
Mon, Wed, Thurs & Fri: 9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.
Tuesday: 8:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m.
If you need help getting mental health services or if you have a complaint or grievance, call or write us. We are ready to help you.

Casa Del Sol Clubhouse

1157 30th Street, San Diego, 92154
(between Coronado Ave. & Del Sol Blvd.)
(619) 429-1937
M - F, Call for hours. - Bilingual

Corner Clubhouse

2864 University Ave. (at Utah)
San Diego, 92104 (North Park, #7 Bus Line)
(619) 683-7423
Monday - Friday: 8:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

East Corner Clubhouse

1060 Estes Street (off Chase Avenue)
El Cajon, 92020
(619) 440-5133
Fax: (619) 440-8522
Mon, Tues, Thurs & Fri: 8:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.
Wednesday: 8:00 a.m. - 6:30 p.m.

Escondido Clubhouse

474 West Vermont Ave., Suite 105
Escondido, CA 92025
(760) 737-7125
Fax: (760) 741-6645
Monday - Friday: 8:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

Friend to Friend

1009 "G" Street, San Diego, 92101
(619) 238-2711
Monday - Friday: 8:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.
An SSI advocate is available

Friends In Hands (Clubhouse)

144 Copper Ave., Vista, 92083
(760) 631-2206
Saturdays: 11:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

Mariposa Clubhouse

560 Greenbrier, Suite. 102, Oceanside, 92054
(760) 439-6006
Monday - Thursday: 8:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.
Friday: 8:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.
Saturday: 10:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.

Neighborhood House Association (NHA) Friendship Clubhouse

286 Euclid Ave. San Diego, CA 92114
(619) 263-6269 Ext. 106
Monday - Friday: 8:30 a.m. - 5:30 p.m.

The Bayview Clubhouse

330 Moss Street, Chula Vista, CA 91911
(619) 585-4646

The Meeting Place, Inc.

4034 Park Blvd., San Diego, 92103
(619) 294-9582
Monday - Friday: 8:00 am. - 4:00 p.m.

Visions @ 5th and H

499 "H" Street, Chula Vista, 91910
(619) 420-8603
Mon, Thurs, Fri & Sat: Noon - 7:00 p.m.
Sunday: Noon - 5:00 p.m.

The Access Center of San Diego

1295 University Ave., Suite 10, San Diego, 92103
(619) 293-3500
Monday - Friday: 9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

Employment Services

1202 Morena Blvd., Suite 201, San Diego, 92110
(619) 276-8071
Monday - Friday: 8:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

Job Options

3465 Camino del Rio South, San Diego, 92108
(619) 688-1784 (Valorie)
Monday - Thursday: 8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.
Friday: 8:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

San Diego Parks and Recreation Disabled Services Program:

Ask for "The Leisure Seekers" group activities and calendar. No formal registration. Simply call ahead of event and say, "I want to sign up for the event" (619) 525-8247

The Creative Arts Consortium

P. O. Box 3053
San Diego, CA 92163-3053
Director - July Rose
(619) 282-4627 or (619) 563-2708

DBSA

Depressive Bipolar Support Alliance
La Jolla/El Cajon group meetings
Call Agnes (619) 338-6024



NAMI Membership

Add your voice to ours

Let's work together to improve the quality of life for everyone affected by mental illnesses in San Diego.

Membership Application - - Each membership is for twelve months starting the month we receive your payment.

Name _____

Please indicate below how many voices are represented by the membership. If no indication is made NAMI San Diego will assume that this membership represents two voices. Number of voices _____.

Address _____

City/State/Zip _____

Phone _____ E-mail _____

Prefer newsletter by mail _____, to read newsletter on the web site _____.

_____ Check (please make payable to NAMI San Diego) _____ Cash

_____ Regular Member \$40.00

_____ Professional \$75.00

_____ Local Member \$20.00

_____ Newsletter Only \$15.00

_____ Open Door Member \$_____ any amount under \$40.00

_____ Donation* _____

_____ Please contact me/us with information about volunteering.

*Unless you instruct us otherwise, the first \$40.00 of a donation will be treated as payment for a membership if you are not already a member of NAMI San Diego. This will also apply if your current membership needs to be renewed.

Check relationship to a consumer

- _____ Parent of Adult
- _____ Parent of Child (under 18)
- _____ Sibling
- _____ Spouse
- _____ Professional
- _____ Other
- _____ Self
- _____ None

Like, Bust Out Your Visa

By Wendy McNeill
Advocate Editor & Board Member

I so hate asking people for money. I remember when I was a Camp Fire Girl, and we had to sell almond roca. I sold the bare minimum, and even that was an assault on my dignity. That was when I was eight.

Now I've got a big problem. I mean, when you're selling almond roca, at least the person buying it gets to eat it, and it's tasty and comes in cool, gold foil wrapping. When you're asking for a donation, well, you're going to take the money and run.

I guess, though, after sober reflection, NAMI taking the money and running with it is going to be great. I can prove it. Throughout my twenties, I had many bouts of bipolar disorder, oodles of hospitalizations, lots of med-noncompliance, you name it. Severe mental illness.

Ultimately, I ended up in a board and care in El Cajon surrounded by roaches, bad eighties rock music, worse and louder rap, and a previously unimaginable array of body odor.

My family was displeased to say the least. They had seen many of the poor choices I made that led me to this grim destination. You know, where there's shame, there's blame.

Then, mysteriously, when my mother would get on the phone, the tone of her voice gradually started to change. My brother, when he visited, took me out for sushi and laughed at my jokes. Why? My mother had started taking the Family to Family class, and her attitude towards my illness was shifting. "Me," the essential person, could now be more easily separated from my symptoms. This change in perspective also rubbed off on my brother and was visible to me.

With this new level of support, I was eventually able to get a job, move out of the board and care, find a cute place, buy a magenta couch, adopt a cat named Jellybean, and get engaged.

Of course, I'm a member of NAMI now, too. I edit the newsletter, sit on the Board, speak for In Our Own Voice, and I've graduated from Peer to Peer.

Now, you.

What I want you to do is **STEP UP TO THE PLATE!** We have our big Walk fundraiser coming up on Saturday, April 16, 2005, and I want you to walk, or stroll, and/or just raise some awareness/cash!

Sorry, no almond roca. But it'll be worth it.

See Patrick's article on page 6 for how to get involved.

The Advocate

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4480 30th Street
San Diego, CA 92116

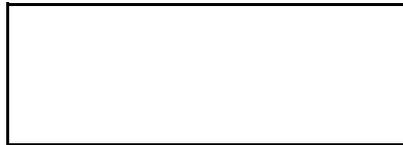
Non-Profit
Organization
U. S. Postage
Paid
San Diego, CA
Permit No. 2695

1st Thursday!!!

*Learn, Mingle, and
Connect!*

March 3, 2005

6:30 p.m.



Return Service Requested

Call for Volunteers!

*By Diana Waugh
NAMI San Diego Volunteer Coordinator*

The WALK is Coming - the Walk is Coming April 16 to Balboa Park and we need your help. Those of you who attended the kickoff luncheon at the Marriot heard that we plan to have 1,000 walkers and raise \$100,000.00. We need this money in order to continue crucial NAMI programs. It's going to take the efforts of our dedicated volunteers to make this happen.

We need volunteers to help prior to the walk with planning, fundraising, PR, and coordinating the Resource Fair.

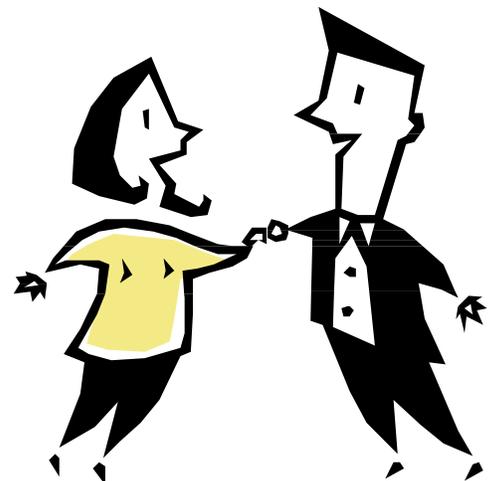
The day of the event we need help with setup, clean up, parking control, registration, passing out t-shirts and water as well as safety attendants.

We have a unique opportunity to use the National Model, Walk for the Minds of America and to work with NAMI No Coastal, NAMI Inland, NAMI SIT as well as a group from NAMI Riverside and NAMI Orange County.

HELP us show San Diego that we care about Mental Health and we're willing to put our bodies behind our words.

COME ON OUT N' HELP!

If you can help in any way, please contact Diana Waugh, Volunteer Coordinator, at (619) 584-5564 ext. 115 or e-mail to dianawaugh@namisandiego.org.





NAMI's Signature Coast-To-Coast Event

Date: Saturday, April 16, 2005

Walk will take place rain or shine!

Place: Balboa Park at Quince & 6th Ave.

Check-in Time: 8:00 am

Start Time: 9:00 am

All walkers must register for the walk. There is no walker registration fee.

Register Online: <http://www.nami.org/>

For more information or to request a registration brochure, contact: 619.543.1434

Total Distance: 2 or 5k (Walkers may walk shorter distances)

Ample Parking Available

Resource Fair, Refreshments, Music & Fun!

NAMI's Campaign for the Mind of America...

...unites and empowers community leaders across the nation who see first hand the devastating impact of untreated mental illness, to work together to transform our failed mental health system of care.

NAMI has partnered in this campaign with national, state and local leadership in the areas of education, law enforcement, business and overall healthcare.

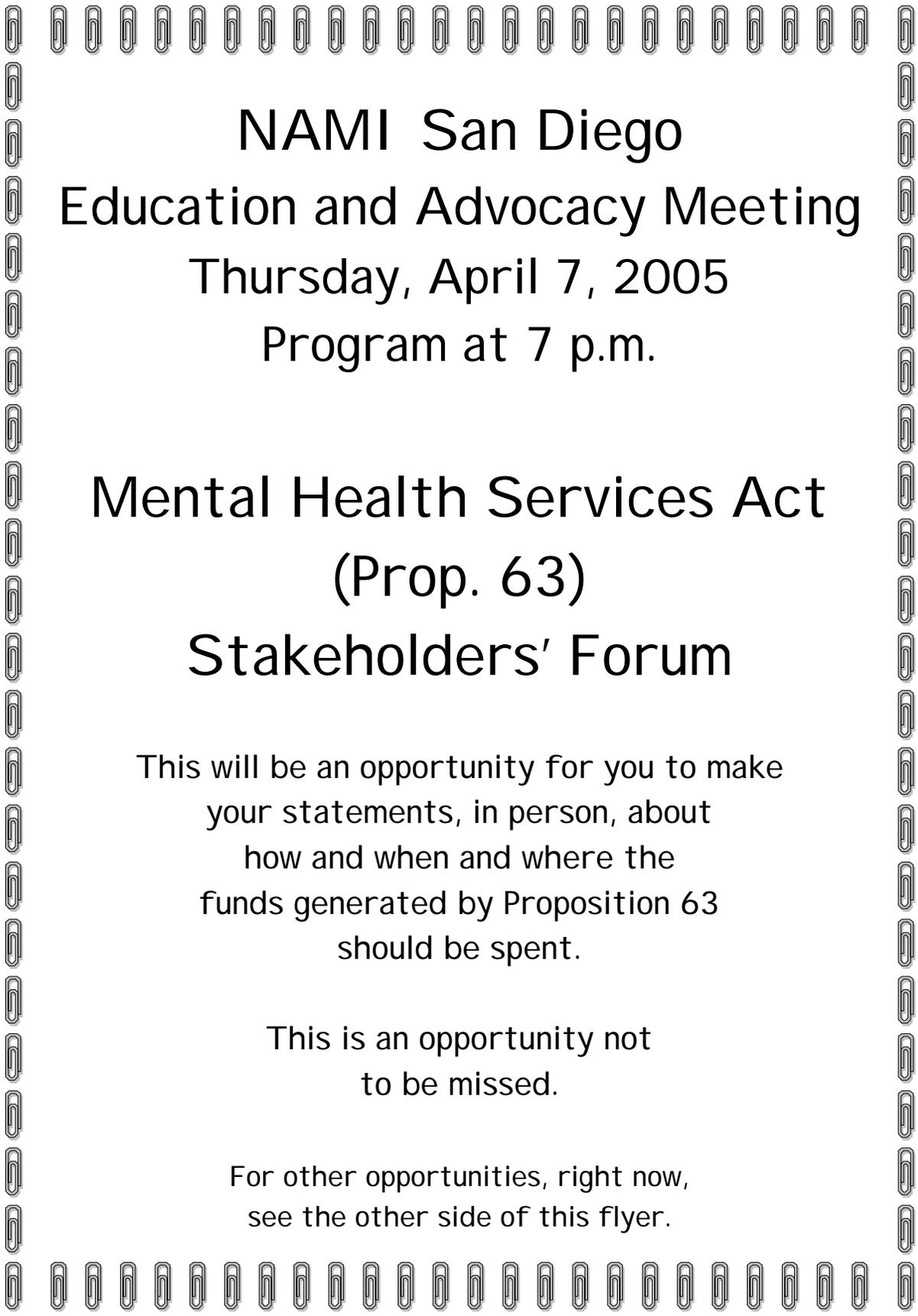
The Campaign addresses this crisis and aims to fulfill the promise of recovery by assuring access to mental health treatment, services and supports for all Americans living with serious mental disorders.

NAMI Walks 2005

Following on the success of our twelve pilot sites in 2003, and our 36 second year sites in 2004, NAMI Walks has been designated NAMI's signature fund-raising Walkathon program and is expanding to over 50 cities in 2005. Tens of thousands of concerned citizens will walk together this year to raise money and awareness about our country's need for a world-class treatment and recovery system for people with mental illness. Proceeds from the Walks will be used to accomplish NAMI's mission: to support, educate and advocate for all those whose lives are touched by mental illness.

NAMI, the National Alliance for the Mentally Ill, was established in 1979 by a group of family members of those with severe mental illness. Its mission is threefold: to support, educate and advocate for those with mental illness and their families, friends and the public.

Today; NAMI is a powerful non-profit, self-help and advocacy organization. With a membership of more than 220,000 consumers, families, professionals, sponsors and people who simply care about those with mental illnesses, it is the nation's largest grass roots organization dedicated to improving the lives of all people with severe mental illness.



NAMI San Diego
Education and Advocacy Meeting
Thursday, April 7, 2005
Program at 7 p.m.

Mental Health Services Act
(Prop. 63)
Stakeholders' Forum

This will be an opportunity for you to make your statements, in person, about how and when and where the funds generated by Proposition 63 should be spent.

This is an opportunity not to be missed.

For other opportunities, right now, see the other side of this flyer.

Mental Health Services Act Phone lines and Email

County Mental Health Services' dedicated phone lines and e-mailbox for taking Mental Health Services Act (Prop 63) questions, suggestions and comments are:

Local phone line

(619) 584-5063

And toll free in the San Diego area

(888) 977-6763

E-mail

MHSProp63.HHSA@sdcounty.ca.gov

Responses to questions will be posted within 10 business days on the Network of Care website, Prop 63 page, under "FAQs."

The Network of Care website can be found at:
<http://sandiego.networkofcare.org/mh>

Click on Information about Mental Health Services Act (Proposition 63) under County Announcements