

Open your mind



Mental illnesses
are brain disorders



NAMI Mendocino County

The County's Voice on Mental Illness

NAMI Mendocino County
P. O. Box 312, Ukiah, CA 95482
Winter 2006

Mission Statement: NAMI is a nationwide volunteer, grassroots organization dedicated to improving the lives of people with severe mental illnesses by providing mutual respect, support, education and advocacy.

Important Updates

The MHSA (Mental Health Services Act) Draft Plan is available for public comment until January 18, 2006 (see page 3 for more information on MHSA). NAMI was well represented on the MHSA Steering Committee. Please take the time to comment! Submit written comments to: Mendocino County MHSA Planning Office, 211 Standley Street, Ukiah, CA 95482. All comments must be in written form. Contact the MHSA Office at 468-3368 for more information.

Beth Robey will be resigning as Director of the Mendocino County Department of Mental Health, effective early February 2006. The interim director will be Ana Mahoney.

The Ukiah Crisis Service Center will once again be open 24-7 beginning January 1, 2006. The crisis center can oftentimes be a preferred option to the Emergency Room, which has been the only option available between 8pm and 8am since Crisis Center hours were cut drastically in 2004.

A new Crisis Residential Facility may be opening soon in Ukiah at the old Silver Birches board and care house. If Phoenix Programs is able to purchase the property, the Counties of Lake and Mendocino will each have 7 beds for people needing a safe place to stay for up to 2 weeks, paid by Medi-Cal, when hospitalization is not appropriate.

(Important Updates continued on page 2...)

2005 - 2006 Officers:

President.....Julie Price
Vice PresidentDiane Zucker
Treasurer.....Lolli Manix
Secretary.....Eileen Lowery
Family-to-Family Coordinator.....Charlene Holbrook
Sr. Advisor.....Sonya Nesch

Dear Friends of NAMI,

This has been quite a year for mental health advocacy, in Mendocino County and statewide. For those of you who are unfamiliar with the work your local NAMI affiliate has been doing this past year, please read on for a truly impressive list of accomplishments. The majority of this work is done by a small group of deeply dedicated advocates – both clients and family members - who inspire me day after day to keep fighting. They rekindle my hope and my belief that yes, we **can** change this broken system, and yes, we **do** have the power to improve the lives of people living with mental illness in our community. I feel honored to be able to work with people of such intelligence, strength, spirit and devotion.

2006 promises to offer us new opportunities to influence positive change. On January 12th we will have a visioning meeting to discuss where we want to direct our resources in the new year. We will continue to offer Family to Family classes, family support groups and Wellness Recovery Action Plan (WRAP) groups, informal one-on-one family and client support, as well as continuing to be a presence on the Mental Health Board and the MHSA Steering Committee. However, we also have larger dreams of developing supported housing in our community that includes vocational and educational supports; developing peer-to-peer training and support; offering medical provider training and crisis intervention training, and on and on. Our dreams are bigger than our resources – both human and financial - and we encourage you to join us in any way you can. Whether it be a donation of money by means of a paid membership or a donation of time* so that we can accomplish more, we invite you to become a part of the solution with us. Please contact me or any of our NAMI advocates listed in this newsletter if you would like to help. Thanks for your support and keep on advocating!

Julie Price
President, NAMI Mendocino County

*We especially need help with publicity and fundraising.

(Important Updates, cont. from page 1...)

Howard Hospital in Willits is now providing mental health assessments through their ER, which were previously only available in Ukiah. So now people in the northern part of the County can go to Howard Hospital rather than all the way to the Ukiah crisis center or the UVMC ER for assessment.

The County Mental Health Dept has hired a child psychiatrist. Dr. Julie Van Schoor, a board-certified psychiatrist and neurologist in general psychology, began working for MCDMH in November 2005. For more information on services available to children experiencing serious mental health problems, contact the Youth and Family Services Division of Mendocino County Mental Health at 463-6878.

The Next NAMI Meeting will be a Visioning Meeting. Bring your dreams and ideas for action in 2006. **Thursday, January 12, 5:30-8:00pm.** Location TBA. Call Julie for details 621-0456.

***New!* Please visit our new local NAMI Website:**
www.namimendocino.org
We welcome any suggestions you may have.

Ongoing

Inland Family Support Group:

Meets the 1st & 3rd Wednesday of each month from 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. at the Wishing Wellness office located at 206 N. Pine Street, Ukiah. Please call Wynd at 485-8033 if you have any questions or will be attending for the first time

Coastal Family Support Group:

Meets on the 1st Thursday of each month from 5:30p.m. to 7:00 p.m. at 201 E. Fir Street, Fort Bragg. Please call Sonya at 937-3339 if you have any questions or will be attending for the first time.

One-on-One Support and Information:

If you are a friend or family member who needs support, information, or to be directed to resources in your community you may call any of the following people:

- Anne.....621-1780
- Gladys.....462-0490
- Sonya.....937-3339
- Eileen.....456-1133
- Diane.....467-9798

MHSA SCHEDULE

Mendocino County's Draft MHSA Plan has been completed and is now available for review and comment. The proposed schedule for review, comment, approval and implementation of the plan follows. For updates to the schedule and for more information, please check with the MHSA Planning office at 468-3368, located at 211 Standley Street, Ukiah.

December 15, 2005 Draft Plan posted. Begin 30-day public comment period. The Draft Plan will be posted online at: <http://www.co.mendocino.ca.us/mh/>. Copies will be available at all offices of the County Mental Health Department and at local public libraries.

January 18, 2006 Mental Health Board will conduct a public hearing on the Draft Plan. 3-6pm at Board of Supervisors Chambers, 501 Low Gap Rd, Ukiah. Contact the MHSA Planning office if you need transportation.

January 19, 2006 MHSA Steering Committee meeting to discuss the public comments received.

Jan 24, 2006 Final Plan to be heard by the Board of Supervisors.

January 25, 2006 Adopted Plan submitted to the State Dept. of Mental Health (DMH) for review and approval.

January 31, 2006 MHSA Planning office in Ukiah closes.

March, 2006 MHSA Steering Committee continues meeting to discuss its ongoing role in implementation and oversight.

April 25, 2006 Receive approval from the State DMH

May 1, 2006 Begin implementation of the Plan.

Family to Family Classes Offered

The Family to Family program is a free course designed for family members of people living with mental illness. The course is taught one evening a week for 12 consecutive weeks. The course is co-taught by specially trained family members and includes the following topics: information about the different illnesses; medications and their side effects; coping skills; handling crisis and relapse; listening and communication skills; problem solving and limit setting; rehabilitation; empathy; self-care; community resources; and much more. We offer the course 1-2 times per year depending on the demand. Contact Charlene at 467-9116 for more information.

*Thanks to Beth Robey and the Dept. of Mental Health for donating the copying of class materials.

NAMI Mendocino County 2005 Accomplishments

- Two Family to Family courses were taught.
- Two Wellness Recovery Action Plan (WRAP) groups were completed and another is scheduled for early in 2006.
- Guest speakers at inland business meetings: Mendocino County Supervisors Hal Wagenet and Jim Wattenberger; Mendocino County Mental Health Crisis Services Supervisor Mark Cerri; Ukiah City Councilperson John McCowen.
- Guest speakers on the coast included Mendocino County Supervisor Kendall Smith.
- Two NARSAD card fundraisers.
- New NAMI brochure completed and 500 copies distributed to the community.
- Spring newsletter was sent to over 300 individuals.
- Sonya Nesch was recognized at the “Women Change America” History Celebration for her 14 years of advocacy for people and families living with mental illness.
- Sonya has also completed and published her book *Advocating for Someone with a Mental Illness*.
- Three NAMI members are on the Mendocino County Mental Health Board.
- Six NAMI members are participating on the Steering Committee for the Mental Health Services Act.
- NAMI members met informally on a weekly basis with community members at The Coffee Critic.
- In July we took a field trip to Buckelew in Marin County, a model community-based organization that provides an array of supported housing and vocational opportunities for people with mental illness.
- A group letter was published in support of SEIU 707’s position paper on the MHSA.
- A number of new books were purchased for NAMI inland and coast libraries.
- A Special Needs Trust workshop provided by Meredith Lintott was held in November and attended by 10 NAMI members.
- Completed the California NAMI survey and received the results of 38 other counties (open availability).
- Three NAMI members attended two NCO training meetings: Grant writing and Roberta’s Rules of Order.
- We have developed and strengthened our relationships with: Mendocino County Board of Supervisors, County Executive Office, County Mental Health Dept., County Dept. of Public Health, Mendocino Community Clinics, Willits Action Group, Mendocino College, Howard Hospital, SEIU 707, as well as other local/county agencies and private practitioners.
- Met with Michael Mabangalo and Sam Fernandez of the Mendocino Community Clinic Dept. of Behavioral Health to discuss possible life skills/psycho-social groups for people living with mental illness.
- Met with the Director of the Disability Resource Center, the Dean of Student Services, and counselors at Mendocino College to discuss the development of a supported education program for students living with mental illness.
- Presented our vision of supported education at the Disability Roundtable, a twice-yearly meeting of the agencies and organizations that provide educational and vocational services to people living with a disability.
- Set goals for our affiliate to attain non-profit status, develop a Speakers Bureau, develop “basic by-laws,” hold more frequent Coast/Inland joint meetings.
- The local NAMI website is up and running! With special thanks to Finn (Loraen) Alden. Check it out at www.namimendocino.org.
- Helped in organizing two educational presentations in Ukiah and Willits by the Pfeiffer Treatment Center of Chicago on Biochemical Balancing and Mental Health.
- Diane Zucker was elected to the Mendocino County Board of Education, where she will advocate for mental health training of faculty and staff in the school system.
- Wynd has persuaded David Williams, an exceptional therapist from Santa Rosa, to provide therapy services in Ukiah one day per week (more on page 5).
- New NAMI member John Snider offered to be our new newsletter editor. Thank you, John, for volunteering your time, and a big thank you to Sonya Nesch and Kris Halvorsen for all their newsletter work to date. It is quite a task!

What is the MHSA?

(From the CA Dept. of Mental Health website)

“The passage of Proposition 63 (now known as the [Mental Health Services Act](#) or MHSA) in November 2004, provides the first opportunity in many years for the Department of Mental Health (DMH) to provide increased funding, personnel and other resources to support county mental health programs and monitor progress toward statewide goals for children, transition age youth, adults, older adults and families. The Act addresses a broad continuum of prevention, early intervention and service needs and the necessary infrastructure, technology and training elements that will effectively support this system.

“The MHSA requires that “each county mental health program shall prepare and submit a three-year plan which shall be updated at least annually and approved by the Department of Mental Health (DMH) after review and comment by the Oversight and Accountability Commission.” The MHSA further requires that “the department shall establish requirements for the content of the plans.” Annual updates of this plan will be required pursuant to MHSA requirements.”

For more information about the MHSA go to:
<http://www.dmh.cahwnet.gov/MHSA/default.asp>.

By request, for clients only:

You are invited to Punch and Pie, a new Message Board where being a human being comes first. “Discuss life, philosophy, politics. Share poetry, music, stories. Our shrinks place labels on us... but that’s not who we are. Come partake in a little humanity.”

<http://p105.ezboard.com/bpunchandpie>

We need your help!

Please help us defray the costs of publishing this newsletter in one of several ways:

- Become a member by completing and returning the enclosed form with a check for \$40.00 (or whatever you can afford).
- Send us a check for \$10 to cover newsletter printing and mailing costs.
- If you would prefer not to receive a hard copy of our newsletters, please let us know and give us your email address so we can send it to you electronically. See membership form or contact info@namimendocino.org

Recommended Websites:

NAMI Mendocino County. You will find more helpful links on our website. Check back often, as we will continue to add information to the site:

<http://www.namimendocino.org>

A comprehensive list of links to mental health websites:


<http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/mentalhealth.html>

Wishing-Wellness, a social profit company dedicated to supporting health and wellness in our lives, in our extended families, in our communities and into the world through education and advocacy. This site also includes a calendar with local mental health events:

<http://www.wishing-wellness.net>

An online resource for those persons dealing with schizophrenia and related disorders that provides hope and help in returning to a meaningful life that includes employment, family and friends, and independent living. Also on the site is the 2006-2007 Lilly Reintegration Scholarship Application (see box below):

www.reintegration.com

 Eileen became a **NAMI MAMI GRAMI** on October 22, 2005 with Dylan Li, 6 lbs 13 oz. Best of wishes to Tiffany, Just and family! ☆☾

2006-2007 Lilly Reintegration Scholarship

Now in its eighth year, the scholarship was established to assist people with severe mental illness acquire the educational and vocational skills necessary to reintegrate into society, secure jobs and regain their lives. Scholarship funding assists with tuition, books and lab fees for those battling bipolar disorder, schizophrenia and related schizophrenia-spectrum disorders.

Applications are available for the Fall 2006-Spring 2007 school year. All applications submitted **must be postmarked January 13th, 2006** to be considered for this scholarship. www.reintegration.com

Shop Amazon.com and support NAMI

It's easy. Simply visit www.nami.org/amazon and click on any of the Amazon.com links. Then, for almost anything you purchase, NAMI will automatically receive a percentage of the total sale (6 percent, on average). So when you shop Amazon.com, you'll be helping NAMI improve the lives of people living with serious mental illnesses. Please share this link with others: www.nami.org/amazon

Coast Activities

Heart to Heart is a Recovery/Wellness Group interested in Peer Support and holistic approaches to healing. They meet in Fort Bragg at the church on the corner of Pine and Whipple on Tuesdays from 1-3:30 pm. The next meeting is January 3, 2006. For information, call 964-2218.

Another **Wellness Recovery Action Plan (WRAP)** Group will start early next year. Call 937-3339 for information. Visit www.mentalhealthrecovery.com/ for more information about WRAP.

NAMI Family Support Group meets on the first Thursday of each month from 5:30 to 7:00 pm at 201 East Fir Street in Fort Bragg. Call 937-3339 for more information.

New Therapist in Ukiah

David Williams, therapist, EMDR, PHT, CHT, and with a huge tool box that cannot be described with mere letters, has just started coming to Ukiah from Santa Rosa on Thursdays to provide counseling services. The word is that he works well with people living with acute and chronic mental illness. He does not accept Medi-Cal, and his rate is \$100/hour.

Call Wynd at 485-8033 or go to: <http://www.cimba-usa.com/> for more information about David Williams.

A Healing Cooperative offers healing through self-help and community, providing peer support and a number of activities. AHC is located at 270 N. Pine Street in Ukiah. Contact Kevin Murphy at 462-3360 ext 103 for more information or visit: www.ukiahumc.org

Join us today!

Please complete and return the following form if you are interested in supporting us in our efforts to improve the lives of people living with mental illness and their families in Mendocino County through education, support and advocacy; and would like to be informed about what is happening with regard to mental health issues at the local, state and national levels by receiving regularly published NAMI newsletters. Membership also allows you to sign up for topical email alerts regarding a wide variety of subjects.

Your support is greatly appreciated. Thank you!

My yearly contribution:

- Individual/Family.....\$40/sliding scale
- Local Newsletter Only.....\$10
- Patron.....\$60
- Benefactor.....\$100
- Lifetime.....\$500

Make checks payable to NAMI

**Mail to: NAMI MEMBERSHIP
P.O. Box 312, Ukiah, CA 95482**

Name _____

Address _____

Phone/e-mail _____

Your membership automatically subscribes you to the state and national NAMI newsletters. Check here if you DO NOT wish to receive these newsletters.

Check here if you would like to be on the NAMI Mendocino County email list.

Check here if you would like to be removed from our mailing list (hard copy).

Check here if you would like to be contacted about volunteer opportunities.

Would you like to be listed in the NAMI Mendocino County Directory of Members for distribution to NAMI Mendocino County Members only? Yes _____ No _____

May we include your address? _____ Your phone number/email? _____