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NAMI Santa Clara County Community Resource & Support Center

National Alliance on Mental Illness

Newsletter Volume XXXVIII No. 2

February 2014

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Calendar:

Feb. 2/Sunday
Nature Walk (p.4)

Feb. 2, 9, 16, 23/Sunday
Connection Recovery Support Group, 3–4:30 P.M. (p.4)

Feb. 4/Tuesday
NAMI SCC Board Meeting (p.3)

Feb. 17/Monday
Office Closed—President's B'day

Feb. 25/Tuesday
Consumer Advisory Council Talk (p.3)

Contact Us!

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Community Resource &
Support Center**
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San Jose, CA 95128-3509
408.453.0400
www.namisantaclara.org
M–F, 10 A.M.–2 P.M.

Important Notice About Our Newsletter

We are going digital! This is the last newsletter that will be delivered to your mailbox via the US Postal Service. Due to the latest regulations issued by the USPS, we have had to make the decision to discontinue using bulk mail. Beginning in February, our newsletter will be sent to you via email, so please make sure that we have an email address for you. Please note that print versions of the newsletter will still be available at various locations including our office, our general meetings at Good Sam, the Good-

will Wellness Center in downtown SJ, and the Central Wellness & Benefits Center at Valley Med.* You can stop by at any of these places for a newsletter.

Additionally, our newsletter and new resource guide can be viewed on our website at www.namisantaclara.org.

*We realize that not everyone will be able to receive our newsletter digitally or pick one up. Just let us know if this describes your circumstance and we will accommodate you.



General Meeting, Tuesday, Feb. 11, 2014 A NAMIWalk Grand Reunion Celebration and 10-Year Anniversary Launch

Our February General Meeting will be a celebration of the amazing achievements of NAMIWalk 2013. We will be honoring team captains, walkers and supporters. We'll have Family-to-Family and Peer-to-Peer class reunions.

Please join us in the auditorium at Good Samaritan Hospital on **Feb. 11** at **7 P.M.** for food and **7:30 P.M.** for announcements. The celebration will take place from **8 to 9 P.M.**, including music, door prizes & a Mini Bazaar.

At the end of the celebration, we'll encourage you to Save the Date — **Sat., May 31,**

2014 — for **NAMIWalk 2014**, the 10th Anniversary of NAMIWalk SF Bay Area. Once again, the Walk will take place at Lindley Meadow in San Francisco's Golden Gate Park.

NOTE: Directions to Good Samaritan Hospital can be found at www.maps.yahoo.com. The auditorium is in the basement of the main building.

Re NAMI Membership: Membership registration and renewal can be done at the General Meeting by paying with cash/check or online with a credit or debit card.

NAMI SCC Board Officer Nominations

In accordance with our bylaws, our annual election of officers will take place at the March 2014 General Meeting. We need candidates for **President, 4 Vice Presidents, Treasurer and Secretary.**

If you are interested in a position, or wish to suggest someone, please contact the nominating committee — **Navah Statman, Vic**

Ojakian and Beverly Lozoff — or call our office. Nominations will be posted on our website by **Saturday, February 1.**

At our February and March general meetings nominations will be accepted from the floor, and installation of officers will take place at the April meeting, following the election in March.

Who's Who at the NAMI SCC Office**Jen Hong:**

Board President

Kathy Forward:

Executive Director

Francesca Merchant:

Office Manager

Donna Mechanic:

Office Support

Monica Nay:

Accounting/Contracts Manager

Sanja Pesich:

Volunteer Services Manager

Karen Fifer:

Volunteer Coordinator

Program Coordinators**Jennifer Blostein:**

Family-to-Family

Greg Osborn:

Provider

Sharon Ruhl:

Basics

David DeTata:

Peer PALS

Barbara Thompson,**Kathy Williams:**

Peer-to-Peer

Raschell Lade:

In Our Own Voice (IOOV)

Kathy Forward:

Parents & Teachers as Allies (PTAA)

Brandon Ha:

Ending the Silence (ETS)

Nina Veeravalli:

Hearts & Minds

NAMI SCC Newsletter

Published 10 times per year by the Newsletter Crew: **Cole Buxbaum** (Editor), **Beverly Lozoff** (Coordinator), **Donna-Jo** (Typesetter) and our great volunteers.

**Special Needs Trusts Seminar by Roy Litherland
November 12, 2013 General Meeting Write-Up**

by Cole Buxbaum

Roy W. Litherland has practiced law for 37+ years and is a noted speaker on Living Trusts and Medi-Cal Planning. He is certified as a Legal Specialist in Estate Planning, Trust and Probate Law by the California State Bar Board of Legal Specialization.

His seminar covered these and other topics: entitlement programs, means-tested programs, qualification rules for SSI, In Kind Support and Maintenance (ISM), housing issues, Special Needs Trusts and their taxation.

A person is defined as disabled when he/she has a severe medically determinable physical or mental impairment which has or is expected to last for at least one year or to result in death and cannot engage in substantial gainful activity (SGA). The major benefit programs that a disabled person is eligible for are Social Security, Supplemental Security Income (SSI) and Medicare. Of these, SSI is means based, meaning that benefits are determined by income and assets, the upper limit being \$2000. On the other hand, Social Security and Medi-Cal will never be reduced unless someone provides In Kind Support and shelter-related expenses.

Mr. Litherland discussed income guidelines and support and maintenance considerations for SSI in detail. The following assets are considered either countable or exempt:

Countable: cash; savings accounts; stocks, bonds and mutual funds; annuities, real estate other than primary residence; second car or other vehicle.

Exempt: residence; car; household goods and personal effects; burial plot; prepaid funeral; \$2000 of non-exempt assets.

Social Security and Medicare are considered entitlement programs and as such are exempt from income; assets are irrelevant.

Special Needs Planning: Mr. Litherland emphasized that "unless you have created an estate plan that spells out who should assume responsibility for your child, the courts will step in. That is true regardless of the size of your estate." A Special Needs Trust is a key provision that allows a parent to provide funds without disrupting the child's eligibility for government aid.

Working with an estate planning attorney, you appoint trustees for your child's trust. Should you die, your successor trustees will step in and take care of your child's finances. Your appointed trustees are those you know and trust.

The law offices of Roy Litherland are devoted exclusively to estate planning. This includes services such as revocable living trusts, special needs and divorce protection, probate assistance, wills tax planning, life care planning and other services. Roy offers free seminars at various locations. To register for one of his seminars, call **408-356-9200** or **831-476-2400** or go online to www.attorneyoffice.com.

Staff Spotlight: Cindy McCalmont

Cindy McCalmont is the new advisor to our Peer PALS program.

Cindy has a Master's Degree from Duke Divinity School, is an avid bicyclist and bread baker, and is currently working on a memoir about her experience with a mental illness.

For the past six years, Cindy has served as advisor and counselor to the Fireside Friendship Club at ACT for Mental Health.

In the photo at the left, Cindy is all smiles as she completes her daughter's 300 handmade wedding invitations. She's all smiles too as she begins work as NAMI SCC's Peer PALS Advisor.

Research Study at VA-Stanford

The VA at Stanford is undertaking a research study on psychosis and is looking for adults between the ages of 18–50 with schizophrenia or a related disorder. Subjects must have no major medical or neurologic illness, or significant substance abuse. Par-

ticipants will receive \$15 to \$30 per hour depending on the tasks.

If you are interested, please call **Stephanie Crockett** at **650-497-4987**. A confidential phone screen will be conducted to determine initial eligibility.

NAMI SCC Board Meetings

Held the **first Tuesday** of the month. The next Board Meeting will take place on **Tuesday, February 4, 7–9 P.M.**, at the **NAMI SCC office**. All are welcome!

Officers of the NAMI SCC Board

President:

Jen Hong

Past President:

Navah Statman

Vice Presidents:

Gerry Larvey

Victor Ojakian

Juan Perez

Beverly Lozoff

Treasurer:

Jerry Gruhn

Secretary:

Meg Stein

Recorder:

Peter Newman

Members-at-Large:

Alan Cade

Lowanda Pierson

A Big Thank You!



Once again, NAMI's Holiday Gift Drive was a huge success, and we could not have done it without the generosity of so many of you as well as your assistance on Dec. 14. On that day, the elves in Santa's Workshop assembled 350 gift bags for county clients. With additional donations, we were able to deliver items to some homeless shelters as well.



National Alliance on Mental Illness

NAMIWalk/Valentines/Class Reunion Celebration

The February General Meeting at Good Samaritan has again been reserved for our NAMIWalk/Valentines/Class Reunion party. See page 1 for more details.

Please join us and celebrate the wonderful contributions of all who participated before, on and after Walk Day in 2013. Graduates of Peer-to-Peer, Family-to-Family, Provider Education Classes, IOOV, Peer PALS, and support group members, reunite with your class and group mates, and start planning for NAMIWalk 2014!

Other Updates: Laurie Williams, Bay Area NAMIWalk Director, visited our Janu-

ary Board Meeting, and the recent All-Affiliate Steering Committee hosted our NAMI National NAMIWalk Directors — excellent opportunities to share information and for the NAMI National NAMIWalk team to see our Bay Area Steering Committee in action.

Many thanks to **Alex Gorelik** who is Co-Chair of the Steering Committee with **Simone Echeguren** from San Francisco. Alex is also co-chairing with Gini in Santa Clara County. Anyone interested in joining our group, please contact Gini, Alex or others on our local committee for information or with questions: vmitchem@hotmail.com, 408-259-2256, or the office.

Consumer Advisory Council Presents Talk on Work Incentives Planning and Assistance Program

The Consumer Advisory Council is continuing its "Conversations With" program on **Tuesday, February 25 at 4 P.M.** Please join the council at the NAMI SCC office and meet **Olayinka Popoola** and **Liezel Taube** who will speak about the Work Incentives Planning and Assistance Program. This program assists people receiving Social Security (SSDI & SSA) in going back to work.

Please call the NAMI office to reserve a seat at this talk.

We are looking for people to join the Consumer Advisory Council at our monthly meetings, **4 P.M. on the last Tuesday of the month** at the NAMI office. For info about this group, contact **Barbara Thompson**, **Robin Stepto** or **Cheryl Aronowitz**.

Peer PALS December Holiday Potluck and Gift Exchange

Our Peer PALS program offers monthly group outings for all past and present members to be able to participate in an enjoyable activity or attend a special event. On December 15, 2013, we had our 2nd annual Holiday Potluck and White Elephant Gift Exchange. More than 30 Pals, Peers, friends and family members were in attendance, and plenty of pizza and home-cooked foods and goodies were provided for all. (Special thanks to **Branham Lane Pizza Hut** in San Jose for giving NAMI a huge discount on the delicious pizza.)

Cindy McCalmont, our new Peer PALS Advisor, provided presents for all, and most were able to receive two or more gifts. There were plenty of activities including lively music and dancing, heated hockey foosball team competitions, jolly conversations and much laughter and enjoyment for all!

To find out more about our beneficial program that helps clients get out more and do entertaining activities with a compatible friend and mentor, contact the NAMI office.

NEW Wellness Recovery Action Plan (WRAP) Group

WRAP is an evidence-based system used by people dealing with mental health as well as other health challenges. A new group is being offered through the SCC Mental Health Department that will be facilitated by Peer Support Workers.

WHEN: Wed., 1:30–2:30 P.M.

WHERE: Downtown Mental Health
1075 E. Santa Clara St, SJ

CONTACT: Ryan Forward
408-792-3954



**NAMI SANTA CLARA COUNTY
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**Paid Opportunity at
NAMI SCC**

NAMI SCC is looking for a **Volunteer Project Supervisor** to work 10 hours per week to help supervise and coordinate office work. A full job description is on our website at www.namisantaclara.org.

Submit a resume and cover letter to **Sanja Pesich** at sanjapesich@namisantaclara.org.

**Connection Recovery
Support Group**

This group meets **every Sunday 3-4:30 P.M.** at the NAMI SCC office. Please arrive between **2:45-3:10 P.M.** when building doors are open. This will reduce group interruptions. Note that this group is for people over 18 years of age with a mental illness.

Nature Walks

The Nature Walk takes place at **9-11 A.M.** on the **1st Sunday of the month** at Campbell Park in Campbell and is now being coordinated by the **Davé** family. For more info, contact them at **408-946-4379**.

**NAMI Santa Clara County
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1150 S. Bascom Av Ste 24
San Jose, CA 95128-3509**

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION OR RENEWAL

NOTE: If this is a renewal, please indicate any changes in the following:

Name: _____

Street Address: _____ City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Home Phone: _____ Work Phone: _____

E-Mail Address: _____

Would you be interested in doing volunteer work at NAMI? If interested, call 408-453-0400.

Please accept my annual membership at the following level: Please check one: **New** **Renewal**

\$ 35 Membership Type: Standard Membership How did you hear about us? _____

\$ 3 Membership Type: Open Door

Please accept my additional donation(s): General Fund _____ Education Program _____ Other _____

In Memory of _____ In Honor of _____

Resource Handbook (Donation of \$25, w/postage add \$10) _____

Total Amount Enclosed: \$ _____ (Make checks payable to **NAMI Santa Clara County.**)

To pay online, go to //www.namisantaclara.org and click on "Join NAMI."

NAMI SCC welcomes your membership. Memberships are valid for one year. (Part of your membership dues enrolls you at NAMI State and National, which, in turn, automatically registers you as a member at all levels.) Your additional donations help ensure that we can maintain our office, as well as our education programs. Your membership and donations are tax deductible.

Tax #94-2430956