



Volume 22 Issue 5

www.namiglendale.org

July 2007

## Dates and Events

### SHARE AND CARE

Do you need someone to talk to? Would you like some of your questions about mental illness answered? Our support group for family and friends of the mentally ill meets **every** Tuesday at 6:00 PM at Arden House, 1552 Colorado Street, Glendale, at the corner of Colorado and Lincoln. We encourage you to come. Limited parking is available on the street. Please enter through the front door.

### MONTHLY NAMI MEETINGS AND EVENTS

**Tuesday: July 31, 2007**

#### NAMI ANNUAL BAR-B-QUE

Join your NAMI friends at the Baldaro home for a Bar-B-Que and Pot Luck 6:00 PM Call Letty Baldaro for information at (818) 957-3185 or email to [justplainwayne@yahoo.com](mailto:justplainwayne@yahoo.com)

**PLEASE NOTE NO MEETING AT ARDEN HOUSE JULY 31!**

### NAMI Glendale Makes Special Contribution to Local DBSA Group

The NAMI Board of Directors approved a special \$1,000.00 contribution to the local Depression and Bi-Polar Support Alliance here in Glendale.

A presentation of the check was made at a recent fundraiser held at Glendale Adventist Hospital. The money will be used to help this valuable group meet charitable and financial goals.

### *Canvas: Sailing Forward*

NAMI has honored the movie [CANVAS](#) with an Outstanding Media Award for a dramatic motion picture. It is scheduled for release in theaters in October 2007, but successful, broad distribution depends on support and publicity from the grassroots.

Visit the movie's Web site to see a preview and to [sign up for updates](#) in months ahead.

Please also contact the *Oprah Winfrey Show* and ask that the director and cast be interviewed on the show. It would help educate people about the real-life experiences of families who battle schizophrenia, promote the movie, and recognize extraordinary performances by Marcia Gay Harden, Joe Pantoliano, and Devon Gearhart who "got it right" in their movie roles.

***Personal notes sent by regular mail have the greatest impact. For stigma-busting, it could be the most important letter you write all year.***

Ms. Oprah Winfrey  
The Oprah Winfrey Show – Harpo Productions  
110 North Carpenter Street  
Chicago, Illinois 60607-2104  
[oprah@aol.com](mailto:oprah@aol.com)



The *GAMIgram*, the Community's Voice on Mental Illness, is published by NAMI Glendale to educate its members and the general public about issues affecting the mentally ill.

President: Joneè Shady  
Editor: Jane S. Hancock  
[janelou@aol.com](mailto:janelou@aol.com)

Staff: Wayne Baldaro and Kay Connus

**DBSA GLENDALE – A SUPPORT GROUP**  
**For those suffering from depression and bi-polar disorder and their loved ones**  
**Glendale Adventist Medical Center**  
**1509 Wilson terrace, Glendale**  
**Thursdays 6 – 8 pm**  
**dbsaglendale@yahoo.com**  
**818-209-8442**  
**Depression and Bipolar Support Alliance**  
[www.dbsalliance.org](http://www.dbsalliance.org)

## WORDS FROM THE PRESIDENT

*Greetings from San Diego*

*By Joneè Shady*

NAMI's National Convention took place over June 20-24. Over 2000 NAMI members, professionals and other interested parties from all over the nation gathered together to participate in workshops and presentations covering new advances in treatment and the many successful programs that are being implemented to improve the lives of those living with serious mental illness and their families.

I attended a symposium that discussed the different NAMI Programs offered. A new program, Connections, is being piloted and plans to be completed and implemented by next year. Consumer support groups run by trained peers will be offered on a daily basis throughout the country. The idea parallels AA in that a client can find an ongoing support group on any day in their community. It is proven that in addition to medication, one needs ongoing therapy or support. This was an idea that outgoing NAMI President, Susan Vogal-Scibilia, M.D, was determined to see come to fruition and in her exit speech she was proud to say that we were well on our way. NAMI trained consumers in St. Louis in the spring. NAMI Urban LA has started these daily support groups in Los Angeles.

Another new signature program, very much needed, will be piloted called NAMI Young Family Education Program. One of the goals of the young family program is to inform participants of the most current facts about mental illness as it presents itself in childhood and adolescence. We know that there is definitely a need for this and that early detection breathes more positive results for recovery.

I also participated in the filming of an outreach video for Spanish Family-to-Family. We had teachers from all over the country gathered in a room reenacting a class and some of us also did role plays like we do in class. This video will be available to affiliates to use as outreach for Spanish F2F classes and possible grant applications.

Affordable housing for our relatives is a big issue and there was a symposium about the different innovative independent living projects that are happening now in the country. There are incentives for builders and others to provide a certain percentage of housing that must be used for those with disabilities and that includes the population of those living with a mental illness. If people know they will have permanent housing, this could be an incentive to remain stable and continue treatment or even seek treatment because of the increase in self-esteem knowing that one is living in a permanent safe environment.

Technology is our friend and one can now join NAMI online and choose a local affiliate. E-file will allow users to use their credit card to join NAMI. The site will display a choice of affiliates based on your zip code. In addition, all dues collected online will be returned to the local affiliate. Check out [www.NAMI.org](http://www.NAMI.org), click on Register and Join, choose Glendale as your local affiliate. We need new members and of course we need all of us to renew. If you haven't done so already, please send in your checks to NAMI Glendale so that you can continue to receive the many benefits of membership and so that we can increase the numbers which are needed for advocacy. Numbers matter.

All of the PowerPoint presentations from the National Convention are available on the NAMI website. I encourage you to visit the site and explore the many new programs being implemented to move the NAMI mission forward. I also encourage you to consider attending NAMI California's annual conference scheduled for the last weekend in September in San Mateo. You will come home with a wealth of information, inspired and hopeful.

See you at the BBQ!

**Editor's Note: Do you have a helpful story to tell? Send it to [janelou@aol.com](mailto:janelou@aol.com) and you'll read it in the next GAMIGram.**



**NAMI News**

NAMI California has launched a test advertising campaign in Spanish using Bus and Shelter signs to encourage Spanish speaking family members and consumers to visit the NAMI California Web Site in Spanish. The campaign includes 15 Bus Shelter signs and 30 buses with interior signs in Spanish speaking areas of downtown Los Angeles (USC Med Center area), San Diego and San Francisco. We do not yet have confirmation that all signs are up in all areas, but did want to give you a "heads up" in the event you see the signs. The campaign will run for 30 plus days. NAMI California will be tracking visits to the site and reporting to the California DMH regarding the effectiveness of the campaign.

Additional information will be posted on the web once all signs are up.

## RESOURCE INFORMATION

- ❑ (PMRT) Psychiatric Mobile **Response Team**, (626) 258-2004 for **crisis management**, Monday-Friday 8 am – 5pm. At other times use the Access Line.
- ❑ Access Line, 24-hr: (800) 854-7771 for information and consultation, and for Psychiatric Mobile Response Team **After Hours** and **Week ends**.
- ❑ (MET) operates 5 PM to 1 AM. Call Local Sheriff Station (or 911 if dire emergency) to request MET response. For general information: (562) 903-7530.
- ❑ Family Advocate: John Griffin (213) 637-2311.
- ❑ LA Police/Mental Assessment Response Team System – wide Mental Assessment Response Team (SMART.)
- ❑ Mental Evaluation Unit (MEU) call (911) to request the MEU response.
- ❑ IF YOUR LOVED ONE IS ARRESTED CALL: DMH Jail Mental Health Services: John Davis, District Chief (213) 229-9991.
- ❑ Inmate Information Center (213) 473-6080 or (213) 473-6100.
- ❑ Jail Inpatient Unit: Neil Ortego, MD (213) 893-5391.
- ❑ Suicide Prevention Center, Crisis Line 24hrs 7 days (310) 391-1253.
- ❑ **Friendship Line**: a toll free telephone help-line, run by people with mental illnesses seven days a week, 365 days a year, offers information about mental health resources and connection to crisis lines. Specially trained peer supporters are now available from 6 a.m. to 10 p.m. during the week and from 10 a.m. to 10 p.m. on weekends and holidays. Give us a call at **888-448-9777**.

## What's in a Name—Revisited

*Commentary by Mike Miller*

In a prior Commentary, I questioned the apparent over-emphasis on nomenclature within the mental health community. Was there too much emphasis on what we call the subject? Are terms such as mental illness or mental health better than mental disability or brain disorder? This is an issue that will continue to be debated. The subject matter is replete with concerns about accuracy, stigma, stereotypes, changing science and so on. I do not have any answers but welcome the discussion.

There is one part of the nomenclature discussion that I believe does provide current answers. That is the subject of self identification, identity of the person who has some form of mental illness. I gained this insight after several discussions with my daughter who suffered with treatment resistant depression. Now, these insights seem like common sense; however, like so many people, I dealt with the mentally ill with a different mind set for most of my life. That mind set which abounds in our society and includes many of those who have the illness, is to identify oneself with the illness.

If a person has a chronic physical malady such as a bad back or cancer, they do not say, “I am bad back” or “I am cancer.” The ailment is something that afflicts them; it is part of their life, but it is not them. They are human beings. As such they can say, if asked about their background, “I am an Irish American, or Catholic or Buddhist.” They can describe themselves physically as “I am 5 feet 10 inches tall and weigh 175 pounds.” If questioned further, they can say, “I work as a teacher or mechanic.” You get the idea: We are all multi-faceted.

To be human is to be many things both specific and general. In essence, we are largely indefinable. No one attribute, characteristic, trait, activity, or factor provides our identity. Therefore, it is not accurate and indeed ridiculous to define ourselves with one aspect of our lives. Yet, many say, “My son is bi-polar,” “My daughter is schizophrenic.” “I am depressed.” Not true! Your son is a person who has been diagnosed as having a mental illness (neurological illness) described as bi-polar. Your daughter is a high school graduate with beautiful eyes, a devout Christian, who wants to be a nurse. Right now she has been battling schizophrenia through therapy and medication. A depressed person can say, “I am an Asian- American, 5 foot 8 inches tall, born in Los Angeles, and I am hoping to finish college soon. I have been suffering with severe clinical depression for a number of years. This has slowed down my education.” The point is **NOT TO IDENTIFY SOMEONE BY THEIR ILLNESS**.

Identification by illness is labeling a human being, giving them a title that belies their humanity. Don't do it. If you suffer from a mental (brain disorder) illness, do not identify yourself with it. When you say, for example, “I am bi-polar,” you are accepting the malady as you. This, in itself mitigates against getting better. You have symptoms, you have problems, you have characteristics caused by the disorder (illness), but that is not you. The person with a severe cold does not say, “I am cold” in describing himself. The person who loses an arm to an accident does not say, “I am amputee.” The person with an invisible physical malady such as a “weak heart” does not call themselves “weak heart.” Such labels are limiting. To define yourself as your problem, by your symptoms, is to limit your humanity and your chances to cope and function with the cards you have been dealt.

The management of mental illness, both for the afflicted and the support person, is enhanced by attitude. If we see beyond the illness in defining our loved one and in them defining themselves, we will give added credibility and importance to their lives. They are much more than an ill person; they are complete human beings with a serious problem. Yes, I know that too many, the illness robs them of some humanity, and that it keeps them from being a whole person. But, I also know that those with the illness are often more humanistic, understanding, aware, and deserving of recognition because of what they have done, despite this monumental impediment to their lives, than a lot of people who are [supposedly] well.

To the extent we over-identify those with mental disorders by the disorder itself we limit the ability to manage symptoms, to deal with the illness and in some cases overcome it. Remember, it is just part of who they are; it is not them! To make it them, is to ascribe too much to the illness. Recognize their lives as humans and from this day on do not identify or refer to your loved ones by their illnesses.

## Verdugo Mental Health Parking Changes Our New Building is Coming!



Construction has begun on the new VMH clinic building. Construction will make the parking lot unavailable for use for one year.

VMH has made arrangements for parking at the Eagle Rock Plaza at the corner of the 2 Freeway and East Colorado Street. A shuttle will transfer people from the parking area to the clinic and back on an approximately every 15 minute schedule. The parking area is located to the rear of the West side of the plaza on the upper level adjacent to the Macy's store. An identified shuttle pick up point will be located near the Macy's store in an alcove which was previously an entrance to the building. The pick up point at VMH will be at the Glen Roberts Child Study Center driveway.



View down Santa Monica Promenade Walk 2006

## NAMIWALKS LA 2007

Save the Date: Oct 6, 2007  
Santa Monica Promenade

The Walk planning committee has hired a walk manager and secured a location for our 4<sup>th</sup> Annual NAMIWalks LA. I would like to thank Lyn Slotky who has stepped up to the plate and agreed to represent Glendale on the planning committee. We would still like to have one more representative share this responsibility. We need you!!!



JOIN NAMI – YOU ARE NOT ALONE  
\$35.00 PER INDIVIDUAL OR FAMILY  
MEMBERSHIP MAKES YOU A MEMBER OF THE STATE AND NATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS.

Please make checks payable to:  
NAMI Glendale

Mail to: NAMI Glendale Treasurer, Wayne Baldaro, c/o Verdugo Mental Health, 1540 E. Colorado, Glendale, CA 91205.  
GAMlgram only - \$10.00

[www.namiglendale.org](http://www.namiglendale.org)

**Missed an issue?** Want to share a GAMlgram with someone? Use the online GAMlgram Archive to view previous issues and share great articles and information with others. Here is the link:

[http://namiglendale.org/gamigram\\_archives.htm](http://namiglendale.org/gamigram_archives.htm)

Remember to join us at the Baldaro's



July 31 for our summer get together!