



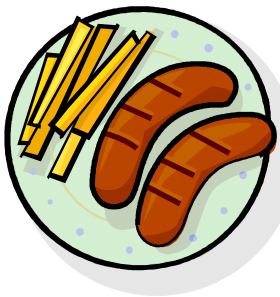
## DATES AND EVENTS

### 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 Tuesdays at 6:00 PM at Arden House, 1552 Colorado Street, Glendale, at the corner of Colorado and Lincoln. We encourage you to come. Enter through the front or rear entrance. Parking is available behind the building or on the street.

### MONTHLY NAMI MEETINGS AND EVENTS

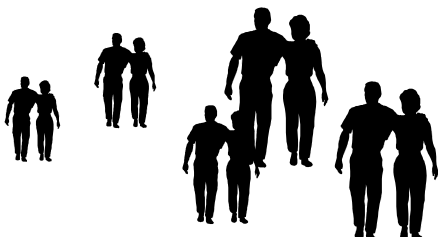
- **Tuesday, July 4, 2006**  
NO MEETING. HOLIDAY
- **Tuesday, July 11, 2006**  
Share and Care: 6 pm — 7:30 pm.
- **Tuesday, July 18, 2006**  
Share and Care: 6 pm – 7 pm.  
Business Meeting – 7 pm.
- **Tuesday, July 25, 2006**  
Share and Care: 6 pm – 7:30 pm
- **Tuesday, August 1, 2006**  
NO MEETING. FAMILY POTLUCK



Save the date for an evening of fun and fellowship around a common cause at the Hancock house.

**NAMI National Convention in Washington DC**  
June 28 – July 3, 2006

**NAMIWALKS 2006 on Third Street Promenade**  
October 7, 2006



## WORDS FROM THE PRESIDENT

Jonée Shady

This past month I found myself at one NAMI event after another. Well, they weren't exactly NAMI events but I was invited to them as a representative of NAMI. Each one reinforced the notion that we have so much work to do to improve the quality of services for those suffering from a brain disorder. Each event also opened my eyes as to how many of us are on this same journey of education, advocacy, and fighting stigma.

Early in the month, I attended the clergy breakfast downtown at L.A.'s beautiful Cathedral. It was called a clergy breakfast but it was really a full day Mental Health conference for clergy. I have found out that parishes, congregations, and the like are all involved in providing services to our homeless. We know that our homeless population has a high number of those suffering from serious mental illness. These programs not only feed the homeless but offer them treatment and therapy working collaboratively with medical professionals. They are interested in partnerships. Did you know that there is a full time position at the Department of Mental Health that works exclusively with the clergy of LA County to support these programs? Now, this is progress and it gave me an idea that we as an organization can offer provider training to those who work directly with those who are servicing this population. (See page 5 about Provider Training.)

Mark Gale who spoke to NAMI Glendale at our last speaker's night explained the need for advocacy to promote legislative change. Laura's Law, which provides treatment to those who are too ill to understand the need for it, is about to sunset. Mark has been actively seeking our help. So far so good, thanks to the efforts of our membership and others who have taken the time to be involved in a letter writing campaign. If you don't think you have enough time, well guess what? They write the sample letter, email it to you, you add a small personal paragraph, and then you send it to your representative. They even show you how to locate who yours may be. Print the letter, put a stamp on it, and drops it in the mail. Total time: 15 minutes. Just know that as a result of our letter writing efforts, this bill has made it to the final stages of passing. Do you have 15 minutes to spare to do some advocacy?

Mid month, I spent the weekend in Santa Ana training a group of NAMI Members from Southern California who

**Please turn to Page 3.**

## The Cycle

Gloria Beyer

My older sister, Victoria, under the conservator ship of Ventura County, has been living at Sylmar Health and Rehabilitation since April, 2005. She had severely decompensated and it took months for her to stabilize with the help of clozaril and a lot of good care. My husband and children and I visited her occasionally and, as she improved, our visits became simple activities or short outings to restaurants. During one of our visits in March she seemed so well that I thought that maybe clozaril was a miracle drug for her. Vickie was delusional only infrequently, or so it appeared to me.

Her social worker told me that my sister was preparing to contest her conservator ship in a juried courtroom in Ventura. I panicked because I know how she has, in the past, presented well before the judge who sees her for about five minutes, declares that Vickie is quite stable, and cancels the conservator ship. Then my sister quickly enters the cycle of getting an apartment, followed by going off her meds.

Of course she didn't tell me that she was contesting the conservator ship because she didn't want me to have anything to say about it. I'm her only living relative who cares for her, visits her, stores all her belongings, handles her financial affairs but unfortunately none of this qualifies me to have any input on her living situation. She doesn't allow her doctor to call me.

On the day that she was scheduled to go to court, she had a seizure, which really concerned me because she has other health issues besides schizophrenia. She was placed in a hospital in Burbank for a week. It was difficult to visit her there because she was so delusional. She was then sent back to the Sylmar Facility but after two days she entered another hospital for another week before finally going back to Sylmar, where dylantin, to prevent seizures has been added to her repertoire of meds. However, the medication makes her very tired, so tired that she never comes out when I go to visit her and she won't come to the phone when I call. We all know the feeling of wishing we could do more.

Her conservator ship has been extended for another year so I can relax a little for a while but I wonder how many months will it take before she stabilizes again. I fully expect that next April when the conservator ship comes up for review, she will try to contest it. So I live with constant longing for her to be able to get out, stay on her meds, and experience the world the way she wants to. However, the other side of me is content to have her in the facility where she is protected from herself and the world.

I call, I bring her magazines, I cry inside.

## RESOURCE INFORMATION

- ❑ (PMRT) Psychiatric Mobile **Response Team**, (626) 2582004 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) 9037530.
- ❑ 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 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**.



The **GAMlgram**, 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.

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## Thank you for your donations!

*John Camisa*

*The Ishii Family*

*Jean Scherkey in memory of her mother,*

*Mary Kay Nouhan*

*Jean Miles in memory of Von Howard*

*Mr. and Mrs. Rocco Barbaro and family*

*in memory of Sue Mestyanek*

*Tamara and Dennis Pickering to further NAMI goals*

## THE WRITING RETREAT

Jane Hancock

It's a beautiful June morning. The coffee drips through the filter into the pot, the egg soufflé rises in the oven, fruit and doughnuts await the early arrivals.

This is how it begins and when everyone finally arrives and the egg soufflé and the doughnuts are consumed, we have our first writing experience. We sit on the deck, surrounded by towering oaks, green hills, lush ivy. We are at peace.

We use a model to get us stimulated, "Thirteen Ways of Looking at a Blackbird" by Wallace Stevens. We attempt "Thirteen Ways of Looking at Mental Illness" or "Thirteen Ways of Looking at a Loved One."

We write for fifteen minutes and then we share. Mike writes about Carrie. "My first poem ever!" he exclaims.

*A man, woman, and a child  
are all part well and part not so well.*

*I know high hopes, talents, aspirations;  
I know too, the opposite.*

*She is of three minds:  
well, not well, and in between.*

*She runs like the wind.  
She lies still like a rock.*

*She is moving from dark to light,  
light to dark.*

*I am of three minds  
like a gardener watching his flower grow,  
then wither, then come back to life.*

*O, sad people of the world,  
the dark tunnel holds light,  
some on the way through  
and a lot at the end.*

Now it is time for what we came to do, write about what we know, what we have experienced, what we want to share with others. It is time to tell our stories. When we get together again, Niki has written about looking at herself and what she sees; Jonée has written her article for the *GAMIgram*, Kathy shares the story of her brother (or is it the story of her parents and how they have dealt with the problem of her brother's illness?); Mike has pondered on ambivalence; and Jane has answered the questions, "What is a writing retreat and what do you do at a writing retreat?"

During the lunch break, we continue the conversation. Something wonderful happens when we write and share. We haven't set a date yet for the next retreat, but if you are interested in joining our little party, let us know. We'll count you in.

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Continued from Page 1.

wish to facilitate a support group in their area. Once again I was reminded that there is such a need to support families who are going through the trauma of living with Mental Illness. Not only was I healing by teaching but I was learning. There can never be enough education and support. I am grateful to have participated and I want to thank my co-leader, Dona Wallis from Orange County, for being such a beautiful, loving and caring partner. I am confident that the participants will run successful support groups in their communities.

Finally I realized that fighting stigma can be a simple as telling our stories. We all have stories to tell and when we can express our experience of living with mental illness in our family and our emotional feelings about it, people listen. When people listen, they have compassion and empathy; when they have compassion and empathy, fear is reduced. We must reduce this fear that people have about Mental Illness. This illness is different from medical conditions in the sense that people fear the behaviors of those who suffer from brain disorders. We want them to understand it like they understand other medical conditions such as cancer or leukemia. When we reduced the fear of AIDS, we reduced its stigma; we must do the same for Mental Illness.

June brought the start of another Family to Family class being held at Blessed Sacrament in Hollywood. We were overbooked on day one with people still calling even after our first session trying to get in, and they are coming from as far away as Wilmington and Sylmar. There is a great need and nothing does for me what teaching this class does.

And finally, I want to welcome our new NAMI Glendale members: Patrick and Candy, Martha and Lila, Paul, Armida, and Marjorie, Jane, John, and Jennifer. Thank you for your support.

## NAMI Announces Scholarship

The NAMI National CIT Technical Assistance Resource Center is pleased to announce the availability of scholarship opportunities for consumers and family members to attend the Second Annual Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) Conference to be held in Orlando, Florida on September 25-27, 2006. This national conference is designed to highlight effective community collaborations that are responding to the needs of those with mental illness including co-occurring substance use disorders. CIT is a community partnership. The scholarship includes registration fees and hotel costs for a maximum of three nights stay at the Rosen Plaza Hotel. The deadline to apply for this scholarship is close of business July 31, 2006. To apply or find more information visit [www.nami.org](http://www.nami.org).

## NOTHING ABOUT US WITHOUT US

Inspired by Mark Gale's talk on June 6

When Mark Gale spoke at our June 6 meeting, he used a phrase common within the new models of recovery for mental health. "Nothing about us without us" is the call of the consumers of mental health services across the nation for the right to be included,

I stand to say that the philosophy of "nothing about us without us" is MOST important when you want to force treatment and/or possibly lock away another human being. I say from lived experience that this is not a philosophy to be reserved only for those who seek voluntary treatment services. Those of us fortunate enough to have survived involuntary treatment and have come out on the other side are invaluable to uplifting what is failing our system of care.

Having experienced psychosis and police assisted hand-cuffs, foot-cuffs, and paddy wagons to psych hospitals, padded cells, forced medication, and stays on locked units until court appearances, I'm expert. As an expert, I believe that I have something essential to bring to the table on the subject. As a stakeholder who will experience a risk many will never have to, I ask to be a part of the process of legislating involuntary treatment.

I firmly believe that the necessary renovation of our unacceptable mental health system of care will come about using the same formula of success for all arenas of care, the collaborative model. Though tempting, I hope we never find it necessary to discount "nothing about us without us"...especially not on the basis of passionate disagreement. Advocates for expanding involuntary treatment law must come to see that lawyers working on behalf of defeating involuntary treatment laws are rightfully defending someone's lived point of view, just as we all rightfully fight for our own lived point of view. Does not American Democracy demand such? Agreement, mutual accountability, flexibility, empathy, and collaborative teamwork are asked of clients, family, care-providers and our community to reach just laws and human resolve. I see this modeled in the way NAMI Glendale and DBSA (Depression and Bipolar Support Alliance) Glendale support one another and work together.

So as we march forward and call our representatives to support new mental health legislation, I pray that we do not leave behind the very voices we fight for. Ask me, "Niki, what worked for you and what harmed you during your involuntary treatment process?" Nothing about us without us. Us being ALL of us.



## FROM THE BLOG

Wayne Baldaro

When Letty and I found NAMI, we found support and education and tools and a whole lot of new friends that share so much in common. At that time support was what we needed; we wanted to come and talk and listen and leave and come back. We did that for quite some time. Finally someone asked if we would help with something and we said we would. Then we were asked if we would help in the fundraising for the Walk and we said "of course" and we did.

We have grown to realize the importance of getting support and giving support. But more importantly we are advocates. We advocate for our son with his caregivers. We advocate for NAMI with friends that need what NAMI offers. We advocate for mental health issues at work, play, church and wherever we can.

People need support and comfort and information. But as our personal situations become more stable and less of a crisis, I see a pattern of not moving towards advocacy but away from the support. I find that alarming and wonder why that is.

I have some ideas about that. Our lives are full. We only have so much time and cannot add another meeting, committee or project to our already busy life. We do not want to give back. We come for the benefit of the support and comfort but when we are asked to become a supporter or comforter, we head for the hills. We are only in it for the crisis. So many of us fall into becoming needy and we really do not see how we can use our experiences in crisis to be of help to others. We do not want to get our feet wet, just the toes. We want to be sponges and not be drained of our energy, time and resources.

Well, here is the reality. If we really want change in the way our loved ones receive services and are treated then we need to be advocates. If we really want newer medicines that have fewer side effects then we need to be advocates. If we want the laws changed that affect mentally ill individuals and how they are treated by the criminal system and the mental health system, then we need to be advocates.

To accomplish great things you must do the little things.

**Mark Gale,  
who spoke to  
NAMI  
Glendale  
about  
advocacy on  
June 6, 2006.**



## NAMIWALKS NEWS



**Jonée Shady at last year's walk in front of the memorial marker that honors her parents.**

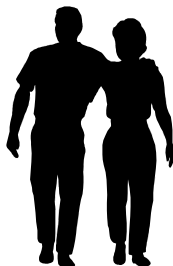
Have you ever wanted to remember someone or honor someone in a very special way? NAMIWALKS LA has a beautiful sponsorship opportunity that does just that. Imagine that you are walking for NAMI and along the walk you come across the name of a loved one who has passed away or someone special whom you would like to recognize and honor.

NAMI Glendale is once again participating in NAMIWALKS and we are committed to raise \$5,000 in sponsorships. Many people find it difficult to approach businesses, so we are appealing to our membership to sponsor the walk through memorial sponsorships. For \$250 you can have one of these beautiful markers placed along the walk which will take place in Santa Monica on Oct 7.

Please make your check payable to NAMIWALKS LA and send it to our treasurer, Wayne Baldaro, along with the name of the person of whom you would like to honor or remember.

### NAMIWALKS NEEDS YOU!

Would you like to be a walk team captain? Team captains will be responsible for bringing five people to the walk that can raise \$100 each for total of \$500. This seems simple enough, doesn't it? Our walk will be in Santa Monica on October 7 and we want to raise awareness in addition to raising money. The more people at the walk, the more visible we will be. Join Jane, Niki, Judy, and Jonée who have already committed to being team captains. If interested, please contact our walk coordinator, Judyrose Erpenbeck at [nanarose55@aol.com](mailto:nanarose55@aol.com) or come to our next Share and Care and sign up.



## Provider Training Class at San Fernando Mental Health Center Ends

**Jonée Shady**

For the last ten weeks I have been involved in the first Provider Training program to be given in the state of California. NAMI Provider Training is a national program developed by Dr. Joyce Burland who also created the Family-to-Family class. It was created for mental health professional who work daily with people who have a serious brain disorder in an effort to give tools which they may not have received in their education and to present the family's view through lived experience Sharon Dunas of NAMI LA fought to bring this training to Los Angeles and was able to contract with the Department of Mental Health to hold four sessions in various areas of Los Angeles. The team of teachers consists of two consumer teachers (Niki Davis and Maria Sierra), two family members (Ana Vega Woller- NAMI SFV and Jonée Shady) and a Mental Health professional who is also a family member (Sharon Dunas).

We taught the ten-week course to clinicians in Granada Hills. Although we started with 26 clinicians (social workers, psychologist, interns) we ended up with about half who gave us pretty positive evaluations. What these clinicians said they found most valuable were the stories of our lived experience with our family members. To be able to hear from us was new to them and that they understood why we at NAMI are striving for professionals to include us in a collaborative model for recovery.

One of the last sessions includes a full panel of family members (spouse, sibling, and offspring) who present their stories and open up to questions and answers. I am most grateful to our recent Family to Family grad, Jack Adelman, who had never spoken about his experience with his spouse before an audience for his bravery and honesty, to Dean Wong from NAMI LA who spoke about his sister and her husband and our own Niki Davis for jumping in at the last minute when a guest speaker cancelled, changing hats and giving us her perspective as an offspring.

I would also like to thank Debra Ishida and Lou Goldsmith, both of NAMI LA, for substituting for Ana, Sharon and me when we had to miss a session. And I mustn't forget to thank Maria Sierra who joined us at the last minute without training and fit right in as if she'd been doing this for years!

### Quick Review of *Out of the Shadows*

**Cliff Payton**

Excellent documentary...a real tear jerker. Liked how it showed the daughters not responding to the mother's anger with more anger...beautifully edited. . . .

Found her daughters delightful--each in her own way. There had to be at least some adequate (more than adequate) parenting to have produced such special women. Of course, they should have been removed from the home for their own safety. Luckily, they did turn out all right.

## COMMENTARY: MIKE MILLER

### The Meaning of NAMI as Viewed From the Grand Canyon

NAMI encourages those of us who support our mentally ill friend or family member to remember ourselves; to take care of our own well being. Sometimes we need a break and should not forget our own life enjoyment and need for such things as a vacation. For me, this has not been difficult. Although my daughter has chronic and clinical depression, I always discuss my time away with her and make sure that her mother, my former wife, is available. These breaks from Carrie and her problems help me refurbish and recharge so I am better able to deal with her difficulties.

Since Carrie is doing a lot better in recent months, the recent short trip my wife and I took to the Grand Canyon in Arizona was less difficult in terms of the usual anxiety I experience about leaving. I told Carrie about the trip and coordinated plans with my other daughter and former spouse, both of whom live near Carrie. Our vacation took place over a period of 4 days during the Memorial Day weekend.

As a native Californian born in Los Angeles I was determined to finally see the Grand Canyon in next door Arizona. My wife made reservations for a lodge inside the Grand Canyon National Park several months in advance. We arrived on a Saturday afternoon.

Sometimes clichés are apt. The Grand Canyon is amazing and breathtaking. It is so fantastic that only seeing it can suffice. Explanations, photographs, even good artistic portrayals fall short. Our Lodge was within walking distance of the canyon and since we are avid hikers, everyday we walked for miles along the rim and partly down into the Canyon.

I usually hike wearing one of my several NAMI T-shirts. Other than one person who once asked me what NAMI meant, the shirts have never brought a response, and I tend to forget they are even from NAMI.

The third day of our vacation, we were hiking back to our Lodge from the Grand Canyon Village. This hike is mostly along the rim of the canyon. A few locations along the hike have stone benches for people who want to sit and view the canyon. We were walking the middle portion of the hike where there are fewer people than the part near the Village. No one was walking towards us, however, out of the corner of my eye I saw a couple of people sitting on a bench as we walked by. I heard something, but could not discern what was said. We were a few feet past the bench when my wife said, "that man asked what NAMI you were in." I did not even think of ignoring the remark and walking on. I almost automatically pivoted and turned around saying, "You recognized the shirt, how do you know about NAMI?" He responded that he was a NAMI member in New York. My immediate thought before he answered was that he was either a mental health professional or a family member in NAMI. He was the latter.

From the second I became aware of his recognition of NAMI, before we even spoke, I felt as though I knew this man and I wanted to talk to him. Although I enjoy meeting and talking to strangers, this experience of immediate warmth and interest in a stranger was profoundly new and unusual. Upon reflection, it is a response to the powerful shared experience NAMI represents and the sense of understanding and camaraderie we experience with others, who we know, are in the same boat. This allowed us to immediately speak of personal matters despite our being strangers. We both described our years of membership with NAMI, and how it helped us cope. He was a member because of his son's illness. His current wife who sat next to him on the bench, like my current wife, is supportive and appreciative of NAMI--although neither is the mother of the ill person. They are both aware of how NAMI helped their loved one cope with the strong issues that impact parents of a child with mental illness.

Neither of us spoke about details. We did not have to. When I discuss NAMI with people who do not know about the group or mental illness, I am very careful since I do not know their level of understanding. With this man, that was not necessary. We both sensed a knowledge and sensitivity that goes with the territory. Facing each other with the Grand Canyon backdrop I sensed a spiritual connection despite no propensity for such feelings. Nevertheless, like my inability to do justice to a description of the Canyon, I can't describe it, but I know it was there.

Our brief discussion of shared experience was like a mini-NAMI meeting. It was not a blight on the vacation, but rather a brief moment that transcended the vacation experience. A chance meeting in the middle of the Grand Canyon. Like what happens at all NAMI meetings, afterwards I felt better for the experience, enlightened and ever mindful that WE ARE NOT ALONE.

As we departed, I thanked him for recognizing my shirt and for our discussion. He said thanks to me and to NAMI. I do not know this man's name and cannot recall if we even exchanged names. Nevertheless, we know each other and will probably never forget the encounter. We appeared to be similar in age and we both have a child who struggles with mental illness. Without sharing details we immediately knew what the other has been through, and what our children have endured. I also believe that together, with other NAMI members, we can continue to help each other and educate others, even beyond the limitations of geography and our immediate relationships. You never know when the opportunity will arise. You might even be on vacation in the middle of a wilderness.

Let us hear from you, either on the Blog or via email to [janelou@aol.com](mailto:janelou@aol.com) or via snail mail to Jane Hancock, Editor GAMIGram, NAMI Glendale, 1552 Colorado Blvd., Glendale, California 91205. We value your thoughts, your opinions, your insight, your questions, your stories.