



NAMI

National Alliance on Mental Illness

NAMI Humboldt News

The Official Newsletter of NAMI Humboldt

November 2011

Local Resource Information

Humboldt County Mental Health Crisis Line:

707-445-7715

HOPE Center: 2933 H Street
Eureka, Open M-F 8 a.m.-4 p.m.

Hopecenter@gmail.com

Humboldt County Mental Health Facility

720 Wood St., Eureka 268-2900

Redwood Veterans Center

Counseling Services

2830 G St. Eureka 444-8271

Individual, group and family counseling for veterans and their families

Bipolar and Depression Support Groups Eureka, Arcata and Fortuna:

Call 443-0905 for info (Eureka groups meet at the Hope Center)

HSU has weekly support groups on campus for students with Bi/Polar Illness. Call 826-3236

CONTACT US!

NAMI Humboldt
P.O. Box 1225
Eureka, CA 95502
Tel:707-444-1600

namihumboldt@gmail.com
www.nami-humboldt.org
www.nami.org



Holiday Party-You're Invited

When: December 8, 2011-5:30-7:30 PM

What: A Holiday Potluck Celebration

Where: 507 F St. , Eureka 2nd floor

Come for an evening of fellowship with family members and all those interested in supporting recovery! Each year our holiday gathering is a highlight, where we share the accomplishments of the past year and celebrate with a tasty meal.

Bring a dish to share. NAMI will provide ham, turkey and drinks.

This is also the time of year that we gather clothing items to distribute to people living in board and care homes and inpatient mental health facilities. Bring new, practical and warm clothing for men and women to the potluck or you may also donate money for clothing by mailing a check to our P.O. Box. Talk with Sandy at 495-5809 or Marilyn at 442-4174 about dropping off clothing items.

Larger sizes are appreciated.

Current NAMI Humboldt
Board and Committee
Members 2011

President: Edith Fritzsche
Vice President: Tim Ash
Treasurer: Tim Doty
Secretary: Debbe Hartridge

Board Members: Ira Blatt, Molly
Bridenbaugh, Shelly Fitzgerald, Jon
Forsyth, Kellie Jack, Lea Nagy

Family to Family: Sharon Benda
Membership: Claudia Hapgood
Newsletter: Debbe Hartridge
Programs: Mollie Bridenbaugh



Clothing Donated to Sempervirens

NAMI Humboldt donated several bags of new underwear and socks to the Sempervirens inpatient facility of Humboldt County Mental Health during Mental Illness Awareness Week in October. Pictured are Edith Fritzsche, NAMI-Hum board president and Jennifer Richmond, donor. Clothing was paid for through donations to NAMI Humboldt. Sempervirens currently has beds for 16 individuals.

New Teachers Trained for Our Highly Regarded Family to Family Classes Information provided by Edith Fritzsche

This October we were excited to work with NAMI California to bring trainers to Humboldt County for 3 days of instruction for a new group of Family to Family teachers. The teacher- trainees included 6 local NAMI members and six people who traveled here from the Bay Area and as far away as Sonora, near Yosemite. These folks are now prepared to teach the twelve week, information packed class we offer each year for family members who have a loved one with mental illness.

Family to Family is a research based program offered all over the country through NAMI. This year in Eureka we had 29 family members complete the course, which people often find life altering. Family to Family offers tools for understanding and coping, as well as a supportive connection with others who know what you are going through. Having six new teachers available locally will allow us to offer two sessions of the course in Eureka in 2012, the first one in February and the second in the fall.

New teachers are: Christina Albright, Sandy Sweitzer, Brenda Flores, and Marcia and Simeon Tauber. We are so grateful that our new teachers were able to be trained right here at home. The trainers were excellent and I sat in on the three days of instruction enjoyed learning the material that has been added since I took the course many years ago.

- x Contact Sharon Benda for information about upcoming Family to Family classes: 707-725-8853

A Lifetime of Volunteering

NAMI-Humboldt member and Hope Center volunteer Ruth Needham talks about her commitment to work for better lives for those living with mental illness diagnoses. Ruth lives in Fortuna, is 86 years old, volunteers at the Hope Center, and has tabled numerous times for NAMI at the Fortuna Health Fair. She also serves on the Humboldt County Mental Health Board.

Despite other problems of my 86 years, my Hope Center experience has been enriching and gives purpose in life.

I have had a long standing interest in mental health, dating back to my childhood when my sister-in-law took her life in my childhood home. There were questions as to "why?" In later years my educational interests were in the field of psychology. While working as a clerk at Sawtelle Hospital in Westwood, CA, a veterans psychiatric hospital, I met my future husband -also working as a clerk. We felt friendship with several veterans --all receiving shock treatment at that time. My husband later became a pharmacist and I raised our family, extending my education part time. Working as an elementary teacher, reading specialist with a special education degree seemed to be compatible with raising a young family.

In later years there was contact with mental health issues in our family. An adopted son was treated by an Orange Co. psychiatrist and placed on neuroleptic medications. Unfortunately he developed severe tardive dyskinesia. He died at age 26. During this period of time I was involved with NAMI and helping promote the John Henry Foundation - a work, residential and treatment program.

After moving to Humboldt County another son had contact with the mental health system. I felt a great need to be involved with the concept of Recovery. There was contact with programs as the Success program and the concept of peer-helping- peer. With the passing of the Mental Health Services Act there was much planning for a peer operated center. When the Hope Center was established, my interests have primarily involved advocacy for peers, promoting good health practices and just be a listening friend. I feel that each person is very individual, coming from different experiences and having different needs. No one is a standard "diagnosis." There is no standard treatment to treat all. Various alternatives need to be available, be it more personal counseling, WRAP, meditation, etc., etc. I would like to see all enjoy better health, respect for their individuality, regain confidence and realize their God-given potential.

Despite other problems of my 86 years, my Hope Center experience has been enriching and gives purpose in life. Thank you.

NAMI Members Being Seen and Heard

So far this year NAMI Humboldt has been represented at 4 health fairs and community events at locations including the Bayshore Mall, the HSU Campus, the Fortuna Health Fair and the Senior Expo at the Eureka Inn. Many thanks to those who made this happen, including Gillian Sparrow, April Zarzicny, Ruth Needham, Alice Woody, Tommie Stanley, Pamela Fishtrom, Barbara May, Jared Kidman, and Ira Blatt. We also were on the scene for May is Mental Health Month, participating in activities at the courthouse and in the Mental Health Walk.

In October, NAMI members Tim Ash, Ira Blatt, Sheila Nitzel and Debbe Hartridge participated in listening sessions offered by the City of Eureka as part of the process of hiring a new police chief. NAMI members spoke up loud and clear about our desire to see a new chief who would be experienced in working with the mentally ill and who would prioritize training for officers. These concerns were included in the City's written report, which may be found on the City of Eureka's website: www.ci.eureka.ca.gov/

Humboldt County Mental Health To Have New Responsibilities Dealing With Non-Violent Offenders

Our new County Mental Health administrators Asha George, Jovonne Price and Barbara Laihie have attended recent NAMI board meetings and talked about the County's planning for providing alternatives to incarceration for convicted felons who would have otherwise been imprisoned prior to the passage of AB 109 and 117 this year. These bills address the massive problems with California's prisons, which are expensive and overcrowded and are, in effect, a revolving door in which 70 percent of released offenders are sent back.

The County Health Department will have responsibility for working with those offenders with mental illness and/or substance abuse histories and would receive funding for .5 clinician, 1.25 vocational counselors, 2 substance abuse counselors to work with prisoners in prison and those not yet sent to prison and parolees. This is the recommendation of the local executive group working on this new arrangement and will be voted on by the County Supervisors.

Our NAMI board members discussed our hopes that the new system will be able to focus more on recovery, versus punishment, with these individuals. Tim Ash, of our board of directors, will keep us apprised of any action that we might take to support recovery oriented local programs.

Join NAMI Now-Fill Out and mail with your check to NAMI
Treasurer, PO Box 1225, Eureka, CA 95502

Name _____

Address _____

City, State, Zip Code _____

Phone _____ E-mail _____

My membership is: New _____

Renewal _____

Family Membership ___ \$35

Professional Membership ___ \$50

Low income Membership ___ \$12

Donation of _____ in memory

of _____.

We thank you in advance for your deductible donation. Your dues support and provide membership in our affiliate as well as membership in NAMI California and NAMI National. When you join NAMI Humboldt, you will receive membership in all three and will receive publications in the mail: The Advocate, the Connection and NAMI Humboldt News. Please let us know if your contact info has changed.

Please state your relationship to Your ill family member (spouse, child, parent) for NAMI National data collected to help provide services and information:

Current and Ongoing Support and Education

E-mail namihumboldt@gmail.com for information about upcoming classes and groups.

Family to Family: A twelve session class for those with mentally ill loved ones taught by trained NAMI volunteers. Next class will be in early 2012. Contact Sharon: 725-8853

Peer to Peer: A NAMI sponsored class led by peer mentors who are “living well with mental illness.” Next class begins December 1. Contact Kellie:

Support Group for family members: Meets twice weekly and is sponsored by Humboldt County Mental Health. Contact Kellie for information. 707-834-3759

Crisis Intervention Training for First Responders: NAMI teams with local law enforcement to bring a mental health perspective to crisis situations. Currently offered twice a year.



Our NAMI program committee put together two talks this fall on topics of interest to our members. In August, a speaker talked about Dream Catchers, a vocational program that unfortunately has recently closed its Eureka office. In October, Dr. Steve Roth, supervising clinician with Humboldt County Mental Health, talked about treatment for co-occurring disorders of substance abuse and mental illness. Suggestions for programs are welcome.



A lively group gathered on the steps of the Humboldt County Courthouse last May in recognition of Mental Health Month. Activities for May included tabling in Eureka Old Town and on the HSU Campus, a proclamation by the County Supervisors, a march from the HOPE Center to the Courthouse and a HOPE Center sponsored picnic at Sequoia Park. NAMI helped supply food for the picnic.

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