



# Brain Storm

Newsletter of NAMI Tri -Valley

Volume 1 Number 3, January, 2006

## **Board of Directors**

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### *Family-to-Family*

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### *In Our Own Voice*

Krista Radojevich  
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## **Advisory Committee**

Daniel Kostalick, M.D.  
Art Tenbrink, MFCC

## **Family-to-Family Class**

**F**ebruary 2nd NAMI offers the Family-to-Family Education Program that will take place at St. Clare's Episcopal Church in Pleasanton.

Family-to-Family is a free 12-week course for family caregivers of individuals with severe brain disorders (mental illnesses). The course is taught by trained family members. All instruction and course materials are free for class participants.

The Family-to-Family curriculum focuses on schizophrenia, bipolar disorder (manic depression), clinical depression, panic disorder and obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD). The course discusses the clinical treatment of these illnesses and teaches the knowledge and skills that family members need to cope more effectively.

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For further information, contact Doris Watson at 925-682-7165 or e-mail at F2F@aol.com

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## **Family-to-Family... from the inside**

*by Mike Koslosky*

Last year I had the opportunity to enroll in Family-to-Family with the hope of learning something about this Bipolar Type 2 beast that had invaded our home like an alien bursting from the core of a previously healthy person. The idea of a 12-week course seemed daunting but after the initial meeting I found myself eager to return. The horrors in my life seemed minor compared to the drama surrounding me. My classmates shared unimaginable tales of distress, fear, sadness and despair. But we had each other. We learned from one another, shared successes, bared our exasperations, but most importantly we were able to understand what our loved ones were going through. We discovered why and how the brain operates in mentally ill people, what medications do and don't do, how to support our loved one in their road to recovery and ways in which we can advocate for their long-term needs. Tips on legal rights, availability of support services, pathways through the medical maze, and techniques to manage our own life to prevent melt down were life savers for all of us.

For yourself and your loved one, take this course. You will never be sorry.

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## **Our Mission**

"NAMI Tri-Valley in collaboration with other community agencies and organizations provides information and referrals to resources, education programs and advocacy support to consumers and families."

## President's Outlook

**E**xtended well-wishes and happy new year to everyone. 2006 will bring about new and exciting local projects and events. January promises a full month that includes support groups as well as a unique opportunity to be a part of the San Francisco Bay Area NAMI Walk being held in June.

On Tuesday January 10 at the ValleyCare Library, guest speaker Dede Ranahan, director of the SF Bay Area NAMI Walk, will inspire and guide us on how to participate in the June fundraiser. One team is already formed under the auspices of Krista Radojevich. Come join us, get involved and have fun while helping to raise public awareness about mental illnesses.

February's guest presenter will be Marye Thomas, M.D., Director of Alameda County Behavioral Health Care Services.

May is Mental Health Month and NAMI Tri-Valley has partnered with the Valley Council on Mental Health to host a visual display in the Livermore Library's main hall. The display educates and provides helpful resources plus handouts. The other months will fill in quickly and we will keep you fully informed.

Start your new year by filling out the membership form and joining NAMI Tri-Valley. When you do, your dues will go toward developing mental health educational programs and collaborative projects that directly benefit our local communities.

Marsha McInnis,  
President, NAMI Tri-Valley

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## Launch Our Library

**H**ave a book that you've read and is now collecting dust on your bookshelf? We would love to start collecting books so that we could start a lending library. If you are interested in donating or lending a book please contact Krista Radojevich at 925-560-0842 or [trivalleybipolar@hotmail.com](mailto:trivalleybipolar@hotmail.com)



## CALENDAR

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**January 9, 2006**

**7:15 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.**

**NAMI Tri-Valley**

**Family Support Group**

Livermore Public Library,  
1188 So. Livermore Ave., Livermore  
Contact: Marsha McInnis  
Phone: (925) 980-5331  
e-mail: [marsha\\_m@pacbell.net](mailto:marsha_m@pacbell.net)

**January 10, 2006**

**7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.**

**NAMI Tri-Valley**

**General Meeting**

ValleyCare Library,  
5525 W. Las Positas Blvd., Pleasanton  
Contact: Marsha McInnis  
Phone: (925) 980-5331  
e-mail: [marsha\\_m@pacbell.net](mailto:marsha_m@pacbell.net)

**January 23, 2006**

**7:00 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.**

**NAMI Tri-Valley**

**Family Support Group**

St. Clare's Episcopal Church  
3350 Hopyard Rd., Pleasanton  
Contact: Donna & Russ White  
Phone: (925) 455-6901  
e-mail: [russdonnawhite@comcast.net](mailto:russdonnawhite@comcast.net)

**Other mental health  
support groups**

**Every Wednesday**

**7:15 p.m. to 8:45 p.m.**

**Depression and Bipolar  
Support Alliance Chapter**

Tri-Valley Bipolar Support Group  
St. Clare's Episcopal Church  
3350 Hopyard Rd., Pleasanton  
Contact: Krista Radojevich  
Phone: (925) 560-0842  
e-mail: [trivalleybipolar@hotmail.com](mailto:trivalleybipolar@hotmail.com)

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**NAMI's Family-to-Family**

Free 12-week course on mental illness for families and caregivers. Begins February 2, 2006, Pleasanton. Contact Doris Watson: 925-682-7165 or [F2F@aol.com](mailto:F2F@aol.com)

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## NAMI Tri-Valley's January Meeting Guest Speaker: Dede Ranahan

January's NAMI Tri-Valley meeting welcomes Dede Ranahan, Director of the San Francisco-Bay Area NAMI Walk. Come find out how to participate and if you participated in last year's Walk, bring your photographs and be prepared to share your stories about what the Walk meant to you and why you will be walking again in 2006.

Hear plans about the 2006 Walk, pick up materials, Walk brochures, sign-up forms, etc. – to help you build your Walk teams. Learn how to get the word out about NAMI and mental illness. We are raising awareness, educating the public, reducing stigma and having a wonderful time in Golden Gate Park.

The meeting will take place at ValleyCare Library, 5725 W. Las Positas Blvd, Pleasanton on Tuesday, January 10 from 7:30 pm to 9:00 pm. Refreshments will be provided.

Beginning February, the NAMI meetings will take place the first Monday evening of the month at the Livermore Library.

FREE

## Workshops and Seminars

Tom Wootton, author of *The Bipolar Advantage*, will be visiting the Bay Area in the month of January. He will be conducting free workshops, and a free two-day seminar. *The Bipolar Advantage* is a wonderful book that takes a positive yet irreverent look at the ups and downs of bipolar disorder. Many Tri-Valley consumers saw Mr. Wootton at a conference in Sacramento this past summer, and have spoken enthusiastically about the presentation. They came away with a positive outlook on a difficult disorder.

Mr. Wootton will be conducting a workshop at the Castro Valley DBSA meeting on January 13th at 7:15pm.

Eden Hospital Conference Center  
Conference Room A, Ground Floor  
20103 Lake Chabot Road, Castro Valley.

The two-day seminar will take place in Berkeley on January 14th and 15th.

## County Board Approval of the Mental Health Services Act

On December 20, 2005, the Alameda County Board of Supervisors approved submission of the MHSA Community Services and Supports plan to California Department of Mental Health, (DMH).

The next steps are to do the necessary editing of the Plan based on public comments, appending a summary and submitting the plan to DMH for approval.

## Wellness and Recovery Training

Alameda County Behavioral Health Care Services is very pleased to have Mark Ragins, MD, provide an all day training for providers, consumers, and family members on Wednesday, February 1, 2006. Mark is a psychiatrist at The Village Integrated Service Agency, in Long Beach, a program known nationally for its practice of wellness and recovery principles.

## Transforming the System: A Practical Approach to Implementing Wellness & Recovery Practices

Mark Ragins, M.D.

Medical Director and Staff Psychiatrist  
The Village Integrated Service Agency, Long Beach, CA

- Participants will be able to describe the four stages of Wellness & Recovery.
- Participants will identify at least one way that Wellness & Recovery principles are already being implemented in their current work environments.
- Participants will be able to identify at least one additional step that can be taken to further integrate the four stages of Wellness & Recovery into their practice strategies.
- Participants will be able to identify ethical and risk management issues related to Wellness & Recovery practices.

Wednesday, February 1, 2006

9 a.m. – 4 p.m.

(Check-in and breakfast begin at 8:30 a.m.)

1515 Clay Street, Oakland, 1st Floor Auditorium

Please Note: Space is limited, and attendance must be restricted to 150 participants

\*\*\*PRE-REGISTRATION IS REQUIRED\*\*\*

Registration will be on a "first-come, first-served" basis.  
RSVP to Alameda County Vocational Program at (510) 383-1600  
Breakfast and Lunch will be provided

Street parking and a parking garage across from the venue are available. Attendees will be responsible for their own parking fees.



**nami** Tri-Valley

*FU:*

*for Consumers:*

**Depression and Bipolar Support Alliance  
DBSA Tri-Valley**

Meets each Wednesday 7:15-8:45  
St. Clare's Episcopal Church  
3350 Hopyard Rd., Pleasanton  
Contact: Krista Radojevich, 925.560.0842  
trivalleybipolar@hotmail.com

**Depression and Bipolar Support Alliance  
DBSA Castro Valley**

Meets each Friday 7:15-8:45  
Eden Hospital Conference Center  
Conference Room A, Ground Floor  
20103 Lake Chabot Road, Castro Valley  
Contact: Jennifer Garrison (925) 413-3784  
jenn@dbsacastrovalley.org

*for Families:*

**NAMI Tri-Valley  
Support Group**

Meets 2nd Monday of the month 7:15-9:00  
Livermore Library  
1188 S.Livermore Ave.  
Contact: Marsha McInnis, 925.980.5331  
marsha\_m@pacbell.net

**NAMI Family Support Group**

Meets 4th Monday of the month  
St. Clare's Episcopal Church  
3350 Hopyard Rd., Pleasanton  
Contact: Russ or Donna White 925.455.6901  
russdonnawhite@comcast.net



NAMI is a non-profit, grassroots, self-help, support and advocacy organization of consumers, families, and friends of people with severe mental illnesses, such as schizophrenia, schizoaffective disorder, bipolar disorder, major depressive disorder, obsessive-compulsive disorder, panic and other severe anxiety disorders, autism and pervasive developmental disorders, attention deficit/hyperactivity disorder, and other severe and persistent mental illnesses that affect the brain.

**Membership Application  
NAMI Tri-Valley**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

General \$35

Consumer \$15

Professional \$45

Century \$100

\$ \_\_\_\_\_ In Memory Of: \_\_\_\_\_

\$ \_\_\_\_\_ In Honor Of: \_\_\_\_\_

Membership entitles you to receive NAMI Tri-Valley Newsletter "Brainstorm", NAMI California publication "The Connection" and NAMI National "The Advocate".

Send this application form with your check payable to:  
NAMI Tri-Valley  
1989-A Santa Rita Road PMB 129  
Pleasanton, CA 94566

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