



The Times

NAMI Pinellas County, Florida
National Alliance on Mental Illness

Clearwater - Dunedin - Largo - Oldsmar - Palm Harbor - Pinellas Park - St. Petersburg - Tarpon Springs

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

Thursday, July 3rd
7:00 pm -NAMI Pinellas Education Meeting "NAMI NATIONAL", a recap of the national conference held in Orlando in June

Thursday, July 17th
7:30 pm -Family Support Group Meeting

Saturday, August 2nd
11:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.
Peer to Peer classes begin

Thursday, August 7th
7:00 pm -NAMI Pinellas Education Meeting COPING WITH LIFE'S CHALLENGES
NAMI Board member Gay Hawk will share tips on managing stress, coping with criticism and improving your communication skills.

Thursday, August 21st
7:30 pm -Family Support Group Meeting

All meetings are held at Hospice of the Florida Suncoast
5771 Roosevelt Blvd.
Building 100
The Gathering Place
Clearwater, FL 33760

BUDGET FORCES PEMHS TO CLOSE SRT

The Pinellas County Short-term Residential Treatment program (SRT) closes July 1, 2008 due to drastic budget cuts in the State's budget. Operated by PEMHS--Personal Enrichment through Mental Health Services in Pinellas Park--this program has always helped individuals most in need of short-term residential intervention.

According to **Tom Wedekind**, Executive Director, PEMHS lost special funding to maintain the County's Transportation Exception Plan, which added 15 crisis beds in downtown St. Petersburg. Funds typically used to fund SRT will be transferred to fund this plan, which modified the Baker Act to establish a central receiving facility for law enforcement officers. "Closure of the SRT allows the community to maintain access for the largest number of consumers with the transfer of these (SRT) funds to acute care services," he explained.



Tom Wedekind, Executive Director of PEMHS, Personal Enrichment through Mental Health Services, has announced that budget cuts force PEMHS to close their short-term residential program--SRT.

Judy Turnbaugh, President of NAMI, reports that NAMI members are devastated by the news of the SRT closure. "Mental health services in Pinellas County face a critical funding cutback that will affect all community mental health agencies. SRT helped those in need of services beyond crisis management. It will be a horrible loss to those most vulnerable. It is a sad time for the consumers and families who need longer term stabilization they received through SRT."

"Despite the lack of these funds, PEMHS continues to provide excellent care," she added, "but our greatest fear is that more consumers will be sent to a state hospital or may end up in jail as services continue to be cut."

The future looks bleak for funding social services in Pinellas County. NAMI is assisting the Mental Health Coalition to develop a position paper on how these cuts will affect PEOPLE, not just programs. NAMI also encourages their members to advocate for budget increases, not cuts, by contacting their legislators.

In a letter to the mental health providers, Wedekind commented, "PEMHS has been pleased to have been able to offer a quality program that has been so instrumental in the recovery of so many consumers in Pinellas County; hopefully, we will be able to provide this service in a future that values mental health funding for all Floridians."

AUGUST EDUCATION MEETING

Since each day seems more challenging, it is time for a self-help session to help you brush up on your personal life-coping skills! **Gay Hawk**, the Director of Public Relations at Windmoor Health-care, will share helpful hints on how to cope with daily personal challenges at the August Education Meeting, Thursday, August 7th at 7:00 p.m. Summer is the perfect time to brush up on your skills for managing stress, coping with criticism, and improving your communication skills. We hope to see you there!

JULY EDUCATION MEETING

The NAMI 2008 annual convention in Orlando was wonderful! Please come to the Education Meeting Thursday, July 3rd at 7 p.m. and get an up-to-date briefing of what attendees learned at the conference. Speakers will include **Stacy Freskos, Vicky Holder, Susan Lang, Steven Thompson, Donald Turnbaugh** and **Judy Turnbaugh**. Come hear about the terrific things NAMI is doing nationwide!

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

NAMI PINELLAS COUNTY

Welcome Summer! Many of you are planning your vacation or "stay-cation" the new buzz word meaning "the gas is too expensive, so we are spending our vacation at home." Whatever you choose, I hope you have lots of fun.

But, before you pack up, put on your bathing suit, or snooze on the sofa, please take a few minutes to address the crisis in under funding mental health programs. We just learned that the SRT (Short-Term Residential Treatment) program at **PEMHS** is closing effective July 1st. This is devastating news and it is not the last of the bad news to come, as more and more programs are being dramatically cut due to lack of funding.

Many NAMI family members and consumers are well aware of the successful treatment they received at the SRT. **Dr. Mary Sheehan** and her staff have literally saved lives of people in mental health crisis who needed longer term care to get them stable so they could return to the community. With SRT closing, where will people go? Will some be sent to the state hospital far away? Will the stays at the CSU (Crisis Stabilization Units) at PEMHS be longer – but, if so, what happens with the increased number of people needing those services? How long must they wait to be admitted? Of course, the jails are always another alternative. They have become the largest mental health facilities in the state. This is heartbreaking! We cannot sit still and allow this to continue happening.

I am begging each and every one of you to contact your legislators now while they are at their home offices and tell them how the lack of appropriate services is impacting the lives of persons with mental illness. Tell them what it is like to see a loved one decomensating right before your eyes because services have been cut. Tell them what it is like to have your loved one incarcerated not because they are criminal – but because they are ill. Tell them what it is like to live in fear. They



President Judy Turnbaugh

need to hear your stories and how these situations impact all of us.

Make an appointment to meet with your Legislators, call them or e-mail them with this information so that they can begin working on funding issues now – before they go back in session in Tallahassee. Florida is 48th in per capita spending of all the states. We are 50th in providing child care. Funding that could be spent to provide mental health services is being spent on jails. Ask your legislators to support the recommendations made by Judge Leifman to the Florida Supreme Court, and ask them to support parity.

You can make a difference by voting! If you are not registered to vote, then, please go register asap. Elections are coming up soon and we need your voice in telling Legislators what it is we need.

After you have done the above, then by all means, go — enjoy your vacation!

Also, be sure to "Savor the Date" for our **Chocolate Extravaganza** in celebration of Mental Illness Awareness Week (Friday, October 10, 2008). Of course, you will need to "walk off" all the chocolate by participating in the End the Mystery Sunset Stroll, (Sunday, October 12, 2008). More details appear in this issue.

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NAMI Help Line [727] 791-3434

Mailing Address:

**466 94th Avenue N.
St. Petersburg, FL 33702
www.nami-pinellas.org**

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This newsletter is written and published by the Board of Directors of NAMI Pinellas County, Florida. Edited and designed by Board Member Gay Hawk of Windmoor Healthcare. To contribute articles, e-mail to: turnj@aol.com

**BECOME A MEMBER OF
NAMI PINELLAS COUNTY**



The June 2008 graduating class of the Crisis Intervention Team included officers from the Pinellas County Sheriff's Office, Pinellas Park Police Dept., Clearwater Police Dept., Gulfport Police Dept., and St. Petersburg Police Dept.

Crisis Intervention Team

SHERIFF HONORS NAMI AT GRADUATION

Certificates of appreciation were presented by **Sheriff Jim Coats** at the last CIT graduation in June to the NAMI Pinellas Affiliate, as well as to **Donald and Judy Turnbaugh** "in grateful appreciation for their generous contribution to the Pinellas County Crisis Intervention Team Training."

The CIT graduation was held for 30 law enforcement officers from the Pinellas County Sheriff's Office and Police Departments of Clearwater, Gulfport, Pinellas Park and St. Petersburg.

All of the police officers and deputies who participated in the 40-hour CIT Education Program received certificates which were presented by their respective police chiefs, ranking officers or the Sheriff.

The guest speaker for the ceremony was County Commissioner **Susan Latvala**, who spoke highly of the CIT program and congratulated the graduates on their commitment to the Crisis Intervention Team--CIT.

A special NAMI thank you to those who attended the graduation, including several providers; PEMHS, Boley, Directions for Mental Health, Gulf Coast Community Services, Suncoast Community Mental Health, and Windmoor Healthcare.

Attendees also included NAMI Pinellas Board members **John and Anne Jones, Patricia Hall, Gay Hawk and Judy and Donald Turnbaugh**. Thank you to all who supported this CIT graduating class.

The next National CIT conference will be held in Atlanta, Georgia, November 4th through 6th, 2008. Interested parties are encouraged to attend. Contact Pat Strode, CIT Program Administrator for NAMI Georgia, 770-234-9347, or please visit their website at www.NAMIGA.org

FOOD DONATED TO CIT

The CIT coordinating committee would like to thank the following donors for sponsoring lunches and food for the CIT graduation ceremony. Participants enjoyed your donations!

- **Pinecrest Place** — Largo
- **Sunrise Senior Living Stratford Court** — Palm Harbor
- **The Fountains at Boca Ciega Bay – A Sunrise Senior Living Community** St. Petersburg

CRISIS HOTLINE CALLS

The following are samples of the types of calls received by the NAMI Hotline:

■ A male caller reported the time and place for his suicide to take place. Our Hotline volunteer called the Pinellas County Sheriff's Office and asked for a safety check.

■ A desperate female caller was advised to call the Largo Police Department and ask for a CIT officer to respond to her emergency. She called later to thank us for our help.

A CIT refresher course will be held in July for any 40-hour CIT trained sworn officer from Pinellas, Hillsborough, Sarasota, Manatee, Hernando, Pasco, or Polk Counties.

The training is sponsored by:
**Florida Mental Health Institute/
 University of South Florida
 USF Police Department
 Florida CIT Coalition
 Florida's Partners in Crisis
 NAMI Pinellas County
 AstraZeneca Pharmaceutical Company**



They aren't laughing about their height difference! They are both very happy that Deputy Teresa Dioquino, left, of the Pinellas County Sheriff's Office, received an Iris Award from Judy Turnbaugh on behalf of NAMI Pinellas County.

GET READY--GET SET--SIT DOWN!

Did I get that right? Most people would have said, "Get ready, get set, go!" NAMI Pinellas says, "Get ready, get set, plop down on your couch!". (But first, let your fingers do the walking to write a check!)

Every journey begins with that first step. In 2007, thousands of concerned citizens in more than 60 communities across the nation joined NAMI's Campaign for the Mind of America and walked together to raise money and awareness about our country's need for a world-class treatment and recovery system for people with mental illness.

NAMI Florida has scheduled a walk for November 8, 2008, in Jacksonville, FL. All NAMI affiliates have been asked to join in; and, our local affiliate is doing just that! We have established a team called "Couch Potatoes of NAMI Pinellas County, Florida."

You can walk in Jacksonville, or you can sponsor our couch potato team, and let us do the "walking" for you. All you have to do is write a check to NAMI Pinellas County, Florida, and mail it to us at 466--94th Avenue North, St. Petersburg, FL 33702. Please note "NAMI Walk" on your donation check.

State walk funds will be used to further our educational programs and continue to promote legislative advocacy at the state and local levels. We need your help. These walks are designed not only to raise funds so we can continue our mission, but they also enhance awareness to help fight the stigma associated with mental illness.

For more detailed information about NAMI Walks and their success, go to nami.org and click on NAMI Walks. So, grab that pen, write that check, and help us help you! We'll "walk the walk" and depend upon you to "talk the walk."

Thank you! *Judy Turnbaugh, President*



Fun in the sun at the annual Spring picnic, which gives friends a chance to catch up and make new friends as well. And, of course, there's always time to pose for a picture. Photos in this issue by Steven Thompson and Judy Turnbaugh.

FAMILY-TO-FAMILY STARTS SEPTEMBER 8TH

Family-to-Family is a free 12-week course for family and friends of individuals with serious mental illness. It is taught by trained NAMI family members. Course participants are required to attend all 12 classes on Mondays from September 8th through November 24th.

Learn about illness signs and symptoms, advocacy, coping skills, stigma, medications, problem solving and treatment resources.

Classes are held at The Hospice of the Florida Suncoast, Roosevelt Blvd., Clearwater.

For more information call the **NAMI HELP LINE** (727-791-3434)

Pre-registration required.
Contact: Marianne Martin (727) 443-3149 or email: memartin1943@yahoo.com

CAR DONATION BENEFITS NAMI

What can you do with a 17 year old car that still runs? A car you've enjoyed but you realize it's just time to move on and get a newer model? You can DONATE IT TO NAMI!! One of the wonderful board members came and picked up my car, drove it to his home, listed it on Craig's list, and sold it! Someone got a new, good, old friend to drive and the wonderful organization of NAMI got a generous donation – a win-win if ever there was one! Next time you get ready to "move on," please consider donating your car to NAMI.

CONSUMER CORNER

In Memory of Chip Corell

by **Steven Thompson**, Co-Chair, Consumer Council

The Consumer Council is a group of consumers locally who advocate for those with brain disorders. Many of us have been trained to lead educational and support groups for local consumers, and we always encourage others to participate in the Peer-to-Peer class and NAMI events which support our local affiliate.

We like to have fun together, too. As always, our Consumers "Have More Fun" group is planning outings in the community. We really enjoyed the State Fair earlier this year, and we brushed up on our bowling skills in May at a charity Bowling Day to benefit Benedict Haven. We currently are planning outings to the Botanical Gardens and the Dali Museum in St. Petersburg. It is easy to become a NAMI member. All that needs to be done is to fill out a form. (See page 11.) The cost is only \$3.00 for consumers.

We also are looking for consumers to get involved with NAMI events and our Pinellas County Consumer Council.

If you wish to make a difference in the community, then please come join the Consumer Council and get involved. Contact me at: (727) 443-4715, or (727) 709-2611 e-mail: sthompson134@tampabay.rr.com. Thank you.

Services for consumers will be cut drastically this year. Contact your legislators now to voice your concerns.



The most recent graduates of a Peer-to-Peer training.



In case you don't recognize the clip art on the left, that's a bowling strike. So, you know what that means--a bowling tournament is on the horizon. Look for more information to come about the Windmoor Healthcare Bowling Tournament, an annual benefit for NAMI. Get a team together for a Saturday in November! More information will be advertised soon.



Ed Wohlford, volunteering again at a NAMI event. Thanks!

PEER TO PEER

by **Steven Thompson**

Ten consumers "graduated" from the second Peer to Peer class this spring, taught by **Johnny Limbaugh, Vicky Holder** and me.

We had a great group and everyone enjoyed all the different aspects of the class. Graduates included **Bill Desmond, Paul Constantinoff, Bryan Dickerson, Maxine Girard, Derek Gyongzois, George Torrence, Allen Vaillancourt, Linda White, Thomas Wilkins and Jennifer Robinson.**

Bill Desmond was named Valedictorian, as he was the only one to attend all nine weeks of the course. Bill went through personal struggles during the class, but that didn't keep him away. Johnny Limbaugh presented him with a watch for his efforts. Congratulations to everyone and thanks for participating!

THE NEXT PEER TO PEER CLASS WILL BE TAUGHT BEGINNING AUGUST 2nd. FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT STEVEN THOMPSON AT: (727) 443-4715 or (727) 709-2611 sthompson134@tampabay.rr.com.

LOCAL VOLUNTEERS RECEIVE IRIS AWARDS FROM NAMI

The National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) Pinellas County, is proud to announce the 2008 Winners of the "Iris Award" which is presented to persons and organizations who have made a significant contribution to improving the lives of persons with mental illness.

The Iris Awards were presented at the 12th Annual NAMI Picnic held at Anderson Park, Tarpon Springs in May. More than 300 persons were in attendance – including Representative Bill Heller who is a great supporter.

ADVOCATES / VOLUNTEERS

John Craig
Patricia Hall
Carolyn Hammond
Vicky Holder
Sophia Holder
Bill Larsen
Marianne Martin

MENTAL HEALTH PROVIDERS

April Lott--Directions for Mental Health, Inc.
Sharon Nivens--Directions for Mental Health, Inc.
Windmoor Healthcare--Fundraising Committee
Perry Kakalis--University Community Hospital
Susan Lang--Central Florida Behavioral Health Network, Inc.
Elizabeth Statzer--Dept. of Children & Families, Mental Health & Substance Abuse Program

If you know someone who has made a difference in the lives of individuals with a mental illness, you can nominate them for the NAMI IRIS Award. Contact Don at turn2cit@aol.com



**LAW ENFORCEMENT
 Crisis Intervention Team (CIT)**

**Pinellas Park Police Department:
 Officer Stephen Vangeli**

Homeless Outreach & CIT Officer for his personal intervention to locate housing for a mentally ill homeless man.

**Pinellas County Sheriff's Office:
 Captain Teresa Dioquino
 Lt. Timothy Pupke
 Deputy Jan Wagner
 Deputy Traci Reid**

For their commitment to the Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) Program as demonstrated in March 2008 on the Dunedin Causeway. After several hours of intervention, rapport was developed and a suicidal man in a car armed with a gun was taken into protective custody without incident.



Photo at left: Deputy Jan Wagner, Pinellas County Sheriff's Office, and above: Perry Kakalis, University Community Hospital, receive IRIS awards from NAMI President Judy Turnbaugh.



IRIS Award winner Carolyn Hammond, honored for her continuous support.



IRIS awards honor persons and organizations who make a significant contribution to improving the lives of persons with mental illness, such as Bill Larsen.

NAMI NEWS NOTES

Nancy Durstein, masters swimmer, stunned the assembled crowd at the Hall of Fame Pool facility in Fort Lauderdale, FL by taking the 1650 yard freestyle event for her age group. Her time of 32:17:90 was not a national record, but good enough to beat the pre-race favorite. Nancy's other medals during the event showed her

abilities in all strokes: 2nd place in the 50 and 100 butterfly, 100 and 200 IM, and 3rd place in the 200 back stroke & 400 IM.

The annual YMCA National event attracts masters swimmers from all over the country, and her outstanding results will catapult Nancy into the National and International spotlights.

KUDOS CORNER

Michael Bernstein, CEO, Gulf Coast Jewish Family Services was honored in June for his many contributions to the community at the Phantom Ball. The Phantom Ball is an innovative and fun way to have a fundraiser. There actually is no ball so 100% of all monies collected go directly to GCJFS. People can support GCJFS in the comfort of their own home by sending their donations directly to GCJFS. Michael Bernstein is, however, a reality and we applaud him for all his accomplishments.



MENTAL HEALTH PARITY

Senate and House negotiators have bridged their differences on the requirements for health plans under a mental health parity bill. This compromise is a major step forward.

It is anticipated that there will be further deliberations before any legislation would move to a vote. Nevertheless, we are excited about this breakthrough and cautiously optimistic about passage of a final bill.

Keep advocating for Florida passing parity next year! Begin your nagging NOW!

FYI

Each Legislator has a website you can visit that contains information not only about them, but also about bills, assignments, councils and committees and other valuable information.

www.myfloridahouse.gov

Contains information on the Florida House of Representatives.

www.flsenate.gov

Contains information on the Florida Senate.

www.myflorida.com

Contains information on Florida Government overall, for example, the Executive Branch, the Legislative Branch, and the Judicial Branch.

“SAVOR” THE DATES FOR A

CHOCOLATE EXTRAVAGANZA

**FRIDAY, OCTOBER 10TH
SPONSOR RECEPTION AND
ANNUAL AWARDS DINNER**

**SUNDAY, OCTOBER 12TH
END THE MYSTERY
SUNSET STROLL
IN STRAUB PARK**

**DETAILS ON SPONSORSHIPS
AVAILABLE FROM NAMI
BOARD MEMBERS
OR CALL 727-209-0890**

GOVERNOR CRIST SIGNS HEALTH CARE LEGISLATION

Governor Charlie Crist has signed Senate Bill 2534 that will provide affordable health insurance options to Florida's 3.8 million uninsured individuals.

According to a written announcement from Governor Crist, “Floridians will have options that will go a long way toward freeing them from worry about health care.”

“Floridians ages 19 to 64 who have not had coverage for at least six months will qualify for the Cover Florida plan. Coverage will cost about \$150 per month, and benefits will include regular medical check ups. The plan is designed to focus on primary and preventive care to discourage unnecessary and costly visits to the emergency room.”

“Available as early as January 2009, benefit plans will include coverage for preventive services, screenings, office

visits, outpatient and inpatient surgery, urgent care, prescription drugs, durable medical equipment, and diabetic supplies.”

“Additionally, the legislation provides opportunity for insurers, doctors and other medical providers to offer medical care through an open, transparent ‘marketplace’ which will provide Floridians other options to meet their medical needs.”

“By negotiating with health insurers – and allowing them to compete for our business – the people of Florida will be the winners. Families and individuals will now have hope. The time has come to do what is right. We live in the most prosperous nation, but to think that nearly four million Floridians go to sleep without health coverage is unconscionable, he said”.

HEAT AND MENTAL ILLNESS

TIPS FOR STAYING COOL THIS SUMMER

The mercury's rising across the country, and with the rising temperature comes increased risk of a potentially fatal illness: heat stroke.

But, did you know that mental illness and some medications used to treat mental illnesses actually increase the risk for heat stroke?

Heat stroke occurs when the body is unable to properly cool itself. Normally, the human body will regulate temperature by sweating, but heat stroke impairs the body's ability to do this. If heat stroke is not treated immediately, it can cause permanent disability and even death.

Disturbingly, individuals with mental illness may be particularly susceptible to heat stroke. Certain medications, including anti-psychotics and anticholinergics, are known to increase the risk for heat stroke because they inhibit the body's ability to regulate its temperature.

Additionally, people with mental illnesses who live in low-income housing without air conditioning also are at an increased risk for heat stroke. This combination can be dangerous.

To help protect yourself or a loved one from the dangers of heat stroke, take a look at this list of do's and don'ts for the hot summer days ahead.

DO:

Educate yourself about the symptoms of heat stroke:

- An extremely high body temperature (above 103 degrees Fahrenheit)
- Red, hot and dry skin (no sweating)
- Rapid, strong pulse
- Throbbing headache
- Dizziness
- Nausea
- Confusion
- Unconsciousness

Stay indoors and use air conditioning if possible. If your home does not have air conditioning, go to a place that does such as a mall or public library. Even a few hours spent in air conditioning per day can reduce the risk of heat stroke. You also can call your local health department to see if there are any heat-relief shelters nearby.

Drink more fluids and don't wait until you're thirsty to drink. Also, adjust your diet to include cold servings and foods that are rich in water, such as fruit and salad.

Wear lightweight, light-colored and loose-fitting clothing

Monitor loved ones and neighbors during a heat wave for signs of heat stroke

Immediately seek medical attention if someone shows signs and symptoms of heat stroke

DON'T:

Exercise vigorously outdoors. If you have to be outdoors, drink plenty of fluids, rest frequently in shaded areas, and limit your activity to morning and evening hours.

Drink liquids that contain caffeine, alcohol, or large amounts of sugar — these can cause you to lose more body fluid

Depend on electric fans to cool you once the temperatures hit the high 90's. Taking a cool shower or bath or going to an air-conditioned place is a much safer way to cool off.

Leave anyone in a closed, parked vehicle

Talk to your physician about the risks of some psychiatric medications and heat stroke.



County Commissioner Susan Latvala, center, was the guest speaker at the June Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) graduation ceremony. Presenting certificates to the graduates were, from left to right, Sheriff Jim Coats, Chief Deputy Bob Gualtieri, Chief Lester Aradi and Deputy Chief Dewey Williams.



Behind the scenes with the burgers and the dogs, the NAMI volunteer cooks are hard at work.

NEW PEER TO PEER CLASS SET FOR AUGUST

by Steven Thompson

NAMI Pinellas will be teaching its third nationally developed Peer-to-Peer Course beginning August 2nd. The course is designed to teach the consumer about mental illness. Topics covered by the course include diagnostic criteria for the major illnesses, biological aspects of mental illness, how to get along in a hospital environment, and spirituality.

Part of the course also is dedicated to the formation of a Relapse Prevention Grid to aid consumers to look back into their diagnoses and realize what happened during the initial stages and what can be done in the future to prevent a relapse.

Consumers also share their experiences dealing with their mental

illness and diagnosis. The course is quite a transformation. You will learn more about yourself and your place in the community. I would highly recommend this to any consumer who is looking to get more out of life, or one who simply wants to learn a little more about mental illness.

The nine-week course will start Saturday, August 2nd from 11 am--2 pm at the Hospice of the Suncoast at 5771 Roosevelt Blvd. in Clearwater. There is a maximum of twenty slots and seating for the class will be first come, first served.

To register contact me at (727)443-4715 or (727) 709-2611 or e-mail me at: sthompson134@tampabay.rr.com.

The **Treatment Advocacy Center**, headquartered outside of Washington, DC, is a national non-profit organization dedicated to eliminating barriers to the timely and effective treatment of severe mental illnesses. They promote laws, policies, and practices for the delivery of psychiatric care and support the development of innovative treatments for and research into the causes of severe and persistent psychiatric illnesses, such as schizophrenia and bipolar disorder.

They can be contacted directly at: www.treatmentadvocacycenter.org
And visit their **Law Enforcement and Corrections Resource Page** at: www.treatmentadvocacycenter.org/Law%20Enforcement/lawenforcement.htm

PERSONAL THANK YOU

NAMI received the following letter from Bill Trahman regarding the *Joan Trahman Memorial Fund*:

On behalf of myself, my family, and Joan's entire family, I want to thank the Board for the honor of naming the memorial fund after her.

All of us, her relatives by birth and through marriage will always be proud to have been part of her life, as were so many others. Thank you.

Sincerely, Bill Trahman

LOSSES TO OUR COMMUNITY

It is with much sadness that our community has lost one of our best leaders and friend when Mrs. Donna Hicks passed away in June.

Donna retired from Florida Power and then devoted many years to serving on the Board of the Guardian Association. As Vice President, she conducted many educational programs and was instrumental in coordinating the Association's Annual "Guardian Expo".

What many people did not know was that in addition to serving as a Professional Guardian, she provided the same services pro bono for many indigent mental health consumers. These individuals had many, many needs and Donna was there to help them in their most difficult moments. She had a special place in her heart for those with mental illness.

Donna will be missed by all. She was a lovely woman with a big heart. Her kindness and compassion were endless. We will all miss her dearly.

We also send condolences to:

--the family of **Robert "Ivy" Jones**, brother of Board members John and Anne Jones.

--the family of **Annette Merson**, mother of Robert and Wendy Merson

--the family of Rochelle Adler, long-time NAMI member

FREE Rx DRUG DISCOUNT CARDS AVAILABLE IN PINELLAS COUNTY

Pinellas County is making free prescription drug discount cards available under a program sponsored by the National Association of Counties (NACo) that offers **average savings of 20 percent** off the retail price of commonly prescribed drugs.

The prescription cards are being distributed to many locations throughout Pinellas County. Availability may vary. Best of all, there is no cost to county taxpayers for NACo and Pinellas County to make these money-saving cards available to residents.

Cards will be available at several locations, including the five offices of Pinellas County Health and Human Services, the five offices of the Pinellas County Health Department, county offices frequented by the public, senior centers, and community centers. A limited supply also is available at our NAMI Education Meetings. For a list of locations where the card is available, go to www.pinellascounty.org/humanservices. County residents can call toll free 1-877-321-2652 or visit <https://naco.advancerx.com> for assistance with the program.

There is no enrollment form, no membership fee and no restrictions or limits on frequency of use. Cardholders and their family members may use the card any time their prescriptions are not covered by insurance. Just present the card at a participating pharmacy. The discount card program is administered by Caremark Rx, Inc.

DR. JILL BOLTE TAYLOR FEATURED ON COVER OF TIME MAGAZINE

Dr. Jill Bolte Taylor was chosen recently as one of *Time* Magazine's 100 Most Influential People. Her personal story is a "wild ride", and she tells it eloquently in her book, ***A Stroke of Insight***. Dr. Taylor was a brain scientist at Harvard Medical School, teaching and performing research into the biological basis of mental illness, when a blood vessel exploded in the left hemisphere of her brain--she had a stroke.

"I could not walk, talk, read, write or recall any of my life," she reports. During the next decade she fought to recover her abilities and continues to study the brain--including her own. In a recent quote in *TIME* Magazine, popular emcee and entertainer Dick Clark said, "Through her writings and lectures, she has done perhaps more than anyone else to explain, both to the healthy and the stricken, what a stroke is."

Dr. Taylor remains dedicated to brain research and the Harvard Brain Donor Bank.

Dr. Jill Bolte Taylor and her father with Elliott Steele, center, at the NAMI National Conference. Mental Illness Research Takes Brains. Call 1-800-BRAINBANK.



Matthew L. Chambers, left, Chairman of the Board of Directions for Mental Health, awarded their first Lifetime Achievement Award to Tom Riggs, honored for 21 years of dedication to the community as President/CEO of Directions.

TIPS FOR HURRICANE SEASON

by Marianne Martin

Helpful hints for to be prepared for Hurricane Season:

- Determine your evacuation level. This is available on evacuation maps provided in hurricane preparedness packets by local businesses, your newspaper, your county utility bill, or from the local county offices.
- If you need to evacuate, make arrangements ahead of time. It is safest and best to evacuate early and only as far as is necessary to be out of the evacuation area. Residents with special needs should register with the county.
- Plan on taking a shelter kit with you (no matter where you evacuate to). Your "shelter kit" should include: medications, nonperishable food, several gallons of drinking water, bedding materials, flash light and portable radio with batteries, any infant/child care supplies needed, quiet games or reading materials, glasses, personal hygiene items (including waterless hand soap), one change of clothing, important papers, picture ID, and cash.
- If you remain in your home, also have a week's supply of nonperishable food, 1-3 gallons of water per person per day, pet supplies, nonelectric can opener, first aid kit, plastic sheeting or other home repair materials, and materials for a portable toilet in case water pressure is lost (5 gallon bucket, large plastic bags, and chlorine bleach).
- Have your hurricane kit ready early in the summer and be sure to keep the following: a 7 day supply of medications; a full gas tank; a list of prescriptions; contact information for your health care provider, and important papers
- Be sure to let family, friends, healthcare provider or work know where you plan on going should you plan to evacuate.
- Pinellas County Utilities can provide you with a booklet to help prepare for the storm aftermath and water storage and purification, waste collection and solid disposal by contacting pcuwebteam@pinellascounty.org or by calling 727-464-4000 to receive a free brochure. *The Storm Gourmet* by Daphne Nikolopoulos, Is a useful book with more than 70 recipes you can make without electricity.

NAMI VETERAN'S COUNCIL ADVISES BOARD

The purpose of the NAMI VETERAN'S COUNCIL is to provide advice to the NAMI Board Veterans Committee regarding mental illness issues for Veterans, active military and their families. Their mission is *to advocate for veterans with serious mental illness and their families in comprehensive and coordinated systems of care in both inpatient and community settings.* The Mission also covers active military personnel and their dependents with serious mental illness.

The council is looking for members to interact with NAMI Florida on a state-wide basis and NAMI National on issues facing all veterans and active duty personnel, as well as their families. The representatives also establish relationships with Departments of Veterans Affairs on the state and national levels and with U.S. Military medical facilities in the state.

The Council provides education to Veteran Families through *Family to*

Family classes and to consumers through the class *In Our Own Voices*. They advocate through VA Mental Health Consumer Councils and provide support through Veterans to Veterans group and NAMI Connections.

NAMI VETERAN'S COUNCIL has an active NAMI e-mail group and monthly teleconference calls on the 3rd Thursday of each month at 4 p.m.

For additional information contact Sally Miller at mtgalsal@aol.com or Bruce Graunke, at Bruce.graunke@va.gov

SUICIDE RATES INCREASING

The nation's housing crisis and escalating pace of foreclosures have been linked to suicides. Mental Health groups are publishing tips on how to handle the stress associated with today's economic issues and the real estate meltdown. Crisis hotlines are reporting a surge in calls from frantic homeowners who are depressed and anxious about the future.

SUPREME COURT DECISION

On June 19, 2008, the Supreme Court of the U.S. issued a decision in which it held that a higher standard must be used to determine the competence of defendants to represent themselves in criminal cases than to determine the competence of defendants to stand trial.

The implications of the INDIANA V. EDWARDS decision are somewhat limited; however, NAMI National believes that it represents a positive step toward the goal of ensuring greater fairness in criminal cases in which the mental illness of the defendant is at issue.

In the decision, the Supreme Court held that defendants determined competent to stand trial are not necessarily competent to represent themselves at trial.

Become a Member of NAMI Pinellas Today!

Name: _____
(Title) (First) (Last) -or- (Name of Organization)

Address: _____ Apt./Unit # _____
(Street Address)

_____ (City) _____ (State) _____ (Zip Code)
 Phone [____] _____ E-mail: _____

New Membership: Yes No -or- Membership Renewal: Yes No

Type of membership (Please check):

- Individual (\$40) Family (\$50) Supporter (\$100)
 Open Door (\$3) Student (\$15) Corporate-Business (\$250)
 I believe in NAMI's mission and wish to donate \$ _____.

Relationship to Consumer (please check one if applicable):

- Parent of Adult Child Parent (child under 18) Spouse Adult Child
 Consumer (Self) Sibling or Other Relative Friend Professional

Reason for joining (please check all that apply):

- Family to Family Peer to Peer CIT
 Support Group Education Programs Membership Drive
 Other: _____ (July-August 2008)

Please make checks payable to: **NAMI Pinellas County, Florida, Inc. and mail to
 NAMI Pinellas County, Florida, Inc., 466 94th Ave. N. St. Petersburg, FL 33702**

NEW TRAINING “PROVIDER EDUCATION” COMING SOON

The NAMI Provider Education Program is a 10-week course that presents a penetrating, subjective view of family and consumer experiences with serious mental illness. The course, designed by NAMI National as one of its signature programs, will be offered for the first time in Pinellas County. It has received enthusiastic response from providers when offered by NAMI affiliates throughout Florida. The training is geared toward line staff at community agencies and hospitals who work directly with people who have severe and persistent mental illnesses.

The course helps providers not only to realize the hardships that families and consumers face and but also to appreciate the courage and persistence it takes to live with and recover from mental illness. It was developed by Dr. Joyce Burland, who also designed the extraordinary Family to Family Education Program.

Provider Education is taught by a team of five consisting of two family members; two consumers; and one mental health professional who is also a consumer or family member. Thanks to a grant from NAMI Florida, the following NAMI Pinellas members have been trained as trainers: John and Mim Craig; Dick Durstein; Joan Andrade; Bryan Dickerson; Steven Scolfield; Steven Thompson; and, Vicky Holder.

We are searching for funding so that we can offer this course, as well as future Family to Family and Peer to Peer educational programs. Stay tuned for more details concerning this valuable course.



Linda McKinnon, President of NAMI Florida, with Judge Steven Leifman, lead author of “Treatment, Not Jail, The Florida Mental Health/Criminal Justice Transformation Project”, at NAMI’s annual convention.

NAMI **Meetings Schedule**

Education Meetings

1st Thursday--7:00 p. m. Monthly

Board Meetings

3rd Thursday--6:00 p.m. Monthly

Family Support Groups

3rd Thursday--7:30 p.m. Monthly

NAMI Connections

Consumer Support Groups
Every Monday, 6:30 p.m.

NAMI Connections

Consumer Support Groups
Every Tuesday at 1:30 p.m. at
Directions for Mental Health
8823 115th Avenue
Largo, FL 33773

All meetings are held at
Hospice of the Florida Suncoast
5771 Roosevelt Blvd.
Building 100
The Gathering Place
Clearwater, FL 33760
(unless otherwise indicated)

NAMI Pinellas County, Florida, Inc.
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St. Petersburg, FL 33702

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SAVOR OUR CHOCOLATE EXTRAVAGANZA!