



Contact us at 256.0288 or NAMI_ABQ@juno.com

2nd Quarter 2004

The New Look *Challenger*

By John Matsko

We hope you enjoy our new format. We were fortunate to have a few new volunteers join our newsletter team. One of the volunteers is Pat Catlett whose expertise is in Graphics Design. You can attribute the new look to Pat. We are always looking for people to write articles and were very happy to have Colleen Costin, Anna Tabor and our (currently anonymous) Foreign Correspondent volunteer to write for the newsletter. Sylvia Hughes and I will continue to proof read and edit submissions. Please let us know what you think of the new **Challenger**. You can send or call in your comments and suggestions using the phone number and the address on the front page of this issue. ☎

NAMI-Albuquerque's Website (Finally)

<http://www.nami.org/sites/albuquerque>

It's been a long gestation period for this useful addition to NAMI-Albuquerque's tools for communicating the message of advocacy, education and support to our members and the public at-large. The major credit for its current content and format goes to Paul Cox and the team he headed to develop the site. Delays in publishing it to the NAMI-National server caused by their lack of the affiliate template have now been overcome. I am the website manager and I would appreciate any comments, suggestions and corrections that you may have. Please send comments to John Matsko, nami_abq@juno.com. Thank you. ☎

Get information about mental illness, medications etc. at NAMI-Albuquerque, 6001 Marble NE, Ste 7. Free pamphlets are available. A lending library of books and tapes is available for members. The office is staffed by volunteers M-F, 10:00 am - 1:00 pm. Stop by and see us.

FAMILY SUPPORT MEETINGS: Tuesdays 7:00-8:30 pm at NAMI Albuquerque Office – 6001 Marble NE, Ste. 7

If someone in your family is afflicted with mental illness and you don't know where to turn, come to the support meeting for help and understanding in dealing with your situation.

Special Needs Trusts will be the topic of the Educational Meetings on Tuesday April 6 and May 4. Accessing SS benefits and our required Annual Meeting will be combined on Tuesday June 1.

CONSUMER SUPPORT MEETINGS: Albuquerque Drop-in Center

1007 San Mateo Blvd. SE, Phone: 256-8289

Hours of Operation: Saturday, & Sunday 10 am-6 pm

Support Group Meeting Friday, 3:00 PM - 4:30 pm - Help prepare a light pot luck and eat after the support group. Movie begins 6:00 pm-

Peer Bridgers Support Group, Monday's 12:00 pm -1:00 pm

Peer Bridgers Training, Monday's 4:30-6:00, Phone: 272.5935

NAMIWalks Fundraiser

By Colleen Costin

Prepare to hit the road! Albuquerque has been selected as one of forty cities nationwide to host **NAMIWalks for the Mind of America** on May 15, 2004. Everyone is invited to join in this fundraising and mental health awareness event. Participants may check-in at the Albuquerque Academy (6400 Wyoming NE) between 9 and 10 a.m. Free parking is available at Heights Cumberland Presbyterian Church across the street at Moon and Academy. The 5 K (3.1 miles) walk around the Albuquerque Academy will begin at 10 a.m. There will be a number of refreshment tables with drinks and donuts to keep you energized along the way. You do not have to complete the course but the distance, pace and terrain are suitable even for children and well-behaved dogs on leashes.

There is no registration fee for the Walk. Walkers are encouraged to collect donations from family members, friends and co-workers in support of their participation in the Walk. Companies, organizations and families may organize teams of walkers and



compete with other teams to raise funds. All walkers raising \$100 or more will receive a NAMIWalks for the Mind of America event

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NAMI Spring Education Meetings

By Mary Tabor

It has been said that if you have a disabled family member and if you own as much as a home, you should investigate setting up a **Special Needs Trust**. Sufficiently convinced of the importance of this statement, your NAMI-ABQ Board has arranged for specially trained individuals to share their expertise with us at three consecutive Education Meetings this spring. These meetings will take the place of our usual support groups on April 6th, May 4th, and June 1st at 7:00 PM at the NAMI-ABQ office.

Special Needs Trusts, also called Supplemental Needs Trusts, are legal trusts designed to provide assets for the care and comfort of disabled and elderly beneficiaries without jeopardizing their access to programs, funds and/or medical benefits that may be available to

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NAMI Walks Fundraiser

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T-shirt. Additional incentive prizes will be awarded based on amounts raised by individuals or teams. There are also opportunities for corporate sponsorships (and extensive recognition) for local businesses committed to backing NAMI's effort to improve the lives of people with mental illness.

All proceeds will be used to support NAMI programs. This event is anticipated to raise well over 3 million dollars for NAMI nationwide. It is expected that \$100,000 will be raised in New Mexico, most of which will be allocated to support local programs such as Family-to-Family, In Our Own Voice, Outreach and Anti-stigma programs.

Volunteers are needed to help set up and man the sign-in and refreshment tables and to position directional signs on the day of the Walk. If you wish to volunteer or would like information and suggestions on teambuilding, fundraising or corporate sponsorships, you should contact Elaine Miller at **260-0154** or by **email at ejonesnami@aol.com**.

Bring your sunscreen, wear comfortable shoes, consider dressing in layers (May weather can be unpredictable) and, most of all, prepare to enjoy a spring morning with family and friends while supporting this very worthwhile venture. See you all at the Walk on Saturday, May 15th! 🌍

Spring Education Meetings

...continued from Page 1

them. The cost of care for many disabled persons can be prohibitive and is simply out

of reach for most people to pay privately. Because many government-funded programs in the United States today provide substantial benefits, and in many cases are the only available programs for disabled persons, access to these services is critical. However, the requirements for qualifying for these benefits often thwart the efforts of families to provide support for their disabled loved ones.

Families who are planning for a disabled family member know how critical these benefits are. In the past, families would either intentionally disinherit the loved one or attempt to create oral trusts or other arrangements with surviving family members. These methods often had heartbreaking and cruel results or were ineffective or fraudulent. On the other hand, many families could not bring themselves to disinherit a disabled beneficiary. As a result, the disabled beneficiary would receive a share of the estate outright, and lose their government benefits until the inheritance was used up. Planning with Special Needs Trusts can solve this dilemma.

Our April 6th meeting features attorney Nell Graham Sale with Miller Stratvert P.A. On May 4th, our speaker will be Jo Ann Baxter, Director of Development and Community Relations at the ARC of NM. Jo Ann will talk about the differences in ARC and other special needs trusts. Please come to both sessions

continued...

for a more complete and balanced understanding of Special Needs Trusts.

The Education Meeting on June 1st will also serve as the Annual Meeting as required in our bylaws. Leona Guitierrez has been invited to speak to us about accessing Social Security Benefits. Leona is a former employee of the Social Security Administration. Desserts will be served. 🌍

Peer Bridgers Educational Meeting

By A Foreign Correspondent

Three members of the Albuquerque Peer Bridgers team came to the NAMI educational meeting to tell anyone, who wanted to hear, about the Peer Bridgers Team. I went along with my son, David, to listen to Jane Thompson, Christine Belford and Patrick Loyd describe the programme. For me, the evening was more entertaining than a night in front of the telly. The speakers were so candid, funny and wise; I switched between laughing and feeling watery-eyed.

The scheme is a flexible partnering between people with mental health problems who are well into their own recovery and people with mental health problems who want some support for their recovery. Jane defined recovery as 'having a dream and having the energy to pursue the dream'.

Peer Bridgers work with clients and occasionally their families too. They offer friendly support, classes and information about locally available resources (they have accrued a huge manual of these). These services are delivered by fellow-travellers on the path of mental health recovery. What struck me powerfully was their lack of top-down condescension, or the false piety that can creep into good-will organizations.

Jane said that sometimes clients find it helpful simply to talk to someone else who knows, from the inside, about the trials of living with mental illness. I found it easy to listen to and to relate to the Bridgers; they were wryly amusing about everyday experiences common to the NAMI community, and were refreshingly unsanctimonious. One of the group related how, in their illness-induced paranoia, they had once "ripped up all their mother's carpets to look for listening devices." *Anyone* who is honest about his own mental states knows that we all skate very close to the edge of absurdity sometimes, it was refreshing to hear this droll, off-hand candor.

The evening re-inforced, for me, the commonality between Us and Them, what the medical community sometimes call 'affected' and 'unaffected' relatives. Show me the person who wouldn't benefit from the compassion, humor and insight of the Peer Bridgers and I'll show you someone who, in cockney vernacular, 'doesn't even know they are born'.

Anyone wanting to train as a Peer Bridger or to find out more about what they offer is invited to leave a message on their answerphone: they don't yet have the budget for a receptionist. The phone number is **505.272.5935**. 🌍

New Housing Opportunity, NLH2

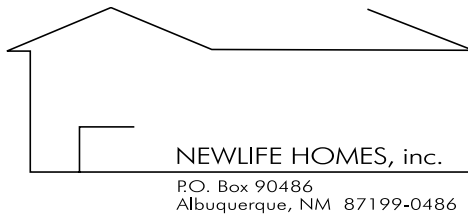
By John Bloomfield, Executive Director, NLH

NewLife Homes has completed phase 1 of a new special needs housing project near Coors and Central, southwest.

The project is called NLH2 and is ready for occupation in March. Applications are now being considered. The 18 one bedroom unit apartment complex provides housing for people with mental and physical disabilities but who are capable of independent living. The project is heavily landscaped creating a campus type feeling with 6 triplexes surrounding a community room. Located at 330 airport SW at the corner of Gwin and 69th, the development is well located with mountain/city views, walking distance to public transport, a range of department stores, banks, and the Alamosa Community Center. The new Alamosa Community Center includes a community medical/dental program, public library, gym, and provides an array of adult programs including computer classes, education, and sports programs.

NewLife Homes 2 can be seen on the left side driving south on Coors from Central. Look for the green metal roofs. To access

the project, turn left on Gonzales, which is the first left off Coors south of Central. Then make the first left turn from Gonzales onto 69th and follow 69th to the end. NLH2 is on the left side.



The project was funded by grants from HUD, City of Albuquerque, and the Federal Home Loan Bank of Dallas. Development is on 1 acre with approx 11,000 sq. ft. Total cost was \$1.4 m. The Architect is Garrett Smith Ltd. Contractor is Global Structures, Developer is NewLife Homes.

All apartments have HUD rental subsidy available and tenants will pay 30% of their adjusted monthly income as rent. The project will be certified by the Albuquerque Police Department's multifamily crime free housing program, and background checks done on all applicants. The onsite manager of the project is Kelly Barnes, who can be contacted in Unit #9. A part-time service coordinator for the project will also be available to help residents with community activities and accessing resources and services they may need.

Prospective tenants should contact MacManagement at 830.9808, and ask for information and an application package for NLH2. NewLife Homes will be developing a further 15 units, called NLH3, immediately adjacent to NLH2. Construction is expected to commence this summer for occupation early next year.

The mission of NewLife Homes is to provide safe affordable permanent housing in a nurturing supportive setting, primarily focussing on residents with a mental illness who are capable of independent living. 📞

CONSUMER NEWS AND VIEWS



NAMI IN OUR OWN VOICE:
Living with Mental Illness

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ recovery education presentation

In Our Own Voice

By Anna Tabor

It's a tough job, but somebody's got to do it. Last fall, the national **In Our Own Voice (IOOV)** team located ten such local somebodies to tell their stories of living with mental illnesses at various venues in the city. The immediate goal is to educate members of the community about people in recovery and hopefully decrease stigma.

Teams of two speakers are sent out with a videotape and the assistance of Laura Hand, Diane Cox, or Mary Tabor. We have been everywhere from Albuquerque Public High School to Presbyterian Health Plex, and from TVI to local churches.

I admit that, during the training, I was a bit concerned about whether or not I could measure up to the program's expectations of an IOOV presentation. This is because I would have to share some of my "Dark Days." And those are not particularly pleasant memories to resurrect. However, there are four other sections to the program (Acceptance, Treatment, Coping Skills, and Successes, Hopes, and Dreams) that both complement each other and offset the challenge of owning up to living through Dark Days. During the time that I have been a part of the IOOV team, I have had the opportunity to work with a number of the team members and have expansive experiences with them. I have also presented alone at restaurants for the Kiwanis groups. However, we determined that it is much more effective to adhere to the national format and insist on going in pairs, which indeed provides an irreplaceable dynamic to the presentation.

Time is ideally allotted at the end for questions from the audience. I have learned a lot about others' views of mental illness through interaction with the audience members, as well as about myself from some insightful questions and comments from them.

IOOV is always accepting ideas for locations of presentations where people think that one would be appropriate and welcome, so if anyone has any input to offer, please call **856-0175**. 📞

Hand Crafted Quilt Donated to NAMI-ABQ

We have been given a beautiful flower garden quilt designed with green, beige and many pastel colors to be raffled off at NAMIWalks on May 15. This 70" X 90" quilt will fit a double/single sized bed or could be used as a wall hanging. Tickets are available at the NAMI-ABQ office for \$5. 📞

NAMI Brings Provider Education to New Mexico

By Laura Hand

W

hat is Provider Education? For many years, mental health professionals have asked what they could do to get the information offered in the Family-to-Family classes. NAMI's Provider Education class is the answer to that request. It has been extensively rewritten to apply specifically to the learning needs of "line personnel" at public agencies who work directly with individuals suffering from severe and persistent brain disorders and their families. The course is held for ten consecutive weeks for three hours per session.

The NAMI Provider Education presents a penetrating, subjective view of the lived experience of mental illness. One of the unique features of Provider Education is the teaching team. The team consists of five people: two family members who are trained NAMI Family-to-Family Education Program teachers; two consumers who are knowledgeable about their own mental illness, and who have a supportive relationship with their families and are dedicated to the project of recovery. The fifth member of the team is a mental health professional who is also either a family member or a consumer themselves.

In 1995, the Provider Course was piloted by NAMI-Rhode Island, NAMI-Pennsylvania, and NAMI-Minnesota. Over twenty states have now inaugurated the program. Based on responses from staff at over 100 agency sites in these states, the reaction to the course has been overwhelmingly positive. In written evaluations, staff members reported that this course was fresh, relevant, helpful, enlightening, and emotionally overwhelming. They stated that not only had their approach towards families changed, but that their understanding of the life dilemmas of consumers had expanded as well.

After a successful Provider Education training in Las Cruces, Albuquerque will be offering its first Provider Education Class to begin March 19, 2004. Training for new teams in both Las Cruces and Albuquerque to teach the Provider Education Class was held March 4 - 7 thanks to a seed grant from the Governor's Mental Health Planning Council of New Mexico.

Aspen Behavioral Health (RCC-5) will be defraying most of the cost of the upcoming Provider Education class beginning March 19, and NAMI-NM would like to take this opportunity to thank both Aspen Behavioral Health and the Governor's Mental Health Planning Council of New Mexico for their support of this program. 🌍

Open Your Mind

About Mental Illnesses and Brain Disorders

For more information on NAMI National visit www.nami.org or call

1-800-950-NAMI
1-800-950-6264

Family-to-Family News

By Claudia McAnnally

T

hanks to our volunteer teachers whose classes were completed sometime around Thanksgiving: Kathryn Chaney, Carol Nuzum, Melissa Maher and Claudine McAnnally.

The first training class for 2004 to train new teachers for Family-to-Family was held February 6 - 8 at the Comfort Inn East in Albuquerque. We would like to take this opportunity to welcome the following ten new teachers to our family: Barbara Craker, June Coburn, Cosette Wheeler, Bea Harris, Phyllis Miller, Kathryn Enns, Jack & Peggy Petrowsky, Gerald Smith, and Dick Magee. Some of these have already committed to teaching our spring classes.

Spring classes for Family-to-Family will start in March. Two classes filled up very quickly and are being taught by Joanna Salinas, Barbara Craker, Mary Stearns and Alma Stark. A third class is being considered and teachers have not yet been selected.

Many thanks to all of the above volunteers and especially to Laura Hand, our State Program Director, without whose countless hours of contribution, important programs like Family-to-Family would not be possible. 🌍

Brain Donations: Thanks so much to Mary Stearns for her generous donations of two brain models which are used extensively in our Family-to-Family classes. We fondly refer to these as "our brains" and they really provide that learning tool that is lacking in the use of only a flat chart. These models have given family members an opportunity to look into this fascinating and complicated instrument – The Brain. 🌍

Announcements:

VSA Arts of New Mexico has invited people from NAMI to join with them and to use their facilities at 4904 Fourth Street NW. Their mission is to nurture and celebrate the creative spirit of people of all abilities through education, outreach, exhibits and performances. They are also affiliated with the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts. For more information call **345-2872**.

WRAP Sessions- Are you in the process of recovering from mental illness? Do you know that people with mental illness can and do recover and lead meaningful lives? **WRAP Training** to be held on May 1 & 2 from 12:30 - 4:30 may be for you. **WRAP** (Wellness Recovery Action Plan) is **not** meant to take the place of medication or your present treatment plan but is a structured system for monitoring uncomfortable and distressing symptoms and, through planned responses, reducing, modifying or eliminating those symptoms. It also includes plans for responses from others when your symptoms have made it impossible for you to make decisions, take care of yourself and keep yourself safe. Anecdotal reporting from people who are using this system indicates that, by helping them feel prepared, it is working for them by helping them to feel better more often and by improving the overall quality of their lives.

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Announcements *continued from page 4...*

WRAP was developed by people who have been dealing with a variety of psychiatric symptoms for many years and are working hard to feel better and get on with their lives.

Five dynamic **WRAP** Facilitators will be leading this training: *Barbara Flores*, PhD ABD, Director of Psychiatric Emergency Services and past Director of Psychosocial Rehabilitation at UNM Psychiatric Center; *Patrick Loyd*, Peer Bridger & NMPI Coordinator; *Christine Belford*, Peer Bridger Educator; *Phil Jordan*, Director of ABQ Drop In Center and *Maureen Guthrie*, employed by ABQ Drop in Center. All five facilitators are consumers with well over fifty years of recovery experience collectively.

If you wish to be part of this **WRAP** training please contact Mary Tabor, **856-0175** or at tabor26@aol.com. Participants will need to complete some homework before May 1st. so please call well in advance to prepare and to reserve your place. **WRAP** training is offered free of charge through UNM Psychiatric Center. ☎

Book Review

By Anna Tabor

It has been said that one cannot study psychiatry without being mindful of religion. Or is it the other way around? Whichever it is, a book published in 2000, and available in the NAMI library, has had me chewing on some pretty heavy material that but introduces the possibility for further thought. All one has to do is check out the lengthy bibliographies, and have someone to bounce your ideas off of.

Psychiatry and Religion: The Convergence of Mind and Spirit is a collection of scholarly essays edited by James K. Boehnlein, MD, MSc. It couldn't be a more comprehensive work. ***Psychiatry and Religion*** includes the following chapters: The Historical Relationship Between Psychiatry and the Major Religions; Psychiatry and Religion in Cross-Cultural Context; Psychoanalysis and Religion: Current Perspectives; A Psychological Perspective on Cults; Psychiatric Therapies Influenced by Religious Movements; Moral and Spiritual Issues Following Traumatization; The Role of Clergy in Mental Health Care; The Worlds of Religion and Psychiatry: Bioethics as Arbiter of Mutual Respect; Religious and Spiritual Issues in Psychiatric Education and Training; Religion and Future Psychiatric Nosology and Treatment.

In one particularly interesting section dealing with PTSD clients, the authors say that those who suffer often "worship" their past experience, no matter how traumatic it might have been. They explain how those characteristics of reenactment are closely related to religious worship. "Application of the theological categories of action, matter, and form to reenactment episodes reveals striking similarities with more customary forms of worship," says Landy F. Sparr, MD, MA, and John F. Ferguson, M Div. This book is well worth reading for anyone who is intrigued by more than just the medical reality of their illness. Religious and spiritual aspects of one's lived experience provide a rich area to investigate, as testified to in ***Psychiatry and Religion***. ☎

Reintroducing the Sunshine Group

The group meets Sundays from 5:00 pm to 7:30 pm at the Community Room, #D3, of the Kentucky Manor apartments at 437 Kentucky SE.

The Sunshine Group was founded in 1997 to serve people with a diagnosis of mental illness. It is the first local self help group effort for persons with a mental illness. From now on we will also serve their families, friends, supervised children and anyone interested in having a pleasant time free of drugs and alcohol.

You may contact us by calling Mickey at **266-6042** or Don at **242-2195** day-time or by e-mail to Don at dlmorgan15@comcast.net ☎

REMEMBER NAMIWalks Fundraiser

Volunteers needed for set up, sign-in, refreshment tables, to position directional signs on the day of the Walk. To volunteer or for more information, contact Elaine Miller at **260-0154** or e-mail ejonesnami@aol.com.

NAMI WALKS

The **Challenger** is a newsletter published quarterly by the **National Alliance for the Mentally Ill (NAMI)-Albuquerque**. It attempts to present a variety of views on issues relating to mental illnesses, with depression, bipolar and schizophrenia as primary interests. Ideas and articles are welcome. Articles do not necessarily reflect the views of NAMI. The right to edit material is reserved. Deadline for articles is the First day of December, March, June, and September.

Send articles to: c/o NAMI-Albuquerque
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The Nation's Voice on Mental Illness



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\$33. Individual/Family Annual Membership includes local, state, and national newsletters and library privileges.

\$3. Consumer Annual Membership.

Enclosed is a **donation of \$** _____ (NAMI-Albuquerque is a 501(c)(3) organization;
 donations are tax deductible)

I prefer to donate and extend support as a non-member.