



Contact us at 256.0288 or NAMI_ABQ@juno.com

3rd Quarter 2004

Get information about mental illness, medications etc. at NAMI-Albuquerque, 6001 Marble NE, Ste7. Free pamphlets are available. A lending library of books and tapes is available for members. The office is staffed by volunteers M-F, 10:00am - 1:00pm. Stop by and see us. More resources are available on our website at www.nami.org/sites/albuquerque, or e-mail John Matsko nami_abq@juno.com or call 256.0288.

Support

NAMI- ALBUQUERQUE FAMILY SUPPORT MEETINGS: Tuesdays 7:00pm-8:30pm 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.

Family-to-Family- Classes are forming now. Contact Laura Hand 265-8273

In Our Own Voice (IOOV)- People living with Mental illness are available to speak about their experiences. Contact Mary Tabor 856-0175 for details on presentations. See page 7 for more details.

CONSUMER SUPPORT MEETINGS:

ADIC- Albuquerque Drop-in Center 1007 San Mateo Blvd. SE, Phone: 256-8289, email adic1@hotmail.com
Open Saturday, & Sunday 10am-6pm, Consumer Run Mental Health Services and Self Help Groups.

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

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

The Depression and Bipolar Support Alliance (DBSA) Albuquerque support group meets Thursday 6:30p - 8:30pm. Meetings are for patients/ consumers and family members/friends at Trinity United Methodist Church 3715 Silver Ave. SE (one block south of Central,two blocks east of Carlisle) Phone 889-3632 or contact us at dbsa4albq@yahoo.com

Double Trouble in Recovery (DTR) is a twelve-step fellowship of men and women, designed to meet the needs of those having addictive substance problems as well as a psychiatric disorder. For information call Donald Hume at 256-4995 or email dhume@nm.net.

Survivors of Suicide (SOS) Meetings held second and last Monday of each month 4:00pm St. Paul Lutheran Church,1100 Indian School Road NE (just west of University Blvd.) Contact Richard Schwoebel 858-0277 or St. Paul's Church 242-5942. See page 3 for more information.

Sunshine Group Meet Sundays from 5:00pm to 7:30pm at the Community Room, #D3, of the Kentucky Manor apartments at 437 Kentucky SE. Contact Mickey at 266-6042 or Don at 242-2195 day-time or email Don at: dilmorgan15@comcast.net meetings resume July 11th.

See page 6 for more Support Information

Join Us for the Annual NAMI Albuquerque Picnic

Tuesday August 3, 2004, 5:30pm - 8pm at the Elena Gallegos picnic grounds. Contact Linda Givens at 294-4413, or email lgcinderela@aol.com. See page 4 for more details.



LOCAL POLICE OFFICER WINS NAMI NATIONAL HONOR

Compiled by Colleen Costin



Anyone who follows the news remembers the day Sergeant Carole Oleksak was shot while trying to restrain a man in a parking lot near the UNM campus. Most of us also remember when Officer Oleksak made her first public statement after an extended and arduous recovery. Our surprise and relief when she expressed compassion for her homeless, mentally ill assailant turned to gratitude and admiration when she vowed to actively support changes in the system that had failed him and others like him.

Our own NAMI-Albuquerque President, Jane Lancaster, wrote the following eloquent description in her letter nominating Officer Oleksak for the national NAMI Sam Cochran Compassion in Law Enforcement Award for 2004:

Jane's letter begins ..."On July 7, 2003, a mentally disturbed homeless man, Duc Minh Pham, critically shot Sergeant Carole Oleksak, an Albuquerque police officer, when she responded to a call for service. Pham shot her in the head and torso when she tried to restrain him in a public area. He was subsequently shot and killed by other officers, as he walked down Central Avenue firing shots wildly in a busy area full of early evening walkers, shoppers and customers at outdoor restaurants. In the immediate aftermath it was revealed that Pham had been arrested over 50 times in the past 10 years. In these cases, because it was determined that Pham was not a threat to himself or others, he was released without being legally bound to accept mental health treatment. This shooting closely followed on fires that swept through the City's riverine habitat along the Rio Grande, thereby evicting hundreds of homeless onto the streets. The community's outrage was intensified by local media commentaries such as "Murderous Homeless Invade Nob Hill." There were calls for

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WHAT'S INSIDE NAMI CHALLENGER

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LOCAL Police Officer WINS NAMI National Award

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sweeping incarceration of the homeless mentally ill or the banishment of homeless from the community.

Sergeant Oleksak astonished everybody by her first public statement after her near miraculous survival. In contrast to the anticipated anger against her attacker, she went on the offensive against his plight and asked the community to design proper services for the mentally ill and the homeless. She dedicated her recovery to lobbying the legislature and city officials for a new approach to treating people with brain disorders (which exist at a very high rate among the homeless.) Her courageous insistence on defining her own misfortune and injury as a result of the failure of the community to care for mentally impaired homeless people has stunned Albuquerque. Oleksak re-framed the terms of public debate about homelessness and mental illness. Her stance, taken long before her own recovery looked certain, galvanized the Mayor's office, the judiciary, and community activists; her attitude provided a focus for change.

A week after the shooting, District Judge W. J. Brennan praised the mental health courts in Albuquerque and the jail diversion program established only a few months earlier. He called for changes to state law that will proactively serve the mentally incompetent. Judge Brennan derided the systematic arrest and re-arrest of people too unwell to seek treatment or to maintain it. This serial futility of the criminal justice system costs taxpayers millions of dollars and causes enormous frustration among police officers, prosecutors, public defenders, corrections officials and judges. The first step is to divert offenders into the mental health system and away from jail with laws such as New York's Assisted Outpatient Treatment Law.

In early December Albuquerque Mayor Martin Chavez convened a summit conference on the homeless mentally ill and initiated a comprehensive plan about the use a new quarter cent tax in a coordinated, results-oriented and proactive way. Funds from this tax (pegged at \$4.8 million in the first year) will be used for an Assertive Community Treatment Program (ACT). Negotiations are underway with New Mexico Human Services to match funds from the sales tax with Medicaid at a 1:3 ratio. Some of these funds will be used to establish two ACT provider teams at the Bernalillo County jail; one, figuratively speaking, at the entrance for jail diversion and one at the exit to stop the circular "lock-them-up and dump-them-out" practices of only a year ago. In support of the Mayor's initiative, the Metropolitan Criminal Justice Coordinating Council (MCJCC) chaired by Judge Brennan, sponsored a memorial to study the competence laws in New Mexico in the last legislative session. Judge Brennan has appointed judges and community advocates to examine the existing competency laws and to make recommendations for changes to more effectively address the mentally ill incompetent in the 60-day legislative session next January.

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Carol Oleksak, on medical leave and still not fully recovered, has lent her authority and her energy to this effort. This is no small thing; all of Albuquerque is united in respect and admiration for this courageous woman officer who risked her life and sustained grievous injuries. She turned her own misfortune into a potent opportunity to change community practice in the treatment of mentally ill and homeless. She defined the moment by affirming that the mentally disadvantaged are the responsibility of a community that has failed them for 30 years. Public support has led to initiatives at city, county and state levels. We are, at last, starting to design and provide crucial and effective comprehensive, proactive services to protect the vulnerable and ultimately, us all."

The Sam Cochran Award, named for the Memphis Police Department officer who developed the crisis intervention training program for police that is now being replicated all over the nation, is given to recognize exemplary police work with people with mental illnesses - police work that not only protects the public but also protects the health, safety, and dignity of some of our most vulnerable citizens. NAMI Acting Executive Director, Michael J. Fitzpatrick, M.S.W. described Officer Oleksak's behavior as "nothing short of heroic." The award will be presented in person at a symposium on legal issues at NAMI's 25th Anniversary convention in Washington, DC this fall. 🌐

NAMI'S 2004 ANNUAL CONVENTION

Introduction by Sylvia Hughes

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NAMI's 25th Anniversary Convention will be held September 8-12, 2004 in Washington, DC. The theme for this convention is "Celebrating a Quarter Century of Changing Minds," encapsulating the true spirit and essence of NAMI's grassroots. The conference agenda will address mental health services, research, forensic issues, housing, employment, consumer-run programs, fundraising, and other topics of critical importance to consumers and family members.

NAMI members who have attended in the past routinely return to their Affiliates inspired by the people they meet and presentations they see and hear. This would be a great year for you to go. Information including fees and deadlines can be found at www.nami.org. Please note that Early Bird rates are available until August 5th. After August 5, you must register on-site in Washington.

Last year, one of the attendees at the NAMI Annual Convention was our Affiliate President, Jane Lancaster. She's written about some of the highlights for her in the following piece.

MY FIRST TIME:

The NAMI National Convention, Minneapolis, June, 2003

By Jane B. Lancaster, President, NAMI Albuquerque

My first experience with NAMI National was last summer when I attended the Annual Convention in Minneapolis. I had no idea what to expect. The diversity of speakers, topics,

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workshops, trainings and videos overwhelmed me with choices. I should not have been surprised. After all, NAMI is the largest single purpose grassroots organization in the country with a membership of over 300,000.

Everyone's interests and needs are different so I am only going to try to tell you what were highlights for me. One of my goals in attending was to attend a two-session workshop on Special Needs Trusts and Estate Planning. NAMI has now started a special WEB page on estate planning available to members with information tailored to the particular laws and regulations of each state. We heard presentations from lawyers on how to write a Special Needs Trust that can last for 50 years without returning to the courts each time there is a change in condition or needs of the beloved beneficiary.

Each day I feasted my mind and heart at presentations on new and diverse treatment options; lively confrontations between providers, consumers and their families; consumer-based consciousness raising sessions; and cutting-edge research. My favorites were special presentations by Dr. Michael Schwartz, "User-friendly Scientific Perspectives on Psychiatric Disorders and Their Treatments," and another by the new NIMH Director, Thomas Insel, "New Research Initiatives from the National Institute of Mental Health."

The final event of the convention was the NAMI Convention Awards Dinner. NAMI honored the memory of Senator Paul Wellstone, champion of parity, who was lost in a plane crash the previous year; Laura Lawless, the first Miss American contestant to compete while speaking out publicly about her personal struggle with depression; and Hikmah Gardiner, who helped the federal government launch its first formal anti-stigma campaign among many others.

As far as I am concerned, I will never miss another NAMI National Annual Convention. This fall's meeting in Washington, DC, is especially critical because legislation for insurance parity for mental illness will come before the House and Senate and NAMI needs all the help it can get to get publicity and lobby the legislature. 🗳️

Survivors of Suicide (SOS)

SOS meetings are held on the second and last Monday of every month at 4:00pm at St. Paul Lutheran Church, 1100 Indian School Road NE (just west of University Blvd.).

These are open meetings; no fees, invitations, or reservations are required. Call Richard Schwoebel at 858-0277 for more information.

The purpose of our meetings is to openly share and discuss feelings such as guilt, anger, remorse, abandonment, and helplessness, which are commonly experienced by survivors. We understand that some survivors might find it difficult to attend an open meeting in which feelings such as these are discussed. We have found, however, that the risk of sharing our special problems and concerns is more than offset by what is gained in learning from those around us who have had the same tragic experience. Those who might be hesitant to attend should know that participation in the discussions is entirely voluntary, and no individual survivor will be pressured to participate during the meetings. 🗳️

THE MYSTERY OF THE HUMAN CEREBELLUM: IMPLICATIONS FOR SCHIZOPHRENIA

A talk by Nancy Andreasen

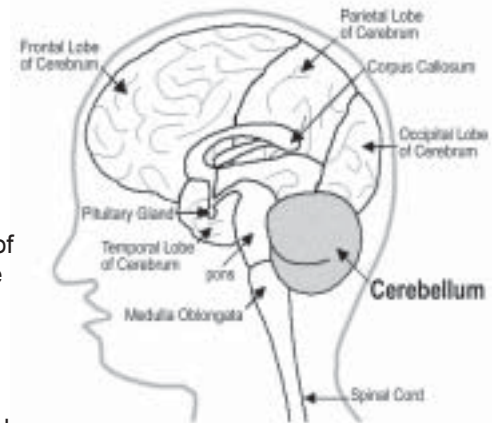
By Jane Lancaster

Dr. Nancy Andreasen, Director of the Health Science Center's MIND Institute (Mental Illness and Neuroscience Discovery), gave a special presentation on the UNM South Campus in February on the cerebellum and its implications for understanding schizophrenia. In the past scientists have focused on the cerebral cortex as the part of the brain that sets humans off from other animals and the locus of advanced cognitive tasks such as foresight and planning. However, recent studies using PET (Positron Emission Tomography) scans show that the cerebellum is involved in nearly all tasks of the human mind including memory, attention, the control of unconscious skilled movement patterns such as driving a car or typing, and the advanced ability to think about what is in another being's mind.

In spite of the facts that the human cerebellum is one of the last parts of the brain to finish its development, and that it is about 1/3 larger than the chimpanzee's, and has

more neurons (one power greater) than the human prefrontal cortex despite its being smaller in size; scientists tended to misunderstand its importance because lesions in it didn't cause obvious loss of function. Furthermore, the anatomic structure of the cerebellum is very simple, essentially all parts are the same and their differing functions are based solely on what parts of the cortex or midbrain they are connected to. In other words, the best model for the cerebellum is as a microprocessor. It seeks patterns and errors in neural processing and helps the cerebral cortex to respond appropriately.

The relationships of the cerebellum to some of the symptoms of schizophrenia are just beginning to come to the fore. The cerebellum has rich connections to deep brain areas involved with emotions and motivation. PET (Positive Emission Tomography) scans suggest that these connections in people with schizophrenia are especially abnormal. Furthermore, finger tapping tasks, clearly controlled in the cerebellum, such as time interval discrimination and imitation are also impaired. One brain scientist has called the cerebellum the gateway to the brain and consciousness. Perhaps schizophrenia is the result of a failure in the brain's microprocessor: one that identifies pattern breaks and errors. 🗳️



PROVIDER EDUCATION CLASS GRADUATES NINETEEN!

By Laura Hand

Thanks to grants from Aspen Behavioral Health, the Region 5 RCC of the NM Department of Health and from the Governor's Mental Health Planning Council of New Mexico, NAMI-NM held its first training of Provider Education team teachers in February, thus making it possible for NAMI-Albuquerque to offer their first Provider Education Class this spring!

The Provider Education Class is a ten-week course in Mental Illness Education providing Consumer/Provider/Family collaboration skills for line staff at public mental health agencies. The team is made up of one mental health professional who is either a consumer or a family member, two family members and two consumers. This five-person team, guided by the curriculum adapted for line staff from Joyce Burland's Family-to-Family curriculum, then seeks to provide insights based upon their personal experience with mental illness. Patricia Diaz, LMSW, Anna Tabor, Rosalind Arden, Pat Catlett and Laura Hand led this first, groundbreaking class.

Some things class members said about the class were, "I have learned to be more empathetic with families dealing with mental illness and not be judgmental about families' feelings." "The class was very helpful. There was a broad-based view into the personal experience of people living with mental illness and their families. It bridged the medical/therapeutic views, and made the invisible, visible." "In my current work, family is not included and many clients don't have communication with the family. It was helpful to see family who are lovingly engaged in the recovery process."

On a personal note, I would like to say what a privilege it was to be on the team and to have the opportunity to meet such wonderful providers! Each of them brought an open heart and mind to the class, and encouraged us to believe that "the system" can be managed, especially when people like these are acting as our advocates.

PROVIDER TRAINING EXPERIENCE

By Jeannetta Boyden, Social Worker

I'm one of about 20 individuals from a wide range of agencies in the greater Albuquerque area that had the opportunity to be the first class of Providers to be trained by the wonderful family and consumer volunteers of NAMI. I have to admit to initial shock as we sat at tables separated from each other and the NAMI panel meticulously went through the well prepared script. Each week we were given new material. After all these years of working in the field, I confirmed what I already knew, gained new perspectives on what I thought I knew and was even confronted with new material.

As the weeks passed we developed a comfort level with each other as we faced our perceptions of one another. I as a provider faced up to the need to listen to consumers and families in a new way. I hope that the NAMI volunteers came to discover that not all Providers are aloof, arrogant and

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uninvolved. Perhaps most eye opening was the commonality between the tables. With each passing class I grew as I listened to the volunteers share their experiences and I compared those to my own. I came to admire the courage and fortitude of the volunteers as I have been challenged to find new ways to assist those I work with to strive for the same.

Thanks to everyone at NAMI for making this opportunity possible.

CONSUMER/CLIENT/TEACHER EXPERIENCE

By Pat Catlett

Having served on the Consumer/Client/Teacher side of the Provider Training, I found the class to be simultaneously encouraging, because of the sustained interest of the Provider attendees, and amazing, as I recounted my up and down life of successes and set-backs. I saw how well I have thrived. I was reminded that I am NOT my illness. It does NOT own me.

The gifted team of teachers and attentive professionals fostered a feeling of my being less like a survivor and more of a hero. They listened and they heard. They empowered me to find new strength to continue with a sincere trust in better treatment, mutual understanding, intense research and continued support.

The hands-on advantage of having real people as teachers living genuine lives with authentic mental health issues, moved the group well beyond any text book encounters.

One consumer/client shared the experience of living a life of Highs and dangerous Lows. 'Mania' is just fine thank you! But 'Depression' is like being covered from head to toe by a heavy lead black shroud. You do not know where you go or who you are. You are frozen, unable to move, unable to breathe, dying alone in a deep hole that gets ever darker, ever deeper, ever colder. Another described the experience of hearing voices, of existing in a very real world outside the realm others were living. The class actually attempted a task of trying to concentrate on verbal directions with a constant, loud, obtrusive chatter going on behind their back. It sent the message home very clearly. No one successfully finished the drawing.

The class discussed how mental illness is not only a behavioral problem. It is a biological chemical imbalance in the brain. Because the brain is an organ, it can be treated organically—similar to other chronic illnesses like diabetes, asthma, hemophilia, hypothyroidism, epilepsy, emphysema, Parkinson's, or lupus. Learning to live with a Mental Health Disorder is just as challenging. There may also be a layering of factors to consider like PTSD (Post Traumatic Stress Disorder), anxiety, post-partum depression, thyroid, puberty, menopause, etc. that complicate physical and mental therapy.

We looked at medications and the need to work with a doctor or psychiatrist. It may take time to find a stable regime of chemical maintenance therapy. We are all intricate, individual

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and complex human beings. What works for one person may not work for someone else. Some people may need a combination of meds that work together— instead of one 'First-Line' medication which may not be physically tolerated. We addressed the VERY real side-effects of medications like dry mouth, severe weight gain or loss, skin rashes, hand tremors, nausea, migraines, over-drugged sleepy feeling (unable to drive or work) that are a challenge to be overcome. We reinforced the need for 'talk therapy' with a psychiatrist, a psychotherapist, a therapist, a counselor, or a spiritual advisor along with taking medications.

We agreed that general good health is very important for people living with mental illness. Just like everyone else, regular exercise, good diet, plenty of rest is the key! While staying active is good, solitude, meditation, prayer or time-out are encouraged. Keeping a journal or 'Daily Mood Chart' gives a larger picture by recording events, amount of sleep, naps, exercise, weight, feelings-levels of irritability/anxiety, pain meds, as well as other medications. A number of the Providers were interested in the charts for their own mood swings. It was definitely a learning experience for all involved. 🌍

NAMI ALBUQUERQUE ANNUAL PICNIC

By Linda Givens

It's picnic time again and we would like to invite you to our summer gala. NAMI Albuquerque will be holding our annual event on August 3, 2004. Our event will be at Elena Gallegos picnic grounds and we have reserved the Kiwanis area. This is located off Tramway just north of Academy on the right with the grounds 1.5 miles off of Tramway. We have reserved the Kiwanis area. It is on the left as you enter the grounds. For those that have not been there before this is a wonderful area to gather. Tables, grill area, recreation area for volley ball and horseshoes and bathrooms are all provided. We will need someone to volunteer to bring horseshoes and a volley ball. We are planning on eating by 5:30pm and have reserved the area until 8:00pm. NAMI will provide hamburgers and hotdogs will all the fixings. NAMI will also provide all paper supplies, water and Crystal Light. We would ask that you bring a salad, chip/dip, vegetables, or a dessert. If you would like to help with cooking, set up, or have questions please feel free to contact Linda Givens **294-4413** or lgcinderela@aol.com

NAMIWALKS TO SUCCESS

By Elaine Miller, NAMI-NM

The NAMIWalks event was very successful with total dollars thus far at \$51,700 and growing each day. I enjoyed organizing the walk and had many wonderful volunteers and want you all to know how much you were appreciated. I could not believe the sea of faces lined up to register on Saturday morning. I believe a great time was had by all.

I learned much and believe we will have an even better event in May 2005. I know you all were so enthusiastic this year that you will want to participate on a larger scale next time. It was exciting to have Senator and Mrs. Domenici participate and we were happy to have Officer Carol Oleksak walking with us.

My thanks to all of you who supported and participated in this first annual NAMIWalks. 🌍



WALKING WORKS WONDERS, A PEDESTRIAN'S PERSPECTIVE

By Anna Tabor

E.M. Forster couldn't have asked for a prettier day. The clear sky framed our sandy path and patches of grass (...you have to appreciate the austere look if you live out here in the desert.) Participants in NAMIWalks were suited up in everything from team tee shirts to prize shirts, given for donation collections, to trek 5 K (3.1 miles) around the Albuquerque Academy on May 15.

Our thanks to Elaine Miller, NAMI-NM Walks coordinator, who helped make the walk possible. A large contingent of Boy Scouts from Troop 381 and their leaders made sure we made it across the street safely, directed our cars in the parking lot, and helped stock the refreshment stations.

Friends and strangers alike, about 350 of us, gathered to support the organization at the premiere of NAMIWalks in Albuquerque. Senator Domenici spoke before the troops headed out, and NAMI political advocate Rob Burpo was there as well. Burpo said that mental illness is the third most talked about issue in politics in this district, trailing education and taxes. There were a number of sponsors committed to the values of NAMI, who contributed to the over \$50,000 that was collected statewide.

Teams as well as individuals were on the path shortly after 10:00 a.m. Some of the team names were Cox Trot, CSED, Go Go Geckos, Family Flyers, Hope, Jeremy's Team, Mighty Moodswings, Rob Burpo for State Representative, Share Your Care, Miller's Milers, Santa Fe Stars, as well as a team from the District Attorney's office, UNM Psych Dept., Kathy Gerber, Marge Cooney and Sara Montgomery. If there were others, please excuse the oversight. A sizable consumer group from Las Cruces made the effort to join our throng and made their presence felt.

I saw several of my friends, and their dogs, from the In Our Own Voice team. Laura Hand, state Family-to-Family coordinator, demonstrated that a canine could be hydrated in a pinch by pouring a steady stream of water into your palm and letting the dog lap it up. Laura's hospitality and kindness never cease. For our two-legged needs, there were stations of refreshments all along the quadrant. There was fruit, bagels, cookies, water, and such, of which many partook.

I had the opportunity to walk with one of the members of the Provider Education class that I was helping to teach at the time. She and I found much to talk about beyond the class, work and whatnot. It was a delight to get to know a student at NAMIWalks, and one with a vested interest in educating herself and eliminating the "s" word—"stigma." Before we all headed home, Bill Duemling "walked" away as the lucky raffle ticket holder for the handmade quilt, "Grandma's Flower Garden", which was made and generously donated to NAMI-Albuquerque by Betty Chittolini. 🌍

ALBUQUERQUE DROP-IN CENTER – GOOD NEWS

Albuquerque Drop-in Center (ADIC) was founded by recipients of mental health services in the Albuquerque area. It is based on the principle of “Consumers helping consumers”. The Center is designed to provide a safe environment so as to avoid the isolation and stigma that is often experienced by individuals facing mental health challenges.

The Center was the recipient of some good news recently. ADIC received a sizable grant from Presbyterian Health Services, which will go into effect on the first of July. According to Norma Faries (pronounced Ferris), the new Executive Director of ADIC, “The new grant will primarily allow ADIC to grow by providing funds for a larger facility and increased staff which will result in the ability to add additional programs”.

Current activities include self-help groups, peer advocacy, resource information, free art groups on Sunday (painting, jewelry, etc), reading library, and fun activities like basketball, darts and more. ADIC hours are Friday, 2pm to 10pm, Saturday, 10am to 6pm and Sunday 10am to 6pm. Dinner and movies are scheduled on Fridays and snacks are available all weekend. Food boxes for consumers are available on the third and fourth Fridays of the month.

Meetings include: Double Trouble in Recovery (DTR): Monday at 6:30pm and Saturday at 2pm and Cocaine Anonymous (CA) Women’s Meeting on Sunday at 6:00pm. ADIC is currently located at 1007 San Mateo, SE, Albuquerque, NM 87108. Contact them by at **256-8289** or by adic1@hotmail.com

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.

According to Mickey, one of the facilitators for the Sunshine Group, the group had to suspend meetings because of facilitators health and other problems. The meeting schedule will resume on July 11th.

The Sunshine Group was founded in 1997 to serve people with a diagnosis of mental illness. Now they 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 email to Don at: dlmorgan15@comcast.net



DBSA MEETINGS

The DBSA (Depression and Bipolar Support Alliance) Albuquerque support group meets Thursday evenings, 6:30pm - 8:30pm. We start with a social time and refreshments and the support group sessions begin at 7pm. We have groups for individuals with bipolar disorder and for those with depression. On the first Thursday we also offer a family and friends support group, although family and friends are welcome anytime. On the fourth Thursday we have a guest speaker.



Speaker to Discuss The Homeopathic Approach to Psychiatric Illnesses

On July 22, 2004, 7:00pm – 8:30pm, DBSA will host Cassie Travaini, N.D., CCH, RSHOM, as she speaks on “The Homeopathic Approach to Psychiatric Illnesses”. All are welcome. We meet at Trinity United Methodist Church, 3715 Silver Ave., SE (1 block South of Central, 2 blocks East of Carlisle.) Phone **889-3632** or contact us at dbsa4albq@yahoo.com

FAMILY-TO-FAMILY CONTINUES TO GROW!

By Laura Hand

Thanks to a grant from McCune Foundation, NAMI-Albuquerque had a record number of new classes this spring! Working with the VA, Marita Marshall and Mollie Garcia led a daytime class of ten that met every Wednesday. Additionally, we had a daytime class meeting every Tuesday at the NAMI-Albuquerque office that graduated a class of 17. They were taught by Mary Stearns and Alma Stark with Rosemary Jordan acting as resource person. Our evening class met on Thursdays and graduated a class of 22. Joanna Salinas and Barbara Craker led them with help from Charles Schreiner in the Resource Person role. Rio Rancho also had a day class of eight people. Deborah Ryan and Mary Ann Sabie taught them. Contact Laura Hand, **265-8273**, to register for future classes.

These classes are made possible by dedicated volunteers who continually find time to teach Family-to-Family. I have mentioned only a few of the wonderful teachers who make these classes possible. If you see anyone whom you know teaches Family-to-Family, make sure you tell them thank you. We cannot thank them enough.

In August, we will be training new teachers to instruct Family-to-Family. If this sounds like something you would like to become involved in, please call Laura Hand at **265-8273**

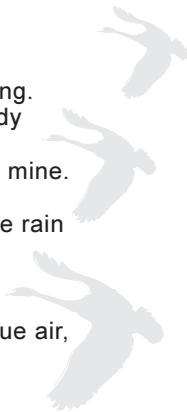
“IN OUR OWN VOICE” TRAINS NEW PRESENTERS
By Laura Hand

In July, NAMI-NM will be training new presenters for “In Our Own Voice-Living with Mental Illness.” There will be a limited number of slots available at the training, so we encourage you to let us know as quickly as possible if you are wanting to train to be a part of this exciting program. “In Our Own Voice-Living with Mental Illness” has celebrated its first year in Albuquerque acting as a vehicle of mental health awareness to the general public, providers, consumers, schools, churches, and law enforcement officers. This interactive program offers a video and two consumer presenters in recovery who share their life experiences, breaking them up into “Dark Days; Acceptance; Treatment; Coping Skills; and Successes, Hopes and Dreams.”

If you have been diagnosed with schizophrenia, OCD, bipolar disorder, schizoaffective disorder, chronic depression, panic disorder, borderline personality disorder, or dual diagnosis, and are currently in recovery, this program could be for you. We are looking for individuals to act as “stigma-busters” and educators by sharing their experiences with the general public. If you are interested in further information regarding this program, please contact Mary Tabor at **856-0175**.

WILD GEESE by Mary Oliver

You do not have to be good.
You do not have to walk on your knees
for a hundred miles through the desert repenting.
You only have to let the soft animal of your body
love what it loves.
Tell me about despair, yours, and I will tell you mine.
Meanwhile the world goes on.
Meanwhile the sun and the clear pebbles of the rain
are moving across the landscapes,
over the prairies and the deep trees,
the mountains and the rivers.
Meanwhile the wild geese, high in the clean blue air,
are heading home again.
Whoever you are, no matter how lonely,
the world offers itself to your imagination,
calls to you like the wild geese, harsh and exciting —
over and over announcing your place
in the family of things.
from *Dream Work* by Mary Oliver
published by *Atlantic Monthly Press* © Mary Oliver



OUR CONDOLENCES By LaDean Buchanan

Our condolences to Mary Kircher and family. Her husband, John, died in March. Mary is one of our faithful volunteers in the office. Also, our condolences to Anna Schneider for the loss of her brother, Charles. We wish to express our thanks for the many Memorial Gifts we received from the friends of these families.

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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