



# nami TEXAS

The State's Voice on Mental Illness

Summer 2005

*Annual Convention 2005:*

## *On the Frontier of Recovery*



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*This newsletter does not offer medical advice. Readers should seek advice from qualified professionals.*

*NAMI Texas is a grassroots, family and consumer, self-help, support, education, and advocacy organization dedicated to improving the lives of people with severe mental illness. Severe mental illnesses are biologically based brain disorders that can profoundly disrupt a person's ability to think, feel, and relate to their environment and others.*



# contents

- 3 Executive Director's Report**
- 4 On the Frontier of Recovery: Convention 2005**
- 9 Convention Spotlight: Insanity Defense Seminar**
- 10 Celebrating Success and Creating Hope: Celebration Recovery 2005**
- 12 Medicare Prescription Drug Coverage: Are You Ready for Change?**
- 14 Mental Health Worker Knows Enemy**
- 15 My Son, Our Story: Steps to Recovery**
- 16 With Hope In Mind**
- 17 Visions for Tomorrow Curriculum Revision**
- 18 Election: Meet the Candidates**
- 21 NAMI Rockport's 1<sup>st</sup> Annual Award Presentation**
- 21 NAMI Walks: Build Your Team NOW!**
- 22 79th Legislative Report**
- 24 Affiliate News**
- 27 NAMI Texas Annual Conference**

◀ **Cover photo: Mike Ciesielski, Photographer, NAMI National 2005**

Michael J. Fitzpatrick, MSW, Executive Director of NAMI National, spoke at the Opening Plenary session of the NAMI National Convention on Sunday, June 19th in Austin, Texas. His topic was **Campaign for the Mind of America: NAMI Drives the Debate on Mental Illness Across America**. He closed his remarks by encouraging a rousing chorus of "Together We Can, Together We Will" from the crowd.

**To find a NAMI Texas affiliate in your area, please call 1-800-633-3760 or visit [www.namitexas.org](http://www.namitexas.org)**



# *Leaders Must Lead*

One of my favorite quotes comes out of my mother's mouth – "Lead, Follow, or Get out of the Way." A modification of that I've heard – "Leaders must Lead."

Governor Perry hasn't been identified by many in NAMI Texas as a "leader" in supporting persons with serious mental illness but his veto of HB 2572 may have been his finest hour.

For those of you who did not follow closely the continuation of the effort that sought to bring systems change to the community behavioral health level, it played out dramatically in the clash between two major bills this session – HB 470 and HB 2572.

HB 470 sought to transform the community mental health system by requiring a split between provider and authority; advancing the movement to a "fee for service" system and a regional governing structure.

But, HB 470 became too complicated to be swallowed during our 140 days.

HB 2572, legislation supported by the community centers, began to gather significant support and momentum as a counter-measure to HB 470. Its provisions stalled the implementation of "fee-for-service" and any systems change by requiring a study of each and a report to the legislature. HB 2572 addressed the "provider of last resort" by letting community centers continue to be the authority and the provider.

Governor Perry ultimately found HB 2572 objectionable and vetoed it. In his Veto Proclamation he spoke to the need to effectively deliver services and for consumers to encounter a system with greater choice, which he felt HB 2572 failed to address.

Let it be said here that there is blame to be shared by all for letting "systems change" occur within the Legislative process.

It is also wrong to believe that as a result of the veto, we have a "divided house."

Governor Perry's Executive Order is forward looking. It keeps in play the transformation of the behavioral health service system while protecting the community safety net.

Representatives of Consumers, Families, Advocates, Stakeholders, Providers, and State & Local Authorities should now come to the table to develop a plan (for we have plenty to work from) that includes a request for more funding (for we surely need that) to forge a consensus around what we need to say to the Legislature in 2007.

More to come on this at our Annual Conference in Austin on Saturday, October 1, 2005 as Department of State Health Services Deputy Commissioner Dave Wanser will give our Keynote Address.

  
Joe Lovelace  
Executive Director, NAMI Texas

# On the Frontier of Recovery

Photographs by Mike Ciesielski

NAMI members, friends and staff descended on Austin, Texas, June 18–21, for the 2005 NAMI Convention. The convention, with a theme of Transforming the Mental Health System in America, featured three days of workshops, seminars, program tracks, receptions and exhibits. Attendees came from around the country and the world to network, learn, gather materials and energize themselves.

The Convention ended with a bang at the NAMI Fiesta! held at the Alumni Center at the University of Texas. Convention goers left energized and looking forward to the 2006 NAMI Convention in Washington, DC.

**Clockwise from top right:** Eduardo Sanchez, MD, Commissioner, Texas Department of State Health Services; a full room at the session on spirituality; Ken Duckworth, MD, Graham Emslie, MD, and Thomas Insel, MD, Director of NIMH, answer questions from attendees; the hallways were always busy; Susan Beattie and Duane Thomassen from San Antonio volunteering in the Welcome Center.





Clockwise from top left: Officer Frank Webb of the Houston Police Department receives the Compassion in Law Enforcement Award from Tom Hamilton, Frances Wise and Sam Cochran; Roger Morin of San Antonio and Mike Katz of Dallas relax between sessions; Michael Schwartz, MD; Robert Scogin of Austin at an Ask-The-Doctor session; author Bebe Moore Campbell signing copies of her new book, *72 Hour Hold*; attendees take a break in the Welcome Center. **Center:** Leon Autrey of Houston and Charlotte Dallas of San Marcos making a little music.



# ■ CONVENTION 2005





Clockwise from upper left: Elvia Ruelas from Laredo at the "Salud Mental" session; attendees get information in NAMILand; Melvin Miller of Austin speaking about the power of NAMI Walks; Mental Health Issues in the Asian American and Pacific Islander Community workshop; King Davis, PhD, Executive Director of the Hogg Foundation; convention ribbons; over 100 exhibitors filled the Exhibit Hall; Julie Noble, President of NAMI Dallas accepting a NAMI Walks award on behalf of her affiliate from Mari Pierce, National NAMI Walks Coordinator; Victor Ortiz of El Paso; a standing ovation; NAMI Walks Managers from around the country. Center: Asian American Family Services Staff.





**Clockwise from upper left:** Marie Alkis, NAMI Texas staff member and NAMI Austin President, Pat Cramer taking pictures at the NAMI Texas/NAMI Austin photo booth in the exhibit hall; attendee Vicki Krimmer enjoying a coffee break; Derald Walker, Marion Shaw and Diane Liara, staff members for Value Options, sponsor of the Consumer Welcome Center; the new green "Expect Recovery" bracelets which you will see on more and more wrists; attendee checks his e-mail from the Connection Café during a break; dancing at NAMI Fiesta! – a fantastic dinner party held on the final evening of the convention at the Alumni Center at The University of Texas; Veterans Council meeting.



# *Insanity Defense Seminar Reflects Tragedy, Pain and Inadequacies of Criminal and Mental Health Systems*

by **Joe Lovelace**, *Executive Director*

Contrary to popular perceptions shaped by the media, “the overall contribution of mental disorders to the total level of violence in society is exceptionally small,” according to the U.S. Surgeon General’s Report on Mental Health (1999).

Similarly, the insanity defense in criminal cases is seldom used and seldom successful.

On June 20, NAMI’s national convention in Austin, Texas, convened a special seminar, “The Insanity Defense: Time for a New Model?” The discussion was especially poignant as a result of presentations from George Parnham, attorney for Andrea Yates, and David Kaczynski, brother of “Unabomber” Ted Kaczynski.

In 2001, Yates drowned her five children. In 1995, the Unabomber was apprehended after killing three people and for awhile becoming, with his identity still unknown – the most wanted man in America. Both were living with schizophrenia – a severe mental illness.

David Kaczynski reported his brother to the FBI after recognizing an anti-technology manifesto written by the Unabomber that was published in the national media. Ted is serving a life sentence in federal prison.

Yates is awaiting a new trial in Texas, after her conviction was overturned because a psychiatrist hired by the prosecution gave false testimony in opposition to her insanity defense.

Two weeks before her children’s deaths, Yates was discharged from the hospital. She had been taken off medication necessary to stabilize her condition. During the session, Parnham played a tape of her police interrogation. When asked why she had drowned her children, there were 14 seconds of silence.

“Her [brain’s] frontal lobe was so impacted by her illness that she could not connect the dots,” Parnham said. “When it came to the ‘why?’ question, she couldn’t handle it.”

Under Texas law, and in many other states, the standard for insanity is whether a person “knows” an action is right or wrong at the time it occurs. But the American Bar Association, other legal authorities, and medical experts maintain that the standard is too narrow.



David Kaczynski and George Parnham

The preferred, alternative approach would hinge on whether or not a person lacked substantial capacity to “appreciate” right or wrong, or was incapable because of illness to conforming conduct to the law.

“What does it mean to ‘know’ when you are mentally ill?” Parnham asked. “Did [Yates] simply perceive that society would view her as wrong, when she knew she was right?”

Yates believed that killing her children at a young age was the only way to be sure that they would go to heaven, because she considered herself a bad mother, and could not raise them to be righteous.

David Kaczynski, who serves as executive director of New Yorkers Against the Death Penalty, told the audience: “I am the brother of a person with a very serious mental illness.”

Despite an assessment by a psychiatrist, based on letters received from Ted, that his brother was very sick, their family was unable to find a way to persuade him to get medical treatment. They had almost no options. Their efforts pushed him away and he became a recluse living in a cabin in Montana.

In making the painful decision to report Ted as a suspect to the FBI, David said, “We had to place our trust in the criminal justice system. We had no other place to turn.”

“But the system we placed our trust in then turned on us and tried to put my brother to death and to add to the violence. It was not about trying to find the *See Insanity Defense...page 26*

# *Celebrating Success and Creating Hope*

**Photographs by Mike Ciesielski**



Celebration Recovery 2005 sparked a new passion for recovery in cities across the country. By combining this year's Celebration Recovery event with the NAMI National Convention, Austin's passion for a purposeful celebration was shared with over 2,000 convention attendees and consumers, family and friends of the local community. Several consumers powerfully shared their message of hope and recovery. Thirty local and state organizations had booths with games, raffles, giveaways, recovery literature and even pet therapy!

Austin stayed true to its slogan "Live Music Capital of the World" as we listened and danced to local bands and singers, including Ruthie Foster, John Pointer, Sarah Sharp, and Newsboyz. Hundreds of consumers took the opportunity to create their personal rendition of recovery through writing and artwork on a banner provided by The Irwin Foundation.

Celebration Recovery offers an unique opportunity to celebrate the good news that those individuals with mental illnesses such as schizophrenia, major depressive disorders, bipolar disorders, and anxiety disorders can and do recover.

Our thanks to NAMI National, NAMI Austin, Austin Travis County Mental Health Mental Retardation Center and Fifth Column Music for their support of this year's event. And to Glenda Pittard, of 3dASAP, and her wonderful committee of volunteers who spent many months planning this fantastic event.

Celebration Recovery is a program initiated and sponsored by The Irwin Foundation with support from both private and public sources, including AstraZeneca Pharmaceuticals LP. The Irwin Foundation is a nonprofit organization committed to advancing community, educational, research, and training and consultation initiatives and activities related to recovery from mental illness.

*"Recovery is a triumph  
of the human spirit  
over illness and  
suffering. This triumph  
deserves to be celebrated."*

*—Michael Schwartz, M.D.  
founder, The Irwin Foundation*

Suzanne Worrell, Ermine Smith and George Worrell of Austin at the Imagine Art booth.





Bill Piper, photographer



**Clockwise from upper left:** Austin State Hospital Pet Partners; people of all ages had fun; PLAN booth with Doris Goewey, Yvonne Hansen and Lisa Belli; Diana Kern speaks on Expect Recovery; Kelly Peck, Ann Nagle and Dianna Mason don cowboy hats to have their photos taken Texas-style; Rep. Garnet Coleman speaks on recovery from mental illness; fun with balloons; Imagine Art client Wallace Carpenter; MC Brenda Coleman-Beattie gets help from Adam Roch for the raffle drawing; NAMI board member Fred Frese.



Bill Piper, photographer

