



# Brain Storm

Newsletter of NAMI Tri -Valley

www.namitrivalley.org

Volume 3 Number 3, May/June 2007

## *NAMI Tri-Valley Mission Statement*

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

### *Board of Directors*

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Daniel Kostalnick, M.D.  
Art Tenbrink, MS LMFT  
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## **BBC News: Cannabis ‘disrupts brain centre’**

### **Scientists have shown how cannabis may trigger psychotic illnesses such as schizophrenia.**

A King’s College London team gave healthy volunteers the active ingredient tetrahydrocannabinol (THC). They then recorded reduced activity in an area of the brain, which keeps inappropriate thoughts at bay. THC levels are thought to have doubled in street cannabis in recent years - at the expense of other ingredients, which may have a beneficial effect. A separate study has shown that one of these ingredients – cannabidiol (CBD) – has the potential to dampen down psychotic symptoms, and could form the basis of new treatments.

### **Dependency**

Although figures are not kept, it is estimated that as many as 500,000 people in the UK may be dependent on cannabis. Increasing numbers of people are seeking help for cannabis problems at specialist clinics. In 2005, only heroin users accounted for a greater proportion of patients. Experts are concerned that street cannabis is becoming increasingly potent. It is thought that average THC content has risen from 6% to 12% in recent years. The Institute of Psychiatry study gave THC, CBD or placebo capsules to adult male volunteers who had not abused cannabis.

They then carried out brain scans, and a battery of tests, and found that those who took THC showed reduced activity in an area of the brain called the inferior frontal

cortex, which keeps inappropriate thoughts and behaviour, such as swearing and paranoia in check. The effects were short-lived, but some people appeared more vulnerable than others. In a second study, a team from Yale University administered THC intravenously. Even at relatively low doses, they found 50% of healthy volunteers began to show symptoms of psychosis. Volunteers who already had a history of psychotic symptoms appeared to be particularly vulnerable.

### **Side effects**

A third study, by the University of Cologne, compared the effect of CBD and a commonly used anti-psychotic medicine, Amisulpride, on 42 patients with a history of schizophrenia. After four weeks both groups showed a reduction in psychotic symptoms, but the CBD group were less prone to side effects, such as muscle stiffness and weight gain. The researchers warned that THC and CBD compete with each other biochemically, so a rise in THC levels would blunt any positive impact of CBD.

Professor Robin Murray, a consultant psychiatrist at the Institute of Psychiatry, said the research provided the strongest evidence that cannabis had a significant impact on the brain. He said proving a long-term effect was extremely difficult, as it was not ethical or feasible to stimulate long-term psychosis in volunteers. However, he said: “If something has an active effect in inducing the symptoms of psychosis after one dose, then it would not be

*Cannabis (con't on page 2)*

## *Cannabis (con't from page 1)*

at all surprising if repeated use induced the chronic condition.” Professor Murray also warned that the high potency cannabis now widely available was likely to pose a much bigger risk to health than the significantly weaker formulations of previous years. “It is similar to comparing the effect of drinking a glass of wine at the weekend with drinking a bottle of vodka every day.”

Marjorie Wallace, of the mental health charity Sane, called the research a “significant contribution” to the understanding of the dangers of cannabis. “Sane has been saying for years that there is a link between psychosis and the drug, particularly in its more potent forms. “We strongly urge the government to heed the growing evidence and take urgent action to warn young people that some of them are risking lifelong mental illness — that they are playing Russian roulette with their minds.”

*Story from BBC NEWS:*

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/go/pr/fr/-/2/hi/health/6606931.stm>

Published: 2007/04/30 12:05:13 GMT / © BBC MMVII

### ***May's Presentation Speaker:***

#### **Daniel Kostalnick, M.D.**

Be prepared to hear a very engaging presentation on dual diagnosis by Daniel J. Kostalnick, MD. Question and answer immediately following.

Dr. Kostalnick is a board-certified psychiatrist with a private practice in Pleasanton. He is a father of 3 and active uncle of 6.

Dr. Kostalnick's special interests are mood disorders, anxiety disorders, disorders of thought, addiction/recovery, sexuality and trauma. He practices both psychopharmacology/medicine and psychotherapy.

### ***June's Presentation Speaker:***

#### **DBSA: Jennifer Garrison**

Jennifer Garrison, facilitator of the Depression Bipolar Support Alliance (DBSA) Castro Valley Chapter, will give a presentation on DBSA, which will be held on Monday June 4 at the Livermore Library from 7:30 to 8:30.

DBSA is the nation's leading patient-directed organization focusing on the most prevalent mental illnesses; depression and bipolar disorder. Please see the DBSA website <http://www.dbsalliance.org> for more information.

### **County Crisis Response Services Open in Livermore**

Livermore now has mental health crisis response services available. Funded by the Mental Health Services Act, the program opened in March.

The Crisis Response Program is provided by Alameda County Behavioral Health Care Services (BHCS). The program is a county-side service for adults (excluding Berkeley/Albany) that provides:

- Telephone crisis information and referral
- Limited walk-in crisis intervention
- Complete evaluations for adults for assignment to Alameda County BHCS case management services
- Urgent interim medication support
- Limited brief treatment for adults at risk of psychiatric hospitalization due to a crisis
- Non-urgent mobile crisis outreach for adults in the community (staff permitting)

The hours are:

Monday 10:00- 5:00

Tuesday 8:30-3:00

Wednesday 8:30-3:00

**For referrals, please call:**

**1-800-491-9099**

## **MAY CALENDAR**

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***May 1, 2007***

### **Parent Resource and Support Group**

Pathways To Wellness  
5674 Stoneridge Dr., Ste 116  
Pleasanton

Contact: Suzi Glorioso  
Phone: (925) 443-1797  
[glorios4@comcast.net](mailto:glorios4@comcast.net)

***May 7, 2007***

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

### **NAMI General Meeting**

Livermore Public Library  
1188 So. Livermore Ave., Livermore

Contact: Marsha McInnis  
Phone: (925) 980-5331

e-mail: [marsha\\_mci@comcast.net](mailto:marsha_mci@comcast.net)

***May 14, 2007***

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

### **NAMI Tri-Valley Family Support Group**

Livermore Public Library  
1188 So. Livermore Ave., Livermore

Contact: Marsha McInnis  
Phone: (925) 980-5331

e-mail: [marsha\\_mci@comcast.net](mailto:marsha_mci@comcast.net)

***May 21, 2007***

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

### ***"In Our Own Voice"***

St. Clare's Episcopal Church  
3350 Hopyard Rd. Pleasanton

Contact: Krista Radojevich,  
e-mail: [trivalleybipolar@hotmail.com](mailto:trivalleybipolar@hotmail.com)

***May 28, 2007***

### **MEMORIAL DAY NO MEETING**

## JUNE CALENDAR

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**June 4, 2007**

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

### **NAMI General Meeting**

Livermore Public Library  
1188 So. Livermore Ave., Livermore  
Contact: Marsha McInnis  
Phone: (925) 980-5331  
e-mail: marsha\_mci@comcast.net

**June 5, 2007**

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

### **Parent Resource and Support Group**

Pathways To Wellness  
5674 Stoneridge Dr., Ste. 116  
Pleasanton  
Contact: Suzi Glorioso  
Phone: (925) 443-1797  
glorios4@comcast.net

**June 11, 2007**

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

### **NAMI Tri-Valley Family Support Group**

Livermore Public Library  
1188 So. Livermore Ave., Livermore  
Contact: Marsha McInnis  
Phone: (925) 980-5331  
e-mail: marsha\_mci@comcast.net

**June 18, 2007**

### **"In Our Own Voice"**

St. Clare's Episcopal Church  
3350 Hopyard Rd. Pleasanton  
Contact: Krista Radojevich,  
e-mail: trivalleybipolar@hotmail.com

**June 25, 2007**

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

### **NAMI Tri-Valley Family Support Group**

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

## Kid's Corner

by Suzi Glorioso

### **A Day at the Ballgame**

By Suzi Glorioso

I sat on the second step of the metal bleachers at the Dublin Sports Park soaking up the warmth and listening to all the sounds around me. It was a beautiful spring day, a gentle breeze swaying the trees and coolly brushing through my hair. A butterfly flittered by and landed on someone's nearby duffle bag as spectators and players began to arrive.

I could feel the energy and excitement begin to build as the players were assigned their batting order and everyone got into place. My husband found the perfect spot for picture taking, planning to capture an amazing moment in a freeze frame. And then I heard the announcement over the loudspeaker "and first up to bat for the Diamondbacks is Ryan!" as a tear slid quietly down my cheek, unnoticed by all but me.

There are so many things in life we take for granted. But having a child that suffers from mental illness brings everything into sharper focus. The everyday, "normal" activities that we hope our children will experience become a trigger for rages or emotional instability, leaving our children feeling separated, isolated and lonely. Our hearts hurt for them and for us, for desires unmet and dreams lost. For many children with mental illness, competitive sports are such an activity.

Our nine year old son, Ryan, would always ask when he could play on a baseball team and cried just as often when the answer was not yet. However, thanks to the Granada Little League, Livermore Rotary, The Olivina and a multitude of volunteers and supporters, his dream, and those of many other children, has come true. These generous people have created an opportunity for our kids all over the Tri-Valley area to play ball on the Little League Challengers teams. Several teams of kids with varying ages and mental and physical disabilities come together every Sunday for a good spirited, heart-warming game of baseball. Every child bats at least twice per inning, no one is out and no score is kept. Each child has a 'buddy' playing with him or her to assist in whatever way is needed. But most importantly, the smiles that shine on every child's face is enough to light up a stadium and to warm even the coolest of hearts.

My husband captured such a picture, Ryan's first hit and the sheer joy beaming from his face. And another tear falls quietly down my cheek . . .

*If you know of a child who would like to play on the Little League Challengers or if you would like to enjoy watching a game yourselves, please contact Suzi at (925) 443-1797 or by e-mail at glorios4@comcast.net.*

## Membership Application NAMI Tri-Valley

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

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

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

- General \$35  
 Consumer \$15  
 Professional \$45  
 Century \$100

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

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

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

Send this application form with your check payable to:  
NAMI Tri-Valley  
P.O. Box 5563  
Pleasanton, CA 94566

## GENERAL MEETING & SPEAKERS SCHEDULE FOR 2007

July 2 — No meeting

August 6 — Steve Loomis: Special Needs Trusts

September 3 — No meeting

October 1 — Doug Del Paggio, PharmD, MPA:  
Director of Alameda County Pharmacy Services

November 5 — To Be Announced

December — No Meeting

## FYI . . . for Families & Friends

### NAMI Tri-Valley Support Group

Meets 2nd Monday of each month 7:15-9:00  
Livermore Library  
1188 S. Livermore Ave.  
Contact: Marsha McInnis 925.980.5331  
marsha\_mci@comcast.net

### NAMI Family Support Group

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

## FYI . . . for Parents

### Parent Resource and Support Group

Meets 1st Tuesday of each month  
Pathways To Wellness  
5674 Stoneridge Drive Suite 116, Pleasanton  
Contact: Suzi Glorioso 925.443.1797  
glorios4@comcast.net

## FYI . . . for Consumers

### Depression and Bipolar Support Alliance—DBSA Tri-Valley

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

### Depression and Bipolar Support Alliance—DBSA Castro Valley

Meets each Friday 7:15-8:45  
Eden Hospital Conference Center  
Conference Room A, Ground Floor  
20103 Lake Chabot Road, Castro Valley  
Contact: Jennifer Garrison 925.413.3784  
jenn@dbsacastrovalley.org



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

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

*Brainstorm* is published by NAMI Tri-Valley, an affiliate of NAMI National and NAMI California