



# Brain Storm

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### *In Our Own Voice Program*

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## ***From the NAMI Tri-Valley President:***

**M**ost of us remember with fondness the children's story "*The Little Engine That Could*". NAMI Tri-Valley is living proof of the that storybook moral; "I think I can, I think I can. I know I can, I know I can!" as we steam ahead building the strength of our organization.

We finally have our bank account information, a mail box, dues structure and are officially open for business. See the back page of this newsletter for a membership form and join us. We are stronger with your support as we speak in a collective voice for the services and programs needed by our loved ones.

Also in store for you are monthly meetings with guest speakers covering a variety of topics in the mental health field. This newsletter will provide up-to-date information on local issues, training and educational opportunities, and information regarding programs and services of both NAMI California and NAMI National. We have created our own web site and it should be launched by the first of the year.

Like any growing organization, we will need help in a number of areas and invite your ideas and talents. To start, become a member and help drive our affiliate. Educate family members and neighbors about mental illness in order to reduce stigma. Join the kindred spirits that will develop and support the mental health needs in this area.

So jump on board our fledgling train because with everyone's help "I know we can, I know we can!"

Marsha McInnis,  
President,  
NAMI Tri-Valley

## ***Our Mission***

"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."

## ***Just Make Lemonade!***

**Front Porch Spirit** is now producing a touring one-man show called *SIDE BY SIDE~ A Journey with Depression*. Brian Wetzel is a comedian who also has 20 years experience with clinical depression. Bringing his experiences and humor together, Brian takes his audience on a unique journey of laughter, painful truth and, finally, hope. By walking side by side with the affliction, he finds a way to keep surviving, keep learning, and keep living.

**January 20 & 21, 2006**

**7:30 pm**

Arlington United Church of Christ  
52 Arlington Ave., Kensington  
*Suggested donation \$10-\$15*

Since debuting in September of 2004 to sold out shows at the Sebastopol Center for the Arts, *Side by Side - A Journey With Depression* has played venues all over Northern California including Stanford University, Luna's Cafe in Sacramento, CSU Monterey Bay, Napa State Mental Hospital, CSU Sonoma, and dozens of faith communities who have brought the show in for community awareness events.

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"The fact that Brian is able to provide an honest, yet hilarious perspective on a topic such as depression is amazing. His performance not only made me laugh, but strengthened my understanding of the mental illness. I highly recommend it to mental health professionals and for friends and families of depressed individuals."

*James Christie, Crises Line Counselor - San Francisco Suicide Prevention*

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"Everyone really got a lot out of the show... I believe those who have not been clinically depressed got empathy, those who treat the depressed got understanding and ideas about treatment and those who suffer from it got validation and a feeling that they are understood and not alone."

*Donnovan SomeraYisrael, Health Education Specialist, Vaden Health Center, Stanford University*

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"I can attest to its powerful contribution to better understanding the topic of depression. The show is anything but depressing, however, and provides a framework for meaningful discussion."

*Randy Sweringen, Director of Alumni Relations, PSR*

**Front Porch Spirit** also offers workshops, trainings, and keynote presentations for groups or agencies that serve adolescent populations on a variety of topics including healthy relationships and sexuality, social diversity, and the complex issues surrounding homelessness.

## **CALENDAR**

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**No December meeting**  
Best of the Holidays to all

**December 12, 2005**

**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\_m@pacbell.net

**December 19, 2005**

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

**"In Our Own Voice"**

St. Clare's Episcopal Church  
3350 Hopyard Rd., Pleasanton  
Contact: Krista Radojevich  
Phone: (925) 560-0842

**December 26, 2005**

**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: russwhite@sbcglobal.net

**Other mental health support groups**

**Every Wednesday**

**7:15 p.m. to 8:45 p.m.**

**Depression and Bipolar Support Alliance Chapter**

Tri-Valley Bipolar Support Group  
St. Clare's Episcopal Church  
3350 Hopyard Rd., Pleasanton  
Contact: Krista Radojevich  
Phone: (925) 560-0842  
e-mail: trivalleybipolar@hotmail.com

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**NAMI's Family to Family**

Free 12 week course on mental illness for families and caregivers. Begins February 2, 2006, Pleasanton. Contact Doris Watson: 925-682-7165 or F2F@aol.com

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**NAMI WALK 2006**  
 by Krista Radojevich

**Save the Date!**

The second annual NAMI Walk is set for June 3, 2006 in San Francisco's Golden Gate Park and NAMI Tri-Valley is ecstatic to be a part of this exciting event. Come be a part of this event that helps raise awareness surrounding mental illnesses and funds to support local Bay Area programs. This past May NAMI WALK 2005 raised more than \$250,000 in corporate sponsorships and donations.

January 10, 2006 will be the kick-off meeting for NAMI Tri-Valley to learn all about how to get involved, organize walk teams, and fundraise. You won't want to miss this event! A short DVD will be shown with highlights from the 2005 walk. Dede Ranahan, Walk Director, will present NAMI WALK information. Last year Tri-Valley Bipolar raised more than \$5,000 and placed in the top 10 out of all Bay Area teams. Whose team will be at the top of the list for NAMI Walk 2006? Bring your friends, family, neighbors! All are welcome! The meeting will take place at the ValleyCare Library in Pleasanton, 5525 W. Las Positas Blvd. from 7 pm to 9 pm

**NAMI WALK-sponsorships**

If you or someone you know can assist with securing a corporate sponsor, help us begin a discussion about ways the organization can support San Francisco NAMI WALK for 2006. Call or e-mail Dede Ranahan at 916-774-6363 [dranahan@surewest.net](mailto:dranahan@surewest.net)

**Book Review**

by Krista Radojevich

*Divided Minds, Twin Sisters and Their Journey Through Schizophrenia* by Pamela Spiro Wagner and Carolyn S. Spiro, M.D., 318 pages, St. Martin's Press, 2005, \$24.95 Hardback

This is a powerful memoir told by identical twin sisters, Pamela and Carolyn Spiro. The twin sisters paths diverged on Nov. 22, 1963, when the sixth-graders heard that JFK had been shot. In this riveting memoir, Carolyn recalls that the news left her feeling "numb." But identical twin Pamela writes about the voices in her head telling her that she actually killed JFK because she did not warn him about going to Dallas.

And so their journey's of sisterhood begins: Pamela's through decades of schizophrenia, and Carolyn's, through years of trying to pull her back. Carolyn is now a psychiatrist and Pamela is a writer. The memoir is told in alternating chapters, which gives the reader dual perspectives for what is going on their lives. As a young doctor, Carolyn sees her first case of catonia in Pamela. It is

(cont'd page 4)

**Launch Our Library**



Have a book that you've read and is now collecting dust on your bookshelf? We would love to start collecting

books so that we could start a lending library. If you are interested in donating or lending a book please contact Krista Radojevich at 925-560-0842 or [trivalleybipolar@hotmail.com](mailto:trivalleybipolar@hotmail.com)

**NAMI Tri-Valley Meetings**

**No December meeting**

Best of the Holidays to all

**January 10, 2006**

ValleyCare Library  
 5725 W. Las Positas Ave., Pleasanton  
 7:00 pm - 9:00 pm

**February 6, 2006**

Livermore Library  
 1188 S. Livermore Ave.  
 Community Room B  
 7:00 pm - 9:00 pm

*FU:*

*for Consumers:*

**DBSA Support Group  
Depression and Bipolar Support Alliance**

Meets each Wednesday 7:15-8:45  
St. Clare's Episcopal Church  
3350 Hopyard Rd., Pleasanton  
Contact: Krista Radojevich, 925.560.0842  
trivalleybipolar@hotmail.com

**DBSA Support Group**

Eden Hospital Conference Center  
Conference Room A, Ground Floor  
20103 Lake Chabot Road, Castro Valley  
Jenn (925) 413-3784

*for Families:*

**NAMI Tri-Valley  
Support Group**

Meets 2nd Monday of the month 7:15-9:00  
Livermore Library  
1188 S.Livermore Ave.  
Contact: Marsha McInnis, 925.980.5331  
marsha\_m@pacbell.net

**NAMI Family Support Group**

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

*Book review (cont'd)*

during her freshman year at Brown University that Pamela is hospitalized for her illness. The memoir shows the power of believing in someone and having the hope that one day they will get better with the right treatment. Carolyn continued to believe

in the humanity of her sister, not merely in her illness, and Pamela responded.

If you liked reading the *Unquiet Mind* by Kay Jamison, you will enjoy *Divided Minds* as well.



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.

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

**Membership Application  
NAMI Tri-Valley**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

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

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

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

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  
1989-A Santa Rita Road PMB 129  
Pleasanton, CA 94566