



Brain Pages



The Newsletter of NAMI Greater Bloomington Indiana Area

Family and Friends Together Providing Support and a Voice on Mental Illness

Issue No. 3

October 2006



Calendar of Events

October 1-7: Mental Illness
Awareness Week

October 2: TLC Support
Group Meeting

October 3: General Meeting
"Our Beautiful Brain in both
Wellness and Illness"

October 7: NAMI Indiana
State Conference

October 12: Brain Stigma
Busters: Candidate Forum

October 16: NAMI-GBA Sup-
port Group Meeting

November 6: TLC Support
Group Meeting

November 20: NAMI-GBA
Support Group Meeting

Our Beautiful Brain... In Both Wellness and Illness

by Jill Bolte Taylor, Ph.D.

Please join us on Tuesday, October 3, 2006 at 7pm in Room 1B/1C of the Monroe County Public Library for our next NAMI Greater Bloomington Area general meeting. Among other things, this will be our annual business meeting and we will be voting for new members of our local NAMI Board of Directors. All NAMI members may vote. If you have any interest in serving on our local NAMI-GBA board, please contact Lee Strickholm, the chairperson of our Nominating Committee, at 339-5440.

Our current local GBA board has asked me to be the speaker for our annual meeting this year. For those of you who don't know, I am a former board member of NAMI National and, in addition to teaching at the local IU School of Medicine, I keynote regularly at NAMI state and national conferences as the National Spokesperson for the Harvard Brain Bank. I will be presenting "Our Beautiful Brain in Wellness and Illness" on the evening of October 3rd.

I became a NAMI member in 1993 because I have a brother who has been diagnosed with the brain disorder schizophrenia. My dad, Hal Taylor, and I went to the national convention held in Miami that year. That conference changed my life. A group of about 2,000 people, comprised of parents, siblings, offspring, and individuals diagnosed with severe mental illness, gathered together for support, education, advocacy, and research related issues. Until I met other siblings of individuals with mental illness, I had not realized what a profound impact my brother's illness had had on my life. In the course of those few days, I found a family of people who understood the anguish I felt at the loss of my brother to his schizophrenia. They understood my family's struggle to

continued on page 2

In this issue:

- 1 *Our Beautiful Brain...*
- 3 Board Candidates
- 4 Book Review
- 5 CIT Update
- 5 Candidate Forum
- 6 Medicaid Sources
- 7 NAMI Indiana Conference
- 7 Membership Form
- 8 Mental Illness Week

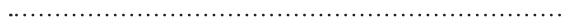
Our Beautiful Brain...

continued from page 1

help him access quality treatment. They fought together as an organized voice against the social injustice and stigma related to mental illness. They were armed with educational programs for themselves, as well as for the public, about the biological nature of these disorders. Equally important, they rallied with the brain researchers to help find a cure.

In December of 1996, while serving on the National NAMI Board of Directors and teaching and performing brain research at Harvard Medical School, I experienced a rare form of stroke that rendered me completely mentally and physically disabled. On the morning of the stroke, I could not walk, talk, read, write, or recall any of my life. The love I received from literally thousands of NAMI members from all over the country gave me the courage to face the agony of recovery. I would not be here today, in this condition of complete recovery, if it were not for the love I received from my NAMI family.

I have just completed a book titled *My Stroke of Insight*, which will be published later this month. At our general meeting, I will speak about my journey, our beautiful brain, and NAMI. I hope you will join us.



Mark Your Calendars!

“Our Beautiful Brain...
In Both Wellness and Illness”
featuring Dr. Jill Bolte Taylor

October 3, 2006

7:00 pm

Monroe County Public Library

Room 1B/1C

Open to the public

Please note that this meeting will be recorded for an international documentary. There will be seating available outside of the camera’s field of vision for those audience members wishing to remain off-camera.

Brain Pages is the official newsletter of the NAMI local affiliate in the Greater Bloomington Area.

For information or questions, please contact Kat Domingo, this issue’s newsletter editor.

P.O. Box 7794
Bloomington, IN 47407
www.namibloomington.org
namibloomington@insightbb.com

NAMI-GBA wishes to thank the Center for Behavioral Health for helping to underwrite this issue of the newsletter.

Electing NAMI-GBA's 2007 Board of Directors

by Lee Strickholm

The by-laws for our local NAMI affiliate allow for eleven members to serve on the Board of Directors. At our annual business meeting on October 3, we will be electing three new members each for a three-year term. In addition to the three recommendations of the Nominating Committee, nominations will also be accepted from the floor with the consent of the person being nominated.

Biographies of Candidates for Board Position Vacancies

Joan Hart is an art historian and adjunct faculty at Indiana University. She served on the MCCSC School Board for 12 years and for the past ten years has put her efforts towards coordinating the local CHADD chapter (Children and Adults with Attention-Deficit /Hyperactivity Disorder). Joan is most recently active in forming a coalition of disability groups called the Brain Stigma Busters, attempting to end stigma for individuals with cognitive disorders. She has two family members diagnosed with schizophrenia.

Cathy Spiaggia, a Bloomington resident for over 35 years, has both family members and friends who have struggled with mental illness. One of the founding members of the Family Advisory Committee to the Center for Behavioral Health, she is interested in advocating for improved services - both for individuals coping with serious mental illness and for family members. Recently completing a three-year term on the board for the Community Justice and Mediation Center, Cathy continues to serve as a volunteer mediator. She is employed as a researcher in the education field and performs locally as a singer/songwriter.

Al Strickholm is a current board member running for a second term. He is a neurophysiologist and professor emeritus at Indiana University whose research interest is on the effects of antipsychotic medications on the brain and nervous system, newly developed drugs, and non-pharmaceutical treatments for mental disorders. Al co-teaches the Family-to-Family classes sponsored by our NAMI affiliate and has attended several national and state NAMI conferences over the years. He has a family member who is recovering from a mental illness.

Meet the candidates and current members of NAMI-GBA's Board of Directors by attending the general meeting on Tuesday, October 3 at 7pm in Room 1B/1C of the MCPL.

All board members will be participating in a day-long retreat in November to discuss the mission, vision, and direction of our local affiliate. Current board members yet to complete their terms are:

Aris Beldavs (arisbeldavs@aol.com)

Vid Beldavs (vbeldavs@authorhouse.com)

Katherine Domingo (kdomingo@indiana.edu)

Jeff Hart (hartj@indiana.edu)

Janet James (jjames@indiana.edu): Treasurer

Cathy Korinek (catkorinek@aol.com): Secretary

Lee Strickholm (leestrick@aol.com): Vice President

Jill Bolte Taylor (jill.taylor@insightbb.com): President

Book Review: *Crazy*

by Al Strickholm

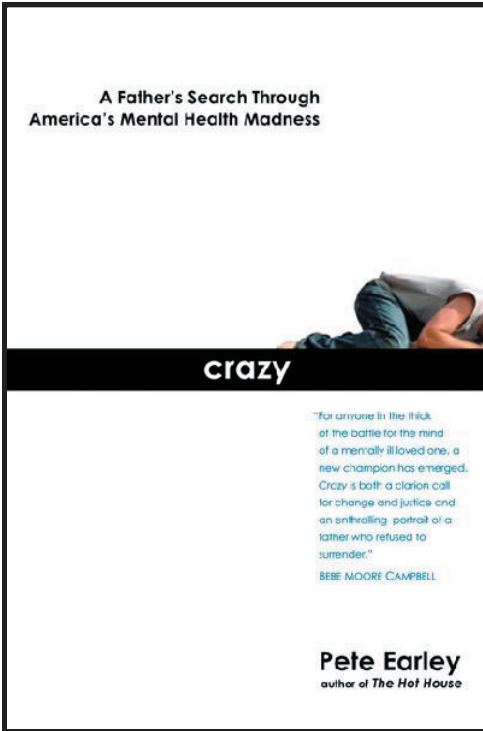
legal system of courts, police, and worst of all, the prisons and jails. Those prisons and jails now house more mentally ill than hospital psychiatric wards.

Pete Earley then follows the journey of his son who became mentally ill in his early youth. He describes the family journey through the mental health and criminal justice systems for his son's actions during a severe psychotic period. Mr. Earley then

psychiatric ward to street, to jail, and back again. Mr. Earley describes a system in complete disgrace, a system broken and unable to properly treat those with severe mental illness, and a system lacking the will to initiate the necessary changes.

Pete Earley not only describes the mental health system failings, but also constructively provides ways to correct this broken system. He also describes the progress that is being made due to the diligence of effective advocates for the mentally ill. The book reminds readers that unless we, the caregivers of our mentally ill loved ones, are diligent, our siblings, children, or parents could easily fall into similar cracks in the current failed system. This book should be read by all mental health providers and personnel in the criminal justice system. It emphasizes the necessity of legal reform and the importance of crisis intervention training (CIT) for police. *Crazy* deserves a five-star rating for unveiling the inequities experienced in our society by many people with severe mental illness.

Pete Earley's *Crazy* is published by Putnam Adult, 2006.



The title of this book suggests that Pete Earley, a distinguished journalist, might be referring to the mentally ill. Instead he is pointing to the whole system the mentally ill confront when coping with this difficult illness. He begins by discussing how mental hospitals were closed following the advent of the newer antipsychotic medications, with the aim that community based centers would provide care for the newly released patients. This aim was never realized because cutbacks in funding instead produced a new phenomenon: the homeless mentally ill. He describes the mental health system, the hospitals, the outpatient care, the

spent a year in Miami, Florida where he observed mentally ill citizens in the courts, jails and prisons, the mental health wards, and other treatment facilities. What he describes is a system where patients are often caught in a system of revolving doors, going from hospital

“Crazy deserves a five-star rating for unveiling the inequities experienced in our society by many people with severe mental illness.”

Our Police Take Step One Towards CIT

by Jill Bolte Taylor

In June, approximately 35 officers from the Bloomington Police, Monroe County Sheriff, Indiana University Security, as well as Deputy Mayor James McNamara and others gathered together for a multi-day educational course about mental illness. Although the official Memphis Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) model was not followed, this was a great first step at bringing together various parties interested in more effectively and compassionately de-escalating potentially dangerous situations when police officers have interaction with individuals displaying psychotic symptoms.

As you may know, a documented one-third of our homeless population and one-fourth of the people in our jail systems are individuals with severe mental illness. These are national

statistics that are echoed locally in Bloomington. From a NAMI perspective, it is vitally important that our police officers are adept at how to recognize when an individual is displaying symptoms of psychosis. Individuals with mental illness need to be diverted from the jail system and instead offered appropriate medical treatment.

Our local NAMI affiliate was invited to participate in this training program. Our president, neuroscientist Dr. Jill Bolte Taylor, brought a real human brain for the officers to observe. She discussed her relationship with her brother who has been diagnosed with schizophrenia and conveyed her concerns about the dangers involved in how police interact with our family members when they are experiencing psychosis. Vid Beldavs spoke to the

police about what it is like to be the parent of a young man whose mental illness periodically results in potentially dangerous interactions with police.

In an attempt to help our local officers understand that the issues we face in Bloomington are common throughout the nation, our local affiliate donated 35 copies of the book *Crazy* by Pete Earley to those in attendance. Although we are grateful for this first opportunity to work with the police on establishing a system that is both safe and efficient for how crisis situations are managed in Bloomington, we are eager to have the necessary action steps taken for a successful program to occur. At the top of that list is the creation of a 24-hour hold facility so our police officers can be empowered to do their jobs more effectively.

Brain Stigma Busters: Election Candidate Forum

by Joan Hart

NAMI has joined forces with two other disability groups, Monroe County CHADD (Children and Adults with Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorders) and the Autism Society to form a coalition called Brain Stigma Busters to fight the stigma of cognitive disorders. We are holding our first joint function in October, a candidate forum for election officials in Monroe County. Candidates

for Judge, Prosecutor, County Council, School Board, as well as Congress are being invited to this event which will take place on Thursday, October 12 at 7pm at the Monroe County Public Library, Room 1B/1C.

Our coalition will introduce what our objectives are and how we plan to work together to provide better treatment for individuals with brain disorders. We will ask candidates to briefly

introduce themselves and give the audience an opportunity to mix with candidates and tell them their concerns. Prior to the forum, we will be sending candidates a survey to tell us what they want to do to support individuals with disabilities. If you have questions for the survey, please contact Joan Hart at joanhart12@aol.com. If you want to become part of Brain Stigma Busters, tell Joan.

Medicaid Reform: Resources for Information

The following information is reprinted from www.nami.org. For more help, contact Mary Giliberti at maryg@nami.org or 703-516-4600 or Steve Buck at sbuck@nami.org or 405-749-1366.

Advocacy Organizations

- Families USA: www.familiesusa.org/issues/medicaid

Families USA has general information on Medicaid. They also have developed a waiver toolbox that has summaries and links for all of the state waivers.

- Judge David L. Bazelon Center for Mental Health Law: www.bazelon.org

The Bazelon Center has several publications on using Medicaid for mental health services.

- National Health Law Program: www.healthlaw.org

This program has materials on the Deficit Reduction Act and other Medicaid issues. Of particular interest is their publication with the National Association of Community Health Centers: *The Role of State Law in Limiting Medicaid Changes*, which contains a chart with the rules in each state for making changes to Medicaid.

- National Mental Health Association: www.nmha.org

NMHA has resources for advocates on Medicaid issues, including the documentation requirements of the Deficit Reduction Act.

Policy Organizations

- Center for Budget and Policy Priorities: www.cbpp.org

CBPP conducts research and produces in-depth analyses of

state and federal Medicaid issues. It has several useful studies of cost-sharing and state reform efforts.

- Georgetown University Health Policy Institute, Center for Children and Families: www.cff.georgetown.edu

The Center's resources are particularly helpful for determining the effect of Medicaid policy on children and families.

- Kaiser Family Foundation, Commission on Medicaid and the Uninsured: www.kff.org/medicaid

This website provides useful analysis and research on all aspects of Medicaid, including waivers and the Deficit Reduction Act. It also includes state-specific information so you can find out what services Indiana is currently providing under its Medicaid plan.

- Medicaid Matters 2006: www.medicaidmatters2006.org

This website is a joint effort of several health and policy organizations. It provides resources for advocates who are seeking to protect Medicaid.

Providers

- National Association of Community Health Centers: www.nachc.com

NACHC has developed some very useful resources for model legislation to address Medicaid

changes in Indiana and to work to slow down the process and include more public input.

- National Council for Community Behavioral Healthcare: www.nccbh.org

This website has materials on public policy issues affecting providers of mental health and substance abuse services.

Local, State, and Federal Government Resources

- National Association of County Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities Directors: www.nacbhd.org

NACBHD provides information for county providers of mental health and developmental disability services.

- National Association of State Mental Health Program Directors: www.nasmhpd.org

NASMHPD's Research Institute gathers data, research, and information about state mental health systems.

- National Association of State Medicaid Directors: www.nasmd.org

NASMD has useful information on legislative and regulatory developments in Medicaid.

- Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services: www.cms.gov

CMS has useful information for advocates, including a listing of each state's current waivers.

NAMI Indiana State Conference: October 7, 2006

NAMI Indiana announces its 21st annual state conference October 7, 2006, to be held at the North United Methodist Church in Indianapolis. The theme is "Treatment and Advocacy: A Winning Combination."

The keynote speaker will be Mary Zdanowicz, founding executive director of the Treatment Advocacy Center (TAC), a national non-profit organization working to eliminate legal and clinical barriers to timely and humane treatment for millions of Americans with severe brain disorders. She has a sister and a brother with schizophrenia. Prior to joining TAC in June 1998 she was an attorney in private practice in her home state of New Jersey.

The day's events will include:

- Ask the Doctor segments: post-traumatic stress, mood disorders, schizophrenia, and mental disorders in children and adolescents.
- Workshop topics: Assisted outpatient treatment, law enforcement and advocacy, getting media attention, art expression and recovery, and a consumer's point of view about getting treatment.
- Exhibitors from pharmaceutical companies, mental health centers, residential facilities, and service organizations.

Registration is \$35 (individual), \$45 (family), and \$12 (consumer). Limited consumer scholarships are available, and your registration fee includes lunch. Please mail registration and fees to: NAMI Indiana, Inc., P.O. Box 22697, Indianapolis, IN 46222-0697. Call 1-800-677-6442 for information.

Not yet a member of NAMI-GBA? Join today!

Your annual membership includes newsletters from NAMI National, NAMI Indiana, and NAMI Greater Bloomington Area, as well as access to NAMI's wealth of resources and information.

- _____ \$25.00 Individual
- _____ \$35.00 Family
- _____ \$3.00 Consumer
- _____ I want to support NAMI-GBA with a tax-deductible gift of \$ _____

**Please make checks payable to NAMI Greater Bloomington Area
P.O. Box 7794, Bloomington, IN 47407
www.namibloomington.org**

I am interested in:

- _____ Learning about volunteer activities
- _____ Arranging for speakers for my organization, church, or other group
- _____ Being a speaker about mental illness

Name _____ Home Phone _____
Address _____ E-mail _____
Preferred method of contact _____

Mental Illness Awareness Week!

OCTOBER 1-7, 2006

To promote the awareness of mental illnesses as biological brain disorders, NAMI-GBA has partnered with the following organizations. Be sure you look around town and learn more about mental illnesses.

Monroe County Public Library will have a display of books and other resources pertinent to mental health and mental illness throughout the week.

Local bookstores and radio stations will be featuring books, art, and music by and about people with mental illness. Tune in and enjoy.

NAMI Greater Bloomington Area
P.O. Box 7794
Bloomington, IN 47407