Golden Globe, Tony and Emmy winning actress Glenn Close threw the ceremonial first ball at the April 17 game of the New York Mets vs. the St. Louis Cardinals, as part of a Bring Change 2 Mind mental illness awareness event in St. Louis. Information booths were set up inside the ballpark and a public service announcement, featuring Ms. Close and her sister Jesse, played on the ballpark scoreboard. The Bring Change 2 Mind campaign seeks to reduce stigma by encouraging frank and factual conversation about mental illness.

“Its not a cool subject for a lot of people,” Close said. “It makes people uncomfortable.” Close’s sister Jesse was not diagnosed until age 45, after her son was also diagnosed with a mental illness. A talented writer, Jesse was always thought of as the unpredictable, wild one in the family.

One message Close wants to drive home is that a psychiatric illness does not have to stop anyone from living a productive, fulfilling life. Bring Change 2 Mind uses its website and facebook page to reach out to folks who need support in dealing with a mental illness. “The idea is, let’s get out and talk about it so people don’t have to feel shame,” she added.

Close, a NAMI member, is also helping promote this year’s NAMI Walks Across America. Her walk video can be viewed at www.bringchange2mind.com. Members and friends can support NAMI Missouri’s walkers by going to www.nami.org/namiwalks/mo and entering the name Kay Rittenhouse (team captain) in the support a walker search box or by sending a check to the NAMI MO office.

St. Louis NAMI member Susan Pijut and NAMI Kansas City member Floy Jacobson were among those attending this event. Ms. Pijut got a hug from Ms. Close and gave her a Children’s Mental Health Awareness Pin. She also provided the picture for this newsletter.
**Board of Directors**
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Ken Jones - Second Vice President
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**Affiliates**
NAMI Greater Kansas City • NAMI Jefferson City
NAMI Columbia • NAMI Joplin
NAMI Southwest Missouri • NAMI St. Louis
NAMI Central Ozarks • NAMI Moberly
NAMI Cape Girardeau • NAMI Southeast Missouri
NAMI Lake Ozark • NAMI Boonville
Emerging Affiliate: Marshall

All NAMI affiliates have support groups. A NAMI support group also meets in Branson.

**WARMLine Responders**
Rita Owens • Sharon Groner
Randall Evers • Karren Jones
Barbara French • Ruth Thompson

NAMI Missouri is the chartered state organization of the National Alliance on Mental Illness

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**In Brief …**

- NAMI Consumer Programs Director Alice Kliethermes made a presentation to public administrators at their annual conference in Hannibal on April 20.

- Policy analyst volunteer Edward Duff trained members of a Kansas City independent living center in the art of citizen advocacy in April.

- Members of NAMI Southwest Missouri traveled to Pilot Grove, Mo to conduct educational programs for junior and senior high students. NAMI Columbia members Tim Harlan and sister Heather assisted.

- NAMI St. Louis executive director Jackie Lukitsch and MHA director Mark Utterbach authored a letter about the hidden costs of untreated mental illness. It was published in St. Louis Today.

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**Upcoming Volunteer Trainings**

NAMI Missouri is one of just a handful of NAMI state organizations to pick up 100% of the costs incurred in training volunteers for NAMI Signature programs. This is possible thanks to your membership and generous donations. We thank you!

- **Family-to-Family Teacher Training (August 20-22)** - Find a friend and learn to teach this awesome 12-week course for family members. FTF is now an evidence-based practice in family psychoeducation. Teachers report this is the most rewarding volunteer work they have ever done.

- **Family Support Group Facilitator Training (October 1-3)** - Learn skills and qualify to help family members find help, hope, comfort and solutions as a NAMI Family Support Facilitator. Most groups are co-facilitated.

- **NAMI Basics Teacher Training (September)** - Find a friend and qualify to help parents, foster parents and custodial relatives meet the daily challenges posed by their child or adolescent with a mental health need. End their isolation and send a message of hope.

- **NAMI Connection Recovery Support Group Facilitator Training (June 25-27)** - Learn how to end isolation, combat stigma and help foster recovery as a NAMI Connection Consumer support group facilitator. Groups are usually facilitated by a team of two or three consumers.

Call (800) 374-2138 for more information.
IN THE KNOW

Mental Health First Aid . . .

Faith Community Initiative

The Missouri Department of Mental Health and colleague organizations are participating in a Missouri Foundation for Health Funded mental health Literacy Project targeting faith communities throughout rural Southeast and Southwest Missouri. NAMI Missouri is one of those colleague organizations.

Mental health professionals are scarce in rural communities. Limited access to mental health professionals means that individuals often rely on other professionals, such as family physicians or clergy to help out with mental health needs.

Mental Health First Aid courses give clergy, church workers and members of congregations tools they need to help. Participants learn how to use a Mental Health First Aid action plan:

- Access the risk of suicide or harm
- Listen nonjudgmentally
- Give reassurance and information
- Encourage person to get appropriate professional help
- Encourage self-help and other support strategies from peers, family members and friends.

Mental health problems are far more common than most assume. It is estimated that one in four Americans will have a diagnosable mental disorder at some point in their lives. Of that number, relatively few get the help they need. MHFA can change this.

The project’s target counties are Barton, Dade, Greene, Lawrence, Newton, Barry, McDonald, St. Genevieve, Perry, Madison, Cape, Bollinger, Mississippi, Stoddard and New Madrid. It’s easy to bring the MHFA course to your faith community. NAMI Missouri will provide instructors, materials, registration via our 800 number, and certificates (a $1800 value). Your congregation or group of congregations must be willing to provide meeting space for 25, course promotion, lunches and snacks for a maximum of 25 for 2 days, and charge or pay $20 per enrollee. Scholarships are available for those who cannot afford the enrollment fee.

Persons completing the 12 hours of training will receive a certificate of completion stating: “this course teaches people how to give first aid to individuals experiencing a mental health crisis situation and/or who are in the early stages of a mental health disorder. Participants learn the signs and symptoms of the most common mental health problems such as depression, anxiety disorders, psychosis and substance use disorders: what is effective; where to get help; and how to use the Mental Health First aid action plan.” To get more information call NAMI MO at 573 634-7727 or Dottie Mullikan at the MO Department of Mental Health at 573 751-4122.

Mark Your Calendars! NAMI Missouri Conference 2010

NAMI Missouri’s 25th annual conference, Recovery, the Road Ahead will be held on November 5 and 6, 2010 at the Resort at Port Arrowhead, Lake Ozark Missouri. This year’s keynote speaker is renowned advocate for women with trauma, substance addiction and mental illness Tonier Cain.
Memorial Tributes

NAMI’s Breaking the Silence and suicide prevention educational programs were conducted for Pilot Grove’s junior and senior high school classes and teachers on March 22 in memory of **Cody Stretz**. Our sincere thanks to the courageous Stretz family, Tim and Heather Harlan, Dewayne Long and NAMI Southwest Missouri volunteers for making this happen.

In memory of Pilot Grove
High School student and football star
**Clark Cody Stretz**
By his parents, John and Marla Stretz, Nancy Calkins, Rosemary Schuster, Patricia A. Wells, Loretta Quinlan, Christie Eichelberger, Bill and Stephanie Young, Betty Sieckmann, Helen Reuter, Dale Reesman, Teresa Smith, Richard J. and Danielle Blanck, Nancy Casanova, Georganna Rau, Stanley Serck, Betty Kusgen, Betty Bowen, and Marilyn K. Williams.

A memorial tribute in memory of **Cody Stretz**
by Mary Pat and Doug Adele.

A memorial tribute in memory of **Cody Stretz**
by Shauna and J.L. Watring.

A memorial tribute to Ann Carr Sheehan’s sister, **Patricia Carr Morris**, by Bettye J. Siebels.

A memorial tribute in memory of **Jeff Kuhlman**
by his parents Rhonda and Ed Kuhlman.

In memory of **Michael Naughton**
by his wife Kay Callison.

A memorial tribute in memory of **Robert E. Burns II**
by his parents, Robert and Judy Burns

A memorial tribute in memory of **Darrel Bryant Loftin**
by Ada and Van Heady.

By C. Louise Morris honoring the memory of her mother **Eula Irene Morris**
on what would have been her 85th birthday.

By Alice Kliethermes in memory of **Rita Muessig**.

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**Family Connections in Bipolar Illness and Schizophrenia**

Recent genetic studies suggest a common genetic cause for bipolar illness and schizophrenia. For more than a century the psychiatric community has debated whether schizophrenia and bipolar illness were two separate and distinct disorders or whether they were more connected. The largest study ever to track both disorders within families now offers evidence that the two disorders share a common genetic cause.

Three decades of registry and hospital data (1973 to 2004) involving 9 million Swedes from 2 million families were analyzed to determine the risk of schizophrenia and bipolar illness among biological and nonbiological relatives of patients with one or both disorders. The study involved close to 36,000 individuals with schizophrenia and 40,500 with bipolar illness. The analysis revealed:

- First-degree relatives (parents, siblings or offspring) of those with either schizophrenia or bipolar illness were at increased risk for both conditions.
- If a sibling had schizophrenia full siblings were 9 times more likely to have schizophrenia and four times more likely to have bipolar disorder.
- If a sibling had bipolar illness, they were 8 times more likely to have bipolar disorder and four times more likely to have schizophrenia.

Researchers found that shared and non-shared environment factors also contributed to risk, but were less important than the genetics. In an interview with WebMD researcher Michael Owen, MD, Ph.D., called the research very strong. “When someone receives a diagnosis of schizophrenia it is easy for clinicians to overlook mood disorder and other symptoms that don’t fit with that diagnosis. The same is true for psychotic symptoms that may occur in people labeled with a diagnosis of bipolar disorder.” He adds it is important to remember that symptoms can, and often do, change over time. “Most don’t fit neatly into categories, and the more questions you ask the more likely you are to find a combination of psychotic and mood symptoms.”
A Quick Take on Health Care Reform Through a Mental Health Lens

The historic Healthcare Reform Bill was signed into law in March. The new law will have a positive impact for persons with mental health needs in Missouri. Here are some benefits you can expect right away:

1. Insurance companies will be prohibited from pulling your coverage, except in cases of fraud or intentional misrepresentation. No more losing coverage because you got sick and filed a claim.

2. Small businesses often employ consumers. These businesses will be able to get tax credits for up to 35% of their health insurance premium costs. In 2014, two-year credits of 50% become available to qualifying small businesses. Business owners should go to www.irs.gov for more detail.

3. You can get coverage for your child even after he/she develops a serious mental illness or other serious condition (like heart disease). In 2014, the same benefit is extended to adults. In the meantime, adults who cannot get insurance due to a pre-existing condition may get coverage through a new insurance plan the state will create. To qualify you must have been without insurance coverage for 6 months. Your insurance premiums will be no higher than those paid by healthy individuals. (Missouri’s current high-risk pool has high premium costs and a one-year uninsured period requirement).

4. Schizophrenia, bipolar illness and other serious conditions tend to develop in the late teen and young adult years. Starting September 3, parents may keep their young adults on their insurance plans up to age 26 if that young adult does not have an employer that offers insurance. This will help young people transition into adulthood without risky interruptions in treatment.

5. Seniors who now fall into the Medicare Part D prescription coverage gap (also known as the “donut hole”) will get $250 to help pay their prescription drug costs right away. This amount will increase in coming years and the “donut hole” will be eliminated by 2020.

6. In 2014, state Medicaid programs will be required to cover persons with incomes up to 133% of poverty ($24,352 for a family of 3). This will eliminate the need to “spend down” for many. From 2014 – through 2017 the federal government will 100% of the of the new enrollees’ Medicaid premiums.

Increase Awareness, Eliminate Stigma.
Sponsor a NAMI MO Walker in NAMI Walks Across America

On May 29 NAMI MO president Kay Rittenhouse, Randa Nesbitt, Christina Wunderlich and Cindi Keele (with little dog Betsy) will walk to raise money for statewide NAMI services and programs at NAMI Walks St. Louis at Forest Park. Please help us continue to promote and support NAMI’s work throughout Missouri. You can donate online. Go to www.nami.org/namiwalks/mo and enter the name of your walker of choice in the search box. Click on that person’s name and make a donation. We THANK you!
IN THE KNOW

Study Contradicts FDA -
*Treatment Doesn’t Raise Suicide Risk*

Epilepsy medications are often prescribed to control symptom of bipolar disorder. In January, 2009, the FDA warned of increased suicide risk among patients treated with epilepsy drugs. But a December 2009 study found fewer suicide attempts in patients with bipolar disorder. While an outside panel of experts confirmed a link between suicide and treatment of bipolar disorder with antiseizure drugs, the panel voted again requiring a strong “black box” warning on the drug’s labels.

Now an analysis of new data by Robert D. Gibbons, Ph. D., University of Chicago and colleagues suggest epilepsy drugs may actually decrease the risk of suicide in individuals with bipolar illness. They stated, “the present analysis provides no evidence that anti-epileptic drugs increase risk of suicide in patients with bipolar disorder. Most anti-epileptic drugs and lithium are associated with reduction in suicide-attempt rates relative to pretreatment levels in patients who are ultimately prescribed these drugs.” Medications included in this analysis were Neurontin, Depakote, Felbatol, Lamictal, Keppra, Trileptal, Lyrica, Gabitril, Topamax, Zonegran and Tegretol.

While there is no definitive proof these drugs actually help people with bipolar disorder, doctors prescribing them often find them helpful when other treatments fail. It is commonly known the suicide risk for persons with bipolar illness is high. According to a 2006 study, 40 out of every thousand attempt suicide annually. This number is thought to be low as many attempts go unreported or are reported as accidents.

Gibbons and colleagues’ analyzed data on nearly 48,000 individuals with bipolar illness in a large medical-claims database. While these results may be encouraging, persons with bipolar illness and their families should continue to learn the warning signs for suicide and be aware.

New Study Validates CIT Effectiveness

Thanks to the efforts of countless dedicated police, NAMI and community volunteers in Kansas City, St. Louis, Columbia, Springfield and other communities Missouri is embracing the importance of police and community Crisis Intervention Teams. We are grateful to the Missouri Department of Mental Health for supporting the Missouri CIT Council and its efforts to expand this important program beyond the initial 3 years of Missouri Foundation for Health funding. Our state budget crisis eliminated this support, at least for now. Other funding sources are being sought.

Advocates involved in local CITs know from lived experience that training in mental health crisis intervention for police minimizes incidence of violence and promotes the safety of consumers and officers. A new study analyzing office attitudes about the use of force adds to the growing body of evidence that confirms our observations.

The study found significant conclusion about how officers viewed the use of force and when they choose to deploy. Officers with CIT training were less likely to use force to engage persons experiencing a psychiatric crisis. CIT trained officers also believed

That nonphysical responses were more effective, and physical responses less effective when responding to a person in crisis. These finding suggest verbal de-escalation training is effective in providing officers with tools they need to safely resolve situations without resorting to force.

An abstract of this study, “Use of Force preferences and Perceived Effectiveness of Actions Among Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) Police Officers and Non-CIT Officers in Escalating Psychiatric Crisis Involving a Subject with Schizophrenia” can be found by googling Schizophrenia Bulletin Website.
Mark Your Calendars!

*NAMI Missouri Conference 2010*

NAMI Missouri’s 25th annual conference, Recovery, the Road Ahead will be held on November 5 and 6, 2010 at the Resort at Port Arrowhead, Lake Ozark Missouri. This year’s keynote speaker is the renowned and inspiring advocate for women who have experienced trauma, substance addiction and mental illness Tonier Cain. We will also have an in-depth update on new psychiatric medications, a Mental Health First Aid presentation, and a presentation on how to use social media to promote recovery and much, much more.

Send us Your MOSER’s Receipts!

For every $10,000 in grocery receipts we send in, we receive a check for $100. Monies raised will go to general support of our programs of support, education and self-help statewide. You can help too. Please send your MOSER’s grocery receipts to:

NAMI Missouri • MOSERs’ Grocery Receipts
3405 West Truman Blvd., Suite 102 • Jefferson City, MO 65109

What are Dues and When are They Due?

Membership dues are an important part of supporting NAMI. Your payment goes to support NAMI work at all three levels. They support things like the new Public Service Announcement (Puzzles) at the National level. This PSA ran during the CBS evening news last month. Here in Missouri, they help support NAMI Missouri’s effort to train more than 120 local education and support volunteers a year and support your local support group and stigma reduction efforts.

Some affiliates send out renewal notices. For others, it’s helpful to know your dues are always due on your membership anniversary date. That date always appears on your address label for this newsletter.

You can pay/renew dues at the affiliate or state level. Or, if you prefer, you can use your credit card to renew at www.nami.org.
Parenting a Child with Serious Mental Health Needs

Raising any child is demanding and at times stressful, but raising a child with mental health needs can leave parents feeling helpless, exhausted and alone. Monica Kriese, whose son has bipolar illness commented, “Most of my friends were pretty distant because I had this really challenging child and they didn’t want to be around him or invite him over. He never got invited to any birthday parties; he’s only been to one in his whole 11 years.”

The isolation extended to the medical professional Kriese was dealing with as well. “I was worried and anxious about so many things. I remember calling his mental health clinician and asking for help and support, and I was reminded that it was my son that was the patient and there wasn’t really a lot of time for parents.”

Another major challenge for parents is the lack of services and the shortage of children’s mental health professionals, says Darcy Gruttadaro, director of the NAMI Child and Adolescent Center. “In our nation, there are about 7,500 child and adolescent psychiatrists with a need of about 20,000.” In rural Missouri the psychiatrist shortage is dire. The same is true for psychologists and social workers. As a result, many parents (with no guidance) find they must serve as case manager for their child. Far too often, they must learn the ropes alone and by trial and error.

Surrounding yourself with a support system of people who are either going through or have gone through similar experiences is key. Sarah Cannon, director of the Canadian based Parents for Children’s Mental Health says, “It’s important to know you are not alone—and you are not the worst mother in the world because there are thousands of other mothers who are experiencing the same things.”

She encourages parents to join support groups. “There are going to be parents who have accessed services that you have no idea how to access or that you didn’t know existed, and they are going to be able to help navigate you through the system.” NAMI affiliates in St. Louis, Rolla, Joplin, Moberly and Columbia have groups. Our Marshall group is planning to start one soon. The Families for Families group in Jefferson City also provides one.
Childhood Onset Disorders

*Know the Signs*

Childhood is often though of as a happy, carefree time, but for many children that happiness is elusive because of a mental health need. Here in Missouri, it is estimated 103,653 children and youth suffer from serious mental health problems, yet in 2007 just 16,876 received services from the Missouri Department of Mental Health.

Early symptoms are often ignored or shrugged off as normal adolescent mood swings and irritability. Far too many parents wait until their child’s behavior becomes extreme. This causes needless suffering and loss of important early treatment time. Since parents are the most likely to detect a mental health need, here are some warning signs:

- A drop in school performance
- Unwarranted worry or anxiety
- Inability to cope with day-to-day problems
- Aggression toward others
- An excessive fear of getting fat, of not being liked, etc., beyond normal adolescent anxieties.

This consequences of untreated mental health needs are high. Without early and effective diagnosis and treatment, childhood disorders can persist and lead to a downward spiral of school failure, poor employment opportunities, and poverty in adulthood. According to the Surgeon General, an estimated 90% of children who complete suicide have a mental health disorder.

Parents need not struggle alone. Parent support groups and NAMI Basics Courses connect parents with others who have “been there” and can provide support and advice. The NAMI Missouri HELPline (800) 374-2138 can steer parents toward finding answers and getting the best possible care.
We hereby proclaim . . .

Children, parents and their advocates attended a ceremony in Governor Jay Nixon's office on Wednesday, May 19. Governor Nixon proclaimed May to be Children's Mental Health Month throughout Missouri. The ceremony was followed by pizza in Secretary of State Robin Carnahan's office.

In addition to the gubernatorial proclamation, some mayors proclaimed the week of May 2 through 8, 2010 as Children's Mental Health Week in their communities. We want to offer special thanks to all the volunteers from Families for Families, Circle of Hope and NAMI affiliates who made these events happen. Mayors are leaders in their communities. When we educate leaders, good things follow. It is our hope the mayors will proudly display the proclamations in their offices and make a May proclamation signing an annual event. We thank:

- The Honorable Jim Schlupp, Mayor of Iberia
- The Honorable Jim O’Neal, Mayor of Springfield
- The Honorable Ken Shearin, Mayor of St. Joseph
- The Honorable Mark Funkhouser, Mayor of Kansas City
- The Honorable Don Burton, Mayor of Moberly
- The Honorable Bev Richtermeyer Mayor of Grand Pass
- The Honorable Lorna Alexander, Mayor of Marshall
- The Honorable John Landwehr, Mayor of Jefferson City
- The Honorable Frank Roland, Mayor of Hillsboro
- The Honorable Werner C. Stichling, Mayor of Desoto
- The Honorable Len Pagano, Mayor of St. Peters
- The Honorable Donald Yarber, Mayor of Cottleville

In Jefferson City the proclamation was given at a city council meeting and televised on the local public access channel. In Springfield, the proclamation was given at the start of NAMI Southwest Missouri’s Miles for Minds walk. The Marshall signing ceremony dovetailed day one of Marshall's first NAMI Basics parent course and in St. Joseph, the ceremony kicked off a variety of community events.
NAMI MO CMHW Mini-grant Awardees

NAMI Missouri was pleased to provide funding for five of our ten applicants this year.

- **University City’s Children’s Center Family Organization, St. Louis** - a project involving resilience teaching tools for families of children ages 6 weeks to 6 years in preschool classrooms.

- **Ozark Center for Autism, Freeman Parent Support Group, Joplin** – an educational workshop for parents and the public

- **NAMI St. Louis, St. Louis** – a half-day workshop on suicide prevention for parents and the public in St. Charles

- **MO Families for Families, Jefferson City** - workshops for parents and awards ceremony honoring those who advanced children’s mental health in the past year.

- **NAMI Southwest Mo, Springfield** – project involving radio streaming station and radio ads directing interested persons to website for list of community resources for kids and parents. Volunteers to hand deliver informational packets to YMCAs, Boys and Girls Clubs and other youth organizations in a multi-county area.

REACCH Youth Group Plans Awareness Activities

Members of Missouri Youth REACCH (Responding through Empowerment and Action to Create Communities of Hope) conducted two projects to call attention to Children’s Mental Health Week. Project one distributed 2000 business cards with the tag line, “Like physical health, mental health is important at every stage of life.” Green lapel pins were attached to each card.

Project two involved the creation of 1300 washable green ribbon face tattoos carrying the message Children’s Mental Health Week May 2-8, 2010 and their distribution at various CMHW events. NAMI Missouri provided partial funding for these activities.

Missouri Youth REACCH is supported in part by the Department of Mental Health, Office of Transformation.
JOIN US!

Every membership strengthens our effort. If you belong to a NAMI chapter, you are already a member of NAMI Missouri. If no chapter exists in your area, or you prefer to join independently, you may take out an at-large membership. All members receive the quarterly *NAMI Missouri* newsletter and the *Advocate*, the bi-monthly magazine of NAMI and other member benefits such as Affinity low cost long distance service and Advocacy Online (by request) and reduced NAMI Missouri Conference fees.

**All Donations and Contributions are Tax Deductible**

Enclosed are my dues for (check one):

- [ ] At Large Membership ($28)
- [ ] Professional Membership ($50)
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- [ ] Additional Contribution _________

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City ____________________ State _____ Zip ____________
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Total Contribution Enclosed ____________

Please Send Payment to:

**NAMI Missouri**
3405 W. Truman Blvd., Suite 102
Jefferson City, MO 65109