

## Council acts as arbitrator for first time in dispute over Camarillo State Hospital beds

# CITIZENS ADVISORY COUNCIL DECIDES COUNTY VS. STATE

### INTERVIEW:

#### DON RICHARDSON

Parent Advocate



"There are answers to unacceptable behavior, and I think we are able to find answers if we are willing to seek alternative methods of dealing with the problem. I think that is what drives me when I get tired and discouraged. I think we can find answers to problems, including mental illness," said Don Richardson.

This is Richardson's philosophy, one he used in his

*"The typical experience is that your tears . . . begin to dry up and you get angry . . ."*

professional career with the Los Angeles Unified School District and one he now applies to his volunteer career as a parent advocate. Richardson and his wife, Peggy, parents of a mentally ill son, embarked upon their careers as advocates approximately 16 months ago,

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The Citizens Advisory Council released a nine point decision in the dispute between Los Angeles County and the state of California over Camarillo State Hospital beds.

The county has requested the Citizens Advisory Council retain jurisdiction of unresolved issues three and seven in the arbitration award decision handed down March 26.

The Advisory Council was acting as arbitrator on the order of Superior Court Judge John L. Cole in the lawsuit the county brought against the state. The lawsuit concerned the closing by the state of the number of beds available to Los Angeles County residents at Camarillo State Hospital (See *Connections*, April 1982).

The basic dispute is whether each side has performed its obligation under the agreement signed in March 1981.

The arbitrators decided to make no ruling on issues three and seven because the fiscal year 1982 is not yet over and figures for the year are not complete.

In the issues decided, the arbitrators held in issue one that both parties have agreed that since litigation between the county and the state has continued during arbitration, the council would make no ruling. The question in issue one was should the state be restrained from implementing its plan to close 154 acute psychiatric beds

by reducing admissions from L.A. County.

In issue two, related to the number of acute beds maintained at state hospitals to assure sufficient beds for Los Angeles County for year 1981-82,

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### WELLNESS SPREADS ACROSS CALIFORNIA

The "Friends Can Be Good Medicine" wellness campaign has been launched throughout the state of California. It is a public education program utilizing mass media and community-initiated activities and is intended to:

- inform the public about an important new health fact: the role of supportive personal relationships in maintaining both mental and physical health;
- encourage individuals to invest more time and energy in their relationships with others; and
- create opportunities for individuals and communities to come together to strengthen their relationships.

Aimed at the residents of the state of California, "Friends Can Be Good Medicine" is sponsored by the California Department of Mental Health, Mental Health

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### INSIDE:

**MHA HONORS  
JUDD MARMOR  
PG. 3**

**WE GET  
LETTERS  
PG. 6**

**SKID ROW  
BLACK EXPANSE  
PG. 7**

A survey about *Connections* has been sent to a random selection of readers. Those receiving the survey are encouraged to return it as soon as possible. Anyone wishing to make comments about the newspaper may write to *Connections*, MHA, 930 Georgia St., Los Angeles CA 90015. *Connections* welcomes your comments.

# ESSAY

## TIME FOR PROFESSIONAL COOPERATION; BATTLES OVER TURF MUST END

By George Jacobs and Steven Alexander

Readers of this newspaper do not have to be told that the mental health field is in trouble. Budget cuts are destroying vital programs. Sunset legislation for various licensing boards and their licensees is again introduced. Recession (or depression) effects are hitting private practitioners' patients/clients.

And while Rome burns, where are the professional associations spending their time? "AB 1762 Killed!" trumpets a headline on the front page of the California Chapter, National Association of Social Workers' Newsletter. (AB 1762 was a bill to change the name of the profession of marriage, family and child counseling to marriage and family therapy.) The California Medical Association let legislators know that the death of AB 1762 was one of its major priorities for the legislative year. We all knew that organized medicine was heavily self-serving, but social workers? Who would have thought that the profession whose president says "... social workers lead the way in assuring a productive, creative life for all" would have their "lobbyist spearhead an effort which successfully opposed the bill?"

Despite the other professional organizations' opposition to our existence, marriage and family therapists have grown in competence and sheer size over the 18 years of their licensed status in California to a position of strength in the mental health community. With 14,000 licensees, some of whom hold licenses in other mental health disciplines, we want to work together with others in the field toward common goals, those which benefit the patients/clients we all serve.

It is time for the mental health professions to stop the embarrassing, destructive battles over "turf" and start cooperating. To the legislators in Sacramento, we all look ridiculous, as they joke about the "definitions" of psychotherapy that are part of the psychology and social work licensing laws. At the Senate hearing on a third party vendorship (insurance) bill, a senator chastised NASW's (National Association of Social Worker's) representative, "Several years ago you were here asking for the same coverage and making the same arguments that the MFCC's (marriage, family and child counselors) are making today. Now it looks like you've joined the 'haves' and are arguing the same arguments that they used to argue about you." At that hearing, the California Medical Association and California State Psychological Association's lobbyists were similarly taken to task for their narrow, hypocritical defense of a clear "turf" issue.

But it seems our efforts toward cooperation and commitment to common goals has been ill-received. County Mental Health has had great difficulty finding a budget job category it can fit us into in order to hire us. The California Coalition for Mental Health (a coalition of California's mental health-related organizations) has thus far rejected our overtures toward membership.

We have been lucky enough to have an example of cooperation among

several professions, when educational psychologists, social workers, mental health counselors, and marriage and family therapists joined forces to defeat a proposal by the Board of Behavioral Science Examiners for an ill-conceived and counter-therapeutic regulation on therapist self-disclosure.

There are numerous other areas where cooperation could be useful. Jointly-sponsored legislation in alcoholism, child abuse, privileged communication, sex education and other issues addressing our social ills must receive much greater support than currently provided. Legislators favorable to a progressive mental health delivery system can be strongly supported by all of us if there is coordination of the effort and a clear communication to candidates and office holders that we stand united.

Local interdisciplinary efforts can provide varying types of service to the public, depending on what the patient/client's need is. Government funded programs can provide "more bang for the buck" if all community resources are utilized. That is just a small sample.

We are not naive enough to think that opposition from the better-trenched "fat cats" of the health care system will stop and that economic "turf" issues will just go away. Our advocacy for the profession of marriage and family therapy will continue to be strong and effective because we believe consumers deserve a choice in selecting services from the wide range of providers in California. We are not willing to halt our successful efforts simply because some other group of providers has historically dictated from whom and what types of services consumers will receive. But we want the large majority of professionals in health care who do not lead, but only pay dues to, the professional associations to which they belong to know that marriage and family therapists seek interdisciplinary alliances for the general welfare. The organizations' leadership have not responded to our call for cooperation in the past. We hope and believe, however, that our prediction of future calamity and our statement to the body politic that "we must work together" will not go unheeded much longer.

In these critical times for all of us in mental health, for providers and consumers alike, it is useful to remember Benjamin Franklin's perhaps apocryphal words upon signing the Declaration of Independence, "We must all hang together now, or we'll all hang separately."

**George Jacobs and Steven Alexander speak from the perspective of the approximately 14,000 marriage, family and child counselors who are licensed by the state. Jacobs is president of California Association of Marriage and Family Therapists, and Alexander was the executive director.**

*The opinions expressed in Essay are those of the authors.*

**CAMARILLO** continued from page 1  
the arbitrators found in favor of Los Angeles County, that a minimum of 1158 beds for the county be maintained at Camarillo and Metropolitan State Hospitals and an additional 51 beds in other hospitals.

The decision stated, "The primary goal of the mental health system must be to serve patients in need of care. Neither at the time the Performance Agreement was entered into nor at the time of this arbitration have there been or are there now sufficient acute inpatient or alternative short term non-hospital beds in Los Angeles County to meet the needs. To limit the use of state hospitals by Los Angeles to patients with long term stays is to severely restrict the number of patients Los Angeles can serve and adds to the ever increasing number of patients who will not be served appropriately, if at all."

In issue four, it was decided that the state does owe Los Angeles County 26,416 patient days, the equivalent of \$2.2 million.

In issue five, the decision was that the state must pay the county \$430,718 for 1982-83. This was a partial decision for the county and involved a dispute over matching funds and cost of living factor. The state offered 6 percent and the county contended the figure should be 10.7 percent. The state had erroneously applied the 15 percent match to Medi-Cal revenue, the decision stated.

The disagreement in issue six was whether the state is required to admit to state hospitals every patient referred by the county. The arbitrators decided no because the Performance Agreement lacked specificity relating to admissions.

In issue eight, the arbitrators found that there is no language in the Performance Agreement with the state that says the county has an option regarding at which hospitals the state may close beds, only that the wards closed must be "appropriate."

In issue nine, the county contended the state has a duty to discharge patients who could be served in less restrictive settings, based on the Lanterman/Petris/Short Act. The arbitrators agreed and further states "the state also has a

duty to provide funding for community service."

County council Greg Holland is reserving comment until all issues have been resolved.

Shortage of funds heads the list of major factors beyond the control of either party which affect implementation of the Performance Agreement the decision states. "Cuts in other mental health programs at the county level have reduced the number and kind of backup resources required to move persons quickly out of state hospitals or to prevent their admission to either state or county inpatient units," stated the decision.

The decision continues, "Because the system has been severely restricted in its ability to respond appropriately and immediately to the needs of the acutely disturbed, another route toward immediate inpatient services has developed. Persons are being jailed who otherwise would have gone to the mental health service. Law enforcement officials have found this to be a quicker route to treatment. Court ordered state hospital treatment for Penal Code Section 4011.6 patients is being substituted for the civil procedures which are state policy. Increasing admissions of non-LPS patients at state hospitals have further curtailed the available dollars for LPS patients. At the end of fiscal year 1980-81, \$9 million was transferred out of state hospital LPS funds to pay the additional costs for patients committed by the judicial system.

"In the effort to save money the state is in fact returning to a far less effective and more coercive treatment system," said the arbitrators.

The council said in its conclusion, "Both parties to this agreement are caught in the shifting sands of mental health policy, practices and funding as determined by the Legislature and the Administration. The Council finds too much emphasis in the Performance Agreement and in the arguments presented to it about beds, days and average length of stays and not enough on the patients themselves. The reason for the existence of the State Department of Mental Health and Los Angeles County Mental Health is to provide the maximum, most appropriate services, to the largest number of mentally ill patients within the realities and limits of funding."

If requested by the parties, the Council is willing to participate in any negotiations.

## JUNE BENEFIT RECOGNIZES JUDD MARMOR

The Mental Health Association in Los Angeles County (MHA) plans to utilize the proceeds from its June 6 benefit testimonial dinner to hire a person who will coordinate and facilitate the public policy efforts of MHA and the Mental Health Coalition in Los Angeles County, according to MHA executive director Richard Van Horn.

"We are going to use the funds not just for our benefit, but for the benefit of the entire mental health movement," said Van Horn.

The funds will be used to provide a level of research needed in public policy, staff support for both MHA and the Coalition, and networking among the Coalition to communicate members' stands on issues, according to Van Horn.

The June 6 dinner dance honoring psychiatrist Dr. Judd Marmor will be held in the Grand Ballroom of the Beverly Wilshire Hotel, with the evening's activities beginning at 7 p.m. and dinner at 8 p.m.

Highlight of the evening will be the presentation of the MHA Performance Award to Marmor. The



Dear Abby

award is given in recognition of outstanding achievement in the area(s) of prevention of mental illness, promotion of good mental health and/or advocacy on behalf of the mentally ill.

"We are honoring Dr. Marmor for his obvious professional achievement. He is one of the preeminent psychoanalysts of our generation," said Van Horn. "We are honoring him for being an early advocate of community based mental health care."

"After meeting with him and spending some time with him, it is apparent that he is a healer," Van Horn continued. "Being in conversation with Judd Marmor materially enhances the quality of one's day."

Marmor is adjunct professor of psychiatry at UCLA and has been Franz Alexander professor of psychiatry at the USC School of Medicine. He has authored six books and numerous scientific papers.

Nationally syndicated columnist Abigail Van Buren ("Dear Abby") will present the Performance Award to Marmor. Author Ray Bradbury, last year's award recipient, is serving as honorary chairperson. The Nelson Riddle Orchestra will be performing during the evening.

Tickets for the testimonial dinner are \$125. For information about purchasing tickets, call Lois Betz, dinner coordinator at 476-9661.

## Expressing FEELINGS through ART



# PEOPLE CONNECTION

## CHILDREN'S ART EXHIBIT CELEBRATES "MAY IS MENTAL HEALTH MONTH"

An exhibition of paintings and drawings by children in the Los Angeles Unified School District will be open to the public 10 a.m. - 5 p.m. daily May 8 through June 30 in the California Museum of Science and Industry in Exposition Park. Admission is free. A reception Friday evening, May 7, in the museum will celebrate the opening.

Using the theme "Expressing Feelings Through Art," selected schools each submitted two students' work for judging and display in the museum to highlight "May is Mental Health Month."

The museum project is sponsored by the Children's Citizen Advisory Committee to the Children and Youth Services Bureau of the Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health.

The purpose of the six-week event is to bring public attention to the mental health welfare of children and youth, according to Marion McCammond, Children's Citizen Advisory Committee chairperson.

All the students participating are to be guests for lunch and a visit to the Burbank Disney Animation Studios.

First prize of \$150 was awarded to Kim Gagliano, Reseda High School, and a second prize of \$100 went to

Jamie Brown, David Starr Jordan High School.

Junior High first place was presented to Carolyn Escap, Hughes Jr. High, and honorable mention was given to Tina Brown and Karen Park of Louis Pasteur Jr. High.

Their teachers were each awarded gift certificates from H. G. Daniels art supplies store for classroom art supplies.

In addition, the first place artwork will be used on posters and invitations for next year's event.

Robert Finch, former Health Education and Welfare secretary, is honorary chair, working with steering committee chair Dr. Stephen Howard (see March 1982 *Connections*).

Pauline James, district art specialist for Los Angeles County Unified Schools, has coordinated the judging panel of John Stillion, art consultant for the schools; Ruth Brill, 10th District P.T.A. art chairperson; Fara Wexler, magnet school coordinator; Dr. George Tarjan, chief of Child Psychiatry at UCLA; and Joyce Weiss, artist.

Twenty-five billboards have been donated to advertise the event, and the art department of Los Angeles Trade Tech College provided the printing of posters and invitations.

## MEDIA TELL INCOMPLETE STORY OF ARREST

Recent news articles and media broadcasts did not include complete information about the arrest of a registered sex offender accused of molesting four boys in 1981 while serving as an aide at the San Fernando Valley Child Guidance Clinic in Northridge.

According to the clinic's executive director, Gerald Goldenstern, the newspaper accounts failed to include the information that the clinic at that time was prevented by law from doing a criminal record check and had no other way of knowing the past offenses.

The law has since been changed and now not only permits but requires a background check of persons working with children.

The suspect was not a direct clinic employee, but worked under the Comprehensive Employment Training Act (CETA) and left the clinic when the CETA program was terminated in March 1981.

In a letter to parents, Goldenstern said, "We were victims of an illogical system. Fortunately, a new law is now in effect."

"It should be noted," he continued,

"that it was our original report and complaint that resulted in an arrest warrant being issued."

The letter concluded, "The way to prevent these incidents is to carry out a check of the criminal record for child related offenses, which is now permitted (under the change in the law) and is a part of our employee checking. In addition, the current staff hired under the old law has been checked or is in the process of a check."

"The clinic was concerned for the well-being of each of the children and parents and made provisions for immediate crisis intervention, in addition to on-going therapy," said Goldenstern in a phone interview.

"The therapy has proceeded satisfactorily during the past year and all the children are progressing well in their program," he said.

## FRIENDS continued from page 1

Promotion Branch and is organized by Far West Laboratory for Educational Research and Development, San Francisco. Two regional coordinators provide information and resources for Los Angeles County and nine other counties. Because of the limited staff, it will be implemented by volunteers in counties throughout California.

New medical evidence indicates that supportive personal relationships play an important, but until recently overlooked, role in enhancing physical and mental health.

"Friends Can Be Good Medicine" is a community-driven program. Local steering committees plan and implement local activities appropriate to their own area, with assistance and resources provided regionally through local coordinators. Free resources are available by contacting Susan Dyer at 651-3775 or 386-3350 and Lewis Bundy at 663-2394 or 386-3350.

Recent research shows a relationship between social support and physical and mental health.

- Compared with people who maintain supportive relationships, socially isolated persons have 2-3 times the overall risk of dying, independent of self-reported health status and traditional risk factors of smoking, drinking, exercise and obesity. (Berkman and Syme, 1979)

- Rates of mental hospitalization are roughly 5-10 times as great for separated, divorced and widowed persons compared to married people. (Carter and Glick, 1970)

- The existence of an available confidant confers significant protection against the development of depression. (Brown, Bhrolchain and Harris, 1975)

- Men and women in Edinburgh who had a confidant and friends had significantly lowered psychological and physical symptom levels. (Miller and Ingham, 1976)

- Men who are forcibly unemployed but with high levels of social support have significantly less mental or physical health problems than those with less social support. (Gore, 1978)

## MEDI-CAL COALITION UNVEILS PROPOSALS

The California Coalition for Medi-Cal Reform (CCMR) announced its vigorous opposition to a recent legislative proposal to slash \$450 million from the Medi-Cal program next year.

The statewide Coalition is a combination of health care providers, Medi-Cal recipients and labor that recently was formed to press for reforms in the Medi-Cal program, which provides needed health care to 3.1 million Californians who otherwise could not afford it. The Mental Health Association in Los Angeles County is a member of this Coalition's steering committee.

The Coalition unveiled a list of reform proposals that would, according to the Coalition, reduce the cost of the program while assuring quality health care.

Mark Tanaka, a spokesperson for several hospitals involved in the Coalition, said that the Coalition was sending three messages to elected officials in Sacramento:

1. They are wrong if they believe that there is no organized public support for the Medi-Cal program;

2. Decisions about who will be denied health care should be made as part of an open political context, not by a few people behind closed doors; and

3. There are creative, progressive, workable alternatives to the present health care delivery system that would provide cost efficient quality health care to the poor. These include a competitive bidding system in which the state becomes a prudent purchaser of health care services in the market place.



*"Each of you has the power to make a difference. Let's elect to use that power in a constructive way by becoming a member of the MHA. Join in fighting the nation's number one health problem."*

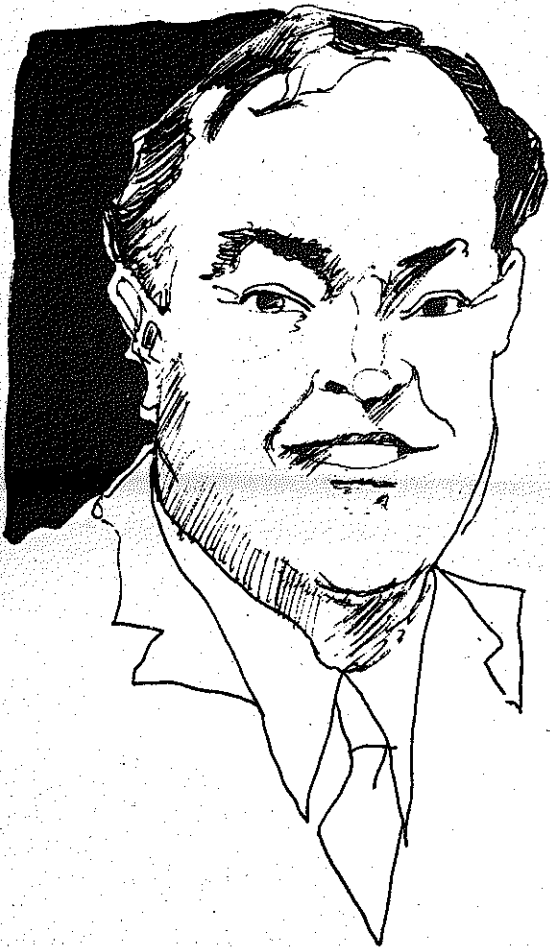
*William J. Thomas  
Mental Health Association President  
Recovered Mental Patient*

AN OPEN

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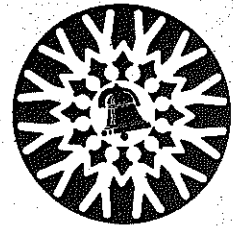
*William J.  
Mental H  
Recovered*

## JOIN THE MENTAL HEALTH ASSOCIATION IN LOS ANGELES COUNTY



*"We hope your membership is a step in your journey of commitment to the mentally ill in Los Angeles County. They need all of us working together to lay out the pathways by which they may re-enter society as recovered and productive persons. Each action your MHA has taken, each program started has begun as the idea, the commitment of one person. It is your turn to become one of these persons."*

*Richard Van Horn  
Mental Health Association  
Executive Director*



*"I was pretty upset when the editor said that I could only have one sentence in spite of all that I had to say. But the one that I finally chose goes - My dear colleagues, psychiatrists, social workers, nurses, psychologists, marriage and family therapists, and advocates: Today is the right day for us to join together as paid up, card carrying members of this remarkable Mental Health Association because ..."*

*Dr. Milton H. Miller  
Mental Health Association  
Membership Committee Chairperson*



GRAPHICS BY JESUS PEREZ

**"Include me in the..."**

I want to be a member of the Mental Health Association  
 BENEFACTOR \$100. or more     SPONSOR  
 GOLD MEMBER \$1,000.  
 I would like to become a MHA volunteer.  
 My special interest is: \_\_\_\_\_  
 My special skills are: \_\_\_\_\_

**Mental Health action and effectiveness happens in direct proportion to your participation.**

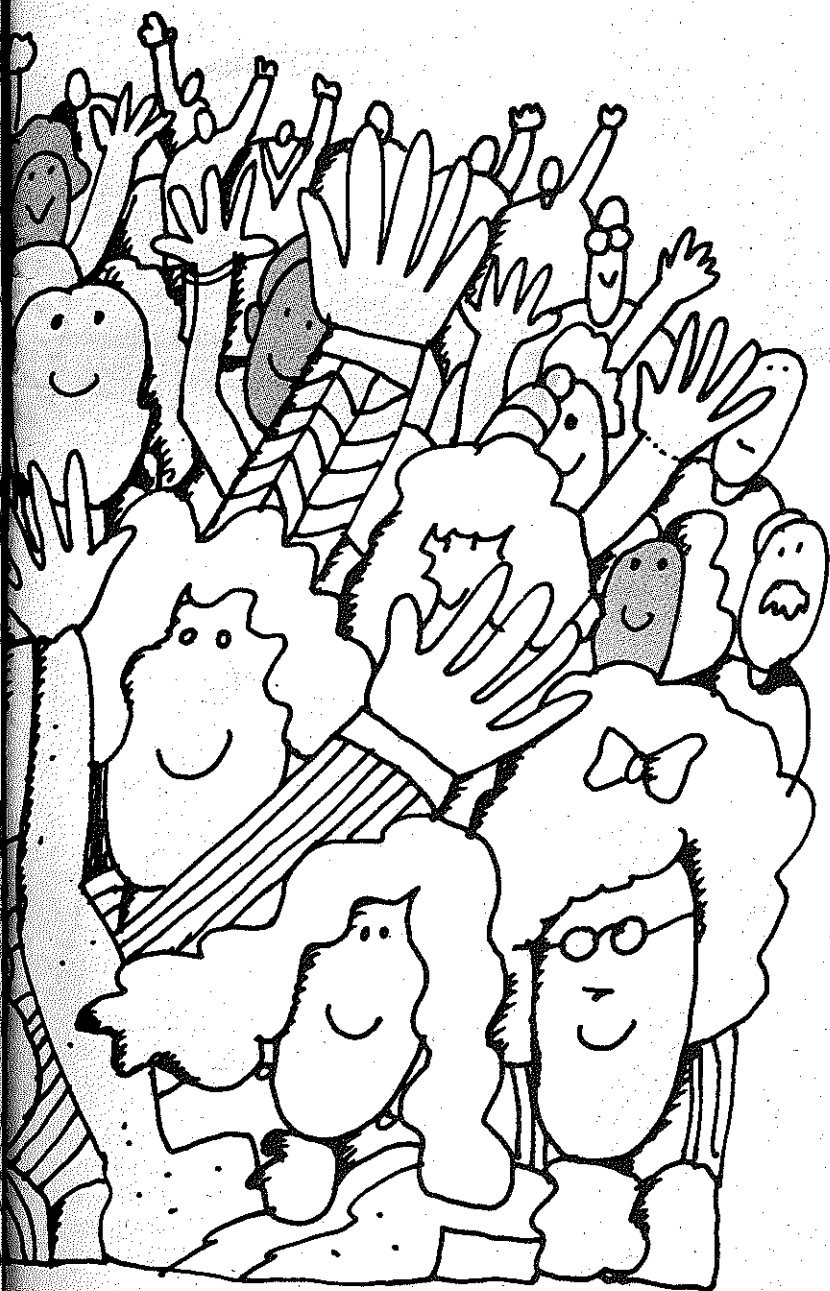
TEAR OFF THIS PORTION AND MAIL TO:

LETTER

ere budget cuts affecting mental health care services Angeles community, the time has come for the public to the plight of the mentally disabled. The response in terms of people power. With the tremendous number of individuals who are hurting, the whole system has been inundated with people crying out for help. The MHA in Los Angeles County has taken a strong and positive role. By becoming a member of the MHA, you can make a difference — reaching out to people. If we can help people to see the mentally disabled as just ordinary folks who are unable to cope, perhaps we can prevent the symptoms from reaching stages that would require an individual to enter the health system. Your membership dollars would be used to support the already existing viable programs which have been implemented by the MHA. Each of you has the power to make a difference. Let's elect to use that power in a constructive way by becoming a member of the MHA. Join in fighting the number one health problem."

Thomas  
Mental Health Association President  
Mental Patient

# MENTAL HEALTH ASSOCIATION LOS ANGELES COUNTY



...the fight against mental illness!"

...th Association.  
...OR \$50.  DONOR \$25.  INDIVIDUAL \$10.

TAX DEDUCTIBLE GIFT

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone—Work \_\_\_\_\_  
—Home \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_  
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Advocacy, hospital visitation, Project Return, Coalition, residential care project, public education, Gifts for Giving, Youth Award Project, activity centers, Connections, and information and referral — all are illustrations of the Mental Health Association at work in Los Angeles County.

MHA in Los Angeles County is a private, non-profit, volunteer organization concerned with all aspects of mental health and mental illness. It is one of 850 chapters of a nationwide organization having more than one million members.

Locally, MHA is a United Way partner and acts as an umbrella organization for mental health interests in Los Angeles County. It is governed by a volunteer board of directors, with William J. Thomas serving as president. Richard Van Horn is executive director.

In Los Angeles, MHA is divided into four regions, with offices and staff in Central/Westside, San Fernando Valley, Long Beach/Coastal and San Gabriel Valley Regions.

The organization's goals are to prevent mental illness, to improve the care and treatment of those suffering from mental illness and to promote mental health. Volunteers and staff work toward these goals through programs and projects.

- Advocacy objectives of MHA are to remain current on all economic and legislative developments, to make mental health an important cause in the county and to eradicate the stigma attached to mental illness.

- Through the hospital visitation program, MHA volunteer teams monitor local, state and county psychiatric facilities. Team members assess patient care, physical environment and programs.

- Project Return is an MHA sponsored federation of self-help clubs for recovering mentally disabled adults. It currently has 20 clubs and 200 members.

- MHA acts as the umbrella organization for the Mental Health Coalition, which brings together diverse interests within the mental health field to address mental health issues. There are 85 groups represented in the Coalition.

- In the residential care project, volunteers work directly with residents of board and care homes. The purpose of this program is to build community contact.

- MHA sponsors seminars, conferences and series on a variety of topics, with the intent of informing and educating the public.

- Clients of board and care homes, OMHSS facilities, Metropolitan State Hospital and socialization clubs can participate in giving and receiving gifts through the Gifts for Giving program. Donated items are made available for clients to give to family or friends and also are presented to the clients.

- The new Youth Award Project, patterned after the scouting model of earning badges, enables youth to earn the MHA Youth Award by completing activities and earning points, using a handbook under the guidance of a leader.

- At activity centers, clients participate in a wide range of indoor and outdoor activities, supervised by MHA volunteers.

- Now in its second year, Connections, a newspaper published by MHA, informs on mental health news and issues throughout the county. It currently has a circulation of more than 17,000.

- MHA also provides an information and referral service, through which staff refers persons with mental health questions to the appropriate service.

## War Fears Depress Economy

I want to record my affirmative response to Dr. Charles Ansell's *Connections* article (April 1982). I was deeply moved by his ability to put into words some thoughts which have been racing through my head for a long time.

Dr. Ansell correctly identified a national mental health problem as the "illusion of invincibility." It is both illusion and delusion that a "limited" nuclear war can be waged, let alone "won"!

During these months of economic malaise I find myself asking, "What is the effect of 'thinking the unthinkable' having on the spirit of the American public? Could there be a causal relationship between depressed spirits and a depressed economy?"

I recall a number of years ago when Harry and Bonaro Overstreet wrote their *The Mature Mind*, how they characterized mental health in terms of "resilience" — our capacity to "bounce back" from life's daily failures and frustrations. Why is not our economy "bouncing back"? Could it be that rising fears about nuclear war have mired so many American people in John Bunyan's "slough of despond?"

Consider, for example, President Reagan's repeatedly futile attempts to convince Wall Street that "things are going to get better." How much of his failure can be attributed to the depressive effect of "How can things get better" if over the horizon we sense the inevitability of a nuclear holocaust?

These are some thoughts, Dr. Ansell, which your *Connections* article triggered in me.

**Dr. Don Falkenberg**  
Executive Director  
Western Career Development Center

## What are MFTs?

The February issue of *Connections* included an interview with George M. Jacobs, president of the California Association of Marriage and Family Therapists. Attributed to Jacobs were a couple of statements that produced a strong reaction. My objections centered on two statements: that MFTs (marriage and family therapists) although licensed for 18 years in this state, are the "new kids on the block" and that we "need to prove ourselves."

Are MFTs the new kids on the block, and do we still have to prove our professional worth? After 18 years of licensing, it seems absurd to call us new, and yet there does seem to be an all-too-pervasive attitude — one part denigration, two parts ignorance — about what we are and are not, within our own group and in our interactions with other professionals. The denigration is expressed in myriad ways: the struggle for the name as well as the game (under California law we are providers of psychotherapy but are not, technically, termed therapists); the struggle for clients' freedom of choice so that our services are honored by their insurance carriers; the sometimes implied, often explicitly stated, opinion of other professionals that anything we can do, they can do better; and even the fact that licensed MFTs were omitted from a recent hypnotherapy training course which other professionals, including dental students, were eligible to attend. I don't believe MFTs want to engage in "No, you can't/Yes, I can" dialogues; infighting is destructive and diverts attention from our most important responsibility: service to our clients.

What are MFTs? What is it we are especially good at doing?

1. Much of our work is preventive. It is often possible to identify signs of prospective trouble (incest, child abuse, domestic violence) before it erupts.

2. We are trained in techniques of communication between women and men, and among members of family groups, including both blended and extended families. We are good at recognizing and working with family dynamics, implicit family "rules," and significant patterns of communication.

3. We are accepting of the need to be flexible in our approach. We haven't mechanically adapted to a one-track therapy framework; we use what works best with the individual and the family.

4. As a corollary, we are accepting of individual differences; we expect and welcome them.

5. We work within a growth model; we believe in the ability of our clients to actively design their own lives and define their individual goals creatively.

6. We are able to work with clients in ways they experience as most valuable and useful for themselves. We are flexible about goal-setting if our clients need to work within certain parameters.

7. We are human, and we don't think we lose professional mystique by showing it. Our qualities of warmth and caring are important to the well-being of the people we serve.

8. We diagnose and treat mental illness, using the guidelines of the DSM-III.

Rather than "prove" ourselves, perhaps what MFTs can most usefully do is to make ourselves and our skills better known, and to check, once and for all, any tendency to apologize for or deny our special areas of expertise and our right to full standing and respect as professionals within the mental health community.

**Betsy Stevens**  
Licensed Marriage, Family and Child Counselor

## Consumer Concerns

I am a consumer of mental health services, and, luckily, I am well enough to look after myself, although I receive S.S.I. (Supplemental Security Income).

I am extremely annoyed at the attitude of "environmentalists," who would insist that there is no chemical imbalance to be found in those who are seriously mentally ill and in those that have to be confined. They seem to believe that therapy alone can help these patients. Though I myself would doubt that I have a chemical imbalance, I am in favor of more expenditure in scientific research to help these people.

I am ashamed that your newspaper, which I receive at my house, does not represent this viewpoint. To this date, I have not seen any articles on scientific advances that would help the seriously mentally ill nor any articles on the funding of research projects.

Though I recognize that the majority of people who read your magazine, especially psychologists, are Democrats, I would have thought that some articles on the ideas of chemical imbalance would help the cause of the seriously mentally ill. To my mind, this is of greater importance than petty partisanship.

**Valerie Cox**

*Connections* encourages response from readers. Letters should be kept as brief as possible and are subject to condensation. *Connections* reserves the right to edit letters for style and libel. Letters must include signature and valid mailing address. Pseudonyms and initials will not be used. Due to space limitations, an attempt will be made to publish a representative sampling of views.

Letters should be sent to: *Connections*, Mental Health Association in Los Angeles County, 930 Georgia St., Los Angeles, CA 90015.

## INTERVIEW (continued from page 1)

when both retired.

"My wife, Peggy, and I years ago had decided that we were not going to let this problem devour us; we were not going to let it consume us," said Richardson. "Rather than let the problem make us inoperative and miserable, we've decided to devote a large portion of our time to what we consider a positive and productive use of our energies."

A look at a list of the volunteer positions Richardson has as a parent advocate explains why he referred to this as a "full time job." Among his positions is a recent appointment by Los Angeles County Supervisor Deane Dana to the Mental Health Advisory Board, an advisory group to the Board of Supervisors.

Of his new appointment, Richardson said, "My main hope is that I can represent a strong parent point of view regarding mental health needs, such as programs and the funding of these programs. If I can do that, I will be representing those who deal with these problems 24 hours a day, year after year, which makes it unique when compared with others on the board."

In addition to this post, Richardson is chairperson of the Los Angeles County Parent Coalition, comprised of eight parent self-help groups in the county; co-chairperson, with Peggy, of the California Association, Families of the Mentally Disabled (CAFMD) Legislative Action Committee; member of the Mental Health Coalition and its steering committee; and president of Advocates for the Mentally Ill (AMI), a parent organization.

Richardson described his advocacy work as a "joint effort" with his wife, Peggy.

"Peggy is a co-partner in all these efforts. Without her encouragement and help, I'd never be able to do it," he said.

The Richardsons' initial involvement with a group began three years ago with AMI. It was this involvement that prompted Richardson to devote more of his time to being a parent advocate.

"It made me realize there was a need for someone to devote a great deal of time to bringing together individuals who are facing this problem," he said.

"There is a group out there that is so frustrated, angry and hurt by their family problem of mental illness that they feel the current mental health system has to be hit on the head with a two by four before it will listen to them," said Richardson. "As a result, too often there is confrontation, instead of listening and joint planning among all groups and individuals who are involved with this problem."

"In my professional career, I have always had success in bringing groups together for the purpose of working together in joint effort toward a common goal," he continued. "It is my hope that in my new capacities at different levels in the system that I can help to reduce the adversary approach and change it to a cooperative effort."

Richardson said that AMI founder Vivian Isenberg "has been a great source of inspiration to us because of her knowledge, devotion and commitment to parent advocacy. She showed us a way to handle our personal problem that was positive, and that way was to try to find answers to mental illness."

Richardson described three stages parents go through in dealing with an offspring's mental illness.

During the first stage, the "sharing and caring" stage, there is a "need for joining groups where members have had a similar problem, so you can talk freely with the assurance you are being understood," he said.

"The typical experience is that your tears, which are part of the first stage, begin to dry up and you get angry because you see that not much is happening to improve the situation of your mentally ill son or daughter," he continued. "You then realize that you have to educate yourself so you can be an effective spokesperson for trying to solve the problem, which means you must be able to speak to professionals, providers and elected officials in a knowledgeable way."

This is the "education stage," during which "you can learn to live with the problem a little easier because you have an understanding of what is happening," according to Richardson.

"The result of the second stage usually moves an individual into the third stage, which is legislative action. Your experience in the first two stages lead you to realize that the only place where the real answers can be provided for is through the legislature," he said. "Until parent groups realize that the real source of action that

will improve the mental health programs for the mentally ill is in Sacramento, they will continue to remain static at stage one or two. In my judgment, this is counter-productive to allow this to happen."

This is one of the messages Richardson brings to parent organizations when he and Peggy visit the groups as part of their work with CAFMD.

"I will outline that numbers are power, knowledge is power, voting is power, coalitions are power and, of course, money is power. Through the proper utilization of each of these powers, we can be effective with mental health professionals and, more important than any, legislators."

When discussing the future work of Don and Peggy Richardson as parent advocates, Don Richardson said, "As long as the two of us can continue to work together to try to find answers, it is a rewarding project."

His philosophy illustrates why he continues his work as a parent advocate.

"I will not accept defeat," he said. "I'm determined that there are answers that we are going to find."

## VOLUNTEERISM ADDRESSED ON QUEEN MARY

Team presentations, panel discussions, small work groups and improvisational theater are components of a three day seminar on "The Three R's of Volunteerism in Service to the Long-Term Mentally Ill."

Sponsored by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Region IX, in cooperation with the Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health, the seminar will take place May 17-19 aboard the R.M.S. Queen Mary in Long Beach.

The seminar is directed at volunteers and personnel who work with volunteers in caring for the chronically mentally ill, with the objective of disseminating information to support effective use of these volunteers.

"Based on current federal policy, it is apparent that we are going to be more dependent than ever on the effective use of volunteers in providing services to the long-term mentally ill. It is the intent of this seminar to provide information that will assist in the design of effective volunteer programs to help meet this need," said Harvey Ryland, project director.

Dr. J. R. Elpers, L.A. County Department of Mental Health director, will deliver the opening statement on "Volunteerism." The keynote statement, "Volunteerism: Partnership between Government and Private Enterprise," will be given by David B. Swoap, undersecretary, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

Subjects addressed during the seminar include "What is Volunteerism?," "Community Acceptance and Relationships Affecting Recruitment of Volunteers," "Using Volunteers in Administration and Leadership Roles," "Power, Politics and Persuasion," "Respective Roles and Relationships of Volunteers and Career Personnel," "Volunteer Burnout — Symptoms and Solutions," "New Breed of Volunteers: Get 'Em and Keep 'Em!" and model volunteer programs "Community Friends Project," "Project Ease," "Use of Volunteers in a Rural Setting" and "Hawaiian Friends Program."

Work Group Sessions with facilitators will be held each day.

Fee for the seminar is \$77 and includes materials, lunches and dinners. Registration is available at the door as space permits. Preregistration information can be obtained by contacting Ryland Research Inc., 5901 Encina, Suite B-1, Goleta, CA 93117, (805) 967-2339.

# ESSAY

## SKID ROW 1982

### BRIGHT SPOTS IN A BLACK EXPANSE

By Frank J. Rice

Skid Row in downtown Los Angeles has been described as a 44 square block area bounded on four sides by a largely disinterested and uncaring society.

Skid Row is a large community with a population between 10,000 and 15,000, depending on the time of year. Estimates indicate that more than three quarters of the men and women who live there are suffering in one way or another from mental illness. Surveys show that only about one third are alcoholic dependent.

For years there have been organizations in Skid Row that have provided food and limited shelter for the men of the area. Attention has been paid to the disease of alcoholism by such groups as the Public Inebriate Program and detoxification facilities, though limited, provided by Volunteers of America and Salvation Army.

About four years ago additional services began to appear in Skid Row.

First there was the Women's Center, founded by a former county social worker, Jill Haverson. Prior to the opening of the center there never had been a place for women. Traditionally, skid row services had been exclusively for men, and yet, in recent years, the female population has grown steadily. The Women's Center does not provide housing but is open during the day, seven days a week. It provides a place where a woman can take a nap, make a cup of tea, enjoy a noon meal and experience the social companionship of other women.

Shortly after the opening of the Women's Center, the Skid Row Development Corporation (SRDC) was founded. It is a non-profit corporation whose operating expenses are underwritten by the Los Angeles Community Redevelopment Agency. Its board of directors is made up of downtown business representatives, area service providers and Skid Row residents. Genesis of this corporation was the Skid Row Task Force, which had been created as one of several working groups which resulted from the creation of the downtown redevelopment district.

The mandate of SRDC is to "provide planning, technical assistance and economic development service to the Skid Row community." Its first project

is a recently opened commercial light industry center, a 35,000 square foot building which, when fully leased, will provide employment for 90-100 Skid Row men and women.

The next project of SRDC is transitional housing, a dormitory-like facility which will provide room and board for 100 men and 35 women whose lives are in transition — hopefully to return to a productive life.

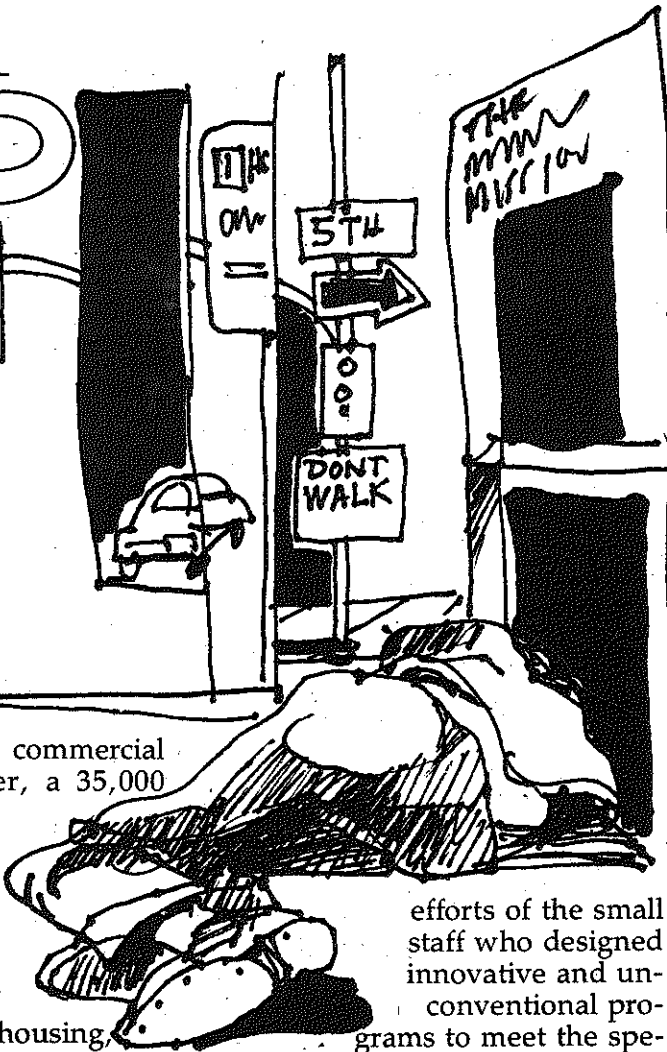
Another Skid Row service project now underway is the Weingart Neighborhood Revitalization Center. Its emphasis is on recovery from alcoholism. When complete, the center will represent the successful conversion of the El Rey Hotel on Sixth Street into a detoxification center with housing and related services. The center will provide 250 beds for alcohol recovery patients and an additional 200 single occupancy units for transitional housing.

All that has been described in the above represent bright spots, wonderful bright spots in a black expanse that makes up the world of this city's destitute men and women.

But there is a paradox here. It is that almost all of the existing services minister to the physical bodies of these outcasts from society, yet their most commonly shared problem is mental illness.

A few hours spent observing men in soup lines or watching "bag women" navigate their shopping carts is all it takes to be convinced that a troubled mind is an affliction shared by most.

There has been one small effort in the area of mental health. It is called appropriately the "Skid Row Project" and was established just a year ago by the Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health Services. Reaction to the



efforts of the small staff who designed innovative and unconventional programs to meet the special needs of the area has been extremely positive. But the effort is so meager when compared to the magnitude of the problem. Unfortunately, Skid Row in downtown Los Angeles isn't the exclusive residence it used to be. There are other Skid Rows developing throughout our community — in MacArthur Park, Ocean Park, Pacoima, Van Nuys, San Fernando and parts of Long Beach. And all with mental illness as the number one disease — far more serious than anemia, malnutrition and alcoholism.

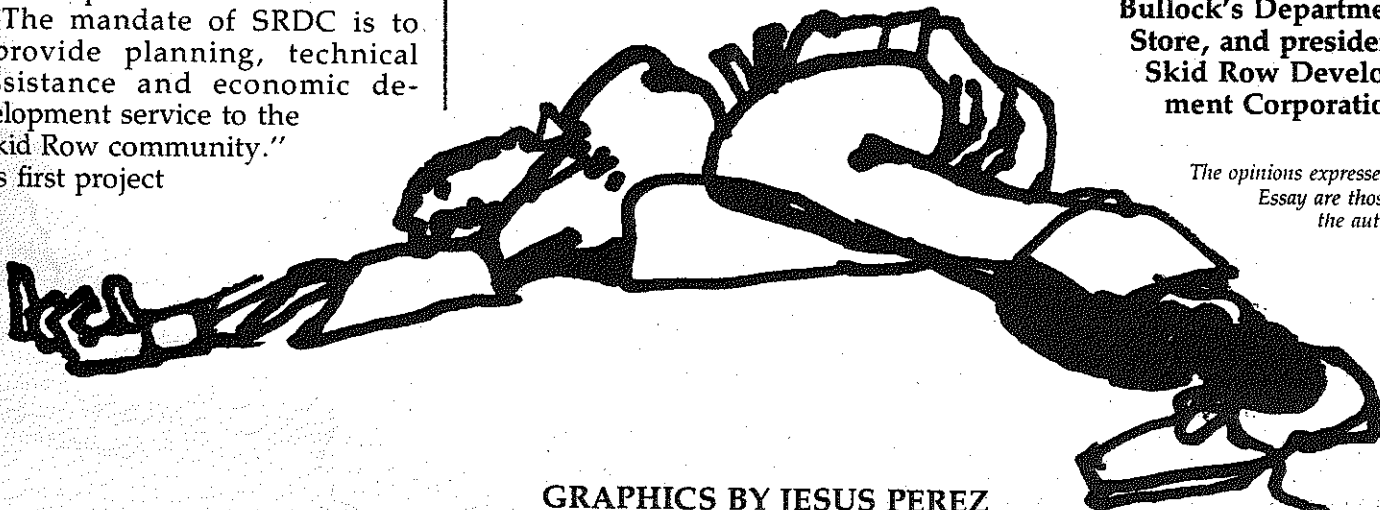
The problem is severe and certainly the solution is not "just around the corner." Surely the answer isn't what is termed "the revolving door syndrome" — a brief stay in a state hospital followed by a return to a substandard rooming house or a back alley, perhaps some minimum treatment, a descent into serious illness, back to the hospital — round and round. An experience shared by too many Skid Row residents.

Perhaps someday we will begin to show our humanity and work to provide trained assistance to those mentally troubled men and women whose present address is Skid Row but who are yet redeemable to society and to themselves.

Webster gives three synonyms for redemption: deliverance, reclamation or release from bondage. Any one of the three would be an acceptable meaning to the mentally ill in Skid Row.

Frank J. Rice is vice president, Bullock's Department Store, and president, Skid Row Development Corporation.

The opinions expressed in Essay are those of the author.



GRAPHICS BY JESUS PEREZ

## FACTS HIGHLIGHT LA COUNTY NEEDS

These facts were compiled by the Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health.

There are now only 2,000 Los Angeles County residents in state hospitals of all types, but 20 years ago there were over 12,000. This represents a drop from 184 per 100,000 population to 28 per 100,000 population.

Based on present patterns of demand and available resources in 1982, 2,860 persons who need immediate hospitalization will have to wait an inordinate amount of time until a bed is located. Eight hundred and eighty four other persons will be turned away to less appropriate forms of treatment.

It is estimated that 13.5 percent of jail inmates are mentally ill, but only 4.5 percent are referred for mental health services. Of the 2,688 meeting criteria for involuntary hospitalization, over 1,000 were held in jail waiting for psychiatric beds to become available.

The Los Angeles County local Short-Doyle system has been treating an increasing number of seriously disabled persons. The percent of adults discharged from services who had psychotic diagnoses rose to 59 percent in 1980-81.

It is estimated that there are 30,000-40,000 chronically mentally disabled persons in Los Angeles County in need of public mental health services while a maximum of 10,000 are currently receiving care.

The State General Fund dollars used for services to Los Angeles County residents have dropped 26 percent (adjusted for cost of living) since 1978. With the present requirements for county matching contributions, the net loss is 13 percent.

There have been dramatic increases in the numbers of referrals for child abuse and neglect. Nearly 64,000 children were involved in such referrals last year. Very few of these children receive the necessary mental health services which could help to stop the cycles of abuse and dysfunction in which these children are often trapped.

Of the 10-15,000 persons who come to the Los Angeles skid row area each year, it is estimated that 8,000 suffer from chronic disabling psychiatric illnesses.

The California Model for Community Mental Health Services shows the need for many more resources: there should be \$88 million more spent on children's mental health services alone. Services for the elderly should have nearly \$13 million more. Overall, an adequate treatment and service system requires more than twice the present gross budget of \$198.6 million.

# CALENDAR

## May 1

**Mental Health Association in Los Angeles County:** "Community Awareness: Catalyst for Change," a conference on mental health issues, will be held 8:30 a.m.-4 p.m. at Long Beach City College, 4901 E. Carson, Long Beach. It features a showing of the film, "The Other Side of Hell," followed by a discussion with MHA President Bill Thomas, subject of the film, and two sessions of workshops.

Conference registration is available at the door as space permits. Fees are \$2 for students with identification, \$3.50 for the public and \$10 for continuing education credit, available for social workers and nursing students.

Call 629-1527 for information.

## May 1

**Pasadena Counseling Group:** "Learn to Be A MFCC," a six hour workshop on marriage, family and child counselor license qualifications, will be held 9 a.m.-3 p.m. at Pasadena Counseling Group, 711 E. Walnut St., Suite 105, Pasadena.

Call 795-7722 for information.

## May 1-2

**La Puente Valley Community Mental Health Center:** The center will have a booth at a health fair to be held 10 a.m.-5 p.m. at Puente Hills Mall, City of Industry. Information and materials on the center's services will be available.

## May 2

**California State Psychological Association:** Continuing education workshops on "Psychological Assessment: Current Issues and Practices," "Management of the Acutely Disturbed Individual," "Psychotropic Medications for Non-Physician Therapists" and "DSM-III — An Introduction to the New Diagnostic Nomenclature" will be held 9 a.m.-5:30 p.m. at the USC Davidson Conference Center, USC, Los Angeles. Workshops are approved for continuing education credit. Registration is available at the door.

Call 478-5039 for information.

## May 3, 10, 17, 24, 31

**Help Anorexia:** The family support group meets every Monday, 7-9 p.m., in the Federal Building cafeteria, 11000 Wilshire Blvd., Los Angeles.

Call 558-0444 for information.

## May 5

**Interagency Committee on Mental Health:** The committee meets at 9:30 a.m. in the first floor conference rooms at the Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health, 2415 W. Sixth St., Los Angeles. Street parking only.

## May 5

**Forte Foundation:** "Parenting and Power/Free Group," an on-going group designed to train parents in new approaches and methods in working with their children and in handling their own frustration, meets Wednesdays, 7 p.m., at Forte Foundation, a non-profit, tax exempt community mental health clinic, 17277 Ventura Blvd., suite 201, Encino.

Call 788-6800 for information.

## May 5

**Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health Central and Southeast Regional Community Liaison Committees:** A mental health fair with the theme "Friends Can Be Good Medicine" will be held 10 a.m.-4 p.m. at Central City Community Mental Health Center, 4211 S. Avalon, Los Angeles.

## May 6, 13, 20, 27

**Help Anorexia:** A self-help group for individuals with eating disorders meets every Thursday, 7-9 p.m., at 11826 Kiowa Ave., West Los Angeles.

Call Bonnie at 820-2719 or Steve at 558-0444 for information.

## May 7, 13, 20, 27

**San Fernando Valley Child Guidance Clinic:** "Coping with Divorce or Separation," an on-going therapy-support group for recently divorced or separated parents with a child aged six or under, meets on Thursdays, 6:30-8 p.m., at the clinic's family stress center, 7347 Van Nuys Blvd., Van Nuys. Parents may enter the group at any time.

Call 993-9311 for information.

## RCLC

The Regional Community Liaison Committees (RCLCs), citizens advisory groups with the purpose of providing input to the planning process, of the Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health five regions meet as follows:

### May 11

**San Gabriel Valley Region RCLC** meets at 7 p.m. at Arcadia Mental Health, 330 E. Live Oak, Arcadia.

Call 960-6411 for information.

### May 12

**Coastal Region RCLC** meets at 6:45 p.m. at Harbor-UCLA Medical Center, eighth floor conference room, 1000 W. Carson, Torrance.

Call 533-3120 for information.

### May 14

**San Fernando/Antelope Valley Region RCLC** meets 10 a.m.-noon at regional headquarters, 5077 Lankershim Blvd., North Hollywood.

Call 508-7800 for information.

### May 19

**Central Region RCLC** meets at 7 p.m. at the LACUSC Medical Center Psychiatric Hospital, room 2C18, 1934 Hospital Pl., Los Angeles.

Call 226-6424 for information.

### May 20

**Southeast Region RCLC** meets at 1:30 p.m. at Hubert Humphrey Comprehensive Health Services, 5850 S. Main, Los Angeles.

Call 603-7061 for information.

These meetings are open to the public.

## May 8

**Pasadena Mental Health Center:** "Your Relationships and You" will be the topic of the center's sixth annual Community Conference, featuring 34 workshops. It will be held 8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. at Westminster Presbyterian Church, 1757 N. Lake Ave., Pasadena.

Call 798-0907 for information.

## May 8

**Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health Children and Youth Services Bureau:** "Expressing Feelings Through Art," an exhibit of painting and drawings by L.A. Unified School District students and a series of oil paintings by Lucille Berkowitz, presented by the Children's Citizen Advisory Committee, will be on display 10 a.m.-5 p.m. through June 30 at the Science Wing Hall, California Museum of Science and Industry, 700 State Dr., Exposition Park, Los Angeles. Admission is free.

## May 10

**Coastal Community Mental Health Center:** The center is facilitating a new monthly meeting of community care facility operators in Torrance, Lomita, Carson and Harbor City area. Its first meeting will be held at 7 p.m. at Torrance First Christian Church, 2930 El Dorado, Torrance.

Call 518-6873 for information.

## May 11

**Relatives and Friends of the Mentally Disabled in Norwalk:** Steve J. Clagett, Rio Hondo Mental Health Services community services coordinator, will speak at the 7 p.m. meeting, held at a new location, the Norwalk-La Mirada Unified School District administration building, 12820 S. Pioneer Blvd., Norwalk.

Call 864-4412 for information.

## May 11

**Pasadena Counseling Group:** Registration is due for a six week assertion training class for women, scheduled to begin May 18, 10:30 a.m.-noon, at 711 E. Walnut St., Pasadena. Preregistration is necessary.

Call 795-7722 for information.

## May 13

**Advocates for the Mentally Ill:** The 7:30 p.m. meeting, held at Thaliens Community Mental Health Center, 8730 Alden Dr., Los Angeles, will feature the topic, "Effective Ways of Getting Help for Mentally Ill Persons." Parents will discuss ways they have found to obtain satisfactory results when they have sought help for their mentally ill son or daughter. Representatives from the Department of Mental Health, Patient's Rights and private treatment facilities will serve as resource personnel during this discussion.

## May 13

**Los Angeles County Psychological Association:** "Nuclear War: Can We Survive It?" will be presented at 7:30 p.m. at All Saints Episcopal Church, 504 N. Camden Dr., Beverly Hills. The film, "The Last Epidemic," will be shown, followed by a panel of speakers consisting of psychologist Bernice Zahm, Ph.D., chemist/environmental scientist Lowell Wayne, Ph.D., and Rabbi Jacob Ott.

Call 477-0449 for information.

## May 13

**Mental Health Association in Los Angeles County:** The Children and Youth Committee meets at noon at Los Angeles Child Guidance Clinic, 746 W. Adams, Los Angeles.

Call 629-1527 for information.

## May 14

**Relatives and Friends of the Mentally Disabled in Pasadena:** Lucie James, Mental Health Association in Los Angeles County San Gabriel Valley regional director, will speak on "Friends Can Be Good Medicine," and Dr. David Comings of the City of Hope will discuss "Genetic Engineering Approach to Schizophrenia," at the 7 p.m. meeting, held at a new location, San Marino Community Church, 1750 Virginia Rd., San Marino.

Call 797-3562 or 449-4217 for information.

## May 15

**Southeast Mental Health Task Force on Sexual Assault and the Women's Center at California State University, Dominguez Hills:** An all day fair with the theme, "Community Action Against Sexual Assault," will be held 11 a.m.-3 p.m. at the Dominguez Hills campus, 1000 Victoria Blvd., Carson. The fair includes information booths, educational presentations, entertainment and celebrity appearances.

Call 603-4873 for information.

## May 16

**Gestalt Therapy Institute of Los Angeles:** "Challenges of Step-Family Living," with Doris Jacobson, Ph.D., associate professor at the UCLA School of Social Welfare, will be held at 7:30 p.m. at the UCLA Religious Conference Center, Helgard and LeConte avenues, Westwood.

Call 827-2606 for information.

## May 17

**Coastal Community Mental Health Center:** The center is facilitating a new relatives and friends group for Torrance, Lomita, Carson and Harbor City area. The first meeting will be held at 7 p.m. at the Torrance First Christian Church, 2930 El Dorado, Torrance.

Call 518-6873 for information.

## May 18

**Center for Mental Health Training:** Applications are due for "Brief Treatment of the Chronically Mentally Ill," a workshop to be held June 3-4, 9 a.m.-4 p.m., at the center, 11665 W. Olympic Blvd., suite 200, Los Angeles. Continuing education credit is available.

Call 478-1535 for information.

## May 20

**Arcadia, Monrovia and Duarte mental health agencies:** A community social service resource meeting, in conjunction with the city of Monrovia, will be held 2:30-4:30 p.m. at Monrovia Community Center, 119 W. Palm Ave., Monrovia.

Call 357-3258 for information.

## May 21

**Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health Southeast Mental Health Region:** "Networking for Mental Health Services — Recovery Through Unity," a networking fair will be held 9 a.m. - 3 p.m. at Augustus F. Hawkins Mental Health Center, room 1169, 1720 E. 120th St., Los Angeles.

Call 603-4803 or 603-4884 for information.

## May 23

**Parents Sharing Custody Inc.:** An organizational membership meeting for parents with shared custody or parents investigating shared custody will be held at 7 p.m. at 8620 S. Sepulveda Blvd., Los Angeles. Fee is \$5.

For information, call 345-4715.

## May 26

**El Centro Community Mental Health Center:** "How Families Cope with Anger and Frustration" will be addressed at the meeting of Family Night, an on-going support group for family members, held 6:30-8 p.m., at the center, room 237, 972 S. Goodrich, Los Angeles. The same group is held in Spanish on May 27, with Dr. Manuel Pueblitz and Graciela Rodriguez discussing the same topic.

Call 725-1337 for information.

## May 26

**Anorexia Nervosa and Associated Disorders:** A self-help group for persons with eating disorders meets the last Wednesday of each month at 8 p.m. at 18345 Ventura Blvd., suite 414, Tarzana.

Call Suzy Green at 343-9105 for information.

## May 26

**Association for Mental Health Affiliation with Israel:** Dr. Louis J. West, UCLA Neuropsychiatric Institute director, will speak on "Psychobiology of the Pogrom," presented by AMHAI at Thaliens Community Mental Health Center auditorium, 8730 Alden Dr., Los Angeles.

Call 995-3484 for information.

## May 26

**A Touch of Care:** Richard B. Cohen, M.F.C.C., facilitates a free monthly Parents Skills Training Group at the organization's social rehabilitation center, 11552 W. Pico Blvd., West Los Angeles.

Call 473-1337 for information.

## May 27

**Mental Health Advisory Board:** The board will meet at noon at the Hall of Administration, room 739, 500 W. Temple St., Los Angeles.

## May 27

**Santa Monica/West Los Angeles Mental Health Network and the Mental Health Association in Los Angeles County:** "Reaching the Hard to Reach," a conference presented in cooperation with the city of Santa Monica, will be held 1-4 p.m. at the Santa Monica Civic Auditorium, 1855 Main St., Santa Monica.

Call 829-4715 for information.

## CONNECTIONS

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Published 10 times a year under Short-Doyle contract by the Mental Health Association in Los Angeles County.

Copy for *Connections* should reach the newspaper by the 10th of the month prior to publication.

**Postmaster: Send address changes to:**  
930 Georgia St., Los Angeles, CA 90015

The Mental Health Association in Los Angeles County is a non-profit, voluntary organization dedicated to the promotion of mental health, prevention of mental illness and the improved care and treatment of the mentally ill. (213) 629-1527.

**Executive Director: Richard Van Horn**