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ALLIANCE FOR THE MENTALLY ILL
OF SAN MATEO COUNTY

Formerly PARENTS OF ADULT SCHIZOPHRENICS

HISTORY: 1974 - 1984

Dedicated to Eve Cliphant who
started the ball rolling.

Compiled by Fran Hoffman from
the archives of PAS and AMI
Newsletter.

Printed by Tony Hoffman.



Affiliated with: California Alliance for the Mentally Ill
National Alliance for the Mentally Ill

The Alliance for the Mentally Ill of San Mateo County, formerly known as Parents of Adult Schizophrenics, began with a postcard from Eve Oliphant giving directions to her home and with a message, "Looking forward to seeing you at my place." Eve had called a few families whose names she had received from the San Francisco Schizophrenia Association. About ten people came to the first meeting. In a years time we had 115 members.

It is said that an organization has a life cycle. In our infancy for the first few months we would meet, share our woes and cry on each others shoulders. Our common bond was our mentally ill family member. The year was 1974.

Then we gradually moved towards adolescence. We set some goals for our organization after studying Marin Parents for Recovery who devoted their efforts to establishing a halfway house, and the San Francisco Schizophrenia Association which was an information center for orthomolecular treatment. We decided we wanted to become more involved politically since most decisions for funding, treatment and programs are political decisions. Another goal was to establish our own residential care home, in order to accomplish these goals we proceeded to study the mental health system, both locally and statewide. We began attending Mental Health Advisory Board and Board of Supervisors meetings, hearings at the State Capitol and any other meetings dealing with mental health.

After a great deal of discussion we chose the name, "Parents of Adult Schizophrenics," as most of us had family members who had been diagnosed schizophrenic, we wanted to foster community understanding of the needs of schizophrenics, and promote research into the cause and cure of the illness.

1975 and 1976 were our years of youthful rebellion. We were instrumental in introducing legislation to increase consumer participation on Mental Health Advisory boards. A bill was introduced by Assemblyman Dixon Arnett which failed. It took another attempt to get this bill passed. Assemblyman Barry Keene introduced it the following year and with the help of Tony Hoffman's persistent lobbying it passed.

We joined with the Mental Health Association in planning a meeting with two speakers, a traditional psychiatrist and one who practiced orthomolecular psychiatry. Dr. Richard Kunin was the orthomolecular psychiatrist but the traditional psychiatrists from San Mateo who were invited refused to participate. One even threatened to resign from the Mental Health Association for promoting such "heresy." The meeting was held with one speaker, Dr. Kunin.

1975 was the year that a housing committee was formed and incorporated as, "Mateo Lodge." George Louzensky applied to private foundations for grants and received \$18,500. A house was purchased in 1976 and the program was on its way.

August 8, 1975, was the first meeting regarding the proposed L Facility at Canyon Hospital. This would take three years and a lot of campaigning and political maneuvering before the facility is finally opened.

This was also the year we joined in the battle to keep Choep Hospital open, while the administration wanted to close it.

With regard to budget planning our comment was, "It seems that more concern was shown for professionals than the people they are supposed to serve in the way priorities were lined up."

We frequently pointed out that Region II, the smallest and wealthiest region was the recipient of the most public monies per capita, as shown in the county plan. This breakdown by region was recently eliminated from the county plan as being too controversial.

We were challenged in those days as being a group with an axe to grind, that we expect mental health workers to cure our family members. We responded that, "We as family members, some with 15-20 years experience with mental illness, know that cure rarely happens. However, we feel that since community mental health is the treatment advocated and that is where the funding goes, our people should have help available. We often heard that the community mental health workers say they, 'do not want to baby sit schizophrenics.' We need long term programs staffed by persons who are not only willing to work with schizophrenics, but consider it a worthwhile job, if deinstitutionalization is to succeed."

We opposed administration plans to eliminate the Vocational Rehab Program which had benefitted some of our family members. The program was saved and we gained a friend in Dr. Richard Lamb, who was in charge of the program at that time. Dr. Lamb has been a staunch supporter of family groups since that time. This program was surveyed by NIMH later that year and received the highest possible rating.

Gaining publicity was one of our original goals in which we succeeded. Pat Feerick sent news releases by the hundreds resulting in news stories, radio spots and a talk show with Eve Oliphant, Maria Ferry and Marcia Pomeroy participating.

Just as the college students in those days, our youthful organization began 1976 with a sit-in in Governor Jerry Brown's office, together with Parents of Retarded, in an attempt to seek funding for better staffing standards for state hospitals.

As we aged we began to get down to serious business. "Interaction" was a program at San Mateo College, held on September 18, 1976, sponsored by PAS and others. About 250 persons attended. Assemblyman Dixon Arnett, a speaker on a panel, said, "too long it (the State Dept. of Health) has been a bureaucratic, ingrown toenail, where pros talk to pros." The department has since changed in structure and leadership, but the problems remain the same.

Members of our organization organized a Family Support Group at Napa State Hospital.

By October, 1976, family groups had formed in Santa Clara, San Mateo, Marin, Alameda, Contra Costa, Yolo, Napa, San Francisco, Placer and Sacramento counties.

Eve Oliphant spoke at the annual meeting of the American Psychiatric Association, held in Florida. As a result we had inquiries from many areas of the United States requesting information on how to start a group.

1977

"No Place for Schizophrenics - The Unwelcome Consumer Speaks Out", an article by Dr. Richard Lamb in collaboration with Eve Oliphant and Fran and Tony Hoffman, appeared in "Psychiatric Annals", December 1976.

1977 continued

The Assembly Sub-Committee for Mental Health and Developmental Disabilities, chaired by Assemblywoman Leona Egeland, is doing a study of Lanterman-Petris-Short mental health programs. They have contracted with Teknekron to do the study. PAS met with them to give testimony.

Mateo Lodge is alive and well and considering establishing another 6-bed facility.

Governor Brown calls for volunteers at state hospitals.

Chope will remain open.

Assemblyman Dixon Arnett introduced a bill which would provide \$25 allowance to state hospital patients, age 18-65, who have no allowance. This bill was sponsored by the Napa family group. The bill is known as the Frances Morain bill - she did a tremendous amount of work in order to get this bill passed.

Four parent groups in the Chicago area have organized as a result of an article about PAS in a newspaper and information that we sent to them.

Plans were approved by the Supervisors to remodel Canyon Hospital for a Skilled Nursing Facility for San Mateo County. In order to get state funds work should begin before June 30. Work did not begin until PAS brought the fact of the deadline to the attention of the Supervisors.

Eve Oliphant received, "Citizen of the Year," award at the annual meeting of the San Mateo Mental Health Association.

Rosalynn Carter chaired a meeting of the President's Commission on Mental Health at the Sheraton Palace Hotel in San Francisco on June 21.

Eve Oliphant is kept busy as she is much in demand as speaker.

PAS and Families for Mental Recovery of Yolo County, received awards at the annual meeting of the California Association for Mental Health, in Pasadena.

Dr. Abe Linn resigns as Director of Napa State Hospital. Dr. Michael O'Connor appointed new Director.

SB363 Senator Arlen Gregorio's bill, dismantles and reorganizes the huge problem-plagued Department of Health. This bill abolished the Department of Health and Benefit Payments and the Office of Alcoholism and created five new departments, Health Services, Mental Health, Developmental Disabilities, Social Services, and Alcohol and Drug Abuse. Supporters felt accountability would increase but critics say problems stem from lack of leadership, not the way it's organized.

Eve Oliphant and Dr. Richard Lamb to make joint presentation at the Sixth World Congress of Psychiatry in Hawaii in September.

The bill to give \$25 per month to state hospital patients was amended to an amount of \$12.50 and passed the legislature.

Tony Hoffman is on the selection committee to choose administrator for Cordilleras Center. Mental Health Management is chosen. Tony negotiated to get a liaison committee for Cordilleras to monitor activities.

Cordilleras Liaison Committee composed of one member from each, Mental Health Advisory Board, PAS, Mental Health Association and Mental Health Division. Fran Morain our first representative.

Dr. Walter Menninger mentioned PAS and PAMI of Santa Clara in his column. We had hundreds of inquiries on how to start a family group. We answered all requests, as did PAMI, and many groups started as a result of our information.

1978

The year began with a plan by Governor Jerry Brown to put 50 million dollars into state hospital staffing and improvement and 70 million dollars for local mental health. The plans failed to materialize as state revenues shrunk.

Cordilleras Center opens - open house on March 18, the "social event of the season". Tony Hoffman cuts ribbon as PAS representative and Chairman of the Advisory Board.

California Association, Families of Mentally Disabled, our new state organization's first meeting was called by Eve Oliphant and Tony & Fran Hoffman. We started with 7 Bay Area County affiliates.

Eve Oliphant and Fran Hoffman journey to San Diego to help at organizational meeting for new family group.

Mobile Crisis Unit at Chope now on-call 24 hours a day, PAS pointed out the need.

Plans are made for, "Schizophrenia Through the Eyes of Families," an all day conference sponsored by PAS and the College of San Mateo. Conference was held on May 20, and was attended by 450 persons, many from out of state. PAS members Eve Oliphant and Terry O'Rourke planned the event. Terry was Program Coordinator, Office of Community Education at CSM, at the time.

Dexter House opens.

The first official meeting of the California Association Families of Mentally Disabled to be held in Fresno. Dr. Dale Farabee, Director of Department of Mental Health, to speak. Tony Hoffman was elected President, Fran Hoffman, Secretary.

PAS pays tribute to Eve Oliphant for mega efforts on our behalf at July meeting.

Vee and Clark Latimer host wine tasting fund raiser at their Atherton home.

NIMH Community Support Program begun as a pilot program to improve lot of deinstitutionalized patients. Priscilla Allen, a former Napa patient and a member of the President's Commission on Mental Health, attacks a myth that hospital care is "bad" and community care is "good," or vice versa. She advocates improvement in both settings, particularly as they relate to chronically disabled. She reports that "there are more people around me (in board and care homes) who are hallucinating and being tormented by these experiences than there ever were when I resided in a large dormitory in a state mental hospital."

AB 3422 which mandates consumer positions on Citizens Advisory Council, passed Legislature. Jay Mahler now represents ex-patients on this board and Pat Williams represents the families. PAS was instrumental in getting this bill introduced.

1979

Teresa De Luca is appointed as Director of Mental Health Services of San Mateo County. She is the first Director of the Mental Health Division who is not a mental health professional and also the first woman director.

An article, "Schizophrenia Through the Eyes of Families," by Dr. Richard Lamb and Eve Oliphant, appears in "Hospital and Community Psychiatry."

Our annual fund raising luncheon is held at Bay View Savings and Loan.

"The Schizophrenias, Issues and Considerations - 1979," is the theme of a Conference held in San Diego, sponsored by PAS San Diego.

San Mateo County plans reorganization of the Mental Health Department. Crisis care, care of the chronically ill and a gero-psychiatric unit at Crystal Springs are the priorities.

The Teknekron report on San Mateo County reports an excessive use of 24 hour care. San Mateo has the third highest budget when equity formula is considered. In terms of net Short/Doyle funds it gets the highest share relative to need in any county. Nevertheless, San Mateo County still has much higher than average total 24 hour care utilization per 100,000 population and 4th highest utilization of local acute care hospitals among the 24 counties studied.

The National Schizophrenia Fellowship of Great Britain declares May 22, 1979, as Schizophrenia Day. PAS sends flyers nationwide asking that letters be sent requesting federal funding for biochemical research in schizophrenia.

Eve Oliphant flies to Little Rock, Arkansas to speak at organizational meeting of family group.

John Murphy begins to publish the, "Family Journal of Mental Health."

A national organization of family groups was organized in Madison, Wisconsin, to be known as "National Alliance for the Mentally Ill." Eve Oliphant is on first steering Committee. Tony Hoffman chosen the following year to the Board of Directors. Helen Teisher, CAMI President, on current Board of Directors of NAMI.

We rent an office at 30 W. 39th Avenue, San Mateo. Thelma Miller has served as office manager for several years, and has served as Corresponding Secretary and Membership Chr.

Dorothy Mierau and Helen Heuerman take over the job of mailing the newsletters, with Dick Zipser, who is also our treasurer.

The Office of Statewide Planning reports that schizophrenia is the leading diagnosis in all treatment settings. Males predominate - half of all who receive care in state mental health programs are under 30 years of age.

The Grand Jury reports that the county has insufficient capacity to treat mentally disordered.

The Orthomolecular Ward at Napa State Hospital receives all committee approvals and the program will be fully implemented.

A fund raising Luau is hosted by Vee and Clark Latimer at their Atherton home.

1980

Eve Oliphant declines nomination as President of PAS. Kay Laine elected to the position. Eve served as President since 1974.

Sue Miller volunteers as Observer at Mental Health Advisory Board meetings.

California Association Families of Mentally Disabled at their Spring Conference in Oakland, oppose the closing of any more state hospital beds as proposed by the Conference of Local Mental Health Directors should Prop 9 pass.

Bill Thomas, author of "Shoe Leather Treatment," speaker at PAS fund raising luncheon for Schizophrenia Day at Bay View Community Room.

We mourn the loss of Frances Morain.

Community Living Centers to establish a 12 bed facility in North County, parent lobbying given credit by City Council who voted to approve the facility.

A 6 bed facility for teenagers also approved despite a great deal of opposition by community.

Tony Hoffman re-appointed to Mental Health Advisory Board - he will serve a total of nine years.

AB 2144 by Assemblyman Bates, a family sponsored bill which requires 24 hour facilities to provide information to families, passed the legislature.

Dick Zipser's persistent efforts to comply with reams of paper work have given PAS a tax exempt status with the IRS.

Congress passed the Mental Health Systems Act authorizing \$796 million for mental health services. Later rescinded by Reagan administration.

Judy Torok School of Ballet recital donates benefits to the Mental Health Association Friendship Centers and Mateo Lodge.

San Mateo Management Information Services report July 78 to June 79, indicates that the initial diagnosis of the largest number of people treated by the San Mateo Mental Health Division was non-psychotic. Non-psychotic 4109, schizophrenia 3795. U. S. Government Accounting Office reports that Community Mental Health Centers attracted a new type of patient who was not very ill and not a candidate for hospitalization in a state institution.

Cordilleras Center is sued by a former patient for alleged over-drugging.

1981

President Reagan's administration is considering cuts in SSI, SSDI and welfare programs.

Overcrowding in jails reported by Forensic Psychiatrist Charles Faltz, making it difficult to provide services to mentally ill in jails.

Fran and Tony Hoffman chosen as Legislative Representatives for California Association Families of Mentally Disabled.

Bette Pugh elected PAS President; Tony Hoffman, Vice President; Dick Zipser, Treasurer; Thelma Miller, Corresponding Secretary; and Tommy Marlowe, Recording Secretary.

A centrally administered Case Management Unit is established under the direction of Gordon Cutts.

1981 is the Year of the Disabled. Supervisor Ed Bacciocco makes plans to advance the cause of the disabled.

Assemblyman Naylor introduced AB 1855 to give counties block grants for mental health funding and give control to counties. This bill defeated.

Three new supervisors sworn in, Arlen Gregorio, Jackie Speier and Bill Schumacher.

San Mateo Times reports a suicide at Cordilleras Center.

Attempts are made to improve program and security at Cordilleras. Facility is surveyed by State Department of Mental Health. Numerous problems are reported.

PAS holds Christmas party and collects gifts for Napa, Choep and Cordilleras.

1982

The county plans to remodel the emergency room at Choep Hospital to include a psychiatric observation area. Tony Hoffman suggested to Supervisor Speier that she spend a Friday evening at the Choep emergency room. She did so and supports the remodeling plans.

Penal code admissions to Napa State Hospital increased by 45% in the past 3 years.

New Management was chosen for Cordilleras Center. Sue Miller represented PAS on the selection committee who chose Telecare, Inc. The Liaison Committee was retained in the contract. Dorothy Texier has been representing PAS on this committee.

Yolo, San Mateo and Alameda family groups observed Schizophrenia Day with luncheon or dinner.

PAS members voted to change our name to Alliance for the Mentally Ill of San Mateo County. The California Association Families of Mentally Disabled also changed to California Alliance for the Mentally Ill. There is a move to get all family organizations to have Alliance for the Mentally Ill as a name to correspond with the national group.

SB 929 by Senator Garamendi, a bill to start a pilot project for physical exams for mental patients, passed the legislature and was signed by the Governor.

1983

Our organization is becoming more active. New member Maryellen Hessel takes over the newsletter from Fran Hoffman, who wrote it for 8½ years. Terry Walker is the legislative chairperson, and Marilyn Hagberg is publicity chairperson and treasurer, Norma Guaspari is membership chair.

Dr. Haylett, Clinical Director of the Mental Health Division reports that San Mateo County does not have a long-term, low-expectation program so patients are sent out of county.

AMI asks that the vacant space at Cordilleras be made into such a facility for 20. Maryellen Hessel is writing a book about schizophrenia which promises to be a blockbuster.

Dr. John Darby asks families to donate blood samples from parents and the mentally ill family member. He works at the Stanford lab studying human genes.

Dr. E. Fuller Torrey speaks to a joint meeting of AMI of San Mateo and PAMI of Santa Clara. Dr. Torrey has written a book, "Surviving Schizophrenia, a Family Manual."

The Stanford Research Center is conducting efforts to solve problems of major mental illness by studying brain activity with CAT and PET scans.

CAMI has an office in Sacramento with full time staff. Grace McAndrews is the Executive Director. We can thank her for the legislative alert which is received by legislative chairpersons of each affiliate.

SB 162 by Senator Watson, a CAMI sponsored bill requiring 24 hour facilities to notify next of kin when a mentally ill patient is admitted, passed the legislature and was signed into law by Governor Deukmejian.

San Mateo county develops diversion plan to keep mentally ill out of jail.

Bette Pugh does a masterful job of fund raising. She not only sells items at Christmas bazaars, she also makes many of the items.

Terry Walker and Bette Pugh made plans for a very enjoyable fund raising luncheon at Mercury Savings in Menlo Park.

Fran and Tony Hoffman were honored by AMI of San Mateo at the July meeting for their years of editing and printing the newsletters and for legislative activity.

Marilyn Hagberg placed an article in the San Mateo Times requesting Xmas gifts for Napa patients. The response was overwhelming, not only from our members but from the community at large.

1984

Assembly Select Committee on Mental Health, chaired by Assemblyman Bruce Bronzan, is to carefully examine the state mental health system and advise the Legislature if any changes are needed. Meetings will be held throughout the year to obtain testimony from consumers and providers.

Dr. Thomas Budinger discussed PET scan research at a joint meeting with PAMI of Santa Clara, at Stanford Medical Center.

Plans are being made for a tenth anniversary dinner for AMI of San Mateo, to be held at the Elks Club. Dr. Michael O'Connor, Director of the State Department of Mental Health and Helen Teisher, President of CAMI, will speak.

CAMI is planning to host the NAMI ANNUAL CONFERENCE, July 5 - 8, 1984, at the University of California, Irvine. The theme "Surviving the Mental Illnesses: Families Face the Challenges." CAMI now has 51 affiliates and plans their Summer Conference on July 5, at Irvine.

We have had about 100 speakers on every imaginable topic concerned with mental illness, who have generously given of their time and expertise. Geneva Niese is currently our program chairperson.

SUMMARY

What have we accomplished in the past ten years?

Our most important accomplishment has been to come out of the closet. It is easier now for families to say that they have a mentally ill family member. We are no longer blamed by most professionals for the illness of our family member. We have provided a support group for families. Our efforts to help one another and to advocate for mentally ill have given us a renewed sense of self-esteem.

There is now a nationwide advocacy movement for mentally ill and many states have statewide organizations. California has the largest statewide organization with 51 affiliates, which was started by us. California Alliance for the Mentally Ill is recognized as a voice to be listened to in Sacramento. We were involved in the founding of the National Alliance for the Mentally Ill which has experienced rapid growth in the past few years.

Locally we have started two successful residential care homes, Mateo Lodge and Dexter House. We supported the establishment of Eucalyptus House and Cornerstone, the new residential facilities in the county. We lobbied for three years for the establishment of Cordilleras Center, our skilled nursing facility. We helped to keep Choep Hospital open. We were involved in plans to get a 24 hour mobile crisis service and in the remodeling of the psychiatric emergency center at Choep. We lobbied to keep the Region III Day Center and Vocational Rehabilitation Center from closing.

We sponsored legislation to put consumers on the Mental Health Advisory Board and the Citizens Advisory Council, which passed the Legislature and was signed by the Governor.

Our members, especially Eve Oliphant and Tony Hoffman, have served as speakers at numerous organizational meetings for parent groups, meetings of students, state and local hearings and many other events.

We have been interviewed, quoted, and served as co-authors for articles in local, state and national newspapers and magazines.

We have sent materials to hundreds of persons or groups nationwide on how to start a family group.

We have sponsored two successful, well-attended conferences at the College of San Mateo.

Our thanks to:

Harry Shifs, of the San Francisco Schizophrenia Association, who gave Eve Oliphant the names of families to call in order to start the organization.

The numerous members who have planned meetings; served as officers; staffed our office; written letters; written, edited, printed, and mailed the newsletter; made speeches; searched for speakers; planned fund raising events; planned conferences; and done the various jobs necessary to make a successful organization.

Bay View Federal Savings and the San Carlos City Hall for providing a meeting place.

George Louzensky who worked with the Board of Directors to start and maintain our residential care homes, those who staff them, and the Board of Directors.

The numerous speakers who have generously given of their time and expertise to educate us. Professionals who have been helpful, particularly Dr. Richard Lamb who has actively supported the family advocacy movement.

Members of the State Legislature and San Mateo Board of Supervisors who have supported our cause.