

The Conejo Connection

A Quarterly Publication of the
Conejo Valley Mental Health Professionals Association

www.cvmhpa.org

Fall, 2006



From The President - Linda Lower

I have always loved the month of September. I was the kid who loved school and delighted in the musty and distinctive smell of a classroom that been closed all summer. A new binder filled with crisp loose-leaf sheets and dividers ready to be filled gave me a thrill. Browsing the aisles of "Staples" is still my idea of a good time. OK, so I have eclectic tastes!

This September, while readying my youngest for her departure to college and anticipating the proverbial "empty nest," I have different associations. Conejo Valley Mental Health Professionals Association is

completing it sixth year. We began as a fledgling organization believing that other professionals like us, appreciated the value of a multi-disciplinary group and were ready to support it. These past six years have borne out that belief. Our membership continues to grow annually and the

consistent quality of our presenters is a source of pride. We publish a quarterly newsletter

and this year we have added a website: www.cvmhpa.org

Now as we begin our annual membership drive, I not only urge you to renew your current membership, or join if you

have not already done so, but also consider the many ways CVMHPA is serving you, its members. Perhaps you have suggestions for expanding our programs and would like to join the planning committee? Would you like to spearhead a special interest group? Is hospitality your forte? Do you like getting involved?

If you answered "yes" to any of these questions, we are looking for you and your contribution. Our board meets on the first Friday of every month at 9:00 a.m. in the conference room at the East Campus of Los Robles Hospital, 150 Via Merida in Thousand Oaks. Our meetings are open to all who want to attend. We look forward to welcoming you. Happy September!

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Words of Wisdom

Patience serves as a protection against wrongs as clothes do against the cold. For if you put on more clothes as the cold increases, it will have no power to hurt you. So in like manner you must grow in patience when you meet with great wrongs, and they will then be powerless to vex your mind. - Leonardo da Vinci

Man who waits for roast duck to fly into mouth must wait very, very long time - Chinese Proverb

We began as a fledgling organization believing in the value of a multidisciplinary group.

New Format, New Look for Newsletter

Many thanks to *Cynthia Horacek* who, for many years, edited and published the Conejo Connection for CVMHPA. She recently handed over the reigns of the publication to Susan Tschudi. Your input and suggestions would be greatly appreci-

ated. We especially want your own articles, reviews, and information regarding any classes, workshops or seminars you may be giving. If you come across an any information that might interest the group, please send it in. Let us know what

you want to read about/ know about. Contact Susan via email: susantmft@gmail.com The newsletter will continue to be published quarterly. The *cut-off* date for the January newsletter is DEC. 15, 2006

Senior's 'Aches and Pains' May Mask Depression - Roberta Kopacz

While leading a group at a local senior center, I noticed that Sally was not participating as she typically did. Usually she was eager to share her feelings, but that had been replaced with a quietness that did not match her customary mood. After I asked a few questions, she admitted her frustration with feeling that "it takes longer and longer to do less and less." Sally thanked me for my time, rationalizing that "it must just be my age" and promised to call me if she didn't 'snap-out-of-it'.

Over time, I have learned to pay attention to the little changes, such as an increase in sadness, complaints, withdrawal or irritability. Throughout time, these behaviors have been associated with the elderly and dismissed by health care

providers. However, they can be signs of anxiety or depression. A study by the NIMH states that depression is often overlooked in the elderly with possibly only one in six seniors with clinical depression being diagnosed and treated accordingly.

Frequently, when seniors visit their primary care physician, depression is missed because they only complain of aches and pains. Possibly lacking the appropriate vocabulary to express their sadness, it may be expressed in the form of physical complaints, thereby masking depression. Another possibility of a missed diagnosis is the lack of focus of thought in depression which can be mistaken for dementia. In addition, there is an assumption that if an older person has lost a spouse, or

a home, or their independence due to illness or disability, then depression is normal.

Increased depression among the elderly offers no simple explanation: they not only deal with health issues, but may have problems with their adult children, finances, or possibly the interaction of medications. An alarming fact is that the number of suicides among seniors is increasing - particularly among white males.

Treatment for depression for the elderly must consider their biological and medical needs, psychological concerns and the support available from family and community. Many older people will improve with treatment that combines medication and talk therapy. (Source: National Alliance for the Mentally Ill; National Institute of Mental Health)

What Are We Up To? Membership Committee Report

The Membership committee has been busy working on the behalf of CVMHPA, getting the word out about our organization. The **2005 Membership Directory** was distributed to medical staff, school districts, religious leaders, and inpatient facilities amongst others. We received positive feedback about the directory, especially in terms of ease of use, inclusion of spe-

cialty areas, and professional layout. Our dedicated staff of committee members took time out of their busy schedules to meet personally with law enforcement, clergy, school district personnel, and administrative staff to increase awareness about CVMHPA. We even gained new members to our organization based on our outreach efforts.

The next several months will allow the committee to work on new goals of establishing *Special Interest Groups* amongst our membership, as well as continue building relationships with the larger community. We welcome new committee members and fresh ideas. If you are interested in helping to promote CVMHPA, contact Lori Hops at (805)496-8432 [1#] for information.

Let's Go To The Movies - A Review of *Little Miss Sunshine*

'Quirky' is a word that is used over and over again to describe the recently released *Little Miss Sunshine* and it's a word that certainly fits the movie. The plot centers around the hopes and dreams of 7 year-old Olive and the efforts of her family to help her attain her goal. The film's 'quirkiness' helps it to remain both funny and poignant, espe-



Ideas and concepts in films can provide therapeutic benefit

cially to those of us who are students of family systems theory. The cast is filled with well known and talented actors but the true light of the film is Abigail Breslin (Olive) and her portrayal of her personal journey toward differentiation. Would it be worth recommending to any of our patients/clients? It might

benefit some if they can see the humor of our shared dysfunction as the human family. As one critic put it: "*Little Miss Sunshine* proves that family is a heck of a lot like the film's VW bus: It may be clunky, it may not always run right, but everyone will be OK so long as we all get together and push." *CVMHPA reviewer rating:*

4 popcorn boxes out of 5



CLASSIFIED ADS

OFFICE available: Large office with window on Topanga Canyon Blvd. in Canoga Park. \$450 mo. Also large group room available by the hour. Call Lana (818) 884-0950.

Thousand Oaks: Full or Part Time Office Space Available. Newly designed therapist suite, Nice waiting room, Call lights, Private entrance, Storage, Kitchen/supply room, Easy freeway access, Friendly atmosphere. Call Cynthia Plotkin, Psy.D. (805) 493-5155 or Rosanne MacDonald C.Ht. (805) 493-1989

OFFICE for rent: Thousand Oaks. Large room with 2 windowed walls and beautiful view. Available full-time. Waiting room. Extra soundproofing. Contact John (805) 449-4005 or Regina (805) 496-3811.

Advertising Rates:

Classified Ads: 30 words/\$10 for members; \$20 non-members, each additional word 10 cents.

Display Ads: Approximately 1/6 page: \$25.00 members, \$35.00 non-members. Contact: Susan Tschudi - susantmft@gmail.com

Intern-Supervisor Positions

♦ Art therapy, transformational and holistic healing traditional MFT training with a family systems approach. Call (805) 499-8511. Non-paid volunteer, free supervision; A Center For Creative Change in Newbury Park. www.barbaradobrin.com

Internship opportunities are listed as a free service to members looking for or offering internships. Contact susantschudi@gmail.com to list.

Calling All Interns & Prelicensed Therapists!!!

As a member you can enjoy the benefits of membership by

- ♦ networking with other professionals
- ♦ increasing your knowledge at our educational meetings
- ♦ earning valuable hours toward licensure
- ♦ having a free listing in the professional directory AND on our website
- ♦ receiving a free directory of community resources
- ♦ enjoying a reduced rate membership rate

For more information visit our website: www.cvmhpa.org

Website Adds New Features

Cynthia Horacek, webmaster, invites everyone to check out our website www.cvmhpa.org.

▪ A new feature, recently added to our website, is the Bulletin Board. When you place a classified ad in the newsletter it will also be posted on the Bulletin Board website page for 60 days at no additional charge! Or, if you desire an ad to be posted to the website for 60 days and a newsletter is published during that same time, it will also be added to

the newsletter for no additional charge. Advertising rates remain the same for both the website and newsletter.

- Display ads can also be posted on the Bulletin Board page. Rates for display ads remain the same.
- As always, internship postings are free to members and available for a nominal fee to non-members.
- Convenient features on the website include the membership application and meeting reservation

forms. They are available to download or print.

- For more info on new listings and expanded listings please see page 4.

(If you need help with your professional listing/want to make changes to your listing contact Cynthia at crhorac@pacbell.net to get the assistance you need.)

As we continue to make improvements to the website your feedback is welcomed!

The New Science of Addiction - excerpt from the Wall Street Journal

On the heels of a five year boom in weight loss surgeries, researchers are observing an unusual phenomenon: Some patients stop overeating but wind up acquiring new compulsive disorders such as alcoholism, gambling addiction or compulsive shopping. Awareness of the issue is just beginning to surface. Some bariatric surgery centers say they

are starting to counsel patients about the issue. Some psychologists describe it as a type of 'addiction transfer', an outcome of substance abuse treatment whereby patients swap one compulsive behavior for another. The behavior has long been explained as a psychological phenomenon as patients seek new strategies for filling an inner void.

Exploring the overlaps between compulsive eating and other addictions is a growing focus at the National Institute on Drug Abuse, which spent \$1.4 million on obesity research last year. Researchers hope to piggy-back on the drug industry's extensive research on obesity in an effort to find new compounds that might treat multiple types of impulse-control disorders at once.

**WE'RE ON THE WEB
AND YOU CAN BE TOO!**

It's Fun - It's Easy - It Gets Referrals!!!

New Listing - As a member, if you aren't listed on our new on-line searchable membership directory at our website *www.cvmpha.org* simply log on and click on 'Create Bio' for your new listing. Follow the directions on the screen. For those already listed, changes can be made by clicking on 'Account Login'.

Expanded Listing - For a *one time* fee of \$75.00 you can create your own a 'Bio-Page' with pertinent information and a photo for anyone who might be searching for a therapist. Most referral sites charge on an annual basis & a higher fee. More and more people are utilizing online resources to find therapists in their communities. For an example of an expanded listing, please look at one on the site. It's a great opportunity.

Need help? Email your phone number along with the best time to reach you to our webmaster Cynthia Horacek: *crhorac@pacbell.net*

**Conejo Valley Mental Health Professionals Association
Board of Officers**

President: Linda Lower, MFT	805-484-3214
Treasurer: Michele Harway, PhD	805-795-4390
Secretary: Judy Wiener, MFT, LCSW	818-870-0435x3
V.P. Membership: Sally Olshan, MFT	818-865-8701
Co-Chair Hospitality: Roberta Kopacz, MFT	805-531-7250
Co-Chair Hospitality: Lynn Sweeney, PhD	805-496-1600
Co-Chair Marketing: Lori Hops, PhD	805-496-8432
Chair Webmaster: Cynthia Horacek, MFT	818-706-1055
Prof. Liaisons/Programs: Mary Ann Lovegren, MFT	805-449-8193
Historian/Newsletter: Susan Tschudi, MFT	805-557-0405
Prelicensed Rep: Catharine Hogue, MFT Intern	805-338-5323
Past President: Howard Levitt, MFT	805-495-0375

All are welcomed to attend the monthly meetings (first Friday of every month from 9 to 11 a.m. at the Los Robles East Facility at 150 Via Merida in Westlake Village). Call a member if you have questions or need more information.

CVMHPA MEETINGS AND SCHEDULES

◆ **CVMHPA Meeting Dates**

November 17th 2006 - Judge Brian Back - TOPIC: *Juvenile Mental Health Court*. Lunch will be served.

January 26, 2007 - Watch for details.

March 16, 2007 - Don Booth, LCSW
TOPIC: *Couples Counseling: A Process Approach* (3 Hour Workshop; 9 a.m to noon.)

Mark Your Calendars for the following **2007** dates: Speakers and programs will be advertised at a later date.

April 20th

June 22nd

September 7th

November 16th

(Meeting dates and guest speakers are subject to availability. Both may be changed due to circumstances beyond our control.)

◆ **CVMHPA Ongoing Meetings**

CVMHPA Board of Officers meetings are the first Friday of each month from 9:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. at Los Robles East facility (150 Via Merida in Westlake Village).

Peer Consultation Group meets in Westlake on the first Friday of each month from noon to 1:30 with Dr. Ed Jesalva. Call or email Judy Wiener for availability and directions (818) 870-0435 x3; *j-wiener@sbcglobal.net*



◆ **CVMHPA Meeting Guidelines**

DRESS CODE: Due to a policy set by Sherwood Country Club, anyone wearing **DENIM** clothing will not be admitted to the meeting.

RESERVATION POLICY: We regret that we cannot accommodate walk-in guests at our meeting. Reservations must be made in advance and must be post-marked by the **Friday prior to the meeting**. If you made your reservation by telephone, please contact Roberta Kopacz (805) 531-7250 for payment arrangements.

In order to receive a cancellation refund, you must notify Roberta (805) 531-7250 by the **Monday prior to the meeting**. No credits given - sorry, no exceptions.

ETC: Be prepared to show your driver's license at the gate when you arrive. If you arrive more than **5 minutes late** or leave more than **5 minutes early** you will not be entitled to CEUs or MCEPs.