

According to PLAN

Spring 2006

Planned Living Assistance Network of Central Texas, (512) 851-0901

"P.L.A.N. of Central Texas serves individuals with mental illness or other mental disorders by offering care management and psychosocial rehabilitation services which assist them and their families to address immediate needs and to plan for the future. PLAN for now. PLAN for the future."

CALENDAR SPRING 2006

PLAN MEMBER SOCIAL
Saturday, April 22 (see p.2)

PLAN NATIONAL MEETING
May 3-5, in Dallas (see p.4)

**NAMI AUSTIN
CONFERENCE**
Saturday, May 13, 9-4,
"Recovery is..." Woodward
Hotel, Austin, 420-9810,
NAMI office

CONSUMER SOCIALS
April 29th, 1-3 pm. Picnic
and tour of Zilker Botanical
Garden. Bring a sack lunch.
Meet at Mary Lee location
in the PLAN parking lot,
1339 Lamar Square Dr.
RSVP to PLAN office.
May-July schedule on p.4

**WELCOME NEW AND
RENEWING MEMBERS**
9-30-05 to 3-17-06

Rita Anderson
Shirley J. Buvens
Neil Chadwick
Anita C. Garner
Regina Gilbreath
Yvonne Hansen
Rita Hornak
Bob Johnson
Theodore A. Konigsmark
Becky Lilljedahl
Anthony & Lorraine
Losciuto
Frances & Jack Musgrove
Liz Nash
Glenn Page
Candy & Glenn Rosilier
June Scoggin
Renee Simmons
George Spencer
Marcia Toprac
Lore Trawick
Dan Moody Walker
Betty Wattinger

President's Message

How does it feel to learn that someone you love has a severe mental illness?

When my older brother was diagnosed with schizophrenia in 1959, I was afraid for him, my parents, and myself. I knew nothing about his illness, treatments, or prognosis. I ALSO felt isolated, with no one outside my parents to whom I could turn for help with my feelings.

"Miracle drugs" were years away. Support was minimal, and biochemical brain disorders were highly stigmatized. Had it not been for my parents' courage and faith, my brother would not have had the extraordinary life that he did. He worked as a mathematician, taught school, married a wonderful woman, and raised a gifted son.

Forty years later, my oldest son received the same diagnosis. Unlike my parents, however, I had a great support team from the NAMI *Family-to-Family* class. This free course helped me understand his illness, newer medications available, and supportive people trained to help me AND my son live in recovery.

I am indebted to the leaders of that 1999 class: Doris Goewey, Susan Mulcahey, Ermine Smith, and her husband W.O. *It is therefore fitting to dedicate this newsletter to our beloved retired PLAN Board member Doris Goewey.* Doris led NAMI classes for many years, was a founding member of PLAN of Central Texas, and has served as Secretary, By-Laws Chair, and Nominating Committee Chair. She will move this year to Arden, North Carolina to be with her daughter and closer to son Andy in Florida.

Becky Lillejedahl, President

PLAN of Central Texas is Moving

PLAN makes many decisions as we strive to improve our services as well as how we as an organization manage ourselves. The decision to relocate our office is a major one: an opportunity arose to share offices with Texas NAMI and collaborate in various ways: many known, others to be discovered.

The size of our new space will be similar to our Mary Lee Foundation office at slightly more rent. However, we will have access to space for other purposes such as small group meetings. Copying services will be available at a reasonable cost. A comfortable reception area is there for consumers and others.

We anticipate this move will happen between April 13 and 15. If you are willing to help move the PLAN office, please phone or email Yvonne Hansen at 693-0293 or yvonnehansen@earthlink.net; Marcia Toprac 323-0913 or mtoprac@earthlink.net; or Becky Lilljedahl at 335-5026. We can make arrangements with you before, during and after our move.

Our new address: Fountain Park Plaza; Suite 140, 2800 S. IH 35; Austin, Texas 78704. The Plaza is South of Oltorf Street about half a mile and on the west side of IH 35.

CONGRATULATIONS TO RALPH HARKENRIDER, winner of our drawing for 50000 frequent flier miles. Thanks to all who contributed to this fundraiser!

Coming Events and the Special Needs Trust

Thank you, Donors!
9-30-05 to 3-17-06

Major Donations

Darell Blandford

General Donations

Bryce Alsup
Linda Bell
Karen Brown
Pamela Brown
Martha & Ned Burns
Larry Calame
Jeffrey & Traci Dahl
Cecile M. DeWitt
John & Margaret Gardner
Anita C. Garner
Regina Gilbreath
Maria Hall
Elbert & Rae M. Hedrick
Jane Hiatt
Nancy Hodge
Adrienne C. Kennedy & H.E. Putoff
Theodore A. Konigsmark
Don & Laura Lansing
Becky Lilljedahl
Barbara McGillis-Field
Eugene & Norma Mees
William Y. Penn, Jr.
Deborah Peterson
Robert C. Ploger
Charles D. Schutz
Lawrence Shepley
Glenda & Rex Shreve
Richard A. & Jane Neth Thompson
Gayle Truax

Corporate and Foundation Gifts

Arnold Foundation
Fidelity Charitable Gift Fund
Ken W. Kitchen and Associates, Inc.
Safeway/Randall's Good Neighbor Program

You are Invited to the PLAN Member Social

All PLAN members and friends are invited to our Spring Social on Saturday, April 22 from 1 to 3 PM., at the rich environment of First Presbyterian Church, 8001 Mesa Dr., thanks to Liz Shelby. Drive west from MoPac on Steck or Spicewood Springs. If southbound,

exit at Steck/ Anderson. If northbound, exit at Anderson/Spicewood Springs. Continue to Mesa. We'll hear good news about PLAN, chat with one another, and enjoy light refreshments. Call Yvonne Hansen (693-0293) or Becky Lilljedahl (335-5026) for information.

Consumer News

Consumer Monthly Social News:

We meet once a month. Our monthly client group went to the L.B.J. Library on the U.T. Austin campus in February. We brought a sack lunch. The March social will be at the Austin Museum of Art at Laguna Gloria. Bring a sack lunch and meet at the PLAN office parking lot, 1339 Lamar Square Drive, Ste. #203A, at 1 p.m. We'll return at

3 p.m. RSVP to (512) 851-0901. Note our coming address change in the p.1 article. Please call the PLAN office to check about client activities. Leave name, phone number, and address. We will send you an invitation to monthly PLAN activities for clients and friends.

Sandy Englert,
Client Advocate Representative

The Special Needs Trust

There are still some people who don't know they can provide funds to enhance the lifestyle/quality of life for a disabled child receiving Supplemental Security Income (SSI) benefits (\$603 per month for food and shelter, plus medical services under the Medicaid program) without the child losing benefits. The SSI rules are strict. In order for the recipient to be eligible, certain financial conditions must exist as follows: \$2000 cap on recipient's assets. Any gift, inheritance, lottery winnings can trigger the end of SSI income (\$603 per month) and termination of medical services (Medicaid). Gifts in the form of money, something that can be sold, payments for food or shelter (such as rent house payments) are all subject to Social Security rules that could disqualify a recipient from all or a substantial portion of the benefits.

The solution is a Special Needs Trust, also known as a Supplemental Needs Trust (SNT). An SNT is a legal device designed to enhance quality of life. Assets held in the trust are dispersed to providers of

supplemental services. Trust monies can be used for books and tuition, auto insurance, care management, entertainment, and travel. Trust assets are not owned by the disabled beneficiary. They are owned by the trust. They cannot be used for food and shelter. I have often stated you can send a trust beneficiary on a round-the-world cruise on the Queen Mary since this supplements government benefits, but buying a can of beans at the grocer can trigger a violation of one or more SSI rules.

We have a PLAN workbook at our office, available to members for \$25, that contains a form of SNT specific to Texas. (Call the PLAN office at 851-0901 to find out how to obtain a copy.) This trust form is for information. We do not recommend you blindly fill in blanks on this form and think you have made adequate provision for your disabled relative. We have a list that we share of lawyers who specialize in this area of the law. I am a lawyer: however, when I set up my trust, I employed a lawyer specialist. (A lawyer who represents himself has a fool for a client.) I have three special needs. The three Special Needs Trusts will be covered in articles in coming newsletters.

Bob Englert

PLAN of Central Texas has undertaken an extensive "Re-Visioning Process." Look in the next issue and on our website, www.planctx.org, for news about new ideas and practices underway at PLAN.

PLAN Services and Grant News

New Services Available through 2006 Seawell Elam Foundation Grant

Thanks to a new grant of \$9,551 from the Seawell Elam Foundation (SEF), a limited number of current and new PLAN members will have the opportunity to join in PLAN's services at a reduced rate or free of charge.

Care Management through Cost Sharing

If you or your family member have been wondering what PLAN care management services can do for you, now is a good time to find out. The SEF grant will enable 8 consumers and their family members who have not yet used PLAN care management services to receive 12 free hours of care management if they are willing to pay for a minimum of 5 hours over a 4-month period. We tried this cost-sharing arrangement with our last SEF grant and it proved to be a very successful method of introducing consumers and families to the benefits of PLAN services. Several families shared stories of their positive experiences and most chose to continue services after their grant-funded hours were used.

Consumer Recovery Group

The second service we're offering with SEF funds is the PLAN Consumer Recovery Group which evolved from the last SEF grant. Several consumers who learned of the family group we offered requested a group of their own. Catherine Weaver, LPC-Intern, the counselor who facilitates our family group, will also serve as the facilitator of the consumer group. The group will explore personal growth issues faced by people with mental illness as they strive for recovery. Members will decide on the specific discussion topics such as communication and social skills, relationships (e.g., family, friends, intimate, employer/co-workers) and employment or education-related issues. Group sessions will be 1 ½ hours twice a month for six months and are likely to be scheduled during the daytime on a weekday. The group will be free of charge to PLAN members.

If you are interested in the Consumer Recovery Group or in our care management cost-sharing opportunity, please call the PLAN office at (512) 851-0901 soon because openings in both program will fill quickly.

Marcia Toprac, Ph.D.

Grants to PLAN Fund Groups for Families and Consumers

PLAN has benefited from the following grants in 2004, 2005 and 2006:

The Arnold Foundation (received 12/05)	\$900
The Austin Community Foundation (received 08/04)	\$2700
LCRA Employees United Charities (received 09/05)	\$500
The Seawell-Elam Foundation (received 02/04)	\$8500
The Seawell-Elam Foundation (received 03/06)	\$9,551
The Spencer Charitable Fund (received 09/05)	\$1000

These grants have been used to finance the monthly Consumers Socials, the quarterly Membership Socials, the Family Support Group that has become the self-supporting "PLAN Family Recovery Group", and the cost-sharing

program that introduces PLAN's services. For members or potential members who have not yet tried them, 14 hours of service will be provided for 5 hours paid by the client, family or consumer.

We have one pending application to the Austin Community Foundation.

We have also had many applications denied. In the process we have learned that a personal contact is necessary to be successful. All of us are inundated by solicitations, and mental health is not the most appealing cause, unless we are personally affected by a mental illness. Given our need for personal contacts, I decided to include this business report in the newsletter, hoping that some of our readers (or some of their friends) have either personal resources or personal contacts with foundations or corporations, and are willing to discuss PLAN's needs with the Grant Committee. The Grant Committee consists of Cecile DeWitt (chair), Marcia Toprac (Board member), Liz Shelby (Grant writer), Sandy Englert (Consumer consultant), Anita Garner (Budget consultant), and Shelly Chapman (Office coordinator).

Cecile Dewitt

PLAN for Now. PLAN for the Future.

PLAN of Central Texas

1339 Lamar Square Drive
Suite 203-A
Austin, TX 78704-2205
*Address after our move (see
article p. 1):*
Fountain Park Plaza, Suite
140
2800 S. IH 35
Austin, Texas 78704

Phone

(512) 851-0901

Fax

(512) 851-0904

E-mail

info@planctx.org

May, June, July Consumer Socials

**May 27th, 1-3 pm. Trip
to Elizabet Ney
Museum.**

**June 24th, 1-3 pm, Trip
to Blanton Art
Museum.**

**May and June socials
meet at the Mary Lee
location parking lot,
1339 Lamar Square
Drive.**

**July 29th, 1-3 pm,
Towers of Town Lake.
Indoor/Outdoor Pool
Party.**

RSVP to PLAN office.

We're on the Web!

See us at:

www.planctx.org

Yes! Join PLAN of Central Texas Today

Plan is a 501 (c) (3) nonprofit organization.

Dues include a PLAN membership plus a newsletter. Membership renewals are due at the November Annual Meeting. New member dues are always accepted. To join, mail dues and coupon at left to the PLAN office.

I enclose my annual membership dues, \$50

I enclose lifetime membership dues, \$1000

Donation enclosed

Contact me

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

National PLAN Meeting in Dallas

PLAN of Central Texas is a member of the National PLAN Alliance.

"Organizing For Success and Staying on Mission," the National PLAN conference, will be held May 3-5, 2006 at the

Crowne Plaza Hotel, Park Central Suites; 7800 Alpha Rd., Dallas. The conference fee is \$110 per person, which includes all sessions, meals except breakfast, and a tour of PLAN of North Texas facilities. PLAN seeks

scholarship donations to help members attend who will share what was learned. For more information, email npa@nycap.rr.com or phone (518) 587-3372. We invite all PLAN members and friends to this enriching event.

PLAN of Central Texas

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**RANDALL'S SHOPPERS:
PLAN'S DONATION
NUMBER IS #9302**