

Hill and Valley Newsletter: August, 2010

Thanks to all who attended our picnic!

Our picnic on the 17th was one of our best yet. We counted 40 people in attendance, and the feedback we received was quite positive. It was nice to have the opportunity for different members of our chapter to visit with each other on such a beautiful day. Total expenses for the picnic were \$269, a 40% savings over last year. If you have any additional thoughts or feedback, please Email us at dbsawest@gmail.com.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS REPORT FOR AUGUST

Bank Account Balances

Checking Account Balance	\$1,405
Emergency Medical Fund:	\$5,110

Total Picnic Cost:

Dues Paying Members

Individual Members	11
Family Members	7
Total Members	18

Newsletter Distribution

Email Recipients	143
Hardcopy Recipients	65
Total Recipients	208
Last Email Date	8/9/10
Last USPS Mailing Date	8/10/10
Last Board of Directors Mtg	8/8/10

In the past month, we added 1 email address and 4 hardcopy addresses to our mailing list. We also received dues from 6 new members. **We now have 18 dues-paying members, compared to 2 prior to the recent Board of Directors leadership change.**

Health Care Reform Requires Mental Health Benefit Parity

The Paul Wellstone and Pete Domenici Mental Health Parity and Addiction Equity Act of 2008 (MHPAEA), prohibits group health plans from imposing stricter benefit limits (office visit limits) and higher patient cost requirements (co-pays and deductibles) for both mental health or substance abuse disorders than those that apply to general medical or surgical benefits. The law gives employers until the first plan year beginning on or after July 1, 2010, to meet the requirements. MHPAEA requires that benefit limits on mental health and substance abuse disorders be no more restrictive than the "predominant" requirements or limitations applied to "substantially all" medical/surgical benefits. Accordingly, a plan that does not impose an annual or lifetime dollar limit on medical/surgical benefits may not impose such a dollar limit on either mental health or substance abuse disorder benefits offered under the plan. The MHPAEA provisions apply to plans offering mental health or substance abuse disorder benefits, but do not require plans to include mental health or substance abuse in their benefits package.

DBSA West – Suburban Chicago

We've been there. We can help.

Note: This law is aimed at employers with more than 50 employees who offer health care benefits. Implementation will not happen instantly; the changes will take effect when companies renew their group health care plans. While there is still plenty of room for improvement, this is a major step in the right direction.

The entire bill can be found in the News and Info section of our website.

Please help DBSA West by becoming a dues-paying member.

DBSA is an all-volunteer organization that is dedicated to improving the lives of people living with mood disorders and their loved ones. Our primary focus is on providing support groups for persons dealing with depression and bipolar disorder and their friends and families.

We are constantly looking for ways to make people aware of our group, which means we spend money on postage, printing and distribution of our information. When you become a member of DBSA, your \$20 individual and \$30 family annual dues payments help us pay for the production and mailing costs of our newsletters and brochures. Please see the sign up form at the end of this newsletter.

Our Officers:

President: Bernadette Knudsen, beesnees1@sbcglobal.net

Vice President: Norma Wimunc, nwimunc25@earthlink.net

Treasurer: Mary Paganoni, marypaganoni@aol.com

Secretary:

Communications Director: Bob Steinmetz, bob@steinmetzmail.com

Our Support Group Facilitators:

Sunday: Bernadette Knudsen, beesnees1@sbcglobal.net

Sunday: Linda Dougherty

Wednesday: Mary Paganoni, marypaganoni@aol.com

Thursday: Bob Steinmetz, bob@steinmetzmail.com

Support groups meet at Good Samaritan Hospital, 3815 Highland Ave in Downers Grove.

In August:

- **Patient Support Groups** are held in the Red Oak Room on the first floor in the main wing of the hospital on Sundays from 1:00pm to 3:00pm, and on Wednesdays in the White Oak room from 7:00pm to 9:00pm. **(Note: on August 22, the Sunday afternoon group will meet in the Birch Room on the ground floor of the North pavilion).**
- **Caregiver Support Groups** are held in the White Oak Room on Thursdays from 7:00pm to 8:30pm.

Check for last minute changes at www.dbsawest.org