



# THE BAART LINE

January 2007

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## The BAART Family - Good Deeds and Good Times

*Judy Mason,  
Executive Assistant/Editor*

This second edition of the BAART newsletter celebrates our diverse culture and many special ways of caring and sharing with our patients and communities.

Our clinics all have different styles and unique personalities. It is this diversity and freedom that makes BAART special to our patients and others who are touched by our services and our very special staff members. It also allows us to grow and develop in our own individual ways.

Each of us can feel that we are an integral part of a wonderful group of people and programs that really make a difference to the people we serve. Not many people can say that, and we should all be very proud to be a part of the BAART family. It feels good to come to work each day knowing we are truly doing worthwhile and beneficial work.

So – for this issue, we are letting the clinics shine – highlighting their service and fun times with each other. It gives a feeling of community and closeness when we share our accomplishments and good times – and when we hear what the other clinics are doing, we get great ideas for our own events.

Have fun with this issue, and remember to keep sending me your contributions and ideas.

## GEARY moves to TURK!



Above – The new Turk Street Clinic

Below – Reception area



## The Geary Clinic has moved to Turk Street

The Geary clinic staff and patients are settling into their new home – 433 Turk Street. It is a great facility, with lots of space – plenty room to treat our patients and for our various programs to meet and expand.

After months of preparation, paperwork, red tape, construction, inspections, and hard work, the new clinic opened on September 2<sup>nd</sup>. We even had a police escort when the methadone was taken from Geary to Turk. Even though some of the inside work (painting, carpeting, ceilings, etc.) kept up for a while after the move, everyone agreed that the new space is wonderful! Nadine Laurent deserves special recognition for keeping everything together and running smoothly during this hectic and sometimes frustrating time.

On October 25th, we held an Open House to show off the new facility. It boasts a nice waiting room for the patients, a great conference room, lots of counselors' offices and medical exam rooms – and an amazing childcare center for our FACET clients.

Nadine Laurent and her staff did a fantastic job with the move and they appreciate the help and support of the administrative group and everyone else who worked on the logistics and massive paperwork mazes that had to be navigated.

Besides the Open House, we had a Medical Directors Meeting and a Clinic Directors Meeting at the new space. Everyone agrees that the new space is a great addition to the BAART clinics.



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**MISSION STATEMENT**  
BAART Programs' mission is to provide people with cost-effective, comprehensive substance abuse treatment and other health care services at its clinics or through community linkages, and to make such services available to as many people as possible who seek them. By doing so, BAART Programs can foster the health, happiness, longevity, and self-reliant, responsible behavior of those individuals, help them recover from substance abuse, and benefit our communities.

## New Research Study

*Al Cohen, Beverly*

Beginning in June at BAART Geary and now continuing at Turk, we are involved in a NIDA funded research study looking at comparing the hepatic safety (effect on liver) of methadone to buprenorphine. This study is formally titled "Starting Treatment with Agonist Replacement Therapy" but START for short. BAART Turk is one of only seven sites across the country involved in this important and high profile project. Up to 1,000 new participants are expected to be enrolled into this study across all sites in order to finish with a final cohort of 600 participants who complete at least six months of active treatment on either methadone or buprenorphine, an additional eight weeks of treatment beyond the six months is offered as a transition period.

The Turk staff involved with the project, including our two research assistants **Camille Langlois** and **Keith Gryder**, **Drs. Schuman, Spencer** and **Sellers** and our extenders **Alicia Hafner**, **Krista DeWys** and **George Pearson**, have all been doing a great job, and BAART is faring well in this study. One very interesting fact about this study is that while methadone has been used for over forty years and has been, arguably, the most studied medication of all time, this is the very first time that a longitudinal study to look at it's liver safety profile has been done on such a scale.



*Judi and Michelle Kletter and Alicia Hafner (soon to be a Kletter, too!) helped out at the First Annual Treasure Island Health Fair by giving blood pressure and diabetes screenings. Over 100 people walked through the Fair and learned about health promotion, disease prevention and available services.*

## Happy New Year!

*Evan Kletter, CEO*

I hope you have all survived another exciting holiday season filled with family, celebration, company parties and holiday bonuses. The New Year is an excellent time to reflect on the achievements of the past year and look forward to anticipated successes in the coming year.

In 2006 many positives came to fruition. We saw our first patients in our newly developed Intensive Outpatient Program. This is a program in which we treat not just those addicted to opiates, but those addicted to other substances, such as methamphetamines, cocaine, marijuana, alcohol etc. Additionally, this program uses other treatment modalities in addition to, as well as instead of, pharmacologic treatment.

Two thousand and six was also the second year of our internship program. We saw the recruitment of more students from more schools than ever before, as well as continuing to provide clinical supervision to existing counselors under this program.

Also in 2006, we were financially viable enough, as indicated by our compensation plan, to make possible an incentive distribution to all eligible employees.

Further, in the past year, 12 of our clinics were visited by CARF. All 12 received the best result possible - a three-year accreditation, validating hard work and our commitment to quality care.

And lastly in 2006, we developed a mental health program, in which we saw our first patients in November and December. These patients were given mental health assessments by clinicians who were supervised by a doctoral-level clinician. Patients also met with a psychiatrist for a medication evaluation.

In 2007 we have a lot to be excited about. In addition to the continued growth and development of the internship, mental health and intensive outpatient programs, there is so much more going on.

The patient satisfaction committee has reconvened, with members ranging from ownership, to management, to line staff, to patients. Our new and improved group has broken into subcommittees focusing on such initiatives as customer service training, clinic environmental issues (cleanliness and safety) and Case Management Development. A case management position is piloting this month at the Market Street Clinic. Stay tuned!

Finally, in 2007 we expect to export BAART Programs' brand of quality substance abuse, behavioral health and medical care services to communities in need. Look for possible new programs in California and around the country.

I want to thank all of our employees for their commitment to BAART Programs' mission



## A Bright BAART Star!

*A new feature beginning with this issue is "A Bright BAART Star", where we will recognize BAART Family members for going above and beyond in commitment to the communities and clients we serve. These dedicated people work behind the scenes to make a difference in the lives of those less fortunate. They work quietly and expect no recognition or reward for their hard work. We want to recognize and commend them. If you would like to have someone recognized in this column, please send your nominations to Judy at Admin.*

Our first Bright BAART Star is **Brenda Carter** from our Southeast Clinic. **Mahshid Reaves** sent in this article about Brenda.

On Halloween, with most of our staff dressed up and getting ready for a cheerful day for our patients, we received the news at Southeast clinic that one of our weekend nurses, **Cheryl Lewis**, who has worked for BAART for almost ten years, lost her 20 year old son to a random gun shooting at 5 pm in one of the city's busiest intersections.

Naturally everybody was concerned. **Brenda Carter**, our Supervising Nurse, was in contact with **Cheryl** offering support and checking to see if she needed any help, since she is a single parent of three sons. **Cheryl** mentioned to **Brenda** that she was lost, did not know where to start and was not able to afford the funeral that she felt her son deserved in honor of his life.

As expected, **Cheryl** was in state of shock and upset about the information released by the media that the shooting was gang related. She stated her son was not associated with any gang. On the contrary he was an active member of a Christian Youth Ministry, worked and involved in positive community activities and was planning to attend college.

Throughout this time, **Brenda** and **Lucretia Ruff**, our other weekend nurse, gave **Cheryl** much needed support and offered her some seed money to start planning the arrangements. At both of **Cheryl's** job sites staff collected money to help out.

**Brenda** wrote a letter to a local radio station in the LA area, which Stevie Wonder owns, and reported the incident and the need to raise funds and support for **Cheryl's** family. She also wrote a letter to a few news media stations and stated that their report on this killing was inaccurate and his murder was not gang related, and on the contrary the community lost one of their best sons and the family would like their side of story to be told and honored.

After the media verified the information with the police department, they called **Cheryl** and arranged a press conference at the site of his killing with **Cheryl**, **Brenda**, the Mayor of the city of Inglewood, a civil rights organizer, and the Pastor of the Christian Youth Church, along with numerous friends, family and community leaders to honor the memory of **Cheryl's** son.

**Brenda** also contacted the Victims of Crime Organization and filed a report with them since they help families that need support for the final arrangements. Stevie Wonder's radio station, KJLH, invited **Cheryl** and **Brenda** two days later to be on air to discuss the issue of Random Killing of Innocent People in the Los Angeles area and organized a fund raiser in the community for **Cheryl's** family. The community support was tremendous offering everything from money to services. **Cheryl** was able to plan the final arrangements her son deserved.

The funeral for **Alexander Lewis Jr.** was held on November 9, 2006 in his birth town of Inglewood, California. It was a very sad day to bury a promising 20 year old young man, but I was so proud to stand by the true hero of this tragic story that made the day possible, **Brenda Carter**, BAART Southeast's Supervising Nurse for 15 years.

## A Great New Achievement!

**Mario Moreno**, who was recently hired as a counselor at the La Puente clinic, wanted to share a story about his good friend **Miguel Palos**. **Miguel** recently took a certification test through CAADAC. The certification was for RADI 1 (Registered Alcohol and Drug Intern). **Miguel** already has his alcohol/drug certification through school, but he wanted to further his education and set a higher goal for himself by taking this road towards receiving his CAADAC certificate in the future. **Mario** says that **Miguel** is one of the most humble individuals that he knows, and it is a worthy cause to acknowledge the achievements of ones co-workers.

## VAN NESS BEGINS REVITALIZATION

The Van Ness Clinic completed the first of many planned facility remodels and upgrades. The front of the clinic was given a fresh coat of paint and new landscaping. The treatment rooms for the Medical Director and Nurse Practitioner were upgraded and new countertops and sinks were added. New bathrooms were added for staff as well as clients. Future remodeling projects will include changes to the dosing area and the addition of a Waiting Room and children's play area.

It's not that some people have willpower and some don't. It's that some people are ready to change and others are not.

*James Gordon, MD*

# Employee Milestones

**Births** – **Beth Williamson**, BAART Richmond, has a new grandson born April 24<sup>th</sup>, 2006. His name is **Christopher Ray Williamson**. He weighed 8 pounds and 2 ounces and is **Beth's** 11<sup>th</sup> grandchild!

**Judy Mason** has a new grandson. His name is **Dorian Ethan** and he was born on June 18<sup>th</sup> and weighed 9 pounds and 7 ounces. This makes four grandkids for **Judy**.

**Weddings** – **Michelle Kletter** and **Sue Liebng** were married on July 8<sup>th</sup>.

## WELCOME, NEWEST MEMBERS TO THE BAART FAMILY

<b>Joaquin Arambula, MD</b>	Medical Director	Van Ness	<b>Dena Myers</b>	HIV Educator	Cartwright
<b>Michael Burg, MD</b>	Physician	E Street	<b>Jokla Nathanaili</b>	Counselor-Maint.	Turk Street
<b>Sandra Chavez</b>	Secretary	Cartwright	<b>Michele Nicolay</b>	Counselor-Maint.	Turk Street
<b>E.C. Coffey, MD</b>	Medical Director	E Street	<b>Patricia Perkins</b>	Counselor-Maint.	Southeast
<b>Emily Cohen, MD</b>	Physician	Turk Street	<b>May Phan</b>	Counselor-Maint.	Richmond
<b>Kristeen DeWys</b>	P.A.	Turk Street	<b>Marilyn Price</b>	Counselor-Maint.	Turk Street
<b>Robert Dillon</b>	Security Guard	Richmond	<b>Sarita Ramot</b>	Medical Assistant	Market
<b>Regina Fernandez</b>	HIV Educator	Cartwright	<b>Rita Rickman</b>	Medical Assistant	E Street
<b>Jody Friedman</b>	Clinical Supervisor	Market Street	<b>Robert Rincon</b>	Counselor-Maint.	Van Ness
<b>Daniel Godsell</b>	Driver/Security	Newport	<b>Vanessa Rivas</b>	Medical Assistant	Antioch
<b>Keiko Grace</b>	Counselor-Maint.	Market	<b>Melissa Rubalcava</b>	Dispensing Nurse	Van Ness
<b>Elisabeth Green</b>	Counselor-Maint.	Turk Street	<b>Nathalia Sance</b>	Dispensing Nurse	Richmond
<b>Denevous Hewitt</b>	Security Guard	Southeast	<b>Ana Sanchez</b>	Medical Assistant	Lynwood
<b>Zhao (Richard) Jian</b>	Staff Accountant	Admin.	<b>Ana Sanchez</b>	Dispensing Nurse	Visalia
<b>Eric Kastan</b>	Counselor-Maint.	Beverly	<b>Carolyn Schuman, MD</b>	Medical Director	Turk Street
<b>Maria Landin</b>	Receptionist	Van Ness	<b>Srine Shepard</b>	Dispensing Nurse	Beverly
<b>Jaynie Lara</b>	HR Manager	Admin.	<b>Samantha Singleton</b>	Counselor-Maint.	Visalia
<b>Sharyl LaRiviere</b>	Secretary	St. Johnsbury	<b>Betty Smith</b>	Counselor-Maint.	Turk Street
<b>Kelly Liang</b>	Billing Clerk	Admin.	<b>Nicholas Sooter</b>	Bookkeeper	Antioch
<b>Victor Libbey</b>	P.A.	Market	<b>Cynthia Starks</b>	Dispensing Nurse	Richmond
<b>Edward Marguleas</b>	Counselor-Detox	Turk Street	<b>Tiffany Valdez</b>	Counselor-Maint.	Visalia
<b>Jennee Marron</b>	Clerical Assistant	Turk Street	<b>Elijah Weber</b>	Counselor-Maint.	Cartwright
<b>Jess Montoya</b>	Dispensing Nurse	Antioch	<b>Curt Widhalm</b>	Counselor-Maint.	Beverly
<b>Mario Moreno</b>	Counselor-Maint.	La Puente	<b>Jennifer Willemsen</b>	Counselor-Maint.	Beverly
<b>Kimberly Munoz</b>	Receptionist	Visalia	<b>Michael Wolk, MD</b>	Clinic Phychiatrist	Market
<b>Bonita Muslim</b>	Dispensing Nurse	Antioch	<b>Carmen Wong</b>	HR Coordinator	Admin.
			<b>Mario Zamirripa</b>	Counselor-Maint.	Van Ness

## A PROUD FAMILY

**Tina Wakefield**, from the St. Johnsbury Clinic, would like to share her family's pride and excitement with us. Her daughter, **Taylor**, was invited last spring at the end of her 6th grade year to participate in the People to People World Leadership Forum in Washington D.C. next April. At the beginning of 7th grade this fall, she was given the additional honor of being selected to become a student ambassador and travel to Japan for two weeks next summer. Taylor has also received another invitation to become a sports ambassador and travel to Vienna, Austria, to represent the US and play basketball with other athletes from around the world.

Taylor is a very driven and focused young lady. She is now 12, but at the age of 9 she decided she wanted to attend Harvard. (Yale is her back up plan.) She is a high honor student, receiving all A's on her report card. (Her last one, which was her first at the high

## EMPLOYEE ANNIVERSARIES WITH BAART

One year –

<b>Alan Aiken</b>	Clinic Director	Newport
<b>Crystal Alexander</b>	Dispensing Nurse	Newport
<b>Francisca Arias</b>	Dispensing Nurse	La Puente
<b>Joanna Armendariz</b>	Medical Assistant	LaPuente
<b>John Brooklyn</b>	Medical Director	St. Johnsbury
<b>Hershey Castillo</b>	Receptionist	Market
<b>Nevin Chou</b>	Billing Clerk	Administration
<b>Jackie Chow</b>	Sr. Accountant	Administration
<b>Curtis Combs</b>	Counselor-Maint.	E Street
<b>Cathy Dubois</b>	Secretary	Newport
<b>Michael Dunn</b>	Security Guard	Market
<b>Janique Eckman</b>	Counselor-Maint.	Turk
<b>Evgenia Feldshtern</b>	Counselor-Maint.	Turk
<b>Virginia Fuentes</b>	Medical Assistant	LaPuente
<b>Timothy Gallemore</b>	Counselor-Maint.	Cartwright
<b>Cecilia Garcia</b>	Bookkeeper	Beverly
<b>Joseph Gregerson</b>	Counselor-Maint.	Newport
<b>Ronald Hudson</b>	Receptionist	Market
<b>Beverly Johnson</b>	Dispensing Nurse	Newport
<b>Stephen Kline</b>	Driver/Security	St. Johnsbury
<b>Chor Lao</b>	Medical Assistant	Van Ness
<b>Erica Lopez</b>	Receptionist	Van Ness
<b>Judy Mason</b>	Executive Assistant	Administration
<b>Margot Mestas</b>	Receptionist	Market
<b>Milena Nowakowski</b>	Counselor-Maint.	Visalia
<b>Dana Otis</b>	Counselor-Maint.	Antioch
<b>Oralia Quintero</b>	Receptionist	Visalia
<b>Pattie Rhodes</b>	Nurse Practitioner	Visalia
<b>Steve Roberts</b>	Driver/Security	Newport
<b>Elaine Robinson</b>	Nurse Practitioner	Newport
<b>Sean Ryan</b>	Counselor-Maint.	Newport
<b>Enserella Schooley</b>	Counselor-Maint.	Cartwright
<b>Marie Sexton</b>	Dispensing Nurse	Newport
<b>Neeka Smith</b>	Dispensing Nurse	Market
<b>C. Stewart-Carballo</b>	Medical Director	Turk
<b>Amy Teitsma</b>	Counselor-Maint.	Antioch
<b>Rebecca Trachtenberg</b>	Nurse Practitioner	Turk
<b>Tina Wakefield</b>	Counselor-Maint.	St. Johnsbury
<b>Doris Wilcher</b>	Dispensing Nurse	Richmond
<b>Katherine Wilson</b>	Dispensing Nurse	Turk
<b>Matthew Yang</b>	Counselor-Maint.	Van Ness

Five years –

<b>Ed Barisone</b>	EVP, Finance	Administration
<b>Alvin Berry</b>	Security Guard	Beverly
<b>M. Espiritu-Newbell</b>	Data Entry Clerk	Market
<b>Belinda Fernandez</b>	Medical Assistant	Beverly
<b>Alice Gonzalez</b>	Counselor-Maint.	E. Street
<b>Yan Fang Kuang</b>	On-Call Accountant	Administration
<b>Melissa Mitchell</b>	Supervising Counselor	Cartwright
<b>Latrease Newman</b>	Counselor-Maint.	Richmond
<b>Susan Otero</b>	Counselor-Maint.	Southeast
<b>Toby Pardo</b>	Counselor-Maint.	E. Street
<b>Kantilal Patel, MD</b>	Medical Director	La Puente
<b>Jennifer Tsang</b>	Counselor-Maint.	La Puente
<b>Linford White</b>	Counselor-Maint.	Market
<b>Cheri Wortham</b>	Counselor-Maint.	Van Ness
<b>Matty Yongprayoon</b>	Accounting Manager	Administration

Ten years –

<b>Irma Davison</b>	Nurse Practitioner	Cartwright
<b>Teresa Fleming</b>	Supervising Counselor	Antioch
<b>Monica Garcia</b>	Counselor-Maint.	La Puente
<b>Kathleen Hobson</b>	Nurse Practitioner	La Puente
<b>Ernest Penaflor</b>	Billing Analyst	Administration

Fifteen years –

<b>Brenda Carter</b>	Supervising Dis. Nurse	Southeast
<b>David Koroshec, MD</b>	Medical Director	Beverly
<b>Kyle Moore, MD</b>	Medical Director	Richmond
<b>Rosa Pimental-Bray</b>	P.A.	E Street

Twenty years –

<b>Mahshid Reaves</b>	Clinic Director	Southeast
<b>Louie Morales</b>	Clinic Director	Beverly

### Another Proud Family!

Antioch Dispensing Nurse **Debbie Rich** is very proud of her son, **Therman Rich**, who has recently returned home after serving a two-year mission in Tucson, Arizona, for the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints. He'll be home approximately two weeks before he returns to college at BYU in Provo, Utah.

## Celebrating Recovery Month October 2006

This past September marked the 17th anniversary of National Alcohol and Drug Addiction Recovery Month, which is sponsored annually by SAMHSA's center for substance abuse treatment (CSAT). This is how a few of our clinics celebrated Recovery Month this year.

**Visalia** - Since one of the goals of National Recovery Month is to promote the idea that recovery from substance abuse in all its forms is possible, we at the **Visalia Clinic** thought we'd celebrate Recovery Month by providing some encouragement and education to some of our biggest supporters: friends or family members who pay fees for our patients. We invited twelve patients and a friend or family member who pays their fees to have lunch with the staff. Eight guests showed up. After enjoying a lunch from Baja Fresh, each guest was offered a tour of the clinic. They had the opportunity to meet their family member's counselor, ask questions of the director, and meet the medical staff. All had concerns about treatment ranging from "What happens in the clinic while I wait in the car for 50 minutes?" to "I got off heroin without methadone; why can't she?" Our guests left with a better understanding of methadone treatment and the patient's responsibilities to the program, and with names of people to contact with future concerns. Overall, it was a positive experience for the staff, the patients, and our guests.

**Van Ness** - "Recovery Happens" Month was celebrated with an Open House and Client Lunch on September 22, 2006. Turkey sandwiches, fresh vegetables, fresh fruit, and beverages were on the menu. A picnic area was set-up and music provided. A leisurely day was enjoyed by staff, clients, as well as County Substance Abuse staff members.



**Turk** - Turk Street hosted a brunch and educational day on September 14<sup>th</sup>. They also gave free glucose tests.

**Cartwright** - The Cartwright Clinic celebrated the event on September 28, 2006 by hosting a community hot dog roast and open house. We had approximately 100-150 guests, which included active and non-active patients along with their families. Fresno County administrative staff and Malaga Water District employees also attended the event. Along with food and drinks, there were games for children and educational materials on current health issues. The response by the attendees was positive. The patients expressed gratitude toward staff members for the celebration toward recovery.

## Summer Fun!



### BAART Bay Area Picnic

Left - Intrepid Anglers **Rick Ramirez** and **Dan Graney** went fishing before the picnic!

Right - **Jesse Montoya** and **Thor Gerard** enthusiastically joined in the balloon toss.



Left - We had many tiny picnickers this year!

Right - **Judi Kletter** and pals.



## Our Talented Family

### Client

*J. Reynoso, E Street*

The wind blows open the left side of her jacket  
 Her hands are intertwined, red with white fingertips  
 Quivering lips, unfocused eyes  
 She reaches for the door and enters BAART  
 Standing in line, hopping in place  
 There is a black bag wavering in the wind right outside the window  
 Sharp, unprecipitated movements  
 Concurrently, frightened and comforted she is  
 Next in line, please  
 Hello, the man with the thick wrists and baritone voice states  
 A smile becomes of her face  
 Her chest becomes warm, there is feeling  
 She marches toward a glassless, opaque cage  
 Hello, the woman with emerald eyes with hands of endless valleys states  
 The woman smirks and drinks  
 She has feeling again in her legs and arms  
 The man with the baritone voice and thick wrists calls out  
 Have a nice day, young lady  
 I haven't been young in years she contemplates  
 Thank you  
 The bag continues to dance in front of her  
 But she is no longer frightened, nor cold, not hopping, or even unfocused  
 She walks by it, smiling.

### Diabetes Awareness Month

BAART Southeast Clinic has a large and vital primary care clinic servicing the needs of the uninsured community. A very large number of patients have Diabetes and, because of this demographic, the clinic is extremely attuned to the diagnosis, treatment, and prevention of this very prevalent disease. As a result of a generous grant from Blue Shield, we have been able to offer our patients free glucometers for their personal use and self-monitoring.



*Anita, Sam and Jackie from Market Fiscal Shop at our Farmer's Market*

## BAART Research Corner

*Al Cohen, Beverly*

Research looking to better understand substance use disorders and improve treatment and treatment outcomes for addictions continues to be a very high priority nationally, though budget constraints at NIH make funding new studies more difficult. While there remains continued activity and interest in the development of interventions, including buprenorphine for opioid addictions and the use of Motivational Interviewing for diverse populations, more attention is being given to looking at how new, evidence-based knowledge coming from clinical trials research is disseminated and "adopted" by the treatment community and used in the Community Treatment Programs (CTP). It turns out that this is a very complex and critical process that largely determines which interventions and tools get used and which get cast aside. Having several studies, large, well run clinical trials that have demonstrated positive benefits to improving treatment frequently is not a guarantee that these strategies will be incorporated into treatment programs. This is a very interesting and important process and I encourage us all to give some consideration to the question.

In 2006, BAART continued its involvement and growth in our research activities and projects. We continue to be very active in the NIDA Clinical Trials Network and are also beginning new collaborations outside of the CTN. Here are some of the highlights of the year and some thoughts on the near future.

**AATOD:** Several BAART programs, including E Street in Fresno, Southeast in LA and Richmond in the Bay area participated in the AATOD/Purdue "Opioid Use Study" looking at the diversion and misuse of prescription narcotics. This is a very large national study, which collected a vast amount of data from all over the country. These initial data are being analyzed now and some preliminary results should follow soon. The early results I've seen suggest some interesting conclusions and thoughts for treatment.

**ETOH Abuse in MMT:** Through a new collaboration with the UCLA School of Nursing, we have started a new research study at the BAART Beverly program in Los Angeles. "Reducing Alcohol Abuse in Hepatitis C positive MMT Patients" is our first study funded by NIAAA (National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism) a sister institute to NIDA with whom we have worked for some time. This project is a pilot study looking at ways to reduce alcohol abuse in MMT patients and to improve hepatitis medical care within this same group. Because of the high prevalence of alcohol abuse in MMT, a population at higher risk for liver disease already, this study is of great importance to future, more expanded work to look at addressing this issue. Brief Motivational Interviewing interventions, both individual and "group", will be used, as well as offering free hepatitis A & B vaccinations. Patient focus groups were completed in October, and Phase II will begin in the next few months. A counselor training workshop on alcohol abuse in MMT is planned for this coming year.

BAART has been considering participation in several other projects, as well as doing some of our own "in-house" studies to examine questions of particular interest to us. If you have any questions about any of the above, please feel free to contact me any time. Also, please let me know if you hear about any research projects you think might be of value and interest to us. Please let me know if you have been nurturing some special question of interest related to addiction treatment that we might develop into a study of our own.

## A Day in the Life of Vermont's Mobile Methadone Clinics

Bonnie Baraw LPN, Dispensing Supervisor  
BBHS St Johnsbury, VT

It's 4:45 in the morning when driver and nurse meet at the office to begin their daily routine of getting ready for the day. The driver checks the van, unplugs various cords and turns on appropriate switches getting ready to travel. The nurse is flipping through her most recent orders and quickly stashing them in the dispensing book along with the days dispensing sheets. The nurse must then go to a separate area to remove the methadone from a large safe and transfer it to a secured safe on the van. All the while carrying along her dispensing binders and labels needed for the day. The driver patiently waits for everything to be loaded. Once the nurse has all her supplies loaded and secured, she exits the van and closes all doors. The nurse must then secure the office building, resetting alarms, closing doors and turning off lights. She then must guide the driver in the monster sized 38 foot van out of the garage safely. And to think all of this is done before the driver and nurse ever get to the dispensing site!

Driver and nurse arrive at the dispensing site about 5:30 am. The nurse must scurry around to get her dispensing station set up before the 5:45 dispensing window opens. Cups, water cooler, dispensing sheets, methadone, take home bottles, labels, hand sanitizer and various other items and necessities to ready her for the job at hand. On the other hand, our driver is outside running around in the sometimes bitter elements of the weather plugging in the van, turning on switches, heat blankets, electricity, water pump, heating controls and etc.

You have to be a special kind of person to drive one of these mobile vans up here in the tiny northeast kingdom. The weather here can change in five minutes and without warning. It can sometimes be cruel and unforgiving, subzero and snowing with a stiff brisk wind coming down from Canada. But our guys are as tough as they come! They must endure temperatures as low as 30 below zero or more and biting winds that can bring the wind chill temperatures down to as much as 50 below zero! Try and stand out in that for as much as two and a half hours a day! I don't think many of us would last long in that do you? That's why I say "kudos" to you, our great bunch of guys that drive these mobile clinics! In between clients, the driver may get as much as five whole minutes to jump inside the cab to warm up. No protection from the elements of nature for our breed of tough guy! Just pure, tough, native Vermonters who must wear multiple layers of clothing including a lot of wool, long underwear (you know the kind with a flap!), big puffy coats, scarves, gloves, nose mittens, boots, hats, snowsuits and all in attempt to try and stay warm enough for the job at hand. Sometimes the wind is so bitterly cold it takes your breath away. And it's not just the bitter cold our guys deal with, it's also freezing rain, snow, sleet, rain, ice storms, slippery snow covered roads, un-plowed roads, hazardous driving conditions, black ice (and the regular kind of ice as well!), and last but not least, blizzard conditions. Yep, that too! And let's not forget that a few of our drivers and nurses drive over 90 miles per day to get to work through some very rural mountainous areas contending with wild animals crossing our paths including deer, foxes, moose, coyotes and various other animals. That just adds to the fun of getting to work in one piece!

The nurse is obviously inside the dispensing area of the van with her own heating system. Now that's not to say that the area is a cozy little hide-away warm-as-you want-be space. No, not like that at all. Yes the nurse is warmer, but we also must dress in layers due to the constant drafts coming in from the outside. (Thanks LL Bean!) We dress for work according to the weather up here! Leg warmers, boots, hats, scarves, wool sweaters and socks! It's not like sitting in your comfy living room by the fire. No, not like that at all! But certainly we do not have to freeze like our driver does. We find ourselves worrying about each other. Driver and nurse asking each other if they are warm enough. Of course we need to bring extra coffee, tea or some other hot beverage with us because there is nothing else to warm you. And I won't even mention how cold and cramped the tiny little toilet is! I'm sure you can imagine.

Once the job is completed at the site, everything is broken down again. The van is unplugged, switches turned off, dispensing area is broken down, chairs placed down on the floor, cupboards closed, dispensing area sanitized, methadone loaded back into the safe and driver and nurse drive back to the office where everything must be plugged back in, supplies unloaded, methadone returned to the main safe and the van is then cleaned and mopped of snow, slush and mud by the driver. The nurse must then do all her data entry and reports.

Let's suffice it to say that this is a challenging, yet fun job. Full of challenges on a daily basis. We may rough it a little, but we're not stuck in an office all day either. There is great autonomy in this job, good friendships and a lot of closeness between staff, nurses and drivers. Vermont's mobile clinics are thriving and we are a very close knit bunch of folks here. We are hoping to grow, face new challenges and let the adventure continue!



### ICE your Cell Phone for Safety

This is an easy and important way to help emergency personnel help you. ICE means **In Case of Emergency**. Simply put the letters ICE in front of the names of people you want notified in an emergency in your cell phone directory – as in “ICE Katey”. Police Officers, ambulance drivers, EMTs, etc. know to check for this. You can be sure your loved ones will be contacted in case of an emergency.