



Newsletter of the New Jersey Region

January 2005

Fund Flow

The November RSC meeting passed a motion to send a \$1,750 donation to N.A. World Services, putting the Region's total contribution for 2004 at \$37,989.22. At close of business the regional treasury still contained \$18,900.75, of which \$5,500 constituted the prudent reserve, and \$4,420.57 the meeting list reserve, leaving a working capital balance of \$8,890.18.

Regional PI Effort

The Regional Public Information subcommittee asked for and received a bit over \$1500 for several projects. \$520 was authorized to mail approximately 300 information packets to treatment providers. 500 meeting lists and an additional \$500 were authorized for a mailing to 500 D.A.R.E. counselors, an effort coordinated by the regional PI committee and that of Middlesex Area. A further \$500 was provided for 1,000 Helpline posters to be distributed to the areas.

Other Financial Motions

The motion tabled in September, to change pricing policy on bulk orders of meeting lists outside the fellowship, passed at the November meeting. Bulk orders of more than one thousand lists to non-N.A. buyers will now be sold at cost (currently 19.61 cents per booklet) plus shipping, rather than the previous rate of \$.50 per booklet. The Regional Delegate–Alternate's budget was approved in the amount of \$745.

A Trio of Convention Motions

At the request of the Convention Planning committee, the region passed a motion to provide links to the web pages of all the N.A. conventions in New Jersey on the main page of the statewide website. This will also need to be passed by the Northern New Jersey region in order to take effect.

A motion was passed to direct the Convention planning committee to reconsider its theme for the next convention. (The theme selected virtually duplicated that of another nearby convention.) Amusingly enough, while the motion's intent asked for a "clearer conscience" than the planning committee vote, in which the committee chair had broken a tie, the region's vote was also a tie broken by the chair.

A motion made by the History and Archives chair passed directing the Convention Committee to "surrender" not Dorothy but all past and present convention tapes to the H&A chair. It was not really clear whether the Convention Committee actually had a lot of tapes not in the archives or whether they were as clueless as to the whereabouts as anybody else.

Controversy du Jour

The November meeting had the experience of listening to a detailed and somewhat irate resignation letter by one of its representatives on the convention Board of Trustees. This had stemmed initially from a dispute about voting rights on the Trustees and the Planning Committee for people who held positions on both. That led to a further dispute about the Board of Trustees Chair's handling of the initial dispute, which involved proceeding by a secret ballot. These factors, with the addition of some harsh words and some perceived bias thrown into the mix, led to the resignation letter, and thus to the Region becoming aware in the first place that some its committees had had an unpleasant controversy going on for a couple of months without anybody finding it necessary to report the matter to the Region.

In the aftermath of the discussion, the member who resigned was reelected to the position he had resigned from, and the Joint Administrative Committee was to look further into the matter at a December meeting. (The immediate need for this was since reconsidered.)

The question of members holding both planning committee and BOT positions is not new, by the way. The lengthy review and approval process for convention guidelines chose not to change current practice, and a motion by last year's BOT chair which would have eliminated the holding of double positions was also not passed.

Elections

The Region was able to fill several positions in November. Steve R. was elected regional Vice-chair, Veronica P. as Assistant Secretary, Margaret D. as Meeting List chair, Nick C. as Regional Delegate, Hector R. as Literature Review chair, and Roger W. (again) as a BOT member. Congratulations and best wishes, all. The positions of website and helpline liaison, and one BOT seat are open.

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Sanity is published every two months as a service of the New Jersey region for its groups and members. Input and articles are welcome on all recovery-related topics. Opinions expressed here are those of individual addicts, not N.A. as a whole.

Issues of SANITY can be downloaded from the statewide website, www.nanj.org

You should not have your own idea when you listen to someone. Forget what you have in your mind and just listen to what he says. To have nothing in your mind is naturalness.

Then you will understand what he says. But if you have some idea to compare with what he says, you will not hear everything; your understanding will be one-sided; that is not naturalness.

—Shunryu Suzuki

Public Information, So Misunderstaffed Living the Twelfth Step

Why is it that many Areas have a problem finding members of the Fellowship of Narcotics Anonymous who are willing to pass the message of recovery through the Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions of Narcotics Anonymous by way of participating in our Public Information Committees? What part of “give freely and gratefully that which has been freely and gratefully given to us”*, don’t people understand?. (*Basic Text, page 47)

The Twelfth Step in the Narcotics Anonymous Basic Text on page 48 states “... the only way that we can keep what was given to us is by sharing this new gift of life with the still suffering addict”. Many suffering addicts, not yet informed that recovery is possible, have utilized the Helpline telephone number on a poster placed by a member of Public Information. Calling the Helpline number has saved many addicts from suffering and/or death and has introduced them to the family of N.A. Volunteers for the Helpline are needed.

“In the Twelfth Step, we practice the spiritual principles of giving the N.A. message in order to keep it.” (Basic Text, page 49) Public Information (P.I.) functions through the efforts of volunteers to spread the message of recovery to the still suffering addicts on the streets and in institutions. P.I. has the ability to make presentations to staffs at facilities or schools providing them with information on recovery to pass along to their clients or students. The youth of today is the leadership of the future. It is of the utmost of importance that every effort is made to ensure that they are informed of the pitfalls of addiction, guiding them away from following a path of destruction.

“The selfless service of this work is the very principle of Step Twelve.” (Basic Text page 49). Volunteers are needed in all areas of P.I. to get the information to the still suffering addicts. Public Information is attempting to provide every library branch with a copy of the Narcotics Anonymous Basic Text for their reference libraries. We need your help.

“Learning to help others is a benefit of the Narcotics Anonymous Program. ... We are given the ability to help a fellow addict when no one else can.” (Basic Text page 49) In addition, Public Information contacts schools, facilities, hospitals, rehabs, the media, etc. providing information and making presentations. We can arrest this disease and begin recovery.

“We give freely and gratefully of our time and service ...” (Basic Text page 50) It is possible to maintain our anonymity as addicts while interacting with the public by following proper instruction and protocol.

One percent of the people seem to be doing all the work for P.I. What more can be done to scout out volunteers to assist Public Information in passing the message of recovery?

Margaret Davis,
CJASC Public Information

(Those wishing to get involved with this aspect of service should contact the Public Information chair of their area, and find out what needs to be done and how they can help. In many areas PI is one of the permanently less-than-fully active subcommittees.—ed.)