



**Newsletter of the New Jersey Region**

**January 2006**

### **Fund Flow—Up, Down, All Around**

The November RSC continued to struggle with the issue of how much money to hang onto, a debate that has been ongoing for at least half a decade. A motion was passed to aim for a working capital balance of \$9,000 over and above the prudent reserve (\$5500) and any money in the meeting list reserve (Usually between \$3000 and \$4000). If adhered to, this would result in the region retaining roughly \$17500 to \$18500 in its treasury every region.

The November region eventually sent to N.A. World Services a contribution of \$2,455, making its total contribution to World Services in 2005 \$14,482. This represents a significant drop from the 2004 total, which was \$37,989.22.

### **Do Overs**

To further complicate the task of conducting financial affairs in an orderly fashion, the RSC decided that in some cases it may be willing to send back to Areas donations that they have since changed their minds about. This came up in response to a report from the representative of Central Area, whose treasurer may have miscalculated the area's prudent reserve back around July of '05, causing a donation to be made to region that apparently left that area a thousand dollars into its prudent reserve. The area has since gotten back above its prudent reserve, but might or might not ask the region to return a thousand dollars.

The region passed a motion to agree in advance to such a request. Should this take place, we will have the spectacle of an area that is not experiencing fiscal difficulties asking for a sum of money that will put it even further over its prudent reserve than it already is, and that then, if the traditional fund flow is followed, should be immediately earmarked for donation to region or world. The point of this exercise evades us, unless new spending projects have come up that some find it inconvenient to pay for out of current and future revenues.

N.A. bookkeeping is surely difficult enough without setting precedent for a "system" in which no service body takes final responsibility for its own financial actions but simply asks others for a "do over" whenever it finds it has made a decision that it might find it convenient to take back. Part of the way we become responsible members of society is by assuming responsibility for our collective decisions.

### **Insurance**

The Region has been looking for some time into obtaining an umbrella insurance policy that would cover all meetings within its member areas, and at the November meeting this reached the point of a motion to spend approximately \$3000 to do so. The motion was tabled to the areas for discussion.

### **NJRCNA XXI**

Preparations continue for the 21st annual Regional Convention, scheduled for June 9–11 of this year. The planning committee and Board of Trustees continue to be short of people. The problem was severe enough that the Planning Committee reported in November that the BOT had looked into what the financial liability would be in the event that the convention was postponed or cancelled. Answer: Approximately \$6,000.

The BOT was still operating without a treasurer as of this writing, and Planning was short a vice-chair, a Hotels and Hospitality chair and a Fundraising and Entertainment chair.

### **Elections and Upcoming**

Mike C. was elected as Helpline liaison at the November meeting. Congratulations. In January the Region will attempt to fill the positions of BOY Treasurer, Meeting Directory chair, Lit. Review chair, H&I chair, and the Assistant Policy, Assistant Treasurer and Assistant Secretary positions.

The Region hosts the Northeast Zonal Forum at the Newark Airport Sheraton the 27th–29th of January.

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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](http://www.nanj.org)**

# Who Are We?



# Where Are We Going?

## Identity Politics, World Board Variety

The "theme" selected for this year's WSC (yes, in the brave new world of marketing-based service working conferences have themes like conventions), is "Its all about carrying the message." From the N.A. equivalent of time immemorial, some of the most difficult issues that arise are those in which how the message is carried seems to have implications for various members as to what the message is in the first place. A couple of these "traditional" issues make their appearance in this year's Conference Agenda Report. The following snippets, the first from the World Board, the latter two from the Regional motions section, seem to show clearly a couple of different ways of thinking about some of those issues.

The following is from page 13 of the 2006 Conference Agenda Report, deep in the Atmosphere of Recovery Subsection of the Issue Discussion section of the World Board report.

Our discussions led us to the conclusion that there are many things that we can try, as a fellowship, to see if they help us better carry our message. These ideas include engaging the fellowship in this discussion; creating literature targeted at specific populations, such as younger or older addicts or those who also suffer from mental disorders; and, on a local level, holding special-interest or common-needs meetings.

"Special-interest" or "common-needs" meetings spring from a perceived need on the part of our members. Of course, the question of meetings geared toward specific populations, and the place of such meetings within NA, is a very controversial one in our program. Regardless of where one stands on this particular issue (even the language we use to describe such meetings is telling—"common-needs" or "special-interests"), it is hard to dispute the fact that addicts need to feel welcome and "a part of" in NA meetings. Feeling different can be fatal for us. We all need to work to ensure that no addict feels excluded or different because of his or her age, religion, ethnicity, profession, or any other reason. We all hope that addicts can find their place in NA, but what we have heard over and over again from professionals who send people to our meetings is that we undervalue the power of that initial identification; when still-suffering addicts feel that identification, it can help them stay long enough to become recovering NA members.

In this spirit, we are planning to schedule some common-needs meetings at the 2007 World Convention in San Antonio. Because there is currently a very dated set of Convention Guidelines, approved by the WSC, that contains a statement that we do not hold this type of meeting at the World Convention, we did not schedule this type of meeting for the 2005 convention in Hawaii. We wanted to have time to discuss this with the conference first and explain what our intentions are. Rather than going through the process of a formal change at this point, we want to try this as an experiment. If it is successful, we will be posing the question to WSC 2008. Regardless of what the response is to these meetings, this will be an ongoing discussion.

## Identity Politics, Regional Varieties

**Motion 1:** To direct the World Board to develop a project plan, timeline, and budget for WSC 2008, to create/develop a glossary of recovery terms typically used in Narcotics Anonymous  
Intent: To provide a resource of common meanings for frequently used NA recovery terms.

*Maker: Northern New York Region*

*Rationale by Region:* It is the belief of this area that a need has arisen to create a glossary of recovery related terms. While many of these words can be found in a dictionary, some of these definitions may not reflect recovery, also the recovery terms used in the fellowship are not found in dictionaries. A sponsor is a tool for addicts to use to gain an understanding of recovery terms, but it is the belief of our group conscience that a glossary will be extremely beneficial to the sponsor/sponsee relationship. A glossary of terms may also help newcomers, who we, as experienced members, need to take "a special interest in a confused addict who wants to stop using." When created, it will provide a resource for addicts and promote a common understanding of recovery terms. This will further enhance unity in the fellowship, instead of allowing different meaning of words separate addicts.

**Motion 2:** To direct the World Board to create a project plan for the development of a fellowship-approved Identity Statement to be presented at WSC 2008. Intent: To obtain literature that will recognize the distinguishing characteristics of the Narcotics Anonymous fellowship from other twelve-step fellowships. *Maker: Ohio Region*

*Rationale by Region:* There are currently in existence several different versions of an Identity Statement that circulate throughout the Narcotics Anonymous Fellowship. Many home groups have chosen to make them part of their group readings. Additionally, they are read at several Area and Regional conventions, and even some service committees have chosen to include them as part of their reading materials. Although they are unofficial in nature, these statements have gained wide support from the fellowship. They have been embraced for the simple reason that no such fellowship-approved literature is available. Therefore, addicts have been left to the vices of developing literature for themselves. We believe that our fellowship would be better served if there were available a single fellowship-approved Identity Statement. This would provide a means of having a message that is consistent and would alleviate many of the problems associated with the many unofficial statements currently in circulation.

*Both of the above motions seem to us to reflect a long-standing confusion between unity and uniformity, as well as a belief that some useful service is performed by attempting to impose a common body of dogma through the manipulation of language. Perhaps if we simply settled on UNIX as the "official" N.A. language we could alleviate the alleged confusion, but the use of living languages in roughly the same manner that the societies in which we are inescapably embedded use them has some advantages.—ed.*