

CLEANSHEET



The Cleansheet is a function of the NORTHWEST AREA Service committee. The primary purpose is to carry the written message of recovery to addicts seeking recovery, to promote unity and to provide our members with news. The opinions expressed herein are those of individual members of Narcotics Anonymous and Do Not Necessarily represent those of Narcotics Anonymous as a whole. All material becomes the property of the Cleansheet. All material must be original and be accompanied by a permission to be used

CLEAN SHEET needs the participation of it's readers. Share your experience, strength and hope on any topic related to your recovery or the N.A. program. Send your articles, artwork, comments or suggestions to:

CLEAN SHEET

C/O

Northwest Area Service Committee

Newsletter Committee or Call

CHAS. N. (215) 849-2239

VOL. 2, NO. 4

2005

AUGUST

THOUGHT FOR THE MONTH

JUST FOR TODAY, I will be unafraid. My thoughts will be on my new associations, people who are not using and have found a new way of life. So long as I follow that way, I have nothing to fear. NOTHING TO FEAR !!

I first met Woody back in the early Nineties when the all the “black” areas were one and we met at 35th and Haverford Ave. We served on the Inner City Area unity committee together, and worked on several activities together. One of my first glimpse into the dedication that Woody put into N.A. was the time he broke his leg securing a spot for his Home Group “Commitment to Recovery” during the N.A. picnic at lemon hill. Here was this fragile, but vibrant looking old man, who walked with a cane up at 6:00 am tussling for the best spot for his home group. Woody got the spot and the cast. Woody was that guy, you could ask to do anything for NA, and he always found the time to help. I was going to school at community back then and I would go to his home group at the hospital to take a break and study between classes. Woody would always make sure that people wouldn't bother me if I was sleeping in the back or reading my calculus book. I was always grateful for the support that he gave me, along with a smile and a “Hey Chas!” when he saw me. I knew that Woody dealt with illnesses, but he never seemed to let whatever physical ailments he had get him down or keep him from his home group. If you don't remember Woody, he was the guy that always flowed with “Old Head Mike” who passed a few years ago. If you saw one the other wasn't to far behind. These two gentlemen taught me a lot about recovery and even more the nature of real friendship. “Old Head” taught me that it was okay to be wrong, as long as you are willing to acknowledge your mistakes. Woody showed me that we could disagree and still be empathetic of one another's feelings and positions. I would often hear him say “ I don't know, I don't get it, but that's okay” Over the last couple of years I didn't get to see Woody as much I would have like and the phone conversations weren't as often as they should have been on my part, but I always felt connected to him, and when I did see him or hear from him it lit a light in my heart every time. This week has been real difficult for me and lot of other members with a little time. We lost so many warriors to death that it can only make sad for the loss, but joyful for the time that spent with us. The gift of the therapeutic value of one addict helping another in this voyage called recovery. Mikel from South Philly held a special place in my heart. We shared friends from different parts of the country and he always had something positive to say. I always felt joy when I saw him, but most of all I felt safe when I was around, nothing could hurt me as long as this strong brother was in my corner. Al from transition in Recovery made feel special whenever I was in his presence with the respect that he showed to me and other members. He wasn't afraid to et his opinions and his experience be shown and for that I'm grateful. Chuck D. was one of those guys at my first meetings who was willing to offer guidance and hope. For them we should be forever grateful. Predecessors who have become ancestors who helped lay the path and still serve as beacons of hope and examples of the best that N.A. has to offer.

The privilege of self-support:

Who's responsible for NA services?

At the 1997 World Service Conference, participants adopted the *Guide to Local Services*. This new service manual describes some changes to the way we can provide services within the NA service structure. Not the least of those changes will be the revamped fund-flow system described by the *Guide*, which includes the practice of direct donations from groups to the area, regional, and world levels of service. Yet, if our service efforts are to prove successful for the future, we may wish to look beyond the mere mechanics of how the money moves through our service system and into our own hearts to the principle of self-support.

First, a bit of history about fund-flow in Narcotics Anonymous. The earliest editions of our fellowship's service manuals recommended direct group donations to all levels of service. However, in 1982, when the World Service Conference approved a revision of the service manual sections on the group, area, and region, groups were encouraged to donate all their excess funds to the area committee—which was then to donate its excess funds to the region, and the region's excess was to flow on to the world. Direct donations as now suggested in the newly adopted *Guide* were replaced by this system of passing on surplus funds from one service level to the next.

So how then did we come full circle? How have we arrived right back where we started from all those years ago? Well, the surplus funds often haven't flowed: In many cases, our resources are exhausted at the area level, leaving little or nothing to be passed on to the regional and world levels of service. "So what?" some members ask. The region and world seem to be doing okay with what they're getting, and besides, how does what they do affect my home group, anyway? The fact is, world services and regions (and in some cases, even areas and groups) have seen an increasing dependency on profits from fundraising activities such as conventions, dances, memorabilia sales, and the inflated price of NA literature in order to make up for a lack of group support. In a very real way, our home group members have been affected by our ineffective fund-flow system—in the form of inflated convention registration fees, service boards and committees not always being directly accountable to those they serve, and, more significantly, higher prices on our recovery literature.

For many of our members, these have become increasingly troublesome problems within our fellowship. Problems such as service bodies' diversion from our primary purpose by "money, property, and prestige" (conventions often generate huge sums of money, and encourage wildly extravagant spending by well-intentioned convention committees); the amassing of huge prudent reserves to provide operating capital for dances and other functions; and the creation of merchandising "businesses" that often seem to lead us away from the spiritual focus of our program—all of these symptoms indicate a decreasing dedication to our primary purpose and a growing lack of accountability to the groups, on whose behalf NA services are supposedly provided in the first place.

Yet our effort to provide services to a growing membership is confronted by a serious dilemma: We know we need money to provide such services, but the basket doesn't seem to be providing the necessary resources to pay for them. Our group donations simply aren't enough to allow us to provide all of the services we know to be essential to the growth of our fellowship and to carry our message to the addict who still suffers. The Finance Committee's answer to our collective money problems? Direct group donations to all levels of service—a suggested return to our earlier system that had been discarded in 1982. The committee also provided a suggested fund-flow plan, the "60:30:10 Plan," as they called it. Under this plan, groups would have donated sixty percent of their surplus cash to areas, thirty percent to their region, and ten percent directly to world services. Trustee Bulletin #22, "Direct Donations", argues for the advisability of such direct donations as well, yet that bulletin makes another essential point: "Direct contributions are not a magic answer that will relieve us of all our financial concerns. Our responsibility as members to fund the services we request is an issue that requires broad discussion."

It's an excellent point. The fact is, with the passage of the *Guide to Local Services*, we now have officially re-adopted direct group contributions to all levels of service. Yet, without a discussion of our principle of self-support, this reinvention of the fund-flow wheel may not make one bit of difference in our fellowship's collective ability to fund NA services. To a member, we must discuss how we have fallen short in our responsibility to support our service structure.



WORLD UNITY DAY

Sunday, 4 September 2005

LIVE FROM HONOLULU, HAWAII

As "one fellowship" we will join together with "many friends" from diverse cultures and distant communities with a common message that "an addict can stop using and find a better way to live." We will exemplify our vision that "NA communities worldwide and NA World Services work together in a spirit of unity and cooperation to carry our message of recovery." Together... "our unity speaks when we care and when we share the NA way."

This year's Unity Day will take place on Sunday 4 September 2005 between the hours of 11:00AM and 1:00PM Pacific Daylight Time, during the **31st World Convention** in Honolulu, Hawaii, USA. Check our website at www.na.org for more information as it becomes available.

Ask your area to hold a gathering for world unity day or get together at your home group and participate in the celebration of our world wide recovery. Let our voices be heard around the world.

The Basic Text Project Needs Submissions

Following is an announcement that we are hoping can be made during local conventions. A well-timed announcement at conventions will spread the word about the Basic Text Project to members who might not otherwise know we need their help. NA World Services needs you! You can help contribute to the Basic Text. Don't miss this chance to make history. The last World Service Conference passed a motion to replace "some or all" of the personal stories in the Basic Text. We want the collection to be international and to represent the diversity of our fellowship—to illustrate the range of our experiences in recovery and our different countries and cultures. To capture the scope of NA recovery worldwide, we need your help. World Services hopes you will share your experience for the project and that you will think about those in your community who may have experience we'd want to capture. We are trying some new things: Yes, we are encouraging addicts to write down their experience and send it in for consideration. But there are other ways to share as well. We will be interviewing some people and helping them get their experience down on paper. You can even forward names to us if you know people who have something special to share but might need help or encouragement to write it down. And you don't need to share your experience from the very beginning to the very end. In fact, we hope to inspire people to take creative approaches to telling their stories. The most important thing is to be yourself. Once again: We need your help. Each of us has experiences to share that could save an addict's life. Please send us yours or get in touch with us if you or someone you know needs help putting it down on paper. We are accepting submissions from now until the end of December 2005. You can send them to the World Board care of the World Service Office (the address is on the copyright page of any Basic Text). [More information is available from the World Service Office or online at www.na.org/conference.](http://www.na.org/conference)



AS I REMEMBER YOU

Remembering my best friend not only in recovery, but in life. **Chuck D.** was his name. We were both using and wanted so much more than a life of using. And God touched you first and led you to the fellowship of Narcotics anonymous. I was still using at the time and from time to time I would stop by your home and you would never let me in. I was thinking you had some serious issues, what I didn't know was that God had a different path for you to walk. You never gave up on me and always encouraged me to get to get help. I needed while suffering in my active addiction which was so obvious to me. You'd always ask me to go to a meeting with you. I'd say no, just said no to help, that's not for me. One day you asked me that same tired old question (you know the one, " Do you want to go to a meeting") I'd never been to a N.A. meeting before, but I said yes !! That was 15 years ago. God used you to help me and for that I'm truly, truly grateful for you helping to find this **NEW WAY OF LIFE** in Narcotics Anonymous. The lessons were painful and you were always there for me, you fed me, gave me clothes when I had nothing but the clothes on my back. But most of all you introduced me to other recovering addicts and the therapeutic value of one addict helping another. You had this wonderful sense of humor and brought light to a lot of people in these rooms. You were and are a miracle loved by many, "Chuck". We will all miss you. Your friends Otis, Elezar, Wayne, Chas, Mike and every one else who knew you. We just want to say thank you for sharing your experience, strength and hope.

*Thanks for allowing me to Share
Otis G.*

Al, We miss You

Albert C. lovingly known as "Al" to his friends, passed away on June 1, 2005 and he is deeply missed by us all. Al was a grateful recovering addict who was deeply involved in service to his home group, The Northwest Area of The Greater Philadelphia Region, and the region. Al started his journey in recovery in the mid eighty's and later was one of the original members of "Transition in Recovery". The experience, strength and hope that he gained during his process in recovery has helped so many of us. Recently one of his friends told me of the first time she met him back in 1992 and how he and another member took her to her second N.A. meeting and telling her that she needs to stay in the process and to get a sponsor because she had shared that she wanted to leave this process and today she has 12 plus years of recovery. Another person told me how after they relapsed Al had shared with them his relapses and the spirit of the First and Third Traditions. Those are just a couple of hundreds of stories I know and heard of about our friend. Al left Philadelphia several months before his passing and moved to Lebanon, PA to be closer to his oldest son and other family members. Even though he was ill he would travel long distances to continue to support the home group that he helped to start until it became too much for him and he became bedridden. We his NA family continued to be supportive. When Al physically left us he had over seven years of continuous recovery. And now he attends the Infinity meeting. I'm happy to have been loved by him and to have loved him.

Joyfully submitted by friends of "AL"

In memory of Mikel

Our fellowship lost another Soldier. On Monday August 15, 2005, Mikel B. passed away with 13 years clean. He was a beloved member of the New Beginnings Group of NA in the South Philadelphia Area. Mikel always believed in Service and Involvement. He served as South Philadelphia Area Service Committee Chairperson, P.I. Chairperson, Policy Chairperson, and on the South Philadelphia Area Convention Committee.

Mikel would always say, "I thank God for our Predecessors for making a way for us and keeping the doors of NA open for an addict like me." Mikel we in the Greater Philadelphia Region of NA thank God for you.

*Rest in Peace; Love and Respect!
Curt and the all those he touched*



A MOMENT IN HISTORY

JANUARY 9, 1973

Inmates Ask Drug Program Data; Meeting Set Up With Prisoners. Some inmates at Chester County Farms have shown an interest in Narcotics Anonymous. How do they get in touch with the group? - J. M. West Chester, PA Call - 276 2703. The 20-member-group of ex-addicts meets nightly throughout Philadelphia area. Anyone with drug problem can call any time, day or night. Headquarters are: Narcotics Anonymous, World Service Office, 2335 Crenshaw Blvd., Los Angeles, Calif. 90016. Joe M. who was a prison guard at Chester County Farms. Ronnie M. was the first 12-step call from the HOTLINE # they went to 5th & Reed, St. Luke's 3rd floor to get him. He was crazy crawling around under the table, once they told him they were addicts that could help him, he got right up off the floor and sat at the table with undivided attention. He acted like he wasn't even crazy any more.

Chester Co. Farms became the first H & I meeting in Pennsylvania and the East Coast

The phone number 276-2703 Became Philadelphia Inter-groups first phone line service. The phone line was connected at Brian T. house Phila, PA. For the first couple of years. Located at Frankford Ave. & Belgrade on Belgrade.

July 1, 1973

N.A. Inter-group Lewisburg (N.A. Round-up) Question of urinalysis at Lewisburg and Williamsport; is taking an urinalyses to be a voting member at Lewisburg & Williamsport in Violation of the 3rd & 4th tradition? Vote: Pottstown 2-Yes

**Lewisburg 2-No
Williamsport 2-No
Philadelphia 5-Yes
Norristown 2-Yes
Collegeville 2-Yes**

Inter-group suggest that Williamsport and Lewisburg delegates take back to their groups that they are violating 3rd & 4th traditions

Rich M. was given \$15.00 to have Inter-group approval stamp made up

Pottstown Wednesday Night step recognized by Inter-group and new delegates will be at August meeting. Bob K. and Joe K. started Pottstown N.A. They were the only two people at the first 4-meetings the sign in book would say 1-week Bob K. - Chaired and Joe C. Spoke. The next week it would say Joe C. - Chaired and Bob K. - Spoke and they switched back and fourth.

Williamsport retreat & Inter-group meeting to be held Labor Day weekend with a weekend campout

October 1st OTIS G. 15 YEARS



CALL BEFORE YOU FALL
IN PHILLY
AND SURROUNDING AREAS
(215)
NA-WORKS

Important dates: BASIC TEXT REVISIONS

December 2005

Deadline to send in your experience for Basic Text revisions

September 2006–March 2007

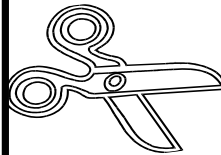
Review & input period (the period when the revised text is mailed out to those who sign up to receive it, and members give their input on the draft)

September 2007

Approval draft is published (this is the draft that will be voted on at the World Service Conference)

24 April–4 May 2008

World Service Conference



NEWSLETTER PERMISSION SLIP

By signing this slip I am giving Clean SHEET permission to print the enclosed original material. I understand that the newsletter committee may edit at the discretion of the editor.

name of submitted work: _____
signature: _____ date: _____