



NORTHERN NEW ENGLAND NEWS

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December 2004

nnenewsletter@yahoo.com

Issue 6

JANUARY RSC MEETING

The next RSC meeting will be held on **January 8, 2005** at the Southern Maine Medical Center, One Medical Center Drive, Biddeford, Maine, Rt. 111, Cafeteria Classroom 3. Go through the main entrance, take the elevator to the 2nd Floor, follow the signs to Cafeteria Classroom 3, it is across from the cafeteria

Take Exit 32 - Biddeford (formerly Exit 4) off the Maine Turnpike, I-95. At first light, turn left onto Alfred Street, Route 111. Follow 1/4 mile to SMMC on your right.

We have the hall from 10:00 AM until 5:00 PM, January 8, 2005. Set-up and any sub-committees start at 10:00 AM. The RSC will begin at 12:00 noon.

Please come and support our regional services!

- ❖ The RSC meeting is open to everyone!
- ❖ Find out details of the regional Traditions Workshop in Augusta!
- ❖ MRLE IX planning Report
- ❖ Newsletter news
- ❖ North East Zonal Forum at the end of January in the Berkshires
- ❖ Open Positions include Vice Chair, Treasurer

Hope to see you there!!

HAVING FUN IN SERVICE

Let's redefine service work as service fun. After all we are volunteers shouldn't we make it an enjoyable experience? Maybe we are driving people away with the concept of "work" instead of service experience being a teachable moment in our understanding of the traditions.

My first experience with service was as a GSR. The chairperson of the area knew his traditions and also Roberts Rules of Order backwards and forwards. He would let us make our mistakes and then direct us in the appropriate manner. The most important memory of that

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Note: To access the Hyper-Links (words that are underlined & blue) in this document you may have to hold the Ctrl Key while clicking your mouse over the hyper-link.

(Having fun in service...continued from page 1)

time is that all the members of area service were united in their belief that the chairperson permitted us to laugh and have fun during the often long and tedious meetings.

In the Old days there were structured committees like Hospitals and Institutions (H&I), Public Information (PI), Policy, Newsletter, Convention Committee. These committees were the training grounds for service work. This structure continued up through area and regional service to the world level. If someone were to join a committee at the area level in their first year in NA and continued through the structure that person would not only stay clean for a number of years but would have an extensive knowledge of traditions and policy. Their personal recovery may or may not have kept the same pace. It is a hazard of service that some addicts replaced their old drug of choice with the new drug of service.

Currently at the world level world service oriented representatives have seen the need for change and are working on consensus building rather than rote learning. There are written manuals for the various service functions. These manuals are guidelines, not cut in stone. The H&I and PI commitments of the past have changed with the facilities and concepts of addiction treatment. We have the choice of changing with them or becoming part of the problem. Most of us rebelled against structure and the establishment in our active drug using days. Let us not become the establishment as a part of our attempts to be "constructive members of society". We are far more creative than that. We are better than that. Being "constructive" means being builders, not followers. We are leaders in recovery.

Our program is based on attraction rather than promotion. Others need to see us having fun and want to be part of that solution. Guided by the traditions we can set our own course for the direction of service "fun" that future generations of recovering addicts can follow.

Member Southern Maine Area

GRATEFUL FOR NA

Recently when I was asked to share on secondary illness at an NA convention it really made me think about the priorities in my life. I was working myself hard by just being on the convention committee; so to have to share there, too, seemed like more than my fair share of the work. Then I remembered about 9 years ago a convention I went to and heard a man share on his secondary illness. It literally changed my life.

About 12 years ago the Hepatitis C screen first became available and a few of my friends had been diagnosed with it. All were IV drug abusers like I was. I read up on it, and there seemed to be no way I could have escaped the disease. But, I was too fearful to get the screen. I waited and I waited in my fear. Denial can be very strong. Then a few years later I went to that convention and heard that man share about having Hep C and the consequences it had caused in his life. I only went to the meeting because the Shingles I was getting so regularly were making me crazy and very sick.

I was with some dear friends at that convention and a few had already been diagnosed with Hep C, too. I started to cry in that meeting and just couldn't stop. The fear that had paralyzed me was coming out in my tears in a flood of feelings. I didn't want to die from some awful disease I had unknowingly given myself in active addiction. What tremendous feelings of guilt and shame welled in me, but somehow the courage to face reality came to me, too.

The process of finally getting tested, testing positive, talking about it and living through it was, in fact, as painful as I thought it might be. I was massively depressed for a solid year after testing positive. I was even mad at my higher power for not only giving this to me but for every malady anyone in the world ever had. I was off the deep end. But there was another side. I was facing reality without using. I got through it all clean with the help of: my family, my sponsor, and my friends in N. A. There was lots of writing and lots of sharing at meetings, too. I did the

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(Grateful for NA continue from page 2)

foot work to find the best doctor and become pro-active in my health care. The depression passed and the desire to live life to the fullest came back to me.

I now have a cause. I can help other addicts who are as full of fear as I had been to come to grips with the wreckage of the past, no matter what it is. I shared at the convention about it all. It was so cathartic. People came up

to me
after
the



meeting and said they had it too and really needed some help in dealing with it. I had people who were just trying to deal with life on life's terms come up to me saying that hearing about my faith and courage had motivated them to take care of the things that needed their attention, too. What a gift to be able to help another recovering addict!

I am in the middle of interferon treatment now for my secondary illness. It is a time of great turmoil for me, but I know with the NA program strongly imbedded in my life I will get through this without using. There may be very little serenity in my life right now, but I have riches beyond imagination from my friends in NA loving me through this. I will always cherish the opportunity that convention committee gave me to get out of my own way and take the risk to allow you get to know me a little better. It's been a lot of work but every moment of it has been so worth it.

Post script...now almost 2 years since this article was written the virus is still undetectable in me. The prognosis is 15-20 years symptom free.

I am now planning my retirement from my job that I thought at one time I would not live to see. I am more grateful with each passing day for the life I have been given and given back in NA.

Member Northern New England Region

SUGGESTED FUTURE TOPICS



February Issue (deadline January 15th)

What you read listed above are the topics to be used for future “meeting in print” newsletter issues. As always, if you have felt a need to write upon an entirely different topic, go for it, as long as it is related to recovery from the disease of addiction. These are intended to stimulate your writing skills for the benefit of our readership. Thanks in advance for your participation. We know what it means when it is said... “We are not alone.”

RDA REPORT

At the end of the last RSC we were discussing having our first Regional Workshop in December in the Southern Maine Area. This workshop is to be held on December 11 in Augusta, Maine at the Mennonite Church from 10 AM to 3 PM. Flyers are available today. Southern Maine has asked for the focus to be on NA Traditions. Many thanks to the Southern Maine Area Trusted Servants for their help. There is still much more work to do such as the agenda for the day, getting people to participate, food and coffee planning, getting a budget check today from the RSC. I am told the church will accept a donation (rent) for the day. I really was not expecting to be the single point of accountability for this event, but here we are. Since this is a Regional Workshop, participation from this body will be welcomed and expected. The next tentative

workshop could be in April of 2005. I would like to put in a motion today for \$150.00 for the next workshop, money to be disbursed at the March
(continued on page 4)

(RDA Report continued from page 3)

RSC. Maintaining the NAWS Database is ongoing, I have been working with the SMA PI Chair on getting meeting information updates. There is a new meeting list coordinator in SMA and she is already forwarding me meeting list changes. I am also doing another sweep through the GSA and Seacoast web lists to stay current. As has been mentioned before, I am able to edit meeting information, register new groups and delete folded meetings, change contact information, sign up groups to receive the NA Way if they are not already, and update Area and Regional Trusted Servant information. It is in everybody's best interest to help keep our database as current as we can.

Another project I have started is putting our RSC minutes on computer disc to be given out to trusted servants. In the last year our treasurer, secretary and regional delegate have all had hard drive crashes, losing valuable service information. Could I be next? Currently I have 22 sets of minutes saved and hope to be digitizing hard copies in the future. I have someone who is willing to help me with this project. Although it seems rather ambitious, it would be really nice to have our whole 12 plus years of RSC minutes available to trusted servants.

The sponsorship book is now available. I ordered it online from NAWS and it arrived this week. It is a very nice looking soft cover book with just over 150 pages. The revised Just For Today book is also now available. Just to let you know that I find ordering literature and donating to NAWS online completely safe and reliable.

On the NAWS website www.na.org there are 28 different



languages of IP's online. In USA English there are 7 IP's plus the group readings. Also, there is a World Convention page that is updated often with new info. I hope to see a lot of us in Augusta next month. Thanks for everything.
RDA, NNE Region

ANONYMITY REVEALED

“Anonymity is the spiritual foundation of all our traditions, ever reminding us to place principles before personalities.” Our Twelfth tradition, on its face, makes it seem that to be an addict is like a double-edge sword. “Should I live my life beholden to principles so as to act like a robot?” If this were so, our meetings might be rather dull, unattractive events. “Should I do whatever feels best at the moment, in other words if it feels good, do it?” Unattractive chaos would likely ensue in our meetings given this hedonistic, selfish approach. Groups are guided to place principles first, while members settle into recovery with their own personality. As this happens, the collective of individuals that forms groups tend to project a personality, one that is dynamic. Anonymity is born from this group collective, and the opportunity for carrying and receiving the message to and by the addict who still suffers expands exponentially.

No matter how many times I attend a meeting, someone will inevitably say something that speaks to my personal recovery. Some personality will share their unique experience, strength and hope and the result is often they speak to me without them ever knowing their effect on me. Groups can also provide this same result in the manner by which they reach out to one another addicts, newcomers and old-timers alike, through this dynamic principle of anonymity. In other words, I can't but we can. How is this so? It is nigh impossible to truly describe with complete accuracy what makes any particular group attractive when it reaches out to all addicts. The most successful groups to sponsor meetings, while not all things to all addicts anywhere, come as close to this ideal as is possible. They are able to reach addicts seeking recovery who have not had any direct contact

with the group. Group membership grows, no matter which group an addict may decide to join.

“Principles before personalities”...then, just what are those principles? If you’ve gotten to this point in seeking understanding of our
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(Anonymity continued from page 4)

traditions and don’t have a handle on what exactly those principles are you probably need to start back at Step One. Powerlessness, acceptance, humility, forgiveness, and spirituality, these are just a few principles. Perhaps most important is the group’s welfare comes first, that is NA as a whole is very important, because our very lives depend on its ability to thrive and grow. This can only be done when we follow all those principles that come before, the steps for the individual as a member of the group, and the traditions as a group member. Personalities do not become ends unto themselves. Selflessness in action for the good of the whole, the whole of NA, brings its own rewards. We actually do begin to live and enjoy life in a much more meaningful way, a direction that God wants for us to take.

Member Southern Maine

NEW MEETINGS

SOUTHERN MAINE:

TUESDAY, AUGUSTA, 7:00 – 8:00 PM, Women’s Step Study Meeting, Maine General Hospital, Conference Room #1, 6 East Chestnut Street, *Addicts needing recovery may attend any meeting regardless of how it is listed.

FRIDAY, PRINCETON, 7:30 PM, O D H, Elderly Meal Site on Passamaquoddy Res.

MEETINGS MOVED

GRANITE STATE

MONDAY, LACONIA meeting is now at the Lakes Region General Hospital, 80 Highland Street, room 1D at 7:30 pm starting Monday October 4th.

TUESDAY, AMHERST meeting has moved to the Church of Christ in Brookline, NH Main St Rte 130, 7:30 pm.

CLOSED MEETINGS

SOUTHERN MAINE

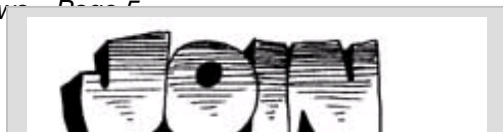
MONDAY, BANGOR, 7 - 8 PM, Carry the Message, Acadia Hospital, 268 Stillwater Ave., Osprey / Penobscot Room

WEDNESDAY, BANGOR, 7 - 8 PM, Carry the Message, Acadia Hospital, 268 Stillwater Ave., Osprey / Penobscot Room

FRIDAY, BANGOR, 7 - 8 PM, Carry the Message, Acadia Hospital, 268 Stillwater Ave., Osprey / Penobscot Room

SATURDAY, BANGOR, 11 AM – Noon, Carry the Message, Acadia Hospital, 268 Stillwater Ave., Osprey / Penobscot Room

“If you would like to receive this newsletter, it’s FREE! Please send an email to nnewsletter@yahoo.com and request your copy. If you do not have email, please see your Group’s GSR for a copy.”



JOIN THE REGIONAL NEWSLETTER SUBCOMMITTEE

If you are interested in serving on the NNE Newsletter Regional Subcommittee, send an email to: mnenewsletter@yahoo.com and let us know you are willing. We mainly meet online and exchange emails to complete our work. We could use your support!

TWENTY YEARS OF NA

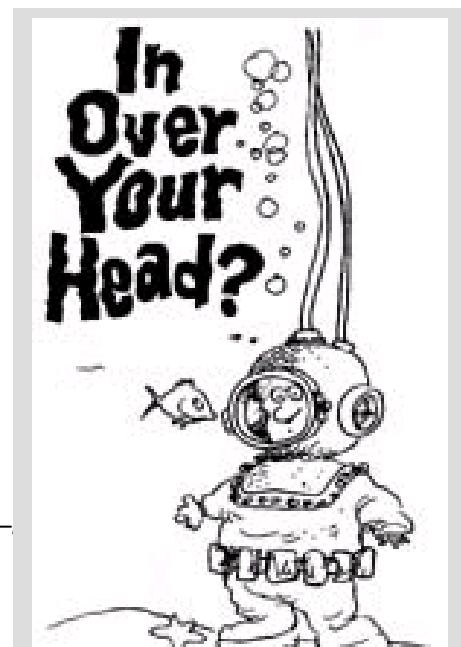
Last night I went to the 20th Birthday of the oldest group in my town. I was flooded with memories as I sat there thinking of my experiences with this group. It was at this group that I had my first day clean. I came in to NA seemingly hopelessly addicted and broken. It was this group that I learned how to listen, how to share honestly, and how to trust. I would not even get a newcomer keytag at first because I was so afraid of rejection. I remember seeing someone get a 30 day keytag and thinking “I’ll never be around long enough to get one of those”. It was at this meeting that I got my first sponsor, my first basic text, my first glimpse of a loving Higher Power, went to my first NA Dance. Back then we used to hear the ABCs of recovery, ashtrays, brooms and chairs. Everyone was encouraged to help with the group. Never will I forget how the members of the group were willing to love and trust me long before I imagined possible. Even when I felt like the scum of the earth, the members of the group always treated as an equal and reminded me that I had something to offer and other newer newcomers could benefit from my experience. In some ways I feel like an old person and that the younger members of the group do not relate to me, but once again I am reminded that it is about the message, not the messenger. Sadly, the founders of this group are no longer around. Most have relapsed, some have passed away, but their efforts in 1984 to start a Narcotics Anonymous group where there was none, gave addicts that came after, a safe place to learn to live clean, the NA WAY.

Member GSA

NAWS NEWS

On the NAWS website www.na.org there are bulletin boards that are dealing with the World Service Discussion Topics. The link to the page is: http://www.na.org/discussion_boards.htm The current topics in Our Public Image are: Our Public Image, Gossiping in NA, Meeting Predators, and Website Guidelines.

In the Infrastructure Bulletin Board the current topics are: Infrastructure, Workgroup versus Subcommittees, The Lord’s Prayer, and A Vision of Unity. Please take the time to check these out and even possibly get involved in the discussion.



Call your sponsor, or better yet
get to an NA meeting!

NA Fun Page

Basic Text Book Two - Title Search

L L W R O Q C P Y E T G Q L W J B B A J Z X S U K U Y S B Z E V N G K E O B P Z
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A GIFT CALLED LIFE
ALIEN
A LITTLE GIRL GROWS UP
AN INDIAN WITHOUT A TRIBE
EARLY SERVICES
FAT ADDICT
FEARFUL MOTHER
HOW DO YOU SPELL RELIEF
I CANT DO ANY MORE TIME
I FELT HOPELESS
IF I CAN DO IT SO CAN YOU
I FOUND A HOME

I FOUND THE ONLY NA
MEETING IN THE WORLD
IF YOU WANT WHAT WE HAVE
I KEPT COMING BACK
IN SEARCH OF A FRIEND
I QUALIFY, WHY ME WHY NOT
ME
IT'S OK TO BE CLEAN

IT WON'T GET ANY WORSE

I WAS DIFFERENT
I WAS UNIQUE
JAILS INSTITUTIONS AND RECOVERY
MID-PACIFIC SERENITY
MY GRATITUDE SPEAKS
NO EXCUSE FOR LONELINESS
NOWHERE TO TURN
PART OF THE SOLUTION
PHYSICIAN ADDICT
POTHEAD
RECOVERY IS MY RESPONSIBILITY
RELAPSE AND RETURN
RESENTMENT AT THE WORLD
SICK AND TIRED AT EIGHTEEN
THE VICIOUS CYCLE
THE WAR IS OVER
UNMANAGEABLE
UP FROM DOWN UNDER



December 2004



Northern New England Region of NA – Calendar of Events

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
Granite State, Saturday Dec. 11 th H&I Orientation Event, Marion Gershin Community Center, 39 West Broadway Derry, NH Help Spread The Message Of Hope			1	2	3	4 Southern Maine ASC 10:30 AM Subcommittees 12 Noon ASC @ Church of the Holy Spirit, 1047 Congress St., Portland, Maine
Granite State ASC 5 Will be meeting in Franklin, Unitarian Church, 206 Central Street at 1:45 pm Seacoast ASC Wentworth Douglas Hosp. Dover, NH 12 Noon	6	7	8	9	10	11 Traditions Workshop sponsored by NNE Region and SMA 10 AM – 3 PM Mennonite Church Augusta, Maine Granite State, H&I, Orientation Event, 11AM- 2PM
12 SMA Phone Line Workshop 5:30 PM at the Addicted to Life Group, Dining Hall at Manna Inc. 629 Main Street Bangor, Maine	13	14	15	16 Granite State Anniversary—Learning to Live “9 Years” 6 PM Pizza—7:30 Meeting Historical Society Bldg, 2 nd Floor, Main Street, Chichester	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31 Granite State--NEW YEARS EVE PARTY!!! Potluck Dinner 5 PM - 6:30 PM, Cleantime Countdown 6:30 - 7:30, Speaker Meeting 7:30 - 8:30, Dance & Marathon Meetings, 8:30 – Midnight <u>Where: Unitarian Church 274 Pleasant St. Concord, NH</u>	

To submit an event for the Calendar please email the information along with the name of your Area to nnewsnewsletter@yahoo.com



January 2005



Northern New England Region of NA – Calendar of Events

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
						1
Granite State ASC 2 Seacoast ASC Wentworth Douglas Hosp. Dover, NH 12:00 Noon	3	4	5	6	7	8 NNE RSC Southern Maine Medical Center, One Medical Center Drive, Biddeford, ME 10 AM Sub-Committees 12 Noon RSC Mtg.
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23 30	24 31	25	26	27	28	29 Southern Maine ASC 10:30 Sub Comm. 12 Noon ASC

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