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# NEVER ALONE

## Anchorage Area NA Newsletter January 2013

The purpose of this newsletter is to keep Anchorage Area Narcotics Anonymous members informed of the events and happenings of our fellowship.

Every attempt is made to adhere to NAWs guidelines for newsletters.

The content contained herein expresses the views and knowledge of its contributors, not NA as a whole.

Newsletter Committee  
Members

Chair/Editor: Doug P  
Staff Writer: Derek W  
Contributor: Mandie G  
**Never Alone Newsletter**

**Committee meets weds at 6pm at  
Kaladis on Brayton Drive**

Have you got some NA information, news, a recovery related story, or an event you wish to include in next month's newsletter? E-mail:  
[anchoragenanewsletter@yahoo.com](mailto:anchoragenanewsletter@yahoo.com)

## ANCHORAGE AREA MEETING — JANUARY 7, 2013

Secretary's Email: [aascnasecretary@gmail.com](mailto:aascnasecretary@gmail.com)

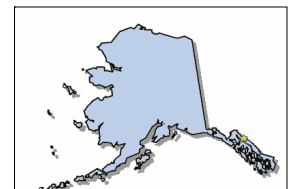
Anchorage Area Service Committee met in regular session on January 7.

- Valley Nooners and Saturday Night Live were present for the first time in a while. *Thank you Valley for your long drive to town to be part of Service.*
- Out and About has been organizing an entertainment event for the 26th of January (Saturday) called "Recovery Rocks", which would be held one day after the January 25th (Fri) Speaker Jam. Out and About suggested that our Area Activity committee pick up this event. Word has it that Activities will indeed pick this up. See more on the back page.
- Empty Chair announced that it is changing from men-only meeting to men and women meeting. The meeting needs some support.
- Treasurer reported that there is \$1934 in funds over our \$1500 prudent reserve. The report also included a running 12-month summary of expenditures and receipts — a "good job" to Josh, our treasurer. Income exceeded expenditures by \$1325 over the last year.
- Treasurer also informed the committee of his intention to pay a year long backlog of 1% donations to World and Region. The donations had no affect on our bottom line because though they were not paid, they had been accounted.
- Activities Subcommittee requested \$700 to add to the \$460 of Activities budget balance in order to put on the 34th Annual NA in Alaska dinner celebration. GSRs were assured that the event could not happen without the additional funds. The matter was voted on and approved as a housekeeping matter.

- Activities also requested that members and group representatives show up to its weekly planning meeting. This was reasonably effective. Newsletter observed 8 members at the Activities committee on January 9th. (Activities meets at 6:30 pm on Weds at Kaladis on Brayton Drive)
- **Vote on \$220 in Basic Text Funds for H&I:** *passed with strong support.* There was some discussion regarding why we were not supplying *Introductory Guides to NA*, which cost \$1.65 instead of \$11 for the Basic Texts. Basically, AA provides books and H&I wants to provide the *Basic Text* to Treatment Center clients as well.
- **Vote for H&I Chair:** *Groups voted Debbie S in as Chair.* Ash A withdrew his nomination before the vote — looks like a nod to *Unity*.

## Regional News

- ♦ The bi-annual Budget Committee is drafting the next two year budget. It will be out for review next month..
- ♦ Next Regional meeting will be at 6:30 pm, January 30th. The meeting will be held at the John Thomas building (Freedom Frog) at 3rd and Cordova. Outside of Anchorage, members may call 866-390-5250 access code 7488087.
- ♦ The October 2012 Regional Minutes are available at [AKNA.org](http://AKNA.org), on the Regional page.



### **Some Thoughts on the “Group Service Unit”**

After years of listening to complaints about dysfunction in our service committees, NA World Services initiated the Service System project (SSP). Currently, Area Service Committee is based in large part on the *Guide to Local Services*. Between 2008 and 2012, the draft “service structure improvement plan” was drafted, the so called Service System Project. At the 2012 conference, delegates approved funding to plan transition to the SSP.

The new service system would replace the Area Service Committee with (1) the Local Service Unit (LSU) and (2) the Group Service Unit (GSU). This sounds like complication rather than resolution. Can it work?

The Group Service Unit is *group-focused*. It is comprised of neighborhood groups, or groups with like interest. It is meant to focus on the groups instead of the “business” of NA. The GSU gives groups the opportunity to share problems they may be encountering and to seek solutions from each other, while avoiding complex discussion about service delivery outside the group. The kinds of things that happen at a GSU meeting include:



- Informal training and mentoring
- Discussion of group issues (issues of interest to the groups)
- Orientation and introduction to service
- Planning an entertainment event

The GSU is made up of neighborhood groups. There might be several GSUs within an LSU geographic area. Each group sends a representative to a GSU meeting. However, any members are encouraged to attend.

For instance a Valley GSU would need not take

on all the responsibility associated with an Area Service Committee — but they could get together as a “GSU” to plan the annual Rally. Additionally, given the distance from Anchorage, they could meet together, decide conscience, and send a proxy to the Area meeting.

As laid out, the *Local Service Unit*, which is more equivalent to what we view as Area Service, conducts core business including H&I, Public Information, Activities, and Literature. As envisioned, LSU officers and committee chairs meet monthly, while GSRs would only attend the LSU quarterly.

That *Frozen Dinner and a Meeting* was a great idea for getting people to the monthly business meeting. It is struggling a bit now. However, perhaps it takes on new life if (a) it is conducted quarterly, and (b) it is held as part of a GSU where one or more other groups participate. And what about Back to Basics or Burning Desire — they meet so late, they struggle with planning their business meeting... (forgive me, I am just saying.)

The GSU is the ideal venue for the concepts and traditions presentation we have at Area now. Other topics which teach our members to become better trusted servants could be presented.



Again, the GSU is group focused. The GSU would be the place to answer “How can we be a better group”, or questions like “how can we make people welcome”, “increase home group membership or business meeting attendance”, and/or “promote an atmosphere of recovery”.

And the Group is where the rubber meets the road in our fellowship.

*Next Month — Local Service Unit.*

### **H&I Literature Drive**

H&I is continuing its NA book drive. Many of those in the institutions we reach out to have no literature. Do you have an old *Basic Text*? *It Works?* Or *JFT*? — we can put it to good use! Give books to your GSR or to a member of the H&I Committee — or come to the H&I subcommittee meeting.



**Hospitals and Institutions meets on the 3rd Thursday of the month at 7 pm at Wings and Things in the mall at Arctic and 36th**

### **Public Information News**

PI is planning a workshop to train members to interact with the public at Health Fairs and man the phone lines. Date and time to be revealed.

PI completed a mailout at its January 20th meeting

**Public Information meets on the Sunday after Area at 4:30 pm at Peggy’s on 5th Avenue.**

### **H&I Orientation on Thursday April 18**

After the regular April H&I meeting

### Interview with Constantine, the Regional Delegate from Greece

Constantine had flown some 20 hours on Lufthansa Airlines to get to Woodland Hills California, the site of the 2012 conference. Between sessions, I asked him if he would participate in an interview for our Anchorage newsletter and he agreed.

Constantine's clean date is February 17, 2000 in Athens, Greece. His home group is the English-speaking N.A. group. The group meets twice per week and uses various formats – text study, speaker.



**What brought you to NA?** I heard about NA from a fellow user who had got clean and then relapsed. Actually, he ultimately died of the disease.

**What attracted you to NA?** There was an absence of stigma and a sense of complicity. There was a feeling that we had “walked the dark side”. Also, there was no need to explain myself; no need for any of us to explain ourselves.

**What gave you hope you could stay clean?** There were role models, people I strongly identified with, staying clean.

**Did you go to 90 meetings in 90 days?** I went to 230 meetings in 90 days. I attended 2 meetings per day for two years. Early on I regularly attended a newcomers' meeting called, in Greek, “*The First Station*”, which meant something like “the jumping off point”. Most people started out there, then branched out to other meetings. Interestingly, most people there came off the street, or detox clinic, not from treatment centers. Nowadays that has been changing.

**Do you have a Sponsor?** Yes, I have a sponsor. I have had the same sponsor for 12 years.

**Were there any other factor(s) that contributed to staying in early recovery?** At 3 months clean I was worried about using, terrified in fact, which I mentioned to my Mother. She said that relapse is a part of the process (of recovery). I thought (and decided), “No fucking way.” If it was allowed, you see, I would have lost interest.

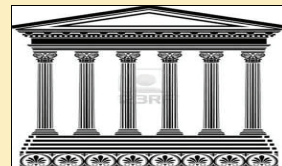
**What about working the Steps?** I think an early turning point for me was working the First Step – getting a handle on “powerlessness”. In the course of that, I came across an incredible, infantile rage at being subjected to the limitations of the human condition. This included the physical limits of the body, aging but, over all these, not being able to do just as I pleased!

**What challenge(s) have you dealt with in later recovery?** As a member of the Living Clean work group, I came to a point where I felt I had nothing more to contribute; that there was a different cultural understanding of what a recovery text should be doing. It should inspire, yes, but by evoking possibilities rather than laying things out. I felt there wasn't enough room left for the reader, that everything was being taken care of, on the reader's behalf. It also seemed to me Americans confused spirituality with social skills. I came close to quitting the work group, on these grounds.

I was more inclined to see recovery is an individual quest, where we each carve out our own path using common tools. Then, we share what we find with other travelers. I still believe that, except I had to come to realize that there are many angles on recovery. I had to put “water in my wine” like we say in Greek. I ended up not quitting the work group and some of my perspective has made it into *Living Clean*. The challenge for me was growing to the point of understanding that there's not only one model of recovery but many and they cannot be exclusive.

#### What is your home Region like?

The Athens Region consists of two Areas made up of 10 groups. NA is 25 years old in Greece.



#### What else would you like to add?

The translation of N.A. literature into culturally appropriate terms is very important. Translation needs a lot of clarifying and communication. By staying too close to the original words you sometimes don't do justice to the meaning. For example, we had difficulty with “responsible and productive member of society”. Greeks have an issue with the word “productive”; “product” in Greek connotes factory line, a result or part of nameless machinery. We couldn't afford the risk of a newcomer, who may have existed at the fringes of the economy, thinking we were telling him to go work at a factory. So, the translation committee decided to replace “productive” with “creative”.

At a later point, at a Translation workshop at the European Delegate Meeting (a zonal forum), we learned that the Italians had the same problem and had chosen the exact same solution. The German fellowship also had issues with the word “productive” and opted for using the German word for “accountable”, as in “responsible and accountable member of society”.

**Thank you ΚΩΝΣΤΑΝΤΙΝΟΣ Μ!**

#### WCNA 35: “THE JOURNEY CONTINUES”

August 29—September 1

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, USA

Registration and hotel packages are on sale! We are offering early bird registration for \$79 through 31 January 2013.

Visit [www.na.org/wcna](http://www.na.org/wcna) for updates.



#### AASC Newsletter Committee Chair Nominations Due in March:

Want a rewarding commitment? Please consider heading up the AASC Newsletter Committee. This position is supported by a strong Committee. Position in its current form needs MS Publisher software. Any questions — ask Doug.



# MARK YOUR CALENDER — EVENTS



## 34TH ANNIVERSARY OF NA IN ALASKA

At the Alano Club on Spenard

### Formal Wear

6:00 pm Doors Open  
6:30 pm NA Meeting  
7:30 pm Dinner  
Auction



Theme Colors:  
Purple, Silver, and Black

Groups should bring the following to the  
Anniversary Party:

Out and About	Hot veggie dish
Back to Basic	Hot Potatoes
Burning Desire	Hot Potatoes
Clean & Serene	Forks 250 count
Dynamite Thursday night	Side Dish Carbohydrate
Empty Chair	Bread, Rolls
Eagle River	Bread, Rolls
Frozen Chozen	Side Dish Carbohydrate
Gong Show	Gravy
Life Savers	Fruit Tray
Morning After	Side Dish Carbohydrate
907 Recovery	Fruit Tray
Round A Bout	Hot Veggie Dish
Sisters In the Solution	Side Dish Carbohydrate
Soul II Soul	Bread, Rolls
Road to Recovery	Gravy
NA Way	Hot Potatoes
Walk Your Talk	Paper plates Dinner and Cake size 250 Count

### The Alaska Regional Convention 2013 LOGO CONTEST

- ◆ Base Logo on:  
**"Lost Dreams Awaken"**
- ◆ Submit by **January 31st, 2013**
- ◆ Post to **ARCNA29@AKNA.org** (or **Webservant@AKNA.org**)



### NA DECEMBER—JANUARY BIRTHDAYS

- 🕯 Tricia T, Dec 18—4 years
- 🕯 RaNae W, Jan 1 7 years
- 🕯 Shannon D. Jan 3—25 Years
- 🕯 Alan H, Jan 19—3 years
- 🕯 Amanda C, Jan 20—1 year
- 🕯 Joe C, Jan 6—2 years
- 🕯 Laura H, Jan 6—1 year
- 🕯 Zan, Jan 5, 8 years



**Out & About** Hosts  
January 25th @ Alano Club  
DOORS OPEN @ 7 PM

Free Food!  
Door Prizes

### FRIDAY NIGHT SPEAKER JAM



**ARIZONA SPEAKER WITH 20 YEARS WILL  
SKYPE IN.**

After the January 25 Speaker Jam

### IT'S FLOAT NIGHT

Presented by Out & About / Burning Desire



A great meeting and fellowship  
while enjoying free root beer and  
orange cream soda floats  
11:00—12:15 pm  
@St. Mary's Church Tudor & Lake Otis

**Speaker, Sponsorship & Breakfast Meeting!**



w/ Sister's In the Solution—  
Women's Group

February 9 at Crosspoint Church  
9:30—11 AM includes FREE breakfast



### RECOVERY ROCKS !!!

**JAN 26**

Featuring Blaze & Erick

With Steven B, Chris M, Joe R

Time: **8:30 to 10 pm** Where: **Alano Club,**

Door fee: **\$2 a person and \$3 a couple**

Want to help? Contact:  
Melissa C—529-7255,  
or Chris M—764-4012

