



Update

A NEWSLETTER FOR PROFESSIONALS

NA PARTICIPATES IN ICAA JULY (1996) AMSTERDAM INSTITUTE

This July, Narcotics Anonymous sent a delegation to exhibit, present, and participate in the 40th Institute of the International Council on Alcohol and Addictions in Amsterdam, The Netherlands. This was the fifth major ICAA event in which NA has participated; the first was the ICAA Oslo Congress in 1988.

The big blue Narcotics Anonymous exhibition booth, with its large color map showing world NA meeting density, was the site for many discussions with institute participants about how our fellowship helps addicts in Europe find and maintain long-term recovery. Free information kits given to booth visitors included copies of the papers NA participants were presenting at the institute and pictorial catalogs describing NA's literature, different items of which are now available in 10 European languages (English, Finnish, French, German, Italian, Nederlands, Norwegian, Portuguese, Spanish, and Swedish).

The Narcotics Anonymous ICAA delegation made two presentations during the week-long institute.

Trustee Susan Blaue's (USA) address to a health care professionals workshop, "NA Says 'Yes' to the World Community," described recent innovations in our international outreach program. Joe Paumgarten (UK) and Piet de Boers (Sweden), volunteers in the Narcotics Anonymous European Public Information Project, surveyed NA's two decades of development in Europe in an ICAA Treatment Section workshop.

The ICAA's 1996 organizing committee asked Lee Manchester, communications officer for our World Service Office headquarters in Los Angeles, to co-chair a plenary discussion on drugs policies as they affect drug users and the possibility of recovery. This was a great honor to Narcotics Anonymous; all the other plenary session co-chairs were members of the ICAA Board of Directors.

Our delegation organized an open Narcotics Anonymous meeting at the Amsterdam RAI Congress Center midweek for ICAA institute participants. The meeting was conducted in English by members of the Dutch NA fellowship, now eight years old. Narcotics Anonymous was originally formed in The Netherlands among English-speaking American and British expatriates. Now, with Nederlands translations of NA literature proceeding rapidly and more Dutch natives joining our fellowship and finding recovery, Narcotics Anonymous in Amsterdam and The Hague is becoming more indigenous than expatriate.