



## Goals And Purposes

If something important becomes known to even one of us, NA needs a way to communicate that to the review of interested members willing to take the time to read and consider making the information generally known to the Fellowship. In the past we have had structural channels to do this but to today we have to engineer new pathways. Please consider this one of the pathways and if you think it needs to be known, pass it along to those you know. We believe our higher powers want all addicts to take part in becoming of service in NA. We envision a Global NA in which all members can freely communicate with each other and further carry our message of recovery from addiction by total abstinence and utilizing the Program of Narcotics Anonymous

<p>We Believe that the Greater the Base (Global NA Society)</p>		<p>The Broader the sides and the Higher the point of freedom.</p>
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 Yours in Loving Service,  
 Lester O.  
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 (A non-profit Newsletter of the Core Group)



## **The Old and the New**

WSC 2021 is only 8 months away. Looming heavily on the horizon is the SSP (Service System Project). Whether you like it or not, one thing that the SSP has done is cause awareness among the fellowship of NA. NA members are asking Question's more than I have seen in over two Decades.

In the Fall of 2010, I attended one of four Worldwide workshops on the SSP being held in the U,S, Myself and one other person who attended returned home and tried inform others in our area with workshops and power point presentations only to find that nobody wanted the hear what was being said. Now two years later everyone wants to know about the changes that are happening in NA.

Recently in an adjoining area several groups left the area and formed their own area and then joined and adjacent Region. Reasons being that both their Region and their former Area were test models for the SSP and had in effect become its poster child. The new Area felt they had no voice at Region and would fare much better in another Region that had not yet converted over to the SSP or CBDM (Consensus Based Decision Making).

My current area is looking at following suit but first they want to look at all options so they form an ad hoc committee to do so. First they needed to know more about the SSP so I did a brief summary for them. Next, the ad hoc committee came up with five options. One of them to join the USSC that has been formed out west. They then asked if I would prepare a report for them on the USSC. I came up with and 8 page report and I tried to not show any prejudice, but some of my personal opinions did show through. Both of these reports are available upon request

More Recently:

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**Narcotics Anonymous World Services, Inc.**  
**Approved World Board Minutes**  
**3-6 April 2013**

In the Middle of Page 6 under Review of Existing Bulletins (Including 29), this Statement is made.

*A board member sees all the bulletins as historical documents, bulletins no longer communicate how we feel about many of the subjects in NA, they are outdated and some particularly offensive.*

Cont...



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## **SNP contacts and plans for now to July and Status of the Project**

### **Where are we and where do we want to go - realistically**

There is only one more meeting before items are approved for the CAR. A direction is being established although acknowledging as well that the direction will change. Will also acknowledge what won't get accomplished and what is being done about it. We'll also report a "timeout" for SNP with a plan to actually implement LSUs and GSUs. Also have to create something for seating at the conference for the time being.

### **What to do about Seating and what do we want to say or encourage regarding investigating**

GSU and LSU will be in CAR to be adopted as well as offering a transition plan. Will acknowledge this being part of a system that we are committed to continue to work on together and we'll continue to work with SNP and seating, flushing out and gathering information.

Will continue encouraging discussion, continuation and at some point more fields testing on the other component pieces. Intermediate bodies will be introduced as a stepping stone to SNP which are still part of the service system.

The board's straw poll showed a preference to Local Service Conference and Local Service Board.

Last item for discussion for the day is WSC Reporting and ideas on how to report all the issues affecting the conference and 2014 WSC recommendations.

After having accomplished agenda items goals for the day the board meeting adjourned for the day at 5:20pm.

"GSU and LSU" will be in the CAR to be adopted as well as offering a transition plan." It seems as though this is what we have to look forward to in the 2014 CAR.

Posted on the Facebook, "More about the SSP" page, "Morris T - RCM of the Hollywood Area in the So Cal Region sent off an email to NAWs regarding their most recent communications to the fellowship in the June edition of Naws News."

Here is part of that post.

NO actions regarding the SSP can officially take place until the fellowship is presented with a Motion at the WSC that must receive a 2/3 majority to pass. You all know that, and I know that, so please, communicate that with the rest of the fellowship that reads NAWs News, which is supposed to be the definitive, comprehensive and most of all, honest and truthful disclosure of the current state of the SSP.

Instead of focusing on and stressing the transition/implementation part of the SSP in your communications, try and be fair and emphasize that the fellowship must still VOTE on and



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officially PASS the SSP via a Motion for any action such as implementation and/or transition to take place That is the true current state of the SSP. Make it clear. Somewhere in your discussions with Jim Delizia, after you are all thru with discussing how to herd the fellowship into the direction YOU the WB wish to take the fellowship, try and make time to integrate the principles of honesty, truthfulness and full disclosure in the discussions as well.

If you all don't, I will. And as you know, or should know, we are in contact with thousands of NA members, including RDs, RDAs, RCMs, GSRs and all members of NA. Better they get the truth and full disclosure from our trusted service body, The WB, as opposed to getting it from me and/or my many fellow NA members who are on top of regarding the SSP.

## Core Projects

### Projects:

**NA Views** - video conferencing center in Waynesville is still going forward with Travis bringing in his new developer to set the system up in his new home. They have the software, hardware and access now in new home. Bo and Ed to visit.

**In the Know** – ‘back burner’ for now. Idea of providing a platform for experienced members to share what they have learned to participants is sound. Lucy O. – Memphis, Allen J MD and a regional person from Louisiana showed interest. Brian - Was to be non-confrontational and open to free sharing of experience. Phone tree to get word out. Myriad topics. Speakers on panel have one dial-up, participants listen on mute, email questions during week to be mentioned at next call. Bruce – could record speakers on good subjects for playback. Brian – keep recordings for future needs. Bruce – wonderful idea to hear from experienced members.

**Fellowship Gathering** – talked about possibly doing it in Memphis. Bo will call Gene and Lucy about it. Maybe they have a good idea. NA History might be good. Also good site for NA Literature History. Maybe Jim Nichols might be interested in hosting in Lincoln. People who helped write the Basic Text would all show up with their friends.

### Did You Know:

1. World services considers themselves exempt from the NA 12 Traditions?
2. Homeland Security states that NA receives no direct support from them.
3. NA ought never be organized.
4. What are the three elements of self-determination?
5. Do you think spiritual growth is important?
6. How do you describe spiritual growth?
7. What's the difference between individual opinion and efficiency?
8. Do you believe the spiritual dominates the mental and physical realms?
9. What about body drugs in recovery?
10. Did you know that many members attend big conventions with funds paid by a treatment center?
11. Did you know the 12 Steps and Traditions are spiritual principles whereas the 12 Concepts are corporate principles?
12. (Fill in the blank!

[nacoregroup.org](http://nacoregroup.org) – Made link to youtube.com to make it easier to get to our video clips.



## **Summary of Core Group Project Discussions for the Month of July, 2013**

From the week of July 9, 2013;

Opened at 8:30

- Bo commented that he included a conversation where Oneshot and Denny S exchanged takes on the Jimmy K lockout. Along with the rumor that lasted 18 years about Bob Stone going out into the desert and shooting himself with a .38, these lies have had major repercussions on how the Fellowship perceives itself.

The “disconnect” in our fellowship can be noted when things that could enhance our Recovery go undone because members who are really good at area and regional services like H&I, Literature, Public Information, etc. are not allowed to sit in sub-committee deliberations at the WSC like they did for the first dozen years of its existence.

It was stated that the Fellowship is in a poor position to self-govern itself because it has few inquiry rights. General information is generally not available. Those who perpetuate this lose the ability to claim they are acting with the consent in support of the Fellowship. This means they invalidate themselves. This means they really are not part of NA because they refuse and avoid Fellowship control and responsibility. While typical, this is ordinary behavior for your organizations, to distance themselves from those who have a say in what they do or don't do.

- Mitch – would like to see some demographics on DRT and Suboxone therapy and outcomes as to clean time among those going through treatment. Are they clean a year later or still on the drugs?

Someone had told him it was ok to relapse because if they come back to the program they have to buy more books! It was all about money. Mitch commented that this



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methodology sets up relapse because the addicts in the program are kept on drugs. Many do have problems that require medication of various sorts but the result is stability and focus which allows recovery to initiate. There is a difference between opiate like drugs and psyche meds that you can't get on the street. Suboxone is \$25 on the street.

- Bo says the way to deal with this is don't give the 'controllers' energy. They'll just use it to fight you. Don't dance with them. Be the water that flows around the rocks... We are free and need to avoid heaviness. Recovery allows fun and effective action. We do not wait but go forward with following God's Will for us today! That's why we are on this call. Moving into my new home and hope this will allow me to do better service for you guys.
- (An echo effect began to disrupt the conference call and several participants had to hang up and dial back in to correct the problem. The Host code stopped working. Guess the service had a rough night! Some participants were not displayed on the Host dashboard. Still able to save recording from last week and this week. Last week's meeting went well and yet I was unable to take minutes while on road trip to Miami. Thanks for bearing with us!)
- Lester came on call at 9:20.
- Bo – support Lester as editor and help build up the newsletter. Thanks to Bruce G. for the great artwork helping us defuse the idea of the core group being a centralist organization.
- Bo – the prohibitions to put out core group writings grew out of the tension and anxiety to do the right thing in the year 2011 right after the Wichita Gathering. I think it was proper for the times and important to exhibit our capacity to surrender. Today, our stuff does not seem so radical and I think whatever we generate should be made available to the general Fellowship anyway possible at the earliest moment. If there are problems, we can deal with them. We have before, so why fear? This would include things like sending our minutes to all members who would be free to pass them on. This should be a general position and would affect me and Chris Keeley's Blog. The more information the better! If any have good reason to not make this change, we need to hear from you.



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- Lester commented on the last line of Mitch’s facebook Statement,” I would love to know the current statistics on I inpatient and outpatient clinics in the U.S., that send their Opiate Detoxed patients home on Suboxone or similar DRT's within the last 5 years. Because some Dr. or clinician says that they won't be able to stay clean In N.A. In Particular the part about patients not being able to stay clean on NA. He suggested IP “I Stayed clean on NA alone – no DRT!” Could be styled like a petition!
- Mentioned that Drug Court is under Homeland Security and it came out in discussion that not everyone knew this. Lester said that he would research
- Bo’s closing Comment: One of the missing links in the NA world today, is a lack of interesting, general information which allows for questions and responses that result in the Fellowship being generally informed. Nothing should be out of bounds. Also, personal attacks and unprincipled actions should simply be out of order. One of the glaring factoids is that we have had much the same people in charge of world services for the past dozen or so years. NA in the United States 'flattened' in 2007. Might this mean we need to make a few changes?
- Wake up!

Closed at 10:00– Lester led closing prayer: Third Step Prayer.

**From the week of July 23, 2013;**

**Opened at 8:30**

- **Bo – Bought new home June 25<sup>th</sup>, getting moved in now.**
- Mitch wrote a beautiful article about spirituality with his Mother. This kind of thing should get more readers to let it be known that this is how the spirit works for us - “My Great Blue Heron.” (See addendum A)
- What can we do and how can we make it better for everyone? The aim is to raise the level of understanding to the point of achieving personal peace. The more we learn and the faster we learn the quicker things will get back to working our program and helping others. There is really no shortcut for this. Each member is important and while not all will have the ardent desire to learn and know; it only takes a sizable percentage to make the needed changes. We are glad for those who come to NA for help and learn enough about living clean to go on with their lives. Still, we have to have a few who take it a step



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or two further to secure the overall caring and sharing against the temptation to make money and settle for a few mental structures instead of deeper spiritual insight.

- Bo - Looking for Chuck Skinner's letter to Greg Pierce 11.13.82 posted by Steve Oneshot currently on FB. Also, James Mc posted by Jmu.
- Jay joined us – he lives in Coldwater, FL.
- Jmu – What we are after? I am service junky, served as secretary with ASC, region, different service committees at region, regional chair and secretary. RD at WSC in 1995 at Greenboro, NC. Experience was that the further he got from group, the less fun and feeling or helping others. Still gets a lot out of sponsoring others, group service, etc. Regional service is still frustrating, no satisfaction. Rot in WSO, WSC, some regions toying to reform, with experiences with area and region everyone seems to regard themselves as teachers, not interested in people.
- Jay – what's happening? The tail is wagging the dog. The few want to control the many. How 25 people can pretend they know better than the whole Fellowship is presumptuous. Where did it start?
- Jay – the USSC could fill the need. We are needful here as well as overseas. The SSP will be pushed through but will not help. Buzz is the Fellowship is not happy with what is going on. If SSP passes will it mean all the little boards will have to incorporate?
- Bo – best I heard it explained is WSO wants to duplicate itself into an array of mini-boards. This might result in many small incorporations.
- Bo - The 'disconnect' we discovered in 2011 has grown in complicated ways and distance. There is no way to elicit agreement from the people who engineered it.
- Jay – The tail is wagging the dog. How can we stop it?
- Bo – Redirect our attention and focus on positive things like gatherings, newsletters, Free Fellowship, personal service. The Fellowship does not like contact with WS, so get busy with other things. The cash flow will shrink and disappear. We can write other books and written materials as well as multimedia, internet, skype, conference calls, etc. and the activity will give people a lift as well as make alternatives available and attractive. It is my view that the corp. uses our past loving service as protective





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coloration for their activities and they don't realize the occasional lapses make a strong impression on members who are watching. I trust to the spirit.

- Jmu – What can we do? I was inspired by Wichita. Members are willing to work for positive change. Alternatives will be busy passing out information at Philadelphia WCNA. Working hard in regional positions will help. Let people know there are things going forward to help remedy the problem areas.
- Bo – We have powerful members who spread rumors and are believed: Bob Stone death, Jimmy K lockout. Both of these threw the Fellowship for a loop. Both were believed and taken as facts for long periods of time. We have to get real about this acknowledge the problem in our thinking. New information must be carefully examined to root out lies before they take hold of people's minds.
- David B – Starting new Fellowship. USSC still a great idea. Have to change people's minds. History conferences are the best way to do that.
- Jay – Clean in 1981. Served up and down structure. Not active in NA for a while, now back full force and things are different. Different feel, consciousness. Downward spiral. Doesn't like corporation.
- David B – Grassroot movements move slowly...
- Ellen B – Live and learn by example. Make sure your home group knows the truth about things.
- Jay – Go back to what works and worked before.
- Bo – What can we make new videos on? Ideas can help direct our efforts.
- Jay – God needs to get the message out there where it can help. Easier to get the buzz going.

## One Member Wrote:

- On the matter of speculation that historical literature is somehow no longer to be read in NA meetings...

Literature written by NA members for NA members is not an outside issue. The Grey form is part of our fellowship history. Group conscience is the process we use to make



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decisions. This entire topic only becomes an outside issue or unapproved literature because far too many members believe the lies told by special workers at NAW\$ whose interests serve the corporation and not the group conscience of the fellowship. Every member who has studied our history and taken the time to get to know the members still with us that were a part of that process come to the same conclusion. Those who refuse to be diligent in this matter continue to be swayed by the corporation.

- I believe the ESH of the members that wrote our literature, not the opinions of the vultures that came after to take advantage.

## One Member Wrote:

The reason a commercial corporation cannot control a spiritual fellowship is the corporate structure is all about titles and credit taking. The introduction of pay creates competition not for quality but for recognition. This can include making others look bad to build our own performance up. Like poisoning the other animals in a horse race - your horse wins but the win is unclean, it is tainted by the dishonesty and the likelihood that given a fair chance, one of the other horses may well have won. Money - Property - and Prestige are fine in their place but they recede in importance when it comes to more important things. The life of the Spirit is more important than money. Anyone who has had money will tell you how easy it is to lose it all. The Spirit doesn't go away. It can be covered over by tons of misbehavior and misdeeds but remain whole and complete just below the surface. After all, it is the spirit within each of us that keeps the heart beating and the breath coming.

Spiritual fellowships are based on helping individual members awaken their spirit and set worthy, achievable goals in a life of steady improvement. The whole reflects the goodness experienced by the individual. Corporations ask other questions: who gets the credit, how does it affect my ranking in my department, how does it affect the ranking of my department, will I get a raise. The individual is considered expendable and are valued only in relation to the whole. This is no one's fault and not a failure of the corporation. Rather it is a limitation imposed by reality that must be accepted and dealt with.

Conflicts of interest, attempts to control the nature and function of the fellowship,



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and betrayal of trust resulting in service agencies developing responsible only to themselves. Conflicts of interest involve situations where an individual may be hindered in telling the truth by the reality that the corporation may perceive their truth to be counter-productive and inappropriate. Whatever else happens, you have to go along with the boss to get the job. Where a corporation functions under a system of direct responsibility to the membership, it is illegal and unworthy to misinform, misdirect, dissemble the truth, and assassinate the character of opponents. Recognizing and accepting these limitations allows us to deal with reality and keep moving forward to our primary goals. It is easy to see how inbound personnel were unaware of the nature and certain qualities of the spiritual Fellowship of NA. They were not told of the extensive discussion and study involved in coming together and creating a situation where NA could be expanded to boundaries set only by the physical size of our planet. The reason a lie is more believable than a miracle is that the lie is simply more likely. Fortunately for all of us in NA, we do get to experience the miracle more and the lie less.

The reality of this is visible over time where amid the tumult of events, certain principles hold true. NA is inclusive, open-handed, honest and above board. This means we cannot exclude, mislead and cover up to preserve the appearance of democracy while exploiting the commercial potential of a business enterprise. These things are not NA and they are not OK. If they occur, members have to devise a way to correct the situation without tearing down the structure. Can it be done? Are you kidding? Look at all we have been through together! What's another miracle? (Written in 2008)

## **News from Thailand:**

### **Member, Group, Area, Region, World Service Conference**

Clarification: The Member, Group, Area, Region and WSC are our service structure. The Members being the highest, most important level of service. We live clean and honestly in the present reality, without manipulation according to our spiritual principles. There is only one service structure. Our members through our service structure, created boards and committees that are directly responsible to the members. Most importantly we, as NA members, are all equal. An individual addict member of the NA World Board is equal to a home group member. A "World" trusted servant or "World" office worker is less important than a newcomer. The truth is in the principles found in the steps and traditions. The further we get away from that,



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the further down the road we go in putting "World Board" members or Office "Directors" on pedestals, the more we hurt, and the more we forget the newcomers.

For example I live in Southeast Asia. There are over 30 million addicts here who never heard of NA. While in my homeland of America you permit each other to carry on and on senselessly about a world board/office changing our structure to a one party government ruled entity with over 15 million US dollars a year in the non-profit coffers.

Our money pays excessive salaries and unnecessary perks. NA World Board/Office has not accepted voluntarily any non-profit watchdogs, such as [Charitynavigator.org](http://Charitynavigator.org) and [Charitywatch.org](http://Charitywatch.org), access to our accounting records. Most other non-profits have full and open disclosure to its members and the public. We the members cannot see our financial records. Our World Service Office marks financial documents to the World Board as "strictly confidential."

Wake up NA, especially American NA, or possibly kiss the newcomers ass goodbye. Addicts are dying over here while our funds are not prudently controlled by us, NA members, for the highest and primary purpose. The addict who still suffers in the horrors of addiction. Just for today ask yourself, do we want to pay exorbitant amounts on travel and entertainment or help addicts who have never ever seen a PSA, an H&I member, or even knowing what a sponsor is.

With every dollar we waste we give up opportunity for millions of addicts to live clean the NA way. The so-called railroaded job, political power seeking, SSP leaves far behind all using addicts and newcomers for tighter control of NA money. Did you already forget? I said 30 million addicts here who never heard of NA, in Southeast Asia alone. While we allow our "leaders" to print color posters saying how much we grown thanks to the World "leaders."

Here's a plan: keep our service structure and make it even more responsible to our members, cut the budget of perks and high salaries to servants and workers, tighten our financial belts and start putting addicts still suffering and newcomers first. We need honest, open to the membership and public all accounting books and records. We need a presence on a charity watchdog web site with honest disclosure. Stop wasting time and money on non-sense like the so called SSP that no one can understand and actually help addicts. Today is a good day to start.



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- Dale A., Bangkok, Thailand

thailand prison conditions





A Newfound Spirituality often accompanies our recovery. This spirituality may express itself in many ways. Many of which may go unnoticed to others. Many feel that expressing our spirituality in a positive manner is both an asset and an attraction to our recovery in NA We would like to offer a forum in this newsletter for doing just that. If you have any stories about how spirituality found in working a program of recovery has expressed itself in your life. Please send it in as input for this newsletter and allow your story to be an attraction to others.

## **Addendum A:**

### **My Wonderful Great Blue Heron**

Mitch's article about spirituality with his Mother.

In 1999, my Mother had been flown gratis from Savannah, Ga. to Baltimore in a Gulfstream G-4 private jet. This only was the beginning of several miracles. My Mother was unable to take any other type of transportation in her condition, be it commercial airlines, train, or car. And she wanted to be with her lifelong friends and family here in Baltimore, after having been living in Savannah since 1976 to 1999.

Gulfstream Airlines maintains its home in Savannah, Georgia, where I believe they also build planes there as well. While Mom was in the hospital, I had somehow heard that, I don't remember how or where the idea came from, but I called the airlines and asked if I could speak to the "Flight Operations Coordinator" I told him that I heard that they may have an "Angel of mercy program "where in certain cases they will fly people that are in need. The man said that he would get back to me and in a couple of hours, my Father called me at the house where I had returned back to, and he said "Mitchell pack us a bag .We're going to Baltimore".

We were met at the tarmac, after being transported by Ambulance.

We had to take several large bed sheets to carry my Mother up those long steep steps, leading to the flight cabin of the Gulfstream 4.

While in flight they allowed me to get in to speak to the pilots in the flight deck. When speaking to the pilot, he revealed to me that I he was the man that I had spoken to when asking for the "Flight Operations Coordinator".

How do you like that?

We transported mom via ambulance from BWI private airport tarmac to a waiting ambulance and then transported her to Gilcrest Hospice in Towson. This was an ideal facility as they had a bird sanctuary in the hall, and a kind, empathetic, compassionate staff. While in the hospice, I arranged for her surviving friends, and high school classmates, who she had



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always kept in touch with for over 50 years, to come and surprise her having a little birthday party for her in the room. Needless to say she was thrilled with this. I was feeling good about it myself. This was on January 29th, 1999.

My Mother was an avid bird watcher, somewhat of an ornithologist, you might want to say. She lived on Wilmington Island in a large wooded piece of land. She would open the back sliding glass doors, using her binoculars and referring to her bird encyclopedias that she kept next to the door on the kitchen countertop. One day as she became weaker, and her health condition was heading quickly downhill, I was sitting on the bed speaking to her as I did, and I asked her, feeling somewhat apprehensive, "Mom, when you leave can you come back and let me know that you are OK? She said "sure Mitchell, what would you like me to come back as?" Knowing her love for birds and my understanding that they fly, I said "How about a Red Tailed Hawk? " Knowing the behavior of this raptor, she said, no, they are disgusting, killing the squirrels up in the trees, and dropping their guts all over the ground." "OK I said, how about a Great Blue Heron?" She said, "OK Mitchell they are beautiful graceful birds." and I said "yea Mom, like you, kind and graceful in life"

Well she passed away on February.9th, 1999, one day before my clean date February 10th.

Six months passed and as per Jewish custom, I was in the midst of preparing for the "Unveiling", which is when the Gravestone which was covered at the time of placement, with a large cheesecloth material, which was removed in a ceremony, where Family and Friends gather at the cemetery. The Rabbi, says a few words in Hebrew, then talks a little about Mom's life, and then removing the veil of cheesecloth from the headstone Monument I had picked out ,followed by of course going back to the house and eating much food and pastries as Jewish our custom liking to suffer and then eat.

Backing up, I had been preparing for this "Unveiling "for a couple of weeks ,spending more time trying to get the headstone delivered, more so than the gathering of friends and family, and arranging for the catered food we would have back at the house.

As I did regularly back then, I was preparing for a 30 mile or so bicycle ride with a friend. This was around August of the same year .We had, had a terrible drought this summer and while I was waiting for her to show up ,I was feeling sad thinking about this upcoming event, I was sitting on the bike looking into the dead, dry cornfield, and all of the sudden in the middle of the dead brown cornstalks, I saw what then had appeared, slowly out of the tall stalks, what appeared to be a tall stork like bird looking to be several feet tall with its head rising a little bit above the dead , corn. I looked closer through my tears and saw what it was. Too my amazement, it was a Great Blue Heron. "Oh My God", I said allowed. Would you look at that beautiful bird," .It then looked right in my direction, thinking it was looking right into my eyes. It bent it's long thin stick like legs , and pushed itself ,up and forward spreading his massive wing span and took off in a graceful slow ascent, It flew right over head of me. Rona, my bike buddy, finally met me, after what seemed to be over an hour of waiting. As we took off on our



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journey that day and were riding into what was about a couple of miles into our ride, I looked above me, and what did I see, Yup, I believe it was the same blue heron. I was just in awe, and when telling my friend about my experience, she just kind of foo fooed it blowing it off. As we wheeled several more miles an hour or so up and down the windy hills of Worthington Valley, which is a beautiful serene, part of Baltimore County which has many Horse farms, being a sanctuary to gorgeous powerfully athletic looking thoroughbreds.

We were climbing a hill having about a 45\* degree incline. As we were ascending to the peak, I looked up at the telephone wires and remember calling out loud, "Rona. Look up on the wire; it's a Red Tailed Hawk."

As we continued moving on, we were entering a thickly wooded area and ,as I tend to do, looking into the woods for wild animals that I hoped to see, I noticed, in a hidden part of a tree about twenty feet up was a large barred owl, who appeared to be sleeping.

I again was blown away with the fact that my Mother was contacting me. By this time I was feeling very filled up .I really totally didn't understand it at the time. Throughout the next fourteen years or so leading up to today, when feeling distraught and my disease was active and I sometimes was feeling hopeless on several different occasions, all of the sudden a Great Blue Heron magically appears. This is not an everyday occurrence mind you, but certainly has given me something to think about, and feel safe and hopeful about.

As I was approaching my Sixtieth birthday several months before, I decided I was going to plan a trip to Italy , as I always had been drawn to that place for some unknown reason , other than I thought it would be interesting and beautiful, and I had never been to Europe. I traveled alone to Italy, having several bumps in the road, so to speak. My initial flight was delayed on the tarmac for two and a half hours due to severe thunderstorms, and I had hurt my knee a day before while exercising. It was painful and swollen, and the flight attendants were kind enough to supply me with bags of ice, as we finally ascended and flew to our first layover spot, before hitting our destination of Venice, Italy; we stopped in Amsterdam, Holland. I was still in discomfort limping around dragging all of my luggage, unable to find the connecting flight. When I finally got to the portal where the airline ticket counter was, waiting twenty more minutes or so, I was informed that the plane had already taken off. Eventually a seat was found for me. I arrived in Venice airport waiting for my luggage to arrive and guess what? It didn't arrive. I filed a report per protocol, and the attendant finally discovered it was on another plane to arrive later in the day. She told me that it would be at the hotel that night, whereas it didn't show up until the following night and the weather happened to be cool in the low fifties and I was wearing a short sleeved shirt and short pants. Oh well. Everyone had been wearing jackets or warm sweaters.

Most everyone in the group was with another family member, wives and husbands, and a group of six women from New Orleans. Needless to say I was beginning to feel more alone and rejected every day. As I was walking thru a treed path leading to the Palazzo Pitti, (The Pitti Palace), I began to have an overwhelming feeling of sadness cover me. I became tearful. I





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began to speak out loud to my Mother, saying” Mom, I know that you always wanted to see Italy, and how I wish that you were with me right now seeing and experiencing this wonderful country. I told her out loud ,”Mom I know that you got to see London and parts of England, Stonehenge and the like, but I am seeing and living this dream for you here in Italy .” I went through the museum, and it was very nice, and in the back area was an enormous garden. It rose approximately a half a mile up. I finally reached the top and the view was spectacular.

The mountains were all around the west, there were castles in the visible distance, and a city spread in between the palace and the mountains, within view of about maybe a mile away. I took pictures of this natural beauty, and the entire circumference of the area. As I was shooting down back towards the Palace, I noticed in the distance down the hill in between the Palace and the cornas what looked to be a pond of sorts, with a large statue in the middle of it.

I started my trudge down the steep hill going back toward the bottom where the Palace stood. I decided to stop at the pond where the statue stood. It was enclosed by a black steel fence. As I came upon the pond, I saw that the statue was that of known other than the Roman God of the Sea and fish, Neptune. This statue was a magnificent depiction of what I thought Neptune would look like around its base was smaller sculptures attached to the base of Neptune.

Then to my amazement sitting on the top of Neptune’s head was a magnificent large bluish grey bird, with long thin legs, looking almost majestic. “Unbelievable I said””, I immediately became totally alert and energized when I saw that it was my Great Blue Heron.

Well, I stayed and took pictures and video, being able to capture live images of the Heron dive bombing into the water catching a small fish, then hopping up onto the fence and gobbling it down as it wiggled it’s little tail out the Herons beak. I stayed there until I heard a loud overhead announcement in four different languages, English being the last, saying” attention all visitors, the Pitti Palace is closing in fifteen minutes, please exit through the east gate. I continued taking pictures as I descended down the hill towards the east gate exit.

Through all of the history and wonderment, and views, and sites that I had seen in these two weeks, I must say, that this was maybe the biggest highlight of my adventure in Italy.

Thanks Mom. I will Love you always.





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**From the week of July 30, 2013;**

Only Bo and myself were on last nights Conference Call. We dicussed several things in general. One of them being a fellowship gathering or some kind of event in the months following the World Convention in order to fill in the gap that's is left after the convention. Something else we discussed was the possibility of doing a weekly 2 hrs spot called NA Radio on an Internet Radio station or possibly doing conference calls live with video for posting various reports etc. More will be revealed.

**Yours in Loving Service,  
Lester O.**

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