



*A newsletter from the Asia Pacific Areas of Narcotics Anonymous*

*Welcome to the new look APF newsletter.*

*The newsletter pages are enhanced for 1997 / 98 browsers which support style sheets, however if you are using an older browser you are not missing out on any information just a little formatting.*

**Vol 1 Number 7 Dec 1996**

*The plan is to offer at least 3 issues per year distributed through the NA Service Structure rather than to individuals, and to offer a mixture of NA APF service news and members stories. I hope that the service committees receiving this newsletter will do their best to distribute copies to members. I want to acknowledge the generous work done by members of the Hawaiian Region to fund and produce the Newsletter up to now, with a special thanks to Larry R ( Trustee ) who seems sometimes to have single headedly held it together for a long time.*

*The Australian region has agreed to fund and produce the APF Newsletter for my period of editorship.*

*Theme for this Newsletter:*

*The WHAT, WHY and the HOW of FORUM SERVICE.*

*I hope through the inclusion of an APF Meeting Report, the experiences of members of the service structure of NA and a calendar of service and recovery events to help explain.*

**WHAT IS SERVICE? - WHY SERVICE? - HOW TO DO SERVICE? - CONTACTS**

#### **WHAT IS SERVICE?**

- *What we do at APF service meetings, specifically what we did in May*
- *1997 Translations in progress: a quick overview*
- *News from the Front*

*What we do at APF service meetings, specifically what we did in May*

*Short Report of the Asian Pacific Forum Meeting held at the World Service Conference 1997 30/4/1997 in LA. Minutes*

*Present: Aotearoa - New Zealand, Japan, India, Philippines, Australia, Garth ( Trustee ), Mario ( WSO Board of Directors ) Larry ( Trustee ) and Tata ( Translations ).*

*DF Meetings  
We discussed the need for Development Forum meetings (meetings held at the WSC to help support and inform members of emerging / developing communities about WSC work.)*

*We would support extending these meetings. Our own APF meeting this year was held very late at night after a very long day in the conference and we agreed to approach the Administrative Committee regarding rescheduling these Forum meetings earlier in the day.*

*We also talked about the possibility of changing the way that business is done at the WSC so that it is more accessible to newer, less experienced, service members.*

*We believe that as the conference becomes more attuned to the needs of non-American participants that changes will need to be made.*

*We had a number of ideas of how this could be done and these ideas have been passed onto the Administrative Committee.*

*We discussed approaching the Trustees regarding having some direct input into how their ' Development Forum' money is spent.*

*At the moment this money is spend on bringing representatives from emerging communities to the WSC. We would like them to discuss the possibility of spending that money on bringing APF community representatives to the APF meeting instead.*

*We decided that we would continue to present our views on this matter.*

## Newsletter

At this stage the Newsletter will be developed in English, however we hope that local fellowships will do their own translated issues as they wish.

### Special Needs of Aotearoa - New Zealand

The RSR explained that though their region is well established, they are having difficulties with funding. At this stage will be unable to attend the APF meeting in India next year.

She explained that they are having difficulties finding people to do service at a Regional level.

She spoke with Garth and Mario who agreed to arrange a meeting in NZ to discuss all these matters and seek practical solutions.

This meeting was an opportunity to discuss WSC matters that affect the APF communities, talk about issues of common interest, get to know each other as individuals and plan for further meetings.

The APF meeting at the WSC is an important way to communicate. The other, perhaps more important meeting, is the one held in a local APF community.

We have found that this second type of meeting has generated a lot of interest and enthusiasm from the host community. This helps spread recovery the NA way.

Next APF Meeting will be held in conjunction with Calcutta Convention.

APF Meeting Calcutta: 4-6 February, 1998.

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### Translations: a quick overview

What follows are excerpts from the WSC Translations Committee Report given to the WSC 1997.

In February 1996 186 different translated NA items were being published, today a year later we have 218 items in publication an increase of 32 recovery items. Currently the WSC staff is working on 63 different translations projects.

Up til now we've been working with Roman-alphabet languages which are familiar to us from personal experience. Now Asia, Eastern Europe and the Arabic-speaking communities are rapidly becoming the main focal points for assistance. This opens a new world of opportunity for us; to work with communities whose written languages, spiritual beliefs and cultural background can be vastly diverse and different.

Just an example: we are currently working on 7 different languages from India alone, a country with at least 15 main languages and great diversity in culture and beliefs.

From the APF meeting in Manila 1997:

1. Philippines: #1 in Tagalog;
2. Malaysia and Singapore: working together on pamphlets;
3. India: translations into 6 languages: Manipuri, Hindi, Tamil, Bengali, Kanada and Oriya;
4. Japan: work slowed down;
5. Thailand: work progressing.

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### News from the Front:

#### Growing APF communities

Thailand: Now there are a number of local Thai members and a regular Rehabilitation meeting. 2 members of the Thai fellowship hope to attend the Sydney Combined Area Convention in October 1997. More on this visit next Newsletter.

Nepal: we understand that the NA community in Nepal now has an number of local Nepalese members after being mainly an expatriate community.

Indonesia: Moves are afoot to start an NA meeting in Indonesia. Garth P attended a International Federation of Non-government Organisations in Jakarta Indonesia in early December 1996. Sometime afterwards NA was approached by some local people about the setting up of a meeting in Jakarta. Up until now the political and social structure of Indonesia has made the setting up of an open NA meeting impossible. News to follow.

China: There has been a small expatriate meeting running in Shanghai. Due to the political climate this meeting cannot be openly advertised. Tanya M from Sydney attended, there were 6 members there but she believes that the numbers fluctuate. She says that it is a warm little meeting and that it saved her life.

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### WHY SERVICE?

- Through the experiences of service members at the WSC

Meet The World Service Conference Participants. What goes on at these meetings and who goes?

*It seems that only minimal information regarding the atmosphere and the fellowship at the WSC gets through to the NA members in meetings.*

*We seem to do a reasonable job of providing feedback about the issues discussed at these meetings (Newsletters, reports and minutes) but it is the interaction between the hardworking participants that seems to go uncommunicated.*

*NA is a fellowship of men and women meeting together to share their experience strength and hope and to help each other stay clean.*

*These then are some of their stories.*

*Hi I'm Jigs*

*I'm the very newly appointed RSR from the Philippines.*

*I was sent to represent my fellowship at the last minute due to Noela, the nominated RSR, having major visa problems.*

*Visa difficulties remain a real issue for us. ( and for other APF communities; Eds note.)*

*Even though this is all new to me I am enjoying the WSC very much.*

*The most important thing here for me is the caring.*

*I love the way that people here care for each other, it was obvious from the very start.*

*What I want to do when I get home is to encourage people to put caring into action by working in the PI and H&I committees rather than just talking about it.*

*I have some ideas about how to ask people to get together and come up with some kind of work plan to follow and to make up a time table to get some of this energy into action.*

*I intend to go around to various meetings and groups and tell people about what happened at this conference and hopefully pass on my enthusiasm to every single addict in my community.*

*I want to tell everybody how good it is to get involved in our fellowship. I want to reach addicts in the Manila groups and those in the Visayas area and Minbanao.*

*I already know some of these people and know that they are already enthusiastic to do things, I think that it is just a matter of organising them to do things together.*

*I have an agreement with Noela, the RSR, that I will work with her on this together. I will talk to her about what went on here, not so much focussing on the technical stuff, but more about the message that I got.*

*The technical stuff has been pretty overwhelming so I have to take time to just sit back and notice how people do things. I don't get too caught up with the structural discussions, I have been trying to connect with the spirituality behind it.*

*I'd like to know more about the Concepts of service and I also intend to give people copies of the new Guide to Local Services. Hardly anybody at home has any idea of the service structure beyond the little book on group service. This is a long way from the service that I have already done.*

*I got into service just by being willing to help others. When asked I'd say "OK what do you want me to do?"*

*I was told that if I wanted to stay clean that I should get into service. I needed that because I am one of those people who gets cravings everyday, and sometimes I think 'What the hell', but then what keeps me clean is doing things with other addicts. So service really helps me live it is as simple as that.*

*Although most things about my life give me pleasure there is always a part of myself which says that I should just give it up for a little while. So I really need to do whatever it takes to stay well.*

*I think that every little thing helps.*

*Osamu's story*

*Hi my name is Osamu I am the translator for Emi the Japanese RSR.*

*The conference is great.*

*At the moment I am translating the new motions that were handed out today. It is a great honoured job.*

*I am happy that I came, plenty of sushi.*

*Emi has been very tired but she is feeling a bit better by now.*

*She has been the same as me, not really knowing what is going on, but it seems that this is normal.*

*She may have found the conference a little easier if she had been given some more background about the structure before she came. What is more important is that before we came here we didn't know that we didn't know. We didn't know the fact that we didn't know. But now we REALLY know that we didn't know. OK.*

*So the next thing is to decide how we will deal with the things that we don't know.*

*I got this job because one of the trustees e-mailed me in Canada to say that I am on the right continent.*

*I have learned that we really do service with each other and not alone. I now realise the usefulness of sharing our own experience about how we do things even though we come from different cultures and different countries.*

*I think that this kind of sharing is as important as the sharing about our personal recovery.*

*Sylvia from Panama*

*Hi my name is Sylvia, I am the RSR from Panama, and I am very nervous about speaking into this microphone.*

*I believe that it is important that I am here and that I learn everything that I can. I have to do my best for my*

own fellowship.

I thank everybody who has helped me to understand things so that I can tell the next person and help them to be able to make the right decisions for our fellowship at these meetings.

We cannot afford to send 2 people to the conference, so that each year it is someone new who has to do the work.

We think that the Panama Region is better served by having a lot of people who have had this experience coming home and bringing their individual experiences back with them.

The first day I was here I felt very nervous and that I didn't understand anything.

We have the extra complication of requiring translations throughout the conference to understand everything.

Some of our representatives have had better English than others making the passing on of information difficult at times.

Even with the best intentions information gets lost and adequate preparation of the next RSR is not done.

This year my Region held CAR workshops and this year we have a better conscience. This was the first in four years.

We had 5 groups making decisions together so that I know that I am really giving my Region's opinion to the WSC. I have a very clear idea of what they want. I know this in my heart.

What I like about being here is that I can share the experience and needs of the addicts recovering or suffering in Panama. We want to work with you to help.

NA is growing in Panama 'poco poco' little by little. We have 54 meetings there and 14 groups. NA started there 12 years ago. I got into service because I was so grateful to be clean. My friend says because I didn't know any better.

I wanted to give something back to the fellowship that saved my life. I really wanted to help the women in NA.

I wanted to be there for them and to help them be strong. What had been happening is that women would go to NA, get clean, fall in love and then start using drugs again.

Often when women come to meetings I say to them that they must look after themselves first and deal with the emotional problems of addiction. If they ask me to help them with this I do.

I love NA and am able to help people as well as have my own life.

Thankyou.

Emmanuel from France France is a Member community of the European Delegates Meeting (EDM).

Hello, my name is Emmanuel and I am the RSR from France and I love the APF.

I love the APF because it seems to be the only other Forum, who with the EDM, wants to move to change the service structure.

I have represented France for 2 years at the EDM and we meet twice a year.

We do very different kind of work at the EDM than here at the WSC.

Over there we are trying to put together a new kind of NA structure. We base our decisions there on a consensus process which is a very different process from the one we use here at the conference.

We do two types of jobs.

One is building our new structure that will gather up developing communities. This means Regions, Areas and sometimes just Groups. They are all represented at the EDM.

And secondly, we are also trying to pave the way to cooperation between all the members.

The main work for the next year will be Fellowship Development.

In Europe we have well-developed fellowships such as Sweden, Germany and England, less developed ones like France and Italy, and then those that are just at the beginning such as Turkey and Greece and so on.

We are trying to find a common language and common patterns of development.

Last year we developed our Mission and Vision statements which have already had some good effects on our work. We are more focussed.

We have adopted guidelines for the first time which will help us to fulfil our Mission and Vision.

We don't have formal training sessions at our meetings although we are working to further develop European PI projects.

We have been breaking up into workshop groups to discuss specific issues like structure development eg how to create a region from 2 areas, or about PI or Outreach.

We are trying to keep these discussions very concrete / specific.

Last EDM we had 11 concrete topics where we used the experience of the older members and this way I took back a lot of experience and suggestions to my region about topics we were interested in eg phonline, meetings lists, outreach.

I view the EDM as a forum to exchange ideas and experiences that can foster the development of each community.

I got into service because I belong to a kind of family of sponsors and sponsees who are all in service, and I believe very much in this kind of affiliation.

Our Sfamily believes that service is a tool by itself. Service is a spiritual means to pave the way to the freedom we are all looking for, positive personal freedom.

I have found that this is working for me, over time service is making changes in me. I am finding out about



my qualities and my shortcomings and I am learning about myself all the time.

This is my second year at the conference.

It is exciting for me because I feel that we are at the turning point from a mostly American conference to a worldwide conference. This impression is created by the Transition Group discussions and other discussions about change. I think that we are going the right way.

What I am having to do is to master one of my biggest defects ♦ impatience, and to trust the conference to find the right pace for the future development of NA worldwide and not to do things at my crazy pace.

APF Newsletter Editor

Hi my name is Bella and I'm an addict from the Australian Region, a member community of the Asian Pacific Forum. It has been my great privilege to have been nominated as the Editor of the APF Newsletter for the next 2 years.

The other APF Office Bearer is the APF Chairperson Bob B from Hawaii email: [laroche@gte.net](mailto:laroche@gte.net)

Other members of the APF are the representatives of the member communities.

The APF meets twice a year to discuss issues of mutual concern, exchange ideas and share experience.

We want to support the development of NA in the Asian Pacific area. This area is growing fast.

We have had communication from individual NA members interested in becoming part of the APF.

We help growing communities by supporting translations of NA literature into languages in use in this area.

We also maintain communication among members and in supporting Outreach, H&I and PI activities in this part of the World.

We work with World Services in these efforts. The APF Newsletter is a part of this work.

Thankyou to all the members who allowed me to interview them at the WSC.

Thankyou to Ron B (RSR Australia) for help with the photocopying and a great big thankyou to Sue H for her invaluable help in getting together this Newsletter.

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## HOW TO DO SERVICE?

- *How to participate in the APF Newsletter*
- *A list of events you might like to attend yourselves.*

### *How to participate in the APF Newsletter*

Next APF Newsletter Theme will be the WHERE of service. I am hoping that I can contact members working within the APF to tell their stories about the service and recovery in their part of the world.

Members wanting to have articles or other material printed in the APF Newsletter can send their material to:

### ASIAN PACIFIC FORUM Newsletter

PO Box 136

Kings Cross 2011 Australia or

E-mail: APF Newsletter

[bellron@eagles.bbs.net.au](mailto:bellron@eagles.bbs.net.au)

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### *A list of events you might like to attend yourselves.*

#### APF Activities Calendar:

19th - 21st December NSW Central Coast Convention Australia

Ph Matt ( mobile ) 0418 402 051

23-25 January, 1998

Aotearoa - NZ Campvention

South Island ph Catherine 6433815696 email [cathlib@ihug.co.nz](mailto:cathlib@ihug.co.nz)

23rd - 25th January Victorian Area Convention Australia

" Sweet Surrender "

Ph Cathy 0 3 9531 3747 ( No 0 if outside Australia )

14th - 18th January:

Philippines Convention Manila

Ph Tata 840 1629 fax 8100270 email [tat@epic.net](mailto:tat@epic.net)

30th January - 1st February    Thailand Convention  
Ph Neil 661 822 6640 email [tomo@ksc.th.com](mailto:tomo@ksc.th.com)

6th - 8th February    1st Indian Regional Convention  
" Bond of Recovery "  
Calcutta Ph Sunil 033 440 7793  
Sumit 033 440 8528  
email [kalibab@giasca.barc.ernet.in](mailto:kalibab@giasca.barc.ernet.in)

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