

NEWS GRAM

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A NEW HIGH FROM H&I

NO GRIT, NO PEARL. CLOSED MEETING IN A REHAB!

BY: Colleen M.

Johannesburg, South Africa

It was my turn to chair the in-house closed C.A. meeting at the local rehab. At that early stage our service committee was still fairly small, and fairly disorganized. I had hoped for a speaker to join to share that evening, however at the last minute he called to apologize as his car had broken down on the way. It was South African summer, and we experience unscheduled electricity “blackouts” from time to time. That evening was no exception.

The pearl string necklace I was wearing had snapped and I managed to collect up as many of the little pearls as I could and stuffed them into my pocket. We lit a couple of candles in the middle of the thatched meeting room in the garden (we call this meeting room the “Lapa,” a South African Sotho word which means a courtyard or similar enclosure in a traditional Sotho homestead). We passed a cell phone around to shine light on the preambles, as we read every single preamble at that time, *We Can Recover*, *The Twelve Traditions*, *The Promises*, *Reaching Out* (which is still the favorite preamble at rehabs here) *How it Works*, *Alcohol*, *Who is a CA Member?*, *Who is a Cocaine Addict?*, *What brought us here?*, and *A Vision for You*.

We were a small group, nine men. Two recently released from prison to rehab, and three young guys sectioned by court. Sometimes the hopelessness and failure addicts are cloaked in is palpable. Sad and disillusioned, broken men sat around the circle, just going through the motions of what was expected of them. It was heart breaking, as it often is in groups of addicts and alcoholics who are defeated and thrown away by society.

I improvised a topic, as falling back on the old tired “whatever’s going on for you” can become a “poor me, self-pity, doom and gloom” session. So, I

put the loose pearls in a pouch and blew the candles out so that we sat in almost complete darkness, apart from the moon that shone in from the garden. We passed the pocket of pearls around the room, each person took a small pearl and passed the rest along around the circle. They couldn’t see what they held. When we all had a pearl, I asked each of them to describe what they felt as they explored the small object in the dark with their fingers.

I have found that often-institutionalized addicts and alcoholics suffer from attention deficit disorder, and/or depression. I’ve had success helping them learn and retain the lesson better from experiential situations, as many battle to sit and listen for any length of time to a monotonous share.

As if on cue, the lights came back on, and they could see the shiny creamy pearls they held. Some couldn’t help themselves and kept a couple. I explained how these beautiful little gems are created over a long time, in tough circumstances in the ocean. Similar to addicts, pearls experience years of “discomfort,” constantly building layers of scars, uncomfortable in their oysters, desperately trying to shake off the irritation to experience relief. As the tiny piece of sand tries to work its way out of the oyster, it grows, forming imperfections. Finally, when the oyster is shucked, and the pearl is released, the result is an incredibly beautiful, strong, natural gem. Just like us, when we finally move from our slavery to our addiction, our oyster, we can move from the problem of addiction, to the solution of recovery, all that suffering and grit creates the magnificent, grateful, healthy, productive people who can recover and pass this wonderful gift along.

(Cont. Page 2)

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NO GRIT, NO PEARL. CLOSED MEETING IN A REHAB

(Cont. from Page 1)

In closing, I asked each person (who had become quite attached to this precious little pearl) to pass their pearl to the person sitting next to him. Some were clearly reluctant but followed the suggestions. Everyone realized that they were getting an equally beautiful pearl by letting go of it and giving it away, nobody was left empty handed. This final lesson is in line with our Twelfth Step. We in C.A. want to share what we have learned with other addicts because experience has taught us that we keep what we have by giving it away. Similarly, most members of Cocaine Anonymous owe their sobriety to the fact that someone else took a special interest in them and was willing to share a great gift with them.

It's a great joy to mention that two of the gentlemen from that particular meeting hold service positions in CA today, two years later. Both are working as counselors at different treatment centers. I wish we could have taken pictures of them then, and now. Their struggle with addiction, their grit, has created the most exquisite pearls. C.A. continues to reach into the darkest souls to carry the message that it is possible to live a life filled with hope, faith and courage.

We're Here, and We're Free.

* * *

Inside This Edition	Page(s)
C.A. Calendar of Events	18 & 19
C.A. Changed My Life	3
C.A. Changed My Life Through the Steps, Traditions & Service Work	4
C.A. Has Given My Life New Meaning	9
C.A. Trusted Servants	2
Conference Committee Corner	16 & 17
H&I Corner	1 & 2
I Have a New Life Thanks to C.A.	5
My Curse, My Blessing	12
NewsGram Subscription Form	19
No Grit, No Pearl. Closed Meeting in a Rehab	1 & 2
Release Form	6
7 th Tradition Donations	20
Sweet Home Chicago – CAWS 2016	10
Where is Sweden and Why do You Need to Know?	7
World Service Conference – A High that Leaves You Wanting More	8 & 9
World Service Contribution Form	13

C.A. CHANGED MY LIFE

BY: Claude P.

Radiokop, Rooderport, Johannesburg, South Africa

I, Claude P., AKA "BIG BROTHER" am a 24 year old, male. I used crack cocaine, alcohol and weed.

Before turning to drugs and alcohol I was a "perfect child." I came from a good family, my father is a schoolteacher and my mother is a housewife. My little brother looked up to me, I was his hero. I had good moral values. I was taught what was wrong from right. I was well taken care of.

But I started using alcohol and drugs. My life became unmanageable. I was in eighth grade, only 13 years old when I first tried weed. That led me to stealing and doing things that were unlawful. I did try other ways to quit, I've been to rehab twice but it wasn't good because after the first stint in rehab I lasted only two months clean and sober. I was sectioned to the second rehab by the court and I managed to stay clean for six years, as I was scared of being caught and going straight back to prison. During this clean period I was a "dry drunk," irritable, miserable and discontent. I have served time for car theft and armed robbery when I was a teenager for a year before I managed to get bail. As soon as my house arrest and community service was complete I went back to cocaine.

During my six years clean I built myself up, but I was drinking on the sly, and I still managed to hold down a very good job, pay the bills, and get my life together. In 2014 I got married after dating for six years. In 2013 we were happy, we had our ups and downs. She has always been very against drugs.

In November 2014 I started using rock cocaine. It started off once in three months, then once every two months, and then every other week. My wife was bitterly unhappy because of my using. I really gave her a hard time and she had panic attacks because of my using. Yet I carried on smoking crack. Although I had built a home for us with all the material luxuries, my life was falling apart.

Recently, this past September 2015, I got high on crack and didn't pick her up from work. I got home the next morning, and dropped her off at work and

checked into rehab directly. At rehab I discovered C.A.

C.A. has helped me admit that I am powerless over my addiction. The meetings also helped me to find my Higher Power, and have helped me overcome my fear by praying. I've learned how to deal with life on life's terms, and survive the triggers that will come up day to day.

I've also learned how to take care of my health, relax my mind and read *A Quiet Peace* every morning.

My experience of C.A. is something I will remember and be grateful for the rest of my life. All the meetings have made me feel welcome and at home.

I highly recommend C.A. to everyone who needs help to recover from alcohol and drugs. It is a Fellowship that addresses all mind-altering substances.

I look forward to going to many C.A. meetings, to being free, to love and be loved, and to forgive and be forgiven. I'm excited about being the best husband to my wife and to live a life filled with Hope, Faith and Courage. I've learned to be honest in meetings and I look forward to being the best I can possibly be, drug free. I recommend the C.A. Fellowship to anyone because it's the best I've ever been to.

I also thank C.A. from the bottom of my heart for all that you have done for me.

* * *

QUOTE:

HFCII

Page 155

I was introduced to Cocaine Anonymous. I started to find some answers from the very first hug at the door of that very first meeting, and I can remember calling myself an addict for the very first time. I can remember the freedom behind speaking those words. I knew the answer for me lay within those walls, and yet I had no clue what that answer was.

C.A. CHANGED MY LIFE THROUGH THE STEPS, TRADITIONS AND SERVICE WORK

BY: Jeannette J.

NEW Midwest Regional Trustee
Florissant, Missouri, USA

Hello, I'm Jeannette and I'm an addict and alcoholic. I'm still pinching myself because I can't believe I'm sitting here, writing this and that this is real! The life I'm living today. It was not my plan to grow up to become an addict, but here I am. And honestly, I wouldn't trade this life for the best of what anyone has to offer. You see, what I remember from there to here is one day I was no longer able to call in to work to say I can't come in today; I became a no call no show. I couldn't leave the house to get a pack of cigarettes, bread or milk. Oh, I wasn't eating breakfast or lunch anymore so what did I need with those commodities. I could barely get the house put back together anymore in time before my 'normie' then husband returned home from work. And, I just couldn't stop doing any of the things it takes to get just one more hit – taking all the electronics from the house to the dope man (the VCR, the cameras, the TVs), cashing in the money orders I bought to pay the mortgage and bills (money orders were supposed to be the assurance that the money wouldn't get spent) and borrowing from whoever would listen and say "yes" that day. It started as fun, I crossed the invisible line into irrational thinking and one more hit became a necessity to live. Incomprehensible demoralization at its best.

I was dragged by the throat from the dope man's (actually, it was a longtime family friend) house to home, where I was instructed to call my parents who instructed me to call for help. A week later, I was admitted into a 28-day inpatient treatment program at the hospital. I didn't know it then but that was the best place that ever happened to me. Less than one week out of treatment, I attempted one more high (one of the worst experiences of my entire life – and I got nothing but ganked). Thanks to my Higher Power, I lived through that escapade and claim February 10, 1989 as the day I was reborn. Grieving the fact that I could never have another, my journey began.

My first C.A. meeting, "The End of the Line," met on Sunday nights at 8:00 P.M. back then and never ended before every person in the room shared (sometimes 11:00 P.M.) became my home group for

the first ten years of my recovery. I attended four meetings a week regularly, got a sponsor, learned to become honest and worked the Steps. My life changed drastically as one of the most profound virtues of our program, in my opinion, infiltrated my life – "To thine own self be true." I had never ever done that before recovery; I was always who and what everyone else wanted me to be. Thus, my life became my own. The selfishness of this program. I needed a selfish program to get me sober. I had to find me in order to have anything worthwhile to give to you.

About four years into the program and heavy-duty service work, I was tired! I wanted to walk away from my District. My Area was still relatively new and I just couldn't take you people anymore. My sponsor told me and still today reminds me that service work is *my* lifeline to recovery. She [my sponsor] has asked me to stop doing a few things and to switch up and change up a few other things. But she always came back to stay plugged in to service, that is *your* lifeline. I don't know what I would do without service. Well...I would probably go to service work anonymous meetings! Anyway, I could tell you so much more but ultimately it comes to, the program works, when I work it!

I couldn't be here without each one of my sponsees who worked the Steps and Traditions throughout the years! There within is an unshakable bond! My steadfast district that keeps on keeping the lights on. Thank you to the delegates and trustees of World Services Conference 2007. My first conference in 2007 was an amazing spiritual experience! I was not a delegate, had no vote, joined LCF and became LCF Secretary, and haven't looked back. I have had to learn Twelve Traditions, Twelve Concepts, Bylaws and Guidelines like there's no tomorrow over the next seven years. Today, there is nothing like giving back at the World Service level! I am continually humbled by this program. I have been gifted with another chance to demonstrate the manifestation of the "Great Reality" as your new Midwest Regional Trustee! I am willing to show up, sleeves rolled up, ready to work it! Thank you, C.A. for giving me THIS life!

* * *

Trustee Corner: (Part 2)

I HAVE A NEW LIFE THANKS TO C.A.

BY: Suzanne V.
NEW European Regional Trustee
Zoetermeer, The Netherlands

My sobriety date is August 9, 2005, the day I was admitted to a 12 Step recovery center in Holland. My goal was mainly to get family to stop nagging me. They made it clear that they thought I was an alcoholic and addicted to gambling. But that, I was convinced, was way too simple an explanation for someone so unique, smart and special as me. And also: I could not be an addict, because I didn't live on the streets, was not involved in crime and still had my own teeth.

Okay, my life wasn't really going well. But the reason for that was 'them' (you know: the boyfriend, the boss, the neighbor, the world) and the only way to get through was by numbing myself. Needless to say that I did not want to stop doing that. On the other hand I didn't want the life I had anymore: I was rapidly growing towards ending it. I had tried for years to fix me (psychologists, antidepressants, self-help books, new job, new boyfriend) nothing worked. I felt I didn't have much time or strength left to keep on going the way I was doing. How confused and desperate I was! After a few days talking to fellow-patients I was granted the strength and courage to try yet one more, last thing: their Twelve Step program. A miracle that grew into my salvation.

The facility I was admitted to demanded that we attended at least three Twelve Step meetings a week. After four months I was released from the recovery center and continued to visit meetings four to five times a week. They told me to 'stick to the winners' and 'do what they did if I wanted what they had.' I saw that 'the winners' made coffee, laid out the books, and counted Seventh Tradition money and I – in an effort to 'stick to them' - helped. In hindsight I would say that I enrolled into service almost immediately, although I didn't know that it was called 'service.' Whenever they asked if 'someone here want to help clean up' or 'anyone want to do the literature,' I raised my hand hoping that 'the winners' would like me more for that. After doing service a little while: I realized that I liked myself more for that! So I continued.

After about a year I was voted in as GSR. I went to a few Area meetings (we didn't have districts back then) and came to the conclusion that everyone

there was absolutely crazy and those people had nothing I would ever want. I quit that position and went back to group level service. I continued working my Steps and also the Traditions began to sink in. Another two years or so later I became GSR again, and I went back to an Area meeting. As I had a bit more clean time and a better understanding of the business side of the Fellowship, I appreciated it a bit differently: I loved it. So when Area needed a secretary I raised my hand.

I did that for a several years and then I was asked to be a delegate and attended the World Service Conference (WSC) where I saw the Twelve Concepts come to life and I absolutely fell in love. It took my breath away to see a room full of recovered addicts exercising gentle courage to try to honestly vocalize their spiritual inner voice. I wanted more of that, I wanted to be part that; I wanted to grow into that.

For the next four years I looked forward to the WSC every year: it fired me up, filled me with a sort of energy that I had never found anywhere else. And now... I have another four years ahead of me, as you have chosen me to be your new European Regional Trustee. Wow, I am so honored, so speechless that I can really only say: here I am, willing to serve this beautiful Fellowship in this beautiful Region. What a beautiful life I live. Thank you.

* * *

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WHERE IS SWEDEN AND WHY DO YOU NEED TO KNOW?

By: Johan T. & Richard E.

Stockholm, Sweden

C.A. Sweden started in September of 2003, one meeting a week on Thursdays, the first two years seldom more than five people attended. But, from day one the meeting formats and the readings were all translated to Swedish.

The bold plan was to translate all the pamphlets and the book *Hope, Faith and Courage* during the first year. One of the main reasons newcomers did not stay was probably that we gave them a pamphlet to translate before the next meeting! This, of course, did not happen, they didn't seem to want to come back either (obviously). This was one of many bad ideas and mistakes made during the early years. In 2005 meeting number two launched and that same year it was decided that Sweden would host the European Regional Assembly 2006. For the first time we in Sweden had something to focus on that was bigger than a meeting and made us work together to accomplish something bigger than ourselves.

Since almost none of us had more sobriety than a year we boldly (again) made a swift decision that this must be done in the middle of Stockholm City and not at "any crap hotel." On Friday the 24th of February recovered addicts from around Europe (and Hong Kong) arrived to Berns, a hotel and amusement palace established in 1863. This weekend changed C.A. Sweden forever, shortly after we had meetings every day of the week and often up to 20 people per meeting! Even if few had long term sobriety we now had a message: There is a solution! - It's not about being clean (solely) it is about being happy! And above all - get a sponsor and do the 12 Steps of Cocaine Anonymous! C.A. Sweden has a steady growth with the attitude of "just do it." It is not about doing it in the right way - it is a program of action, you don't need to understand you just need to do it.

But even if we always had the attitude of doing it ourselves, C.A. Sweden has always gotten tons of help and support from C.A. as a whole. We have had speakers from around the world at our events that paid their own costs. Trustees that visit more than once a year to help us grow and understand what it means to be a part of a Fellowship and not dependent on a Fellowship. WSO and WSC have patiently listened on our problems and requests for help - and what we wanted the WSO to do for us. C.A. has always been there for us - and finally we have realized what it

means to be a part of the Fellowship and not just depending on it.

When we understood that C.A. Sweden IS the Fellowship so much happened in Sweden, we have translated all literature to Swedish; we contribute the Seventh Tradition to CAWSO; we send delegates to the World Service Conference. But above all, we have grown as a Fellowship. C.A. Sweden now has 35 meetings a week in many cities and since 2013 we have more than doubled in size.

We are sure that the reason for this is that we (finally) realized we are one Fellowship. We are not C.A. Sweden - we are C.A!

It is with deep pride and joy we help new Areas close by to establish and grow. And it is with patience and love we listen to the problems and requests of the new areas when they tell us what we need to do to make them survive. Being a part of C.A. is a journey, not a goal, it takes courage to grow in both knowledge and humility.

We have now been given the trust to arrange the C.A. World Service Convention in 2019. It is with the deepest humility and the feeling of finally being able to repay what has been given to us. Maybe it is a leadership challenge, but at least we have a lot of ideas and knowledge. We are convinced that we will produce an event of world class standards - hopefully we will learn many new things that will be useful in the future of arranging of World Service Conventions. We believe Sweden is a good choice as the first country that does not have English as native tongue. Swedes generally speak great English and culturally we are internationals. We give you our word to take good care of all international guests and give them a memorable time in Sweden!

The Convention will not be forgotten, C.A. Sweden and C.A. World Service will grow from this - we promise! We will be challenged, annoyed, we will cry, laugh, love and we will learn. Above all we will grow as individuals and as a Fellowship. We want to demonstrate that C.A. Sweden has grown up, ready to act accordingly, taking responsibilities and passing on what we have learned!

Thanks, thanks for all you gave us, now it is our turn!

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WORLD SERVICE CONFERENCE – A SPIRITUAL HIGH THAT LEAVES YOU WANTING MORE!

BY: Sheyan S.
Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada

I had the honor of attending my first World Service Conference this year as an Alternate Delegate for the British Columbia Area, it was truly one of the most amazing and rewarding experiences of my sobriety thus far. I found Cocaine Anonymous in 2009 while I was in detox through an H&I panel when I heard one of the C.A. members share their story and found that her story was the only one I could relate to of all the panels that had come through the detox facility. I finally felt like I was at home. I came to Cocaine Anonymous with an addiction to prescription pills and was an occasional drinker, however I had never really done any hard drugs... yet. I spent the next year in the rooms never really understanding the purpose of the Twelve Steps, nor did I understand the disease of addiction, that I have an allergy of the body, obsession of the mind, and a spiritual malady. Above all else, I had never done an honest and thorough set of Twelve Steps. As a result I ended up relapsing and all of those “yets” in my life started to come to fruition - my addiction progressed rapidly. In a very short period of time I went from someone who was addicted to prescription painkillers to someone who was using whatever substance was readily available. My addiction had brought me to my knees and I had but two alternatives go onto the bitter end or accept spiritual help. On October 27, 2010 I resolutely made the decision that I was powerless and I didn't want to use any longer. It was at that time that I came back to Cocaine Anonymous. It still took me over a year and lot of self-induced pain before I became willing to do what was required to stay sober. At 14 months sober I finally did my first honest and thorough set of Steps with my sponsor, I started to get involved in service again, and began to carry the message to the addict that still suffers.

Service work is a huge part of my recovery, I was taught by my sponsor to selflessly give back to the Fellowship that has saved my life. At the beginning of my sobriety I started out by making coffee, setting up chairs, and being the door greeter. I still do these things at my home group and I will continue to do it throughout my sobriety to help welcome the newcomer into the meeting and let them know that a meeting is a safe place for them where the door is open. I love to carry the message to the addict that still suffers. I started

to attend our monthly Area meetings as a GSR for my home group, shortly after I was elected to be the Outreach Chair, followed by the Area Chair. The Area Chair position was at times challenging. It required diplomacy, ability to maintain structure, fairness, and above all else an open mind. My term as Area Chair was a great learning experience and I had a lot of growth in service knowledge with respects to Robert's Rules, the Concepts, and Traditions. During my term as Area Chair I was elected to be one of our Alternate Delegates.

My experience as Alternate Delegate and going to Conference was truly amazing! It's sometimes difficult to quantify in words what the experience felt like. For someone who just five years ago was barely able to leave my house to go to the grocery store being so full of fear that I would even come back sober. I feel so blessed at how much my life has changed in if a few short years.

I was so full of gratitude when I was on the plane to L.A. for the Conference. I sat there and asked myself “How did this happen? How did someone as hopeless as me become a trusted servant of this amazing Fellowship?” Cocaine Anonymous, the members, the Twelve Steps, and God have truly saved my life! I had so many emotions run through my body over the course of the week! I made so many new friends from around the World. It felt like I had already known some of them for years even though I had just met them. Going to Conference felt like one big family reunion!

The first time I had to get up to the podium and announce my name I was fearful I would mess it up and that I would forget how to speak due to having terrible stage fright. When I did get the courage to speak to a couple of motions I could feel God in the room and I just let Him speak through me. It was as if all that stage fright was gone for that moment, it was a miracle! I was truly amazed how smoothly business was conducted with over 100 trusted servants in the room. I truly appreciated how each piece of business was debated with respect, passion, and enthusiasm. I also appreciated that debate brought us to an informed group conscience without feeling like we were rushed to vote. It didn't matter if this took us 10 minutes or an hour to debate.

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WORLD SERVICE CONFERENCE – A SPIRITUAL HIGH THAT LEAVES YOU WANTING MORE!

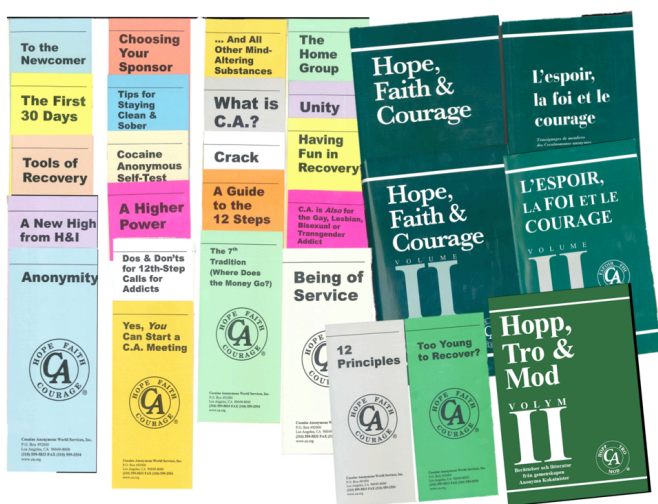
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This year was my first Conference and I asked a lot of questions! I am very thankful to everyone for the patience and time they took to explain things to all of the new delegates. One of the most powerful experiences at Conference was the Serenity Prayer after the close of business on the last day. Over 100 trusted servants from around the world joining in the Serenity Prayer in the spirit of unity- AWESOME!

It was a goal of mine in early sobriety to become an alternate delegate. That's when I used to say: "when I grow up in sobriety..." By the Grace of God here I am today. It has taken hard work, dedication, and selfless service to the Fellowship that I love. For anyone who has not attended the Conference, or who is thinking about possibly wanting to be a delegate in the future, I can assure you that it was one of the most exciting and rewarding things that I have ever done in my sobriety with respect to service. Attending the Conference and seeing what takes place on the larger scale of service around the World is truly a spiritual high that I want more of. I bet you that you won't be able to do just one! I know I'm already praying to go back next year!

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AVAILABLE AT YOUR C.A. WORLD SERVICE OFFICE



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C.A. HAS GIVEN MY LIFE NEW MEANING

BY: Hayley M.

Little Rock, Arkansas, USA

C.A. has given my life new meaning and me a sense of purpose. Before coming into the program I was a loner, had low self-esteem, and I thought the only way in life was to be loaded. I can remember always having that feeling of incomprehensible demoralization. I felt I always was sick and tired of being sick and tired. I didn't realize that I was fighting a disease out of my control. I have been in C.A. for around eight to nine years. I have finally gotten the gist of total abstinence. C.A. has opened up a whole new world for me. I now have real friends who love and care about me and my well being and not just what I can give to them. I have lost the desire to please individuals, but give of myself to help the next sick and suffering addict. I am now well respected in my job, my Fellowship is excited to have me be as a part, they didn't charge me a dime. I have realized that suicide and drinking and drugging my self isn't the real way out. I feel as if I have a chance at this thing called life. I have been in some sticky situations and felt as if I couldn't get through life at times, but as long as I pray and meditate, read my big book, call my sponsor, go to as many meetings as possible then I have a real chance at life and staying sober. The program has taught me to start my day over and to not get so angry when it comes to situations that are out of my control. I have learned the real meaning of pausing when agitated. I love C.A. and I feel I owe my life to sponsorship, fellowship and friendship. C.A. gave it all to me, and more. I'm a better co-worker, daughter, sister, aunt and partner. I wouldn't trade my worst day in recovery for my best day in my addiction. Although we trudge this road of happy destiny it is worth it in the end. C.A. is my comforter now. I will never be left out in the cold, as long as, I follow a few simple directions I too can get sober and remain sober. I am "Free and Sober" today. No God No Peace - Know God Know Peace !!

“Sweet Home Chi go”

CAWS 32 Convention – Chicago, Illinois - USA

June 30 – July 4, 2016

By: Maurice S.

Chicago, Illinois, USA

I have been excited about going to World Service Conventions to fellowship with my brothers and sisters in recovery around the world and online too. I wanted to see what each city had to offer as far as sightseeing, shopping and restaurants. I have rarely been disappointed because of all of the hard work that goes into the planning of such an event. My excitement has never been greater than to have my city, Sweet Home Chicago, be the host to the biggest celebration in the Fellowship of Cocaine Anonymous.

Chicago has so much to offer that I cannot put it in this article but I'll try. The John Hancock Center with its 360 degree observatory deck gives you the best view of the city and their mouthwatering dining at the Signature Room on the 95th floor. Chicago has numerous museums including the Art, Science & Industry, Peace, Du Sable African Art, Contemporary Art, Contemporary Photography and Children's museum. There is the Planetarium and the Shedd Aquarium with over 8,000 aquatic animals and the Garfield Park Conservatory considered one of the finest in North America. Chicago has McCormick Place, which is the largest convention center in the United States. There is Cloud Gate otherwise known as “The Bean” which tourist must have a picture under if you are ever in Chicago. Grant Park is located in the heart of downtown and has a host of attractions including beautiful Buckingham Fountain.

Moving along the lakefront is Navy Pier. It is 3,300 feet stretch of shoreline where there is tons of entertainment for adults and kids and plenty of different foods. There are tour boats lined up to help you explore this marvelous city and get you around, there are also dinner and brunch cruises. Kayak on the Chicago River and enjoy the scenic river view. Walk along our many beaches and enjoy the breathtaking views. Ride a two-seater bike our experience a Segway tour. We have two world-class zoos in the area, Lincoln Park Zoo and Brookfield zoo. There are jazz clubs and blues clubs and reggae clubs and lots of local bands.

Let us not forget the shopping along the Magnificent Mile. A ten block long of every brand name store that you can think of. Explore Water Tower

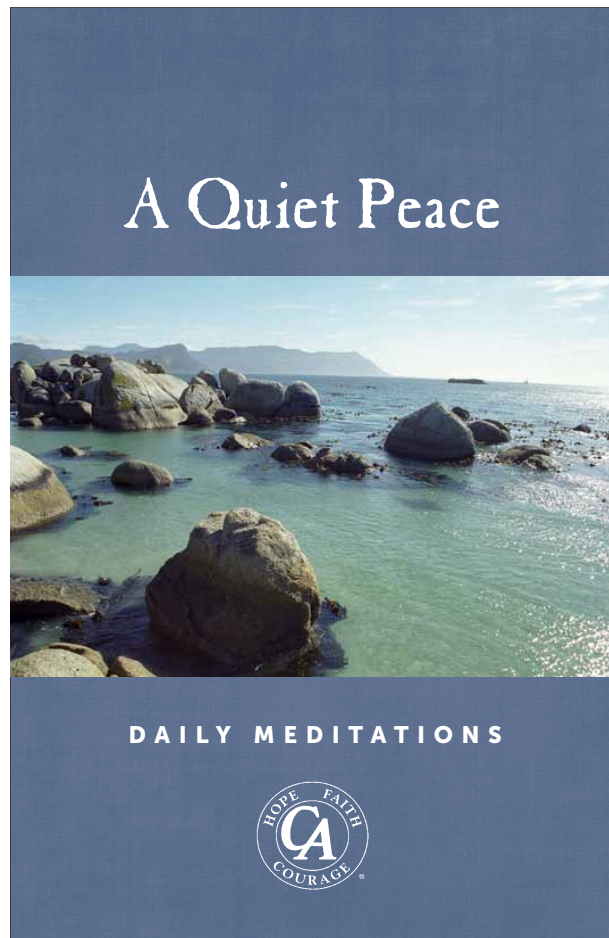
Place that has countless stores and shops on every floor. We have world-class restaurants for every taste possible. Chicago is known for its cheesecake and deep-dish pizza so make sure that you partake of our most famous dishes. Steak to sushi, French cuisine to American favorites and so many in between your taste buds will never forget the many foods this city has to offer both young and old.

You'll be talking about this World Service Convention for many years to come. You'll also want to return to Chicago to visit all the places that you didn't get the chance to and revisit some that you have already. Summertime is the perfect time to visit Chicago because this city comes alive and parties late into the night. A smile will come to your face every time you hear “Sweet Home Chicago.”



THE C. A. MEDITATION BOOK!!

Now Available in an
Electronic format



NOW AVAILABLE THROUGH THE WORLD SERVICE OFFICE

To purchase the new C.A. Meditation Book Contact: CAWSO, 21720 S. Wilmington Ave., Ste. 304, Long Beach, CA 90810-1641, or by fax to 310-559-2554, Attn: CAWSO. You can call the WSO at 310-559-5833.) Or go online to: WWW.CA.ORG.

**\$9.95/book + Shipping and Handling,
or \$179.00 + Shipping and Handling for a case of 24 books.**

MY CURSE, MY BLESSING

BY: Lucy R.

Johannesburg, South Africa

I don't know if I was born this way or if I grew into it, but addiction is both my curse and my blessing.

I honestly don't remember the first time I had my first line, but I do know that I've been an addict for over ten years. Before I ever tried my first drug, I've always felt like a freak, like I don't fit in anywhere, but I do know that after that first line it didn't matter anymore. I fell in love and drugs became the only thing that I could love, but then the drugs turned on me, and I became a slave. Drugs decided when I ate, when I slept, when I cried, when I laughed and I knew that eventually it would decide when I die.

My addict was so strong and had complete control, I honestly thought that I was already dead, locked inside this body with no way out. But God had other plans for me. In the height of my addiction I somehow managed to reach out for help. I found the rooms of C.A. and I was able to stay clean for almost 14 months. But I very quickly forgot about my addict and just how evil she was, and before I knew it she had full control again. I was back in the rooms after my relapse, but I was still doing my program, "I can still drink socially, alcohol isn't my problem." Little did I know that was "her" talking, even though I was clean again my addict still had control, so the inevitable happened, another relapse. One that lasted over three months and one that I will not soon forget. It's like I was a Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde.

Thanks to a God intervention in my life, I landed up in a rehab. At this point I was trying to save my marriage and the relationship with my one and a half year old son. I walked in there broken and filled with a darkness I didn't even know was there. After two relapses I had very little hope for any kind of future, but what I did have was the gift of desperation.

For the first time in my recovery I did Step One and for the first time I accepted my disease. I learned the hard way that unless you do a proper, honest Step One, you are not going to get far in your recovery. Step Two and Three is where I found a God of my understanding. I cannot live a clean and sober life running in self-will. I've tried, twice, and failed. I knew I needed to hand my life over to a Higher Power because I was still too broken to be in control of anything let alone my own life. Step Four is where I had to take a hard look at my

life and Step Five was where I let it go and started to mend the broken pieces of myself with the help of God.

During my stay in rehab I was introduced to C.A. meetings and C.A. members. Not much different from N.A., but the atmosphere felt different. Maybe it was just me, still seeking a place to belong completely. I was welcomed with love and open arms. I was able to address my problem with alcohol and with drugs in one Fellowship. My past didn't make a difference to them. They still loved me with no judgment. This feels like home, I am a black sheep among my flock of black sheep.

I left rehab filled with hope and dreams. I left with the light of my Higher Power burning brightly in my soul. With God working through me, and the Fellowship of Cocaine Anonymous standing by me I have no fear, just today. Today I will do the right thing. One day at a time I will stay clean and sober. Today, God will do for me what I cannot do for myself.

* * *

AVAILABLE FROM THE WORLD SERVICE OFFICE



World Service Contribution Program

Cocaine Anonymous World Services depends on the financial support provided by individual members, groups, committees, Districts and Areas. We use your contributions as efficiently as possible, to maximize the services we are able to provide to addicts throughout the world. When you participate in the World Service Contribution Program, you ensure that we are able to serve the needs of those in our **Fellowship**, and reach even more with our message of **Hope, Faith and Courage**. And because your Contribution Program gifts are conveniently transferred by your bank from your checking account, savings account, debit card, or credit card account directly to the World Service Office, your contributions go farther than ever before. **The C.A. World Service Contribution Program is safe, secure and confidential.** You have complete control of the process, because you specify the amount of your contributions and when they are made. You can always increase, decrease or suspend your participation at any time by writing the World Service Office. Plus, your contributions may be tax deductible (consult your tax advisor). **To help the C.A. World Service Office meet the needs of members, groups, areas and addicts still suffering, please fill out the authorization form below, attach a voided check or deposit slip (if necessary), and mail everything to the address shown. Thank you for your support.**

AUTHORIZATION FOR DIRECT PAYMENT (ACH DEBITS)

YES! As a member of C.A., I want to participate in the C.A. World Service Contribution Program to help keep C.A. World Services going strong!

Cocaine Anonymous World Service Office
21720 S. Wilmington Ave., Ste. 304
Long Beach, CA 90810-1641
(310) 559-5833
cawso@ca.org

As part of my 7th Tradition contributions to Cocaine Anonymous World Service Office, I authorize Cocaine Anonymous World Service Office (CAWSO), to initiate variable entries to my account described below:

Type of Account: ☐ Credit Card ☐ Debit Card ☐ Savings

Credit Card or Debit Card Name: _____

Card Number: _____ Expiration Date: _____

Financial Institution's Name: _____

Financial Institution's Address/Branch: _____

If using a savings account, please include a deposit slip.

PAYMENT DETAILS:

Amount in U.S. Dollars: \$ _____ Date of first payment: ☐ 1st of month ☐ 15th of month

PAYMENT FREQUENCY:

☐ Monthly ☐ Annually ☐ One-time basis Effective date: ____/____/____ (MM/DD/YYYY)

This authority is to remain in full force and effect until CAWSO has received written notification from me of its termination in such time and manner as to afford CAWSO a reasonable opportunity to act on it.

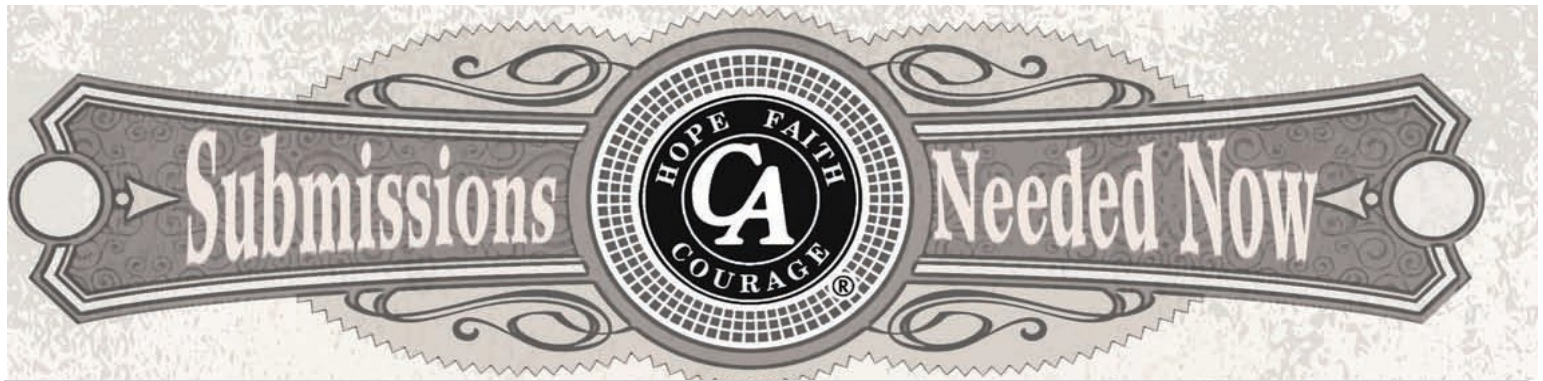
Name: _____
(Please print name as it appears on the account)

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Address: _____

City and State/Province: _____ Country: _____

Zip/Postal Code: _____ Daytime Phone: _____ Evening Phone/Cell: _____



Share Your Experience, Strength and Hope for C.A.'s First 12 Steps & 12 Traditions Book and 12-Step Workbook

We need **YOU** to help make these books a reality! The Conference has approved the concepts, but as with all new C.A. books, the Literature, Chips, and Format Committee needs YOUR submissions.

Be a part of C.A. history and help write these books!

12-Step Workbook:

This workbook will be a tool to be used with a sponsor and in conjunction with literature approved for use at C.A. meetings as listed above. Submissions should be 1-2 pages long and include the following:

- Quotes or references to suggested readings from literature approved for use at C.A. meetings (C.A.'s meeting format, pamphlets, *HFC* or *HFC II*; The Big Book *Alcoholics Anonymous*, *The Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions*, or *Service Manual*);
- Your personal experience on a particular Step;
- Four to twelve questions to help the reader have his or her own experience with the Step;
- A worksheet applicable to the Step (optional); and
- A prayer or spiritual exercise to conclude the section on that Step.

For more information, please contact Kellie F., Subcommittee Chair, via e-mail at flowerz2@telus.net.

C.A.'s 12 & 12

Help us write C.A.'s own 12 Steps & 12 Traditions book based on our Fellowship's experience with the Steps and Traditions. Provide 1000-2000 words on the Step/Tradition focusing on your own experience, strength and hope, with a closing paragraph summing up your gratitude for that particular Step/Tradition and how it relates to your recovery. For more information, please contact Jason L., Subcommittee Chair, via e-mail at jason_lrnc@yahoo.co.uk.

Guidelines for All Submissions:

Don't worry about grammar, spelling or punctuation; we have people to help 'polish' whatever you write. Other than cited quotes, each submission must be the author's original writing. In keeping with the 11th Tradition, submissions will be reviewed anonymously and the authors of material ultimately selected for publication will be asked to maintain their anonymity. Replies will be sent when the selection process is complete for each project. Electronic submissions are preferred. Each submission also requires a properly executed release form (available at www.ca.org or on page 11). You may send your submission(s) and release via e-mail to submissions@ca.org or by regular mail to: CAWSO, Inc. Attention: LCF Committee, 21720 S. Wilmington Ave., Ste. 304, Long Beach. CA 90810-1641. For more information, please call 310-559-5833.

HFC II Available in English, French & Swedish!

The price of *Hope Faith & Courage* and *Hope, Faith, and Courage II* in English is \$9.95 for SOFT COVER and \$14.95 for HARD COVER. Spread the word!

We have available the *HFC II* in French!

L'Espoir, la Foi ET le Courage, volume II for \$9.95 US Dollars

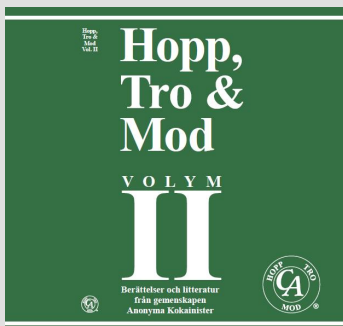
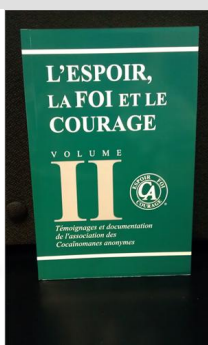
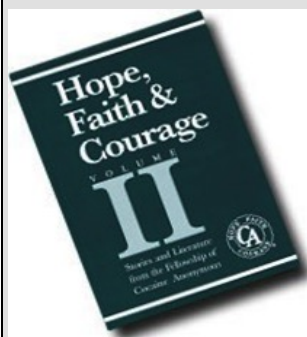
We have available the *HFC II* in Swedish!

Hopp, Tro & Mod, Volym II for \$9.95 US Dollars

Hope Faith & Courage is also available in an Audio Set for \$15.00

So place your order online at <http://www.ca.org/purchase.html>
or contact the World Service Office (310-559-5833/fax 310-559-2554)

BUY ONE FOR YOURSELF, BUY ONE FOR A FRIEND!



**DID COCAINE ANONYMOUS SAVE
YOUR LIFE?**

**ARE YOU NOW IN A POSITION TO GIVE
MORE THAN YOU ONCE DID?**



**DO YOU WANT TO SEE C.A. FLOURISH?
CONSIDER GIVING TO THE
WORLD SERVICE CONTRIBUTION PROGRAM. SEE
DETAILS ON PAGE 13**

ARE YOU WILLING TO DONATE??

QUOTE:

**Hope, Faith Courage
Stories from the Fellowship of Cocaine Anonymous
PAGE 155**

I took a newcomer chip, sat down, and for the rest of the meeting listened for the similarities and ignored the differences. I made Cocaine Anonymous the Fellowship of my recovery, even though I had stopped using cocaine years before. I loved the way the C.A. First Step reads: "We admitted we were powerless over Cocaine and all other mind-altering substances – that our lives had become unmanageable."

AN ORIGINAL UGANDA C.A. 30 DAY CHIP

BY: Steve A.

Phoenix, Arizona, USA

While attending the C.A. World Convention in Cleveland in 1994, I met a man who had travelled from Uganda to Cleveland for business. His name was Soloman. Our conversation began about what we were doing in Cleveland and during our conversation he told me they had begun a C.A. meeting in Uganda. He said that they had between three and seven regular members and they would meet once a week. He told me he would correspond with me about recovery and wanted me to hold onto his 30-day chip. He stated all of their chips were beaded and handmade. I asked him to attend the Convention for a short visit but he said his business appointment was in a very short time and that he would look me up after his business was completed. We exchanged addresses and parted. I never heard from him again. I wrote to his address a couple of times but my letters were returned. This is his 30 day chip and if he is still alive and sober he would 20 plus years now. I pray he shows up at a future event.



ALL FOR ONE AND ONE FOR ALL

BY: John H.

Mulvane, Kansas, USA

I owe my life to this program. This Fellowship that has held me for so long! I feel it is held together by such a wide variety of diversity. This diversity and Unity has become a huge part of what I would like to give back. I was asked to become a delegate by my Area. At that time while at the World Service Conference, I felt an urge to serve on the Unity Committee. I am truly grateful for that opportunity. I have learned so much and continue to learn. I now feel I have so much more to offer my Area because of my Delegate experience. Many aspects of my recovery continues because of my diversity in Unity. I am now available to others to see in this program.

* * *

FINANCE COMMITTEE – CONFERENCE 2015

BY: Keith B.

Chair, WSC Finance Committee
Bedford, Texas, USA

This year's C.A. World Service Conference was another productive conference. It was great seeing so many old friends and making new ones.

Here is a very brief summary of what took place regarding the Finance Committee's actions:

S.M.A.R.T. (Save My A\$\$ Recovery Transfer) is a new contribution plan was presented and passed. You will be seeing more about this in the upcoming months!

A Motion was made and passed that we start working on an International Finance Guidelines. A draft will be submitted to the Fellowship under SR14 Guidelines in 2016.

Our Finance Guidelines will be changed with a recommendation to Groups, Area, and Districts to consider using prepaid banking cards for purchases and night drops for deposits, to help minimize financial risks.

It was voted and approved to the amended six month Budget for 2015, July 1st thru December 31st. And, we voted and approved the revised 2016 Budget.

We want to remind everyone that ***there is no such thing as a small donation.*** Every dollar counts in saving lives. Thank you for service and allowing us to serve you.

* * *

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FOR THE LOW PRICE OF \$10 U.S. PER YEAR, you can receive 10 copies of the NewsGram to share with your friends or your group. Complete this form and include your credit card information, or enclose a \$10 check or money order (U.S. dollars only) and send to: NewsGram, c/o CAWSO, 21720 S. Wilmington Ave., Ste. 304, Long Beach, CA 90810-1641. A subscription form is also available for download at www.ca.org.

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☐ Visa/MasterCard/Discover/American Express # _____

Signature: _____ Expiration date: _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

City and State/Province: _____ Country: _____

Zip/Postal Code: _____ Telephone Number: (____) _____

Calendar of Events

March 25-27, 2016

CAUK 23 Annual CAUK Convention Step by Step

LOCATION

Hilton Birmingham Metropole
Online: group.hilton.com/stepbystep
Phone: 0121 780 4242
C.A. Code: GCAUK

CONTACT:

cauk23.evebtbrite.co.uk

April 1-3 2016

29th Quebec Area Annual Bilingual Convention A New Freedom

LOCATION

Delta Montreal Hotel
475 President Kennedy Ave.
Montreal, QC H3A 1J7, Canada
Online: deltahotels.com/groups/delta-montreal-groups/cocaine-anonymous-quebec

CONTACT

Michael S., Hotel Liaison: 514-889-2942
Jason S., Convention Chair, 514-966-0397

April 1-3, 2016

Colorado Convention Steps to Freedom

LOCATION

Crown Plaza DIA
15500 East 40th Ave.
Denver, Colorado, 80239
604-669-7070 or 800-633-0575, Group code 02G

CONTACTS

Aaron C., Convention Chair, 720-275-2014
Alex J., Vice Chair, 303-875-9869

Get the word out about your local event! Use the form at www.ca.org/event_form.html to get your event listed both on the web and in the NewsGram, or notify us by mail to NewsGram, c/o CAWSO, 21720 S. Wilmington Ave., Ste. 304, Long Beach, CA 90810

April 15-17, 2016

Pacific North Regional Convention When the Pain of Staying the Same Becomes Greater than the Pain of Change

LOCATION

Best Western Chateau Granville
1100 Granville St
Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada
604-669-7070 or 800-633-0575, Group code 02G

CONTACT:

Vince H., Convention Chair 604-649-4912
Tim C., Hotel Liaison, 778-834-8648
Nadine M., Registration, 778-883-3922



QUOTE:

**A QUITE PEACE
PAGE 122**

Defiance is in my nature. I believe I was born that way. All my life, I fought everything – every idea, every suggestion, and every bit of love, especially the limitless love of my Higher Power. Here I sit, with long term sobriety in C.A. and I have finally given up the fight.

June 30-July 4, 2016

C.A. World Service Convention

“Sweet Home Chi  go”

Chicago, Illinois, USA

LOCATION:

The Swissotel
888-737-9477
323 East Upper Wacker Drive
Chicago, IL, USA 60601-9722



NOVEMBER IS GRATITUDE MONTH

COCAINE ANONYMOUS was founded on November 18, 1982, which is why November is Gratitude Month. During November of each year, we pass the **GRATITUDE CAN**, where the money collected goes directly to the Cocaine Anonymous World Service Office

Our PRIMARY PURPOSE is: To Carry the Message to the Addict who still Suffers, and certainly there are suffering addicts in all corners of the world!!

The Cocaine Anonymous World Service Office has a worldwide reach and helps to carry the message in important ways:

- Publishing and translating books, literature and chips.
- Access to Drug Court Conference
- Sponsorship of the National C.A. Helpline
- Administrative support for new Districts, Areas and Regions.
- Mailing free meeting Starter Kits
- Providing free C.A. Books and Literature to inmates.

So, when the **GRATITUDE CAN** comes around in November, remember your unknown brother or sister trying to find their way into the rooms of **COCAINE ANONYMOUS**, and help Cocaine Anonymous World Service Office **CARRY THE MESSAGE WORLDWIDE!**

**ASK YOUR MEETING SECRETARY TO
PASS THE GRATITUDE CAN!!**

7 th Tradition July-September 2015 Category or Group		
Location	Name/City	Total
Anonymous	Anonymous	\$ 879.70
CANADA		
Alberta	Noon Awakening Group	\$ 84.33
British Columbia	Vimy	\$ 20.00
Nova Scotia	The 4 th Dimension	\$ 75.00
EUROPE		
United Kingdom	C.A. U.K.	\$14,885.42
	C.A. London District	\$ 1,519.16
	C.A. Glasgow District	\$ 1,494.40
	SCD Bournemouth	\$ 2,052.62
USA		
Alabama	Lakehouse C.A	\$ 46.00
Arkansas	Arkansas Area of C.A.	\$ 225.00
Arizona	Birds of a Feather	\$ 197.00
Northern California	C.A. of Northbay Serv.Grp.	\$ 22.50
	One Puff, Too Tough	\$ 450.00
Central California	Cen. Calif. C.A.	\$ 225.00
Southern California	C.A. Hope, Faith & Courage	\$ 97.00
	CALA Longbeach	\$ 80.00
	Compton Dist.	
	Come Alive	\$ 183.00
	Inland Empire ASC	\$ 243.54
	Orange County C.A.	\$ 700.00
	Orange Co. GSO Mtg.	\$ 31.00
	S.G.P.V.C.A.	\$ 508.78
	Tired of Being Dogged Out	\$ 100.00
	WSOB Meeting	\$ 119.00
	La Palma Birthday	\$ 28.00
	La Palma Gratitude	\$ 26.00
Colorado	C.A. of Colorado	\$ 450.00
	C.A. of Colorado H&I	\$ 70.76
	Denver Gratitude	\$ 6.14
Florida	District of Fort Myers	\$ 60.00
	Florida Area C.A.	\$ 35.00
Georgia	Metro Atlanta C.A.	\$ 10.34
	Log Cabin Group C.A.	\$ 167.50
Idaho	Magic Valley C.A.	\$250.00
Illinois	IACA, Inc.	\$ 1,224.71
	IACA, NW Suburban	\$ 105.09
	IACA South & West District	\$ 140.24
Maryland	DC-MD-VA C.A.	\$ 25.00
Michigan	Saturday Morning Alive	\$ 15.00
Missouri	Courage to Change	\$ 10.00
	Working With Others	\$ 20.00
Nevada	The Whole Truth – Marathon Mtgs.	\$ 386.00
New Jersey	C.A. NJ District	\$ 400.00
New Mexico	Roswell Birthday	\$ 17.19

7 th Tradition July-September 2015 Category or Group		
Location	Name/City	Total
New York	Circle of Life Group	\$ 100.00
Ohio	Ohio Area	\$ 1,000.00
Oklahoma	Rock Stops Here Group	\$ 150.00
	SOD	\$ 50.00
Oregon	CA of Oregon & SW Wash.	\$ 100.00
Pennsylvania	C.A. of PA/NJ/DE	\$ 300.00
Texas	Square Peg C.A. Group	\$ 25.00
	Freedom & Hope Group	\$ 45.00
Wisconsin	Let's Stay Together	\$ 69.00
Birthday Envelopes		\$0
World Contribution Program		
(See form on Page 8)		\$4,515.00
Total		\$34,039.42

**CORRECTION TO
7TH TRADITION REPORT**

NEWSGRAM ISSUE: 1ST QUARTER 2015

**Donation From
GERMANY: \$223.61**

CAWSO and the NewsGram Editor apologize for the error in not recognizing this donation in a timely manner. Thank you to Germany for your generous donation in assisting CAWSO to reach out to the still suffering addict.

(The A.A. Book *Alcoholics Anonymous*, the book *Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions*, the book *Hope Faith & Courage*, book *HFCII* and *A Quite Peace* are used with permission.)