

Sharing Hope.

You make anytH(&)Ing possible:

A monthly memoir from the Director of Los Angeles H&I

Greetings all, I come to you from my favorite place (outside of an AA meeting, of course): a Chicago Cubs game!

To illustrate how my life has changed in sobriety, let me take you back to October 2007, about a month before I, for the good of western civilization, got sober. The Cubs were in the playoffs against Arizona. I woke up and knew I had to get there; how was my only dilemma.

“Well,” I told myself “this may require some serious drinking to figure out.” I hit up my local liquor store at the 6am opening hour. “Good morning, Gene, looks like it’s going to be another productive day for you” was the compliment the baron of the beer palace paid me. “I appreciate the words of encouragement, General.”

Fast forward to 17 hours later, me waking up in a hotel room so sketchy that even circus folks might say: “No thanks, I’ll sleep with the wildlife.” After managing to fly to Arizona, go to a game I had no memory of, and feeling far from swell, I faced another bottom. The only good news? I didn’t remember seeing the Cubs lose. The words “incomprehensible demoralization” come to mind. Thankfully, I don’t have to live like that anymore.

Which transitions me to how much I love H&I. (A note to all amateur columnists such as myself, when you don’t have a transition, just say you have a transition and maybe nobody will notice.) Anyway, I would like to share a quote from one of the gals, Stephanie, whom I met on my last H&I panel. Stephanie has battled sobriety mightily for most of her life. “I feel so much in sobriety, where before I didn’t feel anything at all.”

I couldn’t imagine anyone summing it up more accurately. The key is to carry those words with you when the bright lights of freedom from institutions are shone upon you. With the help of H&I it can become a reality. We are truly blessed to be able to help others.

*Gene S.,
LAHIC Director*

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MAY CAN TOTALS:

Hold onto your sunhat: in May, our groups donated \$10,620.15 to the literature fund for books, pamphlets and Grapevines to carry into hospitals, jails, juvenile halls and other institutions! Please thank your groups on behalf of all these brothers & sisters who can’t.

LETTER FROM THE CORRECTIONS DIRECTOR

Why does service feel so good? It does for me. And particularly doing hospital and jail panels! When I'm on a panel, I see hope in the faces of everyone there. I remember how hopeless I was. When I heard a speaker share "you never have to drink or use again," it was like music to my ears. I didn't know there was a solution. Bringing a solution to others is awesome. I don't have to worry about the results. My job is to just bring the message. So good!

What has your experience been doing H&I panels?

We will be opening up our H&I Newsletter starting in the next issue featuring other H&I members on their experiences. We would love to hear from YOU! Please write about 250 words on your experience, strength and hope doing H&I and submit it by email to our awesome Newsletter editor:

Colleen Wainwright: colleen@communicatrix.com



We hope to hear from you!

Some jail updates:

- Great job everyone in May!
- Clear plastic bags are required to carry in literature.
- Please turn in your numbers after your panel is done.
- We need panel leaders. Please take a panel.
- We need speakers. If you can speak at more than one panel, please do.

Thank you all for your commitment to our brothers and sister in jail and your outstanding generosity of time and spirit!

In love and service,

*Stephen B.,
AA H&I Corrections Director*

RESIDENTIAL DETOX

We are seeing an increase in residential detox facilities on the Hospitals side. At the last Policy Council meeting the PC voted to add three new H&I panels to our rosters, in Areas 3, 4 and 6. These facilities are lovely residential homes that men and women can check into and spend a week or so detoxing, before moving on to a treatment facility.

I was on the fence about sending panels into residential centers. Some of these cribs are pretty swank, and I questioned whether or not sending our volunteers to support upscale centers such as these was the best use of our resources. Group Conscience prevailed at Policy Council and it was decided that because these folks were in a lock-down, detox environment that this fit our criteria.

Today, as I consider the situation, I realize that we certainly can be of service

to people that are blessed to be experiencing the hell of detox in sweet surroundings, because you cannot buy



sobriety. Willingness cannot be purchased. Miracles either happen, or they don't. We, in H&I, are in the miracle business, but the price is far greater than cash and prizes. We pay with our lives. If we hold on to our old ideas our chance of receiving the

miracle of grace is nil. We have to sell everything that we are, in order to become everything that we can be.

So when an H&I volunteer panel shows up and shares their experience, strength and hope, it doesn't matter where we are. We might be suffering in a multimillion dollar mansion on Mulholland Dr, at Weingart on Skid Row, in Mens' Central or CRDF. People, places or things won't get us sober. Only willingness and grace can make that happen, and it can't be bought. In H&I we simply share what it was like (miserable), what happened (grace), and what it is like now, giving back what we were so freely given. We talk sponsors, meetings and steps. These things don't cost a dime, and in return offer the world.

*Gregory Gardner
AA H&I Hospitals Director*