

The Freedom Flyer

NFF's Monthly Newsletter ~ Keeping the Community Connected

August 2015

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The Freedom Flyer would love to hear from you!

Whether you have feedback about past Flyers, ideas for future issues, or you want to help out, let us know!

Send an email to
newsletter@newfoundfreedom.com

Recovery Walks in the Heart of Philly



PRO-ACT Recovery Walks 2014 in Old City, Philadelphia

Photo Courtesy of PRO-ACT

The Community is on the Move

In September thousands of people will gather at Penn's Landing, joining together for the shared cause of supporting the recovery community. These people, some in groups, some with their families, some just showing up on their own, will all set off through historic Old City Philadelphia for PRO-ACT's 14th annual *Recovery Walks*, bringing attention and awareness to the fact that recovery does in fact work, and not only does it work, it walks.

Looking at last year's crowd it's hard to believe that *Recovery Walks* started out as a small group in a

small park with a small amount of support. Bev Haberle, Executive Director of PRO-ACT, was among those who first organized the event.

"Initially we just wanted to pull together the recovery community," said Bev. "It was to celebrate freedom from addiction. We thought that this was groundbreaking back then- nobody else was doing this kind of thing." A hundred people came to the first walk, which took place in Valley Forge Park.

Continued next page

Despite the lack of cooperation and visibility, the recovery community banded together and the walk went forward as planned. Bev and the others were pleased with the turn out, and “thought [they] were incredibly successful with a hundred people,” she said.

Over the last fourteen years the success of *Recovery Walks* has increased exponentially.

“The numbers coming to the walks have been growing tremendously,” said John Carlson, Volunteer Coordinator. “Last year there were 23,000 people.”

As the crowd increased over the years, so did the location of the walk. Moving to Philadelphia the second year meant a slightly larger impact, but the walk still took place in a park. Each year, they have been able to move to a more visible site, until they ended up with the current route through Old City.

“Last year we were offered five more blocks to walk,” Bev said. “We have come from walking in a park with low visibility to being right in the historic district, which is prime visibility for the recovery community.”

This visibility is important for many reasons. It allows the greater community to see how many people are successful in recovery. It also shows those who are suffering from addiction that recovery does work. The numbers matter, too. The more people who are out there, the more powerful the message becomes.

“We are focusing on the fact that recovery is a reality,” said Steve Calderbank, Recovery Centers Coordinator. “The more people we get standing up saying, ‘Hey, recovery happens; recovery is a reality,’ [the more] those voices will get heard.” And these are not just the voices of those who are in recovery, but also those who support it.

“We have many families walking together,” Bev said. These families will often have t-shirts or signs that say who they are walking in honor of, “and that’s really a major statement,” Bev continued. “If you think about it, 14 years ago there would not have been a family walking down a major street in Philadelphia honoring somebody’s recovery.”

This type of change in attitude towards recovery is one of PRO-ACT’s year-round missions. As an organization, PRO-ACT aims to reduce the stigma surrounding addiction and recovery, and to educate people on what recovery really is, as well as to provide resources to those who need support and information. Their ideology revolves around the fact that recovery isn’t just putting down the drink or the drugs. It goes beyond that. It is how you live your life.



The Crowd at Penn's Landing | Recovery Walks 2014
Photo Courtesy of PRO-ACT

“Recovery means we need to take a look at our life to see what is unbalanced,” John said. At PRO-ACT, “we find out what the purpose is for the person. That’s what we’re looking for- the purpose- and then we help guide that person in the direction of surrendering to their purpose. Drugs and alcohol are always gonna be there, but they won’t be in their life anymore, because they just brought on a new and powerful purpose. And that’s what *Recovery Walks* is all about- it’s about finding your purpose in life that also includes helping others. Then we have victory.”

Bev agreed:

“It’s transforming lives, and what we talk about is that recovery is a much bigger umbrella than just stopping using. There is a myth out there that people do not thrive in recovery, and they do. So we try to demonstrate people being able to obtain very long-term recovery, but also being very holistic, in that they are now thriving in recovery- they have productive lives, they are good citizens, they have wonderful families, they have good jobs, they have gone for their education, they have done all kinds of things that also work together to dispel myths.”

Throughout the year PRO-ACT advocates for the recovery community, working to end the stigma and to create respect for the movement. This is why *Recovery Walks* is so important. And why it’s important to register.

“It’s important that people register, because every legislator, every member of the press, every television station that comes out wants to know how many people you have registered,” Bev said. “There is a connectedness between the number of people that you can bring out for a walk, and legislators seeing that we are an important movement to support.”

"The ripple effect of that is, going to Harrisburg and saying, hey, guess what, we've got 23,000 people advocating for recovery on September 19th at Penn's Landing," Steve said. "We have tens of thousands of people. I think there's certainly power in that. If you don't have numbers, then who's really gonna push for it?"

"I have been told by many legislators, 'Nobody cares about your illness. Nobody cares about people who are dying from addiction. Serves em right.' Well that's not true," said Bev. "So they need to see it's time to stand up and act out, and act out in a dignified, appropriate way, and we provide the avenue to make that happen."

Recovery Walks is an avenue that has proven to be effective. As a result many people have come to change their attitudes, and it's not just the legislators. Those in the greater community who harbored some negative feelings towards the movement have also experienced a change of heart. John remembers one specific example of a few local people being affected by the walk:

"A couple people who live in the Penn's Landing area actually were angry because we were having this walk, because they had to move cars and put up with this for a day. Some were using the language 'addicts' and words similar to that. Every single one of those who complained is walking this year. And they also want to find out about how they can help more. That's an example of how this movement can change people's minds."



The Honor Guard | Recovery Walks 2014
Photo Courtesy of PRO-ACT

One thing the walk does is expose the good side of recovery to people.

Normally, they "only see people who are having difficulties, they don't see the people who are doing well in recovery," Bev said. "Part of the recovery walk is to help

demonstrate that investing in recovery pays off." It's important that everyone, both those in recovery and those who aren't, is able to see people who have had successful, happy lives in recovery for decades.

"We have the Honor Guard for anybody who has ten years or more of recovery, and they wear a purple sash and a button that says how many years recovery they've got," Bev said. "That demonstrates very visibly how people can and do sustain their recovery. It's there to provide hope."

"I like to tell people that recovery is your birthright, Steve said. "It's something that you deserve, not something that you might be lucky enough to get." With each step, the walk is giving people their birthright.

While *Recovery Walks* continues to grow and be more successful each year, the fight is far from over. The more people who show up this year, on September 19th, the stronger the message will be. "People need to be there," Bev said, "If you have any investment in recovery at all or in people who have addiction issues and you want to help out, show up*." ♦

**Make sure you register ahead of time. See below for more information:*

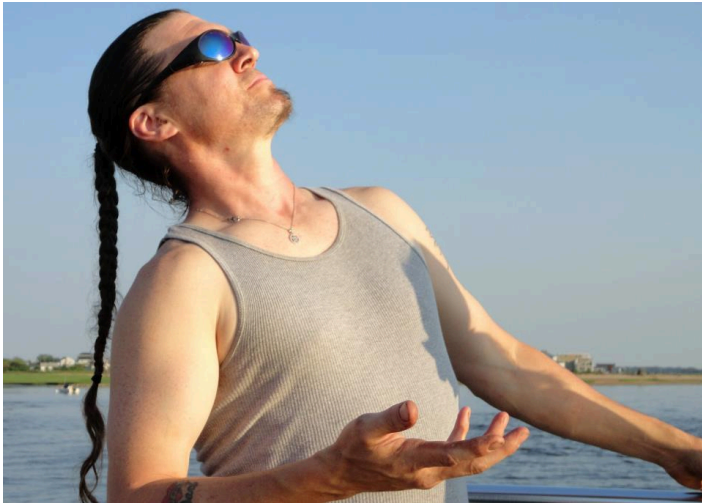
***Recovery Walks* September 19th • Penn's Landing**

To register or for more information (including info about FREE BUS service), please visit <http://www.recoverywalks.org/>

For more information about PRO-ACT please visit <http://www.councilsepa.org/programs/pro-act>

Spotlight on Alumni:

Wayne S., the Four Toms, and a Match Made in Vermont.



Before moving into Inkberry, Wayne had never stayed in one spot for too long. He was in and out of foster care, always moving, sometimes living with family members, but never completely settling down.

"Growing up I lived with so many different people and in so many different places and it was tough to call any one place or group of people home or family," Wayne said.

"Discovering booze and drugs took me out of myself."

Wayne started abusing his prescription when he was in his pre-teen years.

"It's when I was 15 that I started drinking, and drinking heavily from the get-go," he said. He drank and used into his 30s, picking up various drugs, continuing to move from place to place, and still had nowhere to call home. Five months leading up to his discovery of Newfound Freedom, Wayne found himself in a desperate situation.

"My drinking and drugging escalated to the point where I ended up on the street," he said.

Wayne began attending a meeting called McKean Street Miracles. He'd only been there a few times before the fateful night when his life would change. That night, he went to the meeting with another homeless man named Tom. A third man, someone Wayne had used with in the past, sat down across from them.

"His name was also Tom," Wayne said. "That would be Tom number two, who after the meeting would try to get me into a recovery house." That evening, Tom and Wayne called several houses, but to no avail. This turned out to be a good thing in the long run.

"No one answered the phone at these houses, which were in drug infested areas like Frankford and Kensington," Wayne said. "So we took a walk around our neighborhood in South Philly. We happened upon a group of people, one of which Tom started to strike up a conversation with." Wayne took a seat on the steps and also became involved in the discussion. After talking, one of the guys pulled out a piece of paper and a cell phone.

"He made a phone call, handing me the phone. It was Newfound Freedom," Wayne said. "They asked me what my problem was and told me if I could get to the house they would have a bed for me. So this guy offered to drive me up there and I accepted." That night Wayne moved into Inkberry. The man who drove him was a stranger, but an important figure in Wayne's life.

"Before he left he bought me some packs of cigarettes and wrote his name and phone number down on a piece of paper and handed it to me," Wayne said. "It read, 'Tom Ponytail.' Like me he also had a ponytail. That was Tom number three."

Wayne settled into the bunk bed in his new room, and after a few days, when his head cleared up, he realized something that to this day still amazes him.

"I learned that the name of the guy in the bottom bunk was Tom," Wayne said. "Four connected Toms."

Though the four Toms played a significant role in Wayne's journey, they were just the beginning.

"When I first got to the house I felt like the deer in the headlights," he said. "But everyone was not only friendly and generous, I trusted everything they said because you just can't deny the positive energy from real honesty." This inspired Wayne.

"I went to plenty of meetings and learned how to listen, and began to talk much more with the guys in the house and hear about everyone's experiences." By doing this, Wayne began to transform. At first, he was just glad to have a roof over his head. But the house became much more than that for him.

"I went from being happy to just be off the street to being happy to be in recovery," he said. With this came a number of other changes. "Clear thinking and going through the steps and working and learning to be a productive member of the human race." The guys around him noticed this; saw Wayne setting a great example in the house. Eventually, Inkberry's house manager decided it was time to move on, and the assistant manager prepared to take over.

"The assistant manager approached me and asked if I wouldn't mind moving up into his position, which came with extended responsibility and a chance to experience recovery in another way," Wayne said. "I was honored and I accepted. In time I eventually became the house manager. Managing a house full of alcoholics is no easy task. [It takes] courage and compassion." Wayne found he had both characteristics, and managed the house for several months.

When it came time to leave Inkberry after fifteen months in the house, Wayne wanted to remain close by. A room opened up at a sober home that was only a couple of blocks away.

"If slightly reluctant, due to my love for the guys at Inkberry, I accepted the room at Idlewild," he said. That is where he lived until he move to Massachusetts to be with his now wife.

"I met her while I was at Newfound Freedom. Interesting story," Wayne said.

While living at Idlewild, Wayne was asked to chair a meeting at the 12 Keys. As a chair he had to attend a group conscience meeting each month. One month Scott gave him a ride to the meeting.

"That one particular night he asked me if I would be interested in going on a trip to the Wilson House for an Emmet Fox workshop." Wayne gladly accepted.

"Skipping to the part when we were up there in Vermont," Wayne said, "sitting across from me was this woman, and the more my attention was on her, the more this really electric energy spun and spun. She not only noticed me, but she also felt the same." The two made small talk during breaks, smiled at each other, and the next day, Wayne made a point to find her at the meeting.

"We sat together and read from the same *Sermon on the Mount* book. Though she did not give me her phone number, I made sure that I gave her mine. While sitting in the van at the Wawa gas station back in Bristol, I got a text message. It was her. I was so excited." Wayne found out, after talking to her, that she lived in Massachusetts. She had gone to Vermont for the Emmett Fox retreat after asking for a sign- she wanted to know what to do about her bad marriage.

"I would say she got it," Wayne said. "The sign was her and I meeting each other and basically being floored by the energy build up that would happen when we were around each other, and she could not get her mind off of me and I could not get my mind off of her." Though they lived hours away from each other, the two kept in touch and overtime their relationship grew.

"We made strides to see each other the semi long distance for a year before I finally moved up here and we got an apartment together, which is where we still live." He and Lynne have been together for 6 ½ years. Not only do they share a home, but also a much-loved hobby.

"Lynne is an active musician, and music is one of my great loves as well," Wayne said. "I finally have my own drum set, and a bass guitar. Next is building the time to get my musical ideas down on a more permanent medium."

Wayne has also been able to find a job he enjoys and maintain his employment, something he wasn't able to do before.

"I am finally working with and for a great friend of mine who is also a kindred spirit and has his own business in my line of work- truck and industrial tires. His name is Tim and he is in the program as well. That is how I met him. Turns out there are more guys working here who are also in the program. How cool is that?"

Wayne now has a home, a family, a creative hobby, and a job he enjoys. He's come a long way since the streets.

"Life now is great. Newfound Freedom was the biggest role and biggest influence in kicking off my recovery. What directly led to it were angels, four Toms, and the several meetings I attended at Broad and McKean in South Philly in 2007," Wayne said. "My new life sprang directly from me being in Newfound Freedom."

Wayne said he still keeps in touch with everyone periodically and in some capacity back in Philly area.

"I stay as active as I can be because many of my dear friends are products of Newfound Freedom themselves, I keep regular contact with them by phone and Facebook as well. I'm greatly honored to be an NFF alumnus."

Wayne's advice to new residents is this:

"Be open-minded, trust what the love being extended to you is saying, give yourself a chance, get a sponsor, go through the steps, and shake off the chains of the past. Turn the pain into a reference. Be aware that others who have come before you, among them complete cynics and skeptics, have recovered and are happy and helping others to do the same. Trust that this is true, because it is true." ♦

HEY NFF ALUMNI! Are you interested in being featured in the Freedom Flyer?
If so, send us an email at: newsletter@newfoundfreedom.org with subject line "Spotlight"

Newfound Freedom's New Faces, New Services,



Michael Smith, NFF Executive Director

Michael Smith is from Philadelphia. He has a background in business leadership and accounting. Michael spent two years learning the recovery housing business from both sides.

"During that time I became a certified recovery specialist and saw the opportunities to help others while having a career."

Throughout those two years, Michael observed what Newfound Freedom was doing and the effect it had on people.

"I saw these really happy NFF people. For the first time professionally I said, 'That's where I want to be,' and reached out to Scott. Being offered the opportunity was a true gift."

As Executive Director, Michael is focusing on leadership and providing recovery support to residents. The three key elements to success, he believes, are people, processes and programs.

"We are transforming into a Recovery Services Organization and have the people in place who want to make NFF even better. This is not a job. It's a dream. There are opportunities for people in longer-term recovery to carve out a career. That is what I enjoy doing. Newfound Freedom: Hope starts here."

Newfound Freedom is excited to welcome significant changes to our staff structure and our operations. We are driven by a commitment to provide the best possible services, and these changes support that commitment.

In June we hired Michael Smith as our Executive Director. Michael holds a degree in Accounting from LaSalle University, and has years of experience in the recovery housing business as well as personal experience in the recovery community.

Michael's focus is on reinforcing the already-existing structure that is key to Newfound Freedom's foundation and strengthening our relationships with the recovery community at large. It is important to NFF that we continue to uphold the standards of the community, and that our mission and vision reflect these standards.

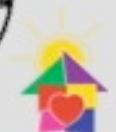
In order to ensure the highest level of support for our residents and families, Newfound Freedom is concentrating on structure and services.

In July, NFF hired Ali Bartol as General Manager of Women's Services.

Congratulations NFF Freedom Fighters
On Your First Season



Great Job Guys!



Same Dedication to Recovery & Residents.

Ali is a Newfound Freedom Alumni who is active in the recovery community. Her experience in the houses, as well as her strong background in management and communication, gives her a unique and essential perspective for this role.

Ali's focus is on solidifying the leadership structure in the women's houses, reestablishing an ongoing presence of NFF Women's alumni in the houses and at events, and working with the NFF recovery support team on orientation and integration programs. She is also rebuilding relationships with those in the women's houses and bringing a voice of inspiration to the females of NFF.

As the final piece in our new puzzle, I am focusing primarily on being in our houses to work with the men and women on early recovery. It is reinvigorating for me to be helping the residents directly and in group meetings.

The entire staff is committed to the mission and vision of Newfound Freedom and we uphold our values through continued assessment and revision of policies and procedures.

-Scott Fleming, CEO Newfound Freedom



Ali Bartol, NFF GM of Women's Services

Ali Bartol is a Bristol native and Newfound Freedom alumnus. Ali has a background in management and experience working in several treatment facilities, and is ready to use her knowledge to reshape the dynamic of the women's houses.

"Working in different treatment facilities gives me an advantage," she said. "I have worked with so many women from all aspects of life." Ali has been a strong female role model and sponsor for many women over the years and is now excited about the opportunity to help even more women. The most important thing for the women's houses, she believes, is structure and stability, as well as "creating a safe haven for women to live," she said.

Ali is very enthused about her new position.

"I am so excited to be working with Newfound Freedom!"

The First Bonfire of the Season
is only a month away!

Celebration
Meeting



September
28th

Brennan's Corner
**Anger is a Poison
That Erodes the Vessel in Which
it is Stored.**

-James Allen

August/September 2015						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
23 Liberty Bell Roundup	24 AA Step Mtg 7pm @ First Pres. NA Text Study 7pm @ St.Paul's	25 Men's Big Book Study 7:30pm @ 60 Jonquil	26 Garage Mtg (Men's Lit Study) 7:30pm @ Bowman	27 Recovery Rap Mtg 9:30am @ Blue Ridge	28 Have a great weekend!!! ☺	29
30	31 NFF Celebration Mtg 7pm @ First Presbyterian	1 Men's Big Book Study 7:30pm @ 60 Jonquil	2 Garage Mtg (Men's Lit Study) 7:30pm @ Bowman	3 Recovery Rap Mtg 9:30am @ Blue Ridge	4 Have a great weekend!!! ☺	5
6	7	8 Men's Big Book Study 7:30pm @ 60 Jonquil	9 Garage Mtg (Men's Lit Study) 7:30pm @ Bowman	10 Recovery Rap Mtg 9:30am @ Blue Ridge	11 Have a great weekend!!! ☺	12 Conquering Grounds Music Festival
13	14 AA Step Mtg 7pm @ First Pres. NA Text Study 7pm @ St.Paul's	15 Men's Big Book Study 7:30pm @ 60 Jonquil	16 Garage Mtg (Men's Lit Study) 7:30pm @ Bowman	17 Recovery Rap Mtg 9:30am @ Blue Ridge	18 Have a great weekend!!! ☺	19 PRO-ACT Recovery Walk
20	21 AA Step Mtg 7pm @ First Pres. NA Text Study 7pm @ St.Paul's	22 Men's Big Book Study 7:30pm @ 60 Jonquil	23 Garage Mtg (Men's Lit Study) 7:30pm @ Bowman 1 st Day of Fall!	24 Recovery Rap Mtg 9:30am @ Blue Ridge	25 Have a great weekend!!! ☺	26
27	28 NFF Celebration Bonfire Mtg 7pm @ First Presbyterian	29 Men's Big Book Study 7:30pm @ 60 Jonquil	30 Garage Mtg (Men's L30 Study) 7:30pm @ Bowman			

Freedom Flyer Writing Contest! Open to Everyone!

We will be accepting submissions on the theme of *CHANGE*.

Pieces can be in any format (personal essay, poem, informational article, cartoon, etc.)

Winners will be selected anonymously by NFF staff. Pieces will appear in the October Freedom Flyer.

Email submission to:

newsletter@newfoundfreedom.com OR mail to:

NFF Newsletter,

2817 Bowman Ave, Bristol, PA 19007

Include your name & how you heard about us.

Extended Deadline

Submissions due by September 30th

Upcoming Events!

*Conquering Grounds Music Festival- Sept. 12

*PROACT Recovery Walk- Sept. 19

NFF Bonfire Celebration Mtg- Sept. 28



***NFF
Celebration
Meeting***

**Last Monday of
Every Month!!!**



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