

The Freedom Flyer

NFF's Monthly Newsletter ~ Keeping the Community Connected

May 2015

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Stay up-to-date with meetings, announcements, and special events.

HEY, NFF Residents and Alumni,

Do you want to contribute to the Freedom Flyer?!

Great!

The Freedom Flyer would love your help!

Please send us an email: newsletter@newfoundfreedom.com

All Revved up and Ready to Go

Livengrin's Ride for Recovery is Right Around the Corner



Bikers from 2014 Poker Run. Photo courtesy of Livengrin.

On May 31st, dozens of motorcycles will take off through the streets of Bucks County, making a lot of noise and drawing a lot of attention. The bikers, setting out in groups of two to twenty, won't be trying to raise hell. They'll be trying to raise something important to the recovery community- awareness. Their ride- a poker run around town- will be just one part of Livengrin's huge annual fundraiser, Ride for Recovery.

For the past several years, NFF has been a proud and active supporter of this important event, which is now in its eleventh year.

"We're a one hundred-and-nine bed facility. Twenty-six of those beds are detox," Livengrin

staff member Cheryl Jennings said. "We're in our 49th year and we treat adult men and women with substance abuse issues." All the money raised during the ride goes to help these men and women.

Cheryl has worked for Livengrin on and off for 25 years, and has been an active board member of the Ride for Recovery Committee for the last 13 years. This year, she is co-chair of the event, along with Micki Kaisinger. Both women were on the very first ride eleven years ago.

"It was about 30 people," Micki said. "We took a nice ride down to Annapolis, Maryland.

(Continued next page)

“Sue Bright, Micki and I were in the pick up truck, and all the bikes rode behind us.” Cheryl said. Sue Bright is the Vice President for Business Development at Livengrin, and it was she who organized this first Ride in 2004.

“The initial concept of a motorcycle run to raise funds and awareness was brought to me by a former employee of Livengrin,” Sue said. She thought this was a great idea, and began spreading the word.

“She kind of just put it out there that if any friends or family of Livengrin people who were interested and rode motorcycles, who just wanted to take a nice ride together... and it was as simple as that,” said Micki. “We had a couple of door prizes, and that was it.”

“The following year,” Sue said, “we raffled a Harley Davidson motorcycle, promoted corporate sponsorship, initiated the poker run concept and ended the event with a family-friendly picnic on the Bensalem campus.” The picnic, which became a post-ride tradition, has grown into a daylong affair with various forms of entertainment for all ages.

“There's so much going on here,” Cheryl said. “We have vendors, we have a game truck that comes out for kids, and moon bounces. There's a lot for families to do on that day.” The afternoon also includes a live band, a DJ, a silent auction, and several raffles. The biggest prize raffled off is, of course, the Harley Davidson. Every year a different bike is up for grabs, and this year it is a 2015 Soft Tail Slim.

“It's a really nice thing,” Micki said. “For ten dollars, somebody's winning \$10,000 or a brand new bike. That's a big deal.” The entire event has become a big deal. Cheryl believes that each one, unique in its own way, is better than the last.

“It has developed into Livengrin's biggest fundraiser,” she said. “Every year it gets better.” This year some new things will be added to the event. The picnic will include specialty food vendors who will be selling funnel cake and other



*Artists and Entertainment at 2014 Picnic.
Photo courtesy of Livengrin.*

treats, and the poker run will include a special group of riders.

“We have added a bicycle run for those who wish to support the cause and ride using a different vehicle to do so.” Sue said. This will mean more participants, and hopefully more funds raised. “We are anticipating an increase of attendees this year over last year, which was over 1300 people, and our fundraising goal is to exceed \$100,000.” All of the money raised through this event goes directly to Livengrin to help patients in various ways.

“We provide recovery books and other things for the patients,” Cheryl said. In addition to supplies and materials that will help patients already in recovery, Livengrin is also able to help people begin their recovery process by providing financial aid to those who otherwise could not afford treatment.

“It's tough today. Even if you have the best insurance, sometimes it's hard to get the coverage, and with copays and deductibles and high costs, there's a lot of people that really need help that aren't able to get it,” Micki said.

“We have a system set up where some of their copays can be paid for,” Cheryl said. “People that come in that meet our qualifications can get some scholarship money.”

The whole day, which brings together recovered addicts and alcoholics, those still in treatment, and the greater community, is effective in raising awareness, promoting

treatment, and giving hope for long term recovery.

“Every year we've had one or two admissions as a direct result of having the ride,” Cheryl said. Sue Bright attributes this to the excitement and sober fun that the Ride for Recovery generates.

The whole community is invited onto the private grounds of Livengrin for the picnic in the afternoon. This is important because addiction affects many people in many ways. According to Sue’s statistics, this disease affects more lives than most other widely recognized illnesses. One in every four households is affected, and the current heroin epidemic is becoming more widespread, killing a great number of young people. Whether one is directly affected by this disease or not, it is important to realize that it’s a problem in our society and to understand that recovery is possible.

“Reality shows or media coverage of celebrities who suffer from this disease do not accurately portray real life facts”, Sue said. This is, however, where many people get their information about addiction. “The problem is that the stigma associated with persons who are alcoholic or drug addicted is alive and well.” And Livengrin aims to remove that stigma, one ride at a time, by providing help and hope to those who need it.

It is impossible to accurately calculate just how many lives the Ride for Recovery has impacted, but every year the folks at Livengrin are reminded that the number is very large.

“Always, people come back and say, ‘I was here, and this helped me’,” Cheryl said. She also said that every year there are groups of riders who show up proclaiming their ‘class of’ year. “And they all ride together,” she said. “That’s what I think of when I think of Livengrin- the graduates and the recovery community out there, and the power of that recovering community, and how they stick together.”


It seems that everyone who is involved in the Ride for Recovery sticks together. After all, it’s only made possible because of dedicated and committed individuals who work all year round to make this happen.

“I just think that there's an awesome group of people who come out every week and put this together,” Cheryl said.

“The people that have been there year after year after year and supporting this and work all year long to make this happen- that's why it's so successful, because they don't rest,” Micki said. “As soon as one's done, they get working on the next one.” Micki herself, as well as Cheryl and Sue are among those who have been working since last summer. Come May 31st, all of their hard work will pay off, and many will be helped as a result. In the end, that’s what it’s all about. As Micki pointed out:

“By Livengrin doing this work, and by all the volunteers that come together to make this happen, they can provide a service to the community for a whole lot of people that otherwise wouldn't be able to get the help that they need.” ♦

MAY 31, 2015



Raffle Tickets!

The NFF women are selling raffle tickets all month.

One ticket is \$10.

Each ticket is a chance to win.

You can stop by Brian’s Harley Davidson on Sundays, or contact Sue Davids at NFF to purchase raffle tickets:

Sue: 215-764-9673

RIDE and PICNIC DETAILS:

Pre-registration (Motorcyclists and bicyclists!).....	\$25
Registration on Day Of.....	\$30
Passengers/Picnic Attendees.....	\$10
Raffle Tickets.....	\$10

Spotlight on Alumni: Real Talk with Ali B.



*Ali Speaking at NFF's 10th Anniversary Party.
Photo by Jedi Joe*

For the past eight years Ali B. has been a strong alumni presence within Newfound Freedom. From visiting the women's houses to speaking at bonfire meetings to just coming back to say hi, she has remained very connected to NFF. And she enjoys it. Coming back to do an interview was something she felt honored to do.

"I think it's really cool whenever I'm asked to come back and do these things," she said, "because without these kinds of things, I wouldn't be here." Though she has been coming back to "do these things" quite a bit, Ali had not yet been in the new NFF office. As she waited for the interview to "officially" begin, Ali walked to the other side of the room and stared at the huge whiteboard on the wall. She appeared to be somewhat in awe of the number of houses and residents.

"It's great to see how many people are helped. When I lived in the houses, it was smaller", When Ali was with NFF there were only five houses. "There are hundred of billions of people who need help, who need a place to stay, who need treatment... and the fact that it went from five to fourteen houses, that can hold hundreds of people- it's incredible."

Ali lived at 60 Jonquil back in the day, before it became a men's house. Though the size of NFF was different then, the rules were the same as they are now. Ali said that it was the first time in her life that she had to take care of herself.

"My mom did everything for me," Ali said. "She cooked my dinner, did my laundry, cleaned my room." It was the structure of the house that helped her realize the importance of everyday tasks and chores. "It's crazy what habits you take with you from a recovery house to practical life." By "habits", Ali is not just referring to household chores. While in the house, she also developed the ability to do something else that was brand new to her:

"Being around and trusting women. That was something I had never done before," she said. Before moving into Jonquil Ali didn't really have consistent, healthy relationships with other females. "I would think that she was trying to take my boyfriend or I was trying to take her boyfriend, and they all talk behind your back anyway, so why would I be friends with them? I'll just be friends with all the guys." And that's how it was for Ali until Jonquil, which is when things changed. "You move into a house with 13 women, and you're almost forced to be friends with them."

Ali decided to put great effort into learning how to develop important friendships with her housemates. "You get these women that come in all different shapes, sizes, colors, backgrounds, etc, and the one thing we all had in common was a drug addiction or alcoholism," she said. She learned how amazing it is "to be able to sit there and relate and see the other paths that women have gone through, and see where they were at that point, and be able to trust them and ask them for help," all things that she had never done before. To this day she still carries that experience with her.

"That's the kind of stuff I took with me when I left," she said. "Not just the cooking and cleaning and that kind of stuff, but also having that friendship with women." Ali was in Jonquil for 8 months before moving on, but she remained a big part of the NFF women's recovery community. Ali wanted to inspire other women the way she had been inspired by alumni when she was in the house.

"It was really attractive to me, seeing them giving back in that way," she said. Ali decided to start a big book study at Appletree. "I would go over twice a week and do big book studies with the girls, or just go over and hang out. I did that for a couple of years." Eventually, Ali stopped doing the big book study, handing it over to newer alumni. She continued to sponsor NFF resident, and she continues to sponsor women to this day. She also hosts her own weekly big book study.

“Every Thursday I do a women's big book study at my house. Just to make it intimate, just to make it less formal, and a place where women can just speak freely about anything.” Ali believes that it's important for women to have an environment in which they feel comfortable; somewhere they feel they can share without judgment. “I think you have to trust people in order to be open with them, and if you're in a room full of 50 women you barely know, that can cause a lot of fear in saying how you really feel or what you're really thinking,” she said. “And when I do the big book study, it's a free for all. Nobody cares, there's no judgments.”

The struggle to open up and share is only one thing that women have to overcome in recovery. There are many other hurdles to jump in order to maintain sobriety, both emotionally and physically.

“I think there's a lot of factors that go into it,” Ali said. “I think that women have a hard time because it takes us a lot longer to let go of things and be forgiving of things. Women use their bodies to get what they need, and when that happens, the guilt and shame that comes with that is so hard to overcome cause they feel like no one else has done it, even though others have, and have overcome it.”

“Another big thing for women is eating disorders. We gain 30 pounds in treatment, because they feed you 3 times a day. And you get out, and you think that you look good, but society tells you that you have to be skinnier or fit. It's the last thing that we can fix, manage and control- our eating and our image. And when that doesn't work, they always go back to what did, which is drugs or alcohol.”

How do women in recovery find a way around this? Perhaps by building friendships with other women who know how you feel. As someone who has successfully gone through the recovery process, Ali has some advice for those who are new to the whole thing:

“We've been put down our whole lives, by our own minds, telling us we're not good enough, and when we continually do that, it discourages others. Forming those relationships is something that could help. Work on yourself, and the women around you. Help empower the women around you. And then your life will be so much better.” One way to do this is to limit distractions and to consciously work on you and your friendships- the things that matter most.

“Do not get into a relationship. Build a relationship with yourself, first. Then, down the road, when you have experience, or when you know your self-worth, or when you know what you want out of life, then you can build a relationship with somebody else.” This is Ali's biggest caution, and perhaps because she knows from experience.

“I made that mistake,” she said. “I got into a relationship my first year of sobriety, and it was chaotic and crazy and not necessarily good. And all that time that I wasted on him, I could have been deepening my relationships with myself.”

Ali is sympathetic to the desire to be in a relationship, but also believes it is not the most important thing to focus on.

“You screwed up everything else in your life already, why don't you take the time to focus on what's most important- you, your family, getting your family back together,” she said. “It's the same thing for men, too. [For everyone], you want to build your self-confidence with self. You don't want to build your self-confidence with the people around you. This is about you and your long-term sobriety.”

Ali's long-term sobriety has been a success, she believes, because she has built a relationship with herself and those around her, and she dedicates herself daily to giving back and staying involved. Today, Ali is not only engaged, but planning her own and her sister's weddings.

“Had I not got sober, had I not been in the houses, had I not kept doing all the same things I've been doing since I got sober, like home group and sponsoring women, then I probably wouldn't be engaged. I probably wouldn't be able to help my sister plan her wedding. You kind of look back at those things, and you're like, had this not have happened, had that not have happened, I probably wouldn't be where I am today, but thank God that they happened.” ♦

Freedom Fighters Geared-Up for the Season

This summer NFF is playing in the United Recovery Softball League. With an awesome team name, and sharp uniforms, the *Freedom Fighters* are ready to go. General manager John Henry steps up to the plate to answer some hard-hitting questions about the 2015 season.



The NFF Softball Team Circling up Before the Game

Q: So, you were in charge of getting the team together. How did that go?

It went relatively smooth. We have a lot of talented, athletic residents who were very enthused to join the team, so I really didn't have to recruit anybody. I was actually surprised at the amount of residents who signed up and are still actively playing. You're sometimes a little apprehensive when you're dealing with newly sober guys and commitments. There was some behind-the-scenes work prior to getting the team together, but it went well for the most part. We had a harder time deciding on the uniform logo and colors, but it all worked out in the end. The uniforms came out really sweet.

Q: What are the team goals for the season and what will the focus be on?

The team goals are to have fun and learn how to function as a team. As with pretty much everything in life, communication is very critical. We'll be focusing on teamwork, communication skills, and supporting each other. We share victory, but we also have to share defeat. Our primary purpose is to stay sober and help each other have fun!!!

Q: Why are sports important and what do they teach us?

Sports are important because they teach you about teamwork and camaraderie. Teaching and learning from others is a crucial part of life. I can't learn anything by myself, and I can't teach anybody if I'm by myself. This is how we grow; being there for others and asking for help from others. As alcoholics and

addicts, this is very hard for us to do!! We generally seem to think we know it all!!

Q: Why is this league important?

This league is important because it brings us all together and shows everyone in sobriety that we can have AWESOME SOBER FUN!!! Many alcoholics and addicts aren't familiar with this stuff. It also lets the community know about what we do in recovery. Many community members have come out to support our team; we have a large cheering section right there beside us screaming and rooting for us on Sunday mornings.

Q: Is there anything else you want to say?

I just want to say how excited I am to be a part of our first NFF softball team. This league is very competitive and full of talent. We will continue to grow each year and learn from each other how to become a better squad. It's such a good feeling to see these guys excited and joyful in early recovery. I can relate this feeling in a way to the 12th step promises that our book teaches haha!!!! I am blessed to be a part of this and look forward to the growth that we will experience in the future. Buckle up and enjoy the ride!!!!

* * *

Come out at support your team! Games are every Sunday throughout the summer. For dates and locations see pg 8. For complete schedule visit the URSL page: <http://urslnow.com/weekly-schedule/>

Kick off the Summer with the NFF Memorial Day Picnic!

*Joe R.
Cooking
up a
Storm
at the
2014
Picnic.*



*Photo by
Jedi*

Every year, NFF “officially” kicks off the summer with the grand event that is the Memorial Day picnic. Residents, alumni, family, and friends come together to eat, hang out, and soak up the sun.

This year, the picnic will be held at scenic Silver Lake under and around the party pavilion.

Food and treats will be donated by Deitz and Watson and Shop Rite. NFF residents and staff will throw on their trusty aprons, and flip food with their trusty spatulas.

Attendees can partake in nice games of volleyball and horseshoes while sipping on refreshing soft drinks.

Don’t miss out on this epic celebration, and your chance to see people from other houses, catch up with old pals, make new friends, and munch on delicious cuisine.

See you there!

NFF Troupe 377 Gives a Shout Out



Dear Chris Flood,

Thank you for the Thin Mints! They made the end of winter a lot more bearable!

Love,

The Blue Ridge Boys

Brennan's Corner

*Strive to be useful
and then
You will find peace.*

-Chris Brennan

What's Going On?

May 2015						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
26	27 NFF Celebration Mtg 7pm @ First Presbyterian	28 Men's Big Book Study 7:30pm @ 60 Jonquil	29 Garage Mtg (Men's Lit Study) 7:30pm @ Bowman	30 Recovery Rap Mtg 9:30am @ Blue Ridge	1 Have a great weekend!!! ☺	2 NFF Girls selling raffle tickets @ Harley Davidson
3 9am- Freedom Fighters vs. Second Chance	4 AA Step Mtg 7pm @ First Pres. NA Text Study 7pm @ St.Paul's	5 Men's Big Book Study 7:30pm @ 60 Jonquil	6 Garage Mtg (Men's Lit Study) 7:30pm @ Bowman	7 Recovery Rap Mtg 9:30am @ Blue Ridge	8 Have a great weekend!!! ☺	9 NFF Girls selling raffle tickets @ Harley Davidson
10 9am- Freedom Fighters vs. Penn Foundation	11 AA Step Mtg 7pm @ First Pres. NA Text Study 7pm @ St.Paul's	12 Men's Big Book Study 7:30pm @ 60 Jonquil	13 Garage Mtg (Men's Lit Study) 7:30pm @ Bowman	14 Recovery Rap Mtg 9:30am @ Blue Ridge	15 Have a great weekend!!! ☺	16 NFF Girls selling raffle tickets @ Harley Davidson
17 9am- Freedom Fighters vs. Banshees	18 AA Step Mtg 7pm @ First Pres. NA Text Study 7pm @ St.Paul's	19 Men's Big Book Study 7:30pm @ 60 Jonquil	20 Garage Mtg (Men's Lit Study) 7:30pm @ Bowman	21 Recovery Rap Mtg 9:30am @ Blue Ridge	22 Have a great weekend!!! ☺	23 NFF Girls selling raffle tickets @ Harley Davidson
24 No Game	25 NFF Memorial Day Picnic	26 Men's Big Book Study 7:30pm @ 60 Jonquil	27 Garage Mtg (Men's Lit Study) 7:30pm @ Bowman	28 Recovery Rap Mtg 9:30am @ Blue Ridge	29 Have a great weekend!!! ☺	30 NFF Girls selling raffle tickets @ Harley Davidson
31 9am- Freedom Fighters vs. LJ Livengrin's Ride 2 Recovery	1 AA Step Mtg 7pm @ First Pres. NA Text Study 7pm @ St.Paul's	2 Men's Big Book Study 7:30pm @ 60 Jonquil	3 Garage Mtg (Men's Lit Study) 7:30pm @ Bowman	4 Recovery Rap Mtg 9:30am @ Blue Ridge	5 Have a great weekend!!! ☺	6

NFF Softball Games

MAY:

10th vs. Penn Foundation
17th vs. Banshees
31st vs. Life's Journey

JUNE:

7th vs. Beginners
14th vs. Longshots
21st vs. EMZ
28th vs. Emilie House

Upcoming Events!

*AA 80th Anniversary- June 10

*Founder's Day Celebration- June 12-14

*4th annual Liberty Bell Roundup- August 21-23

<http://libertybellroundup.com>

*NFF Labor Day Picnic- September 7



NFF Celebration Meeting

Last Monday of Every Month!!!



Contact Us:

855-587-2329 ♦ www.newfoundfreedom.com

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