President’s Message: “It’s Morning Again in the NCPG”

“It’s morning again in America,” was the opening line of a popular political campaign ad in the 1984 presidential campaign of Republican Party candidate Ronald Reagan. It featured a montage of images of Americans going to work and was one of the most effective political campaign ads ever, mainly for its simple optimistic message. It won advertisement industry awards and praise from the political and advertising world.

Given the events of the recent NCPG Board of Director’s Meeting in Dallas, it might be said that “It’s morning again in the NCPG.” The sun is about to rise on NCPG’s new governance structure, and with it, tremendous potential for NCPG’s increased effectiveness as the national advocate for problem gamblers and their families. In February 2007, the NCPG Board of Directors met in Dallas to advance the organization’s new bylaws and board and governance structure. The bylaws changes were necessary in order for NCPG to continue to implement its 2007–2014 NCPG Strategic Plan, adopted by the NCPG Board Meeting in June 2007.

NCPG’s new bylaws structure its membership in three membership groups: affiliate, individual and organizational. Each of the membership groups will nominate and elect members to the NCPG Board of Directors from within their membership group. Once elected, the new NCPG Board of Directors will comprise 15 members, from which the NCPG President, President-Elect, Secretary and Treasurer will be elected. Integral to the NCPG’s new governance structure is its increased reliance on its standing and ad hoc committees.

As NCPG moves forward, in the morning sunshine of a new governance structure, its future is indeed brighter because it has organizationally evaluated itself, made changes and set itself on a course and plan to more effectively advocate for problem gamblers and their families. The NCPG membership can take great pride in the fact that as an organization, NCPG has collectively reflected and boldly responded to the changes it sees going on around it. Not all nonprofit organizations can say that.

(President, continued on page 2)

Executive Director’s Letter: An Eventful Midwinter Board Meeting

The Midwinter Board of Directors meeting was held February 16–17, 2008 in Dallas, TX. President McNeilly reviews the approval of the new Bylaws above a significant change in the Council’s structure and governance. I would like to review some of the additional highlights from this eventful meeting.

The Maine Council on Problem Gambling submitted an application for Affiliate Membership. The Affiliate Committee recommended approval and the Board concurred, and the Maine Council became the 36th State Affiliate member. The Office Space Committee presented an update on the search for new office space, and the Board authorized the Personnel Committee to engage a consultant in organizational development to ensure NCPG’s anticipated growth is thoroughly planned. As of May 1, the NCPG office will be located at 730 11th Street, NW, Suite 601. The 1,600 square feet suite (almost double our current space) includes three offices and a “bullpen” area with room for up to three workstations, plus a filing/storage room. The conference room, receptionist, pantry and restrooms are shared with the Courembis and Anderson, a property management company and also the building’s landlord. If you’re in Washington, D.C. please give us a call—we’d love to show you the new offices, a considerable upgrade from our former space.

Finally, each year the Executive Director is required to present a “State of the Council” report at the meeting. 2007 was an extremely busy and productive year for the National Council on Problem Gambling. We exceeded our revenue goals, maintained our reserve fund, bolstered our core programs, increased our membership, improved our advocacy and initiated strategic planning to ensure NCPG will be able to continue to provide leadership in the problem gambling field. A complete copy of our 2007 report begins on page 3. The Board also approved the 2008 Goals and Budget.

Of course, these accomplishments are only possible with the support of the Board of Directors, in particular the members of the Executive Committee. On behalf of Linda Abonyo, Program Administrator, and Melissa Martin, Administrative Assistant, thank you to the Officers, Directors and Members for the opportunity to work with you to increase public awareness of pathological gambling, ensure the widespread availability of treatment for problem gamblers and their families and to encourage research and programs for prevention and education.
Changing bylaws in any organization is not to be undertaken by the faint of heart. Most fortunately, the NCPG has three individuals who were not only great of heart, but extraordinarily generous of their time, talents and temperaments. The NCPG owes an enormous amount of gratitude to Tom Moore, Dean Hestermann, and Mike Stone, for their countless hours and diligence crafting bylaws that would take NCPG into its future.

In the coming weeks, the NCPG Nominations and Elections Committee will be contacting each NCPG member about your opportunity to contribute to the upcoming Board of Directors Nominations and Election processes. I most strongly encourage and invite all NCPG members (Affiliate, Individual and Organizational) to take part in the upcoming Board of Directors nomination and election processes. As we all go forward, we will all likely continue to learn and adapt to NCPG’s new structures. Your input, nominations and participation can only help the NCPG further realize its potential effectiveness as the national advocate for problem gamblers and their families. It is morning in again in the NCPG, and we can all be proud to stand in the warmth of our new beginnings.

Sincerely,

Dennis P. McNeilly, SJ, PsyD
President, National Council on Problem Gambling

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**Affiliate Profile:**
**Introducing our Newest Affiliate—Maine!**

The Maine Council on Problem Gambling (MeCPG) was established in the early 90’s and received its charter in September of 2001 and its non-profit status in 2002. Founder Richard Swett realized that problem gambling was an issue for Maine and that an organization was needed to raise public awareness and advocate for individuals with gambling problems and their families.

Lee Thompson, current President of the MeCPG, became interested in compulsive gambling in 2003 when referendums for a racino and casino were being proposed for Maine. As an addictions therapist it was apparent to her that if either or both passed that Maine would face serious problems. It was suggested by Kathy Scanlan, Director of the Massachusetts Council on Compulsive Gambling that Thompson seek out Swett to see if they could rejuvenate the Council.

The MeCPG now has five Board members: Howland Bickerstaff, Stacia Fitch, Tom Broffman and Gail Merrill.

The MeCPG partnered with the Office on Substance Abuse, the Maine Gambling Control Board, the Maine Lottery to create the Gambling Advisory Board develop policies, trainings, and certification for gambling counselors. Funding for treatment comes from revenues from the approved racino. Licensed providers in the Maine Gambling Addiction Network can receive reimbursement for treatment not otherwise funded by insurance.

MeCPG goals are to secure funding, create a 24-hour toll-free helpline, develop a statewide speaker’s bureau to educate their community about responsible and problem gambling, fund a prevalence study and to expand the Board of Directors.

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**Book Bag**

**A Childhood Taken Away by a Mother and Grandfather**

*Author: Linda Sommer Farley*

**Synopsis**

“One of the most beautiful aspects of life is the relationship and love between a mother and child. To go through life without a mother’s love can be very cruel and difficult. The only thing I received from my mother was an addiction to gambling. As a baby to adulthood I was raised around gambling. During these frequent card games for money there was filthy language used, arguing, fighting, dense smoke through out the house from the card players smoking, and these card games would last all night or even longer. I could play a hand of poker at the age of five.”

— Linda Sommer Farley

**About the book:**

Linda tells us what life was like for her growing up. She shares with us the trauma of having an abusive grandfather and a mother with a gambling addiction and how it effected her throughout her life. Linda Sommer Farley came from a large family, she was the sixth of eight siblings. She was responsible for her younger siblings when no one was at home. She expresses her embarrassment of growing up poor and the challenges she faced through out her school years due to her poverty. She describes the difficulties and accomplishments she has experienced. She wrote this book with the purest of intentions — to help others.

**“Luck’s No Lady”**

The Connecticut Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services helped produce a half hour radio documentary called “Luck’s No Lady.” In Connecticut, the program is likely to played multiple times, plus on Public Radio stations which is where policymakers can be reached.
On behalf of the staff I am pleased to present this annual report on the major activities of the National Council on Problem Gambling, the national advocate for programs and services to assist problem gamblers and their families.

Our first core program goal was the Annual Conference on Problem Gambling Prevention, Treatment, Research & Recovery. The 21st Annual Conference was held June 8–10 in Kansas City, MO. The conference was co-sponsored by the Midwest Consortium on Problem Gambling and Substance Abuse and hosted by the Missouri Council on Problem Gambling Concerns and the Missouri Alliance to Curb Compulsive Gambling. The conference also received support from U.S. Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA). We met our attendance goal and exceeded our revenue goal.

While running the 2007 annual conference, staff simultaneously developed the core components of the 2008 conference as well as evaluated bids, made a site visit, and negotiated the hotel contract for the 2009 conference. The site selection process was also moved forward last year, so the 2010 planning began as well. Another component of conference administration involved setting up the two Board meetings—the Annual meeting just prior to the national conference plus the Midwinter meeting and Congressional Forum. The final conference objective, a feasibility study on supporting regional meetings, will be completed in February 2008.

The second core goal was to conduct National Problem Gambling Awareness Week. NPGAW is the national grassroots effort to educate healthcare providers about problem gambling. The 2007 campaign was very successful although we were not able to secure a site visit, and negotiated the hotel contract for the 2009 conference. The conference was co-sponsored by the Midwest Consortium on Problem Gambling and Substance Abuse and hosted by the Missouri Council on Problem Gambling Concerns and the Missouri Alliance to Curb Compulsive Gambling. The conference also received support from U.S. Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA). We met our attendance goal and exceeded our revenue goal.

The third core program was to promote the National Helpline Number (800.522.4700): the single nationwide point of access to help for problem gamblers. The National Number is connected to the National Helpline Network. Together, the Number and Network operate like the 911 system, ensuring that a call from anywhere in the U.S. is automatically and instantly routed to the appropriate call center. One task was to collect summaries of key data from at least 20 call centers on the network, and we ended the year with data from 13 call centers that cover 22 states. There were 243,871 calls made to the National Helpline Number in 2007, an increase of 7,000 over last years 236,449 calls. One new call center was added to the Network last year.

The fourth core program goal—to increase public awareness of problem gambling by providing a comprehensive website that meets needs of consumers, counselors, media and the public, as well as distributing press releases of national interest—included objectives to carry a comprehensive redesign of the website. The new site was launched in July and vastly increased our content and capabilities. The website remained the #1 ranked result for a search of “problem gambling” on the major search engines, and was also found to be the most networked (in-linked and out-linked) problem gambling website in a British survey. The website continued to field numerous media calls and distributed six press releases, two more than the goal.

National broadcast highlights included appearances by the Executive Director on all major TV networks as well as numerous print and radio interviews. The four issues of the newsletter were published in color and the length increased to 12 pages. In addition, the National Council was selected as the 2007 national charity of the Campus Media Group (CMG). We worked with CMG to develop a public service announcement for college students printed in over 200 college newspapers across the country.

Program goal five was to administer the National Certified Gambling Counselor (NCGC) program under contract with the National Gambling Counselor Certification Board. The objective was to conduct a legal and structural review of the relationship between the NCPG and the Certification Board and recommend any necessary changes. Significant changes were proposed and are now underway and expected to be completed in June 2008. The amount of work under this contract continues to grow. At the end of 2007 there were 559 counselors on file, including 148 applicants in various stages of the application process.

The sixth program goal to develop national information on the problem gambling field through a survey of state problem gambling services was extended again to next year in order to finalize the methodology and identify a capable vendor. Our seventh goal, to improve management information systems, was met.

NCPG took major strides in Federal public policy issues, our eighth goal. The new Federal Affairs Committee built support and coordinated efforts with our membership base. Staff met with six Representatives, sent over 200 letters to House members and held the second Congressional Forum to build support for the Comprehensive Awareness of Problem Gambling Act. NCPG submitted a statement on the Internet Gambling and Regulation Enforcement Act to the House Financial Services Committee and maintained contact with legislative staff, trade associations and advocates on this issue. We also worked closely with the Association of Problem Gambling Service Administrators (APGSA). NCPG and APGSA met twice with the Director of the Center for Substance Abuse Treatment (CSAT) and maintained contact with principal staff. CSAT published the Problem Gambling Toolkit for Substance Abuse Professionals and organized a joint NCPG/APGSA meeting of state agencies on problem gambling data collection.

Our advocacy does not end at the Federal level—NCPG staff responded to several requests from state advocates to help them address local issues with national implica-

(State of the Council, continued on page 4)
(State of the Council, continued from page 3)

tions. We assembled relevant research, assessed policy implications and mobilized groups of supporters. The National Council and the Nevada Council on Problem Gambling testified before the Nevada Gaming Commission regarding electronic funds transfer issues. The Illinois Gaming Board asked NCPG and the Illinois Council on Problem Gambling to comment on their proposed regulations to enhance self-exclusion programs by requiring identification for all casino patrons. Finally, NCPG helped stop the imminent destruction of irreplaceable data on veterans who had been treated for gambling problems.

Staff had preliminary discussions with prominent researchers in the field regarding the development of a national research agenda to guide Federal policymakers, our ninth goal. Based on their feedback this goal was extended until August 2008.

The tenth and final program goal, to obtain a legal review of Global Self-Exclusion Database proposal, was completed and the project was considered by the Board at the Annual meeting.

Other staff projects in 2007 included development of a pilot study on the efficacy of text message communication with people seeking help for gambling problems. Significant work continued on the strategic planning process that started last year. As part of this effort staff provided substantial support to the Bylaws and Transition Committees, which included arranging a two-day meeting in Chicago.

Staff participated on numerous web and voice conference calls with Awards, Conference, Federal Affairs, Helpline and NPGAW Committees. The Education Committee reviewed (and staff processed) 67 applications for Continuing Education Credit. NCPG also provided assistance to a number of Affiliates last year. Staff advised the Illinois Council on Board and governance issues, provided mailing lists to the Florida and Washington State Affiliates, developed a legislative plan for the Pennsylvania Council, and wrote letters of support for the Iowa and West Virginia chapters. Individuals from Alabama, Georgia, Maine, North Dakota, Virginia and Wyoming requested information on Affiliate membership and we provided materials and suggestions in conjunction with the Affiliates Chair. The North Carolina Council on Problem Gambling became the 35th Affiliate Member in June 2007. At the request of the Affiliates Committee we developed a list of contacts in states without Affiliates. We supported the formation of two Interest Groups, one on Asian Gambling and the other on Standards, Policy and Regulation.


National office staff held an all-day planning retreat, plus intensive monthly scheduling sessions in addition to weekly staff meetings. Metrics on membership and certification were added to the monthly report to the Executive Committee. The President traveled to the national office for a two-day work and planning session, and scheduled monthly calls with the Executive Director to identify critical action items prior to the Executive Conference committee calls. The national office responded directly to many emailed requests for problem gambling assistance. Staff sent hundreds of emails per week, including an average of one every other week to the Board. Annual reviews were conducted for all three staff members and the Executive Director produced a three-year personal development plan. The NCPG office lease was terminated by our landlord and we developed a plan to search for suitable locations to lease or purchase.

At the end of 2007 we had 442 paid memberships, an increase of 20%. Memberships increased in all three categories. The improvements to our MIS systems facilitated membership tracking and renewals. Throughout the year we solicited new corporate member when presented with opportunities.

Our financial performance in 2007 was impressive and we ended the year with revenues of $694,000 and expenses of $538,500, for a net of $156,000. This is even more significant as our budget projected a slim loss of $8,000. Staff worked with the Treasurer to prepare an investment policy and investigate options for our $100,000 reserve fund. Based on these parameters a Commercial Investment Sweep Account was selected to preserve our liquidity but yield a much higher rate of return. We also received another unqualified audit in 2007.

2007 was an extremely busy and productive year for the National Council on Problem Gambling. We exceeded our revenue goals, maintained our reserve fund, bolstered our core programs, increased our membership, improved our advocacy and initiated strategic planning to ensure NCPG will be able to continue to provide leadership in the problem gambling field.

Of course, these accomplishments are only possible with the support of the Board of Directors, in particular the members of the Executive Committee. On behalf of Linda Abonyo, Program Administrator, and Melissa Martin, Administrative Assistant, thank you to the Officers, Directors and Members for the opportunity to work with you to increase public awareness of pathological gambling, ensure the widespread availability of treatment for problem gamblers and their families and to encourage research and programs for prevention and education.

Sincerely,

Keith S. Whyte
Executive Director
National Helpline Report
4th Quarter 2007

In each issue of the National News the National Council on Problem Gambling will provide an overview of the calls placed to the National Problem Gambling Helpline Network (800-522-4700) for the previous months along with a summary of the total calls received year to date.

The National Problem Gambling Helpline Network is a single nationwide point of access network comprised of 27 call centers, with several centers answering calls for multiple states. Each call center is staffed with professionals who are fully trained to deal with problem gambling calls including those in crisis situations.

Since January 2007, the National Helpline has received nearly 225,000 calls. The month of January continues to depict the highest call volume with more than 22,000 calls placed to the National Helpline, which is a 10% increase from January 2006. Overall, this quarter saw a 7% increase in calls volume from July through September 2007 in comparison to last quarter.

The National Problem Gambling Helpline Network is a 24/7, 100% confidential resource that provides hope and help to problem gamblers and their loved ones. The helpline number (800-522-4700) can be dialed toll free anytime, anywhere in the United States as well as from various parts of Canada and the U.S. Virgin Islands.

Helpline Network Call Volume – 4th Quarter 2007

Helpline Calls 2006 vs 2007 Month-to-Date
Membership / Supporter Form

The NCPG is the national advocate for programs and services to assist problem gamblers and their families

Name (Please Print Clearly or Type) ________________________________________________

Company: ___________________________ Job Title: ________________________________

Address: ____________________________________________________________

City: __________________ State/Province: __________________ Zip/Postal: __________

Phone: _______ Fax: _______ E-mail: ____________________________

Memberships

☐ Individual Member

Includes full voting membership, the NCPG Newsletter, member certificate, bi-monthly subscription to Addiction Professional, discount on literature and conferences.

$75.00

***Contact your local Affiliate for a discount on Individual Membership

☐ Individual Member Plus

Includes all benefits of the Individual Member level, with the addition of a subscription to International Gambling Studies, a peer reviewed interdisciplinary journal in gambling studies.

$100.00

☐ Corporate Member

Includes full voting membership, NCPG Newsletter, membership plaque, Annual report. All employees are eligible for discounted member rate at National Conference.

$5,000.00

Support Opportunities

☐ Supporter

receives NCPG Newsletter “National News” Only.

$25.00

☐ Contributor

receives NCPG Newsletter, thanks in newsletter, framed certificate.

$250.00

☐ Silver

receives NCPG Newsletter, thanks in newsletter, framed certificate, and Annual Report.

$500.00

☐ Gold

receives all above as well as National Council’s “Book of the Year”.

$1,000.00

☐ Platinum

receives all of above, with membership plaque.

$2,500.00

Total: ____________________________

Today’s Date ______ / ______ / ______

Method of Payment: Circle one

Visa Master Card AMEX Check # _______ Money Order

Credit Card #: ____________________________ Exp. Date: __________

Signature ____________________________ CSC __________________________

NCPG is a non profit organization, Federal Tax ID # 51-0141872. Your contribution is tax deductible.

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Ed Looney Retires

Ed Looney recently retired as the Executive Director of the Council on Compulsive Gambling of New Jersey. The Council hosted a retirement party in his honor on Sunday, December 16 and over 150 people braved snow, ice and sleet to celebrate the career and honor the character of an extraordinary man. Tributes and testimonials from friends, family and colleagues filled a 60-page program. Two of Ed’s hallmarks were his compassion and serenity.

Ed served as Executive Director of CCGNJ for 15 years. In 2002, he was the recipient of the National Council’s Custer Award for Lifetime Honors and has received numerous other honors and awards.

WANTED!
DEPUTY DIRECTOR
FLORIDA

The Florida Council on Compulsive Gambling (FCCG) is a non-profit organization under contract with State government, whose mission is to serve as a resource to support individuals adversely affected by gambling. The FCCG operates the State’s 24-hour Problem Gambling Crisis Helpline. The FCCG sponsors training activities, including training health care professionals on how to assess and treat; conducts and sponsors research; and provides assistance to health care, employee assistance, law enforcement and government professionals, industry, clergy, academia and the consumer marketplace on gambling related issues. The FCCG maintains a neutral stance on gambling, is governed by a volunteer Board of Directors and is an affiliate of the National Council on Problem Gambling.

The Florida Council on Compulsive Gambling is currently seeking a Deputy Director. Salary Range — $60–$70K based upon qualifications, plus full benefits.

Submit resume either via fax at (407) 865-6103 or email to jcampbell@gamblinghelp.org
The Counselor’s Corner
Save the Date!

By Joanna Franklin, Co-Chair, International Gambling Counselor Certification Board

The announcements are out and the planning is in full swing for the NCPG’s annual National Conference on Problem Gambling, June 26–28 at the Hyatt Regency in Long Beach, CA. This year’s national conference is as international as it is national with a star studded cast of characters, including speakers from Australia, Austria, Canada, Japan, New Zealand, Singapore and the United Kingdom.

Highlights include a presentation by Tim Fong, MD, on a recent international think tank on the DSM V criteria for pathological gambling. The plenary session, “Building a Road Map for Pathological Gambling in the DSM V,” discusses possibilities such as: Will we finally have the quotation marks from “problem gambling” removed? Will we keep five of ten criteria for pathological gambling? Will any of the criteria change?

Other popular topics addressed include family therapy, diversity and multicultural issues, and practical clinical applications such as Evidence-Based Approach to the Pharmacological Treatment of Pathological Gambling by Jon Grant, MD, and Marc Potenza, MD, PhD. I am very grateful to Rena Nora, MD and Mike Catanzaro for their presentations on Gambling and Problem Gambling and the Military, a frequently neglected but very important area.

Opportunities to complete six hours on ‘how to do clinical supervision’ will be made available in the Advanced Clinical Track (ACT). This meets one of several requirements for those certified counselors wishing to become Board Approved Clinical Consultants (BACC’s).

In addition to the clinical tracks, counselors will likely be tempted by sessions on prevention, public policy and responsible gaming presentations. The conference planning committee has created a Prevention Showcase, thus making it easier for all attendees to hear more about current efforts nationally and internationally. Clearly, prevention needs to be a part of every comprehensive care program for problem gambling. Targeting youth and at risk populations is the logical starting point. This new format will allow attendees to hear about the basics — what is and isn’t real primary prevention, and who is doing what where. Our goal is to grow into a real evaluation of prevention program effectiveness with a long term view to future efforts and annual reports at our national conferences as we move toward the ever popular best practice standard.

Finally, a unique and focused Community & Recovery Day on Saturday will look at recovery and community with Gamblers Anonymous and Gam-Anon members joining treatment professionals to explore shared efforts to increase recovery opportunities for all. This specially priced one day program is especially inviting to those from the community who may be interested in the existing services, not just in California, but everywhere.

The International Gambling Counselor Certification Board will have on display the new name, new logo, a survey opportunity, information on our computerized exam schedule and certification information for any and all interested in investigating how certification may enhance your practice efforts.

Counselors, please look to this wonderful collection of topics and presenters to update your gambling treatment knowledge and collect those CEUs for certification and licensure. This collection of excellent presenters does indeed represent a wonderful opportunity to learn, network and share with colleagues from around the community and around the world. Don’t overlook the excellent tourist opportunities in the southern California area and consider combining your CEUs with some well earned vacation time. Hope to see you there.
NCPG 2008 Objectives

Core Purpose: To serve as the national advocate for programs and services to assist problem gamblers and their families.

Mission: To increase public awareness of pathological gambling, ensure the widespread availability of treatment for problem gamblers and their families, and to encourage research and programs for prevention and education.

Strategic Plan Goals:
1. Provide core programs to ensure the availability of services for problem gamblers and their families.
2. Optimize the size and function of the NCPG Board of Directors.
3. Recruit 50 Affiliate members by 2014.
4. Recruit 25,000 Individual members to the NCPG.
5. Recruit 500 Organizational members for the NCPG.
6. Develop a comprehensive Development Program for the NCPG.
7. Encourage the certification of 4,000 gambling counselors.
8. Create a state-of-the art Management Information System.
9. Advocate for national funding for services for problem gamblers and their families.
10. Plan increase in the NCPG full-time national staff.
11. Create a program to develop the NCPG partnerships with universities and colleges.
12. Create a Reserve Fund for the NCPG.
13. Create an Endowment Fund for the NCPG.
14. Increase public awareness and recognition of the NCPG.

1. Core Program Objective—Conduct the Annual National Conference on Problem Gambling Prevention, Treatment, Responsible Gaming, Research & Recovery.
   **Staff and Conference Committee Tasks:**
   A. Meet budget of $130,000 in 2008 net conference revenue. (July 2008)
   B. Increase the 2008 conference registration to 550 attendees. (July 2008)
   C. Select the site for 2010 conference. (February 2008)
   D. Release the 2011 conference RFP. (August 2008)

2. Core Program Objective—Conduct National Problem Gambling Awareness Week, the national grassroots campaign to educate healthcare providers and raise public awareness about problem gambling.
   **Staff and NPGAW Committee Tasks:**
   A. Enlist the participation of 150 participants in 2008. (March 2008)
   B. Clarify memberships & sponsorships for fundraising. (December 2008)
   C. Develop a qualitative and quantitative evaluation process. (February 2008)

3. Core Program Objective—Promote the National Helpline Number (800-522-4700) and Network, our single nationwide point of access to help for problem gambling.
   **Staff and Helpline Committee Tasks:**
   A. Maintain data summaries from 20 call centers on the Network. (December 2008)
   B. Clarify and present mission statement to the Board. (June 2008)
   C. Complete white paper that weighs the advantages and disadvantages associated with a consolidation plan of the various toll free numbers into a single national number (February 2008)
   D. Develop bids on new technology pilot projects for Board approval (May 2008)

4. Core Program Objective—Increase public awareness of problem gambling by providing a comprehensive website that meets needs of consumers, counselors, media and the public, as well as distributing press releases of national interest.
   **Staff and Communications Committee Tasks:**
   A. Develop baseline site metrics. (April 2008)
   B. Develop plan to increase site traffic. (December 2008)
   C. Distribute a minimum of five press releases. (December 2008)

5. Core Program Objective—Advocate for Federal legislation to provide grants for prevention, treatment and research to increase capacity of state agencies and non-profit programs.
   **Staff and Federal Affairs Committee Tasks:**
   A. Continue to develop a longterm legislative strategy. (February 2008)
   B. Reintroduce the Comprehensive Awareness of Problem Gambling Act. (March 2008)

6. Program Objective—Administer the National Certified Gambling Counselor (NCGC) program.
   **Staff Tasks:**
   A. Implement new contract with International Gambling Counselor Certification Board. (June 2008)
   B. Convene symposium on certification with objective to gain reciprocity among all competency-based gambler counselor certification boards. (October 2008)

7. Program Objective—Gather the information on the problem gambling field nationally, through a survey of state problem gambling services.
   **Staff Tasks:**
   A. Identify the parameters. (November 2008)
   B. Begin the data collection. (December 2009)

8. Program Objective—Develop a national research agenda to guide Federal policymakers.
   **Staff and Research Committee Tasks:**
   A. Survey leading problem gambling researchers about the most prominent research needs in the problem gambling field and develop an agenda for NCPG to publish and promote. (August 2008)

9. Program Objective—Influence development of the DSM V criteria on pathological gambling.
   **Staff Task:**
   A. Support UCLA DSM V Think Tank. (June 2008)
In Appreciation of Howard “Chip” Silverman, PhD

Written by Joanna Franklin

Dr. Howard Silverman was “Chip” to his friends. His family and some close friends were by his side when he quietly passed on Thursday evening March 6, 2008 after a battle with cancer. We lost a hero in Maryland and a core element of problem gambling treatment.

Chip had a unique and important role in Maryland, not just in the problem gambling field but in addictions, education, sports and with his writing career. I met Chip in 1979 when he was one of the officials present for the ribbon cutting ceremony of the first state funded gambling treatment program in the nation November 1, 1979. It was Chip’s tireless work that allowed for the Maryland Drug Abuse Administration (now the ADAA) to establish the Johns Hopkins Compulsive Gambling Counseling Center with support from Robert Custer and Monsignor Joe Dunne.

In 1978 after the passing of our landmark legislation creating the first state funded gambling treatment program Chip went about learning all he could about pathological gambling. As he often joked after reading all the articles published by the Brecksville VA Gambling Treatment experts, Robert Custer MD, Julian Taber PhD, Jules Mor- evic PhD et al. — in one afternoon — having read 10 authors he then became the “11th expert” on gambling treatment research.

Chip convinced the then Governor to fund the new legislation and give the program a home with a building on the grounds of Mt. Wilson State Hospital. We were off and running and he was watching over us. This was just the beginning of many years of work with gamblers and their family members, Dr. Silverman as the acting director of the Alcohol and Drug Abuse Administration taught us many lessons about the political and legislative aspects of treatment delivery. He created the first prison based treatment program at Jessup Penitentiary and saw to it that family members were admitted as clients in their own right, not only as adjuncts to gamblers. He also made sure that we had a means test in place to allow for the gambling debts of clients as we assessed finances and sliding scale eligibility, innovative today and a first at that time. When he left state government for the private sector he worked and succeeded in putting in place benefits for problem gambling treatment within the Magellan Health Care System.

He remained our friend before, after and during our funding years. He invited me to teach a section on pathological gambling to his Loyola College class on addictions for several years committed to students learning about problem gambling as they learned about addictions. He graciously accepted our invitations to present at conferences and trainings statewide as well as at a national conference on lessons learned in Maryland. A popular speaker he was known for his remarkable wit and dry humor. His many years of work with addicts and gamblers became a real anchor for those seeking care from someone who could “speak our language.” His private practice included many gamblers seeking care and understanding.

But beyond his importance to the Maryland Council on Problem Gambling and problem gamblers and their families in Maryland, Chip was known for his other accomplishments as one of the original “Diner Guys” made famous in a movie directed by Barry Levinson. He also has “Tin Men” to his credits and six different books he has published. One accomplishment of which he was most proud was the champion lacrosse team from Morgan State College in 1971. This first all black lacrosse team took the championship that year and the “Ten Bears” as they came to be known went into history and their story will soon be a film.

Today as we all paid our last respects to Chip most of the Ten Bears were there, the elected state delegate from the State House of Representives, the surgeon, the businessmen, the educators and therapists to name a few. They all thought of Chip as an adopted Dad and someone that was always there for them on and off the field.

Chip was more than brave facing his terminal illness — he kept his famous sense of humor to the very end. I am so grateful for his collaboration, mentorship, support, guidance and friendship. I am not sure where we will be without him but I know we are, in part, who we are because of him. We have a rich history of care for gamblers in Maryland. He paved the way for us to step up to the plate every legislative session and ask again for the funding we once had to care for the clients, their spouses and children. I am sure sooner or later we will have such funding again in Maryland and we will not start from scratch and re-invent wheels because pioneers like Chip Silverman have shown us the basics, encouraged developments and supported advances over the years. We know where to start and have a good idea of where we would like to go.

Among his many legacies Chip also leaves behind the Maryland Problem Gambling Coalition made up of partners from the Maryland Council on Problem Gambling, the University of Maryland, Medical School, Department of Psychiatry, Loyola College, Department of Pastoral Counseling, and Silvia Martins, Researcher of Johns Hopkins University. Chip was proud of the Coalition and hopeful that together we would accomplish things we could not do alone.

Our thanks does not go far enough to acknowledge how hard you worked for our “cause” Chip. But our gratitude will be continued in every effort to help problem gamblers and their families in a tradition of service you established in Maryland in 1978 that has grown across the U.S. and around the world. Our lives are poorer for his loss but so much richer for his life.

With many thanks my friend.

jf
Full page events flyer REGISTRATION FORM
Calendar of Events

For more information on these events, please visit our website www.ncpgambling.org

April 2008

Indiana Problem Gambling Awareness Program: Phase V/VI
Date: April 8–9, 2008
Location: Indianapolis, IN
Contact: Jennifer Kelley at jenkell@indiana.edu or 812-855-7831

NATI: Counseling the Pathological Gambler (I and II)
Web-Based, On Demand
Contact: Elizabeth George at info@nati.org or 218-722-1503

Responsible Gaming Council: Discovery 2008 Conference
Date: April 13–16, 2008
Location: The Westin Hotel, Ottawa, ON CANADA
Contact: Robin Wilner at robinw@rgco.org or 416-499-9800

May 2008

NATI: Counseling the Pathological Gambler (I and II)
Web-Based, On Demand
Contact: Elizabeth George at info@nati.org or 218-722-1503

Vermont Council on Problem Gambling: Annual Conference on Problem Gambling
Dates: May 19–20, 2008
Location: The Holiday Inn, Route 7, Rutland, VT
Contact: Joy Mitchell at 802-463-9557

2nd Asian Pacific Problem Gambling and Addictions Conference
Dates: May 22–24, 2008
Location: Royal Plaza Hotel, Hong Kong
Contact: info@appgac.org or 852-2827-4567

June 2008

NATI: Counseling the Pathological Gambler (I and II)
Web-Based, On Demand
Contact: Elizabeth George at info@nati.org or 218-722-1503

Date: June 20, 2008
Location: Hilton Garden Inn, Detroit, MI
Contact: Tricia Verrill at 313-967-5451

NCPG 22nd Annual Conference
Dates: June 26–28, 2008
Location: Hyatt Regency Long Beach, Long Beach, CA
Contact: ncpg@ncpgambling.org
We’re Ready to Listen.

If you or someone you know has a gambling problem, give us a call.
The National Problem Gambling Helpline provides toll-free, confidential help 24 hours a day.

1-800-522-4700