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Social Work Advocacy & Organizing

(This excerpt was reprinted from an article on the NASW website www.socialworkers.org)

The original mission of social work had much to do with championing the rights of society's most vulnerable members, from children to homeless people to the physically disabled. That mission remains the same over 100 years later.

Social workers continue to carry the torch for those who need help to succeed in our society. Indeed, while only a small percentage of the nation's half a million social workers count advocacy as their primary job duty, all social workers carry a philosophical charge to protect and empower the vulnerable and disadvantaged. They do so through a variety of means including writing op-ed pieces, lobbying, organizing local protests, and helping to change laws that adversely affect vulnerable and disadvantaged members of society. Today's social workers employ a full range of techniques for advocacy ranging from protests and sit-ins to harnessing the power of the Internet to network with others to affect change.

The knowledge, values and ethics base of social work education uniquely equips social workers to take on advocacy roles. For one thing, they see first-hand the difficulties faced by clients who lack the resources for maintaining the basic human needs for themselves and their families. Social workers will work with social service agencies to facilitate economic maintenance, protect a social safety net or ensure the availability of health and mental health services.

Mobilizing resources, public opinion, interacting with agencies whose responsibilities are to serve the needs of vulnerable populations are ways social workers champion the rights of individuals, communities and society at large through active participation in the political process. Whether concerned about an individual's needs or social policy reform, social workers are most frequently the voice for change and social justice.

Often, the needs of individuals and policy overlap. Here is an example: A social worker works for an organization dedicated to serving homeless and low-income families. Several of her homeless clients tell her they are unable to receive emergency food stamps. When she explores why, she finds a bureaucratic glitch: Because homeless families have no address they are not considered residents and are therefore ineligible for the aid.

In the following weeks, the social worker meets with area service providers and state legislators, who agree to clarify the state policy and implement new regulations allowing homeless people to receive food stamps. The social worker continues her advocacy efforts at the national level, providing testimony that eventually helps to pass the Hunger Prevention Act of 1988 (P.L. 100-435).

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Editor's Note

In the interest of unbiased and accurate communications, *The Gatekeeper* subscribes to the importance of avoiding materials that might imply discriminatory language, sexual, racial, ethnic, or other kinds of stereotyping or bias. *The Gatekeeper* is committed to the fair and equal treatment of individuals and groups. Materials submitted should not promote discriminatory attitudes or assumptions about people. Views expressed in this publication are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official position of NASW.

NASW Idaho Chapter Leadership

Elected Board Members (voting)

President: Linda Burch, LCSW, 208/345-4060 (burchlinda@hotmail.com)

Vice President: Don Pierson, DSW, ACSW, 208/282-3377 (pierdona@isu.edu)

Secretary: Lesa Huff, MSW, LSW, 208/769-1515

Treasurer: Jacquie Drake, LMSW, 208/344-5442 (jacquie@jhecker.com)

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Central Branch Chair (Boise/Treasure Valley): Lorrie Sloan Breshears, MSW, LSW,
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Southeast Branch Chair (Pocatello/Idaho Falls): currently vacant

MSW Student Representative: Lisa Shine, LSW (lshine_2001@yahoo.com)

BSW Student Representative: Donald Schweitzer, 208/524-1273
(clubhousing@hotmail.com)

Legislative Committee Chair: Judy Last, LSW, 208/867-1465 (id500strong@hotmail.com)

Elected Leadership (non-voting)

Chapter Committee on Nominations & Leadership Identification (CCNLI) Chair: Cheryl
Simpson-Whitaker, MSW, 208/429-1203 (cheryls-w@cableone.net)

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CCNLI North Branch Representative: Judy Scanland, EdD, LCSW, 509/758-6011

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CCNLI Southeast Branch Representative: Judy Deffinger, LMSW, 208/232-4134

Delegate Assembly Alternate Representative: Andrea Leeds, LCSW, ACSW, 208/322-6775
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Appointed Leadership

CEU Committee Chair: (interim) Lois Malpass, LCSW, 208/426-5938
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PACE Committee Chair: Delmar Stone, MSW Candidate, CADC, 208/466-0511
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Letter from the President

by Linda M. Burch, LCSW, NASW Idaho President

Winter Greetings!

Again the seasons change as we enter 2004. We face new challenges and experiences as social workers where nothing remains static with our commitment to be “agents of change” across settings.

- The Legislative Session will be in full swing by the time you receive this newsletter and the Idaho House and Senate will be making decisions that will affect each of us in some way. Look for the information box in this newsletter related to changes in the law and rules that govern social work licensure (i.e. one hour of ethics C.E. every year from 4 hours every 4 years) in Idaho. These proposed changes will be presented to our legislators this session. Refer to this webpage (www2.state.id.us/ibol/swo.htm) to view the proposed changes. NASW representatives attend the Social Work Licensure Board meetings and have been involved in this process.
- Go to the National NASW webpage at www.socialworkers.org and access the Delegate Assembly link. The Delegate Assembly 2005 webpage is

designed to receive input now regarding policy proposals and for voting on program priorities. There are deadlines for your input and votes. On line you can monitor the timeline for Delegate Assembly 2005 scheduled for July 21-23, 2005 in Washington D.C.

- Celebrate National Social Work Month with us March 12, 2004 in Boise. This year’s theme: *The Power of Social Work: Pass it On.* Join us!

I urge you to take part and give comment now on those NASW policies listed on the national webpage and to sign-up for the NASW Idaho Legislative Listserv for current and federal policy updates impacting social workers and those we serve. Your voice is valuable, please take the opportunity to participate in the above arenas to influence “change.” Yours in being “Agents of Change in Setting Just Social Policies,” Linda M. Burch, President ☺

The Bottom Line . . .

by Jacquie Drake, LMSW, NASW Idaho Treasurer

. . . for the prior fiscal year was recently finalized by the auditors and accepted by the Board of Directors at the January meeting.

The report by an independent audit firm, Gunther, Tondrick & Goode, Chtd. of Boise, shows that at June 30, 2003, assets of \$51,355 exceeded liabilities and deferred revenue by \$28,768. Revenues for the fiscal year were \$792 better than budget, but expenses were \$1,381 over budget, for a net change of \$589. The auditors found no exceptions to acceptable accounting principles in Chapter bookkeeping.

Last fiscal year’s expense “overage” resulted from the Board’s decision in January 2003 to invest \$3,000 in the Chapter student stipend/scholarship fund. The “expense” was really an investment in the future of social work education in Idaho. So far this fiscal year, we’ve made additional investments in social work education: another \$500 to the Chapter student stipend/scholarship fund, \$1,000 to the BSU School of Social Work, and \$745 to ISU’s Social Work Department.

Our Chapter’s financial solvency depends on three primary factors: cost-containment measures, membership recruitment, and non-dues income. By pairing cost-containment efforts with increased membership, we can meet the challenge of matching necessary expenses with expected income. But it’s the income from non-dues sources that enables us to extend our reach beyond merely staffing an office and mailing out a quarterly newsletter. At the midpoint of this current fiscal year, for example, our positive net income is directly due to the successful joint venture with the Idaho Clinical Society – the Trauma Conference held at ISU in September 2003.

Your continuing support of CEU offerings, conferences and workshops, special fundraising events, and even direct donations are essential to the growth and health of our organization. By working together to strengthen our professional organization, we can achieve the theme of Social Work Month – “*The Power of Social Work: Pass It On.*” ☺



The Power of Social Work: Pass It On!

Since 1984, March has officially been designated as a month to acknowledge and recognize the contributions to the quality of life made by America’s half-million social workers. Often working behind the scenes, social workers are trained to address problems that some cannot or others hope will simply go away. The theme identified this year by the National Association of Social Workers, “*The Power of Social Work: Pass It On,*” has special meaning to social workers because, as social workers:

- We pass the power of our work on to the people whom we help, giving them renewed hope.
- We pass the purpose of social work on to the community to show how our role benefits everyone.
- We pass the passion of social work on from one generation of social workers to the next.

“In schools, hospitals, clinics and community action programs, social workers have made—and continue to make—the world a better place, one person, one family, one challenge at a time,” said Gary Bailey, MSW, President of NASW.

To access a valuable Social Work Month toolkit to assist you with activities in your workplace, go to the national website at www.socialworkers.org. ☺



Chapter News

by Wendy Cary, Executive Director

Congratulations!!

As announced recently in the Idaho Statesman, NASW

Idaho member, **Betsy**

Dunklin, was recently named first

Executive Director of the Idaho Nonprofit Development Center in Boise. The center will help nonprofit organizations acquire the skills, resources and capacity to achieve their missions. The INDC will also offer training and consulting to nonprofits, promote collaboration to meet community needs and work to increase the awareness and understanding of philanthropy and nonprofit issues in Idaho.

Social Worker Elected Mayor

“The social worker should advocate changes in policy and legislation to improve social conditions and improve social justice.” (*NASW Code of Ethics*.) Running for office is one of the best ways a social worker can become an advocate for social change in the political arena. **Jessica**

Gasiorowski, a social worker in Placerville, Idaho and member of NASW Idaho’s End-of-Life Committee, has taken that step. Jessica ran for, and was elected Mayor of Placerville. She was sworn into office in early January 2004. Jessica, we of the Idaho Chapter of NASW salute you!

Many Thanks to Members!!

Valerie Haddon has been involved with our Chapter PACE Committee for many years, most recently as the Committee Chair, and originally as a student intern working to initially develop the PACE Committee. Valerie recently stepped down as Chair of the PACE Committee and we want to thank her for all of her important efforts in supporting NASW Idaho’s outreach related to candidate election. **Delmar Stone** has been appointed to fill the role of PACE Chair.

Marian Schultz has contributed so much to quality continuing education for Idaho social workers as the Chair for our Chapter CEU Approval Committee. She has provided her leadership and knowledge to the committee regarding the criteria utilized by the Idaho State Board of Social Work Examiners when reviewing CEUs for licensure renewal each year. Marian resigned from this position last fall and **Lois Malpass**, a fellow committee member has agreed to take on the responsibilities of chairing the committee until June 30, 2004.

Help Needed!

Chapter CEU Approval Committee Members

If you would like to learn more about the criteria for CEU offerings to be accepted by the Idaho State Licensing Board, help approve CEU applications submitted to NASW for approval, and be aware of upcoming CEU offerings that are “hot-off-the-press”, please contact the Committee Chair, **Lois Malpass**, at lmalpass@boisestate.edu. We need two additional individuals to serve on the committee, which meets once a month for approximately one hour to review applications. This meeting is usually around the lunch hour on the first Wednesday of the month and is held via conference call.

Media Stories

The Chapter is looking for experts in the areas of homelessness, access to healthcare, Headstart, mental health, and developmental disabilities to help us develop media stories around these practice arenas/issues. Please contact the Chapter office at 208/345-4060 or naswid@qwest.net.

Resources

Legal Issue of the Month

The “Legal Issue of the Month” available on the national website at www.socialworkers.org provides an overview of a specific legal topic relevant to social work practice. The topic list is updated monthly. Previous topics remain on the site for viewing. Below are some of the legal topics addressed:

- Social Work Ethics and Non-Compete Clauses in Employment
- What are the Rights of Children in Gay and Lesbian Families?
- Contracts and Independent Contractor Agreements
- Are Licensed Clinical Social Workers Authorized to Provide Expert Witness Testimony Concerning the Diagnosis and Treatment of Emotional and Mental Disorders?

Dismantling Racism Tools

Western States Center’s mission is to build a progressive movement for social, economic, racial and environmental justice in eight western states including Idaho. Visit www.westernstatescenter.org for downloadable tools related to racial justice organizing.

Resource for Children Impacted by Substance Abuse

The “Children’s Program Kit” developed by SAMHSA childhood mental health professionals covers a wide variety of topics and practical teaching strategies for elementary, middle, and high school children. The kit also contains information for therapists to distribute to their clients to help parents understand the needs of their children, as well as training materials for substance abuse treatment staff who plan to offer support groups for children. For more information, go to: www.health.org.

Women’s Research News

The Institute for Women’s Policy Research News Reporter is now available online at www.iwpr.org. The Research News Reporter, distributed monthly, highlights informative, innovative, and sometimes controversial research relating to women and their families. The December 2003 edition includes:

- Teen Parents and Abstinence Education Research Findings: 2003
- Hunger, Homelessness Still on the Rise in Major U.S. Cities
- State Fact Sheets on TANF
- Afghan Women Fight for Citizenship

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Chapter News *(continued from page 4)*

New Practice Updates!

Here's the latest information from the National NASW Program, Policy and Practice Department. Please access these documents on the national website at www.socialworkers.org or call the national office at 1-800-638-8799.

- Clinical Social Work Practice Update: *Health & Behavior Assessment CPT Codes*
- Clinical Social Work Practice Alert: *HIPAA Electronic Codes for Clinical Social Workers in Private Practice*
- Child Welfare Practice Update: *ASFA and Substance Abuse: Understanding the Issues Impacting Two Systems of Care*
- Adolescent Health Practice Update: *Adolescents and Club Drugs*
- Aging Practice Update: *Expanding the Long-Term Care Continuum: Assisted Living and Social Work Practice*

Grants and Fellowships

The NASW Foundation is accepting applications for the 2004 – 2005 fellowship and scholarship awards December 15, 2003 through March 15, 2004.

- The **Jane B. Aron Doctoral Fellowship** is awarded to a social work doctoral candidate engaged in dissertation research in health care policy and practice. One \$2,000 fellowship will be awarded.
- The **Consuelo W. Gosnell Memorial MSW Scholarships** are awarded to master's degree candidates in social work interested in working with American Indian/Alaska Native and Hispanic/Latino populations or in public and voluntary nonprofit agency settings. Up to 10 scholarships, ranging from \$1,000 to \$4,000 will be awarded.
- The **Verne LaMarr Lyons Memorial MSW Scholarship** is awarded to a master's degree candidate in social work who demonstrates an interest in or has experience with health/mental health practice and has a commitment to working in the African American community. One \$1,000 scholarship will be awarded.

Please visit www.naswfoundation.org to learn more about these programs. E-mail inquiries may be sent to naswfoundation@naswdc.org or contact Kerri Criswell, 800-638-8799, ext. 211 or Bonita Williams, 800-638-8799, ext. 298.

Mentoring Program Participant Testimonials

"After having spent time with my MSW Mentor, Maureen O'Leary, I believe that I have already reaped the benefits of my mentor. Having someone to listen, bounce ideas off of, help keep me grounded, and validate some of the fears, concerns, and joys of being a social worker has been helpful. Our personalities and life experiences were well matched and I enjoy our 'coffee time' together. By our mutual decision, we are more informal and meet approximately twice a month. Our time is well spent, refreshing, and provides me with a new perspective."
-Linda Thompson, MSW, Mentee

"From the moment I heard about the Mentoring Program, I knew it was something I wanted to be involved in. I have had some wonderful mentors in my life and meeting with Linda is one way I can reciprocate the many positive experiences I have had. Linda and I have had fun getting to know each other, exchanging ideas and resources, exploring her goals and further developing the role she sees for herself as a social worker. In addition, taking part in the Mentoring Program has given me the opportunity to become more involved in my local NASW Chapter and provided me with personal insights and growth."
-Maureen O'Leary BSW, MSW, Mentor

Welcome New Members

As of January 3, 2004, we have 653 Idaho Chapter members!! Many thanks for your ongoing support and a warm welcome to those who joined in October, November and December.

Far North Branch
Maureen Benson

North Branch
LaVaughn Smith
Crystal Schluter
Susan Keeley
Amy Hurd
Skeeter Lynch

Southwest Branch
Mary Kraemer
Annette Prophet
Hilary Moses

Central Branch
Dennis Hardziej
Rebecca Long
Wendy Perez
Deanah Messenger
Jody Gray
Linda Rawlings
Patti Bowman
Loretta Constantinidis

Southeast Branch
Annette Cook
Sharon Rivas
Christine Hesse

IMPORTANT!

Changes in Idaho Licensure Social Work Law and Rules

Go to the Idaho Bureau of Occupational Licenses at www2.state.id.us/ibol/swo.htm and read the proposed law and rule changes—both will come before the Idaho Legislature this session! Please visit the website for all the changes. Here are a few:

- Continuing education for ethics, 1 hour per year (temporary rule)
- Change in LCSW continuing education (temporary rule)
- Changes in supervision for LCSW (temporary rule)
- Change in Licensure Board composition (proposed law change)



Social Work Month Celebration March 12, 2004

Please be sure to join us for an informative workshop given by Morley Glickin, DSW, entitled "Learning from Resilient People: Lessons We Can Apply to Social Work Practice" (6 CEUs for all levels of licensure). Also, attend a special celebration dinner program at the Idaho Historical Museum that evening. Brochures were mailed out mid-January to all members. Please contact the Chapter Office at 208/345-4060 or naswid@qwest.net, if you did not receive your copy.

Idaho End-of-Life Coalition Launches Ad Hoc Committee to Study Advance Care Planning in Idaho

by Cheryl Simpson-Whitaker, MSW, NASW Idaho CCNLI Chair

NASW Idaho continues to play a significant role in statewide coalition activities to promote broad-based, compassionate palliative care for terminally ill people and the frail elderly who are completing life.

A Better Way Coalition: Life on Our Own Terms is studying the state of advance care planning in Idaho. A white paper will be released in the fall of 2004 including proposed actions to raise community awareness of the issue. Promoting advance care planning is congruent with the social work value of self-determination. *“Advance care planning—thoughtful conversations and instructions aimed at directing future health care—remains one of the most important themes of the movement to improve care of the dying because it concerns our right to choose or refuse treatment that will largely determine the quality of life’s final chapters after we can no longer speak for ourselves.”* (*Living Well at the End of Life*, RAND, ISBN: 0-8330-3455-3).

The Committee welcomes **Sheryl Ford**, NASW Idaho member who will be conducting research for this project! For more information or to contribute comments, contact Cheryl Simpson-Whitaker MSW, Coalition Coordinator, at cheryls-w@cableone.net.

NASW Idaho End-of-Life Project

by Cheryl Simpson-Whitaker, MSW, Chair

The NASW Idaho End-Of-Life Committee reviewed and submitted comments on the draft NASW Standards of Social Work Practice in Palliative and End-of-Life Care to the national office in December. Comments focused on:

- Clarifying the use and definition of ‘palliative care’
- Expanding the section on bereavement
- Describing the type of training for MSW practitioners and including training for BSW practitioners
- Including the statement that social workers should have the *“ability to acknowledge and accept that suffering and mortality are part of the human experience”*
- Expanding ethical responsibility to mitigate compassion fatigue, to include support for co-workers and others on interdisciplinary teams
- Expanding the scope of continuing education to include non-clinical social workers. *“Include an emphasis on the importance of continuing education that addresses ethical dilemmas faced by social workers related to palliative and end-of-life care situations. Social workers can be instrumental in problem resolution in these situations—and may not have a clinical background.”*
- Including more explicit language about advocating for additional courses on death & dying, palliative care, and illness in social work education

Karyn Walsh, NASW Senior Policy Associate for Palliative and End of Life Care conveyed her thanks to NASW Idaho End-of-Life Committee members: *“Your commentary is appreciated. After review of your insightful comments, several amendments were made to the standards before final review of the NASW Board. Your expertise and quick eye have been helpful.”* The Chapter was recently notified that the NASW Board of Directors approved the Draft Standards and they will be presented at the National Hospice and Palliative Care Conference in Las Vegas in March and are now available on the NASW website and in print.

The next project of the committee was to create a survey of Chapter members to identify end-of-life concerns of professional social workers. The survey is available in this issue and all members are encouraged to respond.

Membership on the committee is open to all regular and student members of NASW. Most business will be conducted electronically with committee sub-groups meeting face-to-face whenever feasible. For additional information, please contact Cheryl Simpson-Whitaker at 208/429-1203 or at cheryls-w@cableone.net.

Study Spanish and Hone Practice Skills in Mexico

A workshop, “Working with Mexican Clients,” will be offered in Mexico by two Boise State social work professors, June 21 through July 9. The workshop, held at the Cemanahuac Educational Community in beautiful Cuernavaca, Mexico, “the city of eternal spring,” may be taken for three Boise State University undergraduate or graduate social work credits or for continuing education units.

Taught in English, the workshop will enable students and professionals in social work, health, mental health and education to learn about contemporary Mexican issues to improve their work with Mexican clients who are newly

immigrated to the United States. Using Mexican professionals as guest lecturers, the workshop will provide over 45 hours of course content on ethnically sensitive practice with Hispanic clients; gender issues; the political, religious, historical and socio-economic context of work with Hispanic clients; Mexican/ U.S. relations; and theories of behavior and diagnostic processes sensitive to the Hispanic experience. Studying in Mexico, participants will develop broad awareness of the reality of Mexican life and the experiences shaping the lives of Mexican immigrants to the United States.

In addition to the workshop, participants will take 60 hours of immersion Spanish, live and take meals with a Mexican family, have opportunities to visit a number of interesting archeological and cultural sites in and around Mexico City, and meet other professionals from around the country.

(continued on page 9)

CMS Finalizes Appeals Process for Medicare Coverage Decisions

(reprinted from the CMS Press Office)

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) announced a final rule this fall establishing a process for beneficiaries to appeal local or national Medicare coverage determinations. The final rule provides for independent review of these coverage policies.

Under the final rule, appeals of local coverage determinations (LCDs) would be reviewed initially by an administrative law judge (ALJ). Appeals from national coverage determinations (NCDs) and from ALJ decisions on LCDs would be reviewed by the Health and Human Services Departmental Appeals Board. The Board's decisions could be appealed to federal court.

The final rule revises, refines and finalizes the process proposed in the Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (NPRM), published in August 2002. This rule is also the final step toward formal implementation of several provisions of Section 522 of the Medicare, Medicaid, and SCHIP Benefits Improvement and Protection Act (BIPA) of 2000.

This rule significantly improves beneficiary rights from the NPRM. Both the remedy afforded to beneficiaries for a favorable decision and the scope of beneficiaries that qualify to participate in the process have been significantly expanded in the final rule.

Beneficiaries already have the right to appeal individual claims denials when they believe a covered item or service was denied improperly. The final rule will give them an additional avenue to challenge the underlying coverage policy. The new appeals process will ensure that complaints are reviewed in a predictable, uniform manner. Decisions in these appeals may also have


implications for future Medicare coverage of the item or service for all Medicare beneficiaries, not just the individual who filed the appeal.

In addition to the process outlined in the final rule, interested parties can request a reconsideration of an NCD or LCD if they believe that policy is incorrect.

"This rule implements BIPA in the most efficient way possible to grant beneficiaries timely access to Medicare covered items and services while enhancing the functioning of the Medicare appeals system," said Tom Scully, CMS administrator.

NCDs are made by CMS and must be followed by all contractors that process and pay Medicare claims. LCDs are made by the contractors and apply only in the areas served by the individual contractor.

The final rule will be published in the November 7, 2003, Federal Register.

For more information, go to www.cms.gov. 

Lessons from Geese

(This was transcribed from a speech given by Angeles Arrien at the 1991 Organizational Development Network, based on the work of Milton Olson)

Fact one: As each goose flaps its wings, it creates an "uplift" for the birds that follow. By flying in "V" formation, the whole flock adds 71 percent greater flying range than if each bird flew alone. **Lesson:** People who share a common direction and sense of community can get where they are going quicker and easier, because they are traveling on the thrust of one another.

Fact Two: When a goose falls out of formation, it suddenly feels the drag and resistance of flying alone.

It quickly moves back into formation to take advantage of the lifting power of the bird immediately in front of it.

Lesson: If we have as much sense as a goose, we stay in formation with those headed where we want to go. We are willing to accept their help, and give our help to others.


Fact Three: When the lead goose tires, it rotates back into the formation and another goose flies to the point position.

Lesson: It pays to take turns doing the hard tasks and sharing



leadership. As with geese, people are interdependent on each other's skills, capabilities and unique arrangements of gifts, talents or resources.

Fact Four: The geese flying in formation honk to encourage those in front to keep up their speed. **Lesson:** We need to make sure our honking is encouraging. In groups where there is encouragement the production is greater. The power of encouragement (to stand by one's heart or core values and encourage the heart and core of others) is the quality of honking we seek.

Fact Five: When a goose gets sick, wounded or shot down, two geese drop out of formation and follow it down to help or protect it. They stay with it until it dies or is able to fly again. Then they launch out with another formation or catch up with the flock. **Lesson:** If we have as much sense as geese, we will stand by each other in difficult times as well as when we are strong. 



Legislative Committee

by Judy Last, LSW, NASW Idaho Legislative Chair

As you know, the 2004 session of the Idaho Legislature began on January 12 at noon. Some of the issues the Legislative Committee anticipates addressing are:

- Oppose Defense of Marriage Act: Constitutional amendment that would define marriage as only a male/female union, preventing same-sex marriages.
- Oppose threats to Title X Family Planning Funds which are part of the Public Health Service Act and help provide vital public family planning and preventive health screening services.
- Monitor attempts to redefine the Child Protection Act.
- Support movement to stop people from using the Joint Finance Appropriations Committee to push through intent language, thus preventing the public from testifying about their related concerns.
- Participate in a task force to research issues of human trafficking in Idaho.
- Oppose changing signature requirements for ballot initiatives potentially affecting grassroots organizing efforts.
- Support required wage reporting to help provide better information for public policy decisions.
- Oppose further cuts in Medicaid.
- Study changes to laws regarding child abuse and child neglect definitions

The Legislative Committee will continue to keep you informed of these and other issues as they arise as well as the stands taken on them by NASW Idaho Chapter and how you can be involved.

Six Practical Tips on How to Lobby Your Legislator or Elected Official

1. Establish your agenda and goals.
 - Know what subject you are going to address. Don't overload them with issues—stick to no more than two or three.
 - Decide what you would like to get out of the visit, i.e., a commitment to vote for your issue, leadership on the issue, or you may decide the visit is simply informational.
 - Allow time for small talk at the outset, but not too much. Remember, it's your visit.
 - If it is a group visit, decide who will start the discussion and put your agenda on the table.
2. Listen well.
 - Much of lobbying is listening, looking for indications of the elected official's views, and finding opportunities to provide good information.
 - If you are meeting with someone who seems disengaged in your issue, draw her/him out by asking questions.
 - If you are talking with an individual who strives to dominate the conversation, look for openings to bring her/him back to your point.
3. Be prepared, but don't feel that you need to be an expert.
 - Most elected officials are generalists, like many of us.
 - Do your homework, but don't feel that you need to know every little detail of an issue.

- Share personal feelings and experiences where appropriate.
 - Relate the concerns of your friends and members of the community.
 - Know when to admit "I don't know," and offer to follow up with the information.
 - Be open to counter-arguments, but don't get stuck on them. Don't be argumentative or confrontational.
4. Don't stay too long.
 - Try to get closure on your issue.
 - If you hear what you had hoped for, express your thanks and leave.
 - If you reach an impasse, thank her/him, even if disappointed, and say so.
 - Leave room to continue the discussion at another time.
 5. Remember you are there to build a relationship.
 - If the elected official has a positive stance on your issue or has supported your position in the past, be sure to acknowledge your appreciation during the course of the visit.
 - If the opposite is true, think of the phrase, "No permanent friends, no permanent enemies." Some day, on some issue of importance to you, she/he may come through. In the meantime, your visit may prevent the official from being an active opponent. In other words, you may help to turn down the heat on the other side.
 6. Follow-up is important.
 - Be sure to send a thank-you note after the visit. If commitments were made in the meeting, repeat your understanding of them.
 - If staff members were present, write to them too. They can often be important allies.

Other tips

Letter Writing

Writing to a public official does make a difference. They know that every person who writes represents many others who feel the same, but don't write. Follow these tips to be most effective:

- Be clear about what you want, list the bill, etc.
- Tell a story or example to make the issue real.
- Ask for a direct response with his or her position.
- Personal letters are much better than form letters or petitions. *(continued on page 9)*

Legislature *(continued from page 8)*

Visits

Every citizen has the right to seek a meeting with their legislator, councilperson or other elected representative. These tips will help make visits effective:

- Keep your group small (4-5 people).
- Make your group diverse.
- Discuss in advance how to handle the meeting.
- Be direct, but not threatening.
- Know your facts.
- Leave informational material with the official.

Try to arrange the visit on your turf. Invite the person to tour a clinic, facility or site that helps convey your message in real and human terms.

Establish a relationship with staff

Many elected officials have staff people you can contact. These people are generally more accessible than the official and can usually help to get your message through. 🗎

Mexico *(continued from page 6)*

Conversational Spanish will be taught four hours daily by experienced instructors from the Cemanahuac Educational Community in classes of no more than 5 students. Weekend field trips will be available to destinations such as the Anthropological Museum in Mexico City, the Pyramids of the Sun and the Moon, the homes of Diego Rivera and Frida Kahlo, and the famous murals by Rivera at the Presidential Palace in Mexico City.

Cuernavaca has abundant restaurants, shops, galleries, and cultural events. Its close proximity to Mexico City allows for low cost travel following the workshop to Mexico City, the silver city of Taxco, the enchanted city of Tepotzlan, and many other famous and exciting resorts, communities, and anthropological sites.

For information, contact the Boise State University School of Social Work at 208/426-1568. 🗎

" I am of the opinion that my life belongs to the community, and as long as I live, it is my privilege to do for it whatever I can. I want to be thoroughly used up when I die, for the harder I work, the more I live. Life is no 'brief candle' to me. It is a sort of a splendid torch which I have got hold of for a moment, and I want to make it burn as brightly as possible before handing it on to future generations. "
—George Bernard Shaw

Sounding the Alarm *(story shared compliments of Mary Freeman, LCSW, NASW Florida Vice President)*

There was a man in a remote area who decided to see more of the world around him. As he was walking, he heard drums. The drums kept up a steady beat. He decided to walk toward the drumbeat. He later arrived at a small village and asked about the drums. He was told there had been a fire and the drums were sounded. The village was saved. The man returned to his own village and told the others of the wonderful things he saw on his adventure. He told of the village that had been saved by the beating of the drums. One day his village also caught fire. The villagers gathered together and beat their drums. However, their village burned to the ground. A stranger passing through told them that the drums were not magic, but only an alarm. It took everyone to respond to the alarm to fight the fire and save the village.



NASW Idaho closely monitors legislative issues affecting social workers and sounds the alarm. It takes all of us to respond to the alarm. If we do not take an active role when the alarm is sounded, we also will lose our "village." Please join our Legislative Action Listserv to receive important notices and requests for action. Fill out the information below and mail it to the Chapter office. Help us save our "village."

Be Informed! Take Action!

We can make it easy! Become a member of NASW Idaho's Action Alert Listserv. You will receive timely and easy alerts regarding legislative activity. You can help those who don't have a voice at the Statehouse by being vocal advocates through the listserv. Just fill out this form. Sign up today! 🗎

IDAHO CHAPTER ACTION ALERT LISTSERV

_____ YES, sign me up for the Legislative Listserv

Name: _____ Email: _____

Clip and send to: NASW Idaho Chapter, PO Box 7393,
Boise, Idaho 83707. Or, email above information to Judy Last at
id500strong@hotmail.com.

Idaho Legislative Trivia

(find answers at the bottom of the page)

1. Who is the Speaker of the House?
2. Who is the President Pro Tem of the Senate?
3. Who is the House Health and Welfare Committee Chair?
4. Who is the Senate Health and Welfare Committee Chair?
5. Who is the Health & Human Services Advisor to Gov. Kempthorne?
6. What is the total number of legislative districts?
7. How many legislators are Republicans?
8. How many legislators are Democrats?
9. What was the total number of bills proposed last session?
10. What was the total number of bills introduced last session?
11. How many total bills became law last session?
12. What is the annual state budget for FY 2004?
13. Name the Legislative budget committee.
14. Who makes up the above budget committee?

Answers? (1) Bruce Newcomb (2) Robert Geddes (3) Rep. Bill Satt (4) Sen. Skip Brandt (5) David Lehman (6) Bruce Newcomb (7) 82 (8) 23 (9) 1,134 (10) 678 (11) 381 (12) 2 billion, 4 million (13) Joint Finance and Appropriations Committee (14) 10 House members and 10 Senate members.

How to Get in Touch.....

(reprinted with permission from Wendy Morgan, MSW, Idaho Women's Network)

Contacting State Legislators

To find out who your legislators are, call your local county elections office, or look on the web at: www.vote-smart.org.

Sending a letter

Mail your letter to: Representative or Senator [full name]
Idaho State Legislature
State Capitol Building
Boise, Idaho 83720

Email your letter to your legislator at:
infocntr@lso.state.id.us (use this address during the Legislative Session).

Phone your legislator at: 208/332-1000 or

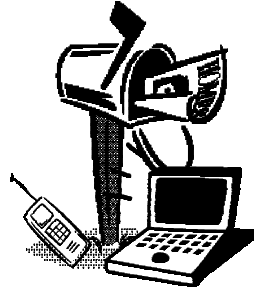
800/626-0471. Fax to: 208/334-5397.

Contacting the Governor

Mail to: Governor Dirk Kempthorne
State Capitol Building
PO Box 83720
Boise, Idaho 83720

Email to: governor@gov.state.id.us
Phone: 208/331-2100

Note: Always include your name, address, and telephone number on all letters and emails to elected officials.



Sample Letter to Legislators

(Reprinted and modified with permission from the Idaho Council on Developmental DisABILITIES)

Date

The Honorable Senator John Doe **or** The Honorable Representative Jane Doe
Idaho State Senate **or** Idaho House of Representatives
Statehouse
Boise, ID 83720

RE: [Bill Number - Bill Title]

Dear Senator Doe **or** Dear Representative Doe:

In this first paragraph, state your name and any relevant advocacy, professional group of which you are a member or officer, or if you are a concerned citizen.

In the second paragraph, identify the Legislative District and city in which you live. Point out that the legislator represents you and that you want him or her to know your views.

In the third paragraph, briefly explain what you like and/or don't like about the bill. Tell them what you know about the existing service (or lack thereof) and how you believe this bill will affect those services. And finally, tell them how the bill would positively or negatively impact you, your clients, others you know, or the service system in general.

In the fourth paragraph, tell your legislator how you want him or her to vote and why it is important. If you are willing to talk to your legislator about the bill, include your phone number and offer to talk with him or her.

Finally, thank your legislator for taking time out of his or her busy schedule to read your letter and and consider your opinion. Make a general closing statement about the impact if the bill does or does not pass. (***It is best to avoid form letters***)

Sincerely,

(Note: This same format can be relayed via email at infocntr@lso.state.id.us)

Sample Yes/No Vote Phone Message

"Hi, I want to leave a message for Senator/Representative _____ This is _____ from _____ in _____ District. I am _____ I would like Senator/Representative _____ to vote _____ on _____ because _____

(full name) (your name) (city) (number) (professional, concerned citizen, member of an organization, etc.) (last name) (yes or no) (bill number and title) (a short one-line explanation)

The Governor's 2004 Budget Proposals: There's a Train Wreck in the Making

by Judy Brown, Director, Idaho Center on Budget & Tax Policy, United Vision of Idaho

My 15-year old son watched the Governor's State of the State and Budget address the other night. Afterwards he said, "Well, that sounded pretty reasonable. What's the problem, Mom?"

Once over lightly, the Governor's proposals did sound pretty reasonable. When it comes to budgets, however, the "devil is in the detail"—and the details in this budget should be setting alarm bells off.

A "maintenance" budget that just maintains the previous year's level and quality of programs in Idaho needs to increase each year by about 4%, according to state budget experts. Roughly speaking, 4 percent growth is required to adjust program expenditures for population growth and for increases in the cost of living. Budgets that grow by less than 4% will require programs to be trimmed, state employees to forego cost-of-living increases and so on.

This 4% figure is the key to understanding the state's budgetary problems—the train wreck—in our near future.

First, it is important to remember that Idaho has already been through two years of budget cutting. As shown in the table, Idaho's base budget was cut by 4% (about \$75 million) last year (FY03) during the height of the economic recession. This year (FY04), temporary sales and cigarette tax increases were enacted and additional cuts of about \$30 million were made. In both of these years, state employees went without raises.

The Governor's proposal for the coming fiscal year (FY05) is for a seemingly smooth ride, given that the economy is slowly recovering. Base expenditures increase by 4% but, primarily because health care costs are rising rapidly right now, there is still no across-the-board cost-of-living raise for state employees. (There is some money for merit raises at the discretion of supervisors.)

Big problems arise, however, in FY06 and FY07 after the temporary sales and cigarette tax increases sunset. In the absence of serious tax reform, base expenditures can grow by only 1% in each of these years. This is significantly less than maintenance-level growth and the state will not be able to maintain its current programs at their current levels. Indeed, upwards of \$60 million will need to be cut from the base budget in each of these two years.

Is this what you want from your state government? If not, what can one do? As taxpayers and voters, we need to get clear about our values and priorities. Then we need to speak out and act in

ways that will make our state's tax policy truly reflect our values. See the October 2003 issue of *UVInsight*, United Vision for Idaho's monthly newsletter, for a deeper discussion of this issue. It is available online at www.uvidaho.org.

United Vision for Idaho and its member groups are currently forming a Tax Reform Action Group to work jointly on behalf of tax policy and budget priorities that reflect our values. To get involved, contact **LuAnne Hormel** at United Vision for Idaho at 208/331-7208 or lhormel@mindspring.com. This is not a time to sit back and relax. If we do, there's a train wreck coming. ●

Recent & Proposed Base Expenditures in Idaho, fiscal years, 2003-2008		
	Base Expenditures (\$ million)	% Change from Previous Year
FY2003 <i>(7/1/02-6/30/03)</i>	\$1968	-4%
FY2004 <i>(7/1/03-6/30/04)</i>	\$2004	2%
FY2005 <i>(7/1/04-6/30/05)</i>	\$2084	4%
FY2006 <i>(7/1/05-6/30/06)</i>	\$2105	1%
FY2007 <i>(7/1/06-6/30/07)</i>	\$2131	1%

Source: Idaho Division of Financial Management. Numbers in italics are proposals in the Governor's State of the State/ Budget address January 12, 2004.

This Island, Idaho

By M.Flinn



**Two years later....
and there's still a train wreck coming!**

(This cartoon was produced in February 2002 for United Vision of Idaho, Idaho Community Action Network and Idaho Women's Network)



Meet our New Lobbyist

“Moving Your Advocacy Agenda Forward”

by **Toni Lawson, NASW Idaho Lobbyist**

Many believe that lobbyists simply throw money at legislators and pressure them into protecting their interests. Of course, this is simply not the case. The type of grassroots advocacy NASW has been promoting over the years takes a lot of hard work and energy. Having a representative at the Statehouse to monitor issues has been an important part of that activity. I look forward to working with NASW to move your advocacy agenda forward at the Idaho Legislature. You can count on me to act as a liaison with Idaho Legislators to make the voice of Idaho’s social workers heard and provide the information needed to make good policy decisions.

I have always seen my professional life as a way to serve and improve the lives of those in my community. I have been proud to be a strong advocate for coverage of the uninsured, public safety, and access to healthcare, especially for women and children. I have worked to increase awareness of the plight of the working poor and underprivileged in our state. I lived for nine years in the Basque Country and helped establish a national grassroots organization to promote dialogue and accord as an alternative to the political violence that ravages that country.

Now, I have the wonderful opportunity to focus my advocacy efforts on making the voice of social workers heard. How exciting! I look forward to working with an organization whose advocacy agenda reflects the social justice values I hold dear. The pace at the Statehouse will soon become fast and furious. While you continue your vital work in the community, I will do my best to keep your representatives at NASW abreast of the issues important to you. Toni Lawson, 2103 W. State St., Boise ID 83702, 208/424-8193, 208/573-4087 (cell), LawsonIdaho@aol.com. 📞

Our previous lobbyist, Anne Pasley-Stuart, was recently appointed by the Governor to fill the vacancy left by Representative Dave Bieter when he was elected Mayor of Boise. We will miss Anne, but are thrilled that she is in this new role! NASW Idaho has been lucky to contract with Toni Lawson for the 2004 Legislative Session.

A Government of the People, by the People, for the People by **Delmar Stone, MSW Candidate, CADC, NASW Idaho PACE Chair**

“Social workers frequently approach electoral politics with great caution because of its potential for divisiveness.” Yet we **MUST PARTICIPATE** for...“in every society the political system is the determining vehicle for expressing human values and for the provision of resources; social workers are experts in the areas of human needs and human services delivery.”

Since becoming Chair of the PACE Committee this past summer, I have traveled to every region of our state meeting with social workers, social work students, and legislators. I’m excited about the work of the PACE Committee at the national level and in our state. There are four things that you can do in the next few weeks to make a HUGE difference in Idaho:

1. Obtain a **“This Social Worker Votes!”** button (\$2-\$5 suggested donation to PACE). Call the Chapter office at 208/345-4060 or one of the PACE committee members listed below for purchase information.
2. Attend your county’s Democratic Caucus on February 24th (Idaho residents only) to support your favorite candidate for President of the United States (and wear your **“This Social Worker Votes!”** button).
3. Obtain a copy of the *Idaho Statesman’s Legislative Guide* (from January 12th Sunday edition) and know who your state legislators are so you can follow how they vote in the Statehouse.
4. Call a member of the PACE Committee to see how you can be involved in our organized efforts to make Idaho a better place to live.

**“Whenever the participation of social workers
is diminished or absent in the political arena,
the quality of public policy deteriorates.”**

PACE Committee Members

Delmar Stone, Chair, 208/466-0511

Lesla Huff, Chapter Board Liaison, 208/762-5155

Judy Last, Legislative Committee Liaison, 208/867-1465

Wayne Timonen, Far North Branch, 208/762-3979

Jette Evans, Central Branch, 208/465-9009

Janis Stitt, Southeast Branch, 208/282-3675

We are still seeking Branch Representatives for the PACE Committee in the North Branch and the Southwest Branch. (*Quotes are taken from “Electoral Politics,” in the 6th edition of Social Work Speaks*) 📞



NASW
Idaho PACE
Committee

THIS SOCIAL WORKER VOTES!

ATTEND THE DEMOCRATIC PRESIDENTIAL
CAUCUS IN YOUR COUNTY, FEBRUARY 24,
2004 AT 7:15 PM

Call the State Democratic Party for
Caucus location: 208/336-9606

**Neither the
Republican nor
Green parties
will be holding
caucuses in Idaho

NASW National will be endorsing one of the
eight Democratic candidates for President

Chapter Announces 2004 Preliminary Slate and Petition Process!

Submitted by Lesa Huff, MSW, LSW, Secretary of the NASW Idaho Board of Directors

The Idaho Chapter of the National Association of Social Workers is pleased to announce the preliminary slate of candidates for Board and elected committee positions for the coming year. The final slate will be selected after the close of the petition process and elections will be held Spring 2004. The preliminary slate meets the Chapter's affirmative action goals. (Nominees for the Branch elected position can be single slated.) The Chapter Committee on Nomination and Leadership Identification (CCNLI) finalized the preliminary slate in January.

Petition Process

Any member wishing to have her or his name added to the ballot by petition has 30 days from the date of the publication of this article to submit a petition. To be successful, a petition for a position elected by the membership statewide must include the signatures and the printed legal names of 33 current members, which represents 5% of the total Chapter membership as of January 5, 2004, the most recent update of the Chapter's membership database by the national office. For a branch position, signatures of 5% of the total number of members of the branch are needed. These numbers can be obtained on request from the Chapter office. Official petition forms are available from the Chapter office and questions about the petition process may be addressed to Cheryl Simpson-Whitaker, Chair of the CCNLI, or in care of the Chapter office.



PRELIMINARY SLATE Board of Directors

President Elect
William Whitaker
JR Seaman

MSW Student Rep
Deanah Messenger
Becky Krause

Vice President
Katherine Gage
Don Pierson

BSW Student Rep
Amanda Wilson
Allison Burton

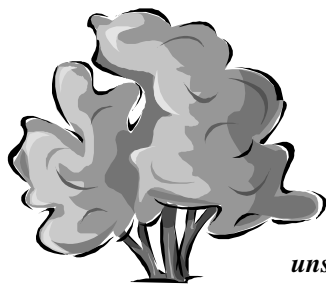
Legislative Chairperson
Carolyn Eardley
Shelley Holmes

Far North Branch Chairperson
Chris Hartley

Chapter Committee for Nominations and Leadership Identification

CCNLI North Branch Rep
Wendy Nunez

NASW Idaho continues to encourage women and people of color to run for elected office and other leadership positions.



Branch News

Want to be involved with your local Branch of NASW, but are unsure how? Contact your local Branch Chair for information about short-term projects, committees, or upcoming events that need your input. Whether you have a lot or a little time to give, we value your input and leadership! Please refer to page 2 of this newsletter for the contact names and numbers for each of the Branch Chairs.

Central Branch (Boise/Treasure Valley)

The Central Branch hosted a two-hour CEU opportunity on Epilepsy in Caldwell on December 9, 2003. Approximately 15 social workers attended and feedback was positive regarding the Canyon County location and the presenters.

An ethics training is being planned for March in the Boise area. Due to new licensure rules, an hour of ethics is needed yearly, so this will be a great opportunity for those needing ethics CEUs. The Central Branch is seeking interested LCSW and PhD level presenters for future CEU offerings. Please contact Lorrie Breshears if you are interested in presenting at 208/466-1473 or LBreshears@direcway.com.

NASWJOB:LINK

THE SOCIAL WORK CAREER CENTER

Make the most of your job search

Find the job you're looking for on JobLink, NASW's online social work employment network.

Take control of your job search and career today!

- Personalize your job search and find the right job for you.
- Get an extra edge over the competition.
- Join NASW to post your résumés and attract top social work employers.
- Quickly apply for your favorite jobs online with just one click.
- Set up job search agents and have new listings emailed directly to you.

Go online today at www.socialworkers.org to take advantage of the new NASW Joblink Career Center.

750 First Street NE, Suite 700
Washington, DC 20002-4241
www.socialworkers.org
888-491-8833

NOTE: NASW Idaho met with IDHW staff in October 2003 to discuss several issues of mutual interest, the “Any Door Initiative” being one of them. In the interest of informing our membership, the adjacent article from IDHW outlines information regarding this new approach to services.


NASW Idaho will continue to seek out regular opportunities to interface with IDHW to address items impacting social services in Idaho including the “Any Door Initiative” prototype project.

NASW Insurance Trust Announces New “Personal Accident Insurance” Product

Washington, DC—The National Association of Social Workers Insurance Trust and Principal Life Insurance Company announces the release of a new product—Personal Accident Insurance.

This new Personal Accident Insurance coverage is available to eligible NASW members through the NASW Insurance Trust’s Group Life & Disability Insurance program. Effective October 1, 2003, members may purchase \$100,000 or \$200,000 in coverage, and a member’s spouse/domestic partner may purchase \$50,000 or \$100,000 in coverage (not to exceed 50% of the member’s coverage amount) for low quarterly premiums.

Personal Accident Insurance pays a benefit to the insured in cases of loss of sight or limb occurring because of an accident. When an accident-related loss of life occurs, an accidental death benefit is paid in addition to any other life insurance policy benefit an individual has. This can provide needed assistance to the member’s beneficiaries faced with final expenses, debts and medical costs they may have inherited.

Social workers can obtain more information about NASW Insurance Trust products, including *Term Life Insurance, Long Term Disability Insurance, Hospital Daily Cash Benefit Insurance and Personal Accident Insurance* by contacting **Rita Wisniewski** at the offices of our administrator, Benefit Services, at 800/526-0800. Information about Professional Liability Insurance can be obtained by contacting American Professional Agency at 800/421-6694. Information and application forms are also available at www.NASWInsuranceTrust.org. 

New Idaho Health and Welfare Initiative: “Any Door Initiative” Service Integration

by LaDonna Larson, Communications Specialist (IDHW) and Marian Woods, LCSW (IDHW/NASW Idaho member)

The Idaho Department of Health and Welfare (IDHW) has embarked on an initiative to integrate health and human services in support of its mission to actively promote and protect the economic, mental and physical health, and safety of Idahoans. In order to attain positive outcomes for Idahoans, IDHW recognizes it must focus holistically on the participant.

The need for human service agencies to integrate services is well established in theory. IDHW researched various state and county human service agencies that use integration models. IDHW continues to follow research about integration, in particular the work of the Rockefeller Institute of Government, which is under contract with the Casey Family Foundation to provide information and findings for successful integration projects. Integration has been instrumental in making human services more accessible and responsive to participant and community needs.


We know IDHW can sometimes be difficult to navigate and many participants have complex needs that no single program service area can fulfill on its own. We also know the current system can foster compartmentalization of participants in order to deliver services. Focusing holistically on a participant will change this.



IDHW mapped out how participants currently get services and identified common activities across all agency services. IDHW also used feedback gathered systematically from participants, customer satisfaction surveys and focus groups for endeavors; and from participants, providers and partners who serve as members on various boards and councils that advise the agency. The knowledge gained through these processes was used to help design the new integrated service delivery system.

IDHW also asked the people who deliver services to design the new integrated service delivery system. Over 130 Department staff participated in the effort to design the system. Staff participating in the design included clinicians and social workers. While staff brought their professional expertise to the table, they also brought their experience as members of the communities in which they live and work. Some of the staff are consumers of Department services, or have friends or relatives who get help from the Department. This dual perspective helped in designing an integrated system that focuses on the participant first.

The integrated system design focuses on the participant, making information about all Department services readily available to them. It streamlines access to services by developing a common enrollment form and process, and facilitates early intervention and prevention activities by using multi-disciplinary teams to plan and manage service delivery. IDHW will begin testing the newly designed system in the Moscow field office at the end of January.

As IDHW begins testing the design, Department staff will be measuring outcomes and asking staff, participants, providers, and partners to provide feedback to the agency on how the system is working. That feedback will be used to make adjustments in the model for statewide implementation. For questions or information: larsonl@idhw.state.id.us or 208/334-5824 

Social Workers and Legal Developments in Gay Rights

(reprinted from the National NASW website www.socialworkers.org)

Introduction

Lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender persons continue to suffer from social stigma, harassment, hate-crimes, and discrimination. The United States Supreme Court issued a landmark decision last term in *Lawrence v. Texas*, 123 S.Ct. 2472 (2003), that clarified the right of adults to engage in private, consensual sexual activities regardless of sexual orientation and removed the cloud of possible criminal prosecution for such acts. NASW and its Texas Chapter participated in the case as a “friend of the court” by filing an amicus brief in conjunction with the American Psychiatric Association and the American Psychological Association. This article will examine the Supreme Court’s ruling as well as recent and anticipated legal developments. Social workers have long supported the expansion of civil rights for all people, including those who are lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender. NASW’s policy is to encourage social workers to work toward expanding full legal rights for the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender population.

NASW Involvement in Supreme Court Decision

Lawrence v. Texas involved two gay men who were arrested for engaging in consensual sexual activities in the privacy of their own home after police were called to the house for other reasons. The defendants were charged under Texas’s criminal sodomy statute. On appeal to the U.S. Supreme Court the Texas statute was declared unconstitutional because it violated the defendants’ due process rights under the Fourteenth Amendment. In a 6-3 opinion, the Justices expressly overturned a 1986 Supreme Court decision in *Bowers v. Hardwick*, a case that upheld a Georgia criminal sodomy statute under which a gay man was prosecuted for private conduct in his own home.

Key arguments in the NASW brief submitted in *Lawrence* included:

- The major mental health professions recognize that homosexuality is a normal form of human sexuality, and not a mental disorder.
- Suppressing sexual intimacy among same-sex partners would deprive gay men and lesbians of the opportunity to participate in a fundamental aspect of human experience.
- Antisodomy statutes like that in Texas reinforce prejudice, discrimination, and violence against gay men and lesbians.

These arguments are supported by NASW policies that encourage nonjudgmental attitudes toward sexual orientation and that increase awareness within the profession of oppression, heterosexism, and internalized homophobia. NASW encourages the development of programs, training, and information that promote proactive efforts to end the physical and psychological violence aimed at lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender people.

Same-sex Marriage

Two weeks prior to the Court’s ruling in *Lawrence*, the Court of Appeal for Ontario, Canada issued an opinion, *Halpern v. Attorney General of Canada*, extending marriage rights in that province to same-sex couples. As of September 30, 2003, more than 750 marriage licenses were issued to same-sex

couples in Toronto, with one-third issued to U.S. couples. Support for same-sex civil marriage has grown in the United States for the past several years, according to the Human Rights Campaign, with 90 percent of voters favoring hospital visitation rights for same-sex partners, 60 percent favoring some of the legal rights of marriage for same-sex couples, such as health care benefits, and an even split on same-sex marriage.


Reported instances of anti-gay hate crimes are steadily increasing, so advocacy efforts will be continuously needed to press for enforcement of existing laws, to provide assistance.....in all areas.

A case that is being closely watched by the Bush administration, according to news reports, is being appealed to the Supreme Judicial Court of Massachusetts. *Goodridge v. Department of Public Health*, 14 Mass.L.Rptr. 591, 2002 WL 1299135 (2002), involves seven same-sex couples who have applied for marriage licenses and been denied. A number of the couples have minor children and many are in relationships of several decades’ duration. In the U.S., only Vermont permits civil unions for same-sex couples, and 37 states have expressly indicated that they will not recognize gay marriages performed in other jurisdictions.

Analysis and Conclusions

The stage is set for continued conflict in the U.S. regarding the civil rights of gays and lesbians. Although a number of U.S. same-sex couples may choose to emigrate to Canada, residency there is not required for marriage. Thus, some couples with legalized Canadian marriages may seek recognition of their marriages at home in the U.S.

Unlike Canada, where some marriage laws are embedded in the federal system, in the U.S., marriage laws are primarily the responsibility of state governments. This weighs against the likelihood of passing a constitutional amendment in the United States to restrict same-sex marriage. In addition, the legal trend is toward expanding rights, rather than using the constitution to restrict individual rights.

Reported instances of anti-gay hate crimes are steadily increasing, so advocacy efforts will be continuously needed to press for enforcement of existing laws, to provide assistance to crime victims, and to support initiatives to create equal rights for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender persons in all areas. Social workers can continue these efforts with the knowledge that they are working to uphold the NASW Code of Ethics’ proscription against discrimination based on sexual orientation and the agreed values and policies of NASW. 

**SELECTED OFFERINGS FOR WINTER
SPRING 2004**

Bringing you the best National, State and Local speakers.

**Legal & Ethical Issues in Social
Work/Mental Health Practice**

Phillip Tsui, MSW, LCSW
February 20th, 6 Law & Ethics CEUs, Seattle
(Winter Spring Continuing Education)

Spiritual Dynamics in Psychotherapy:

A Buddhist Perspective

Phillip Tsui, MSW, LCSW
February 21st, 6 CEUs, Seattle
(Winter Spring Continuing Education)

**Family Law for the Social Work
and Mental Health Professional**

Joan Ward, MSW, LICSW & Don Desonier, JD
March 12th, 6 Law & Ethics CEUs, SeaTac
(Winter Spring Continuing Education)

Client Adherence in Treatment

Lana Ka'opua, PhD, ACSW & Brian Giddens, LICSW, ACSW
April 15th, 6 CEUs, NASW Pre-Conference, Tukwila
(NASW Annual Conference)

Solution Focused Brief Therapy

Marshall Jung, DSW, LCSW
April 15th, 6 CEUs, NASW Pre-Conference, Tukwila
(NASW Annual Conference)

Complicated Mourning:

Psychotherapeutic Interventions

Mila Ruiz Tecala, MSW, ACSW, LCSW, DSW
May 14th, 6 CEUs, Yakima & May 15th, 6 CEUs, Seattle
(Winter Spring Continuing Education)

Building Your Ideal Practice

Lynn Grodzki, LCSW, PCC
June 12th, No CEUs (per WA State Licensure Law), Seattle
(Winter Spring Continuing Education)

2004 Annual Conference:

Health, Healing and Justice In An

Interdependent World[®]

April 15-17, 2004, Tukwila, WA

Contact the Chapter Office at 206-706-7084 or visit
us on the web at www.nasw-wa.org for more
information on our Winter-Spring events.



Calendar of Events

March 5-6, 2004

“Choice Theory: Creating Happiness” sponsored by Idaho Society for Individual Psychologists. 14 CEUs approved by the NASW Idaho Chapter at all three levels of licensure. This offering will be held in Boise, Idaho at the Doubletree Riverside. For more information, call Tom McIntyre at 208/344-7194 or tommytom@cableone.net.

March 25, 2004

“Alcohol and Substance Abuse: The Impact on Family, Community and Ethnic Neighbors” sponsored by the Idaho State University Student Social Work Association. Pending approval for CEUs by NASW Idaho Chapter. This offering will be held in Pocatello at Idaho State University. For more information, call Debbie Lewis at 208/237-1838 or 208/232-0178.



CHOICE • JUSTICE • ACCESS • HEALTH **MARCH FOR WOMEN'S LIVES**

MARCH FOR WOMEN'S LIVES
Washington DC April 25, 2004
ABORTION • GLOBAL • FAMILY PLANNING

**Join NASW in
the Nation's Capital
for Freedom of Choice**

The March for Women's Lives promises to be one of the largest public demonstrations, in history, in support of reproductive freedom. You are the key to making this march a success.

If you are unable to march, but still want to be counted as a supporter of choice please register online at www.socialworkers.org

Be a part of NASW's contingent for the March. By signing up at www.socialworkers.org you will receive regular March updates, as well as information on organizing activities in your local area.

**April 25, 2004 • 10:00 a.m.
The Mall • Washington, DC**

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National Association of Social Workers

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