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## Executive Director

**Gretchen Burns Bergman**



**Vol XXXV October 2011**

### **Postcard from the President by Caroline Stewart**

Dear PATH Family,

Allow me to take a moment to thank all of you “side-kicks”, “better-halves” and “peeps” who support those of us working deep in the PATH trenches. You know who I am talking about; those intrepid spouses, family members and friends who have grown accustomed to Mexican take-out and watching The Big Bang Theory all alone. My own better-half (Donald Stewart) deserves the Nobel Prize for his gracious emotional support of me and our adult children and for his countless hours of working behind the scenes to celebrate the PATH mission. Donald is the “Owl” behind our new note-card business Owl and Mouse Designs. He has spent literally hundreds of hours hand-printing the PATH inspirational notes that support all paths to recovery. He joined me at the glorious Strut for Sobriety (September 10) despite having to come home mid-day to get into a second set of dress-up clothes for a family wedding in Julian. I don’t think, however, that a single soul regretted coming to the Strut thanks to the charismatic vocal delivery of Chuck Negron who sang “Joy to the World” and “One” to support his PATH family (most notably ex-wife Julia Negron, LA PATH). How can we thank Julia and Chuck enough for the pure energy that they infused into our event? David Bergman is another unsung hero who virtually keeps our leader, Gretchen, emotionally shored up, fed and sent with love, over and over again, back into the ring. Dr Bergman hosted the Burns-Bergman Strut table while Gretchen worked her magic. How is it even possible to appropriately thank Dr Dave for the soul-soothing travels and yummy dinners on San Diego Bay aboard Fly Be Free? Our entire PATH board and their families were welcome guests of Captain Dave the afternoon of our annual PATH “renewal” at Stepping Stone on August 13th. Our heartfelt gratitude, as well, goes to Kate Webb, John Wead’s abiding and stalwart fairy godmother who never complains when we steal John away from her over and over again. Have I mentioned how much I enjoy and honor Beth Herman’s husband, Chris Barroso, whose deep progressive values resonate with all that PATH stands for. Beth and Chris helped spread the word about our Moms United to End the War on Drugs vigil in recognition of International Overdose Awareness Day on August 31st. and what about Tulug Kenanoglu’s partner-in-crime, Doug Dolezal? Doug has to be the only man I know who’s significant-other asked for a pet goat (not a poodle or an angora cat but a pygmy goat)

Continued on page 3

### **Executive Director’s Message by Gretchen Burns Bergman**

#### **Respite**

For parents and family members of individuals with addictive illness, dealing with the damaging effects mentally, spiritually and physically can be excruciatingly painful, but when that is compounded by anger and criminalization of our loved ones who are lost in the web of this disease, it can be crushing.

I’ve been dealing with this insidious disease for so many years in the lives of those most dear to me: my sons. The word relapse can send a cold chill down my spine when I consider it for people in long-term recovery, like my older son and people who have pulled themselves up, worked their way out of the criminal justice system, and created real contributing and meaningful lives. But, we know that it is always a possibility with this chronic reoccurring disorder. We learn to be grateful for every precious moment of this new life.

My younger son has been in and out of treatment for over a decade, and never achieved any long and sustainable recovery. His 37th birthday is today. He just went through yet another 10 day detox. I admit to a resurgence of hopeful thinking that somehow his birthday would help him to integrate this clean time into genuine recovery. I truly believe in the power of positive thinking, so I get disappointed and even confused when my sense of order and fairness can’t be achieved. Ah, sweet denial... How it helps us to avoid despair and hold onto a thread of hope!

I’m thankful for this period of time he had in detox, no matter how it transitions. I experience it personally as a “respite”. It lets me take a deep breath to renew my faith and strength. It gives me a vacation from anticipating impending disaster, when I can channel my positive energy into merely hoping that he will gain his physical and mental health enough to stay alive for “the cure”. A few days – a week- maybe even a month is a “respite” from anguish.

I wish to share this sense of “respite” with others in need of a moment of peace and serenity in the midst of the storm. I hope that the mission and projects of PATH serve as a light to transform the darkness for so many families who travel this tortuous journey. I invite you to get more involved with us in making significant changes in the lives and futures of others.

**momsunited**  
to end the war on drugs

[www.anewpathsite.org](http://www.anewpathsite.org)

## PATH Welcomes Your Involvement!

PATH holds semi-annual educational speaker meetings and seminars. We invite you to attend and to get more involved in our many projects to reduce the stigma of the disease of addiction and to increase substance abuse treatment options.

Our Board of Directors meets monthly on the second Wednesday of each month at 6pm. Please let us know if you are interested in attending or if you would like to serve as a member of the Board of Directors or PATH Ambassadors: 619-670-1184 or [anewpath@cox.net](mailto:anewpath@cox.net).

### Resource Information:

A New PATH: 619-670-1184  
AA Hotline: 619-265-8762  
Alanon, Alateen: 619-296-2666  
Naranon: 858-492-8720  
NA Hotline: 619-584-1007  
Central Public Defender: 619-338-4700  
Juvenile Hall: 858-694-4500  
Las Colinas Jail (women): 619-258-3176  
Mental Health Assoc.: 619-543-0412  
Probation: 619-515-8202  
SD County Jail (men): 619-615-2808  
SD Superior Court Central: 619-531-4420  
Teen Drug Screen, Palmerado E.D., 858-694-8497  
SD County Alcohol & Drug Service Info. & Referral:  
619-692-5727

### PARENT SURVIVAL KITS AVAILABLE IN ENGLISH WITH SPANISH TRANSLATIONS

Who do you turn to for help when a loved one has a substance abuse problem? Where do you go for information when your substance abusing family member gets arrested? We have created, a brochure of information to help parents navigate the criminal justice system. It includes information on when to intervene, warning signs of relapse, court related phone numbers, and the judicial process. If you would like a copy, please send \$1 for mailing.

### PATH is endorsed by

- ▷ San Diego Psychiatric Society
- ▷ Mental Health America in San Diego County
- ▷ NAMI San Diego
- ▷ Friends of SD Psychiatric Society
- ▷ Families to Amend California's Three-Strikes
- ▷ The San Diego District Attorney's Office
- ▷ Join Together/Demand Treatment
- ▷ Drug Policy Alliance Network

## Alternative News Sources

[www.facesandvoicesofrecovery.org](http://www.facesandvoicesofrecovery.org)

[www.anewpathsite.org](http://www.anewpathsite.org)  
[www.jointogether.org](http://www.jointogether.org)  
[www.narconews.com](http://www.narconews.com)  
[www.drcnet.org](http://www.drcnet.org)  
[www.reconsider.org](http://www.reconsider.org)  
[www.drugpolicy.org](http://www.drugpolicy.org)  
[www.sdchip.org](http://www.sdchip.org)  
[www.centerforce.org](http://www.centerforce.org)



Help us to Celebrate Recovery by ordering your PATH to Recovery magnetic "R" ribbons and placing them on your cars and refrigerators, or anywhere visible to help to reduce the stigma and show the world that you support Recovery from addictive illness.

They are Available through the PATH office for \$2 each or 3 for \$5.

### A New PATH 2011 Committees

Please help us move forward with our goals by joining one of our committees:

- Executive (President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer)
- Finance and Fundraising
- Membership
- PR/Publicity
- Education & Recovery
- Legislative & Prison Reform

Contact us at 619-670-1184 or [anewpath@cox.net](mailto:anewpath@cox.net) to join a committee.

### SUPPORT A NEW PATH BY PURCHASING AD SPACE

A New PATH appreciates your support! We continue to expand and our newsletter now goes out to over 3600 people! Consider purchasing an ad for our October edition.

\$60 - business card      \$125 - 1/4 page  
\$250 - 1/2 page          \$500 - full page

Our next printing deadline is **December 30, 2011**. Make checks payable to: A New PATH, 2527 Doubletree Road, Spring Valley, CA 91978. Phone/Fax: 619-670-1184, Email: [anewpath@cox.net](mailto:anewpath@cox.net). Thanks for all of your support!

A New PATH newsletter is published quarterly by the Parents for Addiction Treatment and Healing non-profit organization.

Gretchen Burns Bergman - Managing Editor  
Kathy Rezaiv- Editor

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Check our website at [www.anewpathsite.org](http://www.anewpathsite.org)

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### Help A New PATH reduce Stigma and Celebrate Recovery!

In order to celebrate the "silver lining" of sobriety, and to show your support of loved ones in recovery, or your pride in your own recovery, we invite you to join us in wearing "PATH to RECOVERY" silver cause bracelets. Order them through the PATH office by emailing: [anewpath@cox.net](mailto:anewpath@cox.net) and we will mail them to you right away. Please purchase 3 for \$10, so that you can wear one and give the others to friends in recovery, or you can purchase one for \$5. Wear these bracelets so that others can appreciate the growing number of people taking pride in recovery!

### You can help support A New PATH when you shop!

Please register your Ralphs club card online at

[www.ralphs.com/](http://www.ralphs.com/) Using A New PATH and NPO # "90278" and every time you shop and swipe your card/ PATH will automatically earn a rebate.

You can also contribute to New PATH through Food 4 Less: [www.food4less.net](http://www.food4less.net)

Please call the PATH office if you need help in setting this up at: **619-670-1184**.  
**thank you for your ongoing support !**

Continued from page 1

### Postcard from the Prez

and the wish was granted three-fold. Keeping Tulug happy, Doug, makes PATH very happy! Your gracious welcoming embrace of the PATH family at your beautiful Rancho Santa Fe estancia for our Strut Patron Party on August 25th was priceless. A big hug also goes out to Lisa Overton's two beloved daughters, Larissa and Maria, who despite having busy teen-age lives always show up and help out PATH in any way that they can. They are evolving into beautiful and talented young women before our very eyes.

Speaking of talented "young women" our very own Chris Johnson, actress and go-to book-keeper for PATH is soon to marry so how could I fail to mention the huge show of support from her new sweetie, Michael Fowler, who spent hours at the Strut helping Chris with a million financial details. Thank you so much Mike for joining our PATH brood. And special thanks to Carla Manson's husband, Vince. Vince has to be a "keeper" for showing up at our events and looking the other way when Carla misses another night at home with her family. And thanks to Sharon Bair and Susan Thorton-Zetino who have a mutual admiration society and whose friendship fuels a lot of the steam of the PATH engine... And thanks to all who support our dear Reverend Dennis Malone. And, last but not least, our greatest indebtedness to the children of our PATH office leaders: Dee Dee and Emilia whose children have spent many an hour doing homework on the sidelines of a rally, a seminar or a meeting demonstrating an adult-like patience that many of us lack. I salute all of you wonderful people in our lives who listen to us vent, applaud our victories and keep us fighting the good fight for all who suffer from addictive illness. Thank you PATH family. Caroline

### Now Receive Your Quarterly Newsletter Electronically

You can now opt-in to receive the A New PATH Newsletter via your email. This will save us the cost of printing and postage. If you enjoy reading our Newsletter on paper DO NOTHING. Your copies will continue to be mailed to you. However, if you wish to receive the Newsletter electronically, simply send us an email [ANewPATH@cox.net]. Type "OPT-IN Newsletter" in the Subject Line. We will send you a confirmation email that you have chosen to receive future Newsletters via a link in an email. You will then be able to read the Newsletter a week before the printed copies arrive in mailboxes. Current and all previous PATH Newsletters can be read on our website: <http://www.anewpathsite.org/newsletters1.html> Thank you!

### Please help Support our cause by Purchasing:

- 2012 Faces of Recovery Calendars \$15
  - "Givin' Somethin' Back" CDS by Rap Artist Pierre Alexander (\$10)
  - Decade of Dedication CD of Southwestern Choir \$10
  - The Best of Chuck Negron CD - \$10
  - Silver "PATH to Recovery" cause bracelets - 3 for \$10
  - Strut for Sobriety T-Shirts \$15 (Men'L, Women's Med.
  - An Inch from the Heart books of Found Poetry available for \$20 each.
  - "R"PATH to Recovery magnetic car stickers: 3 for \$5.
  - A New PATH white T-shirts & tanks with emerald studs & stone designed by Kathy Rezaizi: \$20
  - Children of Drug War paper back with chapter authored by Gretchen Burns Bergman: \$30
  - Signed Paperback Book: One- Way Ticket, by Rita Lowenthal: \$10
  - Signed paperback book: Discovering Me, Discovering Joy, by Vivian Eisencher: \$10
  - Gourmet coffee - order at PATH.cupgives.com
- Order through PATH office: 619-670-1184 or email: [anewpath@cox.net](mailto:anewpath@cox.net). If you would like us to mail any of these items, please add \$5

A New PATH

### Wife of a Doors Rocker Warns About Drug Overdoses

By Julia Negron

Posted on 8/30/11 – Local Voices – Sherman Oaks Patch

I can't help but think back 40 years ago; to the time I got up close and personal with overdose. The Sunset Strip scene of 1966, 1967's "Summer of Love" and the Monterey Pop Festival were my rock 'n' roll training grounds. I was working in the A & R department of Liberty Records, and by 1968 I had moved in with and was soon married to rock icon John Densmore of the Doors.

A most fabulous lifestyle; all fun and no consequences. I often look back and wonder what the world would be like if we knew then what we know now.

I remember an intimate birthday dinner party for Jim Morrison before he went to Paris. We all laughed when another Doors wife and I rolled up the birthday present we had found for Jim - a Courvoisier cognac bottle decanter on wheels made to look like an antique war cannon. Today I might choose something different.

Even then there were whisperings about some of our favorite musicians; friends being "real" junkies - Tim Hardin, James Taylor? It was hard to believe. Then came the news - both Jimi Hendrix and Janis Joplin were dead. But the real shock came when my own mother died at 47 of an overdose. Still I saw it as a fluke - expected, after all my mother had a long history of problems.

Then Jim. Jim Morrison! Even our own little rock circle didn't seem to know an overdose killed Jim. Today I have no doubt that it did - and that his life could have been saved.

Suddenly hearing about someone you knew from the music scene dying from overdose became commonplace. "Remember so-and-so, the drummer from so-and so?" "Yeah why?" "He OD'd." "Far out."

Only it wasn't really so far out, it was just sad. I developed a drug habit right along with my second husband, Three Dog Night singer Chuck Negron. We took ODs in stride, happy to survive, part of the price, part of the game. Who knew we would survive long enough to look back in sadness on the wasted lives and unsung songs, the unwritten poetry, the unpainted art.

My own life was saved twice by Narcan (naloxone), administered by the private paramedic some of us big shots kept on call. In 1984, my own baby sister died of a drug overdose. 1985 would find me checking into rehab at Cedars hospital, never to shoot heroin again.

As time marched on I would see my own son on life support, another overdose! OK today, though, and in recovery, thanks to medical intervention. But not so lucky were all the rocker parents who did lose their children. Oscar Scaggs, Jessica Rebennack, Andre Young Jr - so many kids of music legends lost. All lives that could have been saved, like mine, if we had known how to prevent a drug overdose from becoming fatal.

Aug. 31 is International Overdose Awareness Day. Today we know that all life matters and things can change. Now that I am a cleverly preserved rock dowager, relying on my stories and memories for thrills, I've painfully watched a younger generation of rockers die of overdoses. Their numbers are legion, the sadness intolerable - they would have practiced their art for another 40 years like my lucky living peers have. Alive today, long gray hair, our leather pants bursting a little bit at the bum. We are still full of stories and music, all the promise that rocked life in the '60s. I want that young life and music to continue.

On Aug. 31 I will be taking my hippie sensibilities out of mothballs for a street protest in Hollywood to raise awareness that overdose is preventable, a medical emergency to be treated with urgency, dignity and without fear of arrest. If Jim Morrison were alive today he would have at least written a poem about it and maybe joined me - gray hair, bursting leathers pants and all.

**The North County Times - Californian**  
**FORUM: The overdose crisis can be met with solutions**

By Gretchen Burns Bergman North County Times |

Posted: Tuesday, August 30, 2011

There is nothing more tragic than young lives being lost unnecessarily, before they have a chance to reach their full potential. The grief experienced by parents and family members left behind is heightened by the sense of frustration and even rage, that this loss could have been prevented. Yet, many don't talk about accidental fatal overdose because of shame and stigma.

Aug. 31 is International Overdose Awareness Day ---- a day to acknowledge individual loss and family grief when loved ones have suffered overdose. This day of awareness was started in Australia by members of the Salvation Army and Community Health Development programs in 2000, and is acknowledged worldwide today.

California has the highest number of overdose deaths in the country. According to the Centers for Disease Control, drug overdose now ranks as a leading cause of accidental death in the United States, second only to motor-vehicle accidents. It is the leading cause of death among people who use drugs around the world. These numbers are rising due to prescription opioid drugs.

I am the mother of two sons who have addictive illness. My older son is in long-term recovery and works as a drug and alcohol counselor. In his profession, he helps people to find recovery and live meaningful lives. His story could have had a darker ending. Many years ago, he was left unconscious after partying with his friends. Thankfully, a Good Samaritan took him to the emergency room and called me. I waited for hours in the middle of the night not knowing if he would live or die. My younger son has been in a position to save the lives of several of his drug using friends, through the use of Naloxone. Worry is my constant companion.

I wonder how many of our sons and daughters have survived an overdose, and we don't know it, or realize how lucky we are that they still have futures to look forward to. Parents of drug users have panic attacks, not because they are codependent, but because they know their offspring are in real danger. Remember the saying, "Do you know where your children are?" warning us to keep close watch on our kids to keep them safe. This haunts us even when our child becomes an adult, when we understand that addiction is a life-threatening disease.

I have several friends who have lost a child needlessly to overdose. After her son, Jeff, died of an accidental overdose, Denise Cullen started helping others suffering from what she calls this "unique, stigmatized and isolating grief."

There are solutions that can save lives, like Good Samaritan policies that provide limited criminal immunity for both the witness and the victim of an overdose. Unfortunately, witnesses of an overdose often don't call 911 out of fear of arrest for associated drug use. Naloxone, a non-narcotic drug that reverses overdoses could be made more available.

We must adopt strategies that will keep people with drug problems alive for the cure.

A New PATH (Parents for Addiction Treatment & Healing) is holding a candlelight vigil at St. Paul's Cathedral Courtyard, 2728 6th Ave., San Diego, at 7 p.m., to honor individuals who have lost their lives to overdose.

*Gretchen Burns Bergman is co-founder of A New PATH and lead organizer of Moms United to End the War on Drugs national campaign.*

**What to Make of Sarah Palin's Alleged Cocaine Use?**

By Tony Newman – 9/15/11 – Huffington Post

[http://www.huffingtonpost.com/tony-newman/what-to-make-of-sarah-pal\\_b\\_964199.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/tony-newman/what-to-make-of-sarah-pal_b_964199.html)

A forthcoming unauthorized biography about former vice presidential candidate Sarah Palin is generating news around the country. The two items getting the most ink so far are the

claims that Palin had a fling with NBA star Glen Rice while she was a sports reporter in Alaska, and that Sarah Palin used cocaine while snowmobiling with friends.

Palin has previously admitted to using marijuana, making her part of an ever growing group of elected officials, from both the GOP and the Dems, who have used illicit drugs or have substance abuse issues in their immediate families.

President Obama broke new ground when he admitted to not only marijuana use, but to experimenting with cocaine when was a young man. John McCain and his family know about substance abuse, with his wife Cindy's well-known addiction to prescription pain pills. George Bush dodged questions about his cocaine and marijuana use and would only admit to "youthful indiscretions." Al Gore was a known marijuana smoker. President Clinton famously addressed the issue with the bizarre I-smoked-it-but-didn't-inhale line. Jeb Bush's daughter Noelle was busted with Xanax and crack. I could go on and on with those who've admitted to or have been outted for illicit drug use: Newt Gingrich, yes. Mayor Bloomberg, check.

None of this should be surprising. I would never expect our elected officials to go through life without trying drugs. We are a society swimming in drugs: Marijuana, Prozac, Ritalin, Cocaine, Cigarettes, Alcohol, Viagra. Virtually every American uses drugs both for pleasure and to soothe the pain -- and more than half of American adults have used an illegal drug.

Past or current drug use should not be worthy of ridicule -- but hypocrisy should be. Rush Limbaugh once scoffed at the idea that African Americans are disproportionately arrested on drug charges, and suggested that the solution should be to arrest more white people. Yet when he was busted with thousands of Oxycontin pills, he changed his tune in a heartbeat.

And how about New York Mayor Michael Bloomberg? When asked if he had smoked marijuana, he said yes, and even added that he enjoyed it. Yet under Mayor Bloomberg, New York has the shameful distinction of being the marijuana arrest capital of the world. Last year, more than 50,000 New Yorkers were arrested and jailed on low-level marijuana possession charges -- that far exceeds the city's total marijuana arrests from 1981-1995!

The scapegoating and hypocrisy from our elected officials is as strong today as ever. Right now there is legislation popping up around the country to drug test people who receive welfare benefits. I wonder how comfortable these elected officials and their staff would be if they had to piss in a cup.

I have mixed feelings when I hear about Palin and other politicians' drug use. The revelations are beneficial by helping shatter the myth that if you try drugs you are going to be an unproductive person who ruins your life. But the hypocrisy is infuriating. Our prisons are exploding with more than 500,000 people behind bars for nonviolent drug offenses -- and these politicians are perpetuating the policies that created this catastrophe.

It is time for voters to punish elected officials - not for past drug use, but for supporting draconian laws that lock up so many of our brothers and sisters for doing what so many of our elected officials do themselves.

Tony Newman is the director of media relations at the Drug Policy Alliance ([www.drugpolicy.org](http://www.drugpolicy.org))

**National Alcohol & Drug Addiction Recovery Month**

**President Barack Obama** issued his proclamation declaring September 2011 as National Alcohol and Drug Addiction Recovery Month declaring, "As a Nation, we must strive to promote second chances and recognize each individual's ability to overcome adversity. We laud and support the millions of Americans in recovery from substance abuse, their loved ones, and the communities that help them sustain recovery, while encouraging those in need to seek help. As we celebrate National Alcohol and Drug Addiction Recovery Month, we pay tribute to the transforming power of recovery, which will continue to heal individuals and communities across our country."

## APA Headlines

### Drug Deaths Now Exceed MVA Deaths, CDC Says. September 2011

The Los Angeles Times (9/18, Girion, Glover, Smith) reported that "preliminary data from the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention" shows that "drugs exceeded motor vehicle accidents (MVAs) as a cause of death in 2009, killing at least 37,485 people nationwide." Public health experts call this an "epidemic," as "this is the first time that drugs have accounted for more fatalities than traffic accidents since the government started tracking drug-induced deaths in 1979." Much of the increase comes from "prescription pain and anxiety" medications, which "now cause more deaths than heroin and cocaine combined."

### Experts: Addiction Is A Chronic Brain Disease. – Aug.2011

The AP (8/16, Neergaard) reports that addiction is "a chronic brain disease, says a new definition aimed at helping families and their doctors better understand the challenges of treating it." The definition appears on the American Society for Addiction Medicine's website. Experts agree. "The behavioral problem is a result of brain dysfunction," explained Nora Volkow, MD, director of the National Institute on Drug Abuse. Volkow "welcomed the statement as a way to help her own agency's work to spur more primary care physicians to screen their patients for signs of addiction. NIDA estimates that 23 million Americans need treatment for substance abuse, but only about two million get that help."

### Children of the Drug War Perspectives on the Impact of Drug Policies on Young People

Editor Damon Barrett is senior human rights analyst at Harm Reduction International based in London.

This book is a collection of original essays that investigate the impacts of the war on drugs on children, young people, and their families. With contributions from around the world, the book incorporates a wide range of styles and approaches, tackling both well-known and under-reported aspects of drug policies in order to ask fundamental questions of national and international drug control systems.

I am proud to be one of the authors in this book. I wrote the chapter "Dancing With Despair: A Mother's Perspective." You can order the book through Amazon, or it is available at the PATH office for \$30.

*Gretchen Burns Bergman*

### ACLU Releases New Report Highlighting Ways to Reduce State Budgets and Prison Populations. – August 9, 2011

Today, the ACLU is pleased to share with you a new report entitled Smart Reform Is Possible: States Reducing Incarceration Rates and Costs While Protecting Communities. The report details how several states with long histories of being "tough on crime" have enacted bipartisan reforms relying on alternatives to incarceration, underscoring that reform is not only politically and fiscally viable, but that other states must also urgently follow suit. These six states – Texas, Mississippi, Kansas, South Carolina, Kentucky, and Ohio – also experienced declines in their crime rates while these new policies were in place. The report further documents ongoing reform efforts in four more states – California, Louisiana, Maryland, and Indiana – and identifies national criminal justice trends. It offers selected recommended reforms to pre-trial, sentencing, parole, and probation systems that lawmakers can enact to reduce states' incarceration rates and corrections budgets while keeping communities safe. We hope you find this report useful in your advocacy.

**A New PATH**

## EL RINCON DE CLAUDIO EL ROL DE LA SENSITIZACION A DROGAS

Las bases neurobiológicas de la adicción- definidas como " la pérdida del control sobre el uso de drogas, o la búsqueda compulsiva y uso de drogas pese a las consecuencias negativas de las mismas" - continua siendo poco entendida. Ni tolerancia ni dependencia física son características esenciales del comportamiento crónico de la búsqueda de drogas, la cual puede re-emergir después de meses de abstinencia con claves asociadas al uso de drogas ( paraphernalia del uso, medio ambientes familiares), stress o la droga misma. Este fenómeno, llamado relapso crónico, tiene obviamente analogías con la memoria a largo plazo y parece representar la esencia de la adicción. Esto ha sido estudiado con el nombre de "sensitización", definido como " aumento de la respuesta a la droga con el uso repetitivo de la misma dosis". En contraste con la tolerancia, que es producida con la administración constante de una dosis baja de la droga, la sensitización generalmente ocurre con una administración intermitente y a dosis altas. En algunos modelos animales la sensitización aparece después de varios días de abstinencia, pero no después de intervalos cortos de abstinencia. Existe evidencia que la adquisición de la sensitización y el mantenimiento de la sensitización corresponden a dos estructuras anatómicas diferentes en el cerebro. Una vez que la sensitización ha sido inducida, los animales pueden permanecer hipersensitivos por meses o más a los efectos psicomotores o a los efectos "placenteros" de la exposición subsecuente a drogas.

La tolerancia probablemente contribuye al aumento del uso de la droga durante el desarrollo de la adicción, y la dependencia física probablemente contribuye a la disforia y síntomas generales que llevan al individuo a tasas de recaídas altas durante el síndrome de abstinencia en etapa inicial. Sensitización es probablemente lo que hace la adicción un fenómeno crónico de por vida, con recaídas frecuentes, ya que envuelve cambios extremadamente estables en el cerebro, no solo a nivel anatómico pero también a nivel de las señales intracelulares.

CLAUDIO CABREJOS MD MPH - DIPLOMATE,  
AMERICAN BOARD OF ADDICTION PSYCHIATRY

A note of gratitude to Stepping Stone of San Diego and John de Miranda for hosting our Renewal Retreat and special thanks to Denise Yamada, Executive Coach and Training Program Leader for her positive affirmations and innovative directions.

ARE YOU STRUGGLING BECAUSE OF AN  
ALCOHOLIC/ADDICTED LOVED ONE?

"FRIENDS FOR RECOVERY"  
CAN HELP YOU...

We meet in the same location each week for 2 hours to assist each other with the emotional, ethical, practical, and legal matters that result from a relationship with those in an addiction. We share our experience, provide information and education about these issues and offer solutions. It is a cross-talk format with a drug and alcohol qualified facilitator. Because addiction is a sensitive issue, our group provides a safe place to find answers to so many questions, while maintaining anonymity. We have found this group therapy to be invaluable for our continued success. The friends and family of those in addiction need help to!

We would like to give our thanks to Dr. Milner and Dr. Prigmore who some 30 years ago pioneered the first addiction recovery center in San Diego, called Rancho L'Abri. They realized the friends and family of addicts needed support too. Although Rancho L'Abri is no longer with us, we carry the torch they so lovingly handed to us by MAINTAINING THE SAME FORMAT.

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Thursdays from 4:00 to 6:00

## Up Close and Personal with “Relapse”

By Caroline Stewart, LCSW

I have been thinking a lot lately about “relapse.” I know. I know. It is no longer kosher to call a return to active drug or alcohol use a “relapse” because of the pejorative framing for such an experience. The word “relapse” sadly implies that there is willful motivation in the individual compelling them to choose the illness over health. We all understand that “re-occurrence” is a more clinical term resonant with other chronic health conditions such as diabetes or arthritis. Yet, against the current trend of scientifically-based findings that addictive illness (especially for alcoholics) is often the “no choice” illness (George Koob, PhD), as the mother of a struggling “addict” I find myself surprised over and over again by my son’s struggle to maintain long-term sobriety. I am embarrassed to admit that it is a kind of dopey, trusting “Groundhog Day” experiencing of believing that once and for all my precious son is on a fluid statistical curve moving towards long-term recovery. I keep hoping that this or that treatment will finally be the saving grace that rescues him forever from the ruins of addictive illness. And yet, even in the face of my own pathological optimism, I found myself talking with my dear intern this morning, about the tenacious grip of addictive illness and how it is a life-time condition requiring life-long vigilance.

A few weeks back, while sitting at my desk, my son called in tears and acknowledged that he had been evicted from his sober-living residence and was on the street surrounded by plastic bags with his belongings. It was a truly heart-breaking moment as this particular program held the promise of long-term housing given my son’s homeless status. As many times before, there was that horrific, wrenching moment when I had to decide to help my son or kick him to the curb. I, frankly, did not believe his story that he had been evicted for no good cause. His father and I had noted some increasing squirreliness and feared relapse. We arranged for our son to come home for a few days but steadfastly insisted that he would have to sleep on the floor and we openly pronounced that “we do not want you to get comfortable here.” I know you know this. We had been here before many, many times. Addictive illness is a re-occurring condition.

Twenty-five years ago, when I first began my psychotherapy training, most of my supervisors were trained in the formal Freudian psychoanalytic tradition. Freud’s beliefs, you may or may not know, continue to gently or not so gently influence our perspectives about treatment. It was Freud’s view that if both the patient (analysand) and his physician (analyst) spent one hour a day for several days a week for sometimes several years, that at the end of the grueling journey, the patient would be free of his or her self-defeating behaviors. I have crassly thought of Freud’s approach as one might bake a loaf of bread. The formless chaotic dough goes into the oven and eventually comes out formed and fully-baked or as bakers might say “done.” A completed analysis means that “one is done.” The primary neurotic issues are resolved and the patient walks happily into the sunset. Sadly, I fear that even progressive and highly informed mental health providers still live with the taint of this Freudian view that with the proper amount of therapy and the proper type of therapy, our clients should be able to come out fully “done.” Clearly, this is not the case with our beloved patients and family members struggling with addictive illness. They are almost never “done.”

But what is it about “relapse” or a “re-occurrence” that so disturbs us? Why do I fight my own scientifically-based understanding that addictive illness is a life-time chronic disease? Fully embracing this truth would make my life a whole lot easier. We are so much better able to problem-solve when we accept that we have a problem in the first place. Just this morning I told my social work intern, “when Mrs. Smith has a flair up of her osteo-arthritis she takes

**A New PATH**

an Advil but when her son relapses, she has to go hide her silver.” I was not trying to be coy here. Sadly, when my son falls back into his addictive illness, he brings out all of the really big anti-social guns: lying, stealing, avoiding, raging and hiding (from himself, mostly). Why wouldn’t I want to be done with all of this? I have had breast cancer patients facing a third or fourth return of cancer and they tell me that they want to stop the treatments and be done with it. They are not suicidal but they are terribly worn out. Tragically, I suspect that the Amy Winehouses of the world haven’t always lost their way through inattention. I fear that many of our over-dosed children are ready to give up.

Furthermore, I fear that one reason so many of our adult children with addictive illness are currently incarcerated is that we all gave up on them. The society gave up on them. Their parents gave up on them. Even their medical providers gave up on them. We all held that sordid little Freudian-Puritanical belief that hard work always pays off and that people who relapse have done so because they didn’t want recovery enough; they didn’t work hard enough. That sadly is a myth. I know of one poor woman who experiences post-traumatic symptoms when forced to attend AA meetings by her probation officer. She shared with her mother that after literally thousands of hours of meetings in which she is often the subject of pontification and righteousness, she still succumbs to her illness and feels like a very bad person. Surely, we could not say that this woman has not worked hard enough. Would ten thousand AA meetings resolve her addictive illness? Would 10,000 breast-cancer support groups resolve the cancer?

In conclusion, there is no getting around this issue of “relapse.” It is the sad truth of addictive illness that we all work so hard to forget. Our patients and family members suffering from addictive illness can only live one day at a time. In this case, the Big Book and Buddha have it right.

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## **Mothers Protest Prohibition...Again (Printed in AlterNet 9/30/11)**

By Gretchen Burns Bergman

On Sunday, PBS and Ken Burns will start a three-day series on an issue that it is very close to my heart. The series is named Prohibition and it is about our country's experiment with alcohol prohibition.

I find it amazing what a small group of mothers can do when they decide to raise their voices to protect their children and families! Although women were pivotal in bringing about national prohibition in 1920 – in the interest of protecting their families from the effects of alcohol abuse – it was also women who were instrumental in repealing prohibition because this “noble experiment” had failed. Millions of women came to oppose Prohibition because it was corrupting morals, eroding liberties, creating violence, destroying lives, and endangering their children.

A few years ago, I was looking at a poster from the 1920's. The woman was holding her hand out and holding her child in a protective grasp, and the caption read: Prohibition Failed! Please do something about it.

I have been advocating for changes in drug policy for over a decade. I have two sons who have addictive illness, one of whom spent ten years cycling through the criminal justice system for nonviolent drug possession offenses. This was a tremendous waste of human potential, and a heartbreakingly painful saga for our family. Not only did we have to deal with the pain of this insidious disease, but we also had to cope with stigma borne out of fear and ignorance, and the damaging effects of incarceration. My son's journey propelled me to advocate for therapeutic rather than punitive drug policies.

When I pondered the message of the poster, I realized that mothers' voices, when gathered together, free from shame and closeted fear, could change what we all know in our hearts must be changed. These punitive prohibitionist policies are affecting the lives and the futures of our children, so we must speak out!

Thus, the Moms United to End the War on Drugs national campaign began, with the mission of stopping the violence, mass incarceration, and overdose deaths that are a result of our current punitive and discriminatory drug policies.

As the nation watches Ken Burns' Prohibition and sees how the 18th amendment turned law-abiding citizens into criminals, caused liquor consumption and binge drinking to increase, and gang violence to explode, I hope that we can draw some parallels to what we are experiencing today. It is alarming that such a failed policy would still be with us in the form of drug prohibition. It's incredible that we have allowed so many lives to be lost and so many liberties to be taken away in this counterproductive effort to keep people from using drugs. Of course these policies backfire today just as they did in the 1920's. Every society throughout history has used drugs – we will never be able to rid ourselves of drugs, so we better figure out how to reduce the harms associated with them.

Mothers, again, are leading the charge, for the sake of our children, and future generations to come, just as women did many decades ago to end alcohol prohibition. We are fed up and raising our voices in favor of control, regulation and legalization of marijuana. We've seen too many families that have been ravaged by both addiction and the criminal justice system. Instead of addressing our loved ones' drug problems, the country spends billions to incarcerate them for nothing more than drug possession. We must stop the criminalization of people who use drugs or who are addicted to drugs.

As people tune into this series over the next few days, we hope they will discuss the impacts of drug prohibition with family, friends and neighbors. We need folks to join us ([www.momsunited.net](http://www.momsunited.net)) and to commit to end our current prohibitionist policies that do more harm than good.

*Gretchen Burns Bergman is Co-Founder & Executive Director of A New PATH (Parents for Addiction Treatment & Healing) and lead organizer of the Moms United to End the War on Drugs national campaign.*

## **Opinion: San Diego, Do the Right Thing on Drugs**

By Margaret Dooley-Sammuli | Posted: Friday, September 30, 2011 2:30 pm

[http://www.voiceofsandiego.org/opinion/article\\_1c7726e2-eba9-11e0-a255-001cc4c002e0.html](http://www.voiceofsandiego.org/opinion/article_1c7726e2-eba9-11e0-a255-001cc4c002e0.html)

When Assembly Bill 109 (called "Realignment") takes effect tomorrow, most San Diegans convicted of low-level offenses will no longer be eligible for state prison but will be kept under supervision right here at home. Realignment gives San Diego, and California's 57 other counties, the flexibility to respond to low-level offenses like personal drug possession in innovative ways.

Rather than simply repeating the state's failed lock-'em-up approach, San Diego should use its new authority to end incarceration for drug possession and to develop health-centered drug policies, which are both more effective and more cost-effective.

San Diego's realignment implementation plan, adopted by the Board of Supervisors on Tuesday, includes guidelines for expanding alternatives to incarceration. This is certainly a good start, but none of the critical details have been worked out. It's particularly important that the county be smart on drugs, because, according to the county, 85% of the San Diegans no longer eligible for state prison have alcohol and drug problems.

Sooner rather than later, the county's agencies — in public safety as well as health and human services — need to set out clear policies on alternatives to incarceration for people arrested for drug possession and others for whom it makes sense, and to ensure access to treatment for those who want and need it.

These policies should end the incarceration of people simply because they possess an illicit substance for personal use or provide a positive drug test, unless they pose a significant threat to the community. The county's health systems should be responsible for working with those who have an alcohol or drug problem, because they can do so at lower cost and with greater success than law enforcement can. Critically, these policies should be honest about drug use. If a person's drug use is non-problematic, then mandating treatment is a waste of scarce resources. Many other options are available, including community service.

This is a practical, not soft, approach. If San Diego relies too much on incarceration — whether through lengthy sentences or short-term jail stays euphemistically called "flash incarceration" — the county will suffer immediate and long-term jail overcrowding. After 40 years of the war on drugs, there can be no doubt that incarceration has failed to prevent or address our communities' alcohol and drug problems.

It is important, too, that San Diego not just expand alternatives to incarceration, but also alternatives to conviction in order to avoid the life-long barriers associated with a criminal record. People with a conviction on their record — even for a petty offense — can face significantly diminished employment opportunities and much lower lifetime earnings. They may also be prohibited from accessing student loans, food stamps and other public assistance. This works against individual, family and community wellbeing and public safety.

Community support will be critical to shaping these new policies. At the Board of Supervisors hearing this week, Supervisor Dianne Jacob expressed concern about "state criminals" coming to San Diego. But the reality is that they are San Diegans. They are our coworkers, neighbors, and loved ones. They deserve to be treated with dignity and respect — and to have access to drug treatment.

Margaret Dooley-Sammuli, a San Diego resident, is deputy state director in Southern California with the Drug Policy Alliance, the nation's leading organization working to end the war on drugs.

## Mission Statement

To reduce the stigma associated with addictive illness through education and compassionate support and to advocate for therapeutic rather than punitive drug policies.

### WHO WE ARE

A non-profit advocacy organization of parents, concerned citizens, individuals in recovery, healthcare professionals and community leaders working together to educate the public, media and decision makers about the true nature of addiction, and to expand access to treatment services. We advocate to end discriminatory drug policies that serve as roadblocks to recovery.

Our goal is to reduce prison recidivism, save lives, heal families, and move towards a healthier society.

### Attention PATH Members ...

For immediate and up-to-date information, please send us your e-mail address and we can inform you electronically! Our e-mail address at PATH is [anewpath@cox.net](mailto:anewpath@cox.net)

## History

PATH grew out of a series of pre-Substance Abuse Summit meetings with parents, Superior Court Judges and Officers of the criminal justice system in the Spring of 1999. Founding members are Gretchen Burns Bergman, Sylvia Liwerant and Tom O'Donnell.

### PATH WOULD LIKE TO THANK:

Alliance Healthcare Foundation  
The California Endowment  
Drug Policy Alliance  
Join Together / Demand Treatment  
Las Patronas  
San Diego County Supervisor Ron Roberts  
Sempra Energy  
Faces & Voices of Recovery  
Robert Wood Johnson Foundation  
Price Galinson Collaborative Fund  
Matthew G. L. Perlatti Memorial Fund

**For their generous grants and support!**

## Our Proposals for Therapeutic Justice

- 1) Long-term mandatory rehabilitation in a structured therapeutic community-based recovery environment for non-violent drug offenders.
- 2) If the nature of the crime does not allow for this alternative, sentencing should include immediate placement in a rehabilitation and recovery program within the prison system.
- 3) Upon release from prison or structured recovery homes, individuals with substance-related disorders should be mandated to transitional programs such as sober living environments, to prepare them to re enter society.



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## The Political Catwalk

by David Beck-Brown and Sharon Bair

Leadership comes from the top. The collective body one leads will behave at the same level of integrity shown by the leader, be it a stellar example or less than par. One can speculate as to which model exists in any given agency involved in the criminal justice system. Proving it is a challenge, but based on experience, it is possible. The following examples show various leadership styles within three government agencies and how the models effect their respective departments. You be the judge of what works.

At the State level, the California Highway Patrol (CHP) exemplifies the model of professionalism that could and should exist in every law enforcement agency. Walk into any CHP office and you will see the results of a leader who made a decision that many people criticized at the time. The leader extended the Peace Officer Bill of Rights (POBR) to every CHP employee including non-uniformed personnel. Prominently displayed on the lobby wall hangs a framed commendation from the Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies, Inc.

At the City level, the chief of police recently spoke at the San Diego Police Foundation's annual fundraising luncheon. He shared a story that probably didn't register with the majority of attendees, including some high profile City officials, as officer misconduct within the department is the current hot topic. The chief confessed he cheated on his entrance exam to become a cop. He didn't meet the height requirement to join the force at the time, so he accepted a favor from admissions to allow him in after trying to pass by wearing lifts in his shoes. An alternative to circumventing protocol would have been to call attention to the discriminatory factor of the height requirement, advocate for a change in policy and then become an officer with integrity intact.

At the County level, the District Attorney (DA)'s mission statement contains the phrase, "We will be open and forthright in our communications with each other and all those with whom we come in contact." On October 1st the federally mandated release of hundreds of State inmates into the hands of County officials will occur. The community group leaders participating in the DA round table sincerely want to support the County with the burden of providing housing and services. Clear communication between County officials and volunteers is crucial at this time. The determining factor will be the successful transition of parolees into the community.

Anyone who has attended a fashion show knows the attire displayed on the catwalk is usually intended for the consumer with means. It's fun to watch, but when the pageantry is over the average onlooker returns home to shop for a bargain. Leaders in our criminal justice system need to be aware of the clothing they display. Are they appealing to the common good of all? A quality leader exudes personal power through all levels of management. Pay attention to the leadership models you encounter. Commend the ones that work and effect change in the ones that need improvement.

*Beck-Brown is a Community Ambassador for PATH and retired from the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation. Bair is a Board member of A New PATH.*

The views of the authors do not necessarily reflect those of A New PATH



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A New PATH works to reduce the stigma associated with addictive illness through education and compassionate support, and to advocate for therapeutic rather than punitive drug policies.

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