Twelve Step, Indian tradition of giving back keys Auger’s recovery

To keep the program, you must give it away. This hallmark of Twelve Step recovery is also a chief tradition of Native American culture. It is a teaching that has helped define nearly 20 years of sobriety for Sally Auger, an American Indian woman from St. Paul who began her recovery at Hazelden.

“If you have more than others, you need to share; that’s an important part of Indian culture,” said Auger. The concept of sharing and giving back is also sacred ground for all people in recovery, she adds.

Auger was in no shape to “give back” when she landed at Hazelden in 1986. Consumed by her alcoholism, Auger was convinced by a therapist from New Jersey to give Hazelden a try. “She put me on a plane, gave me a check for a down payment, and off I went,” said Auger.

Auger started in detox and later joined the Dia Linn Unit, where she sat draped with a blanket for two and one half days. “It took that long before my body broke down and I was able to sleep,” she recalled. “I thought to myself, ‘What am I doing here?’ I was the only Indian person on my unit. I told them I wanted to leave.”

But a counselor, who was part Indian, convinced Auger to stay. She later connected with two Indian counselor trainees at Hazelden who provided support.

She’s glad she stayed, because she’s been sober ever since. She was especially grateful, because after her insurance reneged on paying for her treatment, Hazelden paid her bill through patient aid. “I can’t tell you what a relief that was,” she said.

Although Hazelden did not offer a program specific to Native Americans, she said it provided the foundation for her recovery.

“What I really took from Hazelden was a thorough understanding of the disease of alcoholism,” she said. “I truly understand what so many people don’t understand: that you can live with this disease and live well. That education has given me the foundation to help others.”

She went to a halfway house for several months and made the successful transition back into the community.

P.O Box 11 to double its publication frequency

THIS NEWSLETTER WILL EXPAND PUBLICATION to four times a year instead of two. Hazelden alumni will now receive P.O. Box 11 in January, May, July and November and the Hazelden Voice in March and September. The newsletters will be staggered at two-month intervals to provide consistent communications to alumni.

The quarterly regional newsletters for Hazelden New York, Hazelden Chicago and Hazelden Springbrook have been discontinued. News from the regions will be incorporated into P.O. Box 11 and the Voice. P.O. Box 11 is a newsletter for Hazelden alumni, while the Voice goes to alumni and a wide range of professionals who have an interest in addiction and recovery. We welcome your input. Send your feedback to lreynolds@hazelden.org or call 888-257-7800, ext. 4105.
Grateful Hazelden alumnus says thanks for 35 years of sobriety

My name is Ken and I’m a recovering alcoholic. On Dec. 29, 1969 I was removed from my house by police due to the fact I was abusive to my family due to drinking. Of course I went to the nearest watering hole and was literally crying in my choice of drink when a friend came over and started talking to me. I explained all that went on and he suggested I go to Hazelden. He said they could help. I had no idea what Hazelden was, but at the time I didn’t care whether I lived or died, so I went along with another friend.

We drank, sang, and cried all the way. I spent one day in detox (He paid for my admission, which was $589 for 22 days), and after 21 days on the Tiebout Unit my counselor suggested that I stay another 13 days, because I hadn’t given up drinking for me. I gave it up for family, relatives, job, etc.

So I finally accepted that I had to give it up for me and was discharged Feb. 7, 1970. The first year of my sobriety was the hardest, due to the fact I didn’t attend AA meetings on a regular basis. Many alcohol and other drug problems appeared in my family. I have seven children of which six are alcohol or other drug dependent and have been through treatment. Four are still using as of today. One is in her fifth year of sobriety. One grandson was in treatment at age 13 and is still using.

Over the years I’ve started several AA groups and started the first young people’s AA group in 1973. I have been an alumni contact for Hazelden for 33 years and have tried to help people stay in sobriety—probably 100 or more from Hazelden alone.

My first and major priority is attending my AA meeting on Tuesday night at 7:30. Only an emergency can keep me from going. We go to California to spend our winters and I attend two meetings a week. On Dec. 30 I celebrated 35 years of sobriety, although I know there is no seniority in AA: If you got up earlier than me on a given day, then you have more sobriety than me. Quality of sobriety counts a great deal. AA has given me everything I could ever imagine. At our AA meetings we read the 12 promises of AA and I could never have imagined that I would experience these promises more than once. As I read somewhere, “When I am weak and you are strong, I need you. When you are weak and I am strong, you need me.” That’s why I go to AA—to give and receive.

— Ken K., a grateful alcoholic

Silkwort Reunion is inspiration to all

Dear Alumni Staff, Renewal Center Staff, and Silkworth Counseling Staff:

Another unbelievably great time was had by all (if I may speak for others) at our October (2004) reunion. The growth shown by many of the returning alumni is amazing and inspiring.

The sharing with each other about the events, both good and bad, around the circles in the meeting room and around the tables at mealtime is priceless. Every session and meal and discussion always left me with some new insight into the lifelong process of sobriety.

But, the best part of this reunion was the laughter. We joke, kid, and pick on each other as only those of a kindred spirit can. The second best part was seeing so many of the patients from one year ago in attendance at this year’s reunion—and telling what a positive impact our presence was for them then.

Please pass this letter of thanks to all listed above and let me say to you all—thanks for being there for us, thanks for another great reunion.

— Gerry G.
Hazelden partners with St. Paul recovery church

A “RECOVERY CHURCH” AND HAZELDEN: Logical partners? You bet.

And an excellent match they’re making, as evidenced by two recent outreach events hosted at Central Park United Methodist Church in St. Paul. More events are planned for the remainder of the year, including a June 7 presentation featuring Paul Hilton of Hazelden.

The events, a cooperative effort of the church and Hazelden Alumni Relations, are community outreach events that serve Hazelden alumni and the general recovering community of the Twin Cities. “It’s a great way for us to give back to the recovering community and provide an event of value for everyone in recovery,” said Lisa Reynolds, manager of Hazelden’s Alumni Relations. “Hopefully, the events are inspirational and beneficial to all who attend.”

Indeed, the first event of 2005, held Feb. 15, featured Fred Holmquist of Hazelden and was a big hit, with more than 200 people in attendance to hear Holmquist’s talk on “Living in the Solution: If Not Here, Where? If Not Now, When?”

“Fred was terrific,” said Jo Campe, pastor of Central Park United Methodist Church. “We had a lot of our congregation here and a lot of Hazelden alumni. It was an outstanding event with a great message of recovery and tremendous fellowship.” The church is one of only six in the country that is specifically for individuals and families in recovery, said Campe. The church, in its fourth year, features great diversity among its congregation. It has about 500 members and has grown in numbers primarily via word of mouth.

Church services are held on Saturdays at 5 p.m. and Sundays at 9 and 11 a.m. The church hosts a wide variety of Twelve Step meetings, including AA, Al-Anon, NA, GA, and ACA, to name a few. Other meetings and special workshops are held there to enhance recovery. Hazelden authors, such as Earnie Larsen and Melody Beattie, are supporters of the church and have led workshops there.

John Mac Dougall, D Min, manager of Spiritual Care and the Family Program at Hazelden, presented on “Trust and Surrender” on April 5 at the church. Paul Hilton, one of Hazelden’s most popular speakers, will present a talk titled “Keep it Simple, Keep it True” on June 7 at 7 p.m. He will offer advice for keeping it simple and will share the simplicities and truths that are defined in the Big Book of AA. Hilton has led retreats and programs at the Dan Anderson Renewal Center for more than 10 years and has worked in the addiction field for 25 years.

More events at the church are planned for the second half of the year. The events are free; no preregistration is needed. Call 651-213-4588 for more information.

Regional update

Sober Residence continues to thrive

Chicago—The Sober Residence at Hazelden Chicago, which opened last October, is thriving, with residents occupying 17 of 22 available beds. The residence houses men and women and provides a structured, safe and sober living environment with a wide range of support. Each resident is assigned a recovery coach and an alumni peer from whom they receive guidance to strengthen recovery.

A strong culture of recovery, grounded in the AA tenets of Honesty, Openness and Willingness, is beginning to take hold. For information, contact Tom Cleland, who does pre-entry coordination, at 312-943-3534.

Hazelden Chicago will host an Alumni Appreciation Dinner on Friday, May 6 at 8 p.m. The alumni speaker meeting precedes the dinner at 7 p.m.

Emily Smith is the newest addition to the clinical staff at Hazelden Chicago. She is in charge of the Evening Intensive Outpatient Program and the Family Program.

Nancy Smith will present “Sweet Choices: Helping Clients Choose How to Live with Their Chronic Illness” in headlining the May 20 C4 Lecture Series event at Hazelden Chicago. The free workshop will be held from 8:30 to 10:30 a.m. and includes 1 CEU. To reserve a spot, call Mary Pozarycki at 312-943-3534, ext. 131.

Springbrook alumni dinner attracts overflow crowd to see Mac Dougall

Newberg, Ore.— About 140 people turned out March 11 at the Portland Marriott Downtown in Portland, Ore., for a Hazelden Springbrook dinner that featured John Mac Dougall, D Min., as guest speaker. Springbrook alumni and other friends and family members from the general recovery community enjoyed an evening that included a social hour; dinner, dynamic speaker, and great fellowship.

Springbrook alumni will continue their momentum of sharing and caring with an ice cream social on July 15 and their annual Springbrook alumni reunion on Sept. 16-17. In addition, the Springbrook Alumni Association has resumed a “supper club” event that meets every two to three months. Forty-five current or past alumni association members met in February. All alumni are invited to attend. Contact Debbie Voorhees for more information on the upcoming alumni activities at 503-554-4353.

Hazelden New York prepares for new home

New York City—As staff of Hazelden New York prepared for the move to their new location at 322 W. Eighth Ave., they agreed that
“I was a terrible taker during my alcoholism,” she said. “So in my sobriety I made a commitment to give back to the community.”

And Auger has followed through faithfully on that pledge. After her halfway house stay, she established Peta Wakan Tipi, a nonprofit transitional housing program for Native Americans in recovery. Since 1987, she has been the director of two sites: Sacred Fire Lodge for men in St. Paul, which houses six to eight residents, and Mother Earth Lodge, a home for Indian women in West St. Paul. Both facilities help rebuild the lives of urban-area Indians.

**RESTORING INDIGENOUS SEEDS, FOODS**

As a way to blend Indian traditions with her program, Auger established Dream of Wild Health, a center whose mission is to promote health in the Native American community. Dream of Wild Health recently purchased a 10-acre farm in Hugo, Minn., about 25 minutes north of the Twin Cities. Its main goal is to expand knowledge of and access to healthy indigenous foods for all people. The farm, with a three-bedroom home and large open kitchen, also provides transitional housing to people in recovery.

“A lot of Indian people have no access to fresh vegetables or fruits,” said Auger. “They’ve eaten off food shelves and food stamps. The farm will help change that. One of the first things we’ll establish on the new farm is blueberries, a food high in antioxidants. There will be a Diabetes Garden where we will teach nutrition to kids.”

Native Americans have the highest rate of diabetes in the United States and the world, as well as high rates of cancer, obesity and alcoholism.

For the past five years, Dream of Wild Health was located on a half-acre of leased land in Farmington, Minn. A fund-raising campaign supported by foundations, corporations, tribes, the government, and individuals is making it possible to purchase the farm in Hugo. The farm will provide expanded opportunities for cultivating crops, medicinal plants, and teaching. It will allow for the establishment of permanent gardens to preserve, propagate, and share indigenous foods; develop and distribute healthy foods to the Native American community; expand diabetes prevention educational gardens for Twin Cities native youth; and provide technical assistance to reservation communities.

“The farm is essential to grow the rare seeds in our collection and create access to healthy traditional foods,” said Auger.

Auger, from the Abenaki Tribe near the New Hampshire-Canadian border, says the more Indian people learn about their culture and restoring Indian traditions, the more they learn about opportunities for sobriety. Renewing Indian spirituality and values played a key role in Auger’s recovery. She says the parallels to the Twelve Steps and Indian traditions are clear. “Most Indians will tell you that the fellowship of AA and Native American traditions are very similar.”

Recovering people have amazing stories to tell, she says. “I know within our Indian community—and especially among our recovering people—there are many tremendously giving people, and they work so hard. And it’s not just our Indian community; it’s true for people from all walks of recovery.

“In my recovery, I simply had to give back. I could not have stayed sober if I didn’t give back,” she says.

**REGIONAL UPDATE—from page 3**

their immediate goal is to ensure that the outpatient services and continuing care programs continue without a hitch. “There will be no interruption of services; the needs of patients and clients will be our top priority,” says Peter Turchiano, executive director of Hazelden New York.

The move to the Chelsea neighborhood of Manhattan is expected to take place on May 20-22. Hazelden will occupy the entire 12th floor of the building. Every effort is being made to meet the needs of alumni. A monthly alumni meeting is planned for the new site, with dates TBA. Twelve Step meetings hosted at the old Hazelden New York building have had to relocate; please contact Hazelden New York at 212-420-9520 for the new locations.

**News Briefs**

**CASEY TO HIGHLIGHT MAY 22 TEA AT BOOKSTORE.** The Hazelden Connection bookstore in St. Paul will host a sponsor/sponsee tea led by Karen Casey, PhD, on Sunday, May 22 from 2 to 4 p.m. Casey is author of several meditation books, including the bestseller, *Each Day a New Beginning*. Tickets for this special event are $10 and space is limited. Call 651-665-0332 to make reservations.

The bookstore, located at 769 Grand Ave., also hosts a women’s book club that meets the second Tuesday of the month and a men’s book club that meets every second Thursday of the month. To join one of these groups, please inquire in-person at the bookstore. To learn more about upcoming book club meetings, book signings and other special events at the bookstore, please visit www.hazelden.org/hazeldenconnection or call 651-665-0332.

**FALKOWSKI PRESENTS MAY 11 IN KENTUCKY.** Carol Falkowski will provide a special presentation titled “Surprising Trends in Drug Abuse: What Communities Need to Know” on Wednesday, May 11 at the Fine Arts Center in Henderson, Ky. A social hour begins at 6 p.m. followed by Falkowski’s talk at 7 p.m. Falkowski is director of Research Communications at Hazelden and author of the book, *Dangerous Drugs: An Easy-to-Use Reference for Parents and Professionals*. The event, sponsored by Alumni Relations, is free and open to the community; no pre-registration needed.

**HILTON HEADLINES D.C. WORKSHOP MAY 14.** Paul Hilton will lead a workshop titled “Keep it Simple, Keep it True” from 8:30 a.m. to noon on Saturday, May 14 at St. John’s Episcopal Church in Chevy Chase, Md. Hilton is a popular member of the Dan Anderson Renewal Center staff in Center City and will deliver an a strong Twelve Step recovery message. The event is for Hazelden alumni and families and the general recovering community of the Washington, D.C. area. It is free, but reservations are required; please call 888-257-7800, ext. 4588.
Outpatient tobacco quit program set for October in Twin Cities

HAZELDEN’S YOUR NEXT STEP Community Program, a four-week, 11-session outpatient tobacco cessation program, will be offered in October at Hazelden Center for Youth and Families in Plymouth, Minn.

“The program will provide support from staff and peers and will give participants the tools to take on their nicotine addiction seriously,” said Barry McMillen, facilitator of the program. “It is about quitting tobacco and exploring options for a lifelong recovery one day at a time.”

The program will incorporate elements of a Twelve Step, abstinence-based model and uses lectures, group process and bibliotherapy to assist in becoming tobacco-free. The first week contains four sessions, with the first two evenings (Oct. 3-4) dedicated to preparing for the actual quit date, which occurs on the third session (Oct. 6). The fourth session (Oct. 7) includes support for the first tobacco-free weekend.

Week two includes three sessions: Coping and Relapse, Oct. 11; Maintaining Motivation and Dealing with Stress, Oct. 13; and Behavior Change, Oct. 14. Week three includes Healthy Lifestyle Behaviors and Behavior Change, Oct. 18, and Relaxation Techniques, Oct. 20. Week four features Maintaining Motivation at Program Conclusion on Oct. 25 and Celebration and Closure on Oct. 27. Each session is two and one-half hours long. Optional sessions for peer group support will be held on the weekends.

By the end of the program, participants will be able to:

- Experience three and one-half weeks of a tobacco-free life in a supportive atmosphere.
- Identify the addictive characteristics of tobacco use. Discuss ways in which they are powerless over tobacco and list examples of consequences of tobacco use.
- Describe the progression of their addiction to nicotine.
- Identify life areas needing to change in support of recovery.
- Identify alternative strategies, other than nicotine use, for coping with life stresses.
- Construct an aftercare plan for ongoing recovery and support.

Three informational workshops will be offered to introduce prospective participants to the program and the challenges of quitting. They are free and open to the public and will be held from 6:30 to 8 p.m. on July 13, Aug. 10 and Sept. 14 at Hazelden Center for Youth and Families. To learn about these or for more information on the October outpatient quit program, please call 877-685-1414. A week-long residential Your Next Step program is offered regularly at the Dan Anderson Renewal Center in Center City. Program dates for this year include May 29-June 5, July 24-31, Sept. 18-25, Oct. 30-Nov. 6, and Dec. 4-11.

Hazelden alumni chapters go international

A NEW ALUMNI CHAPTER met for the first time on March 1 in Bermuda! There were 10 people in attendance. Contact Rich S. at 441-735-6688 for details on regular meeting times and location. If you live or vacation in Bermuda, your Hazelden friends are there and meeting regularly.

The Detroit area alumni are also meeting monthly with a group of about 12 persons attending each time. Their recent focus was bringing William C. Moyers to the community on April 12 to speak on “The Power of Fellowship.”

The St. Paul alumni chapter began meeting on March 29 at the Hazelden Connection Bookstore on Grand Avenue. It meets on the last Tuesday of the month at 6 p.m. Your participation is greatly appreciated. A Minneapolis chapter will be forming soon as well; please contact us to get involved.

Chapters throughout the country serve as valuable peer-group fellowships for hundreds of Hazelden alumni. The chapters can focus on various activities, but one of the core objectives is to link new alumni to the recovering community. Each chapter develops its own meeting format, activities and service work.

Several chapters currently meeting include:

- Portland—Meets third Thursday of month at 6:30 p.m. at the Hazelden Springbrook campus (1901 Esther St., Newberg, Ore.). Call Debbie Voorhees at 503-554-4353.
- Los Angeles—Meets first Thursday of the month at 7 p.m. at Village Lutheran Church (343 Church Lane). One-hour meeting, alternates between discussion and speaker meetings. Family and friends welcome. Contact Mitch C. at 310-394-3111.
- Washington, D.C.—Meets first Wednesday of each month at 6:30 p.m. at The Pines of Rome, 4709 Hampden Lane, Bethesda, Md. Call Chuck H. at 301-498-1989. Casual discussion format, followed by optional dinner.
- Chicago—Alumni speaker meeting held Fridays at 7 p.m. at Hazelden Chicago. Families welcome. Call 312-943-3534.
- Detroit—Contact John J. at 248-790-9480.
- Bermuda—Contact Rich S. at 441-735-6688.
- Louisville—Contact Mark R. at 502-339-4662.
- New York—We will be meeting at the new Manhattan location at 322 Eighth Ave, Floor 12, starting in late June.
- St. Paul—Meets last Tuesday of the month at 6 p.m. at Hazelden Connection, 769 Grand Ave.

For more information on alumni chapters, contact Lisa Reynolds at 888-257-7800, ext. 4105.
Alumni visitor guidelines

Alumni of Hazelden are welcome to visit the Center City campus, but all visits need to be scheduled in advance with our Alumni Relations office, with the exception of shopping at Serenity Corner Bookstore, visiting patients, or attending appointments at the Mental Health Clinic. To arrange your visit, please call the Alumni Relations office between 8:00 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday at 888-257-7800, ext. 4588. Upon arrival, all visitors are required to check in at a reception area and wear a visitor’s badge while on campus.

“Scheduling your visit in advance helps Hazelden maintain the same safe, secure and confidential surroundings that you experienced during your stay here,” said Lisa Reynolds, manager of Alumni Relations. “We will be able to make appointments for you with staff you wish to see on campus, and put you on the guest list if you wish to see a patient lecture at Bigelow Auditorium.”

Other exceptions to this policy would be Alumni Relations events, such as unit reunions and Medallion Night, which require advance reservations.

WCRC picnic set for June 12

A picnic for residents, alumni and friends of the Women and Children’s Recovery Community in New Brighton will be held Sunday, June 12 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at Hanson Park in New Brighton. Please RSVP at 763-509-3903.

Second Sunday Retreats

June 12 Saul Selby, “Forgiveness”
July 10 Sue Hoisington, “Understanding Mental Health Issues in Recovery”
Aug. 14 Terry Sullivan
Sept. 11 Don Moyer, “Relationships in Recovery”
Oct. 9 Barbara Crist
Nov. 13 Pat and René Sternau

The Second Sunday Retreats are held from 9 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. on the Center City campus and include lectures, relaxation, and group discussions. They are open to anyone involved in a Twelve Step program. Cost is $10, which includes noon buffet. No preregistration necessary. For more information, call 800-257-7800.

HAZELDEN IN CENTER CITY hosts Medallion Night the third Thursday of the month at 7 p.m. in Bigelow Auditorium and an open AA meeting each Wednesday at 8 p.m. at the Dan Anderson Renewal Center.

HAZELDEN CHICAGO offers weekly AA meetings Wednesday through Sunday, a Teen AA meeting from 8:30-10:30 p.m. each Saturday, an open Al-Anon meeting Mondays at 6 p.m., Families Anonymous Tuesdays at 6 p.m., and an alumni Speaker Meeting each Friday at 7 p.m.

HAZELDEN SPRINGBROOK hosts weekly Twelve Step meetings, including AA Monday at 7:30 and Wednesday (for women) at 7:15 p.m., Al-Anon Monday at 7:30 p.m., Sex Addicts Anonymous and Sex Addicts-Anon Monday at 7:30 p.m., Narcotics Anonymous Thursday at 7:15 p.m., and an 11th Step Meditation AA meeting for men on Sunday at 6 p.m.

HAZELDEN FELLOWSHIP CLUB IN ST. PAUL hosts an open speaker AA meeting on Fridays at 7 p.m.

HAZELDEN CENTER FOR YOUTH AND FAMILIES in Plymouth, Minn., hosts Alumni Night the last Saturday of each month at 7:30 p.m. with a guest speaker.