

# Sage's Army, Inc. Newsletter

SUMMER 2017



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Phone: (724) 863-LIFE (5433). Access to this Newsletter can be found at our Website: [www.sagesarmy.com](http://www.sagesarmy.com), Email: [admin@sagesarmy.com](mailto:admin@sagesarmy.com)

Members,

This Newsletter brings together the people who are fighting to bring change (through Education and Awareness) to the growing trend of Addiction. We like to keep you abreast of the ongoing events of Sage's Army and any news worthy updates as we get them in from the county, state, and country. We would like to thank you for joining this continuously growing movement and appreciate you supporting Sage's Army and our efforts.

Sincerely,

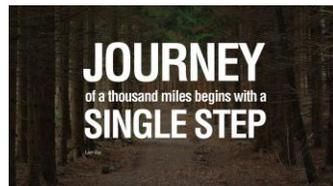
*The Sage's Army Team*



## Team Meetings

Sage's Army Team Meetings are attended by a group of dedicated volunteer individuals, along with the Officers and Directors, who help map out our present and future events. We would like to hear from any of you about ideas that you may have and want to contribute or, if you would like to attend the Team meeting in person, just contact one of our staff or e-mail [admin@sagesarmy.com](mailto:admin@sagesarmy.com).

We also offer bi-monthly Family Reinforcement/Recovery Sessions and bi-monthly Souls United in Grief meetings. Please see Page 7 of this Newsletter for full details.



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**SAGE'S ARMY IS ABOUT AWARENESS.**

**DRUGS DO NOT DISCRIMINATE.**

**ERASE THE STIGMA.**



Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can

# CHANGE THE WORLD

Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has.

*-Margaret Mead*



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*"Our greatest glory is not in never falling, but in RISING every time we fall."*

*~Confucius*

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*"At the bottom of everyone's dependency, there is always pain. Discovering the pain and healing it is an essential step in ending dependency."*

*~Chris Prentiss*

## Events We Attended

**Apr 5** – Sage's Army to rally in Harrisburg to bring attention to the Pa. Advisory Council on Drug and Alcohol Abuse.

**Apr 6** – Carmen, on behalf of Sage's Army speaks at PA Link/Medstaffers.

**Apr 6** – Sage's Army to the Yough Drug Symposium.

**Apr 22/23** – Sage's Army booth set up at the Westmoreland County Home Show. Carmen and numerous volunteers spread the AWARENESS.

**Apr 24** – Carmen to Harrisburg for the Pa. Advisory Council on Drug and Alcohol Abuse.

**May 2** – Carmen and Cindy presided over Team Meeting at the Headquarters.

**May 4** – Mt Pleasant Student Health Fair attended by Sage's Army for day event.

**May 10** – To Burrell High School. Sage's Army in attendance with Carmen and Niki speaking.

**May 31** – NARCAN training at the Headquarters.

**Jun 6** – Carmen and Cindy presided over Team Meeting at the Headquarters.

**Jun 12** – Carmen attends Pa. Advisory Council on Drug and Alcohol Abuse.



## Upcoming Events

(For the most current listing of Upcoming Events, visit our website ([www.sagesarmy.com](http://www.sagesarmy.com)))

**Jun 24** – Hope to see you all at the 4<sup>th</sup> Annual Sage's Army Golf Outing at Glengarry Golf Course.

**Aug 1** – Sage's Army Team meeting at the Headquarters.

**Aug 15** – Carmen to Harrisburg for the Pa. Advisory Council on Drug and Alcohol Abuse.

**Sep 9/10** – Sage's Army booth at the Annual Hempfield Days, Hempfield Park.

## Sage's Army Successes



Our bi-monthly meetings continue to be a successful part of the foundation of Sage's Army. **Souls United in Grief** was created for those who have suffered the loss of a loved one to addiction. These meetings are overseen by two of our Sage's Army Mothers who have also lost their children to this affliction and understand the detriment it can cause.

The **Sage's Army Family Reinforcement Recovery Sessions** reach out to guide family members through the process of recovery options and dealing with the many facets of understanding addiction.

Please see page 7 of this Newsletter for dates and times for these meetings.

## Newsworthy Tidbits



**Yes, it is TRUE...**In our community, the number of fatal overdose deaths have jumped 38% in 2016.

**And expect more...**Coroner expects 2017 to be worse in Westmoreland County. In 2002, there were 22 OD's. In 2016, there were 174 OD's (a 691% increase in OD deaths).

**Fentanyl...**is killing people across North America at a record pace! It is also the #1 killer in Canada.

**You will be punished!** Ohio man who sold heroin laced with elephant tranquilizer in West Virginia was sentenced to to 18 years in federal prison. He said he was just in it for the money.



**This is the FIRST...**New Mexico became the first state to require all State and Local law officers to have antidote kits in an effort to curb deaths from OD's.

**You will die...**Carfentanil (an elephant tranquilizer) is out there and believe it...THIS DRUG KILLS!

**Gray Death...**a combo of opioids, heroin, fentanyl and carfentanil. The drug looks like concrete and is DEADLY.



**"We're coming for you. RUN."** A warning to heroin dealers from a Florida Sheriff.

**When will it STOP?** In 2015, we lost 52,000 Americans to our drug epidemic.

**As the minutes go by...**every nineteen minutes, someone dies of a drug overdose.



**It's a FACT...**2 million Americans are hooked on pills.

**Don't let this be your day.** We lose 144 people every day to drug overdose in the US.

**Statistics DO NOT lie...**in Westmoreland County, 35.2 persons, out of 100,000, die from overdoses.



**PHARMAGEDDON...**This is what they call Americas new drug crisis.

### RECENT ARTICLE excerpts

*Renowned forensic pathologist, Cyril Wecht criticized the US and Southwestern Pa in response to the opioid/heroin epidemic as woefully inadequate. He stated that we are NOT focusing enough efforts or resources to education, prevention, or treatment. He goes on to say that we are naive if we think one or two days of detox or a couple of weeks in rehab will do the trick.*



*A person who recently lost a loved one to drugs stated public education, treatment programs and Narcan are good in the addiction battle. The family goes on to say, "Groups like Sage's Army are fantastic. It's a good thing to let people know what is going on and move people into action. Ignorance only makes things worse."*



*A Pennsylvania bill recently introduced by a Senator from Pittsburgh would allow someone to force a family member into treatment for heroin addiction. This bill is a result of discussions with parents of children who are addicted and the helplessness the parents feel.*

*A recent news article makes mention that notwithstanding our improved economy in our communities, employers that require drug tests find two thirds of applicants fail.*



*From Harrisburg. A big increase of 103 million dollars for opioid addiction reduction and 130.5 million dollar increase for the Substance and Mental Health Administration.*

*From the Tribune Review EDITORIAL. In brief, it questioned how one doctor in this area could prescribe 100,000 pain pills to patients over a 22 month period.*

*Article from Ohio Newspaper: "They are not waking up", say the four children who find their parents dead of an apparent overdose of heroin/fentanyl.*

*More Ohio bad news: The coroner ordered a 20ft air conditioned trailer with room for 18 bodies for an overflow of bodies recently... 50% of deaths from overdoses.*



### Overdose by Incident 2016 Westmoreland County

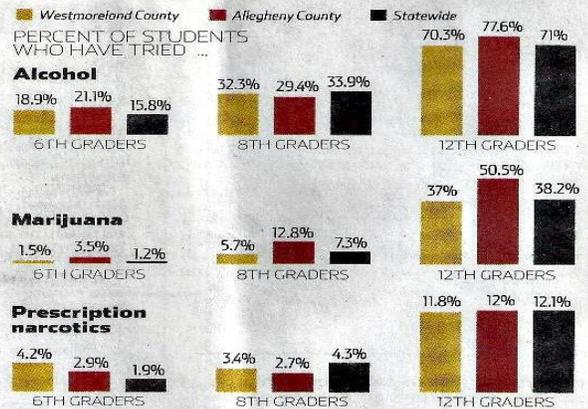
- Hempfield Township 15
- Derry Township 13
- Jeannette 13
- North Huntingdon 9
- Unity Township and Monesson 8 each
- New Kensington and Sewickley 7 each
- Lower Burrell 5
- Greensburg, Latrobe, Vandergrift, Rostraver, Washington, Penn Township, Penn 4 each
- Arnold, Allegheny Township 3 each
- South Huntingdon, Donegal, Youngwood, East Huntingdon, Manor, Loyalhanna, South Greensburg 2 each
- Mt Pleasant, Scottdale, Cook, Fairfield, Youngstown Boro, Ligonier Boro, Export, Smithton, Trafford, Ligonier Township 1 each.

### Post-Acute Recovery to open in Greensburg

A New York City based Post-Acute Recovery will open its first addiction treatment center in downtown Greensburg. The company envisions an outpatient called Strive Health of Greensburg. As noted by the Vice President of the company, they chose our area as a flagship because Western Penna has been hit harder than most by heroin.

#### When experimenting starts

The Pennsylvania Youth Survey, last conducted in 2015, asked students if they have ever tried a particular substance. Here is a look at responses statewide as well as Allegheny and Westmoreland counties. Few students across Pennsylvania (1.4 percent or less) or in either county (0.5 percent or less) reported using heroin before graduation, though many more reported using alcohol, marijuana and prescription pain medication.



Sources: Pennsylvania Youth Survey 2015 (Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency, Pennsylvania Department of Drug and Alcohol Programs, Pennsylvania Department of Education)

**Pa**

is set to receive 26.5 million in



*federal support to combat the opioid crisis. This is the 4<sup>th</sup> largest grant awarded following only California, Texas and Florida.*



An obituary for a 20-year-old Pennsylvania woman who died following a "long brave battle with addiction" has prompted a response from White House officials. Casey Marie Schwartzmier, 20, of Ross Township, passed away in January of a suspected heroin overdose. The White House representative said: "Casey's story has reached the White House...and we are listening."

# QUESTIONS and Answers

DO YOU HAVE A QUESTION? Let us help you find the answer.

with Sage's  
Army



## **What is the first step toward recovery in overcoming drug addiction?**

The very first thing, is to make changes. It is normal to feel uncertain about whether you are ready to make a change, or if you have what it takes to quit. It is okay if you are torn. Committing to sobriety involves changing many things, including: the way you deal with stress, who you allow in your life, what you do in your free time, how you think about yourself. It is also normal to feel conflicted about giving up your drug choice, even when you know it is causing problems in your life. Recovery requires time, motivation, and support, and it's okay to consider your situation before you make the commitment to change.

## **Is it hopeless to think I can change?**

When you are struggling with drug addiction, sobriety can seem like an impossible goal. Recovery is never out of reach, no matter how hopeless your situation may seem. Change is possible with the right treatment and support, and by addressing the root cause of your addiction. DO NOT GIVE UP even if you have tried and failed before. The road to recovery often involves bumps, pitfalls, and setbacks, but by examining the problem and thinking about change, you are already on your way.

## **What are some treatment options?**

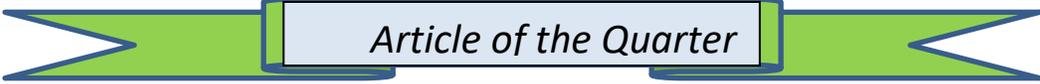
No treatment works for everyone. Everyone needs are different. It is important you find a program that feels right.

1. Treatment should address more than just your drug abuse. You need to look at relationships, career, health, and psychological well-being.
2. Commitment and follow thru are key. In all cases, long term follow-up care is crucial.
3. Many places to turn for help include clergy, doctors, social workers, counselors, and treatment centers.

## **What can I do to prepare for a change?**

There are 5 key steps to prepare for change in recovery.

1. Remind yourself of the reasons you want to change.
2. Think about your past attempts at recovery, if any. What worked, what did not.
3. Set specific measurable goals, such as a start date or limits on your drug use.
4. Remove reminders of your addiction from your home, workplace, and other places you frequent.
5. Tell friends and family that you are committing to recovery, and ask for their support.


 Article of the Quarter

## FDA wants Opioid Pain Killer Pulled off the Market

**(CNN)** The [US Food and Drug Administration](#) said Thursday that drugmaker Endo Pharmaceuticals must remove its powerful opioid painkiller Opana ER from the market. The agency says this the first time it has asked that an opioid pain medication be pulled due to "the public health consequences of abuse."



"We are facing an opioid epidemic -- a public health crisis -- and we must take all necessary steps to reduce the scope of opioid misuse and abuse," FDA Commissioner Dr. Scott Gottlieb said. "We will continue to take regulatory steps when we see situations where an opioid product's risks outweigh its benefits, not only for its intended patient population but also in regard to its potential for misuse and abuse."

If Opana ER sounds familiar, it's because it was the drug of choice for many addicts at the center of an HIV outbreak in Indiana in 2015. The drug is about twice as powerful as OxyContin, another often abused opioid. Opana ER, oxycodone hydrochloride, is used to manage pain severe enough to require daily, around-the-clock, long-term opioid treatment for which alternatives aren't strong enough, according to the manufacturer's website. The FDA approved it for this use in 2006. "My comment is 'wow,'" said Dr. Andrew Kolodny, co-director of opioid policy research at the Heller School for Social Policy and Management at Brandeis University. "This is pretty exciting. This is big news." Though it is a "good sign" for the fight against opioid abuse, he said, "Opana is not the only one that needs to come off the market."

Endo had tried to make it harder for addicts to use Opana ER by making it with a coating that made it hard to crush. The medication is intended to release over time, but addicts had been crushing it to get a massive high all at once.

The United States is in the midst of an opioid overdose epidemic, according to the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Opioid overdose killed more than 33,000 people in 2015, more than any year on record. Nearly half of all overdose deaths involve some kind of prescription drug.

Endo is reviewing the FDA's request and evaluating all its options "as we determine the appropriate path forward," it said in a statement.

**"While the benefits of opioids in treating and managing pain are widely recognized, the misuse and abuse of these products have increased greatly in the U.S. As a pharmaceutical company with a demonstrated commitment to the improvement of pain management, Endo feels a strong sense of responsibility to improve the care of pain for patients while at the same time taking comprehensive steps to minimize the potential misuse of its products. Despite the FDA's request to withdraw Opana ER from the market, this request does not indicate uncertainty with the product's safety or efficacy when taken as prescribed. Endo remains confident in the body of evidence established through clinical research demonstrating that Opana ER has a favorable risk-benefit profile when used as intended in appropriate patients."**



**RESOURCE PHONE NUMBERS**

Westmoreland County Drug and Alcohol Commission – 800 220-1810 ext. 2  
 Allegheny County Bureau of Drug and Alcohol Services – 412 350-3328  
 Butler County MH/MR Drug and Alcohol – 800 292-3866  
 Cambria County MH/MR Drug and Alcohol – 814 536-5388  
 Clarion/Armstrong/Indiana Drug and Alcohol – 724 354-2746  
 Fayette County Drug and Alcohol - 724 354-2746  
 Somerset County Drug and Alcohol – 800 452-0218  
 Washington D&A Commission – 724 223-1181  
 Westmoreland CRISIS Hotline – 800 836-6010  
 Alcoholics Anonymous – 866 851-8459  
 Narcotics Anonymous – 800 992-0401  
 Substance Abuse Helpline – 844 897-8927



For a listing of In/Out Patient Treatment Facilities for Insured and Non-insured, please go to our website (sagesarmy.com) and look under Addiction Resources.

**Headquarters News...**

**Sage's Army Family Reinforcement / Recovery Session**

**Who:** Friends and family members of anyone that may have a problem with addiction.

**When and where:** Every second and fourth Thursday of the month from 6:30 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. at Sage's Army Headquarters at 216 Fourth Street, Irwin, Pa. 15642.

Addiction affects the whole family, often the best chance for an addicted person to get better is for his or her family to get better. This bi-weekly group session provides both the information and guidance that family members need to deal with the immediate crises of addiction, and also the on-going support they need to make necessary and often painful choices that family recovery requires.

**Information and Referral**  
 We are available to guide family members through the maze of treatment and recovery options. We maintain a resource center with a collection of printed material, books, meeting schedules and brochures.

**Cost:**  
 Free of charge

**Where:**  
 Sages Army Headquarters  
 216 Fourth Street, Irwin, Pa. 15642.

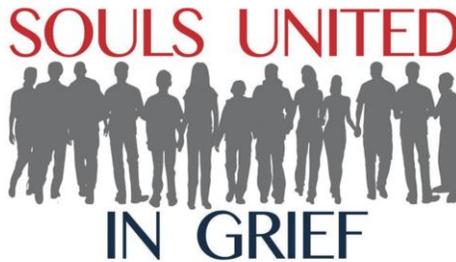
**When:**  
 Every second and fourth Thursday  
 of the month  
 6:30 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.




**Substance Abuse Issues**  
**You Are Not Alone**  
**724-863-LIFE**  
 24/7 Phone line assistance with:  
 Emotional Support  
 Treatment Facility Options  
 Understanding Insurances  
 Parent and Peer Guidance  
**Awareness • Compassion • Action**

**NEW YEAR, NEW DAY...**

Please note that the Souls United in Grief group meeting will be moving to the first and third Wednesdays in 2017



Have you suffered the unimaginable death of a child? Need to talk to someone that knows how you feel?

Join us on the first and third Wednesday of the month 6:30 to 7:30 P.M.

Sages Army Headquarters  
 216 4<sup>th</sup> Street  
 Irwin, PA 15642



*Sage's Army will schedule a presentation to your company, church, or any group. Just let us know. We have a form under Request a presentation on our website at sagesarmy.com.*



**Special Shout out** to our Phone Line volunteers! Their dedication to helping others is tireless. So glad they are a part of our ARMY!

**Sage's Army MEMORIAL Wall**

Sage's Army Headquarters has dedicated a wall to loved ones who were lost to this epidemic.



If you would like to see YOUR loved one memorialized on this wall, please bring a framed 4 X 6 photo (color or Black and white) to the Sage's Army Headquarters (216 Fourth St, Irwin, Pa 15642) during OPEN HOURS or mail to:

**Sage's Army, P.O. Box 156,  
 Westmoreland City, PA 15692**

"It's important that we share our experiences with other people. Your story will heal you and your story will heal somebody else. When you tell your story, you free yourself and give other people permission to acknowledge their own story."  
 - Iyanla Vanzant



305 West Pittsburgh Street  
Greensburg, Pennsylvania 15601  
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Fax 724.835.6288  
Cell 412.551.9023  
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or [CLICK HERE](#)

For those who have not seen the Sage's Army "My List of Nevers", here is the link:  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XblmE6Jh9Vs>

(Your business card here)  
You can add YOUR business card for just \$40 per Newsletter. Our newsletters are Quarterly and reach well over 12,000 locally and millions on the web. Contact [admin@sagesarmy.com](mailto:admin@sagesarmy.com) for more information on placing your business card in this section of our next Newsletter.



## Behavioral Health

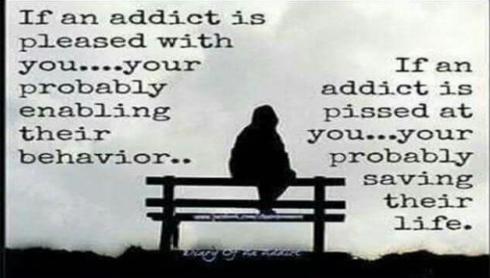
Case Management and Certified Recovery Specialist Offices  
205 South Maple Avenue  
Basement Level  
Greensburg, PA 15601  
**724-832-5860**  
Fax: 724-837-6466

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[Tylermainscontracting@gmail.com](mailto:Tylermainscontracting@gmail.com)

A Big Thank You to all our Donors.  
We couldn't do it without your help.

**Sage's Army ALWAYS Welcomes Donations!**

Sage's Army continues our work through your kind donations. Any monetary contributions, no matter how small, assists our cause. We go through ink, paper, coffee, water, paper towels, toilet paper, etc., so any contribution is GREATLY appreciated!



Would you give your child **HEROIN** for a sports injury?

Ask Your Doctor How Prescription Drugs Can Lead to Heroin Abuse.

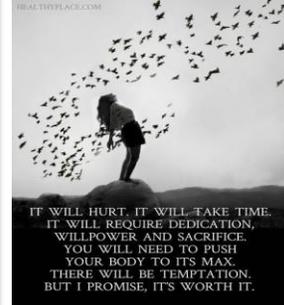
Partnership for a Drug-Free New Jersey  
THE SOUTHWEST COUNCIL OF COACHES  
SCRATCH COALITION  
BEFORE THEY PRESCRIBE - YOU DECIDE.<sup>SM</sup>  
[drugfree.org](http://drugfree.org)

Would you give your child **HEROIN** to remove a wisdom tooth?

Ask Your Dentist How Prescription Drugs Can Lead to Heroin Abuse.

Partnership for a Drug-Free New Jersey  
BEFORE THEY PRESCRIBE - YOU DECIDE.  
[drugfree.org](http://drugfree.org)

We would Greatly appreciate you forwarding our Newsletter through your social media to assist us in helping others. If you need hard copies to hand out to your church, club, or other organization, please let us know. We will provide.



Sage's Army, Inc. is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. All donations are fully tax-deductible. To donate to Sage's Army, please visit us on the web at [sagesarmy.com](http://sagesarmy.com).

**TEACHING AWARENESS**  
DRUGS DON'T DISCRIMINATE  
**SAGES ARMY**  
PEOPLE DO ONE PERSON AT A TIME  
www.sagesarmy.com