

There's Always Hope



PEOPLE HELPING PEOPLE

Grant E.

This piece was submitted by Grant E. shortly after I had gotten the last issue put together and off to the printer. I think that it says it all for many of us. Thank you Grant for the reminder.

KB



Issue #14

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March 2001

"What is our message? The message is that an addict, any addict, can stop using drugs, loose the desire to use, and find a new way to live."

Pg. 65, 5th edition, Basic Text

Note: the opinions and views shared in this publication do not necessarily reflect those of The M.A.N. staff, or NA as a whole.

*Thank you,
The Staff*

When is there too much Literature?

After the 5th Edition Basic Text was passed, many addicts responded with "enough is enough" and passed two consecutive 5 year moratoriums on any changes to the Basic Text at the respected World Service Conferences (W.S.C.), which ended at the beginning of the 1998 World Service Conference. At that time, the World inventory that started in 1993 was being implemented and was changing the World Service structure drastically. Along with that, all World Sub-Committees, Board of Trustees, Board of Directors, and Interim Committee were being disbanded and the 24 panel "World Board" was taking their place. This pro-

cess of changeover also caused many delays in literature revisions, and/or additions. The last project handled by the World Literature Committee at the 1998 W.S.C. was the "Step Working Guides", which were compiled, previewed, and passed in record time. Their only other motion at that Conference was the standard approval of the "A" work list, which was 1. A new chapter on "Sponsorship" to be included in the Basic Text. 2. A new chapter on "Service" to be included in the Basic Text. 3. The addition/substitution of personal stories compiled from our worldwide fellowship in the Basic Text. The Step Working Guides passed but the "A" list didn't. It did however spark much discussion and the theory wasn't completely out of the question.

The new "Publications Committee" had a strong task ahead with this and did surveys with the fellowship for guidance. The 1999 survey found two points to be clear, 1. We need something on Sponsorship. 2. We don't know what form to put it in. The former Literature Committee did, however, accumulate a lot of raw material over the years and gave the "new" Publications Committee

INSIDE:

Your Letters and Poems	Pg. 1 - 9
Area Reports	Pg. 10 - 11
Upcoming Region events	Pg. 12 - 13
"The M.A.N." Report	Pg. 14
Regional Information	Pg. 15
Art	Pg. 16

Continued on next pg.

a good base to work from. But as the fellowship grows and changes, so does the material to work from. This brings us to the latest, conceptual questioner. 12 questions are presented to the fellowship at large to get ideas on what a booklet, pamphlet, flyer, or chapter about Sponsorship should consist of. One past purpose of the World Literature Committee was to turn ideas and concepts into drafts, and that hasn't changed. It would be easy for a group of members to write a booklet and then submit it for approval, but usually the project gets subjected to mass slaughtering during the review and input process and causing resentments. The Publications Committee will be responsible for taking all ideas and concepts and turning them into a draft form for the fellowship. Over the years, Literature review processes have changed. For years, it was "line by line" and created very long time frames for approval. Over the last 8-10 years it had become more conceptual. The current approval policies for recovery literature is:

A. Review-form Literature

1. Literature by the World Board is sent out for a review period before the development of an approval-form draft. The time and method of this review, considering translations, is determined by the World Board based on the needs of the fellowship and the piece in development.
2. Review-form literature is not for use or display in N.A. meetings.

B. Approval-form Literature

1. Approval-form literature is prepared by the World Board and is distributed for a period of time, considering translations, deter-

mined by the World Board of not less than one hundred fifty (150) days. The length of this approval period is determined by the World Board based on the needs of the fellowship and the piece being considered for approval.

2. Approval-form literature should not be read during N.A. meetings, although it may be sold and made available to members at N. A. meetings.

C. WSC Approval

1. The conference shall not vote on any proposals to change existing fellowship-approved NA recovery-literature unless such changes have appeared in the Conference Agenda Report.
2. All literature submitted to the conference for approval requires a 2/3-majority vote of Regional Delegates, and it also takes a 2/3-majority vote to withdraw current NA literature from the category of approved literature.

As stated before, there are 12 questions about "YOUR PERSONAL EXPERIENCE" in Sponsorship. Any member is presented this and can give input. The answers from these questions will serve as guidelines for the "Review-form" piece. Now is the time to get involved in the literature process that benefits members and the Narcotics Anonymous World Services (NAWS). Take some time during the after meeting coffee or social gathering and ask yourselves these questions. If you know of a Literature Committee at your area or region set a date with them to review these and send your responses in, there are no "wrong" an-

Continued on next pg.

**RCM's for the
Mid America Region
February 2000**

Just For Today Area

Patrick Poull
Ph# 620-342-6006

Primary Purpose

Jon McNeely
Ph# 316-665-8351

Western Area

Gary Delzeit
Ph# 785-462-7179

Central Kansas Area

Greg B.

Unity Area

Bryan Hatfield
Ph# 785-482-3514

Fellowship For Freedom

Dave Rose
Ph# 785-235-3872

Wichita Metro Area

Pat Brown
Ph# 316-269-3275

Miracle Area

Jim Clark
Ph# 785-832-8048

**Officers for the Mid America Region
Nov. 2000 - Feb. 2000**

Chair: *Tim S.* 785-227-4241
Co-Chair: *Tony K.* 316-225-4280
Treasurer: *Debbie S.* 785-227-4241
RD: *Betty P.* 316-264-0801
RD2: *John S.* 785-594-2148
Secretary: *Open Position*

Bob K. filled in as secretary for the February RSC. Thank you very much Bob. Had no one stepped forward to

fill the position, we would not have been able to conduct business. (See Roberts Rules of Order.) Bob made it clear that this was a one time shot and that we need a full time secretary. Please consider applying for this position. You are needed if the RSC is going to continue to conduct business!

*Thanks,
KB*

<u>NEXT RSC</u>	
<u>4-H BLDG Woodside & Hickory Streets, McPherson, KS</u>	
<u>SATURDAY MAY 19, 2001</u>	
<u>9:00 AM - 11:00 AM</u>	
(UP)	CAMPOUT
(DOWN)	CONVENTION
<u>11:00 AM - 1:00 AM</u>	
(UP)	PI
(DOWN)	ACTIVITIES
<u>1:00 PM - 2:00 PM</u>	
LUNCH BREAK	
<u>2:00 PM - 4:00 PM</u>	
(UP)	OUTREACH
(DOWN)	STEERING
<u>4:00 PM - 6:00 PM</u>	
(UP)	LITERATURE
(DOWN)	H&I
<u>7:00 PM - 8:00 PM</u>	
SPEAKER MTG.	
<u>8:00 PM - 12:00 PM</u>	
DJ DANCE - AUCTION - RAFFLE	
<u>FUNDRAISER FOR SOUL TO SOUL</u>	
\$3 Per Person - No Addict Turned Away	
<u>SUNDAY MA 7 20, 2001</u>	
<u>8:30 AM - 9:00 AM</u>	
RSC CHAIR/CO-CHAIR, SECRETARY & TREASURER RCM' S, ALT RCM' S SUB-COMMITTEE CHAIRS & CO-CHAIRS MOTIONS & REQUESTS	
<u>9:00 AM UNTIL DONE</u>	
REGIONAL SERVICE COMMITTEE MEETS CHAIR/CO-CHAIRS MOTIONS & REQUESTS	

The M.A.N.
11/17/2000

Hello Family,

First and foremost I want to say "Thank You" to those of you who have sent in articles, poems and art over the last year and a half. I've done a lot of service work over the last few years and I find that of all of the positions I have held this is the one that I enjoy the most. If I had to twist arms, thump on heads and in general chase material for the newsletter, this job wouldn't be nearly as enjoyable. So, once again "Thank You." You have made this publication a success.

I hope that you have enjoyed the new format. The response in the Miracle Area has been positive. I know that I have found this format easier to work with than the larger one, and as the financial statement below reflects, this issue was a little less expensive to produce than the last one. I apologize for not having the section "From the Region" in this issue. I lost my notes from the Regional meeting and didn't find them until a day or two ago. I'll try to do better next issue. I know that at least some of you refer to the frequently. The following is this quarter's financial statement (including tax) and you will find the yearly financial statement at the end of this report.

Description	Quantity	Unit price	Total
Newsletter	750	\$0.285	
			\$213.80
Bulk mailing	6	\$0.76	\$
			3.80
Total	750	\$0.29	
			\$217.60 (rounded up)

Last quarter I included the Regional meeting list and wallet cards (PI subcommittee) in the mailing. In exchange, the PI subcommittee took care of the mailing of the M.A.N. this time, thus the mailing costs were down for the quarter. We will continue to exchange these services as long as it is feasible as it is less expensive to do one mailing than two.

I have been getting great material and encourage The Fellowship to continue sending me this "stuff". This is your newsletter and the credit for its quality (or lack there of) lies with you. Remember, this is not English 101. You don't have to create the perfect article to share your Experience, Strength and Hope. We all have stories that are worth telling. All you need to do is be honest, a Spiritual Principal that we should all be working on. I can be reached at the following addresses:

Kirk Brown
PO Box 975
Baldwin City, KS 66006
Phone (785) 594-2148
e-mail klbertha@aol.com

The following table is an accounting for the yearly budget ending at the close of business on Sunday at the May 2001 RSC. I will be including this in my future reports.

Quarter/month	
3 rd Q. December, 01	
Starting Balance	\$ 850.05
Spent	\$ 217.60
Ending Balance	\$ 632.45
Projected expenses to date	\$ 1,050.00
Actual expenses	\$ 767.55
Budget surplus	\$ 282.45

In Loving Service,
Kirk B.
The M.A.N. Publisher

swers, just ideas and concepts! And to answer the question at the top of the article, NEVER! There can never be "too much literature".

1. Is sponsorship a significant part of recovery?
2. What is important about sponsoring others?
3. How, or can, recovery occur without a sponsor?
4. How, or can, recovery occur without sponsoring others?
5. What is the relationship between spirituality and sponsorship?
6. What is the relationship between support and sponsorship?
7. What are roadblocks to utilizing a sponsor?
8. What are pathways to opening up to a sponsor?
9. Why is there same-sex sponsorship?
10. Can opposite-sex sponsorship work?
11. What is your understanding of the role and purpose of a sponsor?
12. How do you deal with relapse or illness with a sponsor?

There is a June 1st deadline on submitting your input, so please don't procrastinate, like me on writing this.

Gratefully Serving,
Tim S.

Recipe for Miracles

Ingredients:

1 part of knowing who you are
1 part of knowing who you aren't
1 part of knowing what you want
1 part of knowing who you wish to be
1 part of knowing what you already have

1 part of choosing wisely from what you have
1 part of loving and thanking for ALL you have

Instructions:

Combine ingredients together gently and carefully, using faith and vision. Mix together with strong belief of the outcome until finely blended. Use thoughts, words and actions for best results. Bake until Blessed. Give thanks again
Yield: Unlimited servings

CHECK YOUR RESERVATIONS

I have thought for a while about writing this article. In fact, I think I can say with all honesty that I have written it a hundred times in my mind. Some of the details change one time to the next, but the basic message and delivery remain consistent each time.

For a few weeks now, I have thought much about the topic of reservations (no, I am not talking about what you do when you are making your plans to go to the convention)...wondering if I had any...what could my reservations be? I really could not come up with any. When I speak about reservations, I am talking about what in my life could be either a trigger or in my own mind excuse enough

Continued on next pg.

"With the help of other recovering addicts, we can find ways to put our reservations behind us. The most important thing for us to know about reservations is that, by keeping them, we are reserving a place in our program for relapse."

Pg. 10, It Works How and Why

to use. Maybe others have a different definition, but that is mine. Anyway, a few weeks ago, I experienced a couple of extremely difficult weeks. I took part in making some decisions for a loved one that were terribly painful and when all was over, I had lost a person that I loved dearly. Throughout the experience, I was so grateful that I was on solid ground in my recovery! For those of you who do not know me, my loss did not involve a break up, it was a death. But, each of them have been the reservation that brought an end to what one thought was a solid recovery for others and some point in time.

In the course of all my thoughts and reflections on reservations one thing kept playing through my mind over and over again. It was some advice that was actually given to my husband and I long before we got into recovery this last time (4+ yrs. ago). We were going thorough some marriage counseling. At the time, we had planned on getting divorced when this and that and that and that happened. You all know how that goes, right. Anyway....this counselor said to us that we should either get divorced or quit planning our divorce. She said because as long as we were planning the end we could not work on the issues now. (Kind of like one foot in yesterday and tomorrow and peeing all over today.) That is the way I see reservations in my recovery. As long as I entertain any reservations, I am planning my relapse and I cannot focus on my recovery here and now.

Out of curiosity I went to the Thesaurus (a type of dictionary) to see what it said about the word "reservation". One of the definitions which fits closest with the use I have spoken of here is: "A restricting or modifying element" = provi-

sion. I challenge you to look honestly at your program and ask yourself if you have set any restrictions or provisions on your recovery. If the answer is yes, then you had better get to work on clearing those issues up unless you are content to continue to plan your relapse. I do not believe that having reservations in our recovery is "the crime"; I believe that not meeting them head on and dealing with them is. I hope that I have given you some food for thought. And thank you for giving me an avenue for sharing some of my experience, strength and hope. And if you want a reservation, get on the phone and call the hotel and make your reservation for the convention. See you all at MARCNA XVIII in Hutch!!!

Do you just belong?

- Do you just belong?
- Are you an active member, the kind that would be missed?
- Or are you just contented that your name is on the list?
- So you attend the meetings and mingle with the flock?
- Or do you meet in private and criticize and knock?
- Do you take an active part to help the work along?
- Or are you satisfied to be the kind that just belongs?
- Do you work on committees. To this there is no trick;
- Or leave the work to just a few, and talk about the clique?

Continued on next pg.

"Just as we are not capable of measuring another's desire to stay clean, neither are we equipped to decide who should join. We are free to offer welcome instead of judgment."
Pg 145, It Works How and Why

MID-AMERICA REGIONAL CAMPOUT COMMITTEE
 PRESENTS THE

***23rd ANNUAL 4th of JULY CAMPOUT
 GOING THE DISTANCE!***

WHEN: June 29th - July 1st
 WHERE: Lucas Park Group
 Camp
 Wilson Lake,
 Wilson, KS.

FUN, FELLOWSHIP, & RELAXING

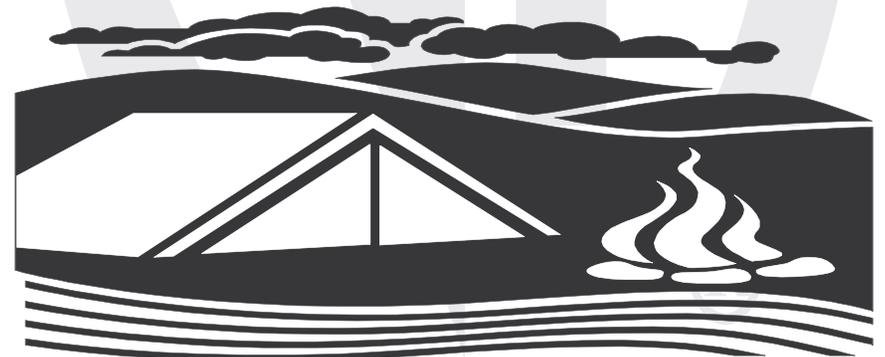
THE WORLDS LONGEST
 CONTINUALLY
 RUNNING

FREE CAMPOUT!

NO DOGS OR FIREWORKS ALLOWED!!!

CONTACT:

Von P. (316) 628-7925 or
 Dave R. (785) 862-2889



Upcoming Regional/Area Events

.....*We Sought Through Prayer and Meditation*.....

Start planning now to attend this year's **Soul To Soul** spiritual retreat. Come September 21, 22, and 23. An intimate group of recovering addicts will share their experience, strength, and hope at beautiful Camp Chippewa. Of course there will be the added perks of great food, fresh air, nature, and relaxation. Watch for flyers at future NA events. T-shirts will be available at the alternative store (Sunday morning) at MARCNA XVIII.

For more information call: *Rod D. 620-343-3149* or
Carl K. 620-341-9332



NOTICE OF CHANGE!

**THE LARNED
"JUST FOR TODAY"
NA GROUP'S
THURSDAY NIGHT
MEETING IS BEING
CHANGED TO
8:00 P.M.**

***THIS IS EFFECTIVE
IMMEDIATELY!!***

Come and get

"HIGH ON LIFE"

WITH US AT OUR NEW LOCATION

**1910 17TH STREET
GREAT BEND, KS**

**TUESDAY NIGHTS
(OPEN)
AT 8:00 P.M.**

Please come to the meetings often, and help with heart and hand.

Don't be just a member but take an active part.

Think this over, members, you know what's right from wrong.

Are you an active member, or do you just belong?

Twelve steps of a sponsor

1.) I will not help you stay and wallow in limbo.

2.) I will help you grow, to become more productive, by your own definition.

3.) I will help you become more autonomous, more loving of yourself, more free to continue becoming the authority of your own living.

4.) I cannot give you dreams or "fix you up," simply because I cannot.

5.) I cannot give you growth, or grow for you. You must grow yourself, by facing reality, grim as it may be at times.

6.) I cannot take away your loneliness or pain.

7.) I cannot sense your world for you, evaluate your goals, or tell you what is best for you in your world; you have your own world.

8.) I cannot convince you of the crucial choice of choosing the scary uncertainty of growing over the safe misery of not growing.

9.) I want to be with you and know you as a rich and growing friend, yet I cannot get close to you when you choose not to grow.

10.) When I begin to care for you out of pity, when I begin to lose trust in you, then I am toxic, bad and inhibiting for you, and you for me.

11.) You must know—my help is conditional. I will be with you, hang in there with you, as long as I continue to get even the slightest hints that you are trying to grow.

12.) If you can accept all of this, then perhaps we can help each other to become what God meant us to be....mature adults, leaving childishness forever to little children.

*Author anonymous,
Submitted by Shelley W.*

The following article was submitted to me anonymously.

There are many issues that we avoid discussing in the Narcotics Anonymous program. The one that I want to bring into the open is the common double blow of being a recovering addict with a child who has severe Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder. There are many possible reasons for this, but this is not the object of the discussion. We have, through working the steps, hopefully resolved guilt and have moved on to amends.

All children have some attention deficit symptoms at times. Medication is not the answer for most children. There are many things that we can do to reduce these attention deficit symptoms. All children need lots of attention (some people say that ADD is very appropriately named). All children need plenty of opportunities for learning. All children need security, respect, consistent expectations, loss of privileges as a consequence for misbehavior, plenty of opportunities for developing positive peer relationships, a good diet, enough sleep, and a regular routine schedule of responsibilities and other events in the home, and sane parents. All children need parents and teachers who keep lines of communication open. Some children need

Continued on next pg.

more of some of these things than others do.

Maybe you have done all you can to meet your child's needs, and your child's teacher has done all she/he can do, but your child's behavior is still a problem. How will you react if some day your child's teacher brings up the subject of ADHD? Some day a teacher might say, "Your child is having a terrible time getting schoolwork done, even though I know the ability is there. Your child is so impulsive and so often out of his seat. I don't think he really wants to be that way. Maybe you ought to take your child to the doctor to see if there is a medical problem." These are chilling words for the recovering addict, and could be even more chilling if the teacher is even more direct. If the problem is truly serious, you may have been dreading this event for several years, since ADHD is usually obvious in the preschool years. It is time, and you want your child to have a good education and a realistic self-concept. You want, your child to avoid the problems you have been through. It may be that your child's behavior has been so difficult to manage that you have been tempted to abuse them or drugs because of the stress of the situation.

Whatever the reasons, you decide to go through with it. Selecting a doctor who understands substance abuse, and who understands the occasional necessity for potentially addictive medications is an essential. A doctor who asks you and the school to complete behavior rating scales is a responsible doctor, even when the behaviors have been obvious in the waiting room. Then begins the process.

I have faced these problems. It has not been easy. I have done quite a few things to cope.

1. I have been honest with my children's psychiatrist and the one pharmacy I do business with, and I know they would do further research if they suspected anything peculiar was going on.
2. I generally do not talk much about this issue in my personal life, either at work or at meetings.
3. My children get sustained-release methylphenidate when I wake them up in the morning, so I don't forget in the chaos.
4. It was necessary to divorce their father to get them help. I later had to file a child abuse report against their father, to get him help. There were other reasons, too, for both.
5. I made the switch from "the other program" to NA.
6. I have immersed myself in the program, working the steps, and in service work.
7. I use weekly reminder pillboxes so I can monitor more closely how many pills are being taken.
8. I keep the supply of medication in a locked cabinet. Occasionally I put the pillboxes away, too. I do not want my friends in the program to have to struggle with temptation.
9. I have found it necessary to take an antidepressant medication that reduces my own cravings for drugs.
10. I keep any medication I take in a different room, so that I won't "accidentally" take theirs.
11. My medallion for my clean years hangs over their pillboxes.
12. I hold my children responsible for their behavior, even when not medicated. I realize that medication is not the only answer.

Continued on next pg.

Miracle Area RCM report

Recovery is alive and well in Douglas County. We have two new meetings since last Region. Larrytown has started a noon Saturday meeting at 311 E. 9th St., Twisted Sisters is a new group with 5pm Friday meetings.

H&I is doing excellent and beginning a meeting in the juvenile detention center.

*In Service,
Jim C.*

Primary Purpose RCM report

Hi Regional Family,

Things are going very well in PP Area. Our five Groups are alive and kicking. As of last month, we have started a meager literature stockpile but are now looking for a new literature chair to operate it. Linda L. resigned at the Area meeting, due to life. We do have every other position filled and I am very pleased with the addict involvement in our Area. We did vote on the optimal budget and it passed. We also have a Area meeting list. There should be some copies on the back table. That's all for now,

*In Loving Service
Jon Mc.*

Unity Area RCM's Report

There is a lot of changes being made in the Unity Area, some good some bad. We are asking people to step up for service work at the Area & Regional levels. The Manhattan Group is having their H&I anniversary winter dance & campout March 16, 17, 18. The dance is on the 17th at 901 Yuma St., Manhattan KS. Unity Area needs help from all it's Groups. Please attend. We would like to see you there. Please remember to

give back what you have received. We had one new Group join us from Clay.

M.A.S.R.C.N.A. optional budget passed the Salina Groups of NA. Phoenix Group, Clean & Crazy formally invites you to the free prom 2001 dance at the Friendship Center 746 Comanche, Salina KS, May 5th 2001. Doors open at 6:00 p.m., speaker at 7:00 p.m. D.V. Dance at 8:00 p.m. Auction and Raffle.

Clean & Crazy Group of NA presents a Saint Patrick's day dance at the Friendship Center 746 Comanche, Salina KS, Saturday March 10th. Doors open at 6pm, speaker at 7:00pm, D.V. dance at 8:00 – 12:00 pm. Auction, Raffle, free coffee – pop for sale.

*RCM's report, thank you, the end
RCM Bryan H.*

Western Area RCM report

Hello everyone,

Western Area is still alive and moving forward.

We held a chili feed in January at Liberal and it was a big success.

We are having our annual whole enchilada May 5th, time and place still undecided.

Radio PSA's have been distributed in our Area and have been heard in some towns.

Updates for Regional meeting list have been turned in to the PI committee. Regional PI, H&I and Literature are planning a learning day in our Area in the near future. Both motions brought back passed.

All H&I commitments are being fulfilled.

*Nothing else at this time,
In Service,
Gary D.*

AREA REPORTS:

C.K. Area report

Howdy

Things are good in Central Kansas Area. Great Bend Group has found a new meeting place, 1910 17th with Tuesday night meetings at 8:00. Larnard Group changed their meeting time Thursday to 8:00. Osborne has joined our Area. Welcome Osborne! They meet Wednesday 8:00 @ 203 N. First Street Church Basement. We have new officers at C.K.A. Greg B., RCM; Sally O., Alt. RCM; Mike G., Chair; Tom C., co-chair; Cheryl C., treasurer; Dax J., H&I; Dale S., Activities; Liz R., Pl. We did not meet for the month of February because of God's Act of a blizzard. Therefore we have no donation for the Region.

*Great to be here,
Greg B.*

FFF Area report

Hi my Bro. Sis,

We are going through a lot of changes in the Area. We have moved Area to 135 Buchanan St at 4:15 P.M. Our H&I is kicking real good. PI is getting off the ground and our convention was real good last weekend. We had a lot of good workshops and speakers and a lot of good fellowship. We have a letter to read and ask for help by our convention committee.

*Thank you for letting me serve,
Dave R*

Just For Today Area Report to Regional Meeting February 18, 2001

Just For Today Area continues to grow, having added Groups throughout the southeast part of Kansas. Each Group has provided updated meeting information to the Regional Public Information chair

We've elected officers: Chair; Paul C.: Alt. Chair; Gene F.: Secretary; Shelly W.: Treasurer; Carla D.: AWAM; Don H.: RCM; Pat P.: Alt. RCM; April S.: Literature; Rod D.: Outreach; Paul M.: PI; tabled until next month H&I; Charles G.:

Area meetings are rotating to host locations on a quarterly basis.

Pioneer Group of Emporia held a M.A.R.C.N.A. fundraiser on February 3, 2001 and collected almost \$1,000.00 to contribute.

Area M.A.R.C.N.A. Fundraiser February 24, 2001 in Chanute. Several workshops and other activities; flyers provided.

Activity Committee working on Area Campout at location other than Melvern Lake; details will be forthcoming.

Area Public Information Committee studying possibility of Area Phone Line with information about meetings throughout Area, contact phone numbers, and other details.

*In Service,
Patrick Poull*

RCM; Just For Today Area

PS Emporia Rescue Mission residents starting young person's NA meeting. New Hope donates starter kit, WSO donates two more. Attendance unknown.

This is what has worked for me. It may not work for you. If you have less clean time, you might consider sending the child, or children, to a relative for a while, while you work on yourself. Do not be ashamed of this. It is an act of courage. Your children need a sane parent.

Anonymous

Good By

February 28th, 2001 2:12 a.m.

Before I can tell you good by, I have to tell you how much I loved you. From the very first time you filled a void in me. You were always there for me. You kept me company when I was alone and made me fit in when I was in a crowd. You made all the hurt in my life go away and let me forget. I didn't have to face any of my feelings or my life because of you and I didn't want to. you helped me through times of physical pain. You were my best friend and lover. You had my undivided attention and complete commitment for almost 30 years. I loved you.

But then ...you turned on me. The void that you filled in me became a hole in my spirit that you kept eating away at until the hole got so big it couldn't be filled. You got me to turn my back on everyone and everything I ever loved. You magnified all the hurt in my life so that it became unbearable and then even YOU couldn't numb it. You made me go through the motions of life but not really living at all. You caused me physical pain. When the pain wasn't bad enough you let me think it worse until it was. I now have permanent damage because of you. You made me do things I was never okay with. You are a liar. You led me to believe it was all right to do the things I had to do to keep my relationship with you. You made me cross every

line I ever drew. You controlled me and everything about me. I could no longer even be with the people I love the most. I didn't know how. I only knew how to be with you and how to shut everyone else out of my life. You had my devotion. You taught me to cheat, lie, steal, manipulate and hate. Because of you I hated everyone especially me. You made me self destructive. You made me hurt everyone especially me. I will spend the rest of my life with the diseases that came along with you. You took my will and you almost took my life. Thanks to you I got to see jails and institutions. Even then you lied to me and let me think you were my friend. You killed a number of my friends. You kept me from being the kind of Mom my son deserves and the kind of wife my husband deserves. You kept me sick and full of fear.

Now I have to thank you. If it wasn't for you, I wouldn't know God today. I wouldn't know a plan for living happy, joyous and free. I wouldn't have real friends in my life. I would never have know how to care for another person and I wouldn't know how to be honest. It might have been years before I found out about my Hepatitis C if you had quietly slipped out of my life. You brought me to my knees. You kicked my ass and for that I am grateful because now I actually have a chance to live and to love. I can love myself and be proud of my actions because of working the program that I had to find because of your destruction in my life. I found freedom.

What have you done for me lately? You lied to me (again). You led me to isolation and despair. You are trying to kill me and as much as I love(d) you, I gotta let you go. What you have done to me has reminded me of all the things I

Continued on next pg.

lose when I use. You made me sick. You made me forget God's love for me and his plan for me ...which is better than yours and mine. You took over the controls again. You took away my choices and my freedom. I don't want or need you in my life anymore. Real friends are all around me so I am letting you go. You are not worth it. I remember now. Thanks but NO THANKS.

The preceding was submitted by Lesli T. She writes "...I am finally ready to take all the suggestions given me by my sponsor. I relapsed on February 26th after 3 ½ years clean. She assigned me a "Good Bye Letter" to my drugs over a year ago. Now I have finally done it...today by the Grace of God I made it back and have a renewed willingness to do what I know works."

KB

I wrote this poem a while back - it has to do with a friend of mine in the program. While talking to my sponsor one day, I was told my friend decided he needed to do more "research". Then in a later conversation, I heard that my friend had died from an O.D. Thankfully, I found out later that night that he was actually still alive, thank God, but the end could have been easily a lot different. As I am still fairly new to the program (10 months) this was my first, and I pray, my last time of experiencing this much shock, pain, and disbelief. This poem came to me during that time of pain. At first it was just the first couple of lines going through my head over and over again and then some more came out, so finally I felt like I just had to get up and start writing it down. Call it divine inspiration or just the pain of my soul, or whatever you will. All I know is that it came.

Today I heard my friend is gone,
His new address is c/o God
He was an addict, much like me
And just today, I heard he O.D.'d
This news I heard, it's really bad
Because his leaving, leaves many sad.
I didn't really, know him well you see
But he was part of my family -
My friends I've come to know and love
Who are always there, when push comes to
~~shove~~
They're there in good times and in bad
And just like today, when I'm really sad
Just give me a call, whether it's night or day
Say the good friends I've made in N.A.
Oh God, how I wish, he would've picked up
the phone
And just kept calling until he found someone
home
I've always heard "The ends are always the
~~same~~
And that there's only but one to blame
Those ends are jails, institutions and death
And now my friend has drawn his last breath
He always seemed so alive and carefree
But now he lives on only in my memory
Addiction is a bitch, a cunning enemy
And now that monster has took my friend
from me
His pain is now over, as he stands next to
God
Rest in Peace, finally, my dear sweet friend
~~one~~

Scott K.

"There may be times when a relapse lays the groundwork for complete freedom. At other times the freedom can be only achieved by a grim and obstinate willfulness to hang on to abstinence come hell or high water until a crisis passes."

Pg. 74, 5th edition, Basic Text

My Debt

Who knew the pain this addict felt...
Deep down inside her soul?
Who wiped the tears this addict cried...
After living in that hole?

Who shared with love, a way of life...
I could not comprehend?
Who stood by me, through good and bad?
May the miracle never end!

How can I repay this gift...
A life I don't deserve?
I give back what was freely given...
I share, I sponsor, I serve.

by Janet Jorgensen March 1998

Note from the editor/publisher

Well folks, this is almost the end of my run as publisher of "The M.A.N." I have one more issue to publish and my term will be up. It is my sincere hope that there are others out there that would like to assume the duties of the publisher; not that I am anxious to leave them behind, but I would like to share this wonderful experience with others. It has been a wonderful and growth filled experience! If you are one of the people who think you would like this experience, please attend the next round of Regional Subcommittee meetings, especially the Literature meeting on Saturday May 19, 2001 @ 4p.m. in the 4-H Bldg. Woodside & Hickory Streets, Mcpherson, KS. You will be welcomed with open arms. (Hey, you do not have to have an interest in becoming the next editor to attend, all are encouraged to attend!)

It appears that World is going to have some work for the Individuals, Groups, Areas, Regions and Zonals to do in the near future. They have already sent a piece down (up?) the "pike" for input. (See "When is there too much Literature?" on pg. One.) The more people

who are involved in the review process, the better for the Fellowship as a whole. We will have a much better representation of the wishes of the membership with additional people involved. One way to make sure that your voice is heard is to attend the Regional Literature subcommittee meeting. Another is to make sure that you attend any of the workshops that are given to cover the material.

I apologize for not having the "Getting to Know Your Subcommittee" section this quarter. I asked two subcommittee chairs to do articles, but they (rightly) thought that two or three days just wasn't enough time. So, not only do I owe you the readership an apology, but I owe the subcommittees one as well for not giving them the opportunity to let you know what projects they are work on. Sorry folks!

One last bit of news before I shut up and leave you alone. John S. got a packet from World and included in it was a request for articles. You see, I'm not the only one who pesters the Fellowship for material. We have had some great material to use here in the Mid-America Region and I think that you the authors should at least consider sending it on into the NA Way magazine. The address is:

**World Service Office
PO Box 9999**

Van Nuys, CA 91409 USA

Please note that they do request an authors release and are more likely to turn down a article that doesn't have one included than I am.

I think that that's all for now. This publication should be available at the convention. I hope that you all are enjoying it (the convention) or have enjoyed it.

Yours in Service,
Kirk B.
Editor, The M.A.N.