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Mid-America Newsletter October — November 1987

LOUISIANA
HOBAN

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HEY... CAN WE TALK?

I am writing out of a deep sense of love and concern for our local Narcotics Anonymous community, and more specifically, the area service committee.

I have been an active member of N.A. for several years, and until recently, attended the ASC meetings regularly. While I have often found service meetings to be a place where lively exchanges of ideas occur, and strongly stated differences of opinion are voiced, I have never before observed the hostility, anger, resentment, disunity and disharmony which seems to be dominating our area service committee meetings lately.

I have asked myself, where does it come from? Why is it happening? What part, if any, have I played in encouraging it? What, if anything, can I do to help resolve the problem and restore the unity necessary to further our primary purpose.

Then it occurred to me that there was very little I could do, but there was a great deal that *We* could do. Yes indeed, this is a *We* program. *We* got into this sad state of affairs, and together, with the help of a loving God, *We* can get out of it. But together *We* will have to make the effort. We will have to apply spiritual principles on an individual and group level as well as on an area level.

On an individual level, much of the work will be of a personal nature, i.e. writing our *own* inventory, making direct amends for harm done, improving our conscious contact with God as we understand Him, etc. In short, by beginning to *really* work the Twelve Steps of Narcotics Anonymous, not just mouthing them or waiting for the other guy to make the first move, but really work the steps ourselves. There is, however, additional work which must be done.

We will have to better prepare ourselves for our service commitments and meetings. At the beginning of our service meetings we open with a mo-

ment of silence and follow that with the Serenity Prayer. During that moment of silence do we really reflect on why and for whom we *serve*?

How does one prepare oneself for service. Most importantly, a person must be *staying clean* and *working the Steps*. Further, one should not seek or accept a service commitment which they believe themselves to be either unable or unqualified to fulfill. That's a tough one. We are often just egotistical enough to believe that we can handle anything. We should consult our sponsors. Hopefully, they will provide the guidance necessary.

We should adhere to clean time requirements. They may be only suggested but they are suggested for a reason. The number of GSR's elected to our ASC who did not have the suggested clean time and subsequently relapsed should tell us something. The clean time requirements should be observed.

Another way we can prepare ourselves is by reading, studying and asking questions about our literature, handbooks, service manuals, and our Twelve Traditions. But don't ask just anyone. Seek input from truly experienced individuals. Just because an individual claims to know what they are talking about doesn't mean they do. Ask them in a loving way to qualify their answers or statements. Having several years clean and experience with group and area level service does not necessarily mean that they are knowledgeable about service issues or Tradition questions. Actively seek the truth, and God will point the way. He always does.

Finally, when considering an issue within your group or at a service meet-

ing, listen carefully to the spokespersons. Just because someone is loud and sounds convincing does not mean they are right. Do they speak the language of the soul, or are they angry, hostile, controlling and domineering? Do they threaten, demand, accuse or indict, or are they gentle, loving, caring and sharing? Do they use fear to motivate, or do they speak of faith? Do they express their opinion, or do they share experience, strength and hope? Do they dictate or do they serve? That's right... *SERVE*.

If we are there with insincere motives and hidden agendas, if we are there seeking to control, dominate, retaliate, confuse or manipulate our members, then our motives are not of a spiritual nature, and our actions will, at best, retard rather than promote the atmosphere of recovery necessary for unity.

It is possible to disagree without becoming disagreeable. It is possible to argue strongly on behalf of or in opposition to a particular issue without becoming hostile, back-biting, and disrespectful of others. It simply requires patience and tolerance and an attitude which reflects the acceptance and application of spiritual principles.

To bring about positive changes in our ASC will require work and commitment from everyone in the local Narcotics Anonymous Fellowship. First, we, the members of N.A., will have to be willing to give back what was freely given to us. N.A. has literally saved our lives. In many ways it is responsible for all that we have and all that we are. *Selfishness* tells me that I am too busy, or that service work is thankless, or someone else will do it. *Selflessness* means that I am willing to

Cont. pg. 4

Remember N.A.
when giving thanks



from the editor's kitchen table

Hi Everybody,

I know this issue is really late, even for me! Between conventions, W.S.C. Quarterly Workshops, Regional Lit. Workshops, Area Workshops, World Ad-Hoc Workshops, and the R.S.C., I haven't had a whole lot of time the last couple of months. You know what, though? It sure beats the old days, when all I had was time and lots of loneliness!

The ad-hoc world workshop on "It Works" went really well. Thanks again Joe F., Kansas City, and the region for doing a great job! There were six members from the M.A.R. Region in attendance. The other thirty or so were from Missouri and Illinois. It was really neat to work with some different lit. buffs. There were also five addicts from different branches of World Services. Michael L. World Lit. Chair, two members of World Lit. Al R. and Doug W., Donna M., W.S.O. board of directors, and Greg P. board of trustees were all hard at it with the rest of us. There was also a staff member from W.S.O. present, Priscilla M., who we kept busy typing away at her portable computer. We got lots accomplished, had fun, and made new friends! It was great.

The R.S.C. went really well too! We elected a new regional secretary, Laura M. from Salina, and a new newsletter editor, Amy G. Kansas City, who will be taking over after the first of the year!! Thanks Derby for hosting the R.S.C. and doing a great job of it. The food was good, and the fellowshiping was excellent!

We planned for our first Kansas State Convention at the R.S.C. meeting. There will also be two more convention comm. meetings in Dec. and Jan. See the "What's Happening" section for details. I'm so excited, I can hardly wait 'till February for our FIRST CONVENTION!!

I'd like to thank Deb P. from Salina for helping me put the last newsletter together, Amy G. from K.C. for her work on "Clean Perceptions, and Laura M. from Salina, who has helped me with typing, gathering input, and copying! Thanks girls, I wouldn't have made it without you!

Since Thanksgiving is upon us, I felt the need to express a little of my gratitude to all of you and N.A. as a whole. The last three and a half years have been wonderful and are getting better all the time. You all have loved me from the start, even when I didn't want you to. You have taught me how to receive love and how to give it to others. You've taught me about spirituality, and helped me to trust and believe in my Higher Power. I've found my family again, and gained an even bigger family, all of you! Thanks for what you've given me. I love you all!

In Loving Service,

Marci W.

Marci W.

**My Gratitude Speaks
When I Care
And When I Share
With Others
The N.A. Way.**

sacrifice some of my time and resources for others. I give back what was given to me by being of service. My gratitude speaks when I care and share the N.A. way.

Secondly, if we are to bring about positive change, our principles must be practiced soundly on a group level. Our groups have a responsibility to their members and to N.A. as a whole. They are best able to carry out that responsibility by electing qualified, dedicated, trusted servants. The trusted servant should have both the recovery and the maturity necessary to serve the wishes of the group, and at the same time be mindful of the needs of N.A. as a whole. Angry, hostile members do not make the best trusted servants. As our members grow in their personal recoveries, they gain the ability to be unselfish and loving in their service to the Fellowship. *Quality service* comes from *quality recovery*.

Some of our groups lack members with sufficient clean time to meet the requirement for the GSR position. If a group cannot find a qualified member to represent them at the ASC should they simply elect a newcomer who may be willing, but unqualified to serve? In my opinion they should not. That is not spiritually sound. The answer lies in trusting that God will express Himself in the ASC, and that His expression will ultimately benefit N.A. as a whole, regardless of whether or not your group has a vote in the room. Selecting a newcomer as your group's GSR jeopardizes that newcomer's recovery. Further, addicts who are new in recovery should be spending most of their time learning to work the Steps and seeking recovery in N.A. meetings, not trying to give away something they do not have.

Our groups have a pivotal role in the maintenance of unity with the area. Groups should encourage their members to attend and support activities, assist new groups and actively support our Seventh Tradition. There is a service job for everyone: hospitals and institutions, activities, and N.A. phonelines, to mention just a few. Members may wish to learn about area, regional or world services, or they may simply desire to serve at their home group. Unity is best served when we all get involved and become part of Narcotics Anonymous.

Lastly, at the area level, our ASC must *want* unity in order to have it. We must be willing to put aside our petty differences, our jealousies, our resentments. We must *work the Steps*.

Our ASC members must be willing to commit themselves to learning service responsibilities. We must be willing to study N.A. materials—to become students of N.A. Service. We must ask questions of experienced, qualified members. To be good trusted servants, we need to do our homework.

I have to believe that we all love Narcotics Anonymous and are here for the same reason. We must stop hurting one another in the name of N.A. service. We need to apply the spiritual principles of forgiveness, tolerance, faith and trust.

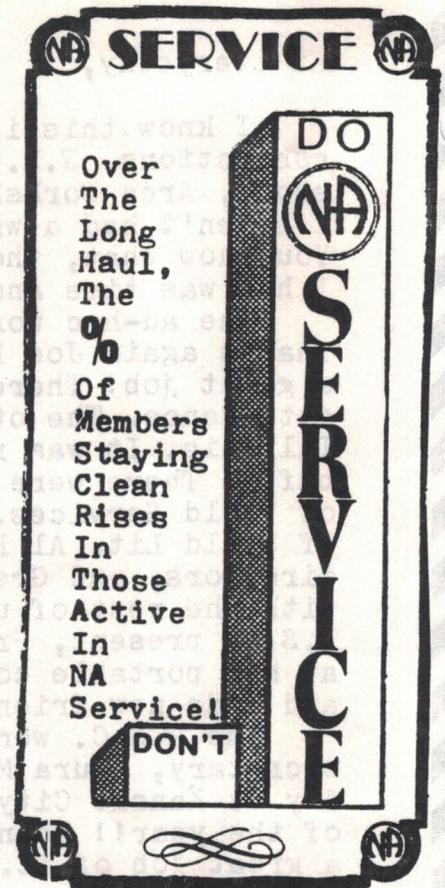
"As long as the ties that bind us together are stronger than those that would tear us apart, all will be well."

How about it...
Can we talk?

Anonymous

Taken from the Oct. '87
issue of the N.A. Way!

When at the end of the road we find that we can no longer function as a human being, either with or without drugs, we all face the same dilemma. What is there left to do? There seems to be these alternatives: either go on as best we can to the bitter ends — jails, institutions or death; or find a new way to live. In years gone by, very few addicts, ever had this last choice. Those who are addicted today, are more fortunate. For the first time in man's entire history, a simple way has been proving itself in the lives of many addicts. It is available to us all. This is a simple spiritual — not religious — program, known as narcotics Anonymous.



Clean Perceptions

MIRACLES

A miracle is a baby in a mother's arms just after birth. A small child's unconditional love for the two that brought him into the world. A miracle is a friend who really does care enough to be there in times of need. A miracle is the kind of love between a man and woman that knows no bounds. A miracle is the healing of a broken heart that has given up on hope. A miracle is how God knows when to give us to each other when we think no one is there.

These are the things that keep us hanging on and give us the strength to go on. These are the miracles that take place every day. Miracles do happen to help us achieve our goals, and miracles do make dreams come true. There's one just around the corner for us all if we believe. It happens with a prayer of hope and faith. Miracles do happen and dreams do come true.

There's more to life than money and material possessions. There's more to life than just what lies outside our own back door. We must explore to achieve, and we must share to grow.

I wish for you that you shall see the miracles that take place in your life. Appreciate them. Never abuse them, and your rewards will be greater in number than you can count. It's promised for us all to live and experience if we live the N.A. way. It's ours to hold on forever if we live it. It's there if we believe it to be, and open our eyes so that we can see.

Live to experience it;

Love and cherish it;

Share to receive it;

It's ours forever if we want it.

Debbie P.
Salina, Kansas

RELATIONSHIPS

Lately I've learned, from talking with other recovering addicts that "addictive relationships" are common. The same symptoms are present for drugs as well as for relationships, which are obsession, compulsion, and self-centeredness. However don't be too hard on your-self, you are an addict, and there is treatment.

First stepping off the merry-go-round and admitting the problem, and then talking this over with your sponsor and other recovering addicts. This is like any other problem in that the pain decreases when it's exposed. Of course go to meetings, work the steps, and do service work.

Sounds simple, and it is when you're ready. The N.A. program offers freedom from addiction including relationships. Think about it. The N.A. program offers freedom from all our compulsions, when we work it.

Jim S.
10/27/87



Adapting to change is the secret to survival.

Taken from the Spiritual Connection
Newsletter, Tulsa, Ok.

Recovery

The drugs are gone, that life
set back, and yet my ways are
there to change.

Can I go on? Which way to
turn? It seems so hard to
learn.

I read my book, I pray alot,
I talk to friends and work
things out.

It seems communication is my
only hope, to be involved my
greatest need. My God I know
is always there, yet often my
behaviors bring despair.

Recovery is not just here just
there, recovery must be every-
where.

Live N.A. they always say, so
who's to blame when I do it my
way.

No, not my will but Thine be
done, and day by day I'll
carry on. At least there's
hope, at least there's joy,
and slowly a little at a time
there's peace inside.

Already what I've lost, I've
gained, and even more to be
obtained. Yet always I must
remain attuned, to God, who
gave me life renewed.

Alice M.
Northside Stroll

I am an addict,
And in meetings, I love to talk
about it!
I want the world to see just what
can be done.

My life has been X-rated,
All of it drug related,
I found I could not manage on
my own!

Then I found my Higher Power.
He is with me every hour,
Now I never have to feel I'm
all alone.

So I can tell you all,
I am walking tall,
And finally life's getting better
"Just For Today".

Now with my Higher Power,
I can make that twenty-fourth hour,
And watch my troubles start to go
away!

I did a searching inventory,
And I found a frightening story,
I was shown the things in life
I had to change.

I confessed to God and man
That I need a helping hand,
And they showed me I could do it,
JUST FOR TODAY the N.A. WAY!

I was forgiven where I was wrong,
Where I was weak I'm getting strong,
And I'm finding life gets better
each and every day!

Now if I use all the tools,
And I practice all the rules,
I know that my desire will go away.

I will follow the twelve steps,
And some day I'll proudly say,
I was brought back to life through
love in N.A.

Anonymous

Deadline for next issue
Dec. 10

news!

UNITY AREA

Literature- Marci W., chair has been unable to attend the last two area mtgs., because of other N.A. service committments. However stockpile is growing rapidly. At this time we are in stock on everything except Basic Texts medallions, and keytags. They will be available soon.



P.I.- The envelopes for the P.I. mailing were stuffed at the last meeting. Nov. 29th the comm. will get together for stamping and addressing them. Also the P.I. comm. has a new chair; Laura M. from Salina. Congradulations Laura.

Butterfly Group- Meeting is growing all the time. Last month they distributed P.I. fliers to about nine small town around our established area.

Nameless- seven to ten in steady attendance. They have started having a Basic Text step study mtg. every other week.

Fri. night Basic Text Study Grp.- Attendance- 11-15. Group needs a new G.S.R. as Joe W. is unable to attend the mtg. because of his new work schedule. (Congradulations Joe)

Pheonix- 20 to 30 attending regularly. The group is willing to sponsor a convention comm. meeting if one is needed.

Unity- Attendance 15-20. Meetings are going well. The group bought a new coffee pot!;



Are you wondering why only one areas news was printed?

All Area Secretaries please send me your area minutes!

Crossroads- Kathy K. typed names and addresses for P.I. mailing. Thanks Kathy! Attendance is up. The group is out of T-shirts, but Marte says to look for hats in the future.

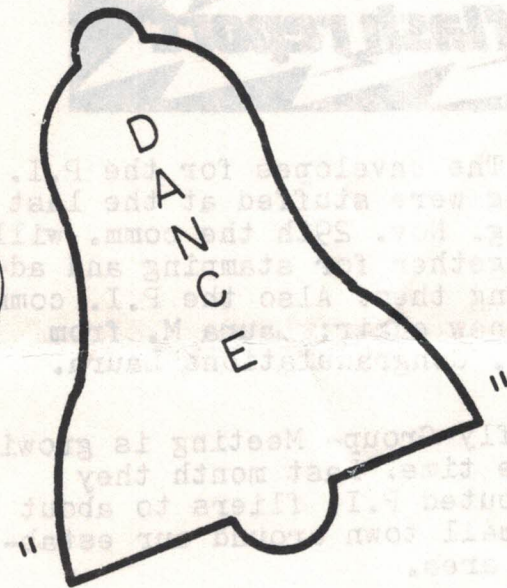
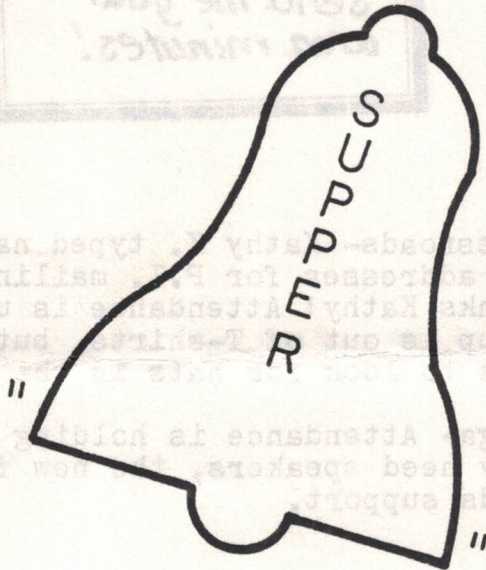
Omega- Attendance is holding steady. They need speakers, the new format needs support.



RING IN RECOVERY

NEW YEARS EVE

"1987"



" FREE SUPPER "
HOSTED BY
DERBY GROUP

6:30 PM SUPPER

8:00 GUEST SPEAKER

" RUBY B. "

BAKED HAM - PROVIDED

9:30 DANCE

— BRING A —

COVERED DISH

DANCE

\$ 2.00

PROCEEDS TO GO TO "MAR. '88"

CONTACT:

ANITA M. 687-3916

PAMELA B. 524-3771

431 S. WOODLAND
DERBY, KS

What's Happening?

IN KANSAS

CHILL OUT AT THE CHILI FEED-
Dec. 5th at the Knights of Columbus 111 E. 1st, Ellinwood, Ks. Serving begins at 5:30, and will be followed by a speakers mtg., dance, auction, and raffle. The Chili Feed is sponsored by the Great Bend group, and they are asking for a \$3.00 donation. So bring your auction items, and your wallet, 'cause it's for a good cause; our first REGIONAL CONVENTION!

REGIONAL CONVENTION COMM. NTG.-
Dec. 20th in Salina. time and place is not known yet. Fliers will be sent to all those who attended the R.S.C. convention comm. mtg., and then some!

RING IN RECOVERY NEW YEARS EVE 1987
with the Derby group! They are hosting a free supper and supplying the baked ham, and asking us to bring a covered dish. Supper is at 6:30, theres a speaker at 8:00, and a dance (\$2.00 adm.) at 9:30. Proceeds go to MARC '88!
431 S. Woodland, Derby, Ks.
For more info, contact Anita M. at 687-3916, or Pamela B. at 524-3771.

There will also be New Years Eve dances in Newton and Kansas City. I don't have the details as of yet.

REGIONAL CONVENTION COMM. MTG.-
Jan. 17th in Salina. The time and place is not known yet. Fliers will be sent out in the next week.

D.C.A. SPAGHETTI FEED- Jan. 30th will be the 4th annual, but I don't have the details yet! Watch for fliers!!

VALENTINE'S DAY DANCE- Feb. 13th the Winfield group will be sponsoring a dance. No other details yet. Look for fliers!

OUR FIRST STATE CONVENTION-
Feb. 19, 20, and 21 at the Doubletree Hotel in Corporate Woods, at 10100 College Blvd., Overland Park, Ks! Fliers with hotel and convention info should be out shortly! Register soon!!!



ELSEWHERE!

GET IT TOGETHER AT... SNCNA 11-
Feb. 5-7, 1988 at the Showboat Hotel in Las Vegas, Nevada
For more info, call Dave T. at (702) 452-6938, Nancy T. (702) 452-0899, or Mike B. (702) 452-4010.

FOURTH ANNUAL GATHERING OF THE FELLOWSHIP- Feb. 12-14, 1988 at Camp Erdman. "KAMANAO O' ALOHA" Aloha Spirit '88! For more details on the 4th annual Hawaiian camp-out contact Tom C. at (808) 262-4631, George K. (808) 262-4394, or C.C., (808) 261 3869. Hawaii Regional Service Office; (808) 533-4900.

LPRCNA VI- March 4-6 in Covington, La at the Holiday Inn For convention info call Peter and Mary at (504) 626-7298, or John B. or Kat C. at (504) 893-9265. For hotel info, call Cheryl Hunt at (504) 893-3580.

CONTRIBUTION GUIDELINES



All contributions should pertain to recovery.

What we print:

- 1) N.A. related material -- group, area, regional and world activities.
- 2) Poems or essays by N.A. members.
- 3) Perceptions on the Steps and Traditions.
- 4) Topic discussions.
- 5) Cartoons, drawings and jokes.
- 6) Group reports.

What we don't print:

- 1) Extreme vulgarity.
- 2) Non-N.A. program material.
- 3) Reference to outside enterprises.
- 4) Material that violates 12 Traditions of N.A.

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Please make copies of this form and take to meetings, special events, etc. and give everyone a chance to attend Mid-America's meeting through the mail. 67402



INFORMATION SHEET

NAME AND ADDRESS OF GROUP _____

BIRTHDAYS _____

STATUS OF GROUP (any particular problem, need, success, new meeting, etc.) _____

ANY SPECIAL EVENTS (include time, place, cost, other information and phone numbers) _____

PLEASE SEND TO MID-AMERICA NEWSLETTER, P.O. BOX 1574
SALINA, KANSAS 67402

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S.O.S. Group
P.O. Box 355
Baxter Springs, Ks 66713

*fast was renewed
Please Renew 3/31/87*

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