

# The Voice\*

Vol. II, Issue 1

April 1979

With the coming of spring, so comes another 'adventure-packed' issue of The Voice. As most of you already know, this is the month for the World Service Conference and things are certainly getting hectic and somewhat busy in preparation for this event. The Conference will be held:

APRIL 28 & 29 at Valley College in Bungalow #1  
(Corner of Burbank Blvd. & Fulton in Van Nuys, CA)  
Parking will be available nearby and signs will  
provide direction to the correct building.

Anyone needing a place to stay who will be attending from out-of-town is asked to please contact a member of the Housing Committee whose address is listed below.

Susan I.  
8852 Debra Avenue  
Sepulveda, CA 91343

Anyone wishing a copy of the Conference Guidelines should contact the World Service Office here in Sun Valley as soon as possible and we will mail you a copy. (PHONE: 213/766-4980). We are all looking forward to seeing you there!

FLASH \*\*\* FLASH \*\*\* FLASH \*\*\* FLASH \*\*\* FLASH \*\*\* FLASH \*\*\* FLASH \*\*\* FLASH

MIDWESTERN REUNION June 16th & 17th, 1979

Groups in Lincoln, Neb., Grand Island, Neb., Topeka, Kansas, Wichita, Kansas and Newton, Kansas are taking over a farm for the weekend. EVERYONE is invited - NO COST - bring your own food - Lots of meetings, activities, fun & fellowship & love.

For further information contact: Mary L. (Lincoln) 402/477-1334

Cindy P. (Topeka) 913/273-5626

Julis W. or Anne W. at Wichita Clubhouse  
316/265-9026

In 1972 a letter was sent out from our fledgling World Service Office asking the fellowship to send in original articles, comments, slogans, etc. as well as personal stories. We knew that we desperately needed more literature and that it would have to come from you. That letter wasn't the first and certainly wasn't the last; the plea still goes out and will continue to go out. Response has come in slowly, bit by bit; and even though the total input doesn't fill one notebook, some of what has been received is very good.

Recently, individuals and groups in several parts of the country have begun to actively work on literature. This is one of the most encouraging signs we've seen. The stage is set; the time is now; but it's up to you. We need a fellowship-wide effort for new and better literature. It will take time, but if we all pitch in, we'll have books of our own and pamphlets that will reach the addict who still suffers and wants help.

In this issue, we once again ask for any contributions to be given or sent to The World Service Office.

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\*\*\* COMING EVENTS - REGISTER EARLY \*\*\*

1st Annual Southern California Convention: July 27, 28 and 29th 1979

"United By The Sea" P.O. Box 3663 Van Nuys, CA 91407

(213) 837-2304 or (213) 376-2130

All roads lead to Atlanta, GA Convention: 9th WORLD CONVENTION Sept, 6-9, 1979

Chairman: Bo S. P.O. Box 274 Marietta, GA 30060

(404) 436-0953 or (404) 428-0081

2nd Annual Pacific Northwest Convention: October 26, 27 and 28th 1979

"We Do Recover" Ashland, Oregon

(503) 482-8310 or (503) 482-0575  
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The World Service Office Inc. would like to remind all Chairpersons or Secretaries to register or update all groups in your areas so that our World Directory will be better and more up-to-date this year than any that have gone before. Don't put it off; last year we had to call all over the country at the last minute for information. For your convenience we have included a registration form in this newsletter - PLEASE USE IT.

## NARCOTICS ANONYMOUS GROUP REGISTRATION FORM

The purpose of this form is to establish or maintain the link between your group and the rest of N.A. We need the following information in order to list your group in the World Directory, send you new materials; such as, new literature, forthcoming newsletters and general correspondence. We also need this so that we may refer newcomers and new groups in your general area to your G.S.O. PLEASE FILL OUT AND RETURN TO US AT —

N.A. World Service Office, Inc.  
P.O. Box 622  
Sun Valley, CA 91352

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Today's Date \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_

- Add us to WORLD DIRECTORY  
 We're starting a new group; please send STARTER KIT  
 There have been some changes; the following is updated information; please correct your records.

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Meeting Day \_\_\_\_\_ Time \_\_\_\_\_  A.M.  P.M.

Type of Meeting \_\_\_\_\_  Open  Closed

Location of Meeting \_\_\_\_\_

Street \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address: Name \_\_\_\_\_

Street \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Secretary \_\_\_\_\_ Phone ( ) \_\_\_\_\_

Treasurer \_\_\_\_\_ Phone ( ) \_\_\_\_\_

G. S. R. \_\_\_\_\_ Phone ( ) \_\_\_\_\_

*If your Group has any special needs, problems or questions, use the reverse side of this form to communicate them to the World Service Office.*

Starting with the material below, we will in all issues, include some of the literature input from our members. We invite your comments and encourage you to add your own material.

W.S.O. Inc. C.A.R.E.N.A. Publishing

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Am I sure I want to stop using drugs? Do I understand and believe that I have no real, long term control over drugs? Do I recognize that in the long run I don't use drugs -- they use me? Do I fully accept the fact that every attempt on my part to taper off or stop using or to control my using has failed? Do I know in my heart that drugs have the power to change me into something I don't want to be: a liar, a thief, a schemer? Do I admit to myself that every time I've been in trouble; everytime I hurt someone intantionally, I was either loaded or trying to get loaded? Do I know in my guts that I fail to do the good things I start out to do and wind up doing the things I don't want to do because of the way I use drugs?

If I can let go of my false pride and look at my life on a gut level -- past all the lies, dreams, and fantasies -- and admit that it's all true and really feel it -- then I'm at Step One of the Narcotics Anonymous program which is...

"We admitted we were powerless over our addiction, that our lives had become unmanageable."

If we can cut through all the nonsense we've been telling ourselves to make us feel good -- and admit that we are powerless over our addiction and that we have made a mess of our lives -- we have a chance. Strange as it may seem, the only help for addicts of our type comes when we are able to admit complete defeat -- utter failure. For people like us, it has to be a whole new ballgame. We've failed with everything we tried anyway -- so what have we got to lose? We've tried everything to control or stop using: counselors, psychiatrists, hospitals, lovers, new towns, new jobs, etc. None of our efforts got us anywhere in the long run. For a day, a week or a month perhaps; but sooner or later we take that first pill, fix or drink and we're gone again-- worse than ever.

When we give up -- quit struggling -- surrender, completely and unconditionally-- then and only then can we be helped to recover from the disease of drug addiction.

Where is this help? How do I get it? What is it? You go into a meeting of Narcotics Anonymous. There you will find people like yourself with the same or worse patterns of using, yet they are clean and sober. They can smile. Their eyes are clear. They seem to care for each other. They will probably introduce themselves to you and try to make you feel welcome. As the meeting progresses you will hear a little bit about them from their own lips. You will hear things that remind you of you if you listen with an open mind and give yourself the opportunity to begin getting well. The main point is this: These people are addicts, people like yourself, yet they are clean and sober for months or years. If you can watch them and listen

to them openly and realize that they -- as crazy and confused and helpless as yourself before they got to N.A. -- yes they, have found a way to live and be happy without drugs.

Since simplicity is the keystone of our program, anything that prevents confusion will be a benefit to us. Many of us adopt prayer of some kind to help us in our Eleventh Step. Although N.A. does not require or recommend any specific kind of prayer, very often some of us were asked why N.A. did not have or adopt a prayer suitable for ourselves that was not already adopted by any other 12 Step fellowship. Several members who have been active for many years sought to find, perhaps, one or two topics that might be specific, simple, easily remembered and to the point of N.A.'s purpose. One thing stood out more than anything else: Gratitude.

We were well aware that the thought expressed in the Serenity Prayer" was written by Dr. Reinhold Niebuhr in 1935 and adopted by several fellowships. It was written as:

"O God, give us the serenity to accept what cannot be changed, courage to change what should be changed, and wisdom to distinguish one from the other."

The prayer starting "Look to this day! For it is life..." from the Sanskrit is also familiar to many of us. To top everything else, we had been requested by another fellowship not to use one of their favorite expressions of personal feeling. They were right in their request of course, and we have tried to live up to our commitment not to use it in any of our literature. Our seeking something that would exemplify the best of our aspirations finally came out as this simple statement that seems to have been accepted by many in the N.A. fellowship:

Gratitude Prayer

My gratitude speaks...

When I care

And when I share

With others

The N.A. way.

When we apply the principles of recovery to our lives we are then recovering, or recovered, addicts. It is semantics more than anything else. We each decide for ourselves what term suits us best.