



a new leaf

a publication of marijuana anonymous

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A Cry for Help

I lived a pretty sheltered life. I had good parents, went to church on Sundays, and did sorta well in school. Everything was good enough. My parents kept me under lock and key, however, and by the time I was 19 and went off to school things changed.

I have always been an adventurer. So, when someone offered me weed, I tried it, reluctantly, but I tried. If I could go back in time and beat the shit out of teenage me to stop myself from making that mistake I would. It led me down a path that only brought me sadness.

I continued to smoke after I moved back home from school. I came home because I did so many drugs that I flunked out – failure number one. For the next 3 years I did every drug I could get my hands on. I had a love affair with MDMA

for years. As I grew older the hard stuff lost its appeal, weed always remained.

I am now 32. I just separated from my wife, and I am miserable. I live to get high. It's the first thing I do in the morning and the last

*If I could go
back in time
and... stop
myself from
making that
mistake I would.*

thing I do at night. I leave work to get high. My jobs, relationships,
continued on pg. 4

Inconceivable???

As I write my story I just completed 11 months sober from Amarijuana and all other mind altering substances. As my sponsor and I have discussed, this seemed inconceivable when I first came into these rooms the first weekend of 2015. When I came to my first meeting, I was just hoping to kick my marijuana habit; instead I'm learning to live life on life's terms. What an order!

I had been an everyday smoker for 15 years. I tried quitting marijuana thousands of times, coming up short every time. I didn't want 2015 going up in smoke and came to these rooms wanting relief from my addiction. I hated myself, and life. When I met people in the rooms who had years

continued on pg. 4

Mermaid's First Meeting

Within 72 hours of being released from a mental hospital, I attended my first MA meeting. It was my first meeting, and it followed my fifth discharge from a mental hospital.

Like the other 4 hospitalizations, I spent weeks believing that I was a blue mermaid, handcrafted by William Shakespeare. My mermaid-self functioned on a diet of pot cookies, bong hits and canna-butter infused teas done in the English style, very milky. My mermaid-self spun off the face of this planet, over and over again.

At my first meeting, I was slowly regaining touch with reality. I was not, however, on solid ground. I knew I belonged at the meeting. Long before I thought I was a blue mermaid, I KNEW I was a serious pothead. I could smoke up to an eighth a day . . . I was out of control. Before the meeting started, I picked a spot on a couch and was ready to listen. I was, in fact, open to making a change. I did not want to go back to the mental hospital, and every time I smoked pot after being released, I would inevitably end up right back in the confines of a lockdown facility. I needed this meeting. I needed it more than I could possibly know.

As the meeting started, I could feel the fellowship. People said the Serenity Prayer with tangible emotion. The Speaker shared intimate details of his life, and I could relate. I Identified as a
continued on pg. 4

a new leaf

The purpose of **a new leaf** is to carry the message of recovery from marijuana addiction. It is through the written experiences of recovering addicts and their stories that we may find experience, strength and hope.

Articles submitted should reflect recovery, unity, and service.

The articles contained in **a new leaf** are the sole opinions of the authors and do not reflect the opinions of Marijuana Anonymous as a whole.

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or submit online:

www.marijuana-anonymous.org/anl
and click on the newsletter tab.

A New Leaf
340 S. Lemon Ave. #9420
Walnut, CA 91789-2706

A Sample Meditation for Your Inspiration

A New Perspective

The process of gaining this new outlook on life was a painful experience for most of us.
- LWH p. 33

We have all heard it said that the mind can be a very dangerous place. Our thoughts can take us in a direction that is a challenge to our sobriety, and in many instances, take us back to old ways of doing and being that no longer serve us.

Why is changing perspective so difficult for marijuana addicts? For one thing, when we have lived one way for so many years, it is hard to make a sudden radical change. Others tell us that they never had any positive influence to tell them there is another way to live. Ultimately, it really doesn't matter why. What really matters is how we can create positive change in our lives.

Like the musician, the athlete, and the craftsperson, we as addicts must *practice* recovery to get better at living our lives as sober people in recovery, and ultimately gain a new perspective on life. Our practice includes prayer, meditation, service, fellowship, and study. Our fellows can also teach us many other valuable practices that have helped them in their recovery like yoga, exercise, chanting, drumming, and on and on.

The practice of recovery leads to the building of useful life-tools. The building of tools leads to new ways to live. New ways to live leads to new ways of thinking. New ways of thinking leads to an entirely new perspective.

Affirmation/Meditation:

As I change my thinking, I change my life.

Craig J.
District 7

MA Daily Meditation Book

Marijuana Anonymous is looking for YOUR writing to fill a year's worth of daily meditations focused on recovery from marijuana addiction. The writings should be approximately 250 to 500 words and focused on MA recovery.

What would you want to read on your sobriety birthday?

Send your submission and we'll try to print it on YOUR recovery birthday. If you feel so moved, send in more than one.

Looking for inspiration? Take a look at daily meditation books from other fellowships. Find an inspiring quote to kickstart your creativity. Take a look at these meditations already submitted for consideration.

Go for it... write yours today.

Send submissions to:

literature@marijuana-anonymous.org
or to ANLP at **chair@anewleafpublications.org**

What's It Like To Serve At The MA World Services Conference?

The MA World Services (MAWS) Conference is the annual meeting of representatives of the fellowship, where MA policy, literature, and other business is discussed and key decisions about MA are made. The next Conference is scheduled for May 27-30, 2016 in New York City. **The deadline for Agenda Items to be considered at this Conference is January 28.**

Districts will be electing their (up to two) Delegates over the next month or two. Delegates represent their Districts at the Conference, and serve as liaisons between their Districts and MAWS throughout the year.

We asked Delegates and other participants at the 2015 Conference about their experiences. Here's some of what they had to say (lightly edited for brevity and clarity).

Q: As a returning attendee, what were you looking forward to?

A: The opportunity to be of service, to participate in MA on the World Service level is an honor, to hopefully do some good to ensure MA is here and strong for the future suffering marijuana addict.

A: Building more relationships with MAWS and other Delegates.

A: Gaining a better understanding of the inner workings of MAWS.

A: The food and fellowship, seeing friends I don't see often.

Q: What advice would you offer new attendees to future Conferences?

A: Ask past Delegates and others who have come before you what to expect. Try to listen more and talk less the first day of the Conference.

A: Review the 12 Traditions, 12 Concepts of Service, the MAWS Service Manual, Conference materials package and Rules of Order adopted at previous Conferences.

A: Be professional, patient, kind, tolerant, and bring your Higher Power and your best self to be of maximum service to God and your fellows.

A: Be prepared for long days. Bring a laptop. Consider your committee choices carefully. Be organized – it's a lot of business.

A: Don't be nervous, people are friendly.

Q: What will you bring back to your District from this experience?

A: An understanding of how MAWS supports the District and the resources available to us; statistics on website activity; info on the need for participation at World Service level.

A: How MAWS will continue to foster growth worldwide.

A: New ways will MA aid sick and suffering (addicts) and help independent meetings.

A: How important MAWS is.

A: So much! Like ideas from other Districts, and a renewed passion for MA efforts. A stronger commitment to service at both the DSC and meeting level. I will solicit and/or help members write their stories for LWH and A New Leaf. I will sponsor others who can step up and serve.

Q: Any other thoughts?

A: What an amazing experience! I hope to continue coming to Conference, and, God willing, see you at the 2018 Conference in Toronto, Canada (if our District's group conscience supports such an endeavor!!)

A: Always practice principles before personalities.

MA To Go

Do you have our fellowship's recovery app, MA Mobile?

The smartphone-tablet app is free and is available for Android in the Google Play Store and for iOS at the App Store. It is easily found by searching for "Marijuana Anonymous."

The app features GPS-enabled meeting search, all MA literature, access to our online forum and MA Online (District 13) meetings, and a marijuana sobriety counter.

Visit your preferred apps vendor to read about additional features.



Scan to install for Android



Scan to install for Apple Apps

A Cry for Help

cont'd from pg. 1

education, and finally self worth have suffered enough. Someone, please help me. I feel so lost. I want to quit but every time I try I am met with another disappointing failure.

The hardest part is admitting you are addicted to something you never even thought was a drug. I told myself it was nothing and it didn't affect me. I was wrong. I HATE the person it has made me. That was a hard realization to come

*The hardest part
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to. I am an addict. And I hate myself for it. I know there is a better way; I want to get there. I want my life back.

Some people can come and go as they please, I go through full-on withdrawals. I get all sweaty and agitated. It's a disgusting feeling.

In the end, I need help. I am lost. I feel hopeless. There is a better version of me underneath this layer of self-pity. I want him back. Someone tell me there is a light at the end of the tunnel. Please.

Jordan

Mermaid's First Meeting

cont'd from pg. 1

newcomer, but did not feel singled-out. I was welcomed. And before long, I was ready to share my story too. It really helped a lot.

Now, this blue mermaid is 2 years and 4 months sober, thanks to meetings, a loving sponsor and working the 12 Steps with gusto. Every day is a new opportunity to make amends. Freedom feels extraordinary. My first MA meeting was a turning point in my life, and I am eternally grateful for the MA community and meetings for saving my life.

Gina D.

Inconceivable???

cont'd from pg. 1

of sobriety, I just couldn't envision myself having the willpower to do so. The thought of never smoking or drinking alcohol ever again was unimaginable. The most important lesson I learned early on was to live one day at a time.

I took welcome chips at the first two meetings I attended, and continued to come back. Without a doubt, going to meetings regularly my first month helped to get me through the first 30 days. However, I still kept my medical card so I could 'go out' if I wanted to. I even purchased marijuana at a dispensary for a relative yet I never had a serious urge to smoke it. Once I got my 30-day chip, I shredded my medical card.

I didn't obtain a sponsor and do Step Work from Life with Hope until about 90 days in. The God thing was a big reason for my reluctance to doing so. However, I've determined my Higher Power is the meeting rooms and MA community, and that is working for me. I'm currently on Step 6 and don't have an exact time table as to when I'll be finished with all 12 Steps, and for once in my life that is okay. One of my strongest character defects is impatience.

Well, I've learned you cannot rush recovery.

In 2016, I would like to continue to share more at meetings and connect more with newcomers and others with years of sobriety. I also would like to continue to have meeting commitments. Continued investment in my recovery is the best way I can ensure my sobriety and be of service to others.

Michael J.

**Another Doctor's Opinion
To the Fellowship –**

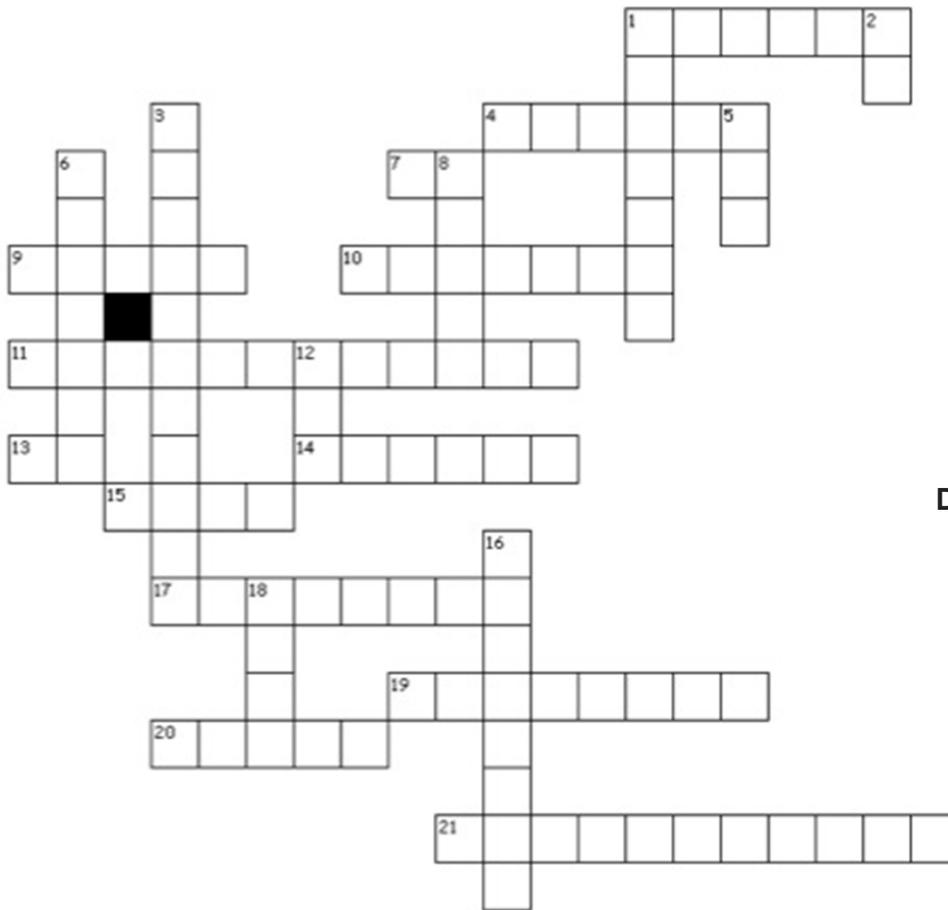
The November 2015 issue of A New Leaf presented a "final" draft of "Another Doctor's Opinion." The 2016 MA World Services Conference will consider "Another Doctor's Opinion" for possible inclusion in the next edition of Life with Hope. The piece is the result of the efforts of its author, and of the MA World Services Literature Committee.

MAWS is looking for your feedback on the proposed addition. Reach back to your November 2015 issue, read the draft and send your comments to literature@marijuana-anonymous.org, and/or to us here at ANLP, at chair@anewleafpublications.org.

Please note that Marijuana Anonymous is not affiliated with, and neither endorses nor opposes the Hazelden Betty Ford Foundation or Dr. Marvin Seppala.

Enjoy the read, and share it with your fellows!

MA Stuff



Across

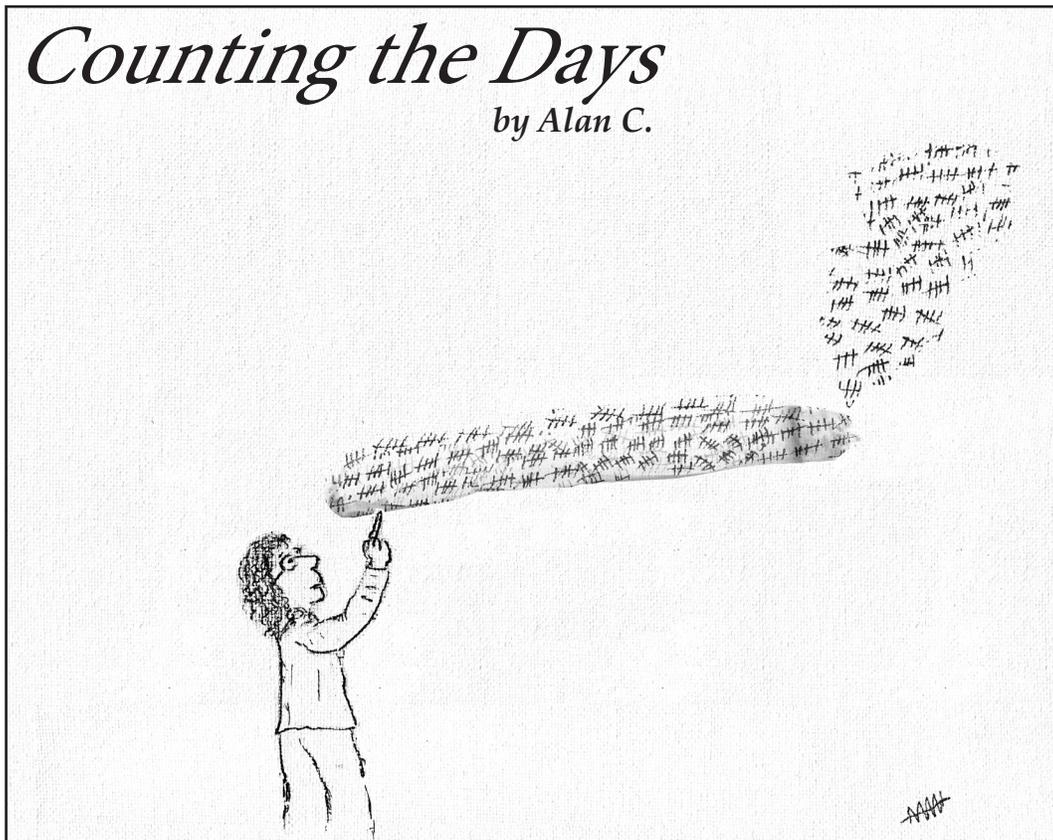
1. Irish meeting location
4. One thing we seek
7. District across the pond
9. Traditions apply to
10. Step guide
11. Our book
13. First word of first Step
14. Location of District 13
15. Walk through
17. Newest District
19. Another thing we seek
20. Twelve of them
21. Site of February, 2016 Convention

Down

1. Euro District
2. Site of 2016 MA World Conference
3. Story of the
5. Not our amigo
6. Side of triangle
8. Largest mtg in Japan
12. Came to believe
16. Site of first Unity Conference
18. Amends

Counting the Days

by Alan C.



The 12 Steps of MA

1. We admitted we were powerless over marijuana, that our lives had become unmanageable.
2. Came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.
3. Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God, as we understood God.
4. Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.
5. Admitted to God, to ourselves, and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs.
6. Were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character.
7. Humbly asked God to remove our shortcomings.
8. Made a list of all persons we had harmed, and became willing to make amends to them all.
9. Made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others.
10. Continued to take personal inventory and when we were wrong, promptly admitted it.
11. Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God, as we understood God, praying only for knowledge of God's will for us and the power to carry that out.
12. Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these steps, we tried to carry this message to marijuana addicts and to practice these principles in all our affairs.

Share Your
Experience,
Strength & Hope

**a new
leaf**

ARTICLES WANTED

stories@anewleafpublications.org

*Let the fellowship know about
your important milestone.
ANL depends on you to
submit birthdays.
Give your anniversary date to
your District Bureau Chief or
your meeting GSR.*

Updates from the Districts

District 2 (East Bay, Northern CA)

We're preparing for a great MA Convention, to be held February 12 – 14, 2016 in Walnut Creek, California. Hope to see you there!

Districts 6 & 7 (Los Angeles)

Held their annual 6 vs 7 softball game in November, followed by a late picnic lunch. Who cares who won? We had a great time!

District 7 (Los Angeles)

After 26 + years in Mar Vista, the Tuesday and Thursday evening meetings have moved.

Tuesday now meets at Newsong Church, 5875 Green Valley Circle, 2nd Fl, Culver City.

Thursday is meeting at SHARE Foundation, 6666 Green Valley Circle, Culver City. Both start at 8 p.m. Book study before Tuesday meeting starts at 6:30 p.m.

The 12 Traditions of Marijuana Anonymous

1. Our common welfare should come first; personal recovery depends on MA unity.
2. For our group purpose there is but one ultimate authority, a loving God whose expression may come through in our group conscience. Our leaders are but trusted servant, they do not govern.
3. The only requirement for membership is a desire to stop using marijuana.
4. Each group should be autonomous except in matters affecting other groups or MA as a whole.
5. Each group has but one purpose, to carry its message to the marijuana addict who still suffers.
6. MA groups ought never endorse, finance, or lend the MA name to any related facility or outside enterprise, lest problems of money, property, and prestige divert us from our primary purpose.
7. Every MA group ought to be fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions.
8. Marijuana Anonymous should remain forever nonprofessional, but our service centers may employ special workers.
9. MA, as such, ought never be organized, but we may create service boards or committees directly responsible to those they serve.
10. Marijuana Anonymous has no opinion on outside issues; hence the MA name ought never be drawn into public controversy.
11. Our public relations policy is based on attraction rather than promotion; we need always maintain personal anonymity at the level of press, radio, t.v., film, and other public media. We need guard with special care the anonymity of all fellow MA members.
12. Anonymity is the spiritual foundation of all our traditions, ever reminding us to place principles before personalities.

Please join us! We want to meet you at the . . .
22nd Annual
Marijuana Anonymous World Convention

February 12-14, 2016 Walnut Creek, California



Featuring:
 Recovery workshops
 Great guest speakers
 Step work sessions
 Meetings
 Music and entertainment
 Food and snacks
 Optional excursions/tours
 Shuttle/ride-share service
Newcomers Welcome group

A weekend of recovery, fun and fellowship!

Where: Walnut Creek Marriott located on 2355 North Main St., a short walk from BART (Bay Area Rapid Transit), 25 miles from Oakland Intl Airport; Ride-share contact: info@mawsconvention.org

Cost: \$125 (early bird rate ended 1/15) Weekend includes everything *EXCEPT* hotel accommodations, breakfasts, and Saturday banquet (see below)

Accommodations: Special room rates at the newly renovated Walnut Creek Marriott, register from the convention website: www.mawsconvention.org or call 1-800-828-5613 (925-934-2000). Rates: \$109 (no breakfast), \$119 (includes one breakfast), \$129 per night (includes two breakfasts)

Banquet: \$50 includes the traditional sumptuous Saturday night sit-down dinner starting at 6:00pm

Questions? Email info@mawsconvention.org

EASY REGISTRATION ONLINE at: www.mawsconvention.org, or return the form below with a check or money order to: MA District 2, P.O. Box 20484, Oakland, CA 94620

NAME _____ EMAIL _____

(OPTIONAL) LAST NAME: _____ PHONE _____

ADDRESS: _____ CITY/STATE/ZIP _____

REGISTRATION:

CONVENTION \$125 (early bird rate ended 1/15)

BANQUET \$50 (Choose: ___ Flat Iron Steak ___ Soy-Ginger Salmon (Gluten-Free) ___ Vegan)

marijuana anonymous worldwide

For a complete listing of all meetings visit
www.marijuana-anonymous.org

MA World Services
340 S. Lemon Ave. #9420, Walnut, CA 91789-2706
www.marijuana-anonymous.org 800.766.6779
email: office@marijuana-anonymous.org

District 1 San Francisco
www.ma-sf.org 415.325.4785

District 2 East Bay
www.madistrict2.org 510.287.8873

District 3 South SF Bay Area
PO Box 551 Saratoga, CA 95071 408.450.0796

District 4 Western Washington
PO Box 17452 Seattle, WA 98107 206.414.9270

District 5 Orange County
1439 W. Chapman Av. PMB#215 Orange, CA 92868 714.999.9409

District 6 LA County North
PO Box 2433 Van Nuys, CA 91404 818.759.9194

District 7 LA County South
PO Box 3012 Culver City, CA 90231 310.494.0189

District 8 New York
PO Box 1244 Cooper Station New York, NY 10276 212.459.4423

District 11 Portland
PO Box 2012 Portland, OR 97208-2012 503.567.9892

District 12 North Bay, CA
PO Box 1088 Penngrove, CA 94951 415.419.3555 or 707.583.2326

District 13 MA Online
www.ma-online.org

District 14 London, England
http://www.marijuana-anonymous.co.uk 24hr Helpline 07940.503438

District 15 Long Island, NY
www.ma-longisland.org 631-647-0768

District 16 Melbourne, Australia
24HR. info 0403 945 083 from overseas +61 403 945 083

District 17 Denmark
www.ma-danmark.dk

District 18 Sacramento, CA
www.sacramentoma.org 916.341.9469

District 19 Toronto, Canada
www.matoronto.org 647.201.9161 or 416.999.2244

District 20 San Diego, CA
www.ma-sandiego.org

Birthdays

Celebrating **349**
years of sobriety!

District 5

Amanda	12/17/14	1 yr.
Colin	12/3/11	4 yrs.
Cyrus	11/27/14	1 yr.
Gary R.	12/10/90	25 yrs.
Larry C.	11/28/99	16 yrs.
Lisa S.	12/7/93	22 yrs.
Robert M.	12/11/11	4 yrs.

District 6

Gregg L.	12/3/05	10 yrs.
Michael J.	1/3/15	1 yr.
Jeremy R.	1/1/15	1 yr.

District 7

Alan C.	12/15/14	1 yr.
Andy B.	11/13/99	16 yrs.
Avi D.	12/30/90	25 yrs.
Craig. R.	1/14/14	2 yrs.
Dan A.	1/5/15	1 yr.
Emily M.	1/5/15	1 yr.
Greg. G.	1/7/03	13 yrs.
Hannah S.	1/6/12	4 yrs.
Jane E.	11/10/10	5 yrs.
Jay I.	11/22/01	14 yrs.
Jeff O.	12/30/03	13 yrs.

District 7 con't.

Karen S.	12/28/07	8 yrs.
Marcy E.	1/7/13	3 yrs.
Mark C.	12/23/96	19 yrs.
Mark R.	12/31/00	15 yrs.
Richie S.	9/1/91	24 yrs.
Rob R.	1/6/06	10 yrs..

District 11

Andy D	12/2/07	8 yrs.
Bethany D	12/1/12	3 yrs.
Casey B.	1/2/12	4 yrs
Cassi S	12/9/97	18 yrs.
Claire H.	12/30/12	4 yrs
Jenifer C	11/12/12	3 yrs.
Jon C.	1/1/99	17 yrs.
Lon M	11/24/09	6 yrs.
Thomas T.	1/15/12	4 yrs.

District 12

Louis R	12/3/98	17 yrs.
Nikhil K	12/13/12	3 yrs.

District 20

Carolyn M.	1/4/13	3 yrs.
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ROVING REPORTER ASKS...

What led you to admit you were powerless over marijuana?

(Submit by February 15th and your answers will be published in the March 2016 issue.)

STEP ONE

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



TRADITION ONE

Our common welfare should come first; personal recovery depends on MA unity.

KEEP COMING BACK!

ANL wants to publish your sobriety anniversary. Let your Bureau Chief know or send your birthday to publisher@anewleafpublications.org. Bureau Chiefs are encouraged to submit Birthdays that, a) HAVE occurred, b) HAVE NOT been published and, c) ARE NOT older than 45 days.

