



# a new leaf

a publication of marijuana anonymous

February 2009

Vol. 19 No.2

## Gratitude by Ross S.

Three years ago, my idea of a fun holiday season was getting stoned and listening to the Rolling Stones. Maybe I'd see a movie on Christmas day, and after that troll around for a New Year's Eve party to attend – preferably one with lots of drugs and alcohol. I felt guilty about my marijuana use, so I would set up various unsuccessful control measures to limit my consumption. Yet there were no known control measures to limit my obsession over wanting to be high. Wanting to numb out, to avoid facing life on life's terms. Invariably, the most depressing aspect of the entire holiday season was that I isolated physically, emotionally, and spiritually.

This year will mark my 3rd clean and sober holiday season. I now go out of my way to surround myself with friends and acquaintances that work a Program for Living. This year, I was lucky enough to spend Christmas Eve with a dear friend in the Program. We laughed, played games, enjoyed great food, shoveled snow, and listened to music – all while clean and sober. What a joyous miracle! While I was at my friend's parent's house, I noticed a fully stocked bar, chock full of alcoholic beverages I used to crave in order

to numb out. My eyes flashed over the array of bottles, but this time, I thought my actions through to their logical (or illogical) conclusions. I decided my accumulated experience, strength, and hope acquired in Recovery was infinitely more desirable than a sip of those spirits.

**“Recovery was infinitely more desirable than a sip of those spirits.”**

The next day I decided to take a boat ride to beautiful Victoria, B.C. As I was reading a magazine on the boat, I came across an ad for a head shop in town. I realized that this was my first clean and sober excursion into Canada ever. My mind began to race: What if I come across this head shop? What if I caught a whiff of BC bud wafting through the air? What would my reaction be? Is my Program strong enough to withstand the allure of old patterns of thinking and behavior? What would my sponsor do?

I decided to take an on the spot inventory of all the treasures

Recovery had brought me: sobriety, studying in school for a new career, a circle of loving friends, problem solving tools (the 12 Steps), alleviation of my isolation and depression...the list can, and does, go on and on. All of that weighed against a few hacking bong hits, followed by hours of mental fogginess, and finally the giant onslaught of guilt, seemed like a pitiful return in comparison. My Recovery had brought me so much more joy than drugs or alcohol ever had. I was able to let go, become present in the moment, and truly enjoy my time in Victoria. And tonight, I will carry the message, and share my experiences with others at a meeting. ▲

## submit

Share your experience, strength and hope! Submit your article to your Bureau Chief or see page 2 for contact information.

# 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, & 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 necessarily reflect the opinions of Marijuana Anonymous as a whole.

## District Bureau Chiefs

District 1:	Dave W.
District 2:	Meredith H.
District 3:	Mark S.
District 4 :	Tad VP.
District 5 :	John S.
District 6 :	Matthew B.
District 7 :	Dan B.
District 8 :	Mike M.
District 9 :	Rockin' Rob
District 10 :	Dan K.
District 11 :	Lisa C.
District 12:	Anna
District 13	Scotty A
District 15:	Ellen N.

## ANLP Staff

Office Manager:	Tom W.
Field Editor:	Kathy B.
Publishing Editor:	Ron H.
Secretary:	Lisa T.
Treasurer:	John Mc.
Chairperson:	Susan B.

Send all articles, inquiries and correspondence to:

[anlp@marijuana-anonymous.org](mailto:anlp@marijuana-anonymous.org)

A New Leaf  
P.O. Box 6482  
Torrance, CA 90504

or submit online:  
[www.marijuana-anonymous.org](http://www.marijuana-anonymous.org)  
and click on publications.

## A Renewed Sense of Faith by Sean W.

After six months of sobriety and active recovery, I started to drift. I had just finished Step 5, and I felt like my obsession with marijuana had subsided for the most part. I spent the next six months leisurely working through Step 6, and usually attended only one meeting a week (the meeting I secretaried, which was starting to feel like a burden).

Around the time of my 1-year birthday, I felt extremely conflicted about whether or not I should start drinking again. I felt that I was limiting myself by ruling out all mind altering substances, and questioned whether this was a reasonable decision. I also felt some resentment about the fact that my commitment to sobriety had contributed to a rift between myself and a group of "normie" friends. At meetings, I would still feel small bursts of inspiration and gratitude for the growth I had made in recovery, so I decided to stay completely sober until I had gone through all of the steps once and then I would reconsider whether I still wanted to drink.

Despite my new commitment to recovery, I still felt some resentment about the fact that I couldn't party, and curiosity about whether or not my life would be more fun if I gave myself the freedom to use. That lingering resentment and curiosity came to a head three months later while I was chatting with a coworker. We were reminiscing about fun party experiences we'd had, and afterwards, I became fixated on the thought of what it would be like to use. Two hours later, I was determined to

get high, and I don't think I could have been talked out of it.

When I was plotting my relapse, I figured that I would be out for at least a couple months – I wanted to make sure my research was thorough, and that I was absolutely convinced that I couldn't moderate the use of drugs or alcohol – but within 30 minutes of smoking, after the excitement had passed, I became racked with anxiety over the possible consequences of becoming a pothead again. I felt scared about the prospect of stunting the spiritual growth that I had been nurturing, and of threatening my newly established financial stability and the self-confidence and esteem I had developed in recovery. I also felt a deep sense of loss when I thought of saying goodbye to my sponsor and the MA community. When I weighed the vast improvements and value my life had gained in sobriety against the still familiar quagmire my life had felt like when I was using, it became very clear that I much preferred the calm and stability of sobriety to the intense drama of active addiction.

I have recently celebrated 6 weeks of sobriety, and while I do feel some regret about losing 15 months of clean time, I feel like the relapse helped to dispel some lingering doubts I had about whether I really wanted to be sober. I have accepted that sobriety is the best option for me, and I feel a renewed sense of faith in the idea that recovery will provide me with the best life possible. ▲

### **Step Two** by Anonymous.

The first time I approached practicing Step 2, I thought it was telling me to "find and define the one true Omni-potent God of the universe, put him under a microscope, copy his DNA for cloning, and present him to the fellowship for a letter grade". So I went out on a quest: I went to Calvary chapel, the Catholic church, I studied Mormonism and Jehovah's witnesses, Buddhism, science of mind, Muslim, hare Krishna, Indian spiritualism, reincarnation....the list goes on ad-infinity. You know what I discovered? That all the

religions of the world are saying that they are the one true religion and all the other ones are wrong. I did not need that. Today, I need something tangible. Life with hope suggests to a person of my intellect, to keep an open mind on perhaps using the fellowship as a HP. HP is defined as "any positive loving spiritual force" LWH also says "that we don't necessarily have to say yes, but we do have to stop saying no." Ah, a light went on in my head when I read that. It makes good sense. Practicing to keep an open mind on "well, yeah, maybe MA

can help me" It's that simple. Even if I don't believe MA can help me. I can sure believe it has helped others. That's all I need to get Step 2 started. Then, as time rolls on, my mind can become more and more open to the positive, loving force. Everyday my faith grows stronger in that force. If you already have strong faith in an organized religion, then I admire you. You are probably on a higher spiritual plane than I am. But if you have trouble with religion, remember: All you really need is an open mind. ▲



### **Marijuana Anonymous 15<sup>th</sup> Annual World Convention**

February 13-15, 2009  
Seattle, Washington, USA

*Hosted by:  
MA District 4, Western Washington*

Further information and electronic registration: [www.maconvention.org](http://www.maconvention.org)

# marijuana anonymous worldwide

## MA World Services

PO Box 2912, Van Nuys, CA 91404 800-766-6779

www.marijuana-anonymous.org

email: office@marijuana-anonymous.org

## District 1 San Francisco

PO Box 460024 San Francisco, CA 94146 415.522.7373

## District 2 East Bay

PO Box 20484 Oakland, CA 94620 510.287.8873

## District 3 South SF Bay Area

P.O. Box 551 Saratoga, Ca. 95071 408.450.0796

## District 4 Western Washington

PO Box 17323 Seattle, WA 98107 206.548.9034

## District 5 Orange County

1439 W.Chapman Av. PMB#215 Orange, Ca 92868 714.999.9409

## District 6 LA County No.

PO Box 2433 Van Nuys, CA 91404 818.759.9194

## District 7 LA County So.

PO Box 3012 Culver City, CA 90231 323.964.2370

## District 8 New York

PO Box 1244 Cooper Station New York, NY 10276 212.459.4423

## District 9 Santa Cruz

PO Box 3003 Santa Cruz, CA 95063 831.427.4088

## District 10 LA County East

PO Box 94400 Pasadena, CA 91109 626.583.9582

## District 11 Portland

PO Box 2012 Portland, OR 97208-2012 503.221.7007

## District 12 North Bay, CA

PO Box 1001 Petaluma, CA 94952 415.419.3555 707.583.2326

## District 13 MA Online

www.ma-online.org

## District 14 London, England

07940.503438

## District 15 Long Island, NY

www.ma-longisland.org 516-568-5883

## District 16 Melbourne, Australia

24HR. info 0403 945 083 from overseas +61 403 945 083

## District 17 Denmark

info@ma-kbh.dk

For a complete listing of all meetings visit [www.marijuana-anonymous.org](http://www.marijuana-anonymous.org)

## birthdays

Celebrating 482 years of sobriety in this issue!

Want your sober birthday published? Let your Bureau Chief know or see ANL contact information on page 2.

### District 1

Lori B. 1/11/09 7 yrs.

Ron H. 1/3/96 13 yrs.

### District 2

Doug 1/17/01 8 yrs.

Charlie R. 1/26/05 4 yrs.

Eric R. 1/5/93 16 yrs.

David G. 1/23/86 23 yrs.

Ari M. 2/1/06 3 yrs.

Scott A. 2/7/03 6 yrs.

Ana 2/6/07 2 yrs.

MaryAnne C. 2/23/07 2 yrs.

Jeff 2/18/03 6 yrs.

Louis 12/3/99 10 yrs.

John L. 12/15/87 24 yrs.

Becky R. 12/22/93 16 yrs.

Paul R. 12/22/93 16 yrs.

Jay C. 12/23/86 23 yrs.

Robert 1/3

### District 3

Carol G. 1/15/90 19 yrs.

Will N. 1/7/96 13 yrs.

Andy C. 1/21/98 11 yrs.

Mark S. 1/30/02 7 yrs.

Max L. 1/19/07 2 yrs.

### District 5

Hal N. 2/26/91 18 yrs.

Papa Joe 2/01/93 16 yrs.

Peter S. 2/17/99 10 yrs.

Bea 2/04/00 9 yrs.

### District 6

Judy S. 01/16/95 14 yrs.

Scott T. 12/24/05 3 yrs.

Loren N. 01/14/90 19 yrs.

Dave K. 01/15/89 20 yrs.

Andy K. 12/19/07 1 Year!

### District 7

Rob H. 12/30/00 8 yrs.

Hari Simran S 12/29/05 3 yrs.

Mike L.B. 01/10/87 22 yrs.

Alicia 01/05/01 8 yrs.

Jeff M. 12/6/96 12 yrs.

Debra M. 1/3/95 14 yrs.

### District 10

Bill D. 2/9/90 19 yrs.

Michael B. 2/12/08 1 year!

### District 11

Su S. 1/26/05 4 yrs.

Tommy S. 1/12/04 5 yrs.

Rick V. 2/8/03 5 yrs.

Dave C. 2/22/02 7 yrs.

Trisa A. 2/1/96 13 yrs.

Harry H. 2/4/87 22 yrs.