



# SEVENMINUTES

*The Nicotine Anonymous Quarterly*

A FORUM FOR NICOTINE USERS WHO DON'T USE

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SECOND QUARTER, 2000

## TRULY UNIQUE

It seems like a very different world in a place far, far away that I smoked anywhere from a pack and a half to three packs daily - usually, depending on how many feelings I had. My entire existence was permeated with smoking and the planning that went into a given situation was extremely serious. Whether it be a party, camping, wedding, beach, trip, movie, social function, or work. What if I 'got lucky' and was required to spend the night? There were considerations of the utmost importance such as how many 'flakes' that couldn't or wouldn't buy their own would be present to infringe upon my stash, thereby depleting my supply to an unreasonably 'low count' which was unacceptable to me! How far was the nearest civilization if I were, for example, camping? I doubt that the rabbit fur rolled in a eucalyptus leaf would do the trick, therefore, great pains had to be taken not to run out.

These mental gyrations were merely second nature to me after more than thirty-four years of practice. No shirt could be owned without a pocket. The list goes on and on. Not only were cigarettes to be considered but what about fire you might ask? Yes the collection of BIC lighters I had accumulated (ok, ok so I stole a few) was to be envied by the plebeian masses. There were 114 at last count. Obsessive you say? Nay, merely cautious. As we all know, planning is of the utmost importance in life and the cornerstone of a successful endeavor- whatever it may be. I planned to quit almost every birthday (mine and frequently yours), New Year's Eve, most federal holidays, and of course, the most reverent, All Saints Day. My most successful 'quit' (on my own) was four days. Usually, my skin would crawl so bad and sometimes I would explode and implode simultaneously. I had always maintained that if I could quit for thirty days then I could surely quit forever. My sister had smoked for twenty years up to three packs a day, went through a smoking cessation course, and never smoked again. Couldn't stand 'em or the people that used them. What a marvelous miracle, so, off I went and paid my two hundred and fifty-six damn dollars, quit for 33 days, gained twenty pounds (ten in each cheek), and smoked for another twelve years. I was about six years into another twelve-step program, pretty much walking on water, and saving people right and left when I decided to 'just apply the twelve steps to my 'nasty little habit of smoking'. It worked quite well at first but then after about four hours I was ready to shoot up, drink, and randomly kill people.



Since then, I have religiously gone to Nicotine Anonymous for a little over eight years, worked the steps every single day, taken the action on a daily basis, and not smoked. The promises have indeed come true for me and the miracles continue to happen. In fact, I expect them, look for them, and thank God for them as they happen. Of course, life still happens and I get sideways sometimes and not quite as close to center as I would like but it is okay, and most of the time it is fantastic and I am extremely grateful. It is the most difficult thing I am ever accomplishing, and, by far, the most rewarding. For about the first nine months I was certain that I would die wanting a cigarette and that I am truly unique. But now I seldom ever even think of them and, yes, I am truly unique.

Thank you-

*Chris M., Fountain Valley, CA*



## Our Preamble

Nicotine Anonymous is a fellowship of men and women helping each other to live our lives free of nicotine. We share our experience, strength and hope with each other so that we may be free from this powerful addiction. The only requirement for membership is the desire to stop using nicotine. There are no dues or fees for Nicotine Anonymous membership; we are self supporting through our own contributions. Nicotine Anonymous is not allied with any sect, denomination, political entity, organization or institution; does not engage in any controversy, neither endorses nor opposes any cause. Our primary purpose is to offer support to those who are trying to gain freedom from nicotine.

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## THE TWELVE STEPS

1. We admitted we were powerless over nicotine--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 Him.
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 Him 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 Him, praying only for knowledge of His will for us and the power to carry it out.
12. Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these steps, we tried to carry this message to other nicotine users and to practice these principles in all our affairs.

### The Twelve Steps of Alcoholics Anonymous

1. We admitted we were powerless over alcohol--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 Him. 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 Him 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 Him, praying only for knowledge of His will for us and the power to carry it out. 12. Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these steps, we tried to carry this message to other alcoholics and to practice these principles in all our affairs.

*The Twelve Steps reprinted and adapted here with the permission of Alcoholics Anonymous World Services, Inc. Permission to reprint and adapt the Twelve Steps does not mean that A.A. is affiliated with this program. A.A. is a program of recovery from alcoholism - use of the Twelve Steps in connection with programs and activities which are patterned after A.A., but which address other problems, does not imply otherwise. The original Twelve Steps of Alcoholics Anonymous are reprinted above.*



## NEWS FROM NAWSO



At the time of this writing, three months remain until we meet in Scottsdale, Arizona for World Services Conference XV. The board has just completed its final full-length meeting prior to the conference where we were joined by *Kent B.*, Conference XV Chair, to work out preliminary plans for our annual meeting. What a gift it was to get a brief reprieve from the frigid New York weather and join my friends and fellow officers in sunny, southern California. What follows is a brief summary of our activities and conference plans which will be finalized during our March teleconference and presented to the entire membership in Scottsdale.

- our financial condition continues to be secure. There has been a slight increase in literature sales. However, donations are down. Please help spread the word among your groups and intergroups that World Services is dependent on contributions to continue to carry the message.
- the annual mailing to groups has helped us to get feedback from the membership on the issue of adopting an official abbreviation for the fellowship. Thanks to all of you who responded to this survey.
- efforts to institute a toll-free number continue. *Scott J.*, chair-elect, will be able to present the status of this outreach tool at the conference.
- GMK Remote Office Management which is hired by the fellowship to handle our secretarial and administrative functions is now able to accept credit card orders for literature by fax and regular mail. Please look for this new option on our revised literature order form. We are hopeful that this will expedite orders of our books, pamphlets and *SevenMinutes* subscriptions for all of our members and especially our members overseas.
- if you are the World Services contact person for your home group and/or intergroup, you may have noticed a new cover letter asking you to confirm your meeting. This is one of two new ways we are attempting to more accurately track the status of our meetings. Please be sure to send in the self-addressed flier so we can verify that the meeting still exists and note any changes that may have occurred.
- in addition to the question of whether we should adopt an abbreviation, conference workshops will also include:
  - a) an opportunity for conference attendees to give feedback on proposed revisions to the existing pamphlet "Facing the Fatal Attraction." Last year, the board proposed the elimination of this piece of literature. Those in attendance were quite vocal about the need for this pamphlet and overwhelmingly requested it be updated. *Checko M.* and *Rob F.* have offered a new version which we are seeking direction on from the conference. We will also have a chance to vote on proposed revisions to "Introducing Nicotine Anonymous," "To the Newcomer and Sponsorship," and "Slogans."
  - b) a preview of the work being done by a committee of servants helping to revise and expand *Nicotine Anonymous: the Book*. This group, coordinated by *Robin L.* will be seeking suggestions on style and tense from our members. *John O.* will have an update for us on the traditions writing committee which is providing us with a much-awaited long form of the traditions as they apply to our fellowship.
  - c) a chance to offer feedback on a proposed piece of literature to clarify the question of "When Abstinence Begins."
  - d) a discussion on the subject of electronic meetings as we attempt to navigate the murky waters of the internet while seeking to balance this forum with our traditions.
  - e) an opportunity to sign up for a service position on the World Services level. We are hoping to attract new servants to fill the many available positions within the fellowship.

This is an excellent time to consider a nomination to the board. If you would like to become an officer or if you know someone who might, please speak up! I would be happy to tell you how serving on this board has enhanced my personal and spiritual growth. Similarly, please let me know if your intergroup is interested in hosting Conference XVII. We will be seeking bids for the year 2002.

My thanks to my fellow officers, three of whom will be retiring from the board at the conclusion of the conference. On behalf of the board and our members, our sincere appreciation to *John N.*, emeritus treasurer, *Cat H.*, emeritus secretary, and *John O.*, emeritus chair for your three years of service on the board and for your continued power of example.

Submitted on behalf of the entire board with deepest gratitude,

*Martha K.* Martha K., 19 Central Avenue, East Quogue, New York 11942 (631) 653-3483 mof316@peconic.net

In keeping with our 12th Tradition, please refrain from taking pictures during any conference function. Please also note that the entire conference will be audiotaped.



## WHAT I'VE LEARNED

I had tried EVERYTHING to quit smoking, because I had a pre-cancerous condition in my vocal cords. The best I could do was get down to two cigs a day, carrying a pair of scissors with me, so I could have a puff or two and then cut the end off. This was torture, for all I could think about was when I could light up and have another puff.

To make a long story short, a friend of mine called me up and asked if I wanted to help her start a Smokers Anonymous meeting. We both belonged to AA, and knew the Steps worked, so I said YES.

I really didn't think I could stop, but I changed my thinking! Cue #1. I read "All is possible to him who believes" from Mark 9:23 and it told me to believe I could, so I changed my thinking, and began to think maybe I could really become a non-smoker.

I began to stop romancing the cigarette! Cue #2. Instead of saying "Poor Me, I can't smoke any more." I said, "Look at me I'm not a slave to that monster anymore!"

And fast, and most important tip is I don't negotiate a cigarette! Cue #3. I can smoke anytime I want to (this is to satisfy my defiance) but I must be honest with myself, and go buy a carton, because I was never a one puff, or one pack a day smoker. I was a two pack a day smoker, therefore I might as well stock up.

These are just some of the things I learned while attending the meetings. This was in 1988. I smoked for 50 years! I've been smoke-free as of July 4th 1999 for 11 years! Thank God and thank the 12 Steps. Thank all the people who keep coming back to share their experience, strength and hope with those who are still suffering. I still go to MY Nicotine Anonymous meeting in Newbury Park, CA every Monday night at 7 p.m.

## SHARING EXPERIENCE, STRENGTH & HOPE

*Here is a letter from a member of our group to a struggling fellow in the bush (same as in the sticks):*

*So, the main thing, the all important thing, is to stop using tobacco. As they say, "Don't smoke . . . even if your ass falls off!"*

*I've been going to the Nicotine Anonymous meeting for quite some time now. Sometimes there would be only two of us at the meetings, sometimes there would be a lot more. But it is always good to share the pain and the agony with others in the same boat.*

*That first 30-60-90 days of not smoking was utter terror. It was like my brain was out on the highway with big logging trucks rolling over top of it day and night.*

*But quitting can be done. I smoked for almost forty years, the last ten or fifteen at 3 - 4 packs a day. With some resolve, a lot of anguish, reading the Nicotine Anonymous literature and the support of others, I've been off the weed for some time now. And does it ever feel better, great in fact, to be off that horrible junk! It's like the difference between being alive or one of the walking dead.*

*I haven't been to your city since the summer of '70, but I remember it as a very nice place, with a lot of good people. I don't know how easy it would be to get a regular group of Nicotine Anonymous types together there, though. But even getting together with one or two others, just once in a while, could be a big help.*

*And a lot of times when I was first quitting, I spent many moments reading and rereading and rereading . . . many times . . . some of the pamphlets. A few of them I could just about repeat back verbatim, I'm sure. So you could give that a try too.*

*Some of our members have computers and e-mail. I'm sure they would like to hear from you and find out how it is going. Golly knows that quitting smoking is one of the toughest things (a Freudian slip?) that I ever did in my life. But for every ounce of effort and pain that went into quitting, I've been repaid a thousand times over, that's for certain.*

*You can quit. Just keep trying. And know that you are in our thoughts and prayers.*

*Anonymous, Anchorage, AK*

Sincerely,  
Lois R, Newbury Park, CA





## Asking Anonymously Getting Word Out

Elizabeth of the Stow group in Ohio asks how the other groups provide coverage to the general public about their group meetings. We polled some people via e-mail to see what they had to say. Let us know what you think. You can reply directly to the editor, Kim J., at [jannati@juno.com](mailto:jannati@juno.com) or write this publication: P.O. Box 126338 Harrisburg, PA 17112-6338, [info@nicotine-anonymous.org](mailto:info@nicotine-anonymous.org). Here is what we've received:

*I am running the meeting in the Putnam Hospital in Carmel, N.Y. and do my own outreach for my area. I contacted all of the local newspapers and asked them to run a public service announcement in their "What's Going On" sections (newspapers don't charge for public service announcements). I then contacted the Department of Health for our county and faxed over the info about the meeting. I also contacted and still get referrals from the following sources: 1. The respiratory departments of local hospital - 2. Dentist's offices in the area 3. The American Cancer Society (our local chapter). 4. The American Lung Association (our local chapter). 5. The American Heart Association (local chapter). 6. Committee for a Tobacco Free N.Y. (they listed our meeting in their newsletter). I put up flyers at elevator banks in the local hospitals. I put flyers in our local churches, supermarkets, store fronts, drug stores etc. In other words - I put flyers wherever I went shopping. I carry them around with me and give them out - I also put one in the local post office. I am still working on getting the flyers posted in the local middle school and high schools - you need to go through the Board of Ed Supervisor to get this done or the principal of the school. If I have any more ideas - I will let you know.*

*Diane D., Carmel, NY*

*At every meeting we put out lists with all of our meetings on it. We also put up envelopes holding our meeting lists. On the envelopes it says, "Do you want to stop smoking? All are welcome. Nicotine Anonymous meeting lists" We put these up at meeting places where other 12 Step groups meet. When we did this at the 14th Street Workshop, it was almost impossible to keep the envelope filled. It became quite a project to keep the envelopes filled at the different places. It was exciting when a newcomer would say they'd heard about us from picking up a meeting list at the Workshop!*

*Pat B., New York City, NY*



### **The Gift in The Struggle**

ONE DAY A MAN SAW A BUTTERFLY,  
SHUDDERING ON THE SIDEWALK, LOCKED  
IN A SEEMINGLY HOPELESS STRUGGLE TO  
FREE ITSELF FROM ITS NOW USELESS  
COCOON.

FEELING pity, HE TOOK A POCKET KNIFE,  
CAREFULLY CUT AWAY THE COCOON  
AND SET THE BUTTERFLY FREE. TO HIS DISMAY, IT LAY  
ON THE SIDEWALK, CONVULSED WEAKLY FOR AWHILE  
AND DIED.

A BIOLOGIST LATER TOLD HIM. "THAT WAS THE WORST THING YOU  
COULD HAVE DONE! A BUTTERFLY NEEDS THAT STRUGGLE TO DEVELOP  
THE MUSCLES TO FLY. BY ROBBING HIM OF THE STRUGGLE, YOU  
MADE HIM TO WEAK TO LIVE".



## MY STORY

By the Grace of God, I have not had a cigarette since September 18, 1996. The first time a cigarette graced my lips I was eight years old. My fifteen year old cousin would give her brothers and me "smoking lessons" each night after dinner. This went on for about six months until I moved back with my mother. Cigarettes had not become an addiction to me at that time.

When I was fourteen, I started to smoke again with my peers in the back of the school bus. This is when I learned how to effectively inhale. Pretty soon, just smoking on the bus was not enough. I started to smoke in the bathroom at my foster home. It wasn't long before I got caught and my life started to get unmanagable. I got grounded. When I was fifteen, I went to another foster home and got permission to smoke, but I had to buy my own. It wasn't long before I started to steal money from my foster sister's piggy bank and cigarettes from my foster father's pack. Anything to feed the addiction! After a few months, I found myself in another foster home, where my privilege to smoke was revoked because I burned the furniture with an unattended cigarette. Now, I had to sneak to smoke. I got caught smoking with the upstairs window open and dropping the butts on the ground below. Again, I got grounded.

Moving right along, I was sent to another foster home where, again, I got permission to smoke. I did stop smoking on my own for about three months. Then, one day, the urge came back and I gave in to it. Now I started to smoke routinely. I quit school and got a job so I could afford my nicotine addiction. I got married and had a beautiful baby girl. I can remember smoking a cigarette while feeding her.

At twenty-one, I made a feeble attempt to quit smoking which lasted three days. I ended up in a heap on the living room floor, crying and lighting up a cigarette. I realized then, that I could not stop smoking. I did not even try again for years. When I was in nursing school, I got a prescription for the nicotine gum. This is what I would do; I would get up in the morning and smoke until it was time to leave for school. I would leave my cigarettes home and chew the gum all day during clinicals. When in the operating room, one cannot leave for a cigarette break. Then, I would come home and "reward" myself with smoking all evening. The insanity of it all!

As we started to learn more about the harmful effects of cigarettes and smoking was being banned from more places, I became more selfish and self-centered in my

smoking, downright belligerent at times. I would say, "When you start buying my cigarettes, then you can tell me when and where to smoke them." If someone complained about my smoking, I would blow smoke in their direction! No thought of how someone else might feel. Thinking back on all the people that had to breathe my second-hand smoke, I had a long list during my 8th Step.

Another time in 1986 I made an attempt to stop smoking. I got another gum prescription and did rather well for most of the day, until 9:00pm. I was rummaging in my purse and found an unopened pack of cigarettes. I was powerless! That pack was opened with a lit cigarette in my mouth so fast that I don't even remember lighting it. I was off and running again!

In 1994, the patch came out, so I thought I would give it a try. My S.O. (Significant Other) at the time was suppose to quit with me. I did not smoke for eight days. Whenever I could not find my S.O., he would be in the garage, smoking. (He died last November of lung cancer that spread to his brain. He did stop smoking three months before the cancer was diagnosed, but it was too late for him.) On the 8th day of not smoking, I got angry. (I was going to show him!) I ripped off my patch, got dressed at midnight and drove to the convenience store for a pack of cigarettes. The whole time, I was telling myself that I would smoke a few and put the patch back on in the morning. Huh! It took another two years before I would attempt to stop again.

After all these years of smoking (I was up to three packs of menthols a day) it started to take its toll on my health. Physical exercise left me breathless. It was a chore to climb a flight of stairs. Heaven help me if I caught a cold. It would settle in my lungs, sometimes turning into bronchitis. I would lose a few days work. The cough would linger, sometimes keeping me awake all night. I would light a cigarette to stop the coughing, and it worked! Pure insanity! Sometimes, I would cough so hard that I would vomit! The coughing spells would always take place when I was in a room full of people. I would have to excuse myself. It was so embarrassing! The addiction had me...I could not stop. I would picture myself in my coffin face up with a cigarette hanging out of my mouth. As smoking became less tolerable in public places, I started to let cigarettes dictate where I would go and what I would do. I would not patronize a non-smoking restaurant. I would not go to the movies. If I had to be in a building that did not allow smoking, I would case the



joint for the nearest exit where I could slip out for a quick smoke. I remember, one time, I was working short-staffed at the hospital and could not get outside for a smoke. I locked myself in the visitors' bathroom and smoked. I could have lost my job, but I did not care at that point. I had to feed my addiction. My grandson has asthma. I was put out because my son refused to let me smoke in his new car with my grandson inside. How selfish of me!! The list goes on and on. I was clueless! I did not realize how my smoking affected others.

The summer of 1996, I started to pray for the desire to stop smoking. Prior to this, I had taken six months to get off caffeine. One of my nursing instructors told me she had quit smoking using hypnotism. The hypnotist told her to stop using caffeine, as caffeine wires us up and nicotine mellows us out. Makes sense to me. So, I was caffeine free, praying for the desire to stop smoking. The next thing I know, I am trotting into Walmart getting a box of patches. I was visiting in New England for the summer at that time. At the end of the summer, I took my box of patches and brought them back to Florida with me. They sat on my TV gathering dust. I continued to pray for the desire, but nothing was happening. Then, it dawned on me. I needed to pray for the willingness to quit smoking. Within a week, I got angry at myself for not being able to get started, so I set my coffee cup on the table with a nicotine patch. My cigarettes went to bed with me. An ashtray adorned the headboard of my bed. I smoked one and went to sleep. Yes, I was hard core and smoked in bed. My cravings would wake me up in the middle of the night and I would have to smoke before I could get back to sleep. I also kept an ashtray outside of the shower and would reach out with a wet hand to take a puff while I was taking a shower. When I woke up in the morning, I grabbed my cigarettes, made it to the kitchen, poured myself a cup of decaf coffee and looked from my cigarettes to the patch. This was decision time! I took a deep breath, opened the patch and slapped it on my body. I knew this was the beginning. No smoking with the patch on. I threw my cigarettes in the kitchen drawer, so I wouldn't have to look at them, but I knew they were there. Just in case. I did throw them away two weeks later.

The first day went by with saying the Serenity Prayer a jillion times and rubbing the patch every five minutes, but I did not smoke. The patch did take the worst of the edge off, for me. Thinking back, a big part of not trying was the fear of failure. This time, I had my Higher Power on my side. When 32 days were past and I had not smoked, I attended my first Nicotine Anonymous meeting. Pride made me wait until I thought I could be successful with quitting. From that first meeting, I was at home. Now, it is over three years and not smoking is the best gift I ever

gave myself. If I had to use one word to describe how it feels I would have to say "FREEDOM". I am powerless over nicotine and my life was unmanagable.

When I was smober sixty days, I traded in my convertible for a brand new Mustang. I could not get the stink of cigarettes out of the convertible. So, my cigarette money went to making car payments. Today, I no longer cough. I can climb two flights of stairs without getting winded. I can sit through a whole movie without having to go outside for a "fix" and don't have to miss the best part. My clothes and hair no longer smell. My clothes do not have burn holes in them anymore. I can go into any building and stay as long as I want to without having to leave for a smoke. I can accept invitations where there is no smoking allowed. I smell better and food sure tastes better. Yes, I did gain weight, but now there is just more of me to love. When I gave up nicotine, I discovered I have an addiction to carbohydrates. One day at a time with that, too. I did lose all the weight, but stopped being vigilant and gained most of it back. The roller-coaster feelings were hard to deal with, but the people in Nicotine Anonymous understood what I was going through. They were very supportive and told me I was allowed to be crazy for a year.

In closing, I just wanted to share something that happened to me. Being smober a little over two years, I decided it was time to buy a computer. I got the whole thing home in my car, carried it inside, including a printer. Read all the instructions and proceeded to put it together. I worked so hard for over two hours working on placing all the wires where they were suppose to go and taking all the pieces out of the boxes. All of a sudden, I got this overwhelming urge for a cigarette! Then, it dawned on me. Whenever I was working hard, I would have to take a cigarette break. This was my reward for all that hard work.

Thanks to Nicotine Anonymous, I was able to understand what was going on and did not have to act on it. I let the thought entertain me for a moment, I applauded it and let it go. I did not have to smoke. I am a miracle! You can do it, too!

Happy, Joyous & Free  
Nancy W., Derry, NH





**NICOTINE ANONYMOUS  
WORLD SERVICES**

**INCOME STATEMENT Jan - Dec '99**

Ordinary Income/Expense		
Income		
	Donations	7,622.03
	Literature Sales	37,903.11
	Shipping & Handling	2,952.06
	Conference Profit	3,140.44
	<b>Total Income</b>	<b>51,617.64</b>
Cost of Goods Sold		
	COGS	10,658.35
	Fulfillment	2,270.49
	Shipping	3,520.99
	<b>Total COGS</b>	<b>16,449.83</b>
	<b>Gross Profit</b>	<b>35,167.81</b>
Expense		
	Bank Service Charges	226.29
	Legal and Professional	221.00
	Licenses and Permits	30.00
	Miscellaneous	0.00
	Office	383.48
	Postage and Delivery	1,514.35
	Printing and Reproduction	323.21
	Projects	2,973.28
	Rent	0.00
	Secretarial Service	6,596.52
	Taxes	539.81
	Telephone	685.21
	Travel & Mtg Exp-Board	6,288.73
	<b>Total Expense</b>	<b>19,781.88</b>
	<b>Net Ordinary Income</b>	<b>15,385.93</b>
	Other Income/Expense	
	Other Income	
	Interest Income	352.03
	Total Other Income	352.03
	Net Other Income	352.03
	<b>Excess of Income Over Expenditures</b>	<b>15,737.96</b>

**BALANCE SHEET As of Dec 31, '99**

<b>ASSETS</b>		
Current Assets		
	Checking/Savings	
	Wells Fargo Checking	5,653.94
	Fulton	10,919.46
	Certificate of Deposit	20,000.00
	<b>Total Checking/Savings</b>	<b>36,573.40</b>
	Other Current Assets	
	Advance to Conference	750.00
	Inventory Asset	9,340.90
	Prepaid Expenses	665.24
	<b>Total Other Current Assets</b>	<b>10,756.14</b>
	<b>Total Current Assets</b>	<b>47,329.54</b>
	<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>	<b>\$47,329.54</b>
<b>LIABILITIES &amp; EQUITY</b>		
Current Liabilities		
	Accounts Payable	3,943.40
	Sales Tax Payable	713.71
	<b>Total Current Liabilities</b>	<b>4,657.11</b>
	Total Liabilities	4,657.11
	Equity	
	Unrestricted Net Assets	26,934.47
	Current Year Excess	15,737.96
	<b>Total Equity</b>	<b>42,672.43</b>
	<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES &amp; EQUITY</b>	<b>\$47,329.54</b>

**CELEBRATING  
ONE YEAR!**



*Hello friends in Nicotine Anonymous!*

*This is just a happy note to inform you that the Spanish e-mail group celebrated it's first anniversary on January 12th !*

*The group started with six people from five countries. We had received a lot of e-mails coming from many spanish speaking countries, looking for help and meetings in areas in which there were no "live" groups.*

*Now we are 35 members from Uruguay, Brazil, Peru, Colombia, Venezuela, Mexico, Puerto Rico, USA and Spain. We still have as our primary purpose to help each other to live without nicotine, and to stimulate and help to establish "live" groups where and when it would be possible.*

*We from Nicanon want to thank all of you servants for your help in reaching out!*

*Big hugs -  
Pierre*

*P.S. As for other milestones, on April 11th the Portuguese e-mail group, NICAPORT, celebrates it's first anniversary. The group started with two Brazilian member's of the Spanish group, and have now 40 members from Brazil and Portugal. In Brazil, Nicaport sponsored two new "live" groups. As for the French group, it's first anniversary will be June 11th.*



## ***BIG NEWS FROM THE BIG STATE: Nicotine Anonymous North Texas***

When called to serve we ought not decline. It is a worthy suggestion, which I have not always followed. But when our World Chair asks for a few words on local happenings for *SevenMinutes*, I happily report. My observations here are not necessarily as a direct participant, being mostly on the sidelines these days. It does make sense to use *SevenMinutes* to share our local experiences, and since those closely involved are sometimes reluctant, I am delighted to share some of our news.

The state of NAINT (Nicotine Anonymous Intergroup North Texas) is as good as it has ever been. After a wonderful annual Holiday Party, meetings here saw a good January influx. Perhaps millennium fever contributed to the number of quitting resolutions, made and inevitably broken. Which sometimes, blessedly, results in a humble walk to a Nicotine Anonymous door. I am hoping your group experienced new lifeblood this year too.

Service abounds. One great thing about hanging around a group long enough is eventually together we find what our best gifts are. Each of us has unique talents for service. All of us can let others know we exist. Two of our folks, *Donna E.* and *Judy B.* got the word to thousands through local TV. It immediately generated calls to our hotline from but a fraction of those who learned we exist. And last month Nicotine Anonymous was mentioned in another cessation spot, because one gal saw a preview and called the station. That piece, mentioning Nicotine Anonymous, got broad coverage in this area. These things did not happen because of a Getting The Word Out Committee. It was hearing an opportunity, and taking a minute to let media friends know we exist. They will crawl over each other to inform your community because it is so newsworthy and important.

Something that often comes up is how to start a new meeting. Few go for very long. But our Lone Star still shining brightly in Richardson, Texas is the "RichLife Group". To know the keys to successful new meetings, start with my two dear friends, *John A.* and *Ann L.* Recently, four of our original eight step-study gathered with twenty-five others at RichLife's regular Tuesday night and picked up six-year chips. John and Ann have gotten their last five years at *their* meeting. Now, John and Ann would never call it "*their*" meeting. They faithfully arrive early, make coffee, get the AC/heat on, arrange tables, lay out literature, hang up Steps, encourage others to chair, form step-studies, meet with the church-landlord, call celebrants for birthday parties, buy supplies, pay bills and stay late to put everything back as the church likes it. For over five years, all that and sharing their experience, strength and hope, too. They will talk about help from a handful who committed a few months in the beginning, some who stayed for the first, small meetings, and the few precious newcomers. Then there were more and more, until it is one of the strongest meetings in this fellowship. So if you really want to know, as John and Ann what it takes to make a new meeting go - for almost six years now.

Y'all come join us for **GRATITUDE AT GRAPEVINE PICNIC, May 13, 2000.** Led by our intergroup Chair, *Fred H.*, NAINT has lined up a wonderful time of fellowship, food, meetings and meditation with basketball, volleyball, hiking, swimming and more. We hope to see new fellows there too; some who may presently join us on the high road to a new freedom! See you in Scottsdale, for *Giving it away In Y2K.*

*Glenn S., Dallas, TX*

### **GRATITUDE AT GRAPEVINE PICNIC**

sponsored by

*Nicotine Anonymous Intergroup of  
North Texas (NAINT)*

May 13, 2000

9 a.m. - 6 p.m.

A day of fun, food, and fellowship

For more information, contact the  
NAINT hotline - 214-327-1633

*We hope to see you there!*



## MY FRIEND NIC

Susan here, Nicotine Addict, I know what ya mean about not wanting to quit, I came here a-kicking and screaming. For 40+ years nicotine was my closest friend, he woke me up in the morning, helped me out when something stressful, happy, sad or any of the feelings we feel during our life would happen to me. Or at night when I would wake up to go to the bathroom he would keep me company. He suppressed my appetite and sped up my metabolism, what a guy. Me and Nic had other friends also. They went by the names of Booze and Drugs. I had to give up Booze and Drugs almost 16 years ago because for some reason my body and mind started to deteriorate. I missed them terribly and it was so hard not to get in my car and go see them, but I still had Nic. Nic and I got through that with the help of Alcoholics Anonymous and Narcotics Anonymous.

Then, about 14 years ago my lungs started to fall apart. Every year I would miss more and more work due to colds and bronchitis. Half the time I was so hoarse people had a hard time understanding what I was saying. Then it got bad. I was being rushed to the hospital because I could not breathe, and about 7 years ago I got an infection in my lungs that antibiotics would not clear up. I was very sick for over a year and after they got the infection cleared up and had done a whole bunch of tests, I was told that my lungs were bad and that I had emphysema and allergic asthma. I was put on steroids, given a little machine that I used four times a day and all kinds of inhalers. Well, me and Nic got through that just fine. Whew! Thank God for that little machine and all those puffers because now it was a little bit easier for me to play with my friend Nic. I still had to be rushed to the emergency room and take antibiotics but me and Nic got through that. Hey, that was what all that medicine was for, right? So me and Nic could be together. Yea, all the doctors kept bugging me about smoking but I thought, 'hey! these guys are just against the tobacco companies and they do not understand that I had to give up my other two best friends Booze and Drugs. If they did they would not keep on bugging me. God knows I have been through enough just giving them up.'

Well that is how I was thinking a year ago. Now it has been almost over a year since I put Nic out of my life and I can see just how pathetic and powerless I was. Talk about unmanageable.

But for the grace of God  
*Susan K.*  
*Hull, GA*

## LIVING FREE IN LONDON



Hi, I am Rita and I am a nicotine addict. Today I had taken part in a so-called quiet day, guided prayer and meditation, just the right thing for me to get centered and to be in contact with my Higher Power. For some reason I didn't get as centered as I wanted - hmm. But what is really wonderful: in my smoking times I had to sneak out from meetings like this to light a fag (cigarette). I would feel guilty, would inhale the nicotine very fast, would feel bad and unworthy to be there, would feel embarrassed because of the smell when I would return to the others and would desperately wish that I could stop.

That was how it has been for a very long time. Not only experiences like this. I remember the Sundays when I had to work at home and went out - I hated the smell after ten years of smoking and went often on my balcony for smoking - on my balcony every hour to have a cigarette to feel ashamed, because of the neighbors and my poor willpower - bla bla bla.

I could go on about this for a long time but it is already boring me. Thank God and thanks to the fellowship of Nicotine Anonymous that I stopped smoking some time ago. I had cravings. I had a very bad temper, still having them from time to time. I felt completely lost. I felt hugely relieved and so much more healthy due to the meetings and service. I didn't give in, which was due to God. Just for today - because I don't know what will be tomorrow. I am so grateful not to be in the clutches of this disease anymore that literally took away my life by taking my breath.

I still would like to have a cigarette sometimes - only one - but I know that I would have to have more than one - another one and another one and another one and start all the agony again. I do hope and pray that by working the steps one day at a time, be in contact with God and my fellows, tell the truth about me and try to accept myself, I don't have to pick up a cigarette again. I do not feel great today and therefore it is very important to me to remind myself what I have gotten through the program and that this is a spiritual program, which means that I am not alone. And the great thing about not feeling great is that I do not want to pick up any substance right now and that I haven't all day long.

Take care,  
yours in recovery  
*Rita, London, England*



# ANNOUNCEMENTS & NEWS

Southern California Intergroup invites you to:  
**"IMPROVING YOUR CONSCIOUS  
CONTACT"**

11th Step Retreat

June 10, 9 a.m. - 5 p.m.

\$25 - includes lunch

Mary & Joseph Retreat Center

5300 Crest Road

Rancho Palos Verdes, CA

For more information or to register, contact George,  
714-892-9001

## **REPORT FROM THE SECAD CONFERENCE**

I'm *Martha M.* from Atlanta, a.k.a. white rabbit, frequently also lost in cyberspace. Anyway, I pretty much coordinated the stuff for SECAD (Southeastern Conference for Alcohol and Drugs Conference)\* last month in Atlanta. I'm also the intergroup representative from the Smyrna-Tillman Nicotine Anonymous group and gratefully smober nearly nine years now. So - SECAD really was an experience.

About 1100 in attendance from all over the world, all alcohol and drug treatment experts and many in recovery themselves. I was astounded how many people had never heard of Nicotine Anonymous. I think we did good carrying the message to let as many as possible know we exist and that, yes, in fact, the 12 Steps do work regarding nicotine addiction.

About 15 people from the Atlanta area worked together to get everything ready and participated in both the booth coverage and the Nicotine Anonymous meeting the first night. *Robin L.* chaired the meeting, and it was great. Five people picked up desire chips -one each from South Carolina, Florida, Georgia, Ohio, and Indiana. It was really cool. We also gave starter packets to guys from Canada and New Zealand. We sold the books NAWSO donated (thank you, thank you, thank you), and gave out tons of the pamphlets, meeting schedules, order blanks, and world directories. We donated about \$600 (excluding WSO's \$100 worth of books), so it was not cheap, but we all really felt like it was for an excellent cause (obviously) and, in retrospect, well worth it! We've got some pamphlets left, so hopefully that will help our intergroup pay our expenses the next couple months, and with further donations/collections, be able to make a contribution back to WSO. Again, thanks to

everyone for your all's (I'm from the south, remember) help and support.

\* *recently they've started calling it an International Conference for Alcohol and Drug Professionals, since people come from all over. I guess ICADEP is too confusing so they still refer to it as SECAD, since that's the acronym everyone (i.e. treatment professionals) is familiar with.*

**Chicagoland Intergroup Nicotine Anonymous  
(C.I.N.A.)**

invites you to:

## **WORKIN' THE JOURNEY III**

Weekend Retreat

August 18 - 20, 2000

St. Benedict's Abbey Retreat Center

Bennet Lake, Wisconsin

To help you on your JOURNEY to recovery, please join us for a fun weekend of learning and support for anyone who desires to stop using nicotine and their spouse/companion Package includes: lodging and meals (dinner on Friday, three meals on Saturday, two meals on Sunday) workshops, seminars and all activities

Price: \$125.00 per person

Contact: Cat H. 773-205-7105

Brent F. 847-806-6611

Please send your payment for \$125 with your name, address, city, state and telephone number to:

CINA Weekend Retreat

P.O. Box 784

Northbrook, IL 60065

Make checks payable to CINA. Payment must be received by August 1, 2000

## **LITERATURE ORDERS AVAILABLE BY CREDIT CARD**

In addition to ordering books, pamphlets and SevenMinutes by check or money order, you may now purchase our literature by credit card. Look for ordering information on an updated literature order form which you may then fax or mail to Nicotine Anonymous World Services. We are hopeful that this will make it easier for our members to place orders and will reduce the costs for those who order from outside the United States. For further information, please contact *Martha K.* at 631-653-3483 or e-mail: mof316@peconic.net