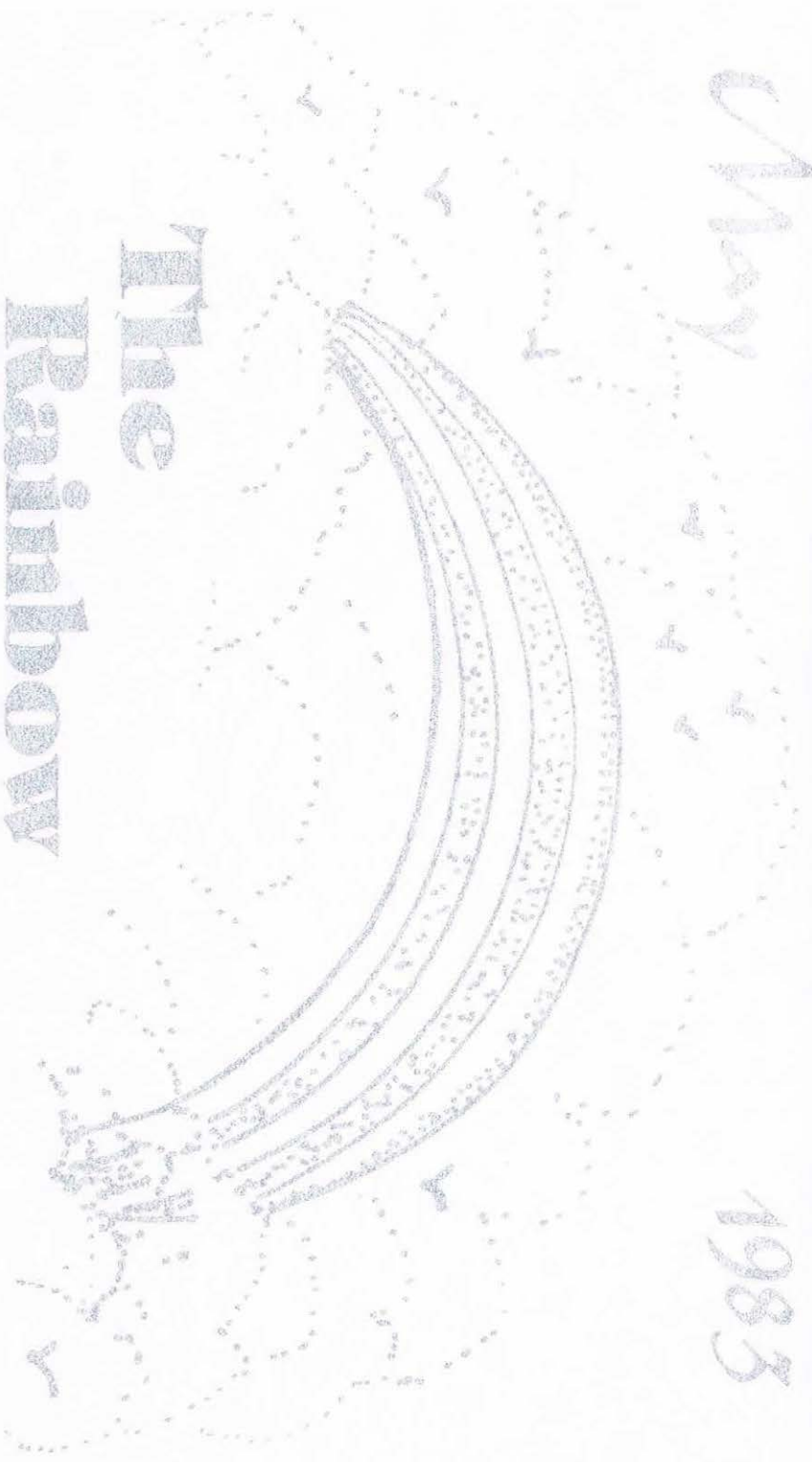


May

1983



# The Rainbow Connection



# The Rainbow Connection

" ... caring and sharing the N.A. way ... "

VOLUME FIVE    NUMBER THREE    MAY 1983

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Marietta ASC.

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THE GIFT

In my journey of recovery at times I have found the path to be real ruff and rocky and at other times smooth and easy. In staying clean I have always found growth in this path.

I feel I have been led into service to N.A. here in the deep South area where, on the average, the communities are small and isolated. The N.A. Fellowship is also small and isolated as well; but it's growing fast. (One group trying to form is in a town so small it doesn't have a name - it goes by it's map location, B-12!)

Yeah, it's a lot of work and real tuff but there are many rewards. A passage I read somewhere really fits the service work down here: "What some men call adversities will be your lot..." This is very true in my experiences.

Meeting these adversities and not quitting but surrendering has always strengthened my personal recovery. Many times I have heard and said myself, "The service work's gonna get me loaded" or "Don't get involved in service, you're not clean long enough; you need to work on your personal recovery" and on and on. For me to hold on to attitudes such as those would be detrimental to my recovery. These cop-outs will creep into my daily life as well. (i.e., don't get involved with other services in my life such as work, transportation, etc. because my personal program isn't strong enough.) ridiculous but inevitably true.

By embracing the Fellowship (surrender) of N.A. today and dedicating a part of my life to carrying the message of recovery to the addict (service) my personal growth has

become more exciting and fulfilling.

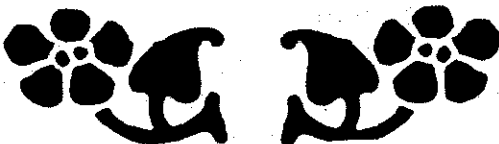
This is the gift that service (on many levels - from sponsor on) to N.A. has given me ten-fold the effort I have put out, service has given back.

It does seem to be especially tough for service work in a small community like I live in. To meet these adversities and the like helps me to remember to keep my "coat of armour" or in other words - don't let anything mess with my clean time. It seems through service, this "coat of armour" grows stronger; and the gift shines brighter.

I could very well, I'm sure, stay clean through other ways such as expensive psychs or rehabs where I could be told what, how, and where to pee. Or I could join other programs that are easier and softer. But today, I choose N.A. where it's tough and hard at times; where things tend to be stark and real (bizarre and strange at times). But growth is strong in the Fellowship of N.A. and the gift is revealed to me this way because it was somewhat hidden by my fears of what this service was all about at first.

Two things I strive to keep in my mind in order for the gift of service to be fulfilled. To keep in mind that we are not alone and that through any service I am trying to carry the message of N.A. recovery to the still suffering addict. We keep what we have by giving it away. It seems the more I give, the more this gift is given to me.

Anonymi - Alabama



... COME BACK- WE LOVE YOU ...

In recovery from my addiction as a member of Narcotics Anonymous, I have had to see a lot of addicts to whom I feel very close go back out and use. Some, I now realize, are not addicts. They just somehow wound up in the program. The fact that they can doesn't bother me unless I start to forget that I can't. The addicts who go out know a pain that is still very real to me. People say that even the excruciating agony of childbearing fades with time. I guess I felt so totally inadequate and uncomfortable for so long that the memory is vivid, even today. I know what a miracle my own recovery is today.

Loved ones whom I have know on this program teach me a lot of things - those who relapse included. I am still an addict and mu life is less managed by me than ever before. Everything I hear about relapses makes me grateful to be a recovering addict. Even when I slip into ingratitude, the simple beauty of being clean just for today impresses me and fills me with hope for the future. One thing has been true for me: a lot of people I know have something I want and I will go to any lenghts to get and maintain - but using addicts don't have anything I want and I will avoid getting what they have any way I can!

Addicts seeking recovery are what Narcotics Anonymous is all about. If we could not respond to the needs of those who suffer we wouldn't have much of a program. I like to look at everything one day at a time. If someone got loaded yesterday but appears to have an honest desire today, something inside won't let me turn away. Sometimes I would like too. Being close to someone in that kind of agony is painful. Especially

someone who is as close with their feelings as I am. Today though I usually feel I have something to offer. Sometimes it is a kind word and sometimes not so kind. I don't enjoy feeling like I have to hedge words with someone playing games I'm susceptible to. I spent too much of my time today redirecting negative energies into useful channels to argue with anyone. Someone who has relapsed is threatening to me because I respect the power of the disease of addiction. When they indicate their desire for recovery, they become members again. I believe that any addict who is clean today and has a desire to recover is a member in good standing. I may not want all of what they have to offer but their desire reinforces my own desire and I will try to help them in any way I can. I would want someone to do the same for me if situations were reversed. I have to add though that one of the things that attracted me most to the program was the fact that I didn't hear anyone promising me a rose garden. I knew it would be tough. I wanted it to be tough because I don't respect things which come too easily. The members who greeted me offered me twelve simple ways to earn my recovery, I'm one of the ones who deliberately didn't try to work the Twelve Steps of NA quickly. I really wanted to give myself a bread and I tried to work each Step in order and as completely as possible before going on to the next, I had heard too many old timers talk about 90 day wonders.

Somehow I knew from the beginning that a lot of my problem had to do with rushing things and almost never giving enough attention to the important things in my life. I would worry but that's only concentrating on what's wrong - not seeking a solution. I try to remember all these things when someone is asking for help.

I'm very grateful for what this program has given me and passing it on gives me a good feeling and reminds me of the basics as well. I don't look down on some one who has fallen prey to their addiction. We suffer from a terrible illness made all the worse by it's ability to disguise itself as pleasure or relief. Being able to help another addict seeking help, new or coming back, gives me the great joy of recovery: the feeling of my higher power using me as an instrument. Those who let me lend a hand in their recovery are really giving me more than I could possibly return.



## NARCOTICS ANONYMOUS

### TRUSTED SERVANTS CARD

*"The primary purpose of each group is to carry our message to the addict who still suffers..."*

The Secretary is responsible for the day-to-day functions of the group.

1. responsible for the meeting taking place when and where it's supposed to.
2. selects leader for each meeting.
3. makes sure that refreshments are ready.
4. arranges for group business meetings.
5. birthday arrangements.
6. leaves meeting area clean.
7. answers all correspondence.

The Treasurer of a group is responsible for the collection and spending of group funds.

1. pay rent.
2. buy literature, chips and newsletters.
3. provide refreshments.

The Group Service Representative is the link that binds the groups together to carry our message.

1. attends the area service committee and expresses the groups consciousness.
2. keeps the group informed.
3. discusses group needs with group members and trusted servants from other groups.

All trusted servants should study the Service Manual of N.A., study and learn to apply the Twelve Traditions of N.A. and train their replacement before considering their term of service complete.



## SOFTER, EASIER WAY

However I came about coming through the doors of N.A., the timing was perfect. I was a heartbeat away from the dramatic consequences of our disease. The softer, easier way my Higher Power had laid out for me was a series of meetings on gratitude.

It has occurred to me that topics can move in waves through our Fellowship, hammering away until that major ingredient clicks in the mind of those who are lacking and looking. Gratitude was the fuel I needed. After hearing pieces of recovery relayed through the necessity of Gratitude, I caught my first clue as to what these people had going for themselves. The end of the first couple of weeks I had come to realize the subtle power of the program. It was handing me the beginnings of the program at the beginning. I did not feel as if I had come into a movie in the middle.

After the years of using dope, of abusing and being abused by people, the idea of being grateful in my daily life for all the simplest of details seemed naive. But after the first pains of withdrawal passed, it was easy to be grateful for not using that day. This was the seed. It is easy to be grateful for not being strung out. The feeling began to spread to the immediate surroundings, later to feelings, and as the people of the Fellowship continued in meetings to explore their relationship with gratitude their daily lives, I began to see.

I feel that I was delivered to those first meetings by the hand of a living god and that the "clicking" I felt in those meetings was the working of his will. The



foundation began with gratitude. This foundation is the base of a program of recovery from addiction to a whole new life of values instead of destruction.

David A.

GOD IS GOOD!

My heart is filled with Light. A fullness of gratitude, for all the love within. I never knew existed, until I reached deep enough to ask the questions that no one could answer.

Like a flame that lights the candle, I've been illumined with God's understanding. The pain was so necessary, for it prepared me to understand the sorrow. To become aware that my suffering has been used as a tool for my learning. That my suffering taught me how not to suffer.

Within this shell of a body that it covers is an endless spirit that longs to be free to experience all of the learning. By my choice of this free spirit within my world transformed to Heaven.

Now encompasses all my tomorrows. Moment to moment I unfold as a beautiful flower.

GOD IS GOOD! GOD IS GOOD!

Cricket

If this day is not a fulfillment of your needs and my love, then let it be a promise of another day.

Kahil Gribran

When one approaches any kind of a higher power,  
He must pay the price if his higher power tells him lies.  
True and false is perceived only by the individual's conscience.  
The whole world may not listen to my conscience, but I must.  
There are others like myself.

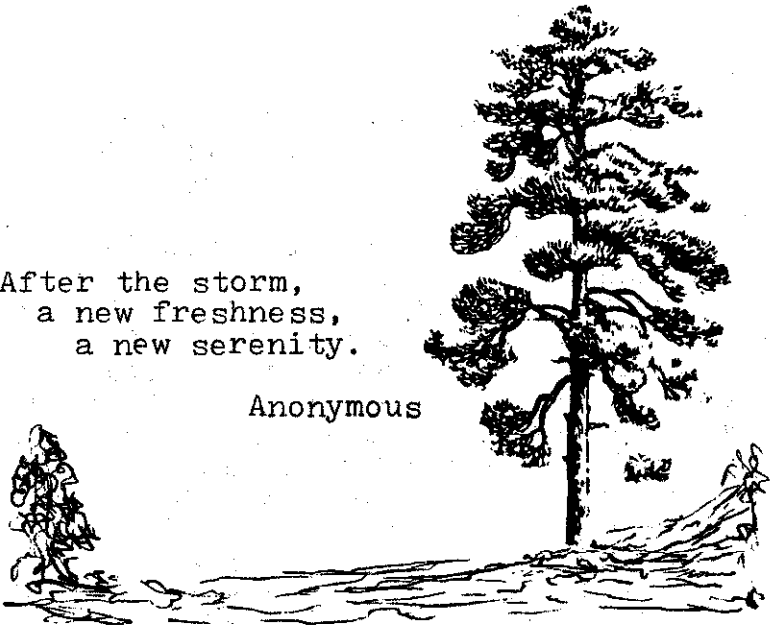
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Each moment of the year has its own beauty a picture which was never seen before and which will be seen again.

Ralph Waldo Emerson

After the storm,  
a new freshness,  
a new serenity.

Anonymous





A NOTE OF GRATITUDE

Dear God,

I thought I would take this opportunity to thank you for all the wonderful things that have happened to me since you brought me to Narcotics Anonymous.

I first would like to thank you for the level of sainty that you have restored me to in the last 20 monyhd. I know I still have a long way to go, but you have brought me so from my pre-NA days of constant institutionalization. It is truly a thrill to live my life without any suicidal thoughts, without the so called help of psychiatrists and without having to completely withdraw from society. This is indeed a true gift.

Secondly, I just can't get over the fact that you have made me a productive person for the first time in my life. For 27 years, I tried to become productive, but without

any success, of course. After I made a decision to turn my life and will over to your loving care, you did the job overnight. Thank you so much for giving me the college education that I always dreamed of for so long. And thank you, my Higher Power, for exposing marketable skills in me that were concealed for so many years. You have sincerely given me a sense of worth.

But, of most importance, thank you for giving me the wonderful Fellowship of Narcotics Anonymous. This has meant more to me than anything else ever has. I just can't get over the unconditional love and acceptance that I have received from the start. It has just been absolutely dynamite. Before you brought me here, I never was able to keep any friends. Today, however, I have brothers and sisters all over the world with whom I can share on the most intimate level. I can now travel anywhere I please, as I already have, and feel comfortable that I will be taken care of, and loved as well.

Before I forget, I would like to express my gratitude for the opportunity you have given me to work with the suffering addict. Prior to my recovery, my whole life was characterized by my selfishness. I only knew how to take from others. Giving was not a part of my vocabulary. Today, you have given me a great opportunity to not just redeem myself, but to help several other people, while saving my own ass. Who could possibly ask for more?

I know that I still do some pretty rotten things at times, dear God, but you have been patient with me, giving me courage to bounce back and to be of service to you as well as my fellow man. For this, I am grateful.

Glenn R.

## TRY IT - IT WORKS

The newcomer is the most important person at any meeting or function of N.A., for we can only keep what we have by giving it away. Sharing with them is the way we fulfill our primary purpose and keep in touch with the spiritual principles that made our recovery possible.

When the day comes that I can't give away what has been given to me freely, then the day has arrived when I have nothing of real value to give. The beginning of the end of my own personal program of recovery. I slip into criticism, fear and resentment.

As a drug addict, I and others like me, depend on each other for help in the battle against the hell and torment that makes up our personal addiction. When the day comes that I recover to the point that I can sit back and become god and judge anyone, especially the newcomer, then I have surely lost what as a recovering addict, I once had. Without others, I have nothing and in this I have indeed relapsed in the worst kind of way.

When I see a new person sitting in a meeting all alone, and remember what it was like when it was me, all alone, kicking like hell, scared and confused, with very little hope, I forget about myself long enough to go over and be friendly, smile and say a few kind words. Whenever I sit in judgement of them, neither of us get anything positive out of it. And who knows, they may have the answer I've been looking for. At the least, I may be able to help them with their burden, by sharing some of their pain. So I do what the program of N.A. says, I carry the message not the disease. When I do this, I find something there are no words to describe my own recovery.

Without the newcomer there is no recov-

ery and no N.A. Without N.A. and recovery, there is no newcomer. If this happens, we all lose; the disease wins.

By caring and sharing whatever we can, whenever we can, the disease loses and we all win!!!

Anonymous

As we grow, we come to understand humility as acceptance of both our assets and our liabilities. What we want most is to feel good about ourselves. Today we have real feelings of love, joy, hope, sadness, excitement - not our old drug - induced feelings.

Our Book

### ALIVE AND FLOURISHING

Despite the rumors, facts and speculations which you may have heard recently, Narcotics Anonymous is alive and well; in fact, it seems to me that N.A. is doing better and growing more than ever.

At this point, you're probably thinking "Where's this guy coming from?" He must be naive or uninformed, doesn't he know what is happening?" Well, maybe you're right, I choose to live my life as positively as I can instead of focusing on the negative and becoming panicky like I used to. I probably am uninformed and misinformed. I've heard and read about problems in our WSO, our WSB and our WSC as well as our Conference committees. I've heard about Regional problems, Area problems and Group problems. I've heard about service structure problems, unity problems, spin-off problems, problems with other programs, and problems caused by members off on some tangent or caught up in people, places, things or self. I've heard bushel baskets full of

problems from here, there and everywhere. However, most of what I hear is 2nd, 3rd, 4th or 10th hand information.

I'm not saying that we don't have any problems or that the things I've heard are just paranoia or overactive imaginations. In fact, I believe that most of what I've heard is probably very real and that there's probably a whole lot of problems we're not aware of yet. What I am saying is that maybe I don't look at these problems the same way some to the people I've talked to lately seem to. I'm grateful for our problems!

For me problems have usually motivated or accompanied growth. I'm an addict and problems seem to be a part of addiction. Whenever I'm put in a situation with another human being, I've automatically got a problem: my inability to cope with, deal with, accept, trust and communicate with others. I see these same problems within our Fellowship and services, but I also see them growing the same way we grow as individuals; slowly and with a lot of faltering steps, but growing still.

When I came to this Program there were probably less than 20 N.A. meetings in the world, and maybe 100 or 200 N.A. members. Today, there are probably 20 local N.A. fellowships this size or larger, When I was new, our service structure consisted of 2 or 3 committees and whoever had the literature in the trunk of their car. Today, there are literally hundreds of service committees working to help make our fellowship better. No wonder it sometimes seems that we have so many more problems today; after all, we've only grown 100 times in the last 10 years or so. Things seem bigger and more complicated because they are. There are a lot more people making mistakes because there are a lot more people. Communications is a lot hard-

er because 3/4 of the members of N.A. don't see each other and share with each other in meetings on a daily or at least weekly basis. Many of the things which we see only as problems may really be symptoms of our fantastic growth.

There is one more thing that convinces me that N.A. is alive and will, and that I need have no fear about our fellowship. This is: N.A. is a spiritual program, and ultimately very personal in nature; our Program is principles and people. Spiritual principles are indestructible and attacks on spiritual principles are futile. Narcotics Anonymous is something that each of us carries within. So long as any of us are clean and living life based on our principles, Narcotics Anonymous will be alive and flourishing. It can't be any other way; the success and growth of our Program is built into the principles upon which it is based.

Gregg P.

Prayer is communicating our concerns to a Power greater than ourselves. Sometimes when we pray, a remarkable thing happens; we find the means, the ways and the energies to perform tasks far beyond our capacities. We grasp the limitless strength provided for us through our daily prayer and surrender so long as we keep faith and renew it.

#### Our Book

Our Program is a positive way of life based on spiritual truths which give us freedom from our addiction and allow us to be useful to others.

"The wise man looks inside his heart and finds eternal peace."

Hindu Proverb



THANK YOU NOTE

To a loving God and the members of N.A.:

Thanks for a very successful WSC 83!!  
If it wasn't for the active support of our members and the grace of a very loving God there would be no place for an addict like me to go for help.

In gratitude,  
Rainbow Staff

THE KEY

Newsletters have always had a problem with subscription as a sole source of funding. The Rainbow Connection got a monthly support of \$60.00 in the beginning in 1980. This income, plus some income from distribution and subscriptions provided all the financial support needed. In time, ASC support fell off and the newsletter wobbled through a two year ordeal as a regional sub-committee.

When the Rainbow became an area sub-committee service, we wanted to insure that existing subscribers got the newsletter they paid for and that new subscribers would be assured of receiving their monthly issue for the term of subscription. We considered publication on a non-subscription, distribution basis with area support before coming up with a plan.

The Subscription Plan has been implemented to hold subscription monies separate from the Rainbow operating account, and take out a monthly amount based on current subscribers. Old subscriptions will be honored. As the subscription fund grows it will stabilize the finances and our area committee will back us financially and through distribution.

Rainbow Staff MASC

\*\*\*\*\* ANNOUNCEMENTS \*\*\*\*\*

REGIONAL SERVICE OFFICE

The old dream of a regional service office became a reality last month. The hours of the new office are 10-4, Monday to Friday. Services include: Literature, public information, Twelve Step referrals, communications, central calendar for all events, etc. The primary need right now is a Twelve Step list form each Area within the Georgia Region, as well as outlying groups in Georgia.

The RSO published the first of a monthly newsletter announcing news of the Fellowship birthdays, committee meetings, social events and other N.A. announcements. The deadline is the third Sunday of each month, the day of the RSC Meeting. Announcements can be called into the RSO at (404) 266-8179 or go by and visit 3166 Maple Dr., Atlanta GA 30305.

N.A. WAY needs your help! You can help, by reading and evaluating new unpublished material, through Marietta Lit. and other area Literature committees. The N.A. Way put out seven issues in a row, addicts in recovery sure can write!

The first regional literature conference was held last month in Fresno, California to work on new material for an NA book on the Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions. It was very successful conference introduced a lot of new material. The effort will be reviewed at this year. Great going, California!

Marietta Literature Committee has come out with a catalogue of old and new archives and review material for study and refer-

ence available to Fellowship at cost of copies.

Help needed in all areas of NA service. There's a place for you!

\*\*\*\*\* CALENDAR \*\*\*\*\*

- OHIO REGIONAL CONVENTION May 27-29 First Annual "We Made a Decision" Columbus, OH Call: (614)486-3280, (513)399-2231, (614) Call: (614)486-3280 (513)399-2231, (614) 889-5673, Write: ORCNA I, P.O. Box 451, Dublin, OH 43017.
- 4th EAST COAST CONVENTION - Bethehem, PA June 24-26. "Freedom Through Fellowship" Lehigh University. For information, call (215)322-8896 or (215)776-1548. Write 4th ECCNA, P.O. Box 4475, Allentown, PA, 19101.
- FLORIDA'S 2nd REGIONAL CONVENTION - Ft. Lauderdale, FL July 1-4. "A Vision of Hope" Galt Hotel. Write 2nd FRCNA. P.O. Box 23575, Ft. Lauderdale, FL 33307.
- FREEDOM CRUISE down Chesapeake Bay Sunday July 3rd from 9 am-5pm, boarding time 8 pm \$6.00 - send name and address to; Baltimore N.A. Special Events, 619 Aldershot Road, Baltimore, Maryland 21229. Seats for 350.
- A NEW BEGINNING - SECOND ANNUAL VIRGINIA CONVENTION OF N.A. January 6,7,8, 8984. Registration: \$10.00; Banquet, dance and registration: \$30.00; total package: reg. room meals, banquet, and dance: single \$109, double \$81, triple rooms available. Send to AVCNA, P.O. Box 2131, Newport News, VA 23602.
- UNITY DAY PICNIC, the first of many future unity events has been planned for Sunday, June 5th, at Jones Bridge Park. This park is located on the banks of the Chattahoochee River. Activities include games and contest birng your own food. There will be a meeting at dust, to reflect on the days' fellow-

ship. This event is FREE, all you need to bring is you. Call RSO at 266-8179 for directions to Norcross or see flyer.

- 1st ANNUAL STAMPEDE FOR SERENITY CAMPOUT  
Sponsored by Northern Nevada Area July 15-17 at Stampede Reservoir, 19 miles west of Reno, NV. Call before July 1st, NA Hotline (702)322-4811 or write: Northern Nevada ASC, P.O. Box 3394, Sparks NV 89431. S
- 4th ANNUAL B.C.N.A.R. "Serene Summer Festival" July 1-3. Call (604)383-3553. Write P.O. Box 384, Station "E", Victoria, B.C
- BLUE RIDGE MINI-CONFERENCE will be held on July 4th weekend. Contact Caroline RSC via c/o Brent C. 50 Albemarle Road, Asheville, NC 28801
- SECOND ANNUAL NORTH ALABAMA AREA RALLY "Freedom In The Valley", June 19, Monte Santo State Park, Huntsville, AL 11 a.m. till ..... Register by June 5th. Write; Patty, P.O. Box 5133, Decatur, AL 35601 or call Bill B. (205) 353-0924.
- THE IMPOSSIBLE DREAM - World Convention of Narcotics Anonymous, P.O. Box 216, Jackson Heights, N.Y. 11372. Registration: \$15.00 Banquet: \$30.00, Vista Hotel, attention: Reservations Dept., 3 World Trade Center, N.Y.M N.Y., 10277-0356. \$75.00 Quad. September 1 - 4th.
- "LET'S NOT GO OVERBOARD"... Midnight Cruise Friday June 24th on board the MV Trinidad., For info and tickets, contact:(312)486-3045
- Want to have a great year? Why not subscribe to the Auckland newsletter called the "New View" from New Zealand. Send two dollars to; N.A. (Auckland), P.O. Box 6520 Wellesley Street, Auckland, 1, New Zealand. N.A. is a world wide Fellowship ..... reach out!

Contributors: Members wishing to send in articles and announcements are essential to any newsletter. Your support is crucial.

The Spiritual Life is not a theory, we have to live it. This is difficult with a higher power, but impossible without one.



#### STAFF REPORT

Here we go again! It's good to be back! With the help of Sheryl, Jaye, John, Bo, Nancy, Greg, Susie, Rick, our subscribers and contributors, as well as the Marietta ASC and the power of a loving God as expressed in the group consciousness, we are going to try to come out on a monthly basis. As members in service to N.A., we sincerely pray all associated with the Rainbow from staff and contributors to the lonliest reader keep in mind the hell we came from and the relief from the disease of addiction we have found in N.A. Pass it on .....

Subscribers: Members and other persons who wish to subscribe to the Rainbow, please send \$12.00 along with your name, complete address and phone number to: Rainbow Connection, 890 Atlanta Road, Marietta, GA 30060.