



Recovery Herald

THIS IS WHAT HAPPENED

I would like to tell you a story about me: I am an addict. I started using very young, and came from a family of many other addicts. I started getting into trouble early in life, as well, and went to jail for the first time at 18. My first trip to jail didn't actually involve committing the crime I went to jail for; however it did involve getting high and hanging out with the guys that committed it (guilty by association). So, from the beginning, drugs have been making my decisions for me. The next time I got into trouble over the course of the next 10 years, it involved a couple DUI's. As I found myself in the system and the revolving door began, I was an addict in my disease-trying to get away with doing the LEAST amount of work to get my license back and doing everything in my power to NOT have to go to treatment. Looking back on my history now, it was a lot more work trying to fight the system. As the years progressed, so did my addiction and my struggle to continue to stay high. So, I continued to go back to jail and I continued to obtain more new charges-all involving the getting and using and finding ways and means to get more. During one of my many stays in jail, I attended a meeting. I thought, "What do I have to lose?" That's when I met a woman who had a huge part in my having a seed of recovery planted in my addict mind and my tired heart. I heard this woman say that she hadn't used drugs in years. This woman came in every week. She smelled like perfume and freedom. She wore stylish clothing and pretty jewelry; she had makeup on and she seemed truly happy. And I was sitting in jail, wearing someone else's underwear and socks, sleeping on a plastic pillow with an itchy wool blanket. This woman had what I wanted!!!

I'm not going to say that I stayed clean from that day because that's not part of my story. I was in and out of jail for the next four years after

that, but there was something different. Each time I went back to jail I would attend the meetings. Each time I attended the jail meetings I would see this woman. I even saw a few other women who would come into the jail, smelling like perfume and freedom. On my last trip to jail, something shifted, and I made a decision. I was tired of going to jail. I was 38 years old and was still doing the same things, expecting different results. This was insane!

I am now a woman in long-term recovery. I didn't have to go back to jail after that last time and soon I'm going to be celebrating 9 years in recovery. My clean date is 8-11-06. My point of this article is this: Narcotics Anonymous changed my life, and the jail meetings planted the seed. The woman who came in to tell me how I could stay clean for that last revolving four years ended up being my sponsor, and one of the other ladies is now my best friend. Today, I have a wonderful life, a career, a handsome husband and a family in my recovery community. I knew after the first year that what I wanted to do was go back into the jail so that maybe, just maybe, someone might hear me as I heard the ladies that brought meetings in to me. It took almost 7 years for that to happen, (I had wreckage to take care of before they would allow me back in.) I was very discouraged. Being an addict I wanted it right now! My Higher Power had other plans for those first 7 years. But now, I go at least once a week to bring the message of hope to the addict that still suffers. The gifts I get from that are indescribable. Not everyone gets it, but when I see a light come on in an addict's eyes who is sitting in jail feeling hopeless, or I see an addict get out of jail and walk through the doors of an NA meeting, my heart is filled with so much joy and it makes it all worth it.

~ Tamera M., NA Member



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What's New?

Places to find specifics about upcoming events:



- **Kenai 907* Facebook page**; click the events tab located at the top.



- **Never Alone 907* Facebook page**

*These are "secret" Facebook groups, you will not find them by searching. If you are not a member yet, please ask someone to add you!



- **Regional Events Page:** www.akna.org/events

For more information contact: Cheyenne (907) 690-2939

"For many of us, getting and staying clean is our greatest accomplishment, no matter what else we do in life."

~ Living Clean, p. 34

~ The Masks Have to Go ~

When they ask "How ya doin'?" my reply is all wrong
 This shroud of denial has served me well for so long.

They don't care how I'm doing, it's just what they say
 At least that's what the addict inside tries to tell me today.

This veil, this mask, it's fused to my flesh
 Sewn to my soul, securing the darkness to the depths.

I'll smile, we'll chat, I'm pretty good at that
 What I really want to do is cry out, just scream and lash out.

I'm in pain, so afraid, I don't know what I'm needing
 But to lift my veil would leave me raw, nearly bleeding.

Getting loaded won't fix it, or make me like you
 What I had wasn't working and I needed something new.

So I got a sponsor in whom I can trust
 They take steps with a sponsor, just as I must.

Each time there is pain and fear in revealing my weakness
 Then the light of hope touches my soul
 and helps me believe "I can beat this".

Addiction's a b*#@ \$ and I'm makin' it mine
 These feelings will pass, it's just a matter of time.

My predecessors say there is only one way
 and that is to live "Just For Today".

So, I'll take these steps all the way to the top,
 face my demons and pray
 I'll give it to the Gods and let them take it away.

My mask will be gone, my soul will be free
 Then God can fill the God sized hole within me.

2015 Kenai Campvention

August 7th – 9th

Location: Alaska Christian Retreat

Located at the end of Deville Rd., Mile 89 Sterling Hwy, Sterling, AK

No Dogs * No Unattended Children * No Swimming * No Fires Outside of Designated Fire Pit

Schedule of Events

Friday, August 7th:

3:00pm	Registration Opens
5:00-8:00pm	Dinner (Chicken Burgers) and Fellowship
8:30-9:30pm	Guest Speaker from California

Saturday, August 8th:

7:30-8:00am	Morning Meditation
8:30-9:30am	Pancake Breakfast
11:00am-12:00pm	Kai Chi Do
12:30-1:30pm	Saturday Lunch
2:00-4:00pm	Games & Fellowship
4:00-5:00pm	Clean-Time Countdown & Group Photo
5:00-6:00pm	Dinner: Choice of Lasagna (includes vegan option) or Chicken Pizziola
6:00-7:00pm	Raffle & Auction
8:00-9:30pm	Speakers: Panel of 3
11:00pm-12:00am	Spiritual Campfire (<i>Sending out Gratitude, Love, & Compassion or Resentment Burning</i>)

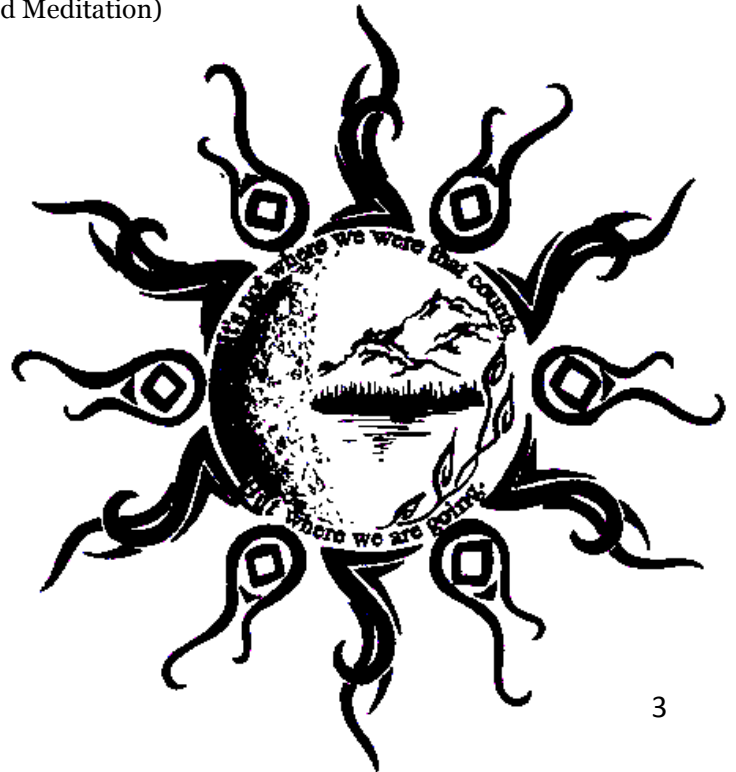
Sunday, August 9th:

7:30-8:00am	Morning Meditation (Guided Meditation)
8:30-9:30am	Biscuits & Gravy Breakfast
10:00-11:00am	Gratitude Meeting
11:30am-12:00pm	Closure: Drumming Circle

Registration	\$25
Early Registration (by July 17)	\$20
Friday Dinner	\$5
Saturday Breakfast	\$5
Saturday Dinner	\$10
Sunday Breakfast	\$5
Rooms (per night, per person)	\$30
Tent Site (per night)	\$10

Questions, call Audrey 280-8285

Registration forms can be downloaded from AKNA.org - click on the "events" tab





**IF YOU ARE NOT WILLING TO
CHANGE,
DON'T EXPECT YOUR LIFE TO.
CARRY THE MESSAGE**

Gratitude

As a wounded dog to you I came
Matter did it not, a hand you held out
Lies were my words, love was your response
"Keep coming back", is what you said to me

On my own I could stand, as time went by
You showed me the way of the steps
A little at a time life around me changed
Then I realized how tall I was

Sunshine began, flowers bloomed
People smiled instead of cussing me
They actually listened to what I had to say
The one and only way became staying clean

Gratitude slowly replaced self-pity
The steps I know now to follow
A pleasure these days such is life
It is me I know now, which is changing

Open arms have I, standing at the door
Tire do I not, beckoning to them
Come on in outta the cold, life is better in here

~ Bert H., NA Member

*"The only alternatives to recovery are jails, institutions,
dereliction and death."*

~ Basic Text, p. 8

Flight

*Living on the edge
one shot at a time
Never thought slow suicide...
was such a freaking crime*

*Beat up and battered
torn and tattered*

*Misery was endless
Life in the gutter till the end of time
I couldn't breathe!
Couldn't stop breathing!
I couldn't make it
I couldn't quit
So freaking tired
of the same old s#*t!
I QUIT!!
I hit my knees
with desperation and despair*

*I bowed my head
I raised my voice
I think these are the words I said...*

*"God, please help me, this is my choice
I give up!
I'm at a loss
Please hear my prayer...*

*Take my will and my life
Show me how to live
How to end this strife!
I can't go on like this
I choose life!
Lift me up and take me home
Let me walk in your light
Help me stand, spread my wings
Let this angel take flight!!"*

~ Billie C., NA Member



BUSINESS MEETINGS

Area Meeting– First Saturday of the month at 5pm, 11312 Kenai Spur Hwy #71

DHF- First Thursday of month at 8pm

Twisted Sisters– Last Sunday of the month at 3pm

S.O.S.– Last Tuesday of the Month at 730pm

It Works– As needed

This One– As needed

Clean Machine– Last Wednesday of Month at 8pm

PJ Meeting– Last Saturday of the Month at 11am

COMMITTEE MEETINGS

PR (Public Relations)- Last Sunday of the month at 530pm, 11312 Kenai Spur Hwy #71

Newsletter– Second Sunday of every month at 3pm, 11312 Kenai Spur Hwy #71

H&I (Hospitals & Institutions)– Last Thursday of the month at 815pm, 11312 Kenai Spur Hwy #71

Activities– As announced



~ Step Five - One Member's Story ~



Once upon a time there was a girl who had no idea how to live. She could barely talk right, match her clothes, or be herself. She had extreme difficulty knowing what was real and what was not. Have you ever lived in a world where you were unsure of everything? It is an ever long adventure...

She woke up one day and wrote down what she believed were her truths. She wrote down her deep, dark secrets. Things she had never shared with a soul. You see, some terrifying events had happened to her as a child, which led to her believing in no one. Well, maybe some... but usually all the wrong ones. She would put all of her love in another's hands and build a beautiful castle with a great wee family and it would all be perfect, just the way it was. Very soon after perfection, she would destroy the castle and run away, leaving the family by themselves. The girl is mean at times, wishing and wanting to be chased after, and this is the first time the family did not wait, chase, or track her down. She was left by herself in this strange place she ran to with not a person to trust. Her feelings and secrets got pushed way to the back of her mind, leaving her thinking that she could never share what went through her head and heart ever, ever again.

Until she met this woman, almost as if for some reason the heavens knew that this woman was the one she was supposed to talk to all along. She worked on trusting her, for this girl had yet to confide in a woman before. After some good time, the girl poured out her everything, with tears of sadness strumming every heart string on the way out. But in the end, it seemed the girl was better than ever, with a good idea of how to live, talk correctly, and accept her unmatched clothes. She invited herself to flourish into a true woman in the real world, with real people, and nothing to hide from.



2015 TRUSTED SERVANTS

Executive Committee

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Alt. Treasurer: Vacant

Secretary: Spring L.

RCM: Vacant

Alt. RCM: Vacant

Literature: Nick R.

Subcommittee Chairs

H & I: Audrey B.

Activities: Cheyenne M.

PR: Jodi L.

Newsletter: Lotus B.

GSRs

DHF: Brad C.

It Works: Peter D.

Clean Machine: Donna A.

Twisted Sisters: Tera M.

PJ Meeting: Krysta P.

This One: Chris H.

SOS: Linzy T.

Toys in the Addict: Dano M.

No Longer Terminally Unique

Hi, my name is Ellie and I am an addict. Not just to drugs, not just to alcohol, but to everything and anything. I believe I have been this way since birth, or at least since I was a small child. I remember doing everything in excess, especially food. I never quite understood how kids would not want to eat any more after their one sandwich. Ellie always wanted more. Ellie was always different.

I will not go into detail about some of the other things in my life that made me feel different, but I am sure assuming you, the reader, is an addict as well, you can understand that deep intertwined “terminal uniqueness” in our souls that we all suffer from. The “terminal uniqueness” causes a void that needs to be filled with something. The first substance I decided to try happened to be nicotine. I was instantly hooked. If I could have afforded a pack of cigarettes a day at the age of 13, I would have bought them.

One drug led to another. Soon, I could not go a few hours by the time I was 17 without using substances without becoming extremely sick.

I knew I did not want to live that life of stealing, lying, manipulation and hurting others forever, but I did not know how to get out of it... God blessed me with amazing parents who did care about the well being of their children and sent me to a treatment center in 2013. From there, I learned how to deal with difficult emotions, to not pick up, to find a Higher Power and get myself to meetings. I stayed clean for almost six months, but did not follow suggestions and was not willing to make any changes in my behaviors which included using men, eating disorders and stealing to cope with my life and emotions. I proceeded to relapse on a substance that I did not think was an “issue” for me. Marijuana.

I used every excuse in the book to justify using it. I even had a person “in the program” say that it hadn’t affected their recovery one bit and they were doing just great smoking it. The second I took my first hit, I felt the shift. The spiritual malady, the guilt, shame, remorse and regret I knew all too well came right back in to my life. Those feelings are obviously difficult for us addicts to deal with, so we use more and more to cover them up. Which I continued to do.

Long story short, my “drugs of choice” that lead me to complete demoralization were marijuana, my eating disorder and stealing. Believe it or not, you do not have to use drugs to be insane, miserable and to want it all to be over.

Using drugs is ONLY BUT A SYMPTOM of the disease of addiction. I got a very up close and personal relationship with that part of my disease. I was not

necessarily strung out this time around, but that was about the only difference from my first experience in recovery at 17. All the same behaviors, different drugs. What a concept! Maybe it really wasn’t just the drugs, it was me!

March 14th 2014 I was arrested on two felony charges, Scheme to Defraud and Fraudulent Use of an Access Device. From there my life took a drastic change. I lost my apartment, significant other, most of the friends I had, thousands of dollars, and some of my family members. Even after losing all of that, to this day, the one thing that hurt the most was losing myself. I lost Ellie the whole time I was in my active addiction. I did not know what I liked, I did not know how to handle life on life’s terms, and I did not know who I was anymore. I completely lost any kind of morals or respect for myself. I hated who I saw in the mirror every single day. March 14th 2014 was the day that changed my life.

My clean date is March 15th of 2014. I fell to my knees that day in a jail cell and sobbed and begged for God to help me. I yelled, “God I cannot do this anymore! Please give me another chance!” I did not think writing this paper would make me emotional, but thinking about those couple days I spent in jail is so humbling, it’s hard not to. That experience in jail, I believe, was truly my first surrender to a God of my understanding.

I am not going to lie to you and say staying clean has been easy, or fun, and fantastic all the time. But, what I will tell you is compared to the life I lived and the person my active addiction made me be; recovery is the easier, softer way.

Today I don’t have to use drugs to deal with emotions. Today I don’t have to throw up 7 times a day to feel beautiful. Today I don’t need to have a man to feel validated and okay. Today I have not stolen a penny since March 14th of 2014. Today I have friendships that really mean something to me. Today I don’t have to act like I like somebody. I’m not out to get somebody’s approval. Today I can feel God’s love and I can feel that love he gives me pouring out to my fellows. SO MANY MIRACLES. But what I have to keep in mind is I can lose all of that if I don’t continue working this program and relying on God’s strength to help me. We CANNOT do this alone.

Never Alone, Never Again.

~Ellie N., NA Member

PUBLIC RELATIONS

Public Relations Helps Addicts Find NA

“Public Relations’ is just another way of saying ‘taking care of our relationships.’ This can apply to our relationships with the general public, with law enforcement, and addiction professionals, and with each other. We fulfill our primary purpose when we effectively carry the message of recovery to the addict who still suffers. In order to do this, NA has to be known and respected in the community.”

~Excerpt from Public Relations Statement

When we meet:

5:30pm the last Sunday of each month at 11312 Kenai Spur Hwy, Unit #71 in Kenai.

For more information contact:

Jodi (907) 953-2891

HOSPITALS AND INSTITUTIONS (H&I)

Occasionally at the end of a meeting you'll hear it announced that H&I will be having a business meeting sometime in the near future. But what is H&I? The purpose of an H&I meeting is to carry the NA message of recovery to addicts who do not have full access to regular Narcotics Anonymous meetings. There are many addicts that are initially introduced to NA when the message of recovery is shared through H&I meetings in jails, treatment centers, and other institutions.

The Hospitals & Institutions Sub-Committee in our area is currently working to build upon the foundation we've established so that we can begin to reach more addicts seeking recovery. It's a great way to get involved in service and to fulfill our primary purpose, which is to carry the message that any addict can lose the desire to use. We have some exciting new projects in the works and are always in need of volunteers. With these new projects there will also be new positions opening up.

~Audrey B., NA Member

When we meet:

8:15pm the last Thursday of each month at 11312 Kenai Spur Hwy, Unit #71 in Kenai.

For more information contact:

Audrey (907) 280-8285

Brad (907) 232-7229

Currently seeking:

*Men interested in service work at the jail (1 year clean time requirement).

*Speakers / Panel Members

(There is a 3 month clean time requirement for member orientation and speaker ride-alongs)

LITERATURE

Need NA literature and not sure who to ask? Talk to the chairperson at the next meeting you attend or contact Area Literature, we can help you out!

We have quite a selection of literature on hand, as well as key tags, medallions, IPs and more!

For more information contact:

Nick R. (907) 398-8604



**NEWSLETTER
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Dennis A.

Mandy H.

Special Thanks to Spring L. for choosing this issue's graphics!

The Recovery Herald is always looking for more writers, artists, reporters, quotes, games, graphics, and more. It is a great way to get involved in service! We need YOU!

FROM THE ASHES WE RISE

How can I explain
To those who don't know
How my highest of highs
Caused my lowest of lows?

The spiritual death,
That I felt deep inside.
Not a flicker of hope,
Not an ounce of pride.

No reason to live,
For I only cause pain.
All I cared about were the drugs
Running through my veins.

They consumed every thought,
They took all I had.
I knew in my heart,
There was no turning back.

I'm almost gone now,
My body only a shell.
I've caused this wreckage,
I've built my own hell.

I want this to end,
Why can't I just die?
For some reason I'm still here,
And I don't know why.

There must be a reason,
Something I can't see.
Maybe something, somewhere,
Can breathe life into me.

Then I see it above,
From my bottom below.
A tiny light,
Guiding me to come home.

Not a home up in heaven,
Not even in hell.
But a home where addicts,
All seem to dwell.

They are unlike any addicts,
I've known before.
They invited me in,
And held open the door.

They asked me to come,
And keep coming back.
That tiny light grew brighter,
No longer just black.

They said I could stop using,
Find a new way to live.
Experience, strength and hope,
Is what they would give.

It all seemed so foreign,
Like it couldn't be true.
If I wanted this life,
There was work I must do.

So I figured, "Why not?
What could I lose?"
Life or death,
Which one would I choose?

A sponsor to guide me,
On this journey I'll take,
Will help me to realize,
I'm not a mistake.

A God of my own
Understanding is key.
Because this is who
Will help set me free.

I reached for a pen,
And started to write.
For once in my life,
I'm willing to fight.

Meetings and service,
Are things I must do.
See, my freedom comes,
From me helping you.

One addict helping another,
Is without parallel.
Because you know my struggle,
You know my hell.

The fog starts to clear,
And now I can see.
No longer does my addiction,
Get to suffocate me.

If you think you are lost,
Even destined to die,
Take it from me,
Let go of that lie.

For I've been there too,
I lived there for years.
You can get through your struggles
You can get through your fears.

Let go and let God,
Find a meeting and pray.
It can be difficult,
But it gets better each day.

Our spirits awaken,
From the ashes we rise,
In each other we find
Invaluable ties.

A gift we've been given,
The most priceless there is.
We've been given hope,
And a new way to live.

Many addicts out there,
Will never get this chance.
Don't take it for granted,
Don't let this chance pass.

You can have this life,
You too can be free.
My name is Amber,
I'm an addict, in recovery.

~Amber B., NA Member

"The Fifth Step is the key to freedom."

~ Basic Text, p. 31



We would like to thank all of our members who contributed to the newsletter. It was by your efforts that this publication was made possible. We look forward to your contributions in upcoming publications; we accept letters to the editor, articles, jokes, cartoons, polls, crosswords and artwork. **Our next edition will be published in October, the topic is Step 6 & Tradition 6.** Please keep article submissions to 175-400 words and recovery based. The newsletter is published quarterly. Email all contributions to:

recoveryherald@gmail.com

Please Note: The opinions expressed herein are those of individual members and not the opinions of the Kenai Peninsula Area or NA as a whole. NA is not affiliated in any way with this publication. The Handbook for NA states, "The Twelve Traditions of NA should serve as the basic guidelines for editing your newsletter... the language of NA recovery should be used." All editorial decisions made by the Newsletter Committee have been made with these guidelines and the 12 Concepts in mind. We welcome any feedback in accordance with the second tradition.