



My Christmas Miracle by Will F.

I had my first drink when I was 12 or 13, and was drunk and high basically everyday for 23 years. My older brother had gotten into trouble, and although little was said out loud in the family, "drugs were involved". My first pot was some I stole out of his dresser drawer. My first joint was smoked alone, and that became my story for the next 25 years.

I'd always been a bit of a loner, partly from being a quiet, reserved kind of person; and partly from being shunned because I was gay. In 10th grade I met a new set of friends through the high school drama club. We partied on weekends. In hindsight, much of what happened was pretty innocent, but it was the beginning of the fatal progression of the disease. By 11th grade I couldn't wait for the weekend, and needed a drink by Wednesday or Thursday. I got a dealer and by my senior year in high school, my routine became the same every day for 23 years. I'd get up, smoke a few bowls, smoke throughout the day, and later, when I got back home, start drinking myself to sleep.

Smoking pot and drinking

alcohol began to change my mood and personality. I became withdrawn, sullen, dangerously quiet, and spacey. At other times I'd be needlessly rude and hurtful. People that could drifted away. My family got more and more angry and hurt by my be-

"I really didn't care if anyone else died with me."

haviors and attitudes. I can't see how they put up with me for so many years. They were scared I'd kill myself behind the wheel when I was out of the house -- and when I was at home, I made their life as negative as mine had become.

My most dramatic pot story happened not long after graduating from high school. I'd gotten yet another new set of friends, some slightly younger dudes who were a year or two behind me. I delayed going to college that fall, partly because I wanted to keep partying with my friends, and partly because I was so scared of being beaten up when I was found out to be a

queer in the dorm. It was Christmas Eve and I'd just worked my last day as a stock-boy at a local department store. I'd quit because I was to begin college in a few weeks, but also because my depression was getting the worse of me. I was really ready to quit for good. After dinner, I borrowed my dad's car to go out. I picked up a few of my friends, and we drove around smoking pot. It had been drizzling all day, so the roads were wet and slippery. Something within me broke, and I saw the bottom of

an exit ramp from a 4-lane divided highway. I drove up the exit ramp the wrong way, and began driving 60 mph against the oncoming traffic. My friends started screaming, and I realized what was happening. This highway didn't have a metal fence between the two directions, only a raised concrete bump, so I was able to hop over into the correct lane. But the car started swerving and it was difficult to keep control. Cars were honking. How I didn't get smashed up, even when driving in the correct lane, I don't know. I really had meant to kill myself, and in my depression, in my thoughtless self-centeredness, I really didn't care if anyone else died with me.

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a new leaf

The purpose of A New Leaf is to carry the message of recovery from marijuana addiction. It is through the written experiences of recovering addicts and their stories that we may find experience, strength, & hope.

Articles submitted should reflect recovery, unity, and service.

The articles contained in A New Leaf are the sole opinions of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the opinions of Marijuana Anonymous as a whole.

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www.marijuana-anonymous.org
and click on publications.

My Christmas Miracle (continued)

When the car came under control again, and we were driving safely, everybody said they wanted to be taken home. I lost several friends that night, including my best buddy, and I don't blame any of them. I had become too dangerous. And "it was only from smoking a few bowls -- nothing really wrong with that, now, is there? It's the really hard drugs that are dangerous, but pot is OK, right?" Those are just lies, but lies I'd stay stuck in for years to come.

If my plan had worked, I'd be dead for 32 years now, and for many people, their Christmas memory would be receiving a police or hospital phone call, very early on Christmas morning, informing them of the death of a loved one from a car crash. I was almost 6 months in recovery when I was taking a shower one morning, and finally broke down and cried. I could finally admit how sick and dangerous that was. I cried from gratitude, because I-could also see how the only way that accident didn't actually happen was through the grace of God.

My last drink (God-willing) was May 23, 1996. My last few bowls of pot (again, God-willing) was May 24, 1996. My sobriety date

is May 25, 1996. Pot was and is my substance of choice, the substance I romanticize. Sometimes, even over 11 years later, I imagine I can still smell it, but I know that it's just the disease working on me, trying to lure me back.

Most of the meetings I do are A.A. There are no M.A. meetings where I live, and I'm low-tech, so I don't do on-line meetings. I do my M.A. meetings in print through reading "A New Leaf". The 12-step program is helping me get a life. I can't say that I've achieved a lot in 11 years. I have much to heal and grow. But one thing recovery has given back to me is Christmas. Today, I am finding Christmas in my heart, and finding out what it means for me, personally. I can't say that every day is Christmas, or that every day is a beautiful day. It's in recovery that I'm finding out that it's O.K. to be human, it's O.K. to be me. For many days over these 11+ years, I've had tears of joy. I should have died from suicide many years ago now. God has forgiven me, and given me a second chance. The disease is real, but recovery is real too. We are blessed by being part of the miracle of being clean and sober.

Merry Christmas, and Happy New Year!



submit

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

14th Annual M.A. Convention

Hosted by District 7, Los Angeles, California
February 15-17, 2008 (President's Weekend)



	Cost	Amount Due
Convention Registration (Includes all workshops and Hospitality Room)	\$40 Early Bird Special before 2/1/08 \$50 after 2/1/08 (incl. day-of)	
Banquet (salmon / chicken / vegetarian) **circle one**	\$40	
Dance	\$5	
Total Amount Due:		

Name: _____

Address: _____

City, State, Zip: _____

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Email Address: _____

Please mail before Feb 1. to get a better rate.
Send this form and your check to:

MA Convention 2008
PO BOX 3012 Culver City CA, 90230

Further information at: www.maconvention2008.com

Hotel Info:

The Culver City Radisson
61 West Centinela Ave, Culver City CA 90230-6306

Hotel Reservations: (888) 201-1718 or www.radisson.com/culvercityca

Get the convention rate of \$99.00 a night with the promotional code 'MAR'

Transportation: The Radisson offers free transportation from LAX. (only 10 min. away)

Registration: On site Registration for the convention begins on February 15 at 4:00pm



marijuana anonymous worldwide

MA World Services

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District 14 London, England

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

District 16 Melbourne, Australia

P.O. Box 60, Fitzroy 3065, Melbourne VIC 1300 762 348

District 17 Denmark

info@ma-kbh.dk

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

birthdays

Celebrating 227 years of sobriety in this issue!

Submit your sober birthday to your Bureau Chief or see page 2 for contact info.

District 2

Doug P. 1/17/00 7 yrs.
 Charlie R. 1/26/05 3 yrs.

District 5

Jaime 12/7/06 1 year!
 Melody C. 1/16/89 19 yrs.
 Tony R. 1/1/03 5 yrs.
 'Jersey' John S. 1/5/07 1 year!
 'Heavy Metal' Jon C. 1/7/07 1 year!

District 6

Jim S. 12/5/06 1 year!
 Jay I. 11/22/01 6 yrs.
 Dave K. 1/15/89 19 yrs.
 Loren N. 1/14/90 18 yrs.

District 7

Jeff M. 12/6/96 11 yrs.
 Liz M. 12/8/02 5 yrs.
 Steve S. 11/25/99 8 yrs.

District 8

John M. 12/14/94 13 yrs.
 Dore E. 11/01/03 4 yrs.
 Mike 'the Younger' 11/11/06 1 year!
 Suzanne B. 11/15/96 11 yrs.
 Mike M. 11/25/99 8 yrs.

District 10

Kristopher T. 10/8/03 4 yrs.
 Elizabeth P. 10/10/05 2 yrs.
 Greg S. 10/25/03 4 yrs.
 Richard N. 10/27/95 12 yrs.
 Zac 12/27/04 3 yrs.
 Aaron 12/25/06 1 year!
 Sarah 12/11/06 1 year!
 John P. 12/2/06 1 year!
 Arthur R. 11/16/05 2 yrs.
 Mike B. 12/21/01 6 yrs.
 Conrad G. 1/8/01 7 yrs.
 Ahryn 1/15/03 5 yrs.
 Rachel K. 1/15/02 5 yrs.
 Fred 1/18/97 11 yrs.
 Jo L. 1/30/05 3 yrs.

District 15

Marilyn 12/17/04 3 yrs.
 Michael 12/29/06 1 year!
 Dominic 12/29/06 1 year!

Cambridge, MA

Jeff 11/27/05 2 years
 Joe M. 1/1/01 6 years
 Ian M. 1/21/02 5 years

