

# Lifeline

News from the  
**Alcohol and Drug Abuse Council of Delaware County**

**Vol. IV Number 1**

**Early Summer 2002**

*From Poster to Billboard*

## DeVita Wins ADAC Poster Contest

**A** billboard featuring the winning entry in the ADAC First Annual Poster Contest appeared during the month of May on Route 28 north of Delhi. The contest was sponsored jointly by the Alcohol and Drug Abuse Council of Delaware County and the Rural Three for Tobacco-Free Communities.

The poster contest winner was Dan DeVita, a seventh-grade student in Andes Central School. His

poster showed a young boy leaping for joy against a backdrop of mountains ablaze with fall colors.

Beneath the art work DeVita penned the slogan: "Life is something precious that can't be bought. Don't sell yours to cigarettes." The word "LIFE" is emblazoned across the sky. The figure's shirt bears the words "Drug-free is the way to be."

DeVita received a \$200 U.S. savings bond as first prize in the poster contest. The three runners-up each were awarded \$50 savings bonds. They were Melissa Bain, Kimberly Daly and Jennifer Daly, all, like DeVita, seventh grade students at the Andes Central School. Sharon Tucker was the art teacher who supervised their work.

"The purpose of the

*continued page 2*



**Joe Muehl** demonstrates acupuncture techniques on volunteer Denise Lemakos, a workshop participant.

## Council Hosts Renewal Workshop

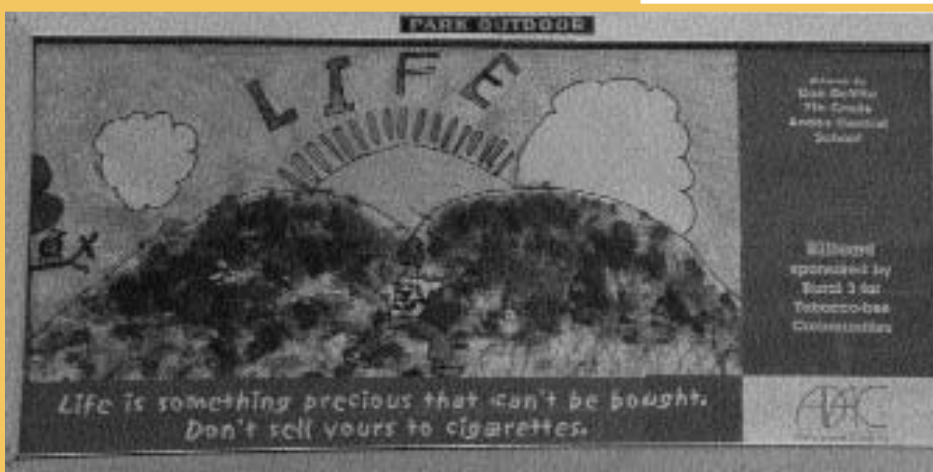
Substance abuse counselors, prevention workers, and those in related fields seeking to recharge their enthusiasm for their work gathered in Delhi in early May for a workshop entitled "Renewal: Revitalizing the Substance Abuse Professional."

Council Director David Ramsey welcomed the group of 35 professionals and introduced the keynote speaker, Alan Wilmarth, who urged the attendees to "celebrate their successes" and assured them that "what you do every day matters."

Wilmarth is director of the Addictions and Outpatient Mental Health Services, United Health Services Hospitals, Inc., in Binghamton.

Sponsors of the daylong training session were the Alcohol and Drug Abuse Council of Delaware County, the Delaware County Alcohol and Drug Abuse Services, the LEAF Council on Alcoholism and Addictions, and United Health Services which operates the Alcoholism Rehabilitation Unit at Delaware Valley Hospital in Walton and the New Horizons Program

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**Poster artist Dan DeVita**, top, poses with Poster Contest Coordinator Amy Morse. Dan's winning poster was converted into a billboard on Route 28 north of Delhi. The billboard's brilliant colors are lost in the black and white photograph reproduced here.

**COUNCIL STAFF**

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**LIFELINE**

is a quarterly publication of the Alcohol and Drug Abuse Council  
72 Main Street • Delhi NY 13753

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**Mission Statement**

The Council is a public non-profit organization committed to the prevention of alcohol and substance abuse. We provide information, referral, and educational services to individuals and families to promote personal growth and informed choices. We envision a future in which individuals have chosen to live free from the harm of substance abuse.

Letter from the Director

Here's a frequently asked question: Is Alcoholics Anonymous a religion? Personally, I've always been satisfied with the answer most A.A. members give: that A.A. is a "spiritual," not a religious program. However, there is prayer at A.A. meetings, and the program does suggest that recovering alcoholics turn their lives "over to the care of God..." Some people take this as an indication that the program is religious.

Finally, from an appellate court, we have an answer. A.A. is, according to a recent decision, a religious activity. What's more, state-funded treatment providers can no longer require patients and clients to attend A.A. meetings. To make them attend would violate the principle of separation of church and state, the court ruled.

At the Council, we provide information about the program and its meetings to anyone who asks and we have always supported the good work that A.A. does. But, as a prevention agency, we have no direct relationship with A.A., so the ruling has no bearing on what we do. But the decision creates a dilemma for the treatment providers we work with who make A.A. part of their treatment plans. It also overlooks the fact that A.A.'s doors are open to anyone with a desire to stop drinking, atheists included.

To the millions of men and women who recovered in A.A., it probably makes no difference what the court decides about the program. But officially labeling A.A. a religion could scare away people who desperately need the chance at recovery that A.A. offers. After all, A.A. members have only one purpose: "To stay sober and help other alcoholics to achieve sobriety." I'm concerned that calling A.A. a religion will only make that worthy mission more difficult.

*David Ramsey*

QUOTE OF THE DAY

*“So we must be content to observe the rough boundary between that which is and that which is not ‘religion’... A.A. is on the religion side of the line.”*

*From the decision of the U.S. Court of Appeals in DeStefano v Emergency Housing Group et al., April 2001*

Billboard (cont.)

contest was to make students aware of the many ways that advertisers manipulate youth to sell them tobacco, alcohol, and other drugs," said Amy Morse, a prevention educator at the Alcohol and Drug Abuse Council, who coordinated the poster contest.

The contest also enabled the students to use advertising techniques to counter the negative effects of commercial advertising on youth, Morse said.

Morse explained that DeVita's poster was selected for the "creative way it combined an anti-drug message with a truly outstanding piece of art." DeVita's artwork will also be reproduced on small posters that will be distributed to county schools and public places elsewhere in the county

Renewal (cont.)

in Binghamton.

The conference had three stated goals: 1. To identify the primary obstacles encountered by substance abuse professionals... 2. To provide concrete practical mechanisms to address such obstacles... 3. To reduce the stress load on the human service worker.

Following the keynote address, Ramsey and Elizabeth Currier, executive director of LEAF, outlined the goals of the Recovery Advocacy movement, which advocates "breaking down the wall of shame and stigma that creates discrimination against recovering people."

The afternoon session was devoted to presentations on "three new interventions: acupuncture, described as "an adjunct treatment option for people in recovery"; Eye Movement Desensitization Reprocessing, for managing cravings and preventing relapse; and creative arts therapy, a non-verbal form of expression.

## Reality Check Goes Public



**IN ALBANY, REALITY Checker Elizabeth Breese (left) displays anti-Big Tobacco signs. Above, Bethany Austin, speaks about the group's goals at a press conference in Walton.**

**W**hen a lively band of teenagers takes to the streets to launch an attack on the transgressions of the Big Tobacco Companies, who can resist their energy and arguments? Not many, it seems. In May, the Delaware County Reality Check group went public in two important locations. First it held a press conference for Delaware County media at Town Hall in Walton, then traveled to Albany for a “Stick It to ‘Em” event, where they met

other Reality check group from elsewhere in the state. The youths were accompanied by a hearse and a coffin filled with subscription cards from magazines that both appeal to teens and accept and run cigarette advertising. Pasted to the cards were stickers reading “Rejected and Returned.” The Delaware County Reality Check group alone collected over five thousand cards, which were bundled up and taken to the post office.

## Graffiti Fest



**WOULD-BE ARTISTS** try their hands at the Reality Check Graffiti Fest in the American Legion field in Delhi. Some 26 easels were set up for participants to create anti-tobacco art work. The field was also adorned by signs (right) pointing out the similarities between cigarettes, battery acid, and rat poison.

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Friend of the Council**

**APPLICATION**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Name**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Company/Organization**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Address**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Town/City**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**State                      Zip Code**

There is no charge to become a Friend of the Council. Voluntary contributions, however, are welcomed and are tax deductible.

**CONTRIBUTION \$** \_\_\_\_\_  
(Make checks payable to ADAC)

Return this form to the  
Alcohol and Drug Abuse Council  
72 Main Street, Delhi, NY 13753

**Council Notes**



Barbara Kaplan of Delhi has signed on as an instructor for the Drinking Driver Program that the Council operates for the Department of Motor Vehicles. Barbara, secretary to the academic vice-president at SUNY Delhi, will alternate with another instructor to teach the course, which meets once a week for seven weeks.

Drivers convicted of a drinking driver offense who wish to obtain a conditional license must take the course, which covers the functioning of the traffic system and the fundamentals of addiction. The participants are also screened for substance abuse and may be referred on for evaluation.

Barbara is active in local theatrical productions as both an actor and director. She received her master of

fine arts degree in directing from Wayne State University.

**GOING CAMPING**

The Council will again sponsor a four-day-long day camp for high-energy and other children. Summer Adventure 2002 will be held from Monday July 22 through Thursday July 25 at SUNY Delhi.

The camp is for children ages 11 to 14 (grades 5 to 8) who may need help coping with behavioral problems, negative changes in family circumstances, substance abuse, lack of school participation, lack of motivation, family history of alcoholism.

The camp will have alcohol and substance abuse prevention and safety messages tied into its activities, which will include swimming, Native American living skills, map and compass skills, and nature crafts.

In addition to the Council, Summer Adventure 2002 is sponsored by Americorp, Delaware County Youth Bureau, SUNY Delhi, and the Tri-Town Boys and Girls Club.

**LifeLine**

Alcohol and Drug Abuse Council of Delaware County  
72 Main Street  
Delhi, New York 13753  
**(607)746-8300**

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**"Life is something precious..."**  
from Dan DeVita's winning poster