

MAN, ALIVE!

A Journal of Men's Wellness

Summer 2000

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IT'S TIME
FOR A NEW
EDITOR

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JARDINEROS DEL CORAZÓN FIRST ANNIVERSARY

by Sandra Starr

A project called Jardineros Del Corazón (JDC, "Gardeners of the Heart") at East San José Elementary School in Albuquerque, New Mexico, is changing the lives of students, teachers, parents, volunteers, and community members. David Johnson, a member of the Albuquerque men's group which assisted in initiating JDC, named the program. East San José Elementary School Principal, Richard Baldonado, working in conjunction with Sandra Starr (APS 21st Century Grant) and three members of the men's group (David Witherspoon, Ken Betzen, and Pat Sauer), combined efforts in January 1999 to create a strong environmental education program which

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East San Jose students make a trench for the serpentine walls.

Man, Alive! is a journal of men sharing from the heart the joys and problems of being male.

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Paper is okay, but please send submissions as a text file on a floppy disk or as an e-mail attachment if you can, to save us having to type your words into the computer. We'll be happy to help you do this. Please try to keep submissions below 1200 words.

We reserve the right to edit all submissions. No fees are paid and no submissions are returned. Copyright of all published material reverts to the author on publication.

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Notes from the editor

This is my last issue as editor of *Man, Alive!* My wife and I are making some major changes in our lives which will take us out of the country for extended periods. I plan to attend this year's Summer Conference, but don't know about other conferences after that. I'll come back if I can, guys!

I was a complete unknown to Men's Wellness when I volunteered to take on the editorship of this magazine, which I had seen before and appreciated. I thought it would get me deep into the heart of the organization—little knowing that the heart was beating so intensely. I look at men very differently now; I know the man who is desperate to find men friends like those in this group (because I was one), and I can reach out to men, knowing that some will not reject me for doing so. I can go into the world with you guys in my back pocket, knowing that we've made meaning for ourselves. I have a very different sense of myself now, and it is symbolized by the sword which Benjamin Miller gave me for safe-keeping at the Fall Conference. (In case I can't make it to the Fall Conference this year, I'll make plans with him to pass it along to one of you.)

We're leaving this country in part to get some perspective on our lives here. We think we may be happier with a quality of life other than that available in the United States. That's a broad-brush statement which hides a multitude of dissatisfactions, one of which pertains to the distribution of *Man, Alive*. I'm one of the people who deposits the magazine at various places around town—bookstores, Wild Oats and the like—for display along with other free publications. Lately some clever local business concern has taken over maintenance of those shelves. The racks are now little wire cubicles labeled one by one for approved publications. There is no "miscellaneous" shelf, no *Man, Alive!* rack, no label that says, "Look here if you're disheartened to find nothing of meaning elsewhere." You see the racks all over the city now. The retailers say that we have to deal with the subcontractor, it's out of their hands. Another market niche clobbered into submission. But it means that *Man, Alive!* is no longer welcome in those places. Where do we go with our message, which is so blatantly antithetical to most of the other publications on those racks? We can all count numerous ways in which our opportunities for community are circumscribed.

Our message is vitally important. *Men's Wellness saves lives*. It's that simple. One of you guys, please step up to take this publication forward. We need to help each other remember!

I love you men.
David

would enhance students' math, literacy, and science skills. Program participation doubled in the fall from 7 to 14 teachers, providing the necessary number of adults to continue integrating environmental education into the school's academic programs.

This article, written at the project's first anniversary, outlines our progress through the past several months into the new millennium. Together touching the earth, man and woman, teacher and student, dark- and light-skinned, young and old, and speaking different languages, we experience community and a gentle beckoning to common ground. We hope you enjoy reading about our accomplishments and that you will feel inspired to add your voice, spirit, and energy to a program which enlivens its workers, the community, the children, and our planet.

The seasons themselves drive and measure the accomplishments of the Jardineros. The beginning of the school year found the kindergarten children and their teachers busily planting fall gardens, giving the students a chance to see that spring is not the only planting season. Colorful Jardineros identity buttons created in a children's art project reflected the joy they felt in working with the project.

The first graders, who are housed in the same building with the kindergarten students, began working with their teachers on plans to transform their large indoor planter. Previously the 6-foot-round planter had been dubbed "the giant ashtray," due to its having been filled with nothing but sand. Walk into the building today and your eyes will rest on a planter that would make the local shopping malls envious. Colorful crotons and peace lilies surround a lovely *Ficus ali* tree, while underneath blue myrtle and English ivy begin to cover the open soil. In the words of first-grade teacher Andrew Atencio, "...this project has shown the students how much they can enjoy working together as a group. They also learn how to take care of the environment—plants and animals. I've heard students telling each other, 'I planted that,' and you can hear the personal pride in their voice. They'll keep on telling each other this, even next year."

While the younger students worked on fall gardens and the indoor planter, several older students,

along with 3 or 4 teachers, other staff members and volunteers, initiated plans for the east side project, a proposed environmental education center.

Following several student-teacher brainstorming sessions, Ken Betzen and David Witherspoon created an architectural drawing of buildings and their proposed relationship to the theme gardens, watering systems, retaining walls and other structures.

Part of the students' motivation to work with Jardineros stems from their direct involvement in efforts that support the project. Paying for over 1,500 landscaping blocks to create retaining walls for a "green-belt" can look like a mammoth job to fourth graders. However, working side by side with grown-ups, a capable community grew in which adults and students combined their energies to address the resource needs. A student drew a big smile on one of the bricks, nicknaming it "Windsor Block." "Windsor" stood by a donation jar inviting families, friends of the school, and visitors to "Adopt-A-Block" to help with the cost of completing the terrace walls. Committed fourth graders immediately began filling the jar with their snack money.

Contagious enthusiasm provided the energy for grant writing, and awards were received from Keep Albuquerque Beautiful, Keep New Mexico Beautiful, and the Dusty Roadrunner Program. Join-A-School partners Ethicon and Wal-Mart provided tools and human resources to help. Rowlands donated peat moss and grass seed, a private donor inspired by the children's work gave \$200 to Jardineros, and Home Depot affirmed a request that the children be able to visit the place where the blocks were purchased. An additional donation from East San José PTA, plus monies from the 21st Century Grant and direct school funds, made it possible to complete the project's Phase One by year's end.

Community residents walking, biking, and riding along south Broadway began noticing the children at work in their efforts to beautify the area. A man on a bike stopped to remark, "I went to school here as a kid. This place has never looked so good. It makes me proud to live here." PNM and Albuquerque City trucks honk as they drive by, the drivers

Continued on next page

Jardineros, continued from previous page

waving at the children busily digging trenches, laying and leveling blocks, and back-filling.

Student Saul Bencomo says, "They put a lot of money into buying these bricks and everything. I feel proud of my school." Standing near him, Natalie Bojorquez (fourth grade manager of tool check-out and check-in), remarks, "I liked learning to use the level. I think this place will look like a forest someday." Eva Gonzales joins her, "...and I also like playing with the water hose." "I feel happy when I see the school looking better," says Juan Mendoza, "and I like that we are doing a 'green belt' that will help get rid of the street noise."

Spring on the campus heralded plans for two major celebrations in which JDC played a significant role: Arbor Day and Earth Day.

March 26, Arbor Day 2000, dawned partly-cloudy, windy, and cold. In spite of the wind, Principal Richard Baldonado welcomed Ethicon personnel, guests from Keep New Mexico Beautiful, Keep Albuquerque Beautiful, Wal-Mart, and APS School Board Member Dolores Herrera to ESJ's campus. The students assisted teachers in presenting the architectural drawing and program plans and the Adopt-A-Block program. The celebration also honored Benny Pohl, full-time volunteer in ESJ's Parent Room. The Jardineros presented Benny with a hand-carved plaque displaying "Benny's Bosque," marking one of the theme gardens as his own. The formal ceremony ended with the school chorus leading the group in singing the Jardineros song, which was written by Pat Sauer.

Following the formalities, everyone joined in planting trees and bushes, shoveling dirt, digging trenches, carrying, positioning and leveling bricks, and raking the back-filled areas. Students, who by this time were adept at following tool check-out and check-in procedures, made certain all necessary implements were available. Teachers pre-assigned work tasks, allowing students to work in pairs and small teams. Systems learning for fourth graders!

The sun had barely set on Arbor Day when plans began for Earth Day. The campus mediators joined in the project by assuming the role of "Garden Guardians." In a school assembly they depicted their new

role in amusing skits that taught care for the environment to the entire student body. Ethicon again appeared in full force with more plants and the manpower to construct a Jardineros tool-shed. The shed sits in an inner courtyard where fifth graders are developing a xeriscape garden reflecting the natural environment of New Mexico. As the students observe the two men who teach them, they get the message: men can tenderly care for the earth, using their strength in ways that support life and community.

JDC could not have grown so quickly and done so well without the support of citizens who care not only about children's academic achievements, but also about the spirit of community in which they learn. As the first school year of 2000 draws to an end, we find ourselves looking forward to the fall when the next phase of the project will be implemented: the construction of a greenhouse, an outdoor classroom, and the introduction of the project to other APS schools through Jardineros "Ambassadors."

Fourth grade teacher Kathy Salgado states, "In Jardineros, students get to put into practice the math, literacy, and science they learn in the classroom. When students are able to contribute to their school and community, it enhances their concern for both. Other teachers are surprised at the growth of Jardineros and what the program has done for our school. A lot of the teachers are now starting to walk their kids through the east-side area. Everyone is becoming more involved."

Bilingual special education teacher Regina Whitmore continues, "It's so meaningful to the students to see the product of their work happen right before their eyes. Jardineros is teaching the students the pillars of value taught in APS' Character Counts, one of which is citizenship. The children are becoming caring, productive citizens as the pride and respect for their school grows. Just the other day I saw a young boy stop another boy and ask him to pick up his trash because he didn't want his school to be dirty. The kids are more likely to take care of the beauty here because they are a part of making it happen." Says her colleague, Grizelda Meyers, "...this program helps us channel the energy of children diagnosed



Further work on the serpentine terrace walls.

with attention deficit disorder (ADD); they work well in this project because they can direct their attention to specific tasks outside and know they're helping their school. I've noticed a lot of kids who want to help with the program who didn't want to help before."

Principal Baldonado sums it up: "It's so good for the students to work with plants and vegetation in their academic learning. The added blessing is that it makes the campus beautiful. Through osmosis the students have begun to see how their efforts have benefited the whole campus and their community."

Wouldn't you like to see your voice among these next year? Join the *Jardineros Del Corazón* as we create community with children! Interested persons

can call Ken Betzen at 379-7121, Principal Richard Baldonado at 764-2005, or Sandra Starr at 243-6688. ▶▶

When one discovers
that he is riding a dead horse,
it is best to dismount.

Dakota Proverb

The New Mexico Men's Wellness
Fall Conference
Oct. 12-15, 2000

Wellness Conferences and Being Real

by Robert Francis Johnson

I have enjoyed *Man, Alive!* for a long time. The New Mexican grass roots model of men's work has been a good one, and the Men's Wellness Conferences I've attended have been personally important to me, but lately I've been feeling a gap between what occurs at conferences and what occurs in real life.

What I have found through the years is that conflict of any kind often ends relationship with men I've met at the Conference, and that once the door is closed, it's closed. In one case I don't even know what the conflict was, but the man refuses to engage in any way with me. Another man whom I invited to be part of an ongoing art project I've been doing for the last four years became verbally and emotionally abusive and walked away from mediation I had arranged with someone we both trust, and didn't seem to find anything paradoxical about going to a men's conference on authenticity. I recently have heard of two men leaving long-term men's groups with no one in either group even contacting them about their decisions to leave. I have grief and sadness concerning these occurrences, and this article is my attempt to understand the difficulty and offer suggestion for greater understanding.

Some things need to be said about conferences and workshops:

They are not real, in the sense that therapy isn't real; they are optimal, ideal situations.

In relationships, commitment is the cornerstone, and cooperation is a means of managing conflict in the messy ways of real life.

Sharing feelings in itself is not intimacy. Intimacy has to do with time, trust, commitment, and working through conflict.

The Men's Wellness Conference is a great beginning to a process of becoming authentic. Men's groups can be a wonderful way of gaining support for changes you wish to make, but they are artificial constructs, and unless you create realness by the actions of your life, they will remain pleasurable havens from the real world.

The earth is dying, gentlemen. The earth is dying. Earth Watch Institute gives us 13 more years of consumerism before we will have so destroyed the infrastructure of our environment that we will begin the extinction of our own species. What a legacy for our children!

Did you know that sport utility vehicles (SUV's) are exempt from clean air standards? In 80% of bills approved in state and federal legislatures, the bills were approved based on who put up the most money. In 90% of elections, whoever spends the most gets elected. If you think we have a functional democracy, I have the deed to a bridge in Brooklyn I'd like to sell you!

The way is clear, gentlemen. We no longer have the luxury of sitting around licking our wounds and congratulating ourselves on the good work we do in workshops while the life we're living is stealing our children's future. You cannot heal the inner healer until you heal the world around you. The Navajos call it "walking in beauty." Strangely, traditional psychology does not address the political or natural environment in its world view. The emerging field of ecopsychology does. There is no inner healing possible without healing our political and natural environment. We need to move from an egocentric view of the world to an ecocentric one. Learning about sustainable living, mindfulness, and living ecologically sound lives is a great beginning. I believe our workaholic and busy-ness is a defense against feeling the feelings of grief for the world we are destroying.

If you care about men, you must care about every man. If you want peace and love in your life, you must be peace and love. If we want a better world for our children, we must bond together and live the world we want to create. Dream a new dream and then live it! ►►

Editor's note: Robert Francis Johnson can be reached in Santa Fe at (505) 954-4495

We Men Asleep

by Robert Francis Johnson

We men asleep; Caoineadh Na Maighdine.
It has been too long since we had the rite of passage;
if we received even a map for our journey, it was a false one.
And so we create an adolescent culture where we men,
apparently in charge, act more boy than man.
We have created a culture of violence and destruction.
We have forgotten the sustainable values in our history.
How can we create a rite of passage when we don't live values that are real?
Do you drive a kick-ass, gas-guzzling, SUV pollution machine to feel like a man?
Do you play the house as investment scam,
knowing your children can never afford to live there?
We are stealing our children's future, we men asleep,
and destroying the world ever so discreetly.
Ah, what the hell, I can't write any more.
My hand is frozen in a fist.
Perhaps I will find a young man to give a real map and some love.
Perhaps I will do nothing and watch it all explode.

Who Done It Blues

by Matthew David

It was dem lazy no 'count niggers who done it;
it was dem greedy self righteous jews who done it;
it was them savage heathen injuns who done it;
it was them no good castratin' women who done it;
it was them slant-eyed spooky gooks who done it;
it was them spoiled disrespectful kids who done it.
No, it was them useless sickly takin' up space old farts
who done it.

It was them dirty A-rabs who done it;
it was them greaseball spics who done it;
it was them steal-your-kids-and-make-them-queer fags
who done it;
it was them man hatin' communist dykes who done it.

Who done it was them that's got, or who's hot to get,
deep power-money reasons for keepin' you divided, and
down.

They's the ones what's always.....

ENRICHING THE CIRCLE

PART 1: THE INVITATION

by Harold Littlebird and Robert Speake

Spirit moved Harold to ask Robert to interview him for *Man, Alive!* about more Native American participation in the Fall Conference. Here is Part 1 of that interview, taped May 3, 2000, as edited for publication in *Man, Alive!* Part 2, which is Harold's personal story of his NMMW experience, will be published later in *Man, Alive!*

ROBERT: So, Harold, we're going to explore some of the things that have gotten in the way of bringing more Native American men to the circle to tell their stories, and maybe some ways we can get around those past problems?

HAROLD: Right. I was once part of a multi-cultural group and, while I was active in the group, I kept hearing over and over that, when men of their own color got together, the talk was always bullshit talk, always talk about sports; it had nothing to do with anything that was going on with them personally. Or, they said, we talk to each other in prison. And that reality struck me hard, because it's particularly true for native men: there isn't a venue to talk with other men, or even with men of their own color on personal issues. I kept thinking, well, Men's Wellness is around, maybe more people will find out about it. But it hasn't happened that way. Now I really feel there has to be a positive push to recruit men. And I'm ready to take the lead on that.

ROBERT: So a group of men sitting in a circle at Ghost Ranch telling their stories is kind of rare.

HAROLD: I think so. Traditionally, for native people, there are gatherings of men, but they are mainly for that community. They're not open to just a group of

men who are of like mind and like heart. It's more in a ceremonial way that a native man would be involved.

ROBERT: Why is it important for more native men to sit in the Men's Wellness circle? What's missing in their lives that could be enhanced by their being there?

HAROLD: There isn't a place where Native American men can talk to other men in a very serious way about men's issues. For some reason, that's taboo. Or it's just not part of the social norm.

ROBERT: But why is it important that they have a place? I understand that it's an outlet for the emotions they have bottled up, but what are the consequences of their just going on with their lives, without a place like this to open up?

HAROLD: When you're stuck in those places and you have no outlet, and you reach into the traditional world for help, something gets lost. You're doing all the outward things and you're participating, but somehow the community doesn't see the connection, doesn't feel the real person, because there's so much bottled up in him due to alcoholism, drug abuse, domestic violence, any of those things that men don't talk openly about with other men.

ROBERT: Do you think that men share the same story beneath the cultural differences?

HAROLD: Definitely. I've talked about alcoholism and drug abuse and domestic violence, but there are all those men who have come back from wars wounded in the same way and have no way of know-

ing that other men have those same horror stories to tell, and that they can find some healing for themselves just by opening up to other men. The most incredible thing about Men's Wellness is that you are truly supported, and it's honest support. No one's there to bullshit you; you're there to speak from your heart and to give it everything you can. And the men there understand it and feel it with you, celebrate it, grieve it, and release it with you. That's so important.

ROBERT: How is it different in the pueblos?

HAROLD: In a traditional community, you have medicine people. You can't just call a man and say, "I need to talk to you. I've got this heavy heart right now, heavy shoulders, and I just need to talk." That man might say, "Ah, I'd love to talk to you, but I've got problems myself." A man from the Conference wouldn't do that. He'd say, "Let's get together." You yourself are an example of that. I've come to you many times when I've been in dire straits. And vice-versa.

ROBERT: Absolutely. From our dialogue so far, it's clear to me that the circle at Ghost Ranch, whatever it involves, is unique. It's a doorway that men can walk through that can change their lives, so why isn't it a doorway that more men of color walk through? Aside from the other cultural restraints, are you ostracized amongst your own people because you walked through that doorway? Have you suffered from reaching out to white men for support, instead of getting it from the pueblo? I'm not thinking particularly about your personal experience, because you've lived in both worlds for years, but is this a problem that we are going to encounter as we move further down the road toward more of a multi-colored circle? Is that going to create problems for men in the tribes?

HAROLD: I think it is a barrier because native men look at things from a distance to see if they're going to feel comfortable in a situation. It's just the way we are. There's an aloofness, a holding back. I say

to myself, I'm going to see how I'm treated first before I step into this. I don't want to go in and then find out I'm not safe here.

ROBERT: Well, that's something that we have some control over. If we need to be more inviting, more encouraging, we can be. My question is: for the Native American men attracted to the circle because it fills a need in their lives, what price will they pay within their own culture for coming to Ghost Ranch?

HAROLD: Some men might say, "You mean you do all that huggy-feely stuff with those guys up there?" Or, "Hey, man, you're not macho enough?" Until the stereotypes break down both ways, there's always going to be risk, that place where a native man has to decide, how do I step into it, involve myself? And then, how do I fit back into my community? For me personally, because I've been in both worlds, the gap hasn't been that difficult.

ROBERT: So some men would be attracted to your own example.

HAROLD: I become that little stone that gets put in place to say, OK here's a foundation to build on. More what I think about now is, I've been actively involved with the Conference for years. I say to myself, you've seen how much this has helped you, now how do you give it back to other native men, so they can find that for themselves?

ROBERT: The other men in the circle at Ghost Ranch probably need to build the bridge for native men to cross. So far, we've talked a lot about offering a place for native men to sit in the circle and share from their heart, talking stick style, about whatever's going on in their lives. It's clear to me that they need us, but we probably need them, too. What is it that they can offer to us that we don't have?

HAROLD: So many men at Ghost Ranch don't come from a ceremonial or ritual kind of community, yet they're hungry for all of this. More Native American

Continued on next page

involvement will strengthen all of our rituals. And there will be a communal empowerment that is somehow lacking.

ROBERT: So the presence of Native American men makes the rituals more authentic?

HAROLD: Well, not so much more authentic, but it would give the larger community of men at the gathering a chance to envision it for themselves, because it comes from a stronger perspective.

ROBERT: Rooted in ancient tradition from their lineage.

HAROLD: Right. I've shared a lot with Men's Wellness, but it would be wonderful to have people from other nations, tribal people, come. They would offer, in their own way, certain things about what we're doing that the men at Ghost Ranch can either integrate or at least listen to in a respectful way. And I think that's a heart and mind kind of thing, because the tribal men would be speaking from a very unique perspective.

ROBERT: So you think that our spirituality might have a chance to deepen just from having some more Native American men present in the circle?

HAROLD: Definitely. I've seen it happen, in my time there. We're not all of the same religious background, but we share our differences while we're there. Somehow all these spiritual perspectives create something magical that shines like a diamond: all the different facets create the jewel that is Men's Wellness. It's not just one person's approach, but a blending of many approaches. Having more Native Americans involved can only enrich this experience, because they'll add what they know from their own traditions, traditions that go further back than anything I know.

ROBERT: That might help you with your recruitment. If you said to a native man, come, you need the circle, you might meet resistance. But, if you say to him, come, you might need the circle, but the circle

definitely needs you. With this approach, a native man, instead of just being someone coming for the first time, might come with a particular role to fulfill, a role unique to his tradition that might give him a feeling that he's contributing something that we don't have.

HAROLD: That's what happened to me when I first came. In between times of my deepest grief, pouring out tears and tears, rivers of tears that weekend—I must've come back ten pounds lighter, all I did was drink water and release it with tears—I kept saying to myself I feel so good to be here. I want to involve myself with as many things as I possibly can, and I want to share them. So I opened up with songs, with prayers, with everything I could. ►►

HAROLD is an acclaimed potter, storyteller, poet, and performer who makes his living from his art. His new CD, *Into the Fire*, distills over fifteen years of profound life experience into a dozen songs. It can be purchased for \$18 by mailing a check to Harold or Marsha Littlebird at 6 Buskirk Lane, Peralta, NM 87042. If you know a Native American man who might be interested in attending the Fall Conference and want Harold to talk to him, please call Harold at (505) 869-0149. The organizing committee has said it can support four scholarships for these men, but Harold thinks he might be able to bring more than four, so if you can fund part or all of a Native American scholarship, please make that known to the organizing committee.

ROBERT is an engineer who has always refused to behave like one. He does a little creative writing, plays a mean mouth harp, and values above all the stories other men have to tell him, like this one. Please contact Robert for a tape or transcript of this interview at the cost of reproduction. His phone number is (505) 268-0796 and his email address is macrcs@cybermesa.com. Tapes and transcripts of the interview will also be available at the Summer Gathering and the Fall Conference.

Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow

by Harry O.

YESTERDAY

How old is sixty?
Forty years ago it seemed ancient,
newly married, first job, new responsibilities.
Not any more.

Forty years ago I envisioned life-long friendships,
sharing vacations, experiences and memories,
little league, music lessons, little people.
Not any more.

Forty years ago people spent a lifetime with one
company,
lived in the same town,
cared about community,
cried, laughed, and raised each other's children.
Not any more.

TODAY

How old is sixty?
Not too old to transplant to a new land,
a land of rugged mountains.
Thunderstorms, born high over the mountains,
rumble across the mesas,
unsure of where to go,
flaming sunsets being pushed over the horizon by
the relentless approach of darkness,
a night sky filled with millions of white, twinkling
Christmas lights.
Something found.

How old is sixty?
Still young enough to believe in miracles.
My life partner healthy and alive,
a new friend who helped me become employed, not
once but twice,

a caring, wonderful person, who herself has found
a miracle.

Something found.

How old is sixty?

Not too old to realize how rewarding it is to have
fellowship with women as well as men.

Not too old to realize that caring people are not
cast out of the same mold.

Goodbye Midwest, hello Santa Fe.

Something found.

How old is sixty?

Not too old to cry.

Not too old to miss children who have become
their own beings.

Not too old to miss grandchildren growing up
without us.

Something lost.

TOMORROW

How old is sixty?

Young, my friends, young.

Grandchildren will soon be able to travel on their
own.

Rafting, train rides, moving rocks that they pretend
will change the course of rivers.

A real adventure for them, great fun for us.

Something new.

How old is sixty?

Young enough to write poetry,

watch my soul mate develop her artistic skills,
learn to appreciate the artistic talents of others,
enjoy work again with all my friends at the

Institute.

Something wonderful.

Poems from the Juvenile Detention Center

Timothy D. Karsten writes: *"I volunteer in the juvenile detention center, cofacilitating with Judith Fein a Tuesday evening class on creative writing and communication skills. Currently, the writing of the youth we work with, ages 12 to 20, is published on <http://www.livefromsantafe.com>...These are kids who have mostly flunked out of school and have trouble spelling their name. Somehow, we are able to get them to write deeply from their hearts and express profound truth. We are working to help them improve their self-esteem, and publication of their writings has a tremendous impact."*

LOVE

By an 18-year-old Chicano Male

I once had a love but I couldn't keep it real
But I'm told that in time a broken heart will
 heal
But I don't think it's true, lost my one and
 only boo
Now I'm trapped in this hell not knowing
 what to do
I loved and I lost, but now it's all over
can't live my life sober, stay down like a
 soldier
Stress gets harder and harder, drama gets
 larger and larger
The temperature is risin' hot like some
 boiled water
I can't see the big picture
My shorty I miss her, wanna hug her wanna
 kiss her
But I'm stuck in this blizzard, and court's
 comin' soon
Feel like I'm being consumed
Once I stand in that room I know I'm facing
 my doom

No more fun, can't see my son, cause I
 chose to bust my gun
Facing one to ten let's pray I get one
I know it's comin' so my fears I finally gotta
 face
18 years old and caught a case
I made a mistake I can't erase, but I guess
 there's nothing left
Take a deep breath
What are my options where's my next step
I know it's lookin' shady from the outside
 looking in
And if I die tonight
Please Lord forgive me for my sins....

LOVE

By an 15-year-old female

I keep dreaming this dream and it's all about
 you.
I have this wild fantasy you dream of me,
 too.
I keep losing myself in happenings of the
 past,
And I keep asking myself how long will this
 last?
My friends say let him go. He's not worth it.
 I hope you know.
My head knows they're right, but my heart
 cannot see.
I thought I was meant for you. I thought you
 were meant for me.
I know you once loved me, and I loved you,
 too.
But I'm fine the way I am and I'll be better
 without you.

LOVE

By an 17-year-old male

When I was little, say about five-years-old,
my mother left me and my brother.

Me and my brother didn't really know our
mother long enough to know her
love.

But we were little
so we didn't care,
and by the time we were old enough
to know what love was,
we didn't really show our love
for our mother,
for we didn't really know our mother.
That's all I can say about my
mother.

I thank God for having my father, my aunty,
and my grandparents
cause after my mother left, these
were my parents
that took care of me and my brother
and that's how I got to know
what love is in a family.

LOVE

By an 18-year-old male

There once was a time long ago when I
didn't know love.

I was as hard as steel, knowing nothing but
what I wanted.

I was up to no good, drinking, partying,
sleeping around.

Then one night at a party I saw the most
beautiful girl in the world,

And a mysterious feeling came over me.

I felt very weird, but I also felt really good
inside, and out.

For the first time in my life I was in Love,
and it felt good.

So me and this beautiful girl talked and
talked and got to know each other.
A few days after that we were together as a
couple.

It felt good and lasted for awhile, then in
one heartbeat it was all
taken away.

Love is good and works in mysterious ways,
But the end is more painful than getting shot
or stabbed.

So whatever you do, don't fall in Love,
unless you want to get hurt.

LOVE

By an 15-year-old female

When you find your true love

It may be exciting at first

Because you think he's the one

He breaks your heart and you give him
chance after chance

He says he will change, but all he says is
lies

You start to think when did I do wrong

Was it me or was he just full of lies »»

**NEW MEXICO MEN'S WELLNESS
2000 SUMMER CONFERENCE**

Friday, July 28 – Sunday, July 30

“COMING BACK TO LIFE”

The Summer 2000 Men's Wellness Conference will be again be held in the beautiful National Forest of the Jemez Mountains, east of Cuba, NM. The theme of this year's conference is "Coming Back to Life." Opening ceremonies will begin at 7 p.m. on Friday, July 28, and the conference will end about 1 p.m. on Sunday, July 30. As always, the Summer Conference is a unique and powerful opportunity for men to come together to deeply share their laughter, joy and grief in a safe and supportive setting.

As the theme of this year's conference suggests, the weekend will be an occasion to revitalize and to celebrate the gift of Life in all its myriad forms in and around us. We'll explore our relationships to these various dimensions and look at how we may keep ourselves from being fully engaged with Life. Do our old self-images and stories about ourselves limit our capacity for joy and new possibilities? As Nelson Mandela said, "Our deepest fear is that we are powerful beyond measure, it is our light and not our darkness that most frightens us...your playing small does not serve the world".

Small and large group sharings will be vital elements in the weekend, and will form the foundation for many other "conversations" such as drumming, music, song, dance, sweat lodges and ceremony. Small group workshops on topics germane to the theme of the weekend will also be available. Plenty of time for relaxation, play, hikes and just hanging out will be available.

Included in the fee for the weekend is a delicious meal on Saturday night prepared by our local chef. Young men from the age of 16 up are most welcome. Scholarships will, as usual, be offered to open the event to as many men as possible. Please submit a brief explanation of need when you send in your registration.

We are seeking volunteers to lead workshops as well as offerings of poetry, song, dance or music. If you have questions, suggestions or a special interest that you feel relates to this year's theme, please contact Gary McFarland at 505-281-9477 or e-mail at GaryMcFar@aol.com.

**Because early registration is most helpful for planning purposes,
please submit your registration by the end of June.**

Name(s) _____

Address _____

City/State/Zip _____

Phone _____ e-mail _____

I'd like to volunteer to _____

If you prefer a vegetarian meal, please check here: _____ Do not use my name for any men's wellness mailings _____

Note: Your registration includes a free subscription to Man Alive!, the New Mexico Men's Wellness journal.

Please reserve my space(s)..... _____ x \$35.00 each = _____

T-Shirts..... _____ x \$15.00 each = _____

Please circle size: **M L XL XXL**

Total Enclosed = _____

Send registration and check to: NM Men's Wellness **2000 Summer Conference**, P.O. Box 884, Sandia Park, NM 87047
We'll send you a confirmation and instruction letter upon receipt of your registration form.

I resigned.

**I will not be pushed, filed,
indexed, briefed, debriefed,
or numbered!**

My life is my own.

The Prisoner (Patrick McGoohan)

The New Mexico
Men's Wellness
Fall Conference
Oct. 12-15, 2000

Calendar

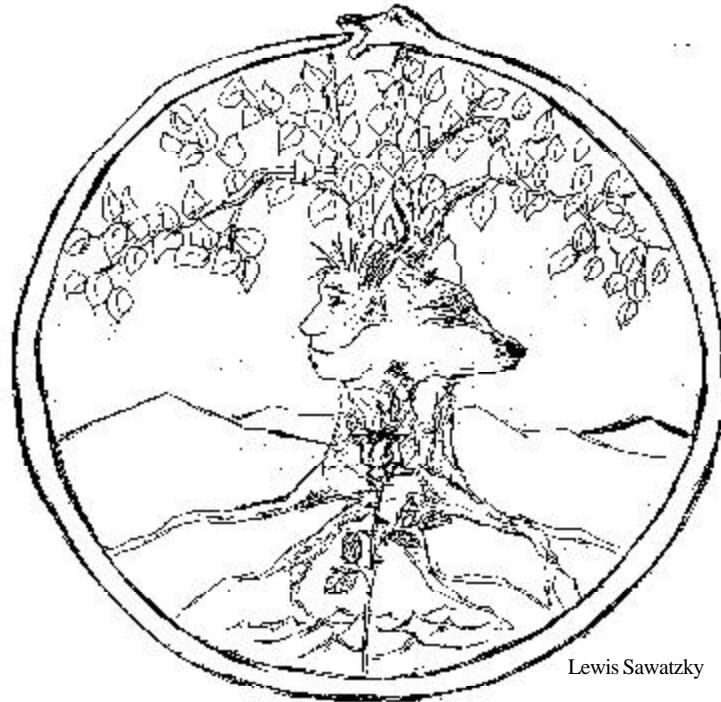
Fall Gathering – October 12-15, 2000.

Wednesday Brown Bag Lunch – Wednesdays noon–two p.m. at the Men's Center (above Haagen-Dasz on the Plaza in Santa Fe). The "Brown Bag Lunch" is a "come one, come all" men's lunch group which has been meeting in Santa Fe for nearly ten years.

If you're looking to join a men's group, or your group is looking for new members, the contact for Albuquerque is Paul Steinkoenig (505) 255-1013 (days) and the contact for Santa Fe is Israel Serr (505) 471-1952 (days).

NEW MEXICO MEN'S WELLNESS
2000 SUMMER CONFERENCE

Friday, July 28 – Sunday, July 30, 2000



“COMING BACK TO LIFE”

Details and registration form on page 14.

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