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Parents Know the Drug Threat



By Kermit Banks
SHERIFF

Today's Subject: The Drug Scene In Our Country

This is No. 1 in my new series of "letters" to parents. Since I cannot possibly talk to every parent individually I find this is a speedy and efficient way to communicate. This series, as the title implies, will be to give all parents in our community some of the latest information on drug abuse.

A noted college professor in the east said recently, "the present generation of young people in our schools and colleges are the best informed, the most intelligent, and the most idealistic of any we have ever had in this country." He adds, "today's young people are more moral than their elders, 90% of them." Only a small minority of young people are using and abusing drugs, but a minority still means a great number of young people, some quite young, and the number is evidently increasing rapidly.

This is a drug-obsessed society. In 1965 about 167,000,000 prescriptions were written by doctors for psychotropic drugs, the kind that change or affect mood or behavior. Adults were the main consumers, and so we must assume that adults themselves are high on the list of drug abusers.

If this is true, and national statistics seem to indicate it, the parents must look to themselves when trying to understand how the drug problem got its start in the first place. However, the purpose of this series is not to place blame, but rather to become familiar with terminology, learn more about the drug problem itself, and discuss how best to cope with it as parents.

It takes no giant intellect to realize that a parent cannot scare a child into doing "the right thing" with statements that are not factual. During these trying times most children, from their associations on the street, know more about drug use and terms than their parents. Therefore, what we discuss here about drugs will be an effort to meet and surpass the knowledge of our children, so that we may better impress them on the pitfalls of drug use.

Everyone knows, if he reads at all, the use and abuse of drugs that affect the mind is spreading across the country. Hundreds of thousands, maybe millions of young Americans are tasting, testing and experimenting or going further with marijuana, LSD, with "uppies" and "downies" . . . pep pills and sedatives, with "Speed," and a few with heroin. So then, in the series ahead, we will examine such things as Oral Amphetamines, Injected Methamphetamine, Barbiturates, Heroin, Marijuana and LSD — what they look like, the names they are called by the teens, where they are obtained, how they are used, dangers of use, affects of use, reactions, etc.

For a majority of youngsters, an encounter with mind-affecting drug seems only a flirtation with the user feeling sure he can take it or leave it. Some authorities say that such experimentation can amount to drug roulette; some young people happen to be particularly susceptible to some drugs and can become dependent and hurt badly by what they intended as an innocent adventure.

American society tolerates alcohol and nicotine, both of which are technically drugs, and millions of people abuse both of them. Many drugs are taken legitimately by prescription, but there is also a black market among some potent drugs. Every year billions of sedative and pep pills are diverted to illegal use and misuse. This is enough pills per person per year to keep everyone in the United States awake and jumping for a week, and enough barbiturates to keep them in a stupor for a week, according to the Federal Food and Drug Administration.

If this information convinces you that all parents need to know more about drugs, watch for my "letter" to you next week in this paper.

UF Asks Support

Your United Fund campaign committee is faced with a formidable task this year in meeting our goal of \$14,150.

The budget committee which set this goal did not arbitrarily arrive at this figure. The goal is painstakingly set, based on the considered benefits to Yancey County from the requests of the dozen or more participating agencies.

Plans call for the most thorough canvass yet undertaken in the county in the effort to meet our goal. But the best efforts of our volunteer workers are not enough. Achieving our goal depends on the individual citizen's response to this worthwhile cause. And we hope that every citizen bears in mind that our UF spares us from being faced with a dozen or more independent drives which would otherwise be conducted in the county.

It is not the prerogative of the campaign committee to name, or put a price tag on your giving. It is vital, however, that we each give a "Fair Share". A fair share has usually been defined in united appeals such as ours, as a day's pay. Since there are many whose circumstances do not permit them to give this much, it behooves the rest of us to give generously to push the campaign "over the top."

Something new in the campaign has been added this year—the "Century Contributors Club". Any firm or individual who gives \$100 or more automatically becomes a member. The names of the Century Contributors will be published weekly in the Yancey Record during the campaign.

Your participation in the campaign, either as worker or contributor, is needed. All of us in the County stand to benefit, and the campaign team will greatly appreciate it. . . .

John Martin, President
Yancey UF



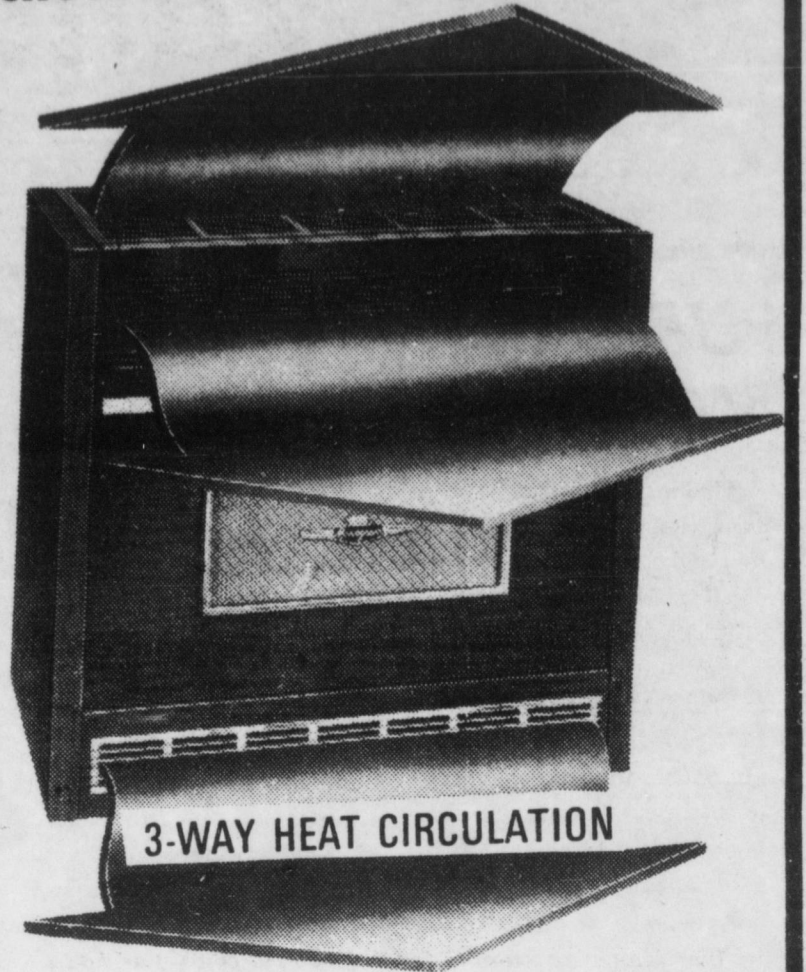
Firms and individuals contributing \$100 or more to the Yancey United Fund in 1971 include the following list to date, based on incomplete advance solicitation:

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- Carolina Tire
- Glen Raven Mill
- Mohasco
- Northwestern Bank
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- Ray Brothers Food Center
- Riddle Fuel Company
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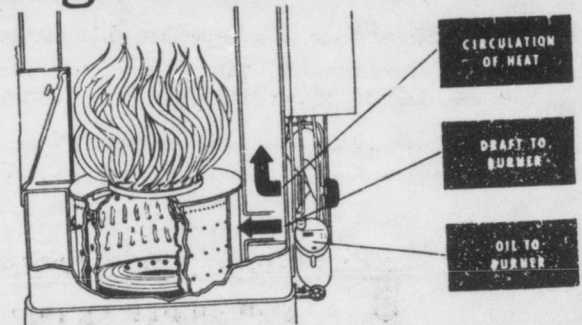
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GRIFFIN
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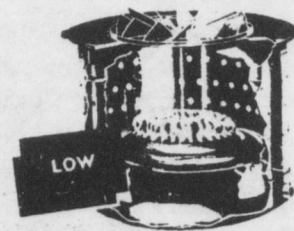
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