

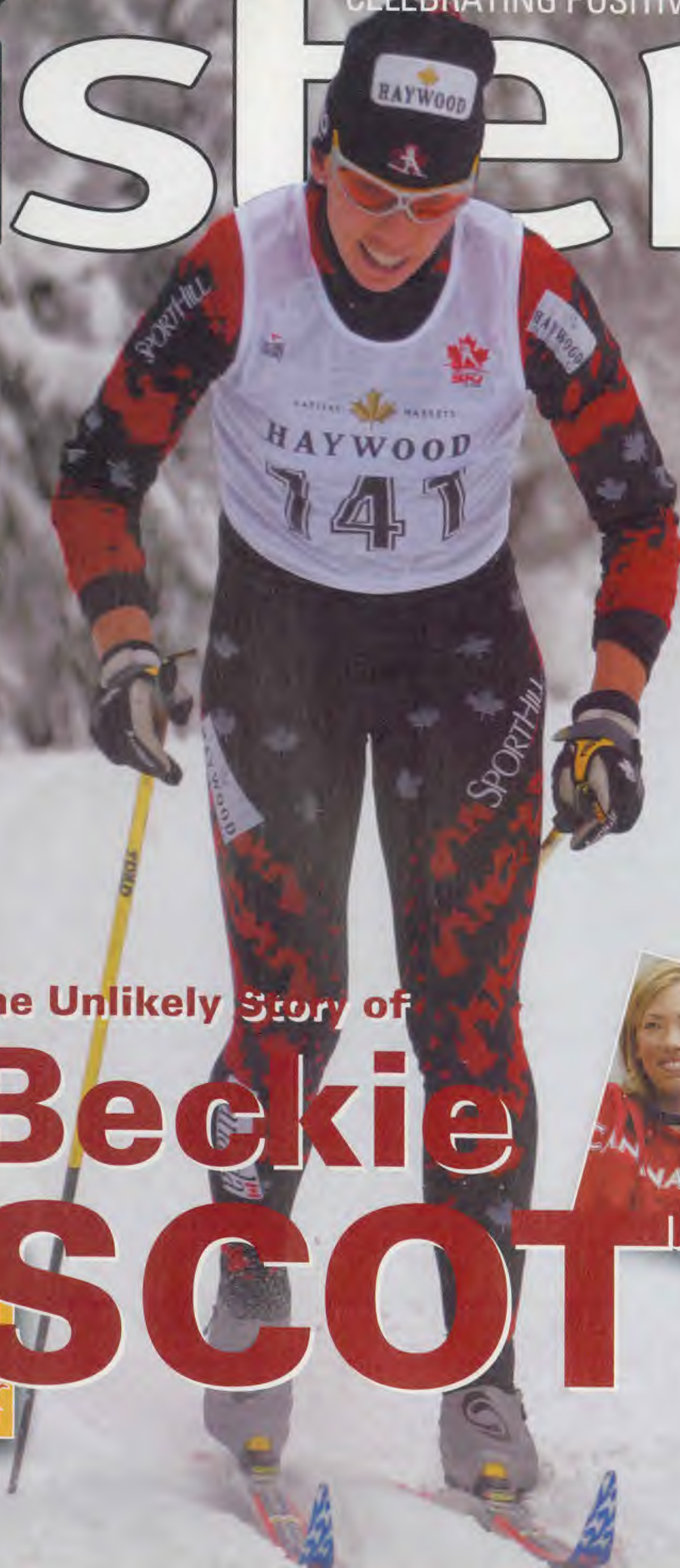
CELEBRATING POSITIVE CHOICES

Listen



The Unlikely Story of

Beckie Scott



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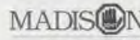
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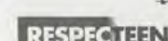
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YOUTH TO YOUTH



Backatcha

High on Life

I got on a trampoline last week for the first time. Ever. In my life. In the beginning, every time I hopped a little I thought I was going to faceplant. *Boing. Boing.* After awhile I got bolder, and it seemed almost effortless. Higher and higher. Bouncier and bouncier. Phoey on gravity! Nothing could hold me down! It was amazing. It was exhilarating.

It was hard work!

Boy, did I have a rude awakening when I got off! I tried to walk, but it felt as though my legs were bolted to the ground. I could barely move them and shuffle away from the trampoline. I'm not sure what the scientific explanation would be for that—I probably wouldn't understand it anyway—but, I know one thing. Gravity is not to be taken lightly. (Get it? Lightly? Ha!)

I was fooled on the trampoline into thinking that I could almost fly, but when I hit the ground again gravity KO'd me. Kids who try drugs experience the same effect. They think their "high" will never wear off, that it's how life can really be. But, when they crash, they crash hard. Instead of life feeling the way it had been before drugs, it feels worse. So they take more drugs, getting higher and crashing lower, and sometimes they crash and burn.

When we talk about getting "high" on life, we're talking about all those things that make us feel good without drugs, alcohol, or tobacco. We're talking about all the great stuff life has to offer each one of us that makes us happy to get up every morning. We're talking about what floats your boat, people. What do you just love, love, love to do?

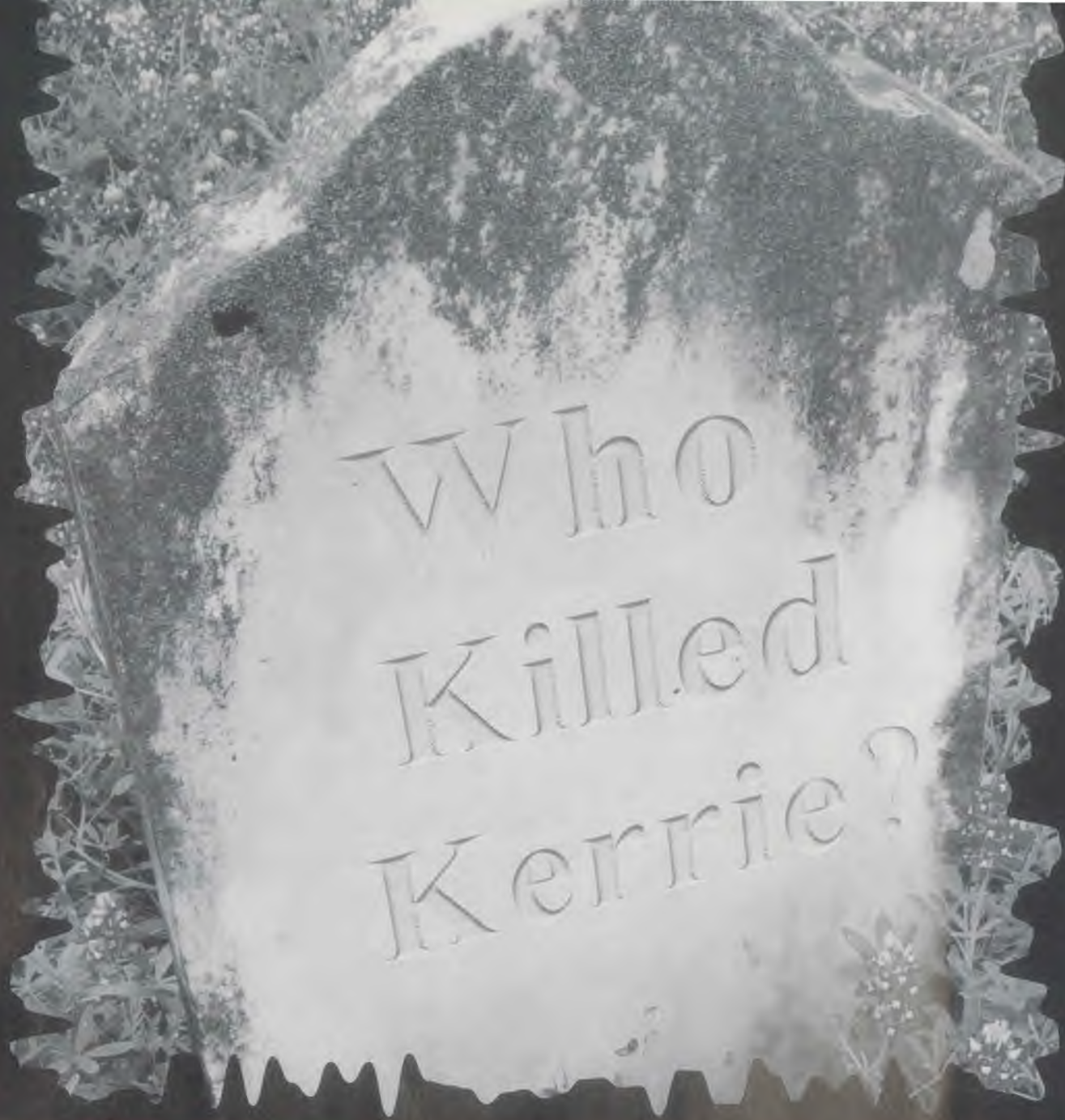
Or what do you want to try? Yeah, maybe learning something new is scary—you think I was filing my nails while I bounced on that trampoline? I'm afraid of heights! But, it was fun. Know what I want to try next? Balance boarding. But, you'll have to wait until May to hear about that.

Until next time, have fun, be cool, and make good choices,

Céleste Perrino-Walker
Managing Editor

The Big Kahuna





By Mary Beth Schewitz

Alice skulked in the deep shadows outside Kerrie's house, hoping Kerrie's dog wouldn't bark. Headlights shone around the corner, so Alice straightened her shoulders and pretended she was out for a walk in the night-cooled air. When the lights trailed off, she

returned to her spot by the garden fence. She picked tiny red apples from the weeping crab tree that draped over the garden gate and looked up the walk to the light shining from Kerrie's window. Kerrie, where are you?

She grew impatient and considered tossing crabapples at the window. Typically, Kerrie waited for Alice, money ready. Alice had

parked in town at the train station and walked the eight blocks to Kerrie's house. Her beat-up Chevy might attract a cop in this fancy neighborhood. *Come on, Kerrie, I've got to shoot up, too.* She scratched her forearms that always seemed to itch, and paced in a tight circle.

A horror-movie-like scream pierced the silence. It came from

inside the house. Alice jumped and broke out in icy goosebumps. Every hair stood on end, as though the devil's cold grip held her by the scruff of her neck. Instinctively, she ran. A siren blared in the distance and as Alice ran toward the train station, the sound hunted her, closing in with every step she took. At last, she faced the beast, momentarily caught in its headlights. But the ambulance raced past her . . . this time.

Alice couldn't stop the violent shaking of her hands long enough to get the key in her car lock. She hugged her arms to her side, and slid to the ground, her back against her car door, sobbing. *Please, please, please let Kerrie be OK. Please don't let her die. . .*

She awoke the next morning. *Late again.* She steadied herself on her dresser, and stared back at her sullen, dark-shadowed eyes reflected in the mirror. She plucked a long sleeved shirt from a pile of clothes on the floor and yanked it over her tumbled hair. I bet Kerrie's fine. That ambulance was probably for her grumpy grandpa. He's always passed out in the hammock when I meet Kerrie. Too drunk to know what's going on. Without bothering to brush her hair, she flipped on a baseball cap and ran Chapstick over her cracked lips.

Alice grabbed her backpack and shuffled along the grass-crazed sidewalk the few blocks to the high school. She halted at the sight of the flagpole. The flag hung limp at half-mast in the still, morning air. Her pulse quickened and her breathing came in sudden, choppy spurts. *Oh no . . . please tell me it isn't Kerrie. It can't be Kerrie.* Air refused to fill Alice's lungs. Her eyes couldn't focus.

Her feet seemed to lose contact with the ground, but she staggered forward toward the entrance.

Alice pulled open the front door. Her cheeks burned as she tried to pass through the crying kids who filled the wide corridor. A tight circle of Kerrie's friends blocked her path. "Killer," hissed one girl. She spat on the floor in front of Alice.

Hey, I warned Kerrie that this was special stuff, to take it slow. Alice curled her shoulders and with downcast eyes searched the floor for an escape. Her head shot up at a shrill voice.

"I can see the headlines now. Alice White, heroin dealer and user, accused of manslaughter in the overdose death of Kerrie Haslett."

What have I done? Sweet perfumes mingled in the electrified air to produce a smell that raised the bile to the back of Alice's throat. Coins bounced off her grunge boots. "Drug money . . . that's all you ever want."

Alice reeled as though lashed by a metal-tipped whip. Tears stung her flaming cheeks. *They're right. I'm a killer. I killed Kerrie. I wish it'd been me.*

Alice struggled to move, but found herself riveted to the spot, staring at the steel-colored floor. Her head bobbed, and just when she felt tilted into delirium, a hand gripped her needle-pricked arm with the strength of a python and tore her from the circling girls. Her backpack thudded to the ground. Alice shrank back, and glowered from under her cap at Max's hand wrapped around her arm. Her eyes darted like a trapped rabbit's from Max's gripping hand up to Tommy to Ryan and Jennifer.

"Alice, you gotta get

clean," Max commanded. "I can't let you walk on, knowing you'll kill yourself just like Kerrie. I didn't do anything to help her, but I'm gonna help you."

Alice pulled free from his grip, saw the crowd surge toward her, and howled, "Leave me alone. I don't deserve help. I want to die." She choked on a sob and hung her head. She whispered, "I'm sorry. I didn't know this would happen."

Jennifer glared back at the crowd and stepped in front of Alice, sheltering her from their stabbing glances. "Alice, you're not yourself. You're a skeleton. I want the real you back. I want my friend who always made me laugh, not this version of you. I'm going to help you, too."

Alice crumpled like a used tissue. "I'm beyond your help."

"Yeah," said Tom. He stepped closer to Alice and shouldered her backpack. He nodded toward Ryan. "That's why we'll help, too."

Alice forced her chin off her chest and through watery eyes took in the mix of kids lining the corridor. One girl rolled her eyes and stormed off in a huff. A bevy of girls trailed after her. Others seemed confused, like Alice. Someone muttered, "They're right, Alice. Get clean before it's too late." A few said, "Good luck." The crowd shuffled away.

Alice hugged her arms around her waist and let her chin drop to her chest again. "Thank you," she whispered.

"Alice," said Ryan. "Today's a start. Let's take it one day at a time. We don't have all the answers, but we'll find them with you." ■

A Test of Honor

By Jennifer Cotturone

I was part of a dangerous plot. I didn't know what my friends were planning, but it involved helping me pass physics. I had never cheated on a test. When my physics grade plummeted, I panicked. Besides getting an F, I had more at stake. As the starting pitcher on our high school softball team, I've built a reputation. I hold the school record for strikeouts in a game. Now our team is one game away from the district tournament, but anyone failing a class is not eligible to play.

"Marcy, you've got to play on Friday!" Amber said when I told her my physics grade. She plays second base. "The entire team is counting on you!"

"Don't you think it's important to me, too? I heard a scout from Northwestern is going to be at the game to watch me pitch. Northwestern! I would kill to get in there!"

Amber's eyes took on a strange glint. "Would you settle for cheating? We can help you pass your test! Sarah and Courtney are in your class. Courtney's a brain, she knows the material."

"Yes, she's helped me, but I'm beyond a little tutoring."

"I don't mean tutoring. I mean getting you the right answers . . . Leave it to me, you'll play on Friday!" Amber ran off before I could say anything else.

I left school obsessed with physics. The notion of cheating made my stomach churn. On the other hand, I had to play in that game. My future was at stake and my teammates were counting on me.

Dark clouds shrouded the sky as I walked into the cold brick building the next morning. Amber was waiting by my locker. Although we were both wearing blue jeans, Amber looked like an ad from J. Crew, while I looked like I shopped at Good Will.

"Whoa, up late studying?"

"Yep. I dozed off around 3:30 at my desk and woke up at 5." I said, yawning.

"How do you feel about the material?"

"OK. I did the example problems over and over until I got the hang of them. As long as Mr. Rossi doesn't throw a big curve, I should be all right."

"Great!" Amber's smile faded as she scanned the area to make sure no one was listening. "Just in case, we're set to help. Start the test and about midway through, Courtney will pass you the answers."

I was shocked. "How's she going to do that? Do you know what will happen if we get caught cheating? Courtney and I will end up with detention and fail the test. I'll end up with an F for the class and I still won't play in the game!"

"That's if you get caught. Don't worry—we've got it figured out."

The bell rang and we hurried to class. Sarah and Courtney were

talking to each other as I entered the room. They didn't look like guilty conspirators.

"If everyone would sit down we'll start the test." Mr. Rossi was an imposing man with dark features and a full head of black, wavy hair. "Clear your desks except for a calculator and a sheet of scratch paper to work the problems."

The room was silent as we began. I read the first question and panicked. Skipping ahead, I relaxed a bit; I knew the answers to the next four questions. Working through the test, I grew more confident. It's amazing what a little cramming can do.

My concentration snapped when the fire alarm went off. *What in the world . . .* Mr. Rossi did not hide his surprise. "This is unscheduled. Everybody leave your test on your desk face down and file out of the building."

We did as we were told and headed outside and across the parking lot where the class-sized mobs merged into one huge mass of people. "I don't see any smoke," someone said. As I searched the school for signs of terrorists, someone grabbed my hand and shoved a small piece of paper into it.

"Hi Marcy," Courtney said, then walked away.

I stood motionless, clutching the small scrap of paper in my fist. The confidence I had been feeling faded. *What if my answers are wrong? Should I look at the paper? What if I'm caught?*



"Everyone back inside!" the principal was on the megaphone.

"Someone pulled the alarm," I heard one teacher say. "Don't they know that's illegal?"

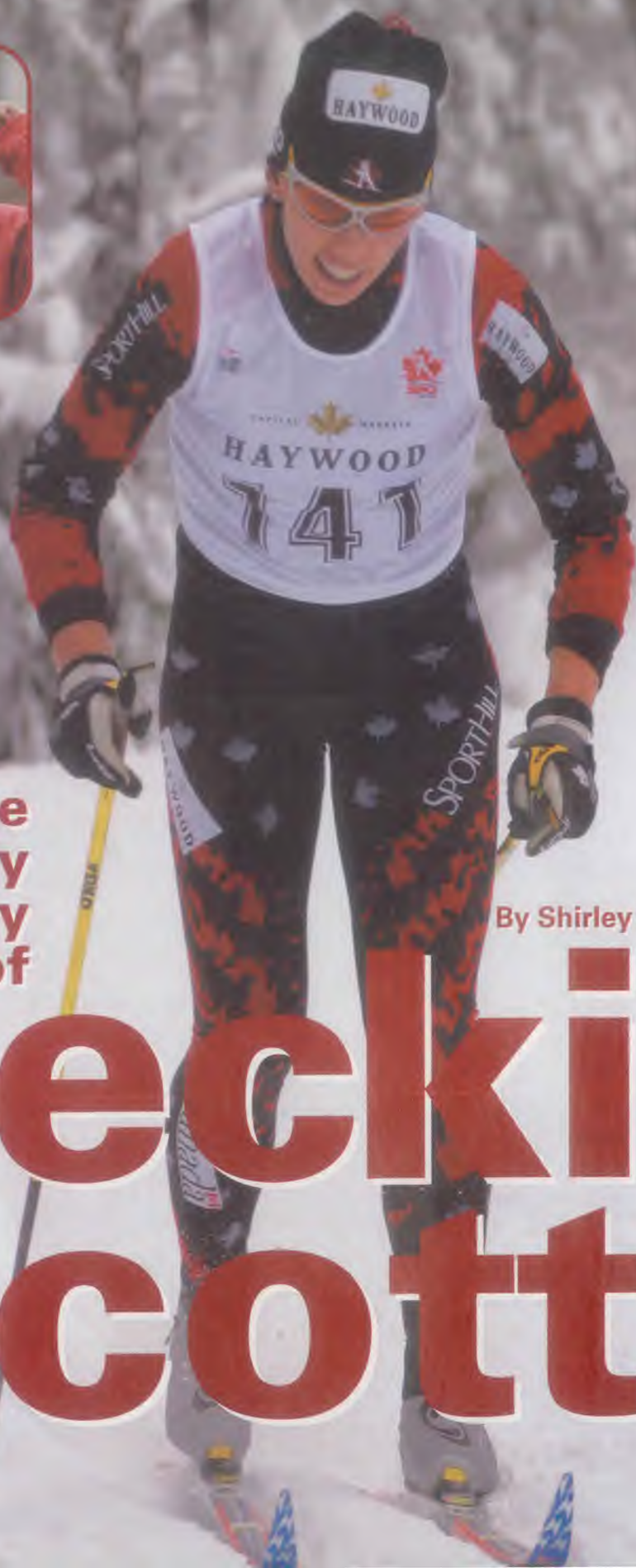
Until then, I had not connected the fire alarm to the cheating scheme. Someone was taking big risks on my account. When we reached our classroom, I sat down and finished the test. I felt sick as I turned it in 15 minutes later. When the bell rang, I sprinted from the room.

I avoided my teammates the rest of the day. A deluge of rain flooded the softball fields, forcing our coach to cancel practice. I looked forward to practice; today I was grateful it was canceled.

I overslept the next morning and arrived at school at the start of third period . . . physics. Mr. Rossi wasted no time. "I have your tests graded. Overall, they weren't too bad."

Mr. Rossi always returned tests face down, whether your grade was good or bad. I stared at the back of my test before turning it over. I could barely breathe. My hands began to sweat and shake. Looking up, I saw Sarah and Courtney watching me from across the room. *This is it*, I thought.

I turned the test over with one quick flip. My eyes didn't comprehend what they were seeing. *Eight...Zero...80!* Reality returned. *I got an 80! A B-minus!* I wanted to dance on my desk. I smiled at Sarah and Courtney who whispered congratulations. I would play on Friday. I would not let my teammates down. And, I did not let myself down in the process—I never looked at Courtney's answers. I earned my B-minus through my own efforts. At that moment, I felt like I could do anything. ■



**The
Unlikely
Story
of**

By Shirley Byers Lalonde

Beckie Scott

She's the only North American woman to win an Olympic medal in cross-country skiing. That in itself is pretty amazing. But Beckie Scott is also the only person in the world to win all three Olympic medals—bronze, silver, and gold—for the same race. Ever.

It's quite a story. And it all began when she was just 5 years old. That's when she started to ski. She was living in Vermilion, Alberta, Canada, with her mom and dad, Walter and Jan Scott. The Scotts were an athletic family and cross-country skiing was part of an active lifestyle that for Beckie also included ballet and jazz dancing, gymnastics and swimming.

"My parents are my role models," says Beckie. "They made sure I was going to grow up living an active outdoor lifestyle. I was never encouraged to be a TV watcher."

She entered her first cross-country ski competition at the age of 7. She belonged to the Jackrabbit Ski League, a ski club for youngsters that emphasizes learning and enjoying the sport. There were some races and some competitions but all on a fun level, says Beckie.

As she grew older Beckie began to realize that not only did she thoroughly enjoy skiing, but she was also pretty good at it. She began to see the possibilities that were there for her and she began to work toward developing her talent to its fullest potential.

Fast forward to the 2002 Winter Olympics at Salt Lake City—Beckie's second Olympics. She'd been to Nagano, four years earlier and coming into Salt Lake she felt good. She felt ready. "I had learned a lot in Nagano," she says,

"and I'd made a great effort to prepare as well as I could. I was at a point where I could expect top 10, even top five results."

Beckie's results were all that she expected. In the 10 km Classic she finished fourth. She was in fifth position for the Sprint. But it was in the 5 km Pursuit that she would win a medal.

The Race Is Two Races

The Pursuit is actually made up of two races. The position in which a racer finishes in the first race determines where she will start in the second.

country skiing, a sport usually dominated by the Europeans.

"I felt fantastic!" says Beckie. "It was a huge celebration. It was a monumental day for the team. The other Canadians participating finished in the top 20 and the top 30."

The gold and silver medals in the Pursuit were won by two Russian women: Larissa Lazutina and Olga Danilova. They had captured a total of five medals between them at the 2002 Olympics. They were formidable competitors.

Sadly, it turned out, they were also cheaters.

CHEATERS NEVER WIN

Do all the cheaters get caught? Probably not. "I think that the motivation and incentive to catch doping and cheating is not on par with the motivation to cheat and use drugs," says Beckie Scott.

Does cheating ever pay? No. Besides having to live with the knowledge that they didn't play fair, cheaters face some pretty scary health risks. Darbepoetinalpha, the drug that the two Russian skiers were taking, is an offshoot of erythropoietin (EPO). One known side effect of EPO is that it can cause the user's blood to become very thick, increasing the risk of heart attacks. On May 9, 2004 the San Francisco *Chronicle* reported that eight European cyclists, ranging in age from 16 to 35, had died suddenly since January 2003. Heart attacks of unknown origins were blamed for virtually all of the eight deaths.

The first race was in the morning. Beckie finished in sixth place. "I had an hour and a half to prepare for the second race," she says. "I started to think tactics and strategy. We went out based on results of the first race—the winner first, etc. I started 19 seconds behind the winner."

Her tactics and strategy paid off. She finished third, scoring a bronze medal for Canada and North America's very first medal in cross-

Days later the two Russians were thrown out of the games after testing positive for darbepoetin, a drug that boosts the production of red blood cells. Darbepoetin accelerates the pace at which oxygen is sent to muscles. Experts say it can shave up to six minutes off a skier's time in a 10 km race.

The Russians and a Spanish man, Johann Muehlegg also a skier, caught at the same time, were sent home. But the International

Olympic Committee (IOC) said it could not take back the medals they had won earlier in the games because they had passed those drug tests. Those medals included the gold won by Olga Danilova and the silver won by Larissa Lazutina in the Pursuit race.

So, even though she knew, and the world knew, that she was the only athlete on that podium who was drug-free, Beckie Scott left Salt Lake not with the gold medal she deserved, but with the bronze. She left to begin a struggle that would last for two more years. It was a long fight but not once did she consider giving up.

"I felt it was important. It was wrong to let those women and that man go down in history as Olympic champions. When you stand up for something you take it all the way." Standing with her was the Canadian Olympic Committee and the Norwegians who were also fighting to have medals won by Johann Muehlegg given to two Norwegians who placed just behind him.

The First Victory

In June of 2003, 16 months after the 2002 Olympic Games Beckie Scott was awarded the silver medal. The IOC stripped Larissa Lazutina of all of her 2002 Olympic medals when it was shown that she had tested positive for banned substances at World Cup races prior to the Olympic Games. Had this been known at the time, she would not have been allowed to compete at Salt Lake.

On October 21, 2003, at a ceremony in Canada Olympic Park in Calgary, Alberta, Beckie was presented with the silver medal.

It was quite a celebration, featuring live music by the Royal



Canadian Artillery Band and a fly pass of a CF-18 Hornet aircraft from the 416 Tactical Fighter Squadron in Cold Lake, Alberta.

The highlight was the silver medal presentation to Beckie by Canadian IOC member Charmaine Crooks, Paul DeVillers, Secretary of State for Physical Activity and Sport, and COC President Michael Chambers.

She had been awarded two Olympic medals for the same race. But still not the gold she deserved.

Beckie was not going to quit fighting. And neither was the Canadian Olympic Committee. On September 9, 2003, the COC appealed to the Court of Arbitration for Sport in Lausanne, Switzerland. The COC cited the Olympic Charter which says that any athlete caught cheating at the Olympics should be stripped of all of their medals. Olga Danilova should lose her gold medal for the Pursuit race because she failed a drug test at the Olympics, even if it wasn't for the five-kilometre race.

Gold for Beckie

The Court agreed, and on Feb 26, 2004, ordered the International

Olympic Committee to award Beckie Scott the gold medal because of doping infractions by the Russian winner. Two years after the race in Salt Lake City, Beckie had the first place medal she deserved. And on June 28, 2004, it was presented to her in Vancouver, BC, the site of the 2010 Winter Olympics.

"My whole family and team was there, even my coach from Utah," says Beckie. "There were over 600 people in the crowd. It was very emotional. I didn't think it would be. It

had dragged on for so long. But when the time came . . . it was very touching and symbolic. I got on the podium and people started applauding and they just wouldn't stop. It was a great day."

Golden Attitude

Off the snow, Beckie is married to U.S. three-time Olympic cross-country racer, Justin Wadsworth. She likes to read, write, and cook, and she's working by correspondence toward an English degree from the University of Waterloo. She's never been tempted to use performance enhancing drugs. For her, doping has never been an option.

"To me, racing on your own merit and doing what you can physically and naturally is the greatest accomplishment," she says. "Taking drugs is the same as taking a shortcut on the course. There is no honour in that. To be successful on your own is an accomplishment that's incredibly rewarding. I can't imagine it would feel even half as good to do it with drugs and doping." ■

GOOD FOR YOU!

By Jean Ann Williams

Do you know what you're eating? Is your protein energy bar loaded with nutritious ingredients that give you energy, or chemicals and preservatives? Take our quiz about some of the ingredients in these so-called healthy bars to see if you know where they come from and what they are used for. **All have more than one correct answer.**



1. Hydrolyzed Collagen:

- a. Derived from ox, bovine, pigskins and bones.
- b. An artificial sweetener.
- c. Thickens and holds together ingredients in protein bars and other foods.

2. Lactitol:

- a. Baby formula.
- b. Too much causes diarrhea.
- c. A sugar alcohol extracted from milk lactose.

3. Mannitol

- a. A stabilizer, sweetener, and bulking property in supplements and foods.
- b. Excessive amount may have a laxative effect.
- c. Food for manatees.

4. Splenda

- a. Known also as Sucralose and has chlorocarbon, which can cause reproductive, genetic and organ damage.
- b. Is in many products, and even manufactured by nutritionally-oriented companies and sold in health food stores.
- c. Has small amounts of dangerous substances like arsenic and lead.

5. Guar Gum

- a. Healthy chewing gum.
- b. Used as thickener in foods like instant noodles, pet foods and energy bars.
- c. Gives a full feeling.

6. Cochineal Extract

- a. Extracted from dried bugs, this color additive is used in foods, cosmetics and fruit drinks in various shades of red, pink, purple and orange.
- b. May cause allergic reactions, including asthma, sneezing and anaphylactic shock.
- c. Also known as Carmine color.

7. High Fructose Corn Syrup

- a. Comes from fruit.
- b. Comes from corn, not sugar cane or beets.
- c. The fructose part of this sweetener has no vitamins or minerals, and is not the same as fructose in naturally occurring sugars.

8. Glycerin

- a. A sweet liquid that adds chewy texture to some protein and energy bars.
- b. Used to make dynamite, cosmetics, and liquid soaps.
- c. Filler in low-fat food like cookies.

9. Disodium Phosphate

- a. Prevents discoloration of foods.
- b. Used in water treatment to reduce water hardness.
- c. Used to raise the thickening temperature of ice cream.

10. Cellulose

- a. Replaces fat.
- b. Another word for cellulite, the fatty deposits on the hips and thighs.
- c. Mostly what plants are made of, like wood and cotton.

Answers: 1. a/c, 2. b/c, 3. a/b, 4. a/b/c, 5. b/c, 6. a/b/c, 7. b/c, 8. a/b/c, 9. a/b/c, 10. a/c

Teens On Energy Bars

A group of teens taste-tested food-packed energy bars. From the assorted bars chosen for the test, these four have the highest quality ingredients: Organic Food Bar (Vegan certified), Carob Spirulina Energy Nugget, BG Bar, CLIF BAR.

The teens first choice was a tie: (1) BG Bar and Clif Bar
(2) Organic Food Bar (Vegan certified),
(3) Carob Spirulina Energy Nugget

When you get the munchies and head for the energy bars, choose one that has real food ingredients listed first and little or no sweeteners.

TIP OF THE MONTH

By Tony Hellmann

You've seen their tags; you may even know gang members. But, what do you **really** know about gangs?

LIE NO. 1, ALL GANGS ____.

You can insert lots of words there. "All gangs sell drugs," or "All gangs jump new people in," for example. Lots do, for sure, but **gangs make their own rules**, and those rules vary from place to place.

LIE NO. 2, GANGS ARE THE SAME EVERYWHERE.

In Seattle, high school gangs are semi-secret. They aren't talked about just anywhere. Only the members and their friends know who all the members are. In L.A., it's more out in the open; members identify themselves with pride. School gangs control different neighborhoods. **Every gang is different.**

LIE NO. 3, GANGS ONLY EXIST IN CITIES, OR "THE GANGS AT MY SCHOOL ARE JUST WANNABE GANGS."

When a bunch of kids gets together and decides to be a gang, they do whatever they need to prove themselves, so take them seriously.

So Where Do You Fit in With Gangs?

If there are one or more gangs at your school, then you're in one of three contact groups: bystander, outsider, or insider. Let's see which one you are:

INSIDERS are members. They are part of the gang, and responsible for carrying out the gang's activities. **OUTSIDERS** have gang members as friends and homies, but aren't members themselves. In some places, they're under the protection of the gang to which their homies belong. In others, they just hang out with gangs. They're accepted by the members. Outsiders are the ones who are offered full membership in

the gang. **BYSTANDERS** are usually aware of gangs, but don't have many friends who are members. They don't hang out with the gang. I was a bystander at my high school. My friend Jeff was in a gang, but I didn't hang out with him when he was around his gang homies.

Why Kids Join Gangs

1 Gangs provide safety and security.

Everyone's got your back. Being a part of a group that promises protection is important to kids who don't feel safe. I used to work with a little Asian kid who joined a gang because he hoped they'd help him kill a bigger kid who had beaten him up. School isn't always safe, and gangs provide some kids a sense of safety.

However, gangs often put their members into other kinds of unsafe situations. Ask anyone being arrested if they feel safe. Ask someone in the presence of enemy gang members if they feel safe.

2 Gangs provide somewhere to belong.

Sometimes gangs are a collection of kids who feel no one else wants them, so they form a strong bond with each other. The gang is where they belong. It becomes their second family, or for some kids their only family. A gang

YOU THINK SMALL TOWN GANGS ARE WANNABES?

My friend, Jeff, and I went to a high school in a little town. A group of Asian kids at our school got together and called themselves RCG: Ruthless Crip Gang, so he and some friends got together and formed PBA: People Bearing Arms. Most kids at school thought they were silly, but I knew he was carrying a gun. People didn't think it was so silly when he and some buddies shot into neighborhood houses from his car one night. He did a couple years at the big State prison for it. It ruined his life; last time I saw him he was 24 and still working for minimum wage.

is a shared identity. That's why gangs have names!

3 Gangs make people feel important or special.

Being a member of a gang means respect: from a member's homies and from everyone else too. For some kids, that's the only way they think they can get respect. Other kids are natural leaders and have leadership positions in their gangs. It makes them feel important. Most gangs have secrets that only members know. It feels good to know that you're in on the secret. It means you can be trusted.

4 Peer pressure.

If all your friends are members, it's hard to say no when you're offered membership. Why be the only one on your own?

Livin' in Gang Territory

If you live in, or are moving to, a place claimed by a gang, the number one rule is: **mind your own business.** This means go where you need to go, but don't stare. Be alert, but keep your eyes on the sidewalk in front of you most of the time. If you know the gang's colors, try not to wear those colors.

Try not to draw attention to yourself. Remember, the gang is interested in knowing what's going on in their territory, so make

yourself uninteresting. Waiting for an hour on a street corner might draw their curiosity. Staying out of trouble won't help if trouble finds you; if a gang tries to check you, tell them what you're doing, or where you're going, and often that will be enough. Don't lie.

Now you know a little more about what gangs are about, and knowledge is power.

THE DANGER ZONE

A group of kids you've never seen before won't walk up to you and say "Hey, want to join our gang? We'll jump you in right here." The transition from outsider to insider isn't what most people think. Gangs don't get new members by putting an ad in the paper. They pull in their member's friends.

As an outsider, you're just a friend. You can hang out when you want and leave when you want. You can decide what you're willing to do, and what you're not. If your friends want you to do something you don't want to do, you're only risking your friendship to tell them no. Then they offer you membership. Now you're in the gang. You get to be a part of all the things you've been hearing about. But you've also got a responsibility to the gang. Their fight is your fight.

What happens now when the gang wants you to do something you don't want to do? You're not just risking your friendship with a buddy. Is it easier or harder to do what you should? It only has to happen one time to change your life forever. Hanging out with gang members puts you in the danger zone.



Tony Hellmann holds a Master's degree (M.Ed.) in Counselor Education from Penn State University and a Bachelor's degree (BA) in American Cultural Studies from Western Washington University. He has worked with at-risk youth at several inner-city schools in the Seattle School District, and currently writes full time. He was an at-risk youth himself once. He lives in Seattle.



Q: I just started dating this girl recently. We both like the same music and always have something to talk about. She met my parents and they didn't approve of her. :(How can I get my parents to like her?

A: First, sit down and ask them what it was that they didn't like. Does she smoke or drink? Was she rude? Think back to the meeting and examine the entire situation. Your parents are basing their judgment on their first impression of her, good or bad. Solving the issue is simple: ask them why they don't like her. If it's something that was misunderstood, then clear it up; if it is something more serious, then listen to them. Trust me, been there, done that. As clichéd as it sounds, they do know best. Why do you think so many arranged marriages last? Your parents have an instinct to keep you safe and healthy. They may see this new girl as a bad influence. So what do you do? TALK TO THEM. :D

Q: Why am I so ugly? I have really bad acne and I have to wear thick glasses. Why couldn't I have been a more attractive person?

A: Whoa, my man! Take a deep breath and put that mirror down. Before you even think about trying to change your image you need to re-evaluate your self-esteem. Your looks aren't everything. Ask any model that . . . they eventually go too. Talk to a school counselor or your parents about your issues with self-esteem before you glance back in that looking glass. Then, once you love yourself as a wonderful person, you can work on making yourself more comfortable. Acne is the worst thing for a teenager. I had plenty of it growing up. :P You just have to work through it. Talk to your parents about seeing a dermatologist; that's a skin doctor who can help you come up with a cleaning regimen to help clear up your skin. You hate wearing thick glasses? Check out the recent trends. Glasses are back in! However, if you still hate them, see your eye doctor for some contacts. They aren't difficult to maintain and it's wonderful to have peripheral vision again. Just remember that you are a beautiful person inside AND outside. Who cares if you have acne or glasses? We all go through it at one point or another.

Q: I just turned 16! But my parents won't let me drive by myself! Everyone else is getting cars and driving to the mall, but my parents still drive me around. How can I make them let me drive?

A: Honestly, you can't. However you might, with the help of healthy persuasion, be able to convince them that you are responsible. Offer to take driving lessons to improve your new skills. Many insurance companies offer a discount for an approved course. The cost of another car is expensive. Add together the payments for a used car, insurance to cover it, and gas to make it run and you've got more than my allowance was at your age. Sit down and talk (let me emphasize: t a l k) to your parents. By drawing out an action plan to improve your driving skills and aid in paying for the costs of your new freedom, you are showing that you are a responsible teenager. Just remember that they know the roads, and if you aren't ready, you aren't ready. Buckle up!

listen

Send your questions to:
heynat@listenmagazine.org

Make Up Your Mind Already

By Dawn Marie Barhyle

Decisions. Decisions. Every day we make over 10,000 of them. Believe it or not, every decision you make has some impact, some consequence. As you get older the decisions get harder. Decisions are a part of life. No getting around it. The decisions you make and the actions that result, are a powerful influence on your future.

In high school lots of choices will open up; they can impact your future positively or negatively. Because you'll be under pressure when you face some tough decisions, you need to develop your decision—making muscle now so you'll have a strong foundation.

Are You a Dynamic Decision Maker?

- ▶ Are you honest with yourself about the issue?
- ▶ What do you want to achieve by making this decision?
- ▶ Do you have unrealistic expectations for yourself?
- ▶ Are you making an impulsive, snap decision?
- ▶ Have you considered long- and short-term consequences?
- ▶ Are you willing to take responsibility for your decision?
- ▶ Have you considered all your options?

- ▶ Are you overestimating the value of information from others?
- ▶ Are you underestimating the value of information from reliable sources?
- ▶ Are you relying too heavily on your feelings of wanting to fit in?

Because life involves many decisions, learning how to make good choices will help you all your life. When you need to make a decision:

- ▶ **RECOGNIZE** that you are facing a decision and define the problem.
- ▶ **GATHER** all the available information to help make that decision and come up with alternatives.
- ▶ **SEEK ADVICE** or guidance from those who know more about the issue at hand.
- ▶ **USE** all possible resources to the best of your ability.
- ▶ **BRAINSTORM** to identify possible outcomes or consequences of each alternative, while evaluating how those alternatives meet your values, goals, and attitudes.
- ▶ **DECIDE** which is the best solution and proceed, confident you are making a thoughtful, well-informed decision.

Live & Learn: Moving Past a Bad Decision

Good people sometimes make bad decisions they later regret; it's not that we are stupid—it's that we are human. Adolescence is a time of experimentation, testing limits, and thinking for ourselves, so our choices aren't always in our best interests. We make bad decisions because we lack experience or information, don't know or understand the facts, or make a snap decision and miss some of our options. If you make a bad decision:

- ▶ Don't dwell on what went wrong.

- ▶ Use what you learned in the future.
- ▶ Own up to your



foolishness, accept the consequences of your decision, and focus your energy on moving forward.

- ▶ Avoid getting caught up in the "blame game," and forgive yourself.
- ▶ Resolve to do better next time.

A bad decision is bad only if you don't learn from it. Remember, it's possible to move past a bad decision and into the future making better decisions with fewer mistakes. As long as you always ask yourself: what can I learn from this? ■

road trip



Tina



Ally



Lisa

Story: Monica Cane / Illustration: Shane Johnson

So Far in Road Trip

Ally picks up a hitchhiker heading to L.A. because Tina thinks he's cute. And more so, because Lisa thinks it's dangerous.



I REALLY APPRECIATE THE RIDE. TURN LEFT OVER HERE.



WHERE ARE WE?

THIS IS WHERE I LIVE. IT'S PRETTY ROUGH, BUT AS LONG AS YOU DON'T WAVE ANY COLORS YOU SHOULD BE OK.



WHAT DO YOU MEAN WAVE COLORS?

HE MEANS THERE'RE GANGS AROUND HERE.



YEAH, THEY TAKE COLORS PRETTY SERIOUSLY. COLORS TELL THEM WHOSE SIDE YOU'RE ON.



I'M SURE NO ONE WOULD BOTHER US—WE'RE NOT INVOLVED IN A GANG.

THEY DON'T KNOW THAT.





Too High

By Richard Maffeo

Caleb Shortridge thought he was drinking water from a half-filled water bottle on the table at his friend's house. Not until after he drank from it did his friends tell him it was GHB, but no one was overly concerned.

They thought it was a harmless club drug.

Even after he passed out, his buddies told his girlfriend he'd sleep it off. "Just check on him every so often to make sure he's positioned on his side and still breathing, but don't bother calling 911," they told her.

There was no sense in running up a huge medical bill for nothing.

Caleb never woke up.

What Is GHB?

Club drugs such as Ecstasy, Ketamine, methamphetamine, and GHB (gamma hydroxybutyrate) have earned a reputation among teens and college students as a cheap way to get high.

GHB (known also by nicknames such as Georgia Home Boy, Grievous Bodily Harm, and Liquid Ecstasy) is a central nervous system depressant. It's used in European medical facilities as a general anesthetic, as well as a treatment for insomnia and narcolepsy (a serious medical disorder characterized by sudden and uncontrollable attacks of sleep, often accompanied by paralysis and hallucinations). However, because of its high potential for abuse, especially as a date-rape drug, legislation signed in February 2000 placed GHB on the list of Schedule 1 controlled substances—which includes heroin, LSD, and marijuana. Anyone who makes or sells GHB faces up to 20 years imprisonment. If a death occurs, the guilty person can face a life sentence.

How It Works

Researchers do not fully understand how GHB affects the brain. Many believe GHB crosses the blood-brain barrier, which is the area around the brain that regulates the flow of neurochemicals and nutrients into the brain. Depending on the dose, its effects are usually felt within 20 minutes and can last for several hours.



At lower doses, GHB produces effects similar to alcohol intoxication. People who use the drug often report feeling euphoric, affectionate, and have increased energy. Sometimes they experience hallucinations. At higher doses, GHB can cause vomiting, convulsions, coma, and, if not treated, death. Unfortunately, the dose that produces euphoria and intoxication is unpredictable and can differ by only milligrams (a drop) from the dose that kills. To compound the problem, there are wide differences in how the drug will affect even the same person. A capful that caused mild euphoria one night could send the person to the morgue the next.

More Than Getting High

Getting high is not the only reason people use GHB. Sexual predators slip the colorless and odorless liquid into the drink of unsuspecting women, leaving them defenseless against rape. Anne (not her real name) is only one example. Her boyfriend offered her a capful of the clear liquid. "Taste it," he said. "It'll make you feel good." She doesn't remember much from that night, except that her body felt like lead as she pleaded with him to stop. "I knew what he was doing. But I didn't have the power or the strength to get him off of me. . . . I don't know how I got home after that."

From the rapist's point of view, the best part about GHB is that it often causes amnesia so women remember very little (if anything at all) about the assault. Perhaps that's why another name for the drug is "Easy Lay."

"It Won't Happen to You"

When GHB victims or their families warn others about the drug, they often hear responses such as, "You don't know what you're talking about . . . If you had done it

properly . . . if you know what you're doing . . . it won't happen to you."

Perhaps it won't happen. Then again, perhaps it will. Police and hospital records illustrate the point that using GHB is like bungee-jumping off a bridge 100 feet from the ground, tethered to a cord that stretches to 99½ feet. Georgia Home Boy doesn't offer a lot of margin for error.

Samantha Reid's margin for error evaporated before her sixteenth birthday. Someone slipped the drug into her drink at a party. A short time later she was in a coma. By morning she was dead. Seventeen-year-old Hillory Janine Farias' story is similar. According to the Drug Abuse Warning Network (DAWN), GHB emergency department-related visits increased from 56 in 1994 to 3,340 in 2001. The DEA reports more than 5,700 overdoses of GHB since 1990. In fact, GHB has killed more than 50 users since law enforcement agencies began keeping records several years ago.

Judi Hewitt's husband didn't believe the medical evidence, or was unaware of it. Whatever the reason, he drank a GHB-laced protein drink. Twenty minutes later he was unconscious. Instead of calling 911, the guys David was with took him to a motel room and left him there to sleep it off. That's where he died.

"How do you tell a 6-year-old that a bad person gave Daddy a drink that put him to sleep for the rest of her life?" Judi asked. "How do you tell her that her daddy is not going to be here for any of her birthdays, school plays, graduation, or her wedding day?"

Something to Think About

On the Web site dedicated to Caleb Shortridge, his mom wrote, "Some people inevitably won't hear the message until something terrible happens to them." His dad added, "Death hurts the living; the death of a child tears your guts out."

Obviously, club drugs such as GHB don't kill everyone who takes

Protect yourself

- | | | |
|---|---|---|
| 1 Don't take drinks—even water—from strangers. | 5 Be wary of drinks that taste salty or soda that is flat; these can be signs of GHB. | solution—they are often used as GHB containers. |
| 2 Don't leave your drink unattended. | 6 Avoid a substance called GBL. It turns into GHB in your body. | 7 Be alert to the behavior of friends and ask them to watch out for you. Anyone who appears to be drunk after consuming a small amount of alcohol may be in danger. |
| 3 Don't drink from open containers like a punch bowl. | 8 Be suspicious of eyedroppers, mouthwash bottles, and bubble | |
| 4 Drink only from tamper-proof bottles or cans, and open them yourself. | | |

And Body Builders

Party-goers and sexual predators are not the only people who use GHB. Many bodybuilders believe the drug stimulates the growth hormone, which reduces fat and increases muscle size. However, unlike drugs such as anabolic steroids, which are medically proven to increase muscle mass, there is no medical evidence that GHB does the same.

them, and not everyone has a bad experience. Yet tens of thousands of teens and young adults—tens of thousands—will tell you the risks associated with getting high on GHB are, well, they're too high. They'd beg you to think deeply about your decision. After all, who wants their name, nightmare, and possibly obituary, used in an article like this? ■

It's a crazy-cold Friday night, but inside the Appalachian Bean cafe the mood is hot. The Main Street java joint is packed with musicians tuning guitars and finessing a sound system as throngs of teens gather 'round tables or sink into slouchy couch cushions.



Nate Deming, 16, performs her original music during a Groove open mic night.

The applause is deafening when Nate Deming, 16, takes the stage and kicks off another Groove "open mic" night. Nate's first tune comes off without a hitch, but during her second number she falters, stops, then speaks. "I can't do this one on key," she says to the crowd. "I tried..." No matter. An

anonymous girl yells out an alternate song, and Nate jumps right into it, belting it, nailing it, and by the time the final chord echoes to a fade, her friends are screaming their approval.

Monthly open microphone nights are a Groove staple. Launched about two years ago, the concerts serve a dual purpose: to provide a fun place to go and a legitimate "rock the house" platform for young musicians. The North Adams Massachusetts-based Groove launched in 1996 when Drury High School sophomores Allison Buck and Breanna Robinson decided to mix kids and music with a substance-free atmosphere.

The girls capitalized on their connection to the existing United Neighboring Interdependent Trusted Youth

(UNITY) group and wrote the grant proposals needed to get the Groove groovin'. By 1998 the Groove was an established UNITY link. During the past eight years the youth-led initiative has promoted substance-free as the way to be and shown that kids can lead themselves away from tobacco, alcohol, and drugs.

There's the coffeehouse, which got the Groove ball rolling. After the Massachusetts Museum of Contemporary Art (MoCA) opened in the city, the first multiband summertime concert was held there and offered professional staging, sound equipment, and lighting. MoCA interns lent their expertise, and now MoCA hosts annual summertime concerts. "Grooves+rock" brings live music to youth in March. A songwriting workshop guided by professional musicians has joined the Groove slate and is wildly popular.

The workshop is where most of the winter's night open mic performers gather just before the concert starts. Eric and Eladia Underwood sat among the guitars, the pencil-smudged notebooks, cases of cola, and a lone harmonica. This is no feel-good activity; the criticism is constructive but genuine.

"You don't have to be a great singer to write good music," Eric tells a musician whose lyrics hit home with workshop members. After another musician struggles with a tune, Eric comments, "It sounds like you are fishing for the melody. But you've got a song there." The songsters say Eric and Eladia deliver the

honest feedback they want.

"It's important to hear other people's opinions," says

If you want to check out the Groove's substance-free sound, pick up a copy of their CD, "100% Substance-Free" at: <http://www.cd4freedom.com>. To purchase the Groove CD go to this web site and search for the title "100% Substance-Free" or call Shannon Barsotti at 413-663-7588 ext. 22 for more information about the CD or the Groove in general.



GROOVE

Nate, who will later perform as the opening act. "If I'm going to be playing in front of people, I need to hear their opinion. And I get to hang with some really cool people."



Groove leader Mandy Brule (left), 18, and 17-year-old Jordan Pagan enjoy an open mic night performance.

Former **Groove** leader Randy Schickler, 18, said **Groove** membership is on the upswing, as is interest in open mic nights and other concert

performances. "That's what I love, that this is expanding," Randy says. "I especially see

more and more bands getting interested."

"This is a good environment and a good place to be," he continues. "It's so much motivation, and after 8 years this still holds true to the goals and morals."

The **Groove** grows because kids keep joining, which proves that kids want positive, substance-free environments, Randy says. "Middle school kids who watched the high school kids are now the members of **Groove**," he says. "This is a great transition, a great way to gain a new outlook. And it gives the idea that you can be an artist without being all tripped out."

Groove leader Mandy Brule, 18, says she joined as a high school freshman. "This is a small city, and **Groove** really gives us something to do," she says. "Substance-free makes it relaxed."

Exceptions are not made for those who do not adhere to the substance-free policy. "It doesn't happen often, but once a band tried to play while under the influence," Mandy says. "We asked them to leave. The substance-free thing is for real."

Ragged Company band musician Peter Minor, 18, says the **Groove** "busts myths." "People think about bands, kids, music, and then they think it's all about clubs and drugs," he says. "And this isn't that at all." Concert fans agree. Jessica Wolf, 16, who lives about 200 miles away in Vermont and came to the concert with local friends, says no **Groove**-like outlet exists in her community.

"This is really, really good," Jessica proclaims. "This is such a cool place to hang out." But what about kids with other interests? The UNITY group is making its mark through endeavors such as a youth-designed mural project (the mural now beckons welcome to travelers entering the city via Route 2), a "Guardian Angel" sculpture project, and a collection of youth writing published yearly. The group also hosts workshops focusing on timely topics such as dating violence.

UNITY and the **Groove** are helped financially by entities including the Massachusetts Cultural Council, but both groups are feeling the pinch of fund availability. To raise funds, **Groove** members cut and marketed an original 13-track CD titled "The **Groove**: 100 Percent Substance-Free." UNITY members sell copies of their writing collection as well.

Randy says both groups are assets to youth. "If I am ever up there getting a Grammy, the **Groove** will come right up front," he says. "This has given me the bounce." ■



Jonah Jonathan, 15, performs during a **Groove** concert. Jonah also plays with a William College-sponsored jazz ensemble.

oove



Stop Smoking Signals

I really want to give up cigarettes, but my mom smokes at home, and that makes it hard. Any advice?

—Traci

It is difficult to give up a habit if there is someone close by with the same vice. I would encourage you to sit down and talk to your mother about your seriousness to quit and be honest about the fact that her smoking makes it even harder for you to achieve success. Maybe you can both give up this nasty habit together and support each other. If your mother isn't willing to quit, do your best to avoid watching her smoke. Try to stay away from those areas of the house that generate cigarette smells that could trigger a relapse in your best efforts. Good luck.

I caught my 10-year-old brother smoking a cigarette behind the house, and I'm worried about him. What should I do?

—Christian

Share your concerns with your brother and try to educate him on the enormous harm that tobacco can do to his health. He may not understand the real risks associated with smoking, such as becoming addicted, for one. And inform a parent, so action can be taken to prevent him from becoming addicted to tobacco.

It's hard to say "no" to offers of drugs when all my friends get high. Is there an easier way?

—Michael

It sounds to me like you may need to change your friends! Start hanging with kids who have more interesting hobbies than getting stoned. It's hard to refuse offers of drugs when all your friends are probably expecting you to go along with their drug-using actions. There are many young people out there who don't do alcohol, tobacco, or other drugs. You just have to look for them.

What's wrong with sniffing a little glue? I've done it for months, and it hasn't been a problem yet.

—Marilou

Consider yourself lucky. Inhalants, such as glue, starve the body of oxygen and stress out the heart, causing it to beat irregularly and rapidly. Permanent brain damage is another negative effect of getting high from toxins. Inhalant users have been known to fall over dead from suffocation, choking on their own vomit, or having a heart attack. If they don't kill you, they have a great potential to cause liver, lung, and kidney problems. I would suggest you give up this dangerous habit. Inhalant use is never a good idea.



"But, Mom, black is unique. All the kids at school wear it."

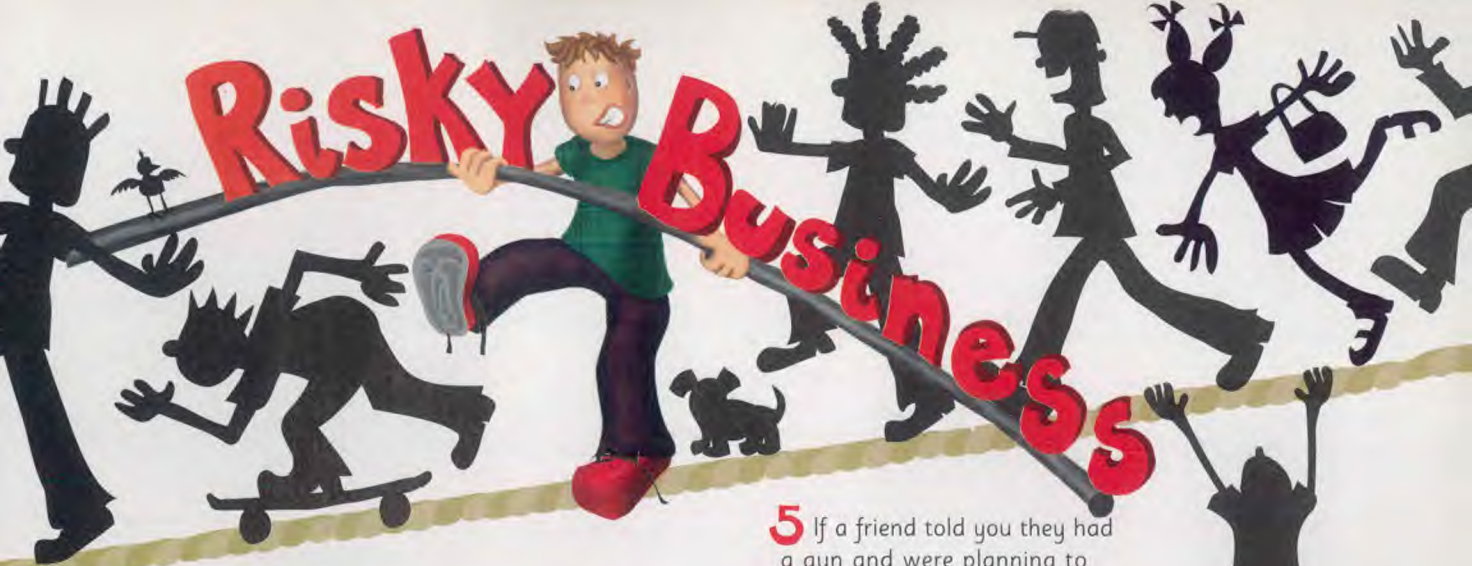
Go ahead, ask Gary his advice on some of those big questions. Gary Somdahl is a dad who puts his skills as a licensed youth chemical dependency counselor to the real-world test all the time. His latest book is **Drugs and Kids**.

Send your questions to:

ASK GARY

Listen Magazine

55 West Oak Ridge Drive
Hagerstown, Maryland 21740.



A double-dog dare is only one cause of risky behavior. Curiosity, peer pressure, or simply our mood of the moment may also influence our actions. Even without these influences, daily living presents risks over which we have no control. We can control our response, however. Each time we get into a car it involves risk. So does taking a shower. Refusing to shower or ride in a car isn't really an option, so common sense enters the picture.

Learning to evaluate risks, determining if they are good or bad risks, is an ongoing process. Check your risk assessment skills by taking the following quiz:

1 Would you risk getting in a car with someone who has been drinking if they are going to drive?

2 Would you call 911 if a friend was smoking marijuana and started to hyperventilate, even if you might get in trouble?

3 Would you take steroids in order to get an edge on the competition?

4 Would you be friendly with a student who was harassed by others?



5 If a friend told you they had a gun and were planning to bring it to school and "make some people sorry," would you tell someone in authority?

6 Would you accept a drink (even soda) from a friendly stranger?

7 Would you "tattle" if you knew something bad was going down?

8 Would you hang out with kids you know are gang members?

9 Would you take a dare that involved doing something dangerous?

Compare your answers to those below. Add 4 points for each matching answer.

Take note of whether the risks are considered good or bad risks and why.

Answers

1 No; bad risk. Accidents are more likely when the driver is under the influence of alcohol or drugs.

2 Yes; good risk. Kudos to you for calling for help. Your friend's well-being is important.

3 No; bad risk. Possible side effects should deter those contemplating taking steroids: feminization in males (including breast growth), masculinization in females, hastening progression of baldness, acne, and aggressive behavior.

4 Yes; good risk. Kindness is never misplaced.

5 Yes; good risk. Lives may be saved by your decision to tell.

6 No; bad risk. Drinks have long been used to get the unsuspecting to ingest drugs.

7 Yes; good risk. Catastrophe may be averted.

8 No; bad risk. This will eventually lead to problems, perhaps pressure to do something you are uncomfortable with or even jail time.

9 No; bad risk. Weigh consequences carefully before accepting a dare. It takes more maturity and self-assurance to say "no" and walk away than to take the dare.

Score

Points

32 - 36 — Mature, levelheaded. Dependable as a friend.

28 - 31 — A cautious risk taker. You'll do to run with.

24 - 27 — Stop and think before acting. (See solution)

16 - 23 — Headed for trouble.

1 - 15 — Negative risk taker. Reevaluate the risks you take and why you take them. (See solution)

Solution: Channel your energies by developing hobbies or getting involved in activities. Ask an adult you trust to help you get involved in alternative activities you can develop a passion for. If you are a negative risk taker, consider to what degree peer pressure is involved. New friends may be in order.

In the 2000 Sydney Olympics, Americans became fascinated by a new, old sport—trampoline. The fans cheered wildly as athletes jumped and bounced, performing twists and somersaults high in the air. Although hugely popular in Europe and Asia, trampoline has only recently become a part of the USA Gymnastics organization that hosts the already popular Mens and Womens Artistic Gymnastic teams. Those in the USA who are beginning to enjoy the popularity of the backyard trampoline are now able to see that bouncing can lead not only to health and fitness, but also to the Olympics!

Although

ancient civilizations from China, Egypt, Persia, and even early Eskimos used similar bouncing methods, the modern equipment we know today was first invented in 1936 by a diver and gymnast from Iowa named George Nissen. Nissen and friend Larry Griswold worked with the idea of a trampoline after spending one summer with a group of circus performers repairing their trapeze nets. Ever the inventor, he first tried out his new "trampoline" (from the Spanish word for diving board, "el trampolin") at a YMCA camp, where he was a summer counselor. It was so successful with the campers that he began to take it further.

With his new invention he developed the trampoline program used by the Naval Aviators

during World War II to improve their balance and give them confidence in the air. From there it soared. To see the first Olympic Trampoline event was always one of George Nissen's dreams. And that came true in the year 2000. At the age of 86 he was an honored guest at the Sydney Olympics, and even jumped on the trampoline for the cameras.

Of course backyard trampolines are different from those used in the sport of



The big

trampoline. Sports trampolines have more bounce, yet are extremely safe. The bed of the trampoline is not the hard slick plastic of the outdoor version, but woven fabric. The rectangle shape is much longer and wider, with padded mats covering the springs and ends of the frame. Some athletes even train on in-

much fun. Soon she was competing at a Level 10, doing such moves as the Barani, the Rudi, the Randi, and the Cody. (See: Know Your Lingo.) Several of her teammates were on the National Team and traveling all over the world to compete with athletes from other countries.

Bre began to travel to New Orleans, Las Vegas, and San Antonio to participate in competitions. She bounced along with 2000 and 2004 American Olympic trampolinist Jennifer Parilla as well as the 2000 men's alternate Ryan Weston and Belarus Olympian

Dmitri Poliarush. Not just a sport for the

very young, Dmitri Poliarush now coaches a team in Louisiana, and at the age of 36 continues to compete and win.

The sport consists of doing 10 skills in a row without stopping in between. No skills can be repeated, so that means 10 different moves. Each of the skills counts one point for a total score of 10. Judges determine deductions for incorrect arm, head, body, and feet positions as well as height differences and travel across the trampoline bed. The athlete must stay within the designated area without touching the bed or ends of the trampoline with hands or other body parts. If there is a touch-down or an extra bounce between skills, the routine ends.

Each skill is given a difficulty point score depending on the amount of rotation. For example, a back somersault is one full rotation, so it gets $\frac{1}{2}$ of a point. The difficulty

score is added to the score given by the judges for the final point total. Each athlete does two routines—a compulsory and a voluntary that really shows off the unique abilities of the trampolinist. Some of the Olympians are doing routines with difficulty scores of 15

Bounce

By Charlene Torkelson

ground equipment so they don't hit their heads on the ceiling (yes, they go that high!). Olympic trampolinists bounce higher than 35 feet in the air!

There are "spotters" (people to catch an athlete) along the edges to avoid any falls, and the athletes themselves practice hitting the trampoline bed safely. Even if they make a mistake and fall, they learn how to turn their bodies so that they land correctly to avoid any injuries.

Bre Torkelson began trampoline at age 10. With her gymnastics background, she quickly learned to do the flips as well as the twists that make trampoline so



or 16. How many rotations do they have to do in those 10 skills with a difficulty level of 15? Lots of them!

Bre also competed in Synchronized Trampoline with a partner. The idea is to bounce together on two side-by-side trampolines doing the same routine. Of course they don't always end up doing the



same thing. Once Bre did the compulsory routine while her partner did the optional—totally different routines. Not a great competition day. But sometimes it's just right. One athlete takes the lead position and the other follows so that each skill hits the trampoline bed at exactly the same time. Bre and her partner Michelle received the Bronze medal at the National Competition in San Antonio.

Bre's advice to others who like to bounce: "Find a good gym, a great coach, and just do it. You'll have fun and stay in great shape." ■

Know Your Lingo

Barani: Front somersault with a half twist

Rudi: Front somersault with one and a half twists

Randi: Front somersault with two and a half twists

Cody: A back somersault landing on the back or stomach

Flifis: Double front somersault with a half twist out

Crash Dive: Front somersault to land on the back

Ball-out: Somersault or twist performed from the back to land on the feet

Full Back: A back somersault with a full twist

Somersaults may be performed in a **tuck**, **pike**, or **straight body** position. The pike and straight positions earn a higher difficulty score than a tuck position.

scrapbookin'g

By Leah Kessler

Scrapbooking is fast becoming a hobby that everyone is getting involved in. A good scrapbook is both a journal and a photo album that you can look back on for years to come. You don't have to be an artist to create a good scrapbook. Your book should reflect your personal style.

To get started you will need the supplies listed as basic supplies in "Getting Started." Later you can get fancy and add the other supplies if you want. A trip to your local arts and crafts store can give you tons of ideas, but don't spend too much on the supplies at first. Once you get started you will have a better idea what you want in your book. You can purchase a

scrapbook starter kit that will have what you need to get started for around \$15, or you can buy them separately. You probably have some of these items already lying around your house.

The best place to start is to find some favorite photos or mementos. You can use movie ticket stubs, letters or notes, birthday cards, or postcards from a vacation. Once you have decided what to make your first page about, you can decide whether to glue your photos as they are or trim and crop them. You could even cut them into shapes.

When you choose the paper you are going to use for the page, choose another color paper that complements it. For example, if you are using pictures from a school football game, try using your school colors. The first color will be used as your page, and the second color will be cut to use as frames for your photos.

Simply cut the paper slightly larger than your photo

and glue it down first. Then you can glue your photo on top of that. This adds color and layers to the page.

You can use this framing idea for your journal entry or headings too. Remember to save your paper scraps, because even smaller ones can be used again on other pages. You can draw your own artwork to fill the page or add stickers and cut-outs. Some pages might look best when left simple. If you don't want to use glue on your letters or cards, cut a piece of paper to be half the size of your page and lay it over the bottom, gluing only the very edges. This will create a pocket to hold your letters or cards.

There are lots of things you can add to give your book character. Quotes, song lyrics, or poetry are only a few ideas. Magazine clippings or articles are good for keeping a record of trends or your favorite musical artists. You can get together with friends and share supplies to save money. Try practicing different writing styles instead of spending money on letter stickers.

These are just ideas to get you started. There is no wrong way to do a scrapbook. Your imagination is the limit.

Life is not a
destination but a
journey

SUPPLIES

Getting Started

Basic Supplies:

- A scrapbook or binder
- Paper (all kinds)
- Plastic sheet protectors
- Scissors (regular and/or decorative edging)
- Photo-safe glue sticks
- Pens
- Markers

Optional Supplies:

- Stickers
- Punches
- Stencils
- Stamps



My Friend Was Arrested!

By Cindy Ellen Hill

What would you do if your friend got arrested? Seeing a friend arrested for a drug or alcohol crime is frightening and confusing. Remaining friends with someone as they go through the criminal justice process is even harder, but can make all the difference for your friend.

Staying in touch with someone who has been charged with a crime can be difficult, especially if they are being held in a facility that doesn't allow teen visitors. If you are able to see your friend or talk to him or her on the phone, don't be surprised if they don't want to talk about their case.

According to Attorney Pamela Marsh, a juvenile public defender, defense attorneys usually tell their clients not to talk about their case. "Generally we tell clients not to discuss the case with friends, especially in sensitive kinds of cases. What the client tells their attorney is confidential, but if they talk to their friends, the friend can wind up subpoenaed into court as a witness, and phone conversations and visits with friends are likely to be recorded as well. So if you don't hear from the defendant, don't



assume that they're mad at you or don't want to talk to you."

If your friend is at home while their criminal charges are pending, they still may not be able to talk to you. "Conditions of the release order issued from the court might restrict their ability to communicate with people, particularly other witnesses, so don't call them or take messages between them; it'll only get them in trouble," says Attorney Marsh.

Drug and alcohol counselor Chuck King points out another reason why your friend may not want to talk about their criminal charges. "If someone has been using drugs or alcohol and is now prevented from doing so, they are likely to be going through withdrawal symptoms that can include serious mood swings. If your friend yells at you, or withdraws and doesn't want to talk to you, keep in mind that these are symptoms of the illness of addiction, and not aimed at you personally."

If you are able to visit or communicate with your friend, there are ways to help them. The first is to encourage your friend to recognize their problem and seek the help they need. "A person charged with a drug crime is likely to be in serious denial," says King. "If your friend is truly being railroaded, speak to their attorney. But in most cases, people are arrested because their drug or alcohol problem is beyond their ability to control. You will not help your friend by buying into their story that it isn't a problem, or by making things up to try to get them out of trouble. This is a chance for them to get the help that they need."

You can support your friend by letting them know that you don't think less of them as a person, and will still be there when their court case is resolved. "Remind your friend that drug and alcohol

addiction is an illness caused by exposure to toxic substances, just like lead poisoning," says King. "It's an illness that can be treated, and sometimes it takes the intervention of the court system to make sure that treatment happens. But it doesn't reflect on the person's morals or character."

Letting your friend know that you are there can also change the outcome of their criminal charges for the better. "The support of friends and family means the person is more likely to wind up on probation rather than in the custody of corrections or a social service agency," says Attorney Marsh. "Friends and family can help the person comply with conditions of release or probation, without minimizing the seriousness of the situation."

Marsh also advises that the best course of action is to "be supportive and upbeat, but don't try to talk about the facts of the case." Sometimes just being there so that your friend knows you still care can help your friend overcome the anxiety and embarrassment of their situation so that they can accept the help that is available.

The police may also want to talk to their friends to see if they are witnesses in the case. If you are called upon to be a witness in a case, it is important to be truthful, regardless of whether you think the information helps or hurts your

friend's case. However, "You don't have to volunteer information, and you don't have to talk to the police without a parent present," Attorney Marsh advises. "You do need to identify yourself, tell them that you are a minor, and give them your date of birth, and then you should invoke your right to call your parents or a lawyer before you give a statement."

"If you feel that you have information that may be helpful to your friend's case, be sure to call your friend's attorney. But don't be surprised if their attorney, or the court, doesn't want to hear general information about how your friend is a nice guy. Court in real life is a whole confusing, messy thing. It isn't like on television. They don't bring in character witnesses unless they have personal information about the facts of the crime the person is charged with."

Finally, having a close friend arrested is a valuable learning experience for your own life. According to King, "The best thing someone can do if their friend gets arrested is to go home and quietly spend some time in their room, close their eyes, and imagine what they would feel like and what they would do if they were in their friend's position. Understanding the consequences of actions can be difficult, but it is one of life's most useful lessons to learn." ■

Check these out if you think a friend has a drug or alcohol problem:

- The National Children's Coalition, alcohol and other drug information for teens. Includes a directory of Teen-Anon recovery groups: www.child.net/drugalc.htm
- A funky, teen-friendly info site from Ontario, Canada: www.teenhealthcentre.com/teens/drugs
- Tips for Teens on Drugs, Alcohol, and Your Friends. Excellent article on how to determine if a friend may have a drug or alcohol problem, plus straight facts on lots of street drugs: www.soundvision.com/info/teens/drug.asp
- Real stories, real info, from real teens: www.drugfreeamerica.org/kids_teens
- If a friend has run into trouble with the law: Legal info for teens, a service of the Chicago Bar Association Young Lawyers Section: www.chicagoteenlaw.org
- An excellent glossary of legal terms and a description of the juvenile justice system for teens from Focus Adolescent Services: www.focusas.com/juvenilejustice.html



Listening



Our T-shirt winners this month are Alex and Brittani!
Congratulations! Your T-shirts are in the mail! For your chance to win, send feedback comments to editor@listenmagazine.org What's on YOUR mind?



In 1996, Listen published a story ["I Never Thought"] about Melissa M., an 18-year-old girl who was in jail for forging checks and other crimes connected to her drug use. In 1996 Melissa said, "That night in my cell I realized that if I didn't take responsibility for my actions right now, the rest of my life would be ruined."

It's always nice to hear success stories from Listen's readers and, in this case, from the subject of one of our stories. We were happy to hear that after being released from jail Melissa began making better choices for her life. Here's what Melissa is up to these days:

Dear Listen,

► I am trying to locate an article that was published in *Listen*, December of 1996. The article featured me, Melissa M., 18 years old and in jail. I've come a long way since then. My life is definitely a success story. I have three beautiful children. I'm a financial aid advisor for a college. I've almost finished with my bachelor's degree in business, and keep a part-time job. Truly amazing!

Best wishes,
Melissa M.

Do you have a success story to share with us? Send it to editor@listenmagazine.org. ■

Dear Listen,

► "Jesse, Come Home" [November 2004] was an interesting article. It made me think of how good I've got it and that running away may seem fun and adventurous, but in reality it's not. Home is a place where I feel safe and secure, and so far my parents trust me and give me quite a bit of freedom. Home sweet home.

Alex, 15

Dear Listen,

► I really enjoyed reading "Sticks and Stones" [March 2004]. At school there is this guy who is picking on me. This has been going on since September. At first I didn't really know why, but now I realize why—because he was upset that I didn't like him. Anyway, I really like this article. I think that this article is helpful for teens.

Thanks,
Brittani

what's next

Coming Next Month

Hayley Westenra: From Busking to Basking

This New Zealand singer enchants the world with her serene style.

Take a Hike

Get offa that couch and into the woods. Hiking is for everyone.

Pop Quiz

You think school tests are hard? How about passing regular drug tests given by your *mom*? This teen does it and loves it.

Incoming

Derek's brother was killed in action. Can he find a way to deal with his grief and loss before it kills him?

The Truth About Carter Linde

Carter's cute. Carter's popular. Carter's hiding something.

A Deeper Blue

Everyone knows what it's like to feel sad. But depression is sadness on a

darker level. Find out how to fight the darkness.

Surviving Deployment Separation

It's hard when someone you know is called to active duty, far away. Here are some things you can do to make the distance seem a whole lot shorter.

Internet Safety Quiz

Tips from Andrea Kienlen, Miss Teen Wisconsin International 2004 and a quiz to see how much you know about staying safe on the Information Highway.



ntinued from page 17.)

road trip

TELL US WHAT

YOU THINK

1. How much do you think Lisa and her friends knew about gangs?
2. How much do you know about gangs?

Send your answer and any comments to:
monica_cane@yahoo.com



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