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Meet your New Editor for
MAN ALIVE!

Michael Hamilton

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What I've Learned About Prostate Cancer

Mike Milstein

It is estimated that about one out of every ten men will be diagnosed with prostate cancer. As it turns out, I'm one of them. Of course, like most of us, I thought this could never happen to me because I exercise regularly, practice healthy diet habits, and maintain a relatively low stress life style. Despite these precautions, I still got prostate cancer. In short, if it could happen to me, it can happen to you. I'd like to share my story with you and share some ideas about diagnosis and treatment that may be of help in case you too have to deal with this challenge.

Diagnosis. In July of 2001 I had my annual physical exam. As part of the exam I had a PSA (prostate-specific antigen) test, which is intended to identify the potential of cancer in the prostate. The PSA count in a "normal" prostate should be 2.5 or less for men in their forties; less than 3.5 for men in their fifties; and less than 4.0 for men in their sixties. My PSA has hovered between 4.0 and 5.0 for the last five or six years (I am presently 64). About four years ago my concern led me to have a biopsy of the prostate, but everything came up normal (i.e., negative). A biopsy of the prostate involves drawing cell samples from both lobes of the prostate to examine them for the presence of cancer. It is an uncomfortable and undignified test and there is no certainty that the results will be accurate, because only a limited number of tissue samples—usually about 12 to 16—are taken. This means that cancerous cells may be present but remain undetected.

Then, in the 2001 annual physical, my PSA jumped to 8.5. My doctor recommended that I see an urologist who could review the information and tell me whether further tests would be necessary. The urologist concluded that the 8.5 PSA result and my earlier relatively high PSA scores added up to a clear warning signal that I might have prostate cancer. He recommended another biopsy. Based on my initial experience I was not anxious to do so, but it was clear that I needed to know whether I did have cancer. As it turned out the urologist used a local anesthetic when doing the probes so the biopsy was uncomfortable, but not painful. Unfortunately, the results of the biopsy showed cancerous cells in one of my two prostate lobes and the degree of aggressiveness was high: 7 on the Gleason Scale, which is a measure of the extent of cancer in cells--10 being the highest, or most cancerous, score. I was told that my score of 7 should be considered significant (just below the highest category).

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

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Submission Deadlines

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Submission Formats and Requirements

Paper is okay, but please send submissions as a text file via e-mail if at all possible, to save us having to type your words into the computer. Photographs should be in .jpg format. We'll be happy to help you do this. Please keep submissions below 1500 words.

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Notes from the Editor

Gentlemen,

I would like to take this opportunity to introduce myself. A few of you already know me, but many of you do not. My name is Michael Hamilton and I have recently assumed "Man Alive's" editorial responsibilities. As you probably know, Gordon Mustain has retired as Man Alive's Editor. Gordon has served the publication well and will be missed. I hope to serve Man Alive and New Mexico Men's Wellness seamlessly as Gordon focuses more on his gallery, an anthology of ***The Best of Man Alive*** and other of his creative projects



You guys know each other more intimately and have no doubt shared a lot of your lives with each other. It's only fair that I jump in and share a little of myself, and we can build from there.

I am a 56 year old divorced male with 3 grown children. I have a son, Erik, who is a 30 year old QA engineer in San Francisco; a 27 year old son, Ethan, in San Francisco who is a musician and a 22 year old daughter, Alexis, who is a student in Redondo Beach, CA who just got her driver's license today (wed). I was married 27 years and moved to Santa Fe from the Los Angeles area in 1995 while my divorce was in progress. In 1994 I lost my dad and EVERYTHING but my ass and life. I served in the army during Viet Nam from 1966 to 1969. I have a degree in accounting and another in metaphysics.

I published a men's journal while in CA, called "HO! A Men's Journal" for 6 years before moving to New Mexico. I founded the Men's Wisdom Council of the Valley (San Fernando Valley) and collaborated in founding the Los Angeles Men's Council. I was a member of the Men's Leadership Guild of Los Angeles and assisted numerous local men's groups in incorporating ceremony and ritual into their meetings. Annually I conducted workshops on accessing the inner teacher and conducted monthly sweats.

I spent most of my life as the quintessential caretaker. Loved and cared for everyone but myself - at home and in the community. One day it occurred to me that I was worthy of love and care. I started asking what I needed - what about "smee". The last 5 years of my marriage I moved farther away from caretaking and began forming a more balanced approach to loving (with the guidance of therapy and to the dismay of my wife). After I filed for divorce in 94' I realized that I had not come as far as I had thought. I moved to NM and went nearly to the other extreme to discover what balance really was. Am I balanced now? - Probably not - LOL. But I am close enough to feel content, loved and appreciated - most importantly by myself. Since I have been here my activity in the "Men's Movement" have been restricted to my men's group and a few articles in out of state publications. Now that I am ready to jump back in the larger community, I was fortunate to find Man Alive looking for an editor. I was passionate about the men's journal I published and Man Alive's need for a volunteer was the perfect match.

- All my relations, Michael

What I've Learned About Prostate Cancer cont'd from Page 1

Further, my core cancerous samples were near the prostate "margins" which means there was a strong likelihood that the cancer had spread beyond the "sack" (the prostate itself), entering the adjacent tissue and, possibly, the lymph nodes.

The next step was to do a bone scan, which involved injection of a radioactive tracer into the blood stream. Then a picture of the bones is taken to see if cancer has invaded them. Once cancer metastasizes in the bones there is little that can be done beyond hormone treatment to prolong life for a few years. Fortunately, the bone scan proved negative so we knew that the best that could be hoped for was cancer contained in my prostate and the worst case would be cancer in adjacent tissue and maybe the lymph nodes.

Treatment. What to do? As it turns out, there are a number of treatment options, but I will only refer to the most common options. One is "watchful waiting," i.e., do nothing and see whether the cancer spreads. This may not be too advisable unless you are 80+ years old: It can take up to 10 years for prostate cancer to kill so the odds are an 80 year old man diagnosed with this cancer will be dead before the cancer gets him! For younger men choosing this option may work and thus avoid invasive treatments, but if it doesn't it can allow the cancer to spread and become more difficult to treat. Another option is to start a treatment of hormones, which is intended to reduce the presence of testosterone because testosterone can feed cancer cell growth. The problem is that, if the growth of cancerous cells is not retarded as intended, they may become even more aggressive, which can result in more significant problems over time. A third option is to initiate a series of radiation treatments to kill the cancerous cells. However there is only about a 50% success rate from radiation treatments and a significant likelihood that healthy cells may be damaged or destroyed. Finally, there is the radical prostatectomy (RP), a surgical procedure in which the prostate is removed and adjacent tissues, including lymph nodes, are biopsied to establish whether cancer tumors have spread beyond the prostate.

My initial thought was to pursue the least intrusive strategies first, hormones and then radiation if hormones did not solve the problem, and, finally, if required, the RP. Wrong! It turns out that, as noted, when hormone treatments don't work, the result may be more aggressive cancer cells. If radiation treatments don't work, the RP will have to be done on radiated tissue, which makes the operation more difficult and increases the severity of negative side effects--incontinence and impotence. Once I understood this, it became clear, especially given my high Gleason score, that I needed to *start* with the RP. After the RP, if it turned out there were cancerous cells outside the prostate, I could begin radiation treatments to clean it up and, if necessary, take hormones as a maintenance program.

Once I decided on the RP, the rest fell into place. I took a temporary course of hormones so I could hold the cancer in stasis for four months. During these months I initiated a set of activities that could improve my immune system responses and make me a stronger candidate for surgery as well as for a better and faster recovery (after RP many men encounter reduced energy for up to a year, as well as a prolonged period of incontinence and a slow return of potency). I talked with other men, and their wives who I knew had confronted prostate cancer. I hiked, biked, did yoga exercises that focused on the legs and pelvic muscle areas, meditated, reflected, ate lots of fish, vegetables and fruit, read widely about taking control of my own healing and stimulating my immune system (e.g., Bernie Siegel's *Love, Medicine and Miracles*), and took every opportunity I could to play and laugh. Most important, I spent lots of quality time with my wife, Annie Henry, talking through what we were getting into and how we would respond to it when the time came.

The results? The operation went well and I have been recovering quickly. More important, the prostate itself proved to be even more cancerous than originally predicted (the post operation pathological exam showed that there was cancer in *both* lobes and the Gleason score was adjusted upward to a 9!) but biopsies of the adjacent tissue and the lymph nodes all proved negative! Given the final Gleason score of 9, the odds were great that cancer would have spread beyond the sack, but early tests have indicated that it did not! My conclusion is that the activities I engaged in prior to the surgery made a big difference. They helped kick in my immune system and that, I believe, eliminated the occurrence of cancer outside the prostate. Most exciting, my first post-operation PSA test was perfect--ZERO! It is still possible that there may be some reoccurrence, so I will take a PSA test every three months for at least a year to monitor this possibility. If there is indication of new cancer growth, it may then be necessary to consider radiation and/or hormone treatments.

I hope that my experience can be of help to other men. If you have not been taking a yearly PSA test, I encourage you to do so. If you are diagnosed with prostate cancer, find out exactly what your specific diagnostic data means and learn all you can about the options that are available to you. Know that you have a good chance of beating prostate cancer if you catch it early, get good medical support, and play a central role in your own treatment and recovery. Know also that there are many men who have confronted this challenge, survived, and are willing to be of help. There are even prostate support groups in New Mexico's larger cities, where you can find library resources as well as locate men who have made prostate cancer treatment decisions that they would be willing to discuss with you.

Commitment

Jeff Hood

Green River, Utah. July, Hot.

We have pushed off from the bank, take one look back at the cars parked on the side of the road and then let them go, out of our awareness for eight days. It might be possible to row back to them in the next ten minutes, with difficulty in half an hour. And in an emergency we might hike back to them later this afternoon, but tomorrow the only way out is down stream, who we are and what we have with us will have to be enough.

We don't know each other well, yet we have climbed into the boat together, under an eight day contract to have and to hold, to be civil, to watch each others' water intake and apply sunscreen to body parts we would not comfortably touch in other circumstances. For some the contract will expand to helping put up tents, serving food, playing games on the beach, singing, and even falling in love. Yes.

And what is the direction we follow? Who leads this village on its journey? In other contexts we might spend months in retreat deciding, or hire a consultant to help identify our vision. Here, we let the river do the leading; it takes us down stream, the only sensible way to go. Its pace, at four miles an hour gives us time to digest the landscape, to respond to the heron fishing on shore, the faces in the cliffs and the dark clouds building in the West.

It may take days to fully realize that we are all on the same river and that it, the wind, and the daylight determine our pace. When I fight it and think I am in charge, my back aches and I snap at my comrades. When I can accept the wind in my face, the low current-rocky bottom and the late morning start because we are relaxed getting out of camp, then I look at my comrades with bright eyes, knowing the blessing of being out here together.

Down stream. I have a map; it shows the course of the river, the islands and the rapids. It gives me some sense of what to expect. Yet looking to the horizon I don't know which way to go around that island, which way will have deep current and which will deposit us on a gravel bar. Coming around a bend I don't know where the obstacles will lie in the rapid or how to position the boat to avoid them. And sometimes obstacles arise that are not on the map, a whale of a drifting cottonwood trunk, or an expected camp taken by another party. Can I trust the river to reveal itself to me? Am I willing to stay in the current and know that as I approach the island the deep channel will sing itself to me in its language of waves and the color of the water? I stand up to look into the glare, listening, smelling, seeing, allowing the song to come, I hope to sing with it. My feed-

back is immediate, my efforts to guide the boat effectively or not. When my song joins with the river, we slide through in whoops and hollers. When I'm off key or out of time, I find myself getting out to push through shallows, or worse, pinned on a rock in the rapid. Then of course the river song goes on, can I rejoin it, use it to sing us off the rock? Or will I go to discord and struggle, breathing hard and croaking out commands to the crew for this and that.

The challenge and choice continue. They are called rapids for good reason, the river speeds up. Once off the rock, there is another downstream. If my attention gets stuck on my last mistake, the next one will surely grab me. What's past is past and the sooner I can find my voice again and join it with the river the better.

The present is inevitable; the rock immediately in front of us will have its way. I may have an instant to respond, to turn as we hit and hopefully bounce around it to the next. But if I don't have a long-range vision, and have not been looking downstream to prepare for it my song will not be pretty.

The future demands that my awareness flow from this rock and this stroke of my oar down through the rapid and as far as I can see. Does the next wave hide a rock or will it be fun to run with a splash in the face? Will the current fifty feet downstream crash us into that wall, or can we avoid it with a few strokes? The future demands that I read the map to anticipate what might be around the bend, and further, to where we will camp, where fresh water can be found and where the best hikes may be.

Yet, if I get rigid in my plans and count on a camp, I may be disappointed to find it taken or swarming with mosquitoes. One evening we arrive tuckered out at a camp next to a creek expecting a clear flowing stream, only to find black water flowing into the river. In disgust and dismay we unpack and make camp, wondering what could possibly turn a stream black. Much later I recall seeing creeks after the Los Alamos fire running the same color with ash from the forest. With chagrin I let go of images of oil spills and mine tailings to embrace a natural occurrence. I can sing again, back in the flow of the trip.

As the river welcomes us and we begin to adjust to living in the desert, thinking we may actually thrive down here, we begin to look around at our comrades. Who are these people I've entrusted my life to? The commitment deepens as so and so's reluctance to wash dishes begins to irk me, as the bozo's demand for coffee in the morning leads to imagining a drowning. Of course we get on each other's nerves. Can I find space in this immense canyon? Is it big enough . . . ? No, am I big enough to offer cream and sugar, or to do an extra dish? Can I let the river guide me when I invite so and so to help prepare dinner?

Continued on Page 11

The New Mexico Men's' Wellness Community

Mike Milstein

As many of you know, Benjamin Miller and I, along with our loved ones, have shared the worst tragedies that a parent can experience; the death of one's child. Avi Milstein took his life in August of 2000 and Katlin Miller died from injuries incurred when she fell out of her family's car, while being driven to school, in November of that same year.

There is no way to rehearse for the kind of tragedy that hit our families. In a matter of moments each of our secure and predictable lives were ripped apart. Powerful emotions arise when such crises occur: Disbelief turns into shock, which, in turn, becomes a deep, potentially bottomless, well of depression. What is the meaning of it all? How could this happen to me? How can I bear the loss of one who is so special and loved so deeply? Why go on?

Then, from near and far, as the word got out, friends from New Mexico Men's Wellness began to call and to appear at our doorsteps. They made it clear that they were here to lend their strength to us when we were feeling weak and extremely vulnerable. They wrapped their arms around us and cried with us. They listened without talking and they sat silently with us as we shared our grief, our fears, and our angers. They joined us for our memorial services, crying with us yet again as we mourned our losses, and they stood tall around the perimeters of the memorial rooms, as sentinels to these sad events. They continued to stay by our sides over the coming difficult weeks and months, holding us safely in their caring hands and letting us know that we were not alone.

What an amazing gift you men gave us! I can't find adequate words to express my gratitude for the way you held us safe and hovered over us to make sure that we got through those unbearable early weeks and months. Of course, it is far from over, and probably "healing" will never be complete, but we are going to make it and the community of support we have received from those of you in the New Mexico Men's Wellness movement is one of the most important factors in our ability to cope with our grief.

New Mexico Wellness As Community

Most of us who have become involved with the New Mexico Men's' Wellness movement had little or no conception of that movement as a community. Certainly, for me the motivation to become involved was based on personal needs—i.e., dealing with my own "stuff." But, as important, even though it wasn't intentional, over the years I have benefited enormously as a result of my deepening relationships with many of the extraordinary men I have met in the movement. Community, in the best meaning of that word, has emerged and become a powerful pillar of support, as witnessed by the outpouring of support we received in our time of need.

Many of us have been connected with the Wellness movement for ten and, for some, even twenty years. Over this time we have gained much more than our own personal development. We have become connected with each other and developed relationships that have grown richer and more meaningful with time and nurturing.

Yet, most of us probably have not consciously thought about this powerful and positive evolution of community. For me it took our awful tragedies to make the unconscious thought a conscious understanding!

So, getting beyond the need to thank you, I want to propose that one of the most powerful things that has been achieved by the New Mexico Men's Wellness movement is the creation of a powerful community of support. I believe that *all* of us are in need of community, especially in the stressful and confusing world in which we live. However, at the same time that the need has increased, traditional sources of community (e.g., the church, the nuclear family, and the neighborhood) have become fragmented and fragile.

What the New Mexico Men's Wellness movement has done over the years, without much conscious intent, is to provide its members and their loved ones with an alternative and extremely effective community of support. Imagine what we can do if we become more conscious and purposeful about the power and potential of our community?

Fishing for Answers

Philip Green

Part one of a two part Series

February, 2002

John Paul Reskin was an ordinary guy with an eye on introspection that often got him into trouble. Of course this "trouble" was quite healthy, but he wished sometimes that he were oblivious to such thinking. He was approaching fifty and wondering why he seemed to be stuck in one place. He was lacking any appetite for what he was doing in his job, but could not seem to cultivate the courage to change it. He had developed the ability to be unusually adept at rationalizing and justifying staying right where he was. Every day he desired to bolt away at a faster pace and to a farther distance, but each day his feet showed their loyalty to his rationalizations and bogged down a little farther in the mire of his habits and rituals called daily life. John Paul didn't show any of this turmoil on the outside. He always appeared cool, sounded stoic. But he was smart enough to know that this inner tension was pulling him apart. Something had to give and if he didn't get in touch with what really mattered to him, he would surely compromise his health and well being. He finally decided to do what he always did when he reached a crisis point. He decided to go fishing. He had heard about a small oval mountain lake that was a treasure to the eyes and a challenge to reach. The lake was always cold and full, fed by shadowed glacier melt all through the summer. He went for it. He would go fly fishing in this sacred place.

He felt some sense of fulfillment just in reaching the beautiful lake. The water was a still emerald green. The hue darkened quickly from the rugged edge showing that this lake became very deep. He pulled out his \$1400 bamboo fly rod with his Orvis Goldmaster 300X reel and 5X Weight-Forward amber-toned line. He tied on a tapered 7 _ foot leader with 4X tippet tip. He added an 18 inch 6X tippet end and tied on his favorite pale morning dun fly, gray with a little gold glisten in the early sun. He eased out some line as he swung a few false casts, getting the feel of the rod sailing the line in and out. He listened to the wisp of the line on the forward swing and finally let the fly settle gently on the smooth ripple-free water. He waited eagerly for the splash of an aggressive rainbow trout hitting the fly. Deep inside he was anxious and impatient, but outwardly he was very disciplined and let the fly sit nearly a minute without any motion. The ripples of its landing had disappeared. A small twitch.....nothing. He decided that he could see the fly too well and so

any fish rising in this crystal water would see him and quietly turn long before reaching the surface. He pulled the fly up and worked a few false casts again turning toward a spot away from his shadow and further out. At the same moment he let the fly light on the surface, he bent down a little to get below the viewing horizon of a fish at that distance. Again he imposed his discipline and let the dun drift nearly a minute. He was about to rest his squinting scrutiny of the fly and lift it again when it slipped silently under the water. The line began moving away. This strike was gentle, but not subtle. This fish did not just open his mouth and suck in the fly without moving. It immediately began gliding away. It had all the characteristics of a large fish, going about its business, without any fear of an outsider. John Paul set the hook and smiled as he bowed the rod back gently enough to keep the fly tight on the fish but not hard enough to break his very fine 6X tippet. The fish began to move directly outward zinging line off the reel. John Paul waited patiently for the fish to pause so he could take up some line and continue the struggle. The line just continued to follow the fish deeper and deeper. He looked down at the reel and noticed that he was down to the final layer of fly line. He gave an extra tug to try to slow the fish but to no avail. The last of the fly line slipped through the eye on the end of his rod. The 60 yards of fly line backing began to unwind. Still the fish did not pause. The backing layers grew thin on the reel and he imagined having to break this one off, leaving him with only a tremendous story to tell. He began preparing to pull back to break the line. The backing reached its end and the pull peaked on the rod. He lowered it so that the line would take the full pull and break without any damage to the rod. But something mysterious had happened. The fragile tippet would not break. John Paul then realized that he might have to let the whole rig go into the water. He couldn't imagine his antique bamboo rod and classic Orvis reel being pulled right out of his hands. He pulled back as hard as he could. Finally he took one hand off the rod and grabbed a tree branch on the bank. Still the pull continued to be too strong. He switched hands and tried to pull toward the tree with his right hand. Nothing helped. He finally faced the reality that he would have to let the rig go into the depths. With great dismay, he tried to let go of the rod only to discover that he could not. He could let go with one hand, but never with both hands. At that point he was forced to surmise that his life was not in his control and that he was going to be pulled in the depths with the rod. This was a small high mountain lake, not a river. It was not a wading situation. He was wearing hiking clothes and had been casting from atop a large rock beside a tree. He took a deep breath and was plunged into the water.

..... to be continued in the next issue

The Question

Mark Skrabacz

Editor's Note: Mark wrote this poem while at the Men's Spring Retreat at Hummingbird Camp (North Campus) just north of Jemez Springs, NM

In Spring '02, we, the 22,
a party of willing men
embarked on a curious journey
to find our dwelling deep within.

Leaving behind our world of work,
our families and cars,
we walked in silent single file
Under silvery light of moon and stars.

We stated our intentions
'round circle of light and brotherly care.
Vowing to ourselves and others
that to our true natures we would repair.

This journey, not about camping
or stalking birds and deer,
was about dropping distractions,
and letting the natural self appear.

In the peacefulness of silence
with solitude's insightful display...
I felt a longing to belong, the lure of manly banter,
yet focused in my own way.

I noticed the usual habits
the old familiar haunts,
of the doing of a course, a talk,
support, a hug, a walk.

In silence and in solitude
one can observe what arises.
Awareness of attachments, aversions,
the human condition and other surprises.

Inaction forms a worthy base
from which to self-observe.
Action's partner, complement,
brings balance to life's pulsing nerve.

We, the 22, together took a step
our deeper selves to find.
Some looked beyond the doing.
Some searched beyond the mind.

We found the process helpful
beyond our understanding.
Discovering that, to get out the way,
is a task, rigorous and demanding.

For the answers to life's questions,
We search outside our self to find.
The light for which we're seeking
Is found within our heart and mind.

The rhythm of nature sets a tone
that keenly tuned ears receive.
In silence and in solitude
its wholeness we perceive.

As men we feel the sounding chant
of deeper self and chorus.
Who we are and what we hear
remain as choices 'fore us.

The lesson in this learning
is that less is often more.
Less doing as in talk and such
can open deep self's door.

So, my brothers, here's a question
a worthy mark to hit.
Will you go for your deeper self?
Will you go for it?

PLAN ON GOING TO THE **SUMMER GATHERING**
SEE PAGE 11 AND BACK COVER

11th Annual Men's Wellness Cross-Country Ski Weekend At Cooks' Cabin -- An '02 Experience

Lawrence Cook

The 11th annual "Fish Creek Ski Fest" was a renewed connection within the flow of a decade's plus cross-country ski weekends, connecting in with a Men's Wellness tradition, begun at Corkin's Lodge in 1990.

Relocated in 1992 to Cooks' Cabin, we now flow in '02 mode, knowing we are part of a wonderful "same-time-next-year" reconnecting event.

This year, Guy Dahms and Lawrence Cook arrived 1st, in the late afternoon of Thursday, 3/21. Settled in and warmed up, Steve Shelly, John Delamater and Mike Owens arrived. Later the snow and moonlight beckoned.

A Moonlight Ski

The same friends ski at the same time, in the same place, knowing full well no one can ski the same trail twice, in the same way no one can step in the same river twice. Besides, we are not the same people skiing or stepping.

Enlightenment comes from our solar source reflected linearly, casting shadows snowward. To ski with no other light source, traversing in and out of moon shadows requires trust and confidence, illuminated by companion camaraderie.

Friday's Frolics

Friday's arrivals began with an early Paul Bruce, followed by Lee Liebler, Chris Wuest, Jim Ward, Phil Green, Will Hoffman and Mark Hawes.

Guy set the track toward Fish Lake and the Continental Divide. We lesser mortals followed, so enjoying a wondrous ski again, only to be informed of the "difficult conditions" – due to the fact that the snow had not "set up." Yet, our trek up the trail and across the creek twice, took us upward and skyward in body and spirit.

Saturday's Sauntering & Sitting

The various outings of the day included a wondrous trek across the creek, up to an old logging road including passing over, around and through Fish Creek, the Fubar Ditch Road, Ooh & Ah Point, Pat Scanlon's Curve, Bear Aspen Corner, The Christmas Tree Farm, Castle Creek, Quack-Quacker Lake and Aspen Hill.

Saturday P.M. brought a talking circle collection of reflections and reports after a wonderful potluck dinner. Whether via sitting circles or skiing outings, communication flows for this group. There was only one "first

timer," but a definite sense of being "simpatico" was felt among all. How could it be otherwise?

Sunday & Beyond

Sunday morning, one group trekked back through the Forest to the Castle Rocks, three on snowshoes and one on short & wide, metal-edged, back-country skis. The three snowshoers were sent off to find their own way. The one skier followed, employing a familiarity with the terrain that led to one more "out of this world ski" – flowing with the knowing sense that terrain and path merge into "The Way that Connects Hearts & Souls."

Coming together below the Castle Rocks and above Fish Creek, snowshoers & skier joined in a prayer filled celebration of a joining Spirit that makes us One with all that is – the Morning Sun, Clear Blue Sky, Mountain Fresh Air, uncovered Deep Powder Snow, and Ice Crusted Tree Sheltered Snow. The return treks resulted in a synchronized arrival, achieved not by following chronological time, but flowing once more with medium and message of "this is The Way for Me."

So it goes – another Men's Cross-Country Ski Weekend within the tradition of Men's Wellness.

The Way that Connects Hearts & Souls

Gathering here together,
Juntos, we are
One,
Joining Hearts & Souls
Searching & Being
Sought.

One more time,
The same time each year,
This Gathering
Occurs,
Connecting past & present
With a common purpose
To Be
Present to the elements
With which we are
Blessed.

To romp & play & dialogue
Beyond the day to day
That frequently clouds
The Source of Goodness
Emanating from
Everyone.

Once again we dedicate
Ourselves
To this time of
Love & Sharing,
Experiencing an existence
That proceeds & continues to
Expand
A passionate response
To Life & the Gift it
Gives.

--Lawrence Cook

NM Men's Wellness 2002 SUMMER GATHERING "CELEBRATING MALE SEXUALITY"

Friday, July 19 – Sunday, July 21

Leo Klinker

HEAR YE, HEAR YE!

The 2002 NM Men's Wellness Summer Gathering will be held again in the Santa Fe National Forest near Cuba, NM, weather and fire danger permitting. (If the area is closed, we will have another site.) This is a chance for us to share the experience of being men with each other in a safe and supportive setting. Everything is self-selecting – you only have to stretch yourself as far as you want.

OK SNAGS (Sensitive New Age Guys)

We're actually going to DO IT! (No, not that, we've been "doing it" for years, yea, decades.) But sshh – we don't talk about it much, do we? Except for bragging and locker room jokes. Yep, we're going to have another summer gathering, and this time we're going to talk openly about **SEX**, by God! Bring yourselves and what you have to share about the joys and woes of male sexuality – experiences good and bad, pains and pleasures, troubles and your WISDOM. Come to share and to learn, to bless and heal and celebrate our sexual selves. (No women, videos, or inflatables.)

We'll have small and large group sharing, workshops, drumming, sweats and ceremony and whatever else comes up, so to speak. Our communal meal on Saturday night will be a Pot Luck – bring something to share with several people. Bring drums – there will be drumming circles on Friday and Saturday nights. You'll also have time to play, hike, and hang out.

Young men 16 and older are most welcome. Scholarships will be offered for people who would be otherwise unable to come – please submit a brief explanation of need with your registration.

We would like volunteers to lead workshops related to sexuality – we will have a list of possible topics but will be open to suggestions. Feel free to bring offerings of other kinds: poetry, music, dance, etc. Contact LEO KLINKER at 505-833-3981 or leo69aloyus@earthlink.net.



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REGISTRATION FORM on BACK COVER
(EARLY REGISTRATION helps us plan. Submit by June 30 if possible.)

Scholarship Funding

Scott Dow

As a member of the NMMW organization you now have a new program available for helping our scholarship fund. Each member may choose his own frequency (ie, monthly, quarterly or ?) and mail a check made

payable to NMMW (and note it is for the Scholarship Fund) and mail it to:

New Mexico Men's Wellness
P. O. Box 23346,
Santa Fe, NM 87502

and I will see to it being deposited ASAP. If you have any questions call Scott Dow at (505) 983-3069 or e-mail him at scottjdow@earthlink.net

Kite Flying and Consciousness - A True Story

Joseph Woods

During the summer of 1955, I was into kites. I loved everything about them. I could buy a real wood and paper kite at the corner store for twenty-five cents of my own money and a ball of string for a nickel. I would carefully assemble the kite making sure I taped all the stress points. I would make a colorful tail for my kite out of rags from my Mom's sewing scraps, if I didn't get caught.

My buddies and I would ride our bikes a couple of blocks to a park where all the kids flew their kites. Kites of every color, shape and size would fill the sky. What a great time we had. I loved it. I remember thinking that it just couldn't get any better than this, but something very special awaited me. A gift would literally fall from the sky that would change my life forever.

On Saturday morning I woke up early as usual, thinking about flying my kite. I walked out the kitchen door into the warm, thick, Texas summer air. I walked around the house towards our driveway and to our postage stamp size front yard. I could not believe my eyes. The neighborhood was quiet and a couple of birds sang in the trees. Big white clouds lazily drifted over in a clear blue sky. No one was up yet. I had the world to myself. There before me lying in the green grass was the biggest, most beautiful kite I had ever seen. I just couldn't believe what I was seeing. The kite had been very carefully hand made. It was taller than I was and covered with heavy brown wrapping paper. In the center of the paper someone had very skillfully painted a likeness of Donald Duck. I followed the kite string back over our house where I found the broken end in our backyard. The big kite had broken its string and crash-landed in my front yard. At nine years old I naturally, I assumed it was a gift from my angels.

I carried my new big kite into the house where I went over every inch of it for tears. It was perfect not a scratch on it. What luck! My next thought put me into a panic. Dad would be up any second and he might force me to give it up. Before I could think it through, Dad was standing above me. He didn't say anything for the



longest time. My heart was pounding in my throat. He just said, "nice kite," and walked out to the car and drove off. He returned a short time later from his office. He handed me a huge spool of heavy duty black sting. He said a big kite like mine would need some strong kite string. Wow! Christmas had never been as good as this.

For the remainder of the morning I went out and checked the wind every five minutes. Did I see the leaves at the top of the locus tree begin to shake? Would the wind ever come up? Five minutes later the leaves were being blown out of the top of the tree. I tied on a new longer tail onto my kite, grabbed the black string and ran outside. The Donald

Duck kite came to life the second I walked out the door. He danced about me, pulling at the sting, wanting to fly up to the clouds. The black string spun of the spool in a blur. The big beautiful kite rapidly got smaller as it climbed into the sky. Never had I flown a kite so high. So high and far away that the black string laid over the rooftops for blocks before it climbed up to my beautiful kite.

I stood there watching my kite in perfect bliss. I stood in a silent world as I watched the big kite slowly rock back and forth in an ultramarine blue sky. In the next second I was looking far below me down to the ground. Way, way below me, I could see a little boy holding on to a spool of black string. I realized that the little boy was me! I was floating up in the sky with my kite, looking back down at the ground at myself! What a wonderful feeling. Was I dreaming? No, I was floating

Continued on Page 11

Kite Flying and Consciousness - A True Story cont'd from Page 10

in the sky. I was flying. I could see my neighborhood as the birds saw it. In the next second I was back in my body, full of wonder and excitement.

The experience with my Donald Duck kite changed my life. As a child I did not block what happened to me. I just went with it and enjoyed myself. I learned that anything is possible. We can fly! We can fly away from this physical world and travel to places of untold beauty and understand a deeper, more complex aspect of ourselves.

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Commitment cont'd from Page 4

What and who am I committed to down here?

Certainly, myself. I want to drink in images of this green river of life. I want to breathe in balance, hold it in my gut and let it go again, and remember it next winter when my feet are cold.

I am committed to the river, the trees, the bear and the clouds; to taste them and to be tasted by them. I want to live my life back in town with the same care that I give here. We strain the garbage out of our dishwasher so that we don't pollute the river. Can I translate that lesson the next time I purchase something packaged in plastic? How do I walk lightly on the Earth?

And my commitment to people. I've been on enough river trips to know that a week spent together out here will change my image of you forever. I want to perceive you in such a way that the image is of love. The next time I meet you for lunch in town, or sit across the meeting room table from you, I want to see the sun dried smile on sandpapered chin, the gleam in your eye because you took a risk and captained the raft through a class III rapid, the assurance in your step as you walked into camp the morning after spending a night alone in the desert. I want the best in me to greet the best in you.

If we are lucky, we begin to see the elemental nature of life out here. My prayer is that our interpretations of it lead us to laugh harder, breathe free-er and love deeper.

New Mexico Men's Wellness 2002 Fall Conference Ghost Ranch; Abiquiu, NM

"FREEDOM RULES"

Starting @ 7 PM Thursday, September 26
Ending @ 1 PM Sunday, September 29

**MARK YOUR
CALENDAR, NOW!**

Subject: Age-old question?

How old would Grandpa be?

The answer is at the bottom...

I was born before television, penicillin, polio shots, frozen foods, Xerox, contact lenses, Frisbees and the pill.

There was no radar, credit cards, laser beams or ball-point pens. Man had not invented pantyhose, air conditioners, dishwashers, clothes dryers, and the clothes were hung out to dry in the fresh air and man hadn't yet walked on the moon.

We were before gay-rights, computer-dating, dual careers, daycare centers, and group therapy.

We never heard of FM radios, tape decks, CDs, electric typewriters, yogurt.

Pizza Hut, McDonald's, and instant coffee were unheard of. We had 5 & 10-cent stores where you could actually buy things for 5 and 10 cents.

Ice cream cones, phone calls, rides on a streetcar, and a Pepsi were all a nickel. And if you didn't want to splurge, you could spend your nickel on enough stamps to mail 1 letter and 2 postcards.

You could buy a new Chevy Coupe for \$600 and gas was 11 cents a gallon.

How old do you think I am -???

This man would be only 59 years old.

Pardon our omission:

Man ALIVE! would like to recognize **JOSEPH WOODS** for the painting of the three dolphins "The Journey Home" © Joseph Woods 2001 with his story *Green Room Transformation* (MA, Winter 2001); and for his illustration, "My Father's Eyes" © Joseph Woods 2002 with Mark Bennett's story *Gifts* (MA, Spring 2002). **We regret the oversight.**

Readers Pick up the Pen

EDITOR'S NOTE: "Readers Pick up the Pen" is a regular column in Man, Alive! In it we ask our readers to address subjects on which they are the only authorities -- their personal experiences, emotions and heart responses to selected topics. Each issue we will select a specific topic and ask readers to write a couple of paragraphs about it. Topics will be intentionally broad in order to give room for expression. Writing style isn't as important as thoughtfulness and sincerity. Just two or three paragraphs will suffice. We will edit the submissions for clarity, but you will have the chance to approve any major changes made. The manuscript requirements and deadlines listed in the Publication Box on page 2 will apply to submissions for this column.

*The TOPIC for the FALL ISSUE will be: **FATHERS AND DAUGHTERS**. Let us hear from you.*

WAR: Is there such a thing as a good war?

WAR AS SEEN BY VELASCO

War in the past was defined as a conflict between two nations or groups of nations, usually as a result of territorial conflict. Wars today seem to be more of a result of ideological, economic, or religious differences. The USA, better known as America, wages wars in several fronts – wars of isolation as in the case of Cuba, North Korea, Iran and Libya, whereby these countries are considered "evil" but no gain is seen in invading and changing the power structure. War for oil for economic gain is IN – protect Kuwait against Iraq but forget protecting Western Sahara from Morocco, and East Timor from Indonesia. Today there are wars on terrorism, wars on drugs, wars on whatever. These are the result of America's demand for oil and drugs, and the desire to Americanize or globalize the whole world. Everyone should have access to a Coke and a Big Mac.

Terrorism, as the new war, is a result of revenge for acts committed against others. Specifically Muslim extremists, which inflicted such damage to America last year, are vengeful for the excesses which America inflicted on Iraq over the last 10 years...Over 300,000 dead, isolation of a "brother" nation, and continued support of an aggressive and invading nation called Israel are but a few reasons. Can you believe oil at \$20/barrel – cheaper than during the last 100 years if you include the inflation factor – something wrong with this picture? Israel, the largest recipient of American foreign aid in the world (3% of their GDP), a country with a yearly per capita income greater than any Latin American or African nation.

The other war is the drug war. The greed for drugs in the western world is a result of demand rather than supply side economics. America sprays coca fields in

Bolivia, creating horrible ecological and economic harm. What if Bolivia sent airplanes to spray muriatic acid (helps things rust) over gun manufacturing factories in America? The cause in this case is the price fixing and control for basic commodities which Western nations have created. The price for coffee, sugar, rice, soy, and most commodities are lower than anytime in history (inflation adjusted.) Alternative crops or crop substitution programs are very hard to implement in such scenarios.

Trench warfare, body bags, unknown soldiers are a thing of the past. More news reporters have been killed in Afghanistan than American soldiers killed in action. It is incredible the number of civilian casualties in Afghanistan ... over 3,000 ... more than military casualties. In this regard it is unlike the trench warfare of WWI, but similar to the destruction and fire bombing of Tokyo and Dresden during WWII where most casualties were civilian.

Finally let us look at America's wars from the side of the Constitution. WWI and WWII were fought by a set of laws, namely the US Constitution, and international treaties such as the Geneva Convention. Today we see "international actions" such as the war in Afghanistan, which cast a blind eye to the "law" and are carried out more in a Fascist and Totalitarian form of government than anything else. What needs to take place is to follow the US Constitution (not the ship) and international treaties, or change these and develop new war instruments... (better hurry before America invades Iraq.)

He dicho... (I have stated.)

Juan

As the leaf turns

Philip Green

the aspen leaf in spring
is green and limber,
reflects energy, well-being,
whimpers softly in the breeze.

moist and green
it looks the same
again and again until
suddenly one day, gold.

shimmering, startling gold,
sought after, adored,
unquestionably beautiful,
purrs in the wind.

people scurry to see them,
walk the forests, line the roads
for they are not here long.
green, green, green, green, gold.

my colors are turning now
as I meet three score,
stiffening a little, slow to focus,
wild, winsome, weathered.

i am handed a bottle
labeled "last quarter"
but filled with sweet creamy time
for me to tend and pour,

a bottle dipped from the stream,
the ever steady current,
constant emptying flow
i used to sit and watch go by.

something slipped away,
shed like a cicada's shell.
the "I" of me is lost.
my pack is suddenly light.

the gold collage of aspen glens
does not shimmer for itself
but for all us creatures,
an awe-laced show beyond green, before brown.

and so it is with me.
I will pour from my bottle
for friends, family, fellow travelers.
I am beginning to shimmer.

Rain

Joseph Woods

Rain falls on dry leaves,
Washing away the dust.
Tears of Joy fall from the sky.
The dry earth drinks in
The gift from the ocean.

Pinion bark transforms from
A dusty brown to a rich dark chocolate.
The air fills with the perfume
Of the ancient forest.
The wind sings through the trees.
A promise of life renewed is kept.

© Joseph Woods 2002

Sound of Waves

Joseph Woods

I hear the sound of waves
Breaking on a distant shore.
My heart longs to be there.
Gentle sea breeze in my face
And the smell of salt water
Fills the air.

An icy comet returns
On a path near the sun.
Filling the darkness
With light once again.
A child skips along the sand.
The difficulties of the past
Are healed.
I am safe.

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MAN, ALIVE!

is available on the Internet at:

www.nmmenswellness.org/

Check it out!

email your comments to
eagle_call@msn.com

DIRECTORY OF CONTACTS FOR MEN'S GROUPS IN NEW MEXICO

(This directory is a work in progress. Please send corrections, additions and subtractions to GaryMcFar@aol.com. Let's get every men's group in New Mexico represented on this list. It will provide a rapid means of disseminating information pertinent to Men's Wellness among groups. Also, if you are interested in joining a group, you can use this list to find a group in your area and then contact the representative to find out if the group is open or not, it's exact meeting place and if it meets your needs. Gary McFarland.)

Northern Region

Max August -- Santa Fe -- 820-1248

maxaugust@earthlink.net Intergenerational group and the "Wounded and Clueless" group

Scott Dow -- Santa Fe -- 450-4650

scottjdow@earthlink.net

Rob Hawley -- Taos -- 758-8176

rob@taosherb.com -- New Warriors group

Victor LaCerva -- Santa Fe -- 983-4233

victorl@doh.state.nm.us

Robert Spitz -- Santa Fe -- 988-3541

robtspitz@aol.com -- Wednesday Lunch Group

Paul Zelizer -- Taos -- 758-9066

mrc@laplaza.org -- Men's Resource Center of Northern New Mexico

Central Region

Dave Breault -- Albuquerque -- 266-9233

dbreault@lobo.net

David Cain -- Albuquerque -- 346-8157

wcain@email.usps.gov

Michael Hamilton -- Sandia Park

eagle_call@msn.com

Bob Hollingsworth -- Albuquerque -- 294-4908

hollingsbooks@thuntek.net

Writer's group and a regular group

Gary McFarland -- Sandia Park -- 281-9477

garymcfar@aol.com

Tim Murphy -- Mountainair -- 847-1850

David Robertson -- Albuquerque -- 345-0457

secretgardensdkr@aol.com

Pat Sauer -- Albuquerque -- 299-6749

psauer@accessinn.com

Central Region (cont'd)

Sal Treppiedi -- Albuquerque -- 275-7258

salteaches@yahoo.com

Hartley Wess -- Albuquerque -- 243-6888

hartwess@excite.com

Southern Region

Neal Apple -- Silver City

apple-allen@gilanet.com

Tony Harris -- Las Cruces -- 524-1899

antix@zianet.com



Websites of interest to Men:

www.menshealthnetwork.org

www.malemenopause.com

www.vix.com/menmag

www.menstuff.org

www.themenscenter.com

www.menalive.comwww.nmmenswellness.orgcommunities.msn.com/nmmenswellness

NM Men's Wellness

Calendar of Events

Wednesday Brown Bag Lunch - Wednesdays noon – 1:30 p.m. at the Men's Center (541/2 E. San Francisco 2nd floor (just off the plaza, enter the door to the right of Hagen-Daz store). The "**BROWN BAG LUNCH**" is a "come one, come all" men's lunch group what has been meeting in Santa Fe for the past eleven years. A place to share from the heart and be listened to from the heart.

New Mexico Men's Wellness Summer Gathering - Santa Fe National Forest, east of Cuba, NM; Starting on Friday, July 19, 2002 ending Sunday, July 21, 2002. Theme: "**CELEBRATING MALE SEXUALITY**", Contact Leo Klinker (505) 833-3981; email: leo69alloysius@earthlink.net

Men's Wellness Adopt-A-Highway Project - Saturday September 14, 2002. Meet at 9:15 a.m. in the Park-And-Ride lot, next to the cemetery on the southwest corner of I-25 and Hwy 550 (previously NM 44). For more information Contact Bob McMain at (505) 248-1001 **OR** David Johnson at (505) 266-9960. To be added to the project email list, send a request to rdrunr@zianet.com.

New Mexico Men's Wellness Fall Conference - Ghost Ranch; Abiquiu, NM; Starting @ 7 PM Thursday, September 26, 2002 ending @ 12 noon to 1 PM Sunday, September 29, 2002. Theme: "**FREEDOM RULES**" Contact Stephen Feher (505) 263-3590 (day) / 771-2924 (eve) / email: sfeher@bestcoaching.com **OR** Barry McIntosh (505) 474-5579 email: kamac@cybermesa.com. **Planning starts 6/2 @ 2PM Contact Steve Feher.**

Wildman Gathering - Bosque Creek Ranch (southwest of Dallas, north of Austin). The originators of the "Wildman Gatherings" are scheduling a WildMan Gathering on October 18th-20th at. If you're interested contact coyotecall@spinn.net.

NM Men's Wellness Spring Retreat

"48 Hours of Reflection"
René Dominguez

The day was Friday, April 26, 2002; there were 22 men from NM Men's Wellness who met at Hummingbird Camp in the Jemez Mountains for a "retreat" from familiar routines and stresses.

We had a few (very few) sprinkles to greet us as we waited to be shuttled to the comfortable North Campus for a 48-hour retreat outstandingly co-convened by Max August and Robert Spitz. After getting settled in our rooms we all had one of many tasty and fulfilling meals in the camp's dining room.

After dinner we returned to the North Campus' spacious lodge being given a candle, representing the light from within, as we each entered a space that had been transformed into a men's circle complete with talking

sticks and a singing bowl. Each man had an opportunity to express his intention(s) for the weekend as he placed his candle into the circle of light that was formed by each man's candle. The first of several talking circles followed the retreat weekend opening. After the talking circle each man claimed a nametag colored indicating whether he was in silence, available for listening only or available for discussions and retired for the evening.

What was planned to be a mostly individual retreat weekend was augmented by spontaneous offerings from various men at the retreat including, but not limited to, Yoga, Meditation, Dialogue, The Young Man's Ultimate Weekend, Heart Math, Focusing, Submersion in Hot Springs, and Hiking to Ruins which were offered voluntarily and participants could attend at their option.

Men at the retreat also accomplished contemplation, writing, and silence. (*Read the poem that Mark wrote at the retreat on page 7*). We ended with a large talking circle the afternoon of Sunday, April 28, 2002 where we shared some of what we had discovered throughout the weekend. Come and join us next year for a growth break from your day-to-day routine.

Take an **ACTIVE** part in New Mexico Men's Wellness:

JULY 19 – July 21

2002 Summer Gathering - Page 11

NEW MEXICO MEN'S WELLNESS – 2002 SUMMER GATHERING
REGISTRATION FORM

FRIDAY, JULY 19 – SUNDAY JULY 21

(EARLY REGISTRATION helps us plan. Submit by June 30 if possible.)

Name(s): _____ Phone: _____

Address: _____ email: _____

City, ST, Zip: _____

Please reserve _____ space(s) X \$35 each = \$ _____
T-Shirts _____ Medium
_____ Large
_____ eXtra Large (XL)
_____ eXXtra Large (XXL)
Total _____ T- Shirts X \$15 each = \$ _____

Total Enclosed = \$ _____

See YOU There!

**Send registration and check to:
NM Men's Wellness Summer Gathering
c/o Leo Klinker
6532 Wayne Road NW
Albuquerque, NM 87120.**

We will send you a confirmation and instruction letter with directions upon receipt of registration.

Men's Network Press
Man, Alive!
P.O. Box 23346
Santa Fe, NM 87502

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