Grand Canyon State Games

Essay Contest

Sponsored by Southwestern College

Medal Awarded
(circle one)

Gold

Silver

Bronze

Honorable Mention

Student's Name: SHEA VAN SLYKE

Student's Grade: 8

Student's School: BIOS CHRISTIAN ACADEMY

** Note: *Please paper clip this form to the top of the winning Essay*

"A Letter of Regret"

To Missed Opportunities and Neglected Relationships,

Before I became a prisoner to addiction, I was able to feel. I had a soft heart. After becoming an addict, my clarity and sensitivity was replaced with a film that prevented me from experiencing emotion. Everything was seen with a new view- family, friends, and school held no importance with the new "me." Once I began, the vague remembrance of my past life vanished. I'll never forget the night I took my first dose. Immediately, addiction captured me.

As soon as I started, nothing mattered. My past relationship with my parents was nonexistent- they were the enemy that tried to rip me away from my new Master who I'd openly welcomed. Eventually, my family kicked me out to protect the rest of my family. School was a complete afterthought. While my friends made trips to school, I made trips to the local dealer. Friendship didn't exist any more- none of my friends agreed with my decision. I was alone. I felt exalted when I gave in to my addiction, and soon afterward sunk into the bottomless pit of depression so fast I could barely catch my breath. It seemed there was nothing could get me out of depression except for drugs.

I started to question my controller's authority. His reply was "Your life would be miserable without me. Didn't I "rescue" you from your lowest point?" Every time I defied my master's orders by refraining from my natural inclinations, I was "punished" severely. Finally, I decided that I was serving my master not by force, but

by choice. I could have chosen to not be tempted by addiction, and stayed strong. Addiction caught me at my weakest. But once I gained the courage to escape, addiction could not stop me. I am free.