45 YEARS . . .
. . . AND THEN WHAT?

Just a few short months ago members of the Butte Falls Lions Club celebrated their 45th anniversary. Although the club has been struggling for the last few years there have always been enough active members to keep it going, but that may be coming to an end. At their last meeting a motion was put before the group to disband the club. To the handful of members present the reason seemed obvious, no one was interested in accepting the office of president for the coming year, and there were not enough members to safely conduct a trap shoot - the clubs main source of funding.

This is a public cry for help! Perhaps you don't know what the local Lions Club does for your community. Here are just a few of the services the club performs: the annual Easter Egg Hunt, Thanksgiving and Christmas Baskets of food for families in need of assistance, eye glasses for students and senior citizens, and bi-annual sight and hearing screening for community members. If the Lions Club folds, all of these services will be lost for our community. In addition to the above, the club also makes donations to the Lions Sight and Hearing Center in Medford, the Butte Falls Scholarship Fund, the Community Hall and other local groups. The club is in need of new members; it meets twice monthly and attempts to put on three trap shoots yearly. If you have some time to donate and are interested in helping your community while at the same time helping to maintain an organization that has helped the community for the last 45 years then please contact one of the following for more information: Beverly or Carlos Carrillo at 865-3837, Gloria Karches at 865-3341, Bob Lozano at 865-3421, Ed and Gayle Koch 826-9105, or Dan Murphy.

The groups next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday April 8 in the Community Hall at 7pm. The communities help is desperately needed to keep this organization in town!

ALCOHOLISM ADDICTION

These are ugly words. It's an ugly disease.

Hi, my name is Angie and I'm an alcoholic. But I'll tell you something that may surprise you. I'm not ashamed to be an alcoholic. I *am* ashamed of the things I did when I was in my active alcoholism, but I'm not ashamed to have this disease. Because that's what it is. Many professionals compare alcoholism and addiction to cancer and diabetes. These diseases, too, will kill a person if left untreated.

As I write this, I celebrate my 372nd day sober. 373 days ago, if you had asked, I would have told you that it wasn't possible for me to go even one day without a drink. I've known I'm an alcoholic for years, but the belief that nothing could be done about it was firmly etched into my mind. The overwhelming depression, the hopeless, helpless feelings of alcoholism are indescribable. It's a physically, spiritually, and emotionally debilitating disease.

One day, in utter misery, I reached out to my friends. I cried, I begged them for help, and we all agreed that I needed treatment. By the next day I had changed my mind. I truly didn't think I could be helped. My friends didn't give up on me. They believed in me when I couldn't. They loved me when I hated myself. When the time came, they dragged me, "kicking and screaming" to a treatment center. Thus began my journey in recovery.

I won't tell you that it's been easy. It hasn't. This past year I have learned more about myself than I ever wanted to know. And I continue to learn every day. My life now is not perfect. It probably never will be. But I accept the challenges set before me one at a time. Today, I love myself. I have inner peace. I know that I have the ability and inner strength to accept my life as it comes. Each day can be wonderful, if I do the footwork.

They say that, on an average, one person's alcoholism or addiction has a direct effect on four other people. I write this article in the hope that my recovery can have an effect on at least one person. If you suffer from this horrible, devastating disease, I want you to know that you are not alone. And you are not hopeless. Not by a long shot.

It's OK to say, "I'm an alcoholic."
It's OK to say, "I'm an addict."
It's OK to say, "I need help. I can't do this by myself."

The first step is the hardest. To reach out to someone, to let down your guard, and say, "I'm helpless" is terrifying. Believe me, I know. But it's also the first step toward a new life. Being "clean and serene" means a lot more than not drinking or using drugs. It's a whole new way of living.

In closing, on behalf of the kids, I want to thank each and every person who has stood by me through the years. You know who you are. Without your love and faith in me, our new life may not have been possible.

Angie Baker