

CONTACT:793-9420

Worcester Telegram & Gazette (MA) - February 2, 1990

- Edition: ALL
- Section: FEATURES
- Page: A8
- Column: CONTACT

CONTACT represents you - cuts through red tape, asks questions and tries to solve your problem. Dial 793-9420 or write: CONTACT, The Telegram & Gazette, 20 Franklin St., P.O. Box 15012, Worcester, 01615-0012.

Q Why do we have to have a lawyer go into court for us? Why do we have to give them so much money? I have seven children and I've got a will. But I don't want the lawyer to get my money. And, why does it take so long? C.G., Charlton

A You sent along an advertisement selling making-your-own-will kits. The ad states that lawyer fees and court costs "are quite expensive." It also states lawyers charge an average of \$60 for writing a will.

Obviously, this company is out to sell you a kit for \$19.95 plus \$2 for postage and handling.

We posed your question to William Litant, spokesman for the Massachusetts Bar Association. He said you can use a will kit and do your own legal work. This type of action works best where you have a simple situation.

He said, however, people may not realize that their situations are more complex than they think. One lawyer recently told him of a man with two daughters who made out a will in the 1940s. He left one daughter the house, then worth \$12,000, and he left the other daughter \$12,000 in cash. His intent was to divide his estate evenly between the two. The man died recently. His house grew in worth to \$400,000. The first daughter got it. The second daughter still got only \$12,000 cash.

He said complications often arise if someone has been married before and if there are children from different marriages. Illegitimate children can also pop up later in life, staking a claim to a share of the estate.

You can use a will kit if you want - and it may work out all right - but checking things through with a Massachusetts lawyer may save you and your heirs from later grief, Litant said. He added lawyers often do wills at a very reasonable fee, especially if it is not complicated.

Litant sent to you some literature on legal services and how to get the best for your money.

Q I'm trying to get back \$3,880 from an alcohol and drug rehabilitation program called Straight Inc. of Stoughton. My daughter was entered in April and I withdrew her early from the program, in August. All my money and payments were made and I have no outstanding bills.

I have contacted them twice and very nicely asked about the refund. They said an error was made on the billing and they would straighten it out. I have heard nothing from them.

I was pleased with the treatment that my daughter received there and was thankful for the help, but I feel they are being unjust in not returning my money. I am a single parent and do have need of that money to make good the loans that I had taken out. J.R., Worcester

A Lisa S. Carlson, assistant administrator for fiscal services at Straight, said a delay in the main office kept your money from getting to you sooner. A check of \$3,880 was mailed to you.

MORE ON TELEPHONES

CONTACT has received numerous requests recently for help in getting telephone problems resolved. Richard B. Colon, spokesman for New England Telephone Co., said the unprecedented backlog in making service calls is because of the recent strike.

Original estimates were that it would take three months to serve customers awaiting service, but it now looks like it will take six months, he said. Colon said everyone will get the service they need, but work is being done by geographical areas. Priority still goes to people with serious health problems.

Colon said readers who want to know when work crews will be in their area can call the New England Telephone Co. business office for an update.

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Treatment center for teen boys to open

Providence Journal (RI) - July 8, 1990

- Author/Byline: THE PROVIDENCE SUNDAY JOURNAL, DAN BARRY, Journal-Bulletin Staff Writer
- Edition: CITY FINAL
- Section: NEWS
- Page: B-01

Rhode Island's first drug-treatment center for teenage boys will open tomorrow, more than two years after state officials unveiled plans for the project.

And the list of potential clients is already growing.

"It is my understanding that when the doors open up there will be four or five residents brought in immediately," says Richard H. Freeman, assistant director of the Department of Mental Health, Retardation and Hospitals.

MHRH, which is overseeing the project, has spent almost \$600,000 to convert a cottage on the grounds of Zambarano Memorial Hospital in Burrillville into the 12-bed facility, known as The Lodge at Wallum Lake.

It's been a long time coming. State officials announced in January 1988 a plan to open a treatment center for boys with severe addictions requiring residential care.

But the project experienced a series of bureaucratic delays - including the temporary loss of a crucial document on the cluttered desk of a Department of Administration official.

Meanwhile, MHRH contracted with out-of-state residential facilities, like Straight, Inc. of Stoughton, Mass., to treat drug-addicted Rhode Island boys.

Despite the extended delays, Freeman said that the finished product is "the best of its kind in the country."

13- to 17-year-olds

MHRH has hired Marathon House, a private, nonprofit drug-treatment organization, to operate the facility.

The boys admitted into the program would be between 13 and 17 years old and would stay from three to six months, according to David H. Mactas, executive director of Marathon House.

He said Marathon House has developed eligibility criteria for potential clients that will be forwarded to drug-treatment agencies throughout the state, as well as to Family Court and the Department of Children and Their Families.

Mactas said not all boys would be appropriate for the round-the-clock, highly structured program that Marathon House plans to adopt. For example, boys with histories of violence will not be accepted.

"Kids who require a secured setting" will also be ineligible, he said.

Staff prepares for opening

The staff for the facility has been hired and is preparing for the opening, he said. The filled positions include a program director, five counselors, a recreation specialist, a nurse, a teacher and overnight workers.

Despite the delays, Freeman said he's proud of the finished product.

"I'm not embarrassed by it, based on the work I see," he said. "It's the best of its kind in the country."

Freeman said the state has also begun plans to renovate another Zambarano cottage into a similar facility that would hold eight boys. Caritas House in Pawtucket is the only residential treatment program for teenage girls, with 17 beds.

- Index terms: NARCOTICS; EDUCATION
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