

QUEEN CITY Voice

New Year's Resolutions

By Eric Reed

With the new year upon us the city of Manchester looks ahead. Many in the city speculate on what is to come in 2016, and take a long look at the many hurdles that we must overcome. On the top of the list of many is the drug epidemic which has slowly been choking the city. In 2015 there were as many as 357 deaths related to drug overdoses in New Hampshire, an increase from the 321 in 2014. Of these over 101 were from Nashua and Manchester alone. These startling figures show that these addictive substances have risen to overtake traffic accidents as a leading cause of death in the state.

State funded treatments for heroin addiction increased by ninety percent, while treatment for opioid addiction rose by over five hundred percent. The use of Narcan, a substance used to reverse the effects of opioid overdose have also risen considerably.

It is hard times like these that the people of Manchester turn to their leadership for answers, and while answers to the epidemic plaguing our city may be few and far between, there is still hope. Mayor Ted Gatsis, spoke earlier this week to an assembly about the rising threat that the heroin and other abused substances pose to the city.

In his speech he talked about his plans to combat the epidemic. Part of this plan is expanding treatment options available to those who suffer from drug addiction. Working with drug giant Panacea Pharmaceuticals, he plans to open a treatment facility on Elm st., and has plans to open three more by the end of 2018. Panacea is helping to fund these centers, and its new treatment centers will promote



the use of Isoprovalyn. Isoprovalyn has recently been approved by the FDA and claims a one hundred percent success rate in curing addiction. The actual results remain to be seen as members of the medical community have often downplayed the drug's effectiveness. Dr. Malcolm Rivers of Elliot Hospital has said on record that "It is little more than a placebo, and traditional treatments such as methadone have a much better chance of creating long lasting freedom from the dangers of drug addiction." The new treatment facility is scheduled to open its doors in May, and time will tell if they are effective in stemming the tide of addiction in Manchester.

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RESOLUTIONS

CRIME ON THE RISE

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TODAYS WEATHER

Today:

Showers, mainly before 5pm. High near 47. Calm wind. Chance of precipitation is 100%. New precipitation amounts between a quarter and half of an inch possible.

Tonight:

A 30 percent chance of showers before 7pm. Mostly cloudy, then gradually becoming mostly clear, with a low around 38. West wind around 5 mph becoming calm in the evening. New precipitation amounts of less than a tenth of an inch possible.

Crime Increases Across City

By Jennifer Ryan

Police Chief Nick Willard is under fire this week as the Manchester Police commission published a report this week detailing crime statistics in the greater Manchester area. The report filed last Tuesday laid out detailed statistics of crime rates around the city and the areas in Manchester where crime was most prevalent. Unsurprisingly the area of greatest contention in the report detailed Elm street. and the surrounding area as a hotbed of crime, with assault and robbery being most common, with illegal substance use being a close third.

Much of the increase in crime seemed to stem from drug related transgressions. The report noted an increase of one hundred fifty percent, in drug related offences. The need of people to acquire illegal drugs has led many to commit acts of robbery and theft. This coupled with a surprising increase in what seems to be gang related activity has turned downtown Manchester into a hotbed of criminal activity. "It's like you can't even go out after dark anymore," said Sarah Springs of Oak street. "The city's just not safe after dark anymore."

Mayor Gatsis has a meeting scheduled with the police chief next week, and the two plan to discuss the report, as well as

plans going forward to ensure public safety, and bring peace of mind back to the citizens of Manchester. Chief Willard hasn't seemed confident in his ability to serve the city, and has often cited budget cuts as a major factor in his lack of ability to achieve positive change.

When questioned about the report, Willard stated on record that "I see this report as a good thing, now people can see what I've been trying say. That the city has underfunded our department for year, and the results of this are now apparent for all to see. Now that we see the problem I believe we can make steps toward change." As for his plans on improving the safety of the city he commented that he hoped to be able to get additional funding and with that fund a special unit tasked with targeting drug suppliers that have been feeding the city poison for years. It doesn't look good as the city budget for 2016 has no extra provisions for the Police Department, and it remains to be seen if the necessary funds can be found.

DEAR SANDY

DEAR SANDY: I've been worried about my brother, we've always been very close, talking almost daily and sharing almost everything with each other. Lately however he's begun to shut me out, and I'm getting worried. I try to visit with him and he's never home during the day, I called his work and they said he hasn't shone up for his shifts. When I do see him it's been late in the night when he unexpectedly shone up at my door, looking guilty, but not willing to tell me why. What should I do?
-Worried Sister in Manchester.

DEAR WORRIED: Try to give him some space, It sounds as though he is going through a tough time and may be afraid to tell you about it. Just be supportive, and try to be there when he's ready to talk.

ODD NEWS

BARNAUL, Russia (AP) — Tired of the dog-eat-dog politics in their Russian city, the residents of Barnaul say they want a cat to be their next mayor.

The Siberian city of 650,000 people, which lies 2,900 kilometers (1,800 miles) east of Moscow, is to get a new mayor next week when a commission comprising the city council and the regional governor choose from among six candidates.

But none of the six appear to spark much affection among Barnaul's residents. An informal online poll asking residents to express their preferences among the six and a Siamese cat named Barsik showed the feline nabbing more than 90 percent of the vote.

"Through the image of Barsik the cat, our people are sending definite wishes to the future head of Barnaul," says regional Gov. Alexander Karlin.

"The conclusion has been made that there's absolutely no trust among voters for any of the candidates," said local Communist Party official, Ivan Karpov.

