

The annual spring WCTU Children's Contests are here again. I am dedicating my 2010 WCTU efforts to the memory of Forrest (not his real name), an older brother to a close friend of our family.

This past summer, Forrest attempted suicide by hanging. Our friend, Angie (not her real name), found her brother, called 9-1-1, and cut the rope with scissors. Forrest survived for one month in a coma on a ventilator before his divorced parents gave up hope. This death (one of thousands of annual suicide attempts in the U.S.) shocked our family, and gave me a new desire to pass along the message of the hope of Christ, before the hopelessness of any addictions takes its toll.

Forrest's mom was an alcoholic, and he himself began drinking alcohol and taking drugs at a young age. Angie followed his example until she moved to the mid-Kansas area, became a Christian, and left those habits.

Recently, Forrest came to live with his sister's family to "turn his life around." Brother and sister worked together to avoid substance misuse, during difficult situations. But no one knew how much Forrest needed help until an unexpected, stressful situation caused him to lose hope.

One contest and one entry might not change a lifestyle, but one person with one act of caring can do just that.

The Woman's Christian Temperance Union Children's Contests for grades

K-12 to promote abstinence from drinking alcohol, using tobacco, and using drugs (both illegal and the abuse of prescription drugs). The Contests include a Picture Coloring Contest for grades K-3, a Poster Contest for grades 4-12, and an Essay Contest for grades 4-12. Each of the K-3 grades competes within its own grade in the coloring contest.

The poster and essay contests compete within divisions: grades 4-6, 7-9, and 10-12. Modest cash prizes are awarded at the state level for the top

4 winners in each grade or division. First place winning entries are sent to the National Contest, and larger, modest cash prizes are given at that level.

For 2010 contests rules, homeschoolers can contact me at myers_nellie@yahoo.com or call me at 316-799-2882. I can send contest rules via e-mail. I will send picture coloring sheets and/or essay packets to those who request them. To ENCOURAGE local participation, support groups may conduct their own local contests by mid-March and award small prizes. By April 2, 2010, send me the first place winning entries and a tally of the participants and in which division they participated, if that information is available. **THOSE INDIVIDUALS NOT IN A LOCAL CONTEST**, may send their entries to me by April 2, 2010, at the following address: Mrs. Nellie Myers, WCTU State Education Director, 14566 NW 110th St., Whitewater, KS 67154. Homeschoolers in a Kansas support group who live just outside state borders may participate in the Kansas contest; or if a child from a neighboring state is not in a Kansas support group, and does not know how to enter their own state contest, that child may also enter the Kansas contest.

For those interested in Bible Memory, a WCTU Bible Memory "contest" with selected memory verses is also conducted. Rewards are given for participation. E-mail me for details.

WCTU works for temperance against addictions caused by alcohol, tobacco, drugs, and gambling. Homeschooling families are welcome to attend the WCTU Mid-year Meeting Hutchinson, KS, on April 15-16, 2010.