



## FOR YOUR INFORMATION

### \*\*\* New Steering Committee Policy \*\*\* for the Aberdeen Building

The Aberdeen Steering Committee has tackled the question as to whether the building should be made smoke free.

In fairness to both sides of the controversy, and in the spirit of AA, a petition was floated and has resulted in a compromise.

The Steering Committee has approved the following policy

Smoking allowed from 6:00 p.m. 'til 11:00 p.m. on Wed., Thurs., Fri. & Sundays only.

All other days and times are non-smoking.

Furthermore:

During special events such as AA Marathon, dances, Thanksgiving or Christmas dinners, the building will be nonsmoking even when these events may fall on the smoking days and times mentioned above.

The Steering Committee also passed a "no pets allowed" policy for the building. This pertains to all animals ... not just dogs.

Many of you will have noticed that the building is looking especially bright and welcoming lately. This is due to the very hard work of many of the AA members who use the building. They have sanded and polished the floors and put a new coat of paint on the entire inside of the building.

These projects, as well as the many dinners and festive occasions that the "Special Events Committee" hosts are financed & approved by the Aberdeen Steering Comm.

The Committee meets 7 pm the 2<sup>nd</sup> Tues. of each month at the Aberdeen Building & all AA members are welcome to attend.

## FEATURES:

- FYI
- Spotlight on Our Groups
- Traveling Highlights
- Historical Facts of AA
- District 52
- Member's Musings
- Carrying the Message

---

## TRAVELING HIGHLIGHTS

---



(This AA member recalls his many years traveling the length and breadth of North America as a sports reporter.)

\*\*\*\*\*

During the long Neanderthal epoch of my existence when John Barleycorn ruled my life, I guzzled from coast to coast and border to border because of the traveling nature of my work.

As befits an alcoholic full blown into the idiocy of the disease, I got drunk in Boston & San Francisco, Montreal and Houston, Miami & Chicago along with getting violently ill from booze in Watkins Glen, NY and Ogden, Utah.

And, it isn't easy to get stinko in Utah! You have to work at it just as I had to devote time and effort to finding more than my share of drink in the dry counties of the Bible Belt back in the Nineteen Forties, Fifties & Sixties. But what dedicated, active alcoholic couldn't solve these problems?

One Sunday in Greenville, NC, (so long ago that East Carolina was just a half dozen one-floor corrugated buildings on an open and dusty old farmland), I came up with something that could just as well have killed me. That was supposedly a dry area in those days. But not for an alcoholic bent on booze.

When this drunk found AA, more than three decades back and began to emerge from the prehistoric life that was barely an existence into the wonderful life of one beautiful day at a time, I was fortunate enough to still be holding down the traveling job, a job I loved.

I felt that, since I'd gotten drunk all over the planet, it was only fitting that I work at getting sober all over the planet by attending AA meetings everywhere I landed on assignment. What a delightful way to work at this life-long experience of staying off alcohol.

Just about everywhere there is a town full of saloons, there is a town full of kindly and loving folks in AA. Also, in many of those places there are AA houses, such as we have here in Aberdeen. Of course there are AA meetings in churches, schools, homes, clubs, etc. from border to border and coast to coast.

For many years I wandered the good old USA in a big custom fitted Chevy Van. Starting from

New Jersey just before Xmas, I drove to California in about six days usually. There I worked the Rose Bowl and then picked up the PGA Tour.

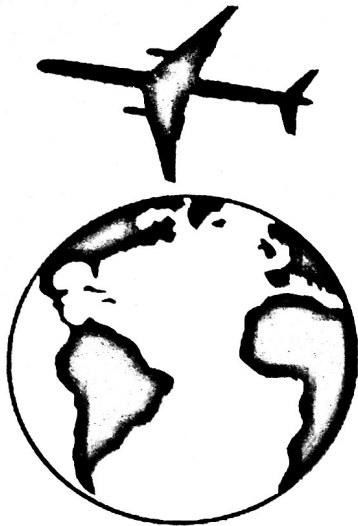
Traveling by van was the best way to follow the golf tour and I went from California to Arizona in the winter to Florida and Georgia in spring & then up north through the summer.

One cold, December day, while cruising 50 miles west of Fort Worth along I-20 it began to drizzle. But, as is Mother Nature's want in mid Texas in winter, she mixed in a goodly bit of sleet that quickly turned the road into an ice rink that the Red Wings would appreciate. But drivers, trying to make it home for Christmas on I-20 felt differently. We needed safety off the road and quickly.

I knew all motels would fill up quickly so I pulled into a Holiday Inn on the east side of Abilene and got one of the last four rooms. There I stayed for four days waiting for the ice to melt. And, for each of the ice-bound nights in Abilene I attended a crowded AA mtg. In a nearby church adjacent to the Abilene Christian University campus.

The first night I walked into an open speakers meeting and a kind lady at the door introduced herself knowing I was new to the area. When I answered with my very strong non-Texan

\*\*\*\*\*



## TRAVELING HIGHLIGHTS

\*\*\*\*\*

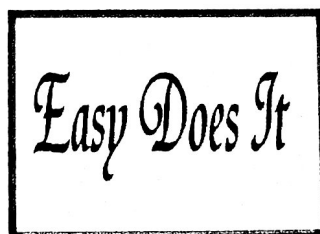
Ever since I've been in AA, which is more than 20 years, I've loved going to AA meetings in other parts of the world and in our own country.

Of course they are never "right" as compared to the ones I attend here in Moore County! Some of them say the *Lord's Prayer* and some don't. Some of them open with *The Serenity Prayer* and yet there are others that don't have any prayers in their format at all.

One time in Italy I attended a meeting that opened by welcoming all the visitors but asked ... "PLEASE don't tell us all about your journey until *after* the meeting". I got a kick out of that, envisioning one very verbal AA visitor taking up the whole hour with their travel story!

An early meeting on Cape Cod was interesting, too. It was 6 o'clock on a Sunday morning but there were at least 20 people there. The chairperson welcomed us all and then, instead of any opening readings, he went around the room and had each of us share whatever we wanted. It was a strange format but very powerful. We ended with *The Serenity Prayer* as we held hands.

Then, there was the time I went to a meeting in Mexico. They had all the slogans posted ...like ...



and of course they were written in Spanish. That didn't matter though. It was just so comfortable to see the same things that we had at home posted on their walls.

Not only have I loved going to AA meetings all over the world; but, I've learned a very important lesson from it too.

I had just a little over a years sobriety when I attended my first AA meeting away from Moore County. When I got home I couldn't wait to tell my sponsor how poorly I'd been treated. "They never even asked my name", I complained. "I was so mad I got up and left before the meeting was over."

If I expected my sponsor to empathize with me I was sadly mistaken. She looked me straight in the eye and said, "Did you put your hand out? Did you introduce yourself?" Aha! It was a great and powerful lesson in ego deflation and I've never forgotten it.

Anonymous AA member

\*\*\*\*\*

## **CARRYING THE MESSAGE**



\*\*\*\*\*

In order to "Carry the Message" of sobriety to others I have to have a good solid AA program of my own.

As I write this I have just come from the District Meeting and I realize that my focus on service made a huge difference in my early sobriety and how now, after 9,189 days it remains an integral part of my program.

I was less than 30 days sober when I had my first experience with service. I was taken (not asked, but taken) to sit on a panel discussion at a detox center. I remember asking what I was supposed to share – and I was told to share how I had stayed sober for 20 some days.

I was so nervous and I couldn't tell you anything I shared; but, I do remember looking around the room and seeing the damage that alcohol had taken on the people in the room. When we left I didn't know if any of those people would stay sober, but I knew that I would not take a drink that day.

Over the years I have had a number of different service commitments ...Greeter,

Cookies, Birthday Cake, Secretary, Treasurer, Panel Coordinator, General Service Representative and Intergroup Secretary. Each one has taught me something and added to the quality of my sobriety.

Early on in sobriety I had an experience that showed me how the program works. I was the Treasurer for my group and I realized I had to get honest and let them know that my son had stolen their money. The fear and embarrassment was overwhelming. I was sure that everyone was going to be angry and I would be booted out.

With guidance from my sponsor I went to the meeting and let them know what had happened. I was planning on having to reimburse the group (it was not a small sum) and lose my job as treasurer, but they voted to let the money slide and insisted that I maintain my commitment to the group. I was stunned – but I learned that if I can get out of my head, ask for direction, take a suggestion, be honest and leave the results alone, amazing things can happen.

Currently, I am the GSR at my home group Vass and Secretary at Intergroup. I will soon turn over my GSR commitment to another home group member and am looking forward to taking on the Alternate DCM responsibilities and providing service to the groups in District 52.

Service in A. A. keeps me accountable. It allows me to give back to AA ... the program that saved my life ...and allows me to walk around in the world without the guilt, shame and fear that ruled my life prior to my arrival.

My wish for anyone reading this is that you consider getting into service. Maybe you can do one of the following:

Get active in your Home Group. Make a commitment to attend the weekly meetings. Sign up to chair them and help with set up and closure.

Attend the business meetings to see what you can give back.

### Attend INTERGROUP :

See what service opportunities are available. The Intergroup provides all the services for Moore County that the individual groups could not handle alone. It meets the first Saturday of every month at 9am in the Wilder Bldg., Aberdeen

### Attend a DISTRICT meeting:

We are always happy to have visitors and are looking for members to participate. The next District meeting will be February 10, 2013 at the Wilder Building at 2:00pm.

If you are still reading this – thanks for hanging in there!

In love and service – Teri W.



## MEMBER'S MUSINGS

### NOTES FROM THE TRAIL

Saturday, Oct. 18, 2008

I couldn't believe this day had finally arrived. What started as an interesting, "Wouldn't it be fun to someday..." conversation more than six months ago was actually about to happen. Zella G., Pat M. and I were going to hike the Grayson Highlands section of the Appalachian Trail for five days.

After months of preparation, endless list-making, buying and borrowing gear, reading up on the trail and hiking in general, we had loaded up our backpacks for the final time. As we headed out into the chilly pre-dawn air for the ride to Damascus, Va. (our "jumping off point") I said a silent prayer that God would guide and direct every step of our journey.

We were excited and I, for one, was still more than a little apprehensive. For days I had shared with my sponsor the many fears of my not being physically or emotionally "up" to this challenge.

My biggest fear was that I wouldn't be able to keep up

with my friends. I felt that I was somehow "less than" capable physically as my friends who manage to log many hours of strenuous physical activity every week. I struggled to fit in an occasional stroll around the block.

My sponsor reassured me that I would "be fine". She said that if I needed to go slower than the others that perhaps that was God's way of slowing us down so that we could enjoy the journey!

We were delivered to the trail for the start of our trek by a kindly gentleman from Mount Roger's Outfitters in Damascus. As he drove away I realized that the top of the mountain looming above our heads was that night's destination. I hefted the 30+ lb. pack onto my shoulders and prayed again for God to provide lots of majestic beauty that would require lengthy pauses to be fully appreciated.

As we trudged up the mountain that first afternoon we chanted, playing a revised children's game that went something like this, "three AA's went on a walk in the woods and on that walk they left behind...." We ended up with a long list that included, "demanding jobs, unrealistic expectations, fear of failure, crazy thoughts and the plummeting Stock Market". It felt good to let go and leave some of the "real world" behind.

Several hours, just as many miles, and more than 3,000 ft. higher we met our first "Trail Angel".

The temperature had dropped to a frigid 22 degrees. As we attempted to make camp on the summit of White Top Mountain the howling wind nearly blew our tent off the side of the mountain. I was wearing every piece of clothing that I had packed but my hands and feet were numb from the cold. My teeth were chattering and I had begun to shake uncontrollably. (Was this the hypothermia we had been warned about?)

My hands were useless so I prayed as the other two girls struggled unsuccessfully to start a fire. Just then a woman coming to get water from the spring saw our predicament and invited us to make camp on the other side of the mountain.

She and her husband took us under their wings, instructing us in methods for staying warm. Their tip on using hot water filled bottles to warm our feet in the sleeping bags was truly a lifesaver that first night as the temperature continued to dip.

Zella and I roared with laughter the next morning when Pat rolled out of the tent shouting, "Half measures availed us nothing!" We quickly realized that it really was a good idea for me to be out in front. My short legs forced us to take a slower

pace and more frequent breaks. So I really did my best to provide the group with frequent opportunities to pause for a "Blue Ridge Break".

Our second night brought another "Trail Angel" in the form of a beautiful German Shepherd and his owner. Temperatures fell to well below freezing and the wind whipped around the little tree sided shelter on the top of Thomas Knob. The body heat from this huge but gentle dog kept Pat warm through the night.

Our chilly discomfort was more than compensated for by the panoramic view from the rocks behind that shelter. After dark we were awed by the millions of stars that lit up the sky. For the first time since childhood I could actually see the "Milky Way".

I fell asleep that night thanking the creator of this vast universe for my sobriety and the opportunity to share this sometimes frightening and sometimes exciting; but, always amazing journey with such good friends.

Each days hike brought new challenges and new joys. The fall foliage was at it's peak and every torturous struggle up a mountainside was rewarded at the top with spectacular views.

One blue sky day we stopped to eat our lunch on the high

boulders of Wilburn Ridge. The sun had warmed the giant slabs of rock that we rested on and for as far as the eye could see there stretched a rolling crazy quilt of fall colors. Two hawks wheeled through the sky above us as we spent an hour journaling our adventures.

Late that afternoon we found a threesome of guys from the Charlotte area napping and reading in their shelter. We pitched our tent in a clearing near by. Later that evening they shared their roaring fire, lots of laughter and hot tea with us as we discussed "life" in general and the importance of taking the time to reflect and meditate.

We would wind up meeting with them again the next night and find out that one of them was "also in the program".

As we trudged into the shelter that last night we were surprised to find our final "Trail Angel", DeLois C. was waiting there with a big bag of freshly ground "Starbucks" and a French press! (Another item we had regretfully decided to do without on the trip.)

After four days and nearly 30 miles on lukewarm, instant coffee and herbal tea we were gleeful and bouncing up and down like kids as we held out our cups for seconds.

As we broke camp on our last morning we each remarked that

while we were glad to be returning home to family and friends, we were also sad to be leaving the trail. We agreed that this experience had enriched our lives in ways that we couldn't have possibly imagined.

Here are some life lessons that have stuck with me since my experience on the trail:

- \* Stick close to your friends. When one of you is struggling another is always there to lend a hand and no one gets lost.
- \* Being open and honest about my fears somehow makes it easier for me to accept help.
- \* A slow and steady pace can make for a more interesting and memorable journey.
- \* Listen to the people who have successfully traveled where you want to go. It is likely that they have some valuable insight into tools necessary for a less painful and more successful journey.
- \* My creator is everywhere. When I make time to "just be" in his presence I become stronger and more "fit" for the trail.
- \* When I keep my eyes, ears and mind open I find that He sends me "Trail Angels" along the way.

Contributed by AA member,  
Laura D., Vass group

## HISTORICAL Facts of AA



### CAPTAIN JACK

Have you ever wondered what it would be like to have no AA meetings available...or to be physically incapable of getting to one?

Even in this day and age of the computers there are recovering alcoholics who have no access to AA meetings.

Thanks to Captain Jack S, however, they do have access to a bi-monthly, confidential bulletin called "The Loner-internationalists Meeting", (LIM) distributed by the GSO of AA.

LIM began through the efforts of Captain Jack, a sailor who found sobriety in AA & understood that to maintain this he needed to reach out to other members through correspondence.

In March, 1946 he wrote a letter to GSO requesting information on AA contacts because he was "still at sea on an oil tanker and I have few contacts ashore with AA and have to rely on the Book and the Guy upstairs."

A GSO staff member provided Captain Jack with the name of AA contacts and encouraged him to write to them, which he did.

Two years later, in 1948, he wrote a 3 part article for the "AA Grapevine" based on this correspondence and entitled "A Loner at Sea". Letters poured in and he decided to respond by starting a "Round Robin Mtg." via letters. This was to become the bi-monthly LIM.

If you want to get involved, here's how it works today. A GSO staff member coordinates the Loners, Homers and Internationalists correspondence service, which is open to AA members in one of the categories listed below.

LONER...member unable to attend meetings regularly due to no AA meetings in the vicinity where he/she lives.

HOMER...member who is unable to attend AA meetings due to a physical incapacity.

INTERNATIONALIST ...an AA member working on a sea going vessel for long periods.

PORT CONTACT... member willing to serve as a contact for Internationalists when in port.

LONER SPONSOR...member active in AA mtgs. who shares his/her experiences and group activities with LIM.

To participate: an AA member must: 1) read and write English, 2) provide a permanent mailing address, 3) be willing to share experience, strength and hope through correspondence.

Interested AA members who fit a LIM category may contact the Loners Assignment, c/o GSO, PO Box 459, Grand Central Sta, New York, NY 10163  
Or Email: [LIM@aa.org](mailto:LIM@aa.org)

### SANDY HILLS



Footwear  
for trudging the road  
of happy destiny !

## **DISTRICT 52** **NEWS**

\*\*\*\*\*

### **New Officers elected**

Here is the list of the new officers for District 52. They will each serve a two year term:

DCM...Daniel W., Primary Purpose Group

Alt. DCM...Karen P., Vass Group

Secretary: Chuck A., Keep It Sober Group

Treasurer: Jim L., West Side Group

\*\*\*\*\*

District 52 is the AA Service entity made up of Moore, Hoke, Richmond, Lee & Scotland counties.

District meetings of the GSR's (General Service Representatives) from these groups are held four times a year.

Additionally, our officers and GSR's attend Area (State) Assemblies twice a

year and our DCM (Chairperson) attends the two meetings each year of DCM's and Area officers for the state.

**This is the basic process of keeping your Home Groups and Meetings connected to the World-wide AA Organization.**

District 52 now has 20 groups with GSR's to represent them, and that participate in the AA service structure.

If your group has chosen not to participate we hope you will reconsider.

\*\*\*\*\*

**THE NEXT DISTRICT MEETING IS SCHEDULED FOR JANUARY 10<sup>th</sup>**

District meetings are open to any AA members who are interested and we invite you to attend.



## **WHAT IS** **INTERGROUP**

We are a service committee formed for the purpose of supporting AA activities in Moore County. Our goal is to improve communication and understanding among AA groups.

The Sandhills Intergroup is comprised of interested volunteer members and representatives from the AA groups in Moore Co.

The ideas and suggestions of local AA's are welcome and all are encouraged to attend the monthly meetings at 9am on the first Saturday of every month at the AA building on Wilder Avenue in Aberdeen. The Sandhills Intergroup is financed solely by the local AA groups.

\*\*\*\*\*

Published & distributed by

Sandhills Intergroup  
PO Box 2513  
Southern Pines, NC 28388  
1-800-496-1742  
[www.moorecountyaa.org](http://www.moorecountyaa.org)

\*\*\*\*\*