

**S**andhills  
Intergroup



# NEWSLETTER

Volume 11, #1

January, 2012

## FOR YOUR INFORMATION

### FEATURES:

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

### AA eBooks are here !!

AA World Services, Inc. and the General Service Board of AA announce the availability of copyrighted AA publications in Electronic Book (eBook) format.

Starting in December, 2011, eBook versions of the 4<sup>th</sup> edition of the *AA Big Book* & the *Twelve Steps & Twelve Traditions* may be purchased from the A. A. W. S. Online Store in English, French and Spanish.

Once purchased, A.A. publications may be read on a -mobile device using the A.A. eReader. The A. A. eReader for Apple devices and an Android version of the A. A. eReader are available.

The A. A. eReader App may be obtained at no charge from the Apple Appstore and -Android Market.

Additional AA Publications will be coming soon.

## MEMBERS MUSINGS



### ARMADILLO SOUP

Recently, due to dental surgery I've been reduced to consuming soft foods. I found a recipe on the Internet for Butternut Squash soup that seemed to have enough variety of vitamins and spices to sustain my interest, so I bought all the ingredients and started following directions.

First I had to prepare a chicken stock (it would have been easier to raise a chicken); and then I needed to bake that for an hour. Next I had to prepare all the vegetables for roasting, peeling, halving, chopping.

I needed to halve the huge butternut squash and I told my friend Ginnie that it would have been easier to dissect an armadillo!! All the vegetables needed to be roasted for an hour while I washed all the other pans and separated the chicken

from the stock. Then, I had to transfer all this to a big pot on the stove to simmer for an hour and finally to blend the whole mess into a blender and then back to the pot to cook !

Many of you know that thick soups or sauces will explode like Mount St. Helena if left unattended on the stove but I was too busy washing all the pots and pans to worry about that.

When I heard a huge PLOP I turned around to find the soup on the stove, the floor and the stove hood ... and, to make matters worse it only yielded four cups of soup. Worse yet, my partner Bill thought it was wonderful and suggested we incorporate it into a regular spot on the menu. **FAT CHANCE !**

When I told my son about the fiasco his reply was why didn't I just go down to the store and buy some Progresso soups and blend them! Wow! Now there's a concept and it got me to reflecting on things we set out to do in life, some of

which are harder than they look and some easier...and the need to make decisions along the way about what is worth the effort and time and what is not.

That soup looked fairly simple when I was hungry and read the recipe; but, to me, it turned out to be way more time consuming and energy consuming than it was worth. I bet I used up more calories making it than I created by eating it.

When I came into AA it looked fairly easy because I was hungry for a change, desperately hungry and, due to the fact that my husband had two years of sobriety I wasn't getting the chances to drink as often. Hiding my drinking seemed more effort than it was worth.

So, I picked up a white chip and immediately discovered how very much I wanted a drink. I couldn't think of anything else but how I'd gotten myself into this commitment and would lose face if I backed out. Worse yet there were steps suggested which one



was expected to follow. They required that I look at my drinking in the light of truth rather than excuse. It was hard for me to drop rationalization techniques that had been perfected over years of addiction.

Joe McQuaney says that the first year in AA is all about not doing what you want to do and doing what you don't want to do so that eventually you can get what you always wanted to get!

There is an awkwardness about almost everything; taking advice from others, owning up to inadequacies and coming out of self long enough to notice that others are being affected by your behavior ... and, through all that, not being able to self medicate.

This is an awkward and difficult time. On bad days when situations over which you have no control explode sobriety doesn't seem to yield enough reward to be worth it; but, unlike Armadillo soup, it becomes easier the more you put it into practice.

I believe it is a matter of energy. I learned to increase my serenity by asking myself this question "what gave you energy today and what depleted it?" It seemed a lot of work and trouble to make all those AA meetings, to meet with my sponsor and to practice the principles in all my affairs.

I was told to go to as much trouble to stay sober as I had to obtain booze! That took me back to some wild rides to the package store in snowstorms!

So, no matter what, in AA I was expected to show up and once I started this I noticed a phenomenon. I came away with more energy than I brought to the table. Hope gives me energy, as does laughter and watching other people grow and expand. When I was drinking, on the morning after the night before, I wasn't just depleted of energy, I felt sucked dry.

Now I began to experience my own expansion ... the ability to think, to be truthful and to be useful.

Once you are in AA it's hard to get out because you find that you belong. All that energy that was spent trying to decide whether we belong or not is wasted. But, all the energy spent belonging and becoming something more is wonderful.

Truly I know that I have a far better life than anything that might have happened to me had I just stopped drinking and not found the program of Alcoholics Anonymous.

Every day that I live some time is spent considering sobriety, serenity, connection to God, myself and others, and that gives me the energy I need.

So ... I've bought some cans of soup as I need to conserve my energy for more important things and, as my friend says, "If Bill likes that soup so much let him dissect his own armadillo" My sentiments exactly. This is a selfish program !

Written by: Bonnie C  
Vass Group

## THE BIG BOOK

The following article appeared in "A Family Album and Souvenir of The International AA Convention, San Diego, Calif., 6/29 - 7/2, 1995"

Bill W. at his desk in "Wit's End", a studio at Stepping Stones, his & Lois' home, Bedford Hills, NY.



## HISTORICAL FACTS ABOUT ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS

"In 1937 Bill and Dr. Bob met in Akron and tallied the results of their two year's work. They counted together some 40 sober alcoholics, and 'saw that wholesale recovery was possible.'

They agreed that they needed a book that would explain the program to alcoholics and therefore prevent distortion of their word-of-mouth message.

Meeting with 18 members of the Akron Group they proposed the book. The idea was met with substantial opposition; many were against any publicity, turned thumbs down on any printed material and argued that 'the apostles hadn't needed books.'

But when Bill & Dr. Bob persisted and 'by the barest majority', the Akronites agreed that they should proceed.

By the summer of 1938 Bill had drafted the first two chapters.

Harper and Brothers offered to publish the book; but, after much consideration by the trustees of the Alcoholic Foundation and much discussion in the group, it was decided that AA should control and publish its own literature... a decision, as it turned out, of tremendous importance for the future of Alcoholics Anonymous.

In her memoir, "Lois Remembers", Bill's wife,

Lois, describes the great tension that Bill went through as he wrote the Big Book.

'As Bill finished each chapter, he read it to the group that met at Clinton St. After these members has discussed it, going over every detail and making suggestions, Bill sent it to Akron for the opinion of members there.

The pros and cons were mostly about the tone of the book. Some wanted it slanted more toward the Christian religion; others, less. Many alcoholics were agnostics or atheists. Then there were those of the Jewish faith and other religions. Shouldn't the book be written so it would

appeal to them also?

Finally it was agreed that the book should present a universal program, not a specific religious one, since all drunks were not Christians.

When he finished writing and had reread what he had put down Bill was quite pleased. Twelve principles had developed ... the 12 Steps.

But when he showed them to the group the old discussions were resumed. There was 'too much God' it was said and 'for Pete's sake take out that part in Step 7 about getting down on your knees'.

They thrashed it out this way and that with Bill as umpire. Finally they hit upon the phrase 'God as we understood him' and 'a Power greater than ourselves'. These expressions could be used by anyone, anywhere..

Then the question of the title arose. By that time 100 or so members had been sober for two or three

years, so the name 'One Hundred Men' seemed appropriate until one woman joined the group and objected !

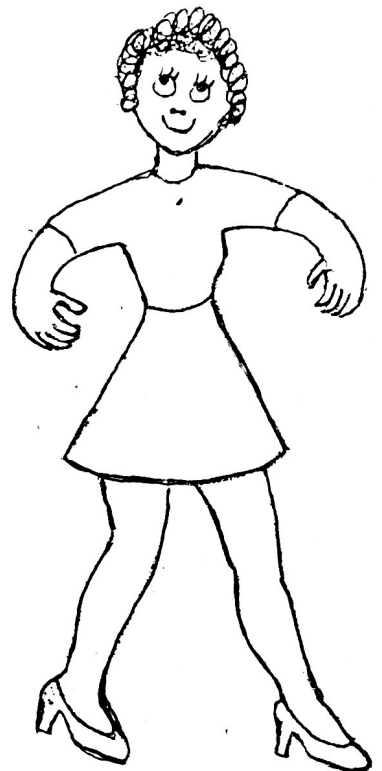
'The Way Out' was very popular for awhile but Bill thought it trite and had Fitz, who was then in Washington, look it up in the Library of Congress. There were already twelve books registered under that name.

At one time Bill was tempted to call the book 'The Wilson Movement' and to sign it as author. This natural but egoistical impulse was soon overcome by mature reasoning.'

Finally the Big Book rolled off the presses in 1939. It was published by Works Publishing."

(Of interest:  
One share of stock in Works Publishing Co. in 1937 cost \$25, and could be purchased on the installment plan for \$5.00 a month. One wonders how many sold and who owns them today !)

### SANDY HILLS



ANYONE FOR A HUG?

### T.H.I.N.K.

Is what I'm about to say:

Thoughtful

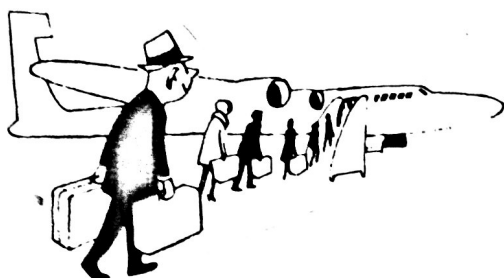
Helpful

Intelligent

Necessary

Kind

## **TRAVELING HIGHLIGHTS**



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A few years back we lost our dear AA friend Bill H. In 2003 he wrote about his experience with AA while living overseas and we reprint his words here...

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"Although I have had an opportunity to visit many parts of the world on business the majority of my sober travels have been to New Zealand, Australia and the South Pacific.

Those of you who sobered up in large cities are often surprised when you discover that there may be only one or two meetings a week in some areas and in other parts of the world there are fewer than that.

I found this to be true when I visited Raratonga in the Cook Islands of the South Pacific. This beautiful place lies approximately 1500 miles north of New Zealand and boasts scenery and sunsets right out of the movies. The inhabitants, numbering about 3,000 are primarily Polynesian.

Upon arrival there I found the phone listing for AA and dialed the number. There was no answer but I kept trying. On the third day a woman's voice said, 'Alcoholics Anonymous, can I help you?'

I identified myself and asked when and where I might find a meeting to attend. The woman responded, "Oh, I'm so very sorry but he's out of town for a few days." "He" being her husband and the only active member of the fellowship living on Raratonga.

We chatted about AA and Al-anon and then she said that she was heading out on a two day boat trip to pick him up and invited me to go along.

Unfortunately my work schedule did not allow this and she ended our phone conversation saying ... "Cheerio, Bill. He'll be so very sorry he missed you. Remember, keep it simple and one day at a time."

The hand of AA was there for me then, and, though I wished I could have had a meeting with those folks I learned a great lesson about humility and service from them.

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## **SPOTLIGHT ON OUR GROUPS !**



### **KEEP IT SIMPLE Beginner's Meeting**

The "Keep it Simple, Beginner's Meeting" began in 1974. It nearly folded a few years back ... and then a small group decided to make a dedicated effort to save it.

They started to actively ask for help and support from the AA community. They also decided to make this a



meeting specifically designed for the beginner.

Early in the revitalization process a group conscience decision made it a group, as opposed to just being a meeting, and they are now listed as such.

Today the average attendance at a meeting is 30 or more and new members are encouraged to get into service work and assume some responsibility for the success of the group as soon as they feel comfortable.

Their GSR goes to District meetings, as well as other AA functions and conventions. The group also actively supports the AA Group at Women's Prison in Troy and provides them with books, literature and "The Grapevine".

The "KISBM" meets on Friday evenings at 8 and Sundays at 2 at the First Health Specialty Center, 35 Memorial Drive in Pinehurst. The format is for an Open Discussion and everyone is urged to join in .



## **CARRYING the MESSAGE**

Have you ever seen that TV commercial where the little old lady is on the floor and she says, "I've fallen and I can't get up"? Well, that was me a few months back. I fell and fractured my femur ! And why, you might ask, am I writing about this ? Because its my opportunity to say a huge "Thank You" to all my AA friends.

From day one the cards and flowers flowed and many of you visited. (The day I came home the nurse told me that the staff thought I had the most interesting visitors of any of their patients. I was tempted to give the credit to AA but remained true to our pledge of anonymity!)

I was well cared for in the hospital and in PT Rehab but it was when I came home that I began to see what "real" love is...its the care and devotion that

comes from my AA family. I do have two boys who live near me and also a daughter and her husband who came down from New York to help out. I think they were just as amazed as I was at the extent of help that I received from AA.

At least one, if not more, of you came by every day to get my mail, bring me food and to do whatever else was needed. The rest relied on phone calls and they were a comfort too.

A good AA member took me to my first Dr's appointment and I even had one loyal friend who faithfully brought me a Panera breakfast bagel every Sunday morning!

It was many weeks before I felt well enough to actually attend a meeting but that was not a problem since 6 of you brought a weekly meeting to me. You know who you are and thanks.

I wouldn't wish a mishap on any of you ...but if it comes you can be sure that AA will be there for you  
Ginnie D., Vass Group



## DISTRICT 52 NEWS

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### District 52 Meeting

January 22 - 2:30 PM

Aberdeen Building

All GSR's and interested  
AA members are urged to  
attend.

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### IMPORTANT DATES

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### WINTER 2012 Committee Meeting

February 18 - 19

North Raleigh Hilton

All GSR's are encouraged  
to attend Area Assemblies.

It is the responsibility of  
the GSR's to make sure  
that their Group's wishes  
will be known, heard and  
fully considered at the  
District and Area level.

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### CORRECTIONS CONFERENCE

### Freedom from Bondage XXIII

March 16 - 18

DAYS INN  
Southern Pines

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### SPRING 2012 Assembly & Committee Meeting

May 4 - 6

North Raleigh Hilton

All AA members, as well  
as GSR's are welcome and  
encouraged to attend these  
meetings.

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## Sandhills Intergroup

A central office established  
to aid all the groups and  
meetings in Moore County  
in the common purpose of  
carrying the AA message to  
the alcoholic who still  
suffers.

We are funded solely by  
the AA groups in our  
county and we need and  
ask for your input.

- 1) 24 hr. Answering Serv.
- 2) A Website
- 3) Moore Co. Meeting List
- 4) Publish a Newsletter
- 5) P. I. Committee

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Published & distributed by

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