



NEWSLETTER

Volume 3, Number 2, May 2004

FOR YOUR INFORMATION

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A.A - P.I. - C.P.C.

Alphabet soup or a message to recovery?

Everyone in recovery is well aware of the initials AA but many members might not have reached the rooms without P.I. or C.P.C.

The PI, *Public Information*, and CPC, *Cooperation with the Professional Community*, committees are informational service functions of AA. It is often because of the efforts of these committees, that sufferers are first made aware of the possibility of recovery through AA. Their purpose is to make sure that when anyone, anywhere reaches out AA will be there and reachable. These committees of the local Intergroup, District or Area, operate with the assistance of the General Service Office of AA.

PI committees carry the message to the still suffering

alcoholic by informing the general public about the AA program. This is done by providing AA literature and speakers to schools, police departments, libraries, other organizations and the media.

C.P.C. committees inform the professionals who come in contact with alcoholics about our program and how we can work together to support recovery. It is important that AA works with professionals who treat alcoholism. In order to accomplish this, the CPC committee provides professionals with info on how AA works and how alcoholics they deal with can reach AA through our Answering Service and meeting schedules.

If you are interested in working with our PI - CPC committee come to an Intergroup meeting at 9:00 the first Saturday of each month at the Aberdeen building.

PRIMARY PURPOSE GROUP

In the mid nineties a number of AA members in the Sandhills participated in some long term Big Book workshops. A great deal of enthusiasm was generated among the members to become more active in the program. The general feeling was that a new group was needed that emphasized ACTION. AA is often said to be a group of alcoholics in action.

An exploratory, planning meeting was held in March of 1997 where the basic planning for the Primary Purpose group was accomplished. We did not want to be "just another meeting". The group would endeavor to have a job available for everyone that would participate.

In order to achieve this it was decided to establish several service committees as well as the usual officers that are found in most groups. This called for people to serve as: Chairperson, Secretary, Treasurer, General Service

Representative and Inter-group Representative. The service committees we established were:

Cooperation with the Professional Community, Public Information, Correctional Facilities Committee, Treatment Facilities Committee, Newcomers, Newsletter, Literature and a Program Planning Committee. Strangely enough there were exactly the same number of members as jobs, so we started out with our job provision goal met.

Our first group meeting was held June 2, 1997. We were off and running! By the Grace of God and thanks to some dedicated members, we have never failed to have our regularly scheduled meetings--- no matter what. We meet each Monday and Thursday at 8:00pm. On Monday we break our large group into three smaller ones. These include a pre-selected topic discussion (closed), a Big Book discussion (closed) and a Newcomer meeting that is open. On Thursday we have an open speaker meeting in which we try to

provide diversity in the speakers who are invited.

We are most definitely an action oriented group. We have commitments in every service area of AA. This includes Detox, Rehab. Centers, Correctional facilities, as well as active work with the professional community, public info. and all aspects of the AA Service Structure. Each quarter we have a group "outing", which is really just an excuse to share a good dinner. Lots of good food and outstanding fellowship.

At Primary Purpose we want to help assure that the next person who comes to AA for help gets as good an opportunity to recover as was so freely given to us. Primary Purpose is not just our name, it is our job description. We are grateful to all of our neighboring groups for the cooperation and support we have been given in everything we have tried to do. We also want to always remember to practice RULE 62.

Primary Purpose Group
First Baptist Church, So Pines

LITTLE KNOWN FACTS OF AA



H.L. Mencken was greatly amused by "The Drinker's Dictionary". The actual entry in Franklin's dictionary that Mencken quotes says that people who hung around taverns referred to drunks as being "PIGEON-EYED".

Thus, Dr Bob, when referring to someone as "his pigeon" was referring lovingly to anyone who was "pigeon-eyed".

Some members of AA may take offense at being compared to the lowly pigeon. Take heart. Dr. Bob, Mencken and Franklin could have made you a toad, a goose or a puppy.

Franklin was descriptive. He claimed that compulsive drinkers "eat a toad and a half for breakfast" or they are "dizzy as a goose" or "as good conditioned as a puppy".

The word "sponsee", (which Dr. Bob, H.L. Mencken and Franklin would be quick to point out is not a word to be found in the dictionaries), seems to have replaced the old word "pigeon" in modern AA. What hasn't changed is that "pigeons" or "sponsees" who don't drink don't get drunk!

(Thanks to Nancy D. who found the article "PIGEON" by Father G. on the internet and sent it to the Newsletter. Our apologies to Father G for editing his amusing words and we hope our readers will read the article in full.)

"The Drinker's Dictionary"
by Benjamin Franklin.

(Our source for the AA
term "Pigeon"?)

Dr. Bob is credited with being the first person to use the term "pigeon" as it refers to the newcomer in AA.

Dr. Bob was an avid reader. He loved words and H.L. Mencken, who wrote "The American Language" was one of his favorite authors.

In that book Mencken points out that Benjamin Franklin, the author of "The Drinker's Dictionary", was the first American to wonder why tavern goers never referred to a patron as being drunk. They were "soused", "corned" or "stewed".

At age 30, as a successful owner of the Pennsylvania Gazette, Ben Franklin published "The Drinker's Dictionary" a collection of 225 words or phrases referring to imbibers.

ARE THERE GREMLINS IN THE ABERDEEN BUILDING ??

Have you noticed all the wonderful sobriety items that have been appearing in the Aberdeen building

...such as the adorable wreath in the front hall, over the literature rack,

Or the lovely cross-stitch "Serenity Prayer" in the kitchen...

Or the plaque near the back door that tells us that the elevator to sobriety is out of order, we need to "take the steps" !!

THANKS, ANONYMOUS
GREMLINS! YOU'VE
MADE US SMILE.

I would rather go through life sober, believing I am an alcoholic....

than go through life drunk, trying to convince myself that I am not.

TRAVELING HIGHLIGHTS



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 and Sixties. But what dedicated, active alcoholic couldn't solve these problems?

One Sunday in Greenville, NC, (so long ago that East Carolina University was just a half dozen one-floor corrugated buildings on an open and dusty old farmland), I managed to come up with a bottle of something that could just as well have killed me. That was supposedly dry territory 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 had 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 assignments. 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 as I went from California and Arizona in the winter to Florida and Georgia in spring and 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 wont in mid-Texas in winter, she mixed in a goodly bit of sleet that quickly turned I-20 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 in a hurry so I pulled into a Holiday Inn on the east edge of Abilene and got one of the last four rooms. There I stayed for four days waiting for the ice to melt on I-20. 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. In fact, 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 mtg. When I answered with my very strong non-Texas accent from Jersey she asked me to be her speaker for the night. You don't say "No" in AA, even in Texas. So they were subjected to Jersey-gobble in Abilene AA one frosty Dec. 20th in the mid Nineteen Eighties.

Years before that I spent the 1975 Christmas Day at the AA house in El Paso, Texas, while working the Sun Bowl game that was played the day after Christmas. There was a mtg.

every 3rd hour that day and it helped me get through a lonely time being away from home on that Christmas.

Even across the Atlantic one can find AA in most locations from Dublin to Moscow. My wife and I travel to Ireland regularly and have close friends in that beautiful island nation. But the most striking aspect of sobriety in Ireland for me comes in our regular visits to Tralee, the little West Ireland city in County Kerry. That is where Matt Talbot came from. There is a major road in Tralee named Matt Talbot Street.

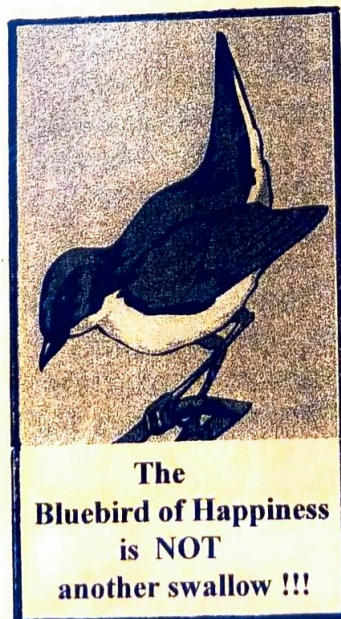
When I first joined AA, my home group was in a Catholic Church on the Atlantic Ocean shore in Long Branch, NJ. Across the street from the church was a retreat house where, twice a year, AA members came from all over the Northeast to attend a semi-annual, three day Matt Talbot Retreat. So, when we visit Ireland, I make a point of driving along Matt Talbot St. in Tralee.

I have attended AA meetings in Boston, Syracuse, Portland, ME; Pasadena, CA; Houston, San Francisco, Miami, South Bend, IN; Pittsburgh, Detroit, Lexington, KY; Kansas City, Nashville, Palm Springs, CA; Palm Beach, FL. & on and on. It must be noted that I also got drunk in each of the above locations in the bad old days.

What is so important to me is that no matter where I go for an AA meeting, the welcome is uniformly warm with no questions asked. I have always felt right at home just as I was walking into my original old home group in Long Branch, NJ.

AA is a rare and magnificent fellowship that takes to its bosom the drunk, the long sober and the ones who slip. AA holds them and comforts them in the same fashion no matter where in the world you seek out a gathering of AA members. No church, social organization, club or other group gives as genuinely warm a welcome to a stranger as you will find in AA. Maybe that is because there really are not any strangers in AA...just friends you have not met before.

Gordon W.



DISTRICT 52 2004

Dates to remember

June 13, Sunday
District Meeting,
Unity Day Picnic
AA Birthday Celebration
(Aberdeen City Park)

June 19, Saturday
Service Center Meeting for
members interested in doing
service work outside their home
group. (1st Baptist church, 210
May St, So Pines.)

Sept. 11, Saturday
District 52 meeting & elections.
(Aberdeen Building)

Sept 25, Saturday
Service Center Meeting for
members interested in doing
service work outside their home
group (1st Baptist Church, SP)

Dec. 11, Saturday
District 52 Meeting
(Aberdeen Building)

Also

Dec. 11, Saturday
Service Center Meeting for
members interested in doing
service work outside their home
group (1st Baptist Church, SP)

A treatment center is where you
go and pay \$15,000 to find out
that AA meetings are free.

WORKING WITH OTHERS

I have "come to believe" that the program of Alcoholics Anonymous - first 164 pages - can quite easily be broken into three (3) stages:

1. Upon arriving we receive.
2. We learn to maintain.
3. When asked, we "pass on" what has been "so freely given to us".

The truly sad thing that I've watched these past "24 Hrs" is that so many receive and maintain (to some degree) by continuing to be takers ...but miss out on the very BEST PART OF THE PROGRAM.

Folks, it's that 3rd part, working with others, that's the pay-off, the greatest "high" that this alcoholic has ever felt, and, unlike alcohol, it doesn't stop working for us.

I'm not suggesting sponsorship right away, not until "we have something to transmit" according to our Big Book.

My "something" was this terrific ole drunk car and a driver's license !! Picture this: I fell through the doors of AA in 1986...by the Grace of God, I assure you. My old car was a mid-70's AMC Concord, 4 drs, V-8 engine and my heavy foot.. The fenders that were supposed to "spread out" over all 4 tires no longer did, they were crushed all but flat with several spots & stripes of different

colors. Three of the 4 doors had sustained some hard knocks and whenever someone would ask me "how'd that happen ?", etc. I didn't have a clue. (You all informed me why I was clueless ... BLACKOUTS !)

Since I didn't work, all that free time on my hands filled me with fear and you (AA) became my security blanket. I was able to go to 2 or 3 meetings each day and anywhere I chose to go.

My sponsor suggested (actually told me) that when in a meeting close to home I was to say that "I go to lots of meetings, car runs good (who cares what it looks like) and anyone who wants or needs a ride, I'll be happy to pick you up and we'll go to lots of meetings together. See me after this meeting, we'll exchange phone numbers."

What a terrific way for new comers to stay sober together. For the first 4/5 years of my sobriety people at my home group would point me out to someone new as "the lady that runs the County Taxi Service, if you need a ride to meetings she'll pick you up."

For the first time in years I was giving back as well as taking. What a freedom and joy. Some of the best meetings were on the way TO and FROM a meeting. When that ole car hit the dust it took a lot of garbage with it.

We may not have all stayed

sober but, those of us who have, owe part of our sobriety to those who haven't. One alcoholic helping (and showing) another that "It Does Work".

Oh, and the one good door, in case you're interested....I was going home from an out-of-town meeting and someone ran a red light and "got me" in that door. My phone call to my husband went like this: "Honey, guess what? My last good door just got caved in, the driver sped off, I've called the police. Can you believe it? I mean it 's so GREAT. I know how it happened, it was not my fault, I know where I am and the greatest gift of all is that I'm sober and not in a blackout. I'll be home shortly".

If anyone of you believes that you arrived without something to give, I strongly urge you, to simply walk up to someone, give them a good ole AA hug & tell them you're grateful you are both at that meeting.

If it had not been for this very same unconditional love that others gave to me I doubt I'd be sober today. You just might help each other to stay sober another 24 hrs. WOW, what a gift !

It works, it truly does work; but, I have to "suit up" & "show up" to receive it and to "Pass It On."

Gratefully, Virgie S,
Westside Group

AA LITERATURE



This is a list of AA books available from the General Service Organization in New York. Most of these are on display and for sale at the individual Home Groups in Moore County. If they do not have what you want you can order it directly by phoning GSO: the Order Entry Dept. is open for orders weekdays from 8am to 4:45pm Eastern time. Call: 1-212-870-3312

"Alcoholics Anonymous"
The basic text of AA. or, as we call it, the "Big Book" ...now in it's 4th printing.

"Twelve Steps & Twelve Traditions"
Bill W's 24 essays on the Steps and the Traditions.

"AA Comes of Age"
Bill W tells how AA began, how the Steps & Traditions evolved & how the AA fellowship grew & spread.

"As Bill Sees It"

This is a collection of Bill's writings set up to be read daily.

"Daily Reflections"

AA members reflect on favorite quotations from AA literature...a reading for each day of the year.

"Dr Bob & the Good Old Timers"

The life story of the co-founder of AA, Dr. Bob Smith of Ohio.

"Pass It On"

The story of Bill Wilson and how the AA message reached the world.

"Came To Believe"

AA members write about what "spiritual awakening" means to them.

"Living Sober"

88 pages of down-to-earth examples by AA members on how they manage to stay sober and clean "one day at a time".

I can't do his will my way.

I NEED YOUR HELP

Hi: I am Sharon H and I moved to Moore County in 1999. I decided to volunteer whatever services I could provide to Intergroup because I found I was unable to attend as many meetings as I had back in NY and because I have learned that AA is what keeps me sober and has given me the life I have today.

When we started to discuss the possibility of adding a sequel to the "little green book", AA IN MOORE COUNTY, I volunteered to write it.

This addition will cover the years from 2001 until the present. I thought the best place to begin was to request your thoughts on what you think are significant additions to AA in Moore County.

Suggestions can be emailed to me at: vchall@charter.net or given to a member of the Sandhills Intergroup.

Thanks, Sharon H

Our Little AA Wallet Cards

Sandhills Intergroup is pleased to say that over 1200 of our little pocket cards have found their way into the hands of the AA community. These are truly little cards with a big message. Not only is there a place for names and phone numbers but, they also include the 12 Steps, The Promises, The Serenity Prayer, and both the Third and Seventh Step Prayers.

We have just completed our 5th printing of these wallet cards and will be happy to keep on having them printed as long as they are in demand. Please feel free to take as many cards as needed for your Group or individual needs. This is just one more way that...
WE CAN CARRY THE MESSAGE. !!

The ideas and suggestions of the local AA members are welcome and all are encouraged to attend the monthly meetings at 9 AM on the first Sat. of each month at the AA bldg. in Aberdeen.

Sandhills Intergroup is financed by local AA groups. The treasurer presents an annual estimated budget and, with the continual support of the AA groups we anticipate continued success. These monies pay for printed material, a website and a 24 hour answering service.

The Public Information Committee of Intergroup distributes meeting lists and literature to local hotels, motels, hospitals, commercial buildings, law enforcement, mental health and medical and professional agencies.

The volunteer members on the 12th Step Answering Service List return calls to suffering alcoholics, as well as answer their questions and provide assistance.

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WHAT IS INTERGROUP?



We are a service committee formed for the purpose of supporting AA activities in the Moore County area of NC.

Our goal is to improve communication and understanding among our AA groups in order to unite all efforts to better serve the alcoholic who seeks the help of Alcoholics Anonymous.

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

