

Sandhills
Intergroup

NEWSLETTER



Volume 5, Number 2, May, 2006

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FOR YOUR INFORMATION

"FREEDOM FROM BONDAGE", XVIII

Area 51's annual Correctional Facilities Committee Conference will be held
June 2, 3 & 4
at the Days Inn on Rt. 1,
Southern Pines.

The planning committee promises some special surprises as well as the fellowship and fun of past conferences.

Featured speakers are:
Jack C., Hagerstown, MD
Diane O., Cupertino, CA
Amy T., Tulsa, OK
Miguel M., Selma, NC

All AA's are invited, as well as family members and Al-Anons. Most groups have received flyers with registration blanks & the \$10 reg. fee may be paid before or at the door.

FOUNDERS' DAY Akron, Ohio

June 10th, 2006, is the 71st anniversary of Alcoholics Anonymous and the middle of the annual celebration of Founders' Day which will be held June 9, 10 & 11 in Akron.

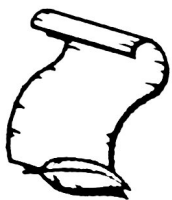
This is a 3 day celebration of sobriety...held in the hometown of AA's own Dr. Bob.

Festivities are planned from 10 AM Friday thru the closing speaker mtg. Sunday morning. All activities are held at the University of Akron.

Registration forms are available at:
www.akronaa.org

Go early... stay late
And CELEBRATE !!

MEMBERS MUSINGS



AT WHAT POINT ?

At what point do newcomers "catch-on" to our program? When does AA begin to work for any of us? And, even more importantly, how do we stop being a person with problems and become the person with a solution?

These questions came to me today... during my morning Eleventh Step. My first thought was that we are afflicted with a three-fold illness... mental, physical & spiritual. Next came a passage from the Big Book, "When the spiritual malady is overcome, we straighten out mentally & physically." Then I reviewed my personal experience.

In early sobriety I had mistakenly thought the first

thing I experienced was God freeing me from my mental obsession to drink. In other words, God straightened me out *mentally*... ahead of correcting my spiritual malady. But I was in for a surprise. My *spiritual malady* was indeed overcome first, only through the Grace of God, because surrender and conscious contact with God came first ... and at that point He removed my mental obsession to drink.

My early mistake was then compounded when I thought, "Well, now that I am sober, everything will be wonderful !" But it wasn't...and, to this day, everything is not always wonderful.

"How can this be?", I wondered. "Why is it that, all too often, I'm restless, irritable & discontented?" I pondered these questions during a morning Eleventh Step until, as if thunder-struck, it came to me. To be a person who lives in the solution means that when I have a problem I see it as an *opportunity* to

practice the program of Alcoholics Anonymous. Problems are no longer problems...they are opportunities.

I realized my alcoholism can flare-up at any moment and that I must expect outbreaks & be aware of them. The next step was simple. I'm told what to do in Step Ten, "Continue to watch for selfishness, dishonesty, resentment and fear. When these crop up, we ask God at once to remove them. We discuss them with someone immediately and make amends quickly if we have harmed anyone. Then we resolutely turn our thoughts to someone we can help."

And it works like magic. In that early experience I saw that *selfish fear* of being restless, irritable, and discontented was a problem. And, as soon as I asked God to remove the selfish fear, He did.

I then discussed this miracle with an AA friend and while doing so we both thought of someone this discovery could help.

In Step Eleven I'm told that, "We alcoholics are undisciplined. So we let God discipline us in the simple way we have just outlined." This does not give me permission to be undisciplined, it tells me I must grow up. It tells me I must become a mature, sensible, responsible, and disciplined person who practices the program of Alcoholics Anonymous instead of behaving like a selfish and childish brat.

An old-timer from Miami says, "Step Eleven is the powerhouse of AA". It's true. It was a morning Eleventh Step, (many mornings ago) that led me to living in the solution rather than in the problem.

So, at what point can newcomers, or anyone else for that matter, learn to get out their problems and live in the solution? At any point you like.

When I sense a need for God's help, I take this opportunity to ask Him for a miracle. I simply ask Him to let me perceive problems as opportunities

and, as Dr Bob has told us, "Your Heavenly Father will never let you down!"

My name is George, I'm an alcoholic. I've been writing about thoughts like this ever since the death of my good friend Douglas. I can no longer discuss these topics with him. I miss him.

Submitted by AA member:
George P.

SPECIAL EVENTS COMMITTEE IS FORMED

The Sandhills Intergroup has formed an auxiliary committee dedicated to special events being held in the Aberdeen AA building.

The details are still being formed; but, at this printing, the committee will oversee the annual dinners at Thanksgiving and Christmas...as well as being responsible for the Holiday marathon that keeps the building open

from noon through midnight during the crucial days during Christmas & New Years

It is hoped that all AA groups in Moore County will have representatives on this committee so that they all can share in these festivities. Also, any and all individual AA members who are interested are welcome.

Some of the things that the committee will face will be Food Coordination, Flyers for special events, Sign-up sheets for the marathon, Supplies for events, and overall responsibility for the Set-up and Clean-up of each event.

The Special Events Group meets directly after the Intergroup meeting, the first Sat. of every month in the Aberdeen Building.

Richard M. and Roy F. are co-chairmen and Mary Kay W. is secretary. See any of these AA members if you are interested in joining us ...or, better yet, come to the next meeting

TRAVELING HIGHLIGHTS



AA in San Diego

In January of this year my husband and I were offered the use of our son's condominium in San Diego, California, for the month of January.

I had spent two days there in 2005 on my Grandson's first birthday; but saw little of the city except for the beach and short visits to a few other sites. This time we were situated right in the downtown area.

San Diego, like much of southern California, is an area of incredible beauty with next to perfect year round temperatures. The Pacific Ocean is powerful and lovely and hundreds of surfers spend hours on surfboards waiting for the right wave.

The San Diego Zoo & Wild Animal Park is a transport to another world where the value of the animal life is in the millions and the value of the plant life surpasses even that.

One can visit La Jolla and view hundreds of birds of many varieties on the cliffs above the ocean, or a stretch of beach where 40 or 50 female seals are in various stages of delivering their offspring & the value of real estate defies belief.

The San Diego harbor is home to many of the elite US naval vessels and Coronado Island, with the old and stately Hotel del Coronado, is a delightful place to spend an afternoon walking the beach shell seeking.

The condominium we lived in was downtown where buildings are in various stages of completion, demolition or rebuilding to accommodate the numbers of people flocking to the area.

It is also a city of great tragedy (to my eyes)...full of homeless people and addicts of all varieties, (alcohol, narcotics and crystal meth...the new kid on the block) competing for handouts.

Back in 2005 we had a picnic on the beach. When I started to clean up our garbage my son said, "No, it will be picked up and used." I'm sure that was so, because the next day that beach area was spotless.

Due to the size of the area and the sheer numbers of people and automobiles, there was at least one accident per day and I was reluctant to travel far from home by myself.

I called the AA number and found that there was only one day time meeting in the downtown area and the woman who answered the phone did not believe I would be comfortable there. However, since it was the only meeting available to me with easy access I went.

I spent the first year of my sobriety at a city meeting in Syracuse, NY and I didn't expect to have a problem at the San Diego downtown meeting.

I didn't ! The meeting was in one small room in an old building about 10 blocks from where I was living and was shared with NA on alternated days and hours during the week.

I found a place for myself sitting next to a couple of women. One was an older woman like me, who gave me a book mark with the Serenity Prayer on it. The young man sitting in front of me collected his six year chip from an old timer with 46 years of sobriety. It reminded me of the meeting in Syracuse ... or I could have been at any meeting in Moore County.

The young man also gave me a meeting schedule & a story he had written about sponsorship which had special meaning for me because I grew up on the Columbia River. (You'll understand when

you read it...)

Another day and another meeting I sat next to a young woman who asked me how I managed to stay sober in a party town like San Diego. She's right, it is a party town; but I told her "because AA works!".

At one point I worried about whether that meeting would survive ...because the space might be commanded for something more lucrative. I've decided that, hopefully, San Diego will recognize how much it needs AA.

Submitted by:
Sharon H

YOU CAN BEAT THE
LEAVES & BRANCHES
BUT TO NO AVAIL...
UNTIL YOU GET TO
THE ROOTS.

YOU CAN PLANT THE
SEED, WATER IT AND
GIVE IT LIGHT...BUT
YOU CAN'T MAKE IT
GROW.

CARRYING THE MESSAGE



The following story was written by the young man that Sharon met in San Diego.....

TWO SALMON

Two salmon were returning home from their perilous sea life in an ocean full of terror and uncertainty, discussing the upcoming convention, after which they planned to attend the final convention to get a chance to meet Bill, Bob, Lois, Ann & the rest of our fellowship who have died sober.

The younger salmon asked the older salmon many questions as they swam the steps and rapids and trudged the river of happy destiny. Older and wiser, with many years of experience which he'd acquired one day at a time, the old

timer responded with love and patience.

The youngster asked one perplexing question after another and finally asked, "I can see all the others ahead of us still swimming and leading us on, but what about the one's behind? I don't see them following."

The old timer knew the fate of this youngster's future hung in continuing up the steps and rapids to the final convention. As he pondered it over he thought of the others who helped him when he first started to swim home, his many questions, doubts, fears, uncertainties, and most of all the ever present thought that an old timer once told him about swimming one day at a time.

It seemed like hours went by, but really only a few minutes had passed. He gently tilted his head to the side, looked the youngster in his trusting eyes and said, in a gruff tone, "You see, son, we are supposed to keep

following the ones ahead of us, they know the way there because they are following the ones ahead. But, most of all, we have to remember that the ones that keep swimming through the waters will get to the final convention no matter what happens along the way. The ones who stop will be carried away by the current. So let's save our energy for swimming...you can ask me more questions later. OK?"

"Sure," said the youngster, "I didn't mean to bother you."

"You're not bothering me," said the older salmon, "I swam up here next to you because I saw you were having difficult times over those last rapids and thought you might need some help."

"Thank you", said the youngster.

"My pleasure", said the old timer.

By James G.
San Diego, Ca.

Historical Facts of AA



Jack Alexander's article entitled "Alcoholics Anonymous" in the March, 1941 issue of "The Saturday Evening Post" greatly influenced the growth of AA. At that time the "Post" was one of the country's most popular publications.

Alexander was not an instant believer and it wasn't until he "could feel AA in the very marrow of his bones" that he could write the story that would rock drunks and their families all over the world.

In 1950, just shy of 15 years after the founding of AA, the "Post" published a follow-up article by Alexander entitled "The Drunkard's Best Friend".

Both of these articles can be found on the Internet and will give the reader a crash course on AA's early days.

SPOTLIGHT ON OUR GROUPS



PRIMARY PURPOSE GROUP

AA is often described as a group of alcoholics in ACTION. With this in mind a group of AA members in the Sandhills formed the Primary Purpose Group. We felt that a new group was needed that emphasized ACTION.

An exploratory planning meeting was held in March of 1997 where the basic planning for the Primary Purpose Group was accomplished. We would endeavor to have a job available for everyone that would participate.

In order to achieve this it was decided to establish service committees, as well as the usual officers that are found in most

groups. The service committees established were: Cooperation with the Professional Community, Public Information, Correctional Facilities, Treatment Facilities, Newcomers, Newsletter, Literature and a Program Planning committee. Strangely enough there were exactly the same number of members as jobs, so our job provision goal was met.

The first group meeting was held on June 2, 1997 and it was a huge success. Originally the Monday & Thursday meetings were held at 8 pm...but they now both begin at 7 pm.

On Mondays the group breaks into three smaller groups, after the opening procedures. These include a Closed, pre-selected topic discussion; a Closed Big Book discussion, & a Newcomer meeting that is Open.

On Thursdays there is an Open speaker meeting in which there is a diversity of speakers from inside &

outside our community.

The service hours expended by the Primary Purpose Group are impressive. As a rule each month the group members spend:

22 hours at Detox.

4 hours at Rehab Ctrs.

23 hours at Correctional Facilities.

This does not include the countless hours spent with the professional community, public information & all other aspects of the AA service structure.

Each quarter we have a group "outing", which is our excuse to share a good meal and outstanding AA fellowship.

We in the Primary Purpose Group 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 out name, it is our job description!

District 52 News

Your Districts CPC/PI and CFC Committees meet the last Saturday of the month at 9am in the Aberdeen building...come join us!

UPCOMING EVENTS...

May 19-21, Spring Assembly, Raleigh.

June 2,3,4 CFC Conference, S. Pines.

June 10th, 2 to 6 pm
Distr. Quarterly Bus Mtg.
& UNITY DAY PICNIC
At the lake, Aberdeen
EVERYONE INVITED

April was Alcohol Awareness Month and David S. prepared an article for "The Pilot".

Roger W. & Dave C. made a presentation to the Fellowship of Churches & handed out literature pkgs. to those attending.

The District has Public Sv. Announcements airing on 3 local radio stations and one TV station. We need more hands to "Carry The Message" in Hoke, Lee,

Richmond & Scotland Counties. (CPC/PI stuffing sessions are being planned. A variety of information packages especially for the professional will be prepared for distribution.)

District 52 5-county meeting lists are available upon request.

SANDY HILLS



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 our 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 each month at the AA building on Wilder Ave. in Aberdeen. The Sandhills Intergroup is financed solely by local AA groups.

Published & distributed by

Sandhills Intergroup
PO Box 2513
Southern Pines, NC 28388
1-800-496-1742
www.sandhillsaa.org
