

Sandhills
Intergroup



NEWSLETTER

Volume 1, No. 1 September 2000

FOR YOUR INFORMATION

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WELCOME to the first edition of **YOUR** Newsletter...written by and for the members of the Moore County AA community. The Newsletter will be published three times a year in January, May, and September. Please contribute your ideas and articles for the next edition...**WE NEED YOUR INPUT...** see any Intergroup member for details or better yet, come join us. We meet on the first Saturday of each month in the Aberdeen Building at 9:00 a.m. for one hour.

The Fourth Edition of Alcoholics Anonymous is now available. Please see your group's service rep for a copy.

The Intergroup received the latest edition of the Big Book in Braille from GSO. It was a large package since a Braille Big Book comes in seven volumes. The secretary of Intergroup called the State Library for the Blind in Raleigh. Peggy

Roberson from the State Library said that they have had requests for AA materials in Braille and we could send it postage free as "Free Matter for the Blind". Intergroup feels good about being of service in yet another area. The address for anyone needing it is:

N.C.L.B.P.H.

1811 Capital Blvd

Raleigh, NC 27635

Telephone: 1-888-388-2460

33 dedicated members of AA in Moore County are signed up and available for 12th Step calls via the Intergroup Answering Service. It works like this: The caller dials 1-800-495-1742 and will be in contact with an operator who can provide meeting information, including directions. If the caller is in distress the operator will explain that she is not an AA member but will contact one of us on the list and that we will call them back as soon as possible. The operator will take the caller's first name only and their

phone number.

The operator then refers to our 12th Step Calling List and will keep trying to make contact until successful. The operator, at no time, gives out our names or phone numbers. We thus retain our anonymity. It is then up to the AA 12th Stepper to return the call and to share his or her experience, strength and hope with the caller. This often results in the newcomer being picked up for a meeting or being directed to one... but sometimes, it is just the contact alone that will be of help to the caller.

Anyone who is a member of AA in Moore County with one year or more of sobriety is eligible and encouraged to be on the 12th Step answering service list.



SPOTLIGHT ON OUR GROUPS

The Southern Pines Group

“ The Southern Pines Group is the oldest group in Moore County. The group has changed locations and formats many times over the years. None of

the founders of the group are still alive but we do have older members who recall them. For the 50th anniversary of the group in 1997, the GSO was contacted and they shared with us that, in their archives from 1947, they have correspondence with the Southern Pines Group. The archivist told the group that the early meetings were held in a room in the arcades of the building that now houses Hawkins and Harkness Jewelers on Broad Street. Later, and for many years, the group met at Campbell House on Connecticut Avenue. In 1982, the Southern Pines Group moved to the Episcopal Church. Recently, the group has changed from a Speaker Meeting to an “As Bill Sees It” format. According to one of our oldest members, the group actually heard Bill W. in 1948 when he visited while passing through Southern Pines on his way to Florida.

The West Side Group

“ Until the middle 1960's, segregation as an institution was legal in North Carolina. Generally in the South, and locally, AA has no immunity from segregation even if it was by unconscious acquiescence to the status quo. For many years,

blacks were rare in local AA meetings. There were efforts in the late 1970's and early 1980's to start a meeting in West Southern Pines, a group that would not be restricted to blacks, but one in which blacks would feel more comfortable. The West Southern Pines meetings were first held in a nightclub and later in a black owned funeral home. Among the target audience was a group of “winos” who met near the nightclub under the “Tree of Knowledge”. The meeting produced no converts at the time and eventually folded. However, by 1988 enough people with solid recovery, including alumni from the “Tree of Knowledge”, were interested in carrying the message to the black community.

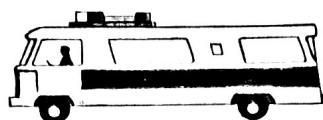
These people united to form the West Side Group in August of 1988. The group has moved twice and now meets in The Douglas Center on Pennsylvania Avenue on Wednesday nights. It is now well attended by a large, racially and gender diverse group of alcoholics. “

The Vass Group

The Vass Group was founded in 1983 when a local minister invited three AA members who lived in Vass to start an AA meeting at the First

Baptist Church. The first meeting was held in the sanctuary of the church. It was attended by three men, a prospect they were 12th stepping and a couple of members of the Central Carolina Group from Sanford. Three of the members of the Vass Group signed a note at a local bank and the old church sanctuary was fixed up with a kitchen and central heating and air-conditioning to make it suitable to hold meetings. The group originally had a closed discussion meeting on Wednesday and Thursday nights and a speaker meeting on Saturday. The format now is for one meeting a week, closed discussion on Wednesday. Because of their location in the northern part of the county, the Vass Group attracts members from Lee, Chatham, Harnett and Cumberland Counties. Every year for their anniversary they have an "eating meeting" with a special speaker, which draws a large crowd.

**Boozers don't keep
their looks any longer
than their promises.**



TRAVELING HIGHLIGHTS

Please share your traveling experiences with your AA friends. We will print as many articles as we can.

*The following is submitted by
Lynn H.*

It was quite by coincidence or so I thought that Harold and I were seated next to one another at the Sunday morning 11th Step meeting. We discovered we shared many dreams, one being an ardent and insatiable desire for exploration. We married some few months later and thus began our Nomadic odyssey which almost daily was infused with AA connections. Before setting out, we made an AA banner. Being rather large and flag-like, it never failed to attract the curious and those who understood the triangle within a circle along with our message "One Day at a Time", drawing them to our door invariably asking "are you

friends of Bill W.? And so, as our almost 7 year trek began, we were made secure with the single most incontrovertible anchor the knowledge that whether we were attending a meeting in a hospital basement in Two Harbors, MN on the northern shores of Lake Superior at friendly English speaking meetings with our new banner-pals, Margie and Hans L. from Littleton, CO while in Puerto Penasco or in remote Escalante, Utah where meetings consisted of our AA friend, Jay, Harold, myself along with two prison releases...wherever we searched out AA, the hand was always there to embrace and support us, whatever the need. It was in Brookings, OR, the 8 p.m. Brookings Harbor Study Group, we were especially welcomed by Gladys and Wayne S. This to become one of our most memorial experiences when the following morning a knock on our door and there was Wayne, confined to a wheelchair by MS. He had navigated across town to locate us high on a bluff overlooking the great Pacific. And what a rich experience it's been. A joy to be around with his big smile, Wayne always comes prepared with AA paraphernalia, of one sort or another, wherever/ whenever, he passing it along. Checking bulletin boards quickly became second

nature. It was a 3x5 index card posted by Harry P. that led us to this doorstep in border territory SE of San Diego. Then 38 years sober, Harry was a member of the original Akron AA group and is still spreading the word. It was a fun night when I picked up my 4 year chip at a monthly cake meeting in Yuba City, northern CA. With much humor and laughter, the chairperson announced "Nobody intentionally comes to Yuba City and especially to pick up a chip! But tonight we have guests from NC." It was quite by chance at a huge meeting in Tucson that Harold was tapped on his shoulder by Liz H., someone he had gotten sober with some 12 years earlier. Liz is now an Episcopal priest. We sat in awe as Liz performed Mass at St. Philips, realizing the limitless possibilities that await us when we choose the sober journey. Enter, Cottonwood Tom. Our gypsy-like wanderings early on brought us to the Verde Valley where at our first meeting we met Tom. Tom's way of doing AA is all encompassing... no one is left out or alone. An ex-biker with pony tail - some 17 years

sober, Tom gathered us up making sure we knew AA was alive and well in Cottonwood/Clarkdale, AZ. Tom has always been there for all who need him. A phrase we've often used is "let's hit the road". In doing so memory-wise I've been reminded of just how tremendous are our numbers, of just how willing our hearts are to grow in greatness and, especially, how lucky we, the sober ones, are... Today.

Lynn & Harold H.
The 4th of July 2002
Moab, Utah



TEST YOUR AA-IQ!!!

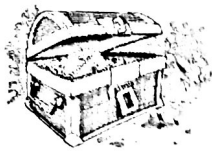
1. Bill W. and Dr. Bob meet and the seeds of AA are sown in the year _____.
2. Both men, at one time, lived in the same State of _____.
3. The First Edition of the "Big Book", "Alcoholics Anonymous" was printed in _____.
4. _____ was Bill W.'s longtime secretary and

AA's first Archivist.

5. Bill W.'s wife _____ sets the example for what had become the Al-anon movement.
6. The famous "Rockefeller Dinner", which was the basis for AA being self-supporting was in _____.
7. Jack Alexander's feature article on alcoholism ran in _____, March 1941.
8. The only requirement for membership in AA is: _____.
9. "Alcoholics Anonymous" is now in it's _____ printing.
10. AA is in approximately _____ countries in the world.

ANSWERS FOUND ON PAGE 8.





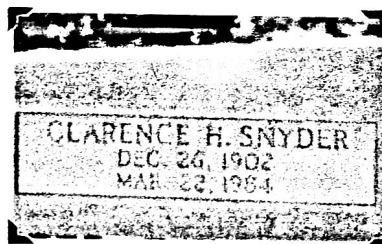
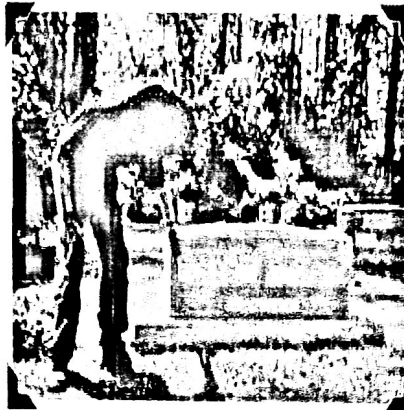
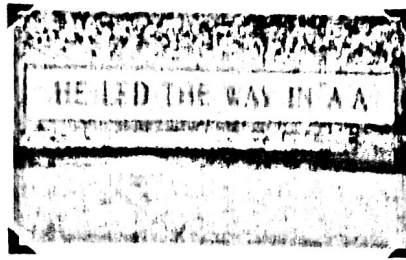
LITTLE KNOWN FACTS OF AA IN THE SANDHILLS

Our own Cameron, NC
is the final resting place for
one of AA's original 40!!

In 1938, Clarence Synder
sought out Dr. Bob in Akron,
Ohio. After a rocky start, he
was able to get, and stay, sober
for 46 years. He originated
Cleveland's Group #3 and is
credited with being the first to
use the name "AA Group".

His story "Home
Brewmeister" is in the 1st, 2nd
and 3rd editions of the Big
Book. Clarence married Grace
Snipes Moore of Cameron, NC
in 1971. They resided in
Florida until his death in 1983.
His body was shipped to
Cameron and, according to
Lewis F. of the Vass Group,
(please see photos), a
memorial service was held at
the Cameron Presbyterian
Church and he was buried
there in the Snipes family plot.

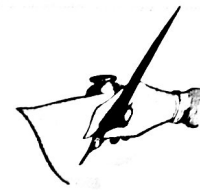
His gravestone is easy to find
and proudly states "HE LED
THE WAY IN AA."



Clarence was a very colorful,
often controversial, member of
AA. For a fascinating read, go
to

<http://aabbsg.de/chs/index.htm>
on the Internet. Mitchell K.,
who spent many years with the
Snyders, has written a very
informative biography of
Clarence. He states that Nell
Wing, Bill W.'s secretary,
commented that Clarence was
"probably the one man
responsible for sponsorship as
we know it today". Thanks,
Clarence!

Ginnie D.



MEMBER MUSINGS

A Teenager writes:

I'm 16 years old and I am
currently living at Bethesda Link,
a halfway house. I live there with
six other teenagers who are
alcoholics and none of whom have
the desire to drink. In my opinion,
that is a miracle. Sometimes, it's
hard for me to believe that I'm in a
halfway house, that my life
became that unmanageable. I am
grateful to be here, learning how
to live. At Bethesda I do some
things that seem simple and are
really important, such as doing
chores on a regular basis and
waking up and going to bed at a
reasonable time. It helps me to
have that stability. I'm
discovering what my feelings are
and how I feel when I have them.
Feelings are something I didn't
have when I was drinking; and if I
did, I stuffed them. I'm learning
that all feelings are a good thing
when used appropriately. I'm
being guided on how to use them
appropriately. I'm learning about
his disease we all have called
alcoholism. It helps me to know
that most of my insane thoughts
come from my disease. I know

this is the place where I need to be and I'm grateful to be here. It's gets crazy here sometimes and despite that, I would never trade the opportunity I'm having being here or the experiences I'm gaining.

Erica G.

*If alcohol didn't
bring us to our
knees, sobriety will.*



BOOK CORNER

HAVE YOU READ...???

In this column we'd like you to share what book (AA approved, please) has touched your life. The following is an example.

The "Loophole"

Things were not running smoothly within the infant program during the winter of 1939. Bill W. was pressing to get what would be called the "Big Book" assembled and sent to the printers. His efforts were being frustrated by factions within the fellowship. Theists, Desists, liberals, psychologicals, radicals, agnostics and atheists were jockeying to imprint their ideologies on the "steps".

The disagreement was focused on the word "God" in the Steps. Hank P. and Jim B. stood firm against the consensus and Bill W.'s reluctance to modify the Steps as he had written them.

Eventually Bill was to capitulate...his intention was clear "...the Steps would have to be more explicit, leaving not a "single loophole through which the rationalizing alcoholic could wiggle out". Thus the qualification "as we understand him" was added to Steps 3 and 11.

In "The Language of the Heart" pg. 201, Bill states "Those expressions... have proved lifesavers for many an alcoholic. They have enabled thousands of us to make a beginning where none could have been made had we left the Steps just as I originally wrote

them."

The gateway had been widened so that all who suffer from alcoholism might pass through, regardless of their belief or lack of belief. The "loophole" had been created through which many of us "rationalizing drunks" could wiggle IN.

Submitted by: "Anonymous" AA member.



ASK IT BASKET

The Intergroup will try to answer your "Ask-It Basket" questions to the best of our ability based on AA approved literature. These questions might make good discussions for your groups. Some questions, we felt, were of too personal a nature to be answered in this column. We suggest you talk these over with your sponsor or someone you trust and respect in the AA community.

The following are actual questions as they were put to us in the "Ask-It Basket"...thanks for

your input.

Q. "Why are there not many Blacks?"

A. Tradition 3 states: "*The only requirement for AA membership is a desire to stop drinking.*" Please read the Moore County AA History . Also in the Big Book, 3rd Edition, page 283 and in the 4th Edition, pg. 531 for stories of Blacks in AA.

Q. Why can't I be in a relationship in early sobriety?

A. Early sobriety is the time for you to concentrate on yourself. You are not told not to have a relationship, however, many "old timers" have learned that major changes are best not made in early sobriety.

Q. Why do so many AA groups use non-AA approved literature? The 24 Hour Book is Hazelden -not AA. One group even has non-AA books for sale or to win in a raffle. ????

A. The 4th Tradition states: "Each group should be autonomous except in matters affecting other groups or A.A. as a whole." To continue with the text of Tradition Four in "Twelve Steps and Twelve

Traditions": "Autonomy is a ten-dollar word. But in relation to us it means very simply that every AA group can manage its affairs exactly as it pleases, except when A.A. as a whole is threatened."



CARRYING THE MESSAGE

CORRECTION FACILITIES

FACT: The vast majority of inmates in North Carolina are in prison because of alcohol or drug abuse.

FACT: Many of those inmates want to learn how to live a sober life.

FACT: There are eight prisons within an hour's drive of where you live and most are closer than that. There are active AA groups in each of the nearby units. In some, there are one or more inmates with a couple of years of sobriety and usually many more with just a few months. Some of them have been able to go through a residential treatment program

while in prison and some had been in AA prior to entering prison. A few of them have joined on their own or as the result of the message they have received from other inmates. All of them look forward to meeting AA's from "the street". Many of our members volunteer at one or more of these nearby units on a regular basis to help carry the message inside. But there are other ways to help carry the message. The volunteers are always looking for literature. Have you finished reading all those old Grapevines gathering dust since 1995? How about your 3rd Edition of the Big Book which you replaced with the 4th Edition? Or, maybe you'd like to make a gratitude gift of DAILY REFLECTIONS to an inmate who has no funds. Contact your Home Group CFC Representative. If your group doesn't have one, now is the time to appoint one.

Jack L.

A PROUD MEMBER WRITES ABOUT HER GROUP:

The Brownson Big Book Group celebrated twenty years of carrying the message in April 2002, with a "pot luck" and Open Speaker Meeting. Jim M., who moved here from Virginia was the speaker. His talk helped us get to

know him and his family who also attended the anniversary celebration. We welcomed him and seven other new members to our group in 2002. We are a small group who discuss the Steps, Traditions and the Big Book every Tuesday at 8 PM, upstairs (directions on the meeting schedule). The last Tuesday of each month is our birthdays celebration downstairs or wherever the generosity of the Brownson Church allows us to meet for a speaker, cake, ice cream and medallions. All are welcome as it is an open meeting on that night only, once every month.

Myrna J-W.



ANSWERS TO AA-IQ TEST.

*(ALL ANSWERS BASED ON
AA LITERATURE.)*

1. 1935
2. Vermont
3. April, 1939
4. Nell Wing
5. Lois
6. 1940
7. "The Saturday Evening Post"

8. a desire to stop drinking
9. 4th
10. 150



WHAT IS SANDHILLS INTERGROUP?

We are a service committee formed for the purpose of supporting AA activities in the Moore County area of North Carolina. Our goal is to improve communications, and understanding among AA groups in order to unite all efforts to better serve the alcoholic who seeks the help of Alcoholics Anonymous. Intergroup is comprised of interested volunteer members, and representatives from the groups in the AA community in Moore County. The ideas and suggestions of the local AA members are welcomed and all are encouraged to attend the monthly meetings at 9AM on the first Saturday of each month at the AA Building on Wilder Avenue in Aberdeen. (unless otherwise announced.) Sandhills Intergroup is financed by local AA groups. The treasurer

presents an annual estimated budget, and with the continued support of the local AA groups, we anticipate continued success. We need volunteer support from the local AA community to help with Intergroups' functions as listed below.

1. Maintain a 24 hour telephone answering service to:
 - a) provide meeting information to callers
 - b) answer 12 step calls (the answering service has a list of local AA volunteers who return these calls, and give assistance)
2. Maintain a website with meeting information, directions and Newsletter.
3. Update and distribute meeting lists and AA approved information pamphlets. The public information committee of Intergroup distributes lists and literature to local hotels, motels, hospitals, community buildings, law enforcement, mental health, and medical and professional agencies.

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