



Volume 3, Number 3, September 2004

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FOR YOUR INFORMATION

UPDATING THE 12TH STEP ANSWERING SERVICE LIST

DO YOU WANT TO BE ON THE 12th STEP ANSWERING LIST ?

DO YOU WANT YOUR NAME TAKEN OFF THE LIST ?

It is September and time for our yearly up-date of the 12th Step Answering Service list. If you are currently on the list your name will remain active unless you tell us otherwise.

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 list.

The Answering Sv. works like this: A caller dials 1-800-495-1742 and will be in contact with an operator who provides 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. She requests the first name only and the callers phone number.

The operator then refers to our 12th Step calling list and will keep trying to make contact until successful. She does not leave a message for us, nor does she give our name or number directly to the caller.

It is then up to the AA 12th Stepper to return the call & 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, often it is just the contact with another alcoholic that will be of help to the caller.

If you are interested in being on the list, or need to be taken off, please contact: Deirdre chair-person of the Answering Service Committee at:

Lacasseb@pinehurst.net

CARRYING THE MESSAGE--NEEDED A Few Good Women



A few good women, AA volunteers, are needed to carry the message to a woman's prison which is to open soon in Troy.

The North Carolina Dept. of Corrections has converted Southern Correctional Institution from a male Close custody facility to a 480 bed Close/Medium prison for women. It is expected to begin receiving inmates in late October or early November.

Two men have been carrying the message to the prison for the past couple of years and stand ready to continue to do so, if asked. However, they, and the program staff at Southern believe that women AA volunteers are key to the

success of the AA program in a woman's facility.

An AA volunteer in the prison will participate in AA meetings much the same as in her home group. She may be asked to chair a meeting, to lead a discussion or to tell her story. Inmates may ask for help in working the Steps. Some may ask a volunteer to be a sponsor or to listen to a 5th Step. AA on the "inside" is just the same as AA on the "outside". The only difference is that the "inside" members can get to meetings only as their home groups.

Inmate AA's are no different than you or me. They look forward to seeing some of the same people showing up at each of their meetings, just as we do. They look forward to hearing speakers, but they also want to hear the volunteers share how they stay sober one day at a time.

Some of the inmates may have had a good deal of time in a treatment program but there will

probably be as many who have never been exposed to treatment. More than likely there will be some who have attended AA meetings either at other prisons or, as they say, "on the street", before going to prison. There may even be some long-time members of AA with several years of sobriety.

The AA volunteer must be at least 21 years old. She should be a member of a home group and should have a sponsor. It is imperative that she has a positive message of recovery to carry into the prison meeting. In addition, she must be willing to complete a written application to the Dept. of Correction and be willing to undergo a background investigation. The DOC guarantees the applicant's anonymity during the application process.

Upon completion of the application the volunteer will participate in an orientation conducted by the facility's Program Supervisor Jack Clelland.

The orientation will cover Division of Prisons policies and the facility's rules and guidelines concerning the volunteer identification card and signing in and out of the facility. In addition, he will discuss what may be taken in or out of the prison, undue familiarity with inmates, how the volunteer should respond if the facility goes into an emergency mode of operation and any specific rules governing access and personal conduct within the facility.

Those women who are interested in becoming volunteers at Southern are asked to telephone either Charlie Russell at his home 910-573-2302 or Bill Crews at 692-4577 (home) or 692-2642 (office).

Anyone with questions concerning her or his eligibility to become a prison volunteer is asked to call Jack Leonard.

Jack Leonard:
692-5362 (home)
944-3581 (office)

LITTLE KNOWN FACTS OF AA...



JANUARY IS SUMMER
IN NEW ZEALAND

THEY CELEBRATE 42
YEARS OF AA IN THEIR
COUNTRY.

The New Zealand National Convention of Alcoholics Anonymous is extending an invitation to all AA members, worldwide, to join them in celebrating 42 years of AA in their country.

The theme of the 42nd Convention is "The Joy of Sharing" and will be held in Christchurch...(a city of approximately three hundred and fifty thousand and situated in the South island of New Zealand), on January 28th - 30th, 2005.

The location will be at the Lincoln University and the weekend will include an international meeting, non-stop alchothon, Friday night BBQ, old timers meeting and free transportation from the airport/city to the convention site.

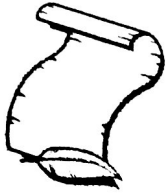
Registration costs:
\$30 per day....or,
\$187 full (includes 2
nights accommodations, all
meals & registration.)
Pls make checks out to:
AA Convention 2005

Contact the convention
secretary: Margaret
20 Northcote Rd.
Papanui
Christchurch,
New Zealand

Or: Convention chair-
person: Paul
Email:
paulh@pcconnect.co.nz
Phone:
(0064) 03 352 3727

(all prices are NZ dollars
and all dates are NZ time
zone. More information
can be obtained on the
official AA website in NZ:
[Hhttp://www.alcoholics-
anonymous.org.nz/html/](http://www.alcoholics-anonymous.org.nz/html/)

MEMBERS MUSINGS



"GOD SAID.... NOT YET,
THERE'S MORE WORK TO
BE DONE"

There I was...14 years sober, so I thought, immersed in life to the fullest. At 11 years sober I had gotten married and life was taking on a new meaning of commitment.

I owned a distribution business and sobriety had touched and healed most areas of my life. I had a program that directed me through all the obstacles that came.

From the moment my wife and I met difficult circumstances commenced. Our physical, mental and emotional lives were tested frequently. At 2 years married we had our first child. Again more life commitments took on a deeper meaning.

My wife only knew me in sobriety, so she never saw the dark side. With life being so busy I drifted from the program and the fellowship. My peace was slowly moving away. I

began to feel pressure and anxiety.

The conscience I developed in my recovery years soon was to be silenced. I found myself on edge more and more. Thoughts of drinking became frequent and eventually evolved into action.

Progression works both ways, positive and negative. At first my body rejected alcohol violently. Of course it was not used to it and I had no tolerance at all. The mental obsession started and the conflict within "knowing the difference" was endless. In time, and more consumption, it had quieted to a smaller voice.

So I continued on that path for 3 ½ years. The end was unbearable and at times definitely was life threatening to myself and those around me.

My first introduction to AA was in 1980. I'd been convicted of 2 DWI's and was charged with a felony conviction. The courts had taken away my license and I had received 5 years of probation. Also it was required that I'd attend a 30 day rehab.

After returning I stayed sober for over 90 days and relapsed around Thanksgiving. I returned to AA in March of 1987. From that point I involved myself and surrendered to the program of Alcoholics Anonymous., taking suggestions

and commitments in the fellowship.

In my wildest dreams in recovery I thought I'd never go back. I know today that I must keep recovery in front of everyone and everything, my attendance and contact with other AA's is essential to my survival.

I need to thank my family and my friends in AA that kept me in their prayers. Also the Highland Falls Group in New York that loved me back to sobriety. I shook from craving and anxiety for two months. Today I am grateful for that pain and suffering.

My wife and I had discussed our situation and made a decision to change. The changes we believed would save me and the family. We decided to sell the distribution business and our home in New York. We picked North Carolina because of family support.

Within a year everything sold and we arrived in February, 2004. The area is beautiful, AA is very strong and our lives are much less stressful.

My wife has taken on a full time position in Occupational Therapy and I've taken on "Mr. Mom" and part-time work. The role reversal has been an eye opening experience for both of us.

We now have a different perspective on each other and for that we are grateful. I invited my wife to attend an Alanon meeting and she accepted and is starting on her own path.

I believe in the power of our 12 Steps to pave a new way of life for everyone who chooses them. At that last day of my demise I thought of death.

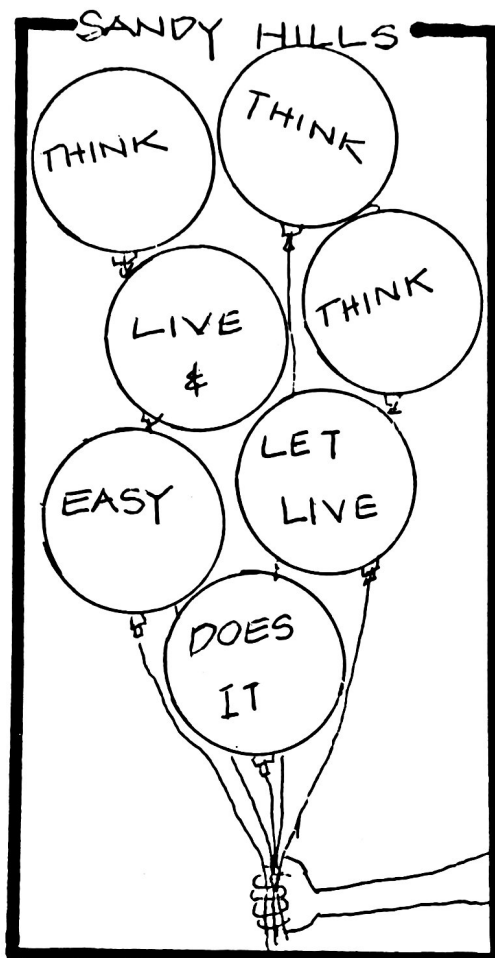
"GOD SAID...NOT YET, THERE'S MORE WORK TO BE DONE."

Pete P.

"There is a principle which is a bar against all information, which is proof against all arguments and which cannot fail to keep a man in everlasting ignorance....that principle is contempt prior to investigation."

---HERBERT SPENCER

(*Alcoholics Anonymous*
Appendix II
"Spiritual Experience")



Any ideas for the "Sandy Hills" cartoon...please see Intergroup member Barry P

DISTRICT 52 DATES TO REMEMBER

2004

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 on

Dec. 11, Saturday
Service Center Meeting
(1st Baptist Church, SP)

"AA GEMS"

"If you're wrapped up in self you make a very small package."

"The 12 Steps are like 12 wrenches...they will fit any nut who walks through the doors."

Alcoholics Anonymous has been called an Upside-down organization because the "final responsibility and ultimate authority for...world services" resides with the groups - rather than with the trustees of the General Service Board or the GSO (General Service Office) in New York.

AA is the one place where the "little guy" has the chance to be heard. Our Home Groups are autonomous and vary greatly but we all have the right to present our views, concerns and suggestions to our District. They, in turn, will relay these concerns through the Area and on up to the General Service Conference.

All of these organizations are self supporting and rely upon the generosity of the Home Groups to keep them going.

Note: The Sandhills Intergroup is not a part of the structure of the Fellowship. We are an organization formed to provide services for the AA community in the county of Moore.

The Intergroup does not act as mediator or make any suggestions or recommendations. We have no voting privileges.

The Sandhills Intergroup provides local services that would be difficult for any one Home Group to handle... such as the answering service, the placement of literature in public places, the publication of this Newsletter, etc.

We rely upon the generosity of our Home Groups and would like to thank each and every one for the support that has been given to us...so that we are able to continue serving you.

STRUCTURE OF THE FELLOWSHIP (as represented in our Sandhills area)

HOME GROUPS

The registered Home Groups in Moore County send an elected GSR (General Service Rep.) to the quarterly District Mtgs. They also elect an alternate GSR to cover when the other is unable to attend. The views and/or concerns of the group are presented at these District meetings.

DISTRICT 52

District 52 is made up of 5 counties: Moore, Richmond, Scotland, Hoke & Lee. GSR's from the Home Groups of these counties make up the membership and representatives are chosen from this group to attend the Area Assemblies. District officers are also elected from this group and serve 2 years. The offices are that of DCM (District Committee Member), an alternate DCM, a secretary and a treasurer.

AREA 51

This is the final link between AA in our State and the world services of AA. Basically, the area committee is composed of all district committee members, those from each district whom GSR's have elected to represent them. The officers are elected from this group and also serve on a two year basis. Area Assemblies are held 3 or 4 times a year and a delegate (and alternate) are elected to attend the General Service Conference of that year.

GENERAL SERVICE CONFERENCE

This is a yearly conference made up of word-wide delegates chosen from the Area Assemblies. The concerns and suggestions of local home groups, such as ours in the Sandhills, finally get to be viewed and voted on at the conference. Everyone who is a delegate has a voice and a vote.

TRAVELING HIGHLIGHTS



BELLA FIRENZE AA!

AA in Florence, Italy, is alive and well as Carol C and I found out this past March. We actually attended 6 American speaking meetings during our 2 week stay.

Finding the meeting place was not too difficult but getting in was another matter. "Lingua Inglese" meets 4 times a week in the American Church on Via Bernardo Rucellai. This is a picturesque gothic style church encircled with an iron fence and locked gates.

We were proud to have figured out where the church was but how could we get in? Finally a young man appeared from within the church and with gestures and gibberish we

conveyed that we were alcoholics and "needed" a meeting.

(Little did he know how much we actually needed that meeting. We had arrived at the Florence airport the night before only to be told that all the luggage on the plane had been lost! After much paper work and wringing of hands another plane landed and, voilla!, there was our luggage.

We then proceeded to our lodgings... a lovely monastery perched high above the city, and tried to wash away a days travel with a little hand-held shower. We became quite adept at this before the two weeks were over!)...but, back to the meetings.

A small side door led us into an unlit hallway and an iron, spiral staircase that wound its way to the basement. The meetings were held in a child's classroom with miniscule chairs gathered around a long table.

Typically the meetings

drew 15 or 20 people and it was such a comfort to be there and to see all the usual AA paraphernalia being used. They hold 4 mtgs. a week and these are divided into Discussion, 12 Step and Speaker. Mon. & Wed. were at 1pm, Friday was at 5pm and Sat. night was at 7:30.

They opened their mtgs. with, "We welcome our visitors from afar and hope that you will share with us, but please stick to AA related topics and tell us about your trip after the mtg." (This usually brought a good-natured laugh from the travelers.)

I also liked the part of their opening that said, "We welcome everyone here who has a desire to stop drinking, but if you have had a drug or a drink in the past 24 hours please do not share during the meeting."

We latched onto a few of the women and continued the meetings afterwards with luscious pastries and cappuccino. Almost all the members were expatriates but a few (like Fillipo)

were "home-grown". We met a girl in her 30's who told us that she had been drinking at her local pub in Ireland and the next thing she knew she awoke in Florence...and she's never gone back! Luckily she was proficient in Italian.

She lives in Siena and busses to Florence for the English speaking meetings. We became friends and she was our escort on our day in Siena. Since then she and I have emailed and I hope she will visit one day.

It is wonderful to travel to any part of the world and find AA friends. We broke up our 2 weeks with the 6 meetings and it made us feel very connected.

Carol and I shared some of our own experiences but mostly we listened and relaxed. After a long day of sight-seeing it was a treat to settle into a known AA routine and we would leave feeling very refreshed.

Yes, as I said, AA is alive and well in Firenze, Italia.

Ginnie D., Vass Group

WHAT IS 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 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.

The ideas and suggestions of the local AA members 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.

Sandhills Intergroup is financed by local AA groups. The treasurer presents an annual budget and, with the continued support of the AA groups, we anticipate continued success.

The Public Information Committee of Intergroup distributes meeting schedules and literature to local hotels, motels, schools, hospitals, community services, law enforcement, mental health and medical and professional agencies.

Other Intergroup functions are:

The 24 hour answering service, which is a professional answering service that will give meeting information to the caller or will pass along the call to one of our AA members who are listed on the 12th Step List.

The Website that provides our meeting schedules and directions to meetings, as well as a copy of the Newsletter and a contact number so that the reader can reach us through the internet.

Updating and distributing meeting schedules 3 times a year.

An informative Newsletter published every 4 months.

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