



Volume 6, # 3, September 2007

## FEATURES:

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

## FOR YOUR INFORMATION

**"I'VE BEEN ON THE 12<sup>th</sup> Step ANSWERING SERVICE LIST FOR THREE YEARS AND I'VE NEVER HAD A CALL! AM I STILL NEEDED?"**

We, in the Intergroup, get this question all the time... and the answer is definitely "YES...we need each and every one of you...and here's the reason why..."

The Answering Service works like this: a caller dials 1-800-496-1742 and will be in contact with an operator who can provide meeting information and 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 only the first name of the caller & their phone number.

The operator then refers to our 12<sup>th</sup> Step Phone List and will call until she gets an actual answer. She does not leave a

message on an answering machine. And here is the important part: it often takes 10 or more calls to reach an available member and that is why a large list is so critical.

It has been suggested that many of you already on the list may want to give your cell phone number as well as your home phone. This would greatly ease the job of the operator.

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.

By the same token, if you are currently on the list and need to be excluded please let us know.

For changes or additions please contact Chairperson, Deirdre, at: [blcdlc@yahoo.com](mailto:blcdlc@yahoo.com)

---

## MEMBERS MUSINGS

---



\*\*\*\*\*

An AA member in our area has compiled the following information on anonymity, as taken from our AA texts and literature.

\*\*\*\*\*

### TRADITION TWELVE

The spiritual substance of anonymity is sacrifice.  
(First sentence of Tradition Twelve in "12 x 12".)

When the Big Book appeared in 1939 we called it *Alcoholics Anonymous*. It's foreword made this revealing statement: "It is important that we remain anonymous because we are too few, at present, to handle the overwhelming number of personal appeals which may result from this publication. Being mostly professional folk, we could not well carry on our occupations in such an event."  
(Third paragraph of Tradition Twelve in "12 x 12")

"As a rule, the average newcomer wanted his family to

know immediately what he was trying to do. He also wanted to tell others who had tried to help him -- his doctor, his minister and close friends. As he gained confidence he felt it right to explain his new way of life to his employer and business associates.

When opportunities to be helpful came along he found he could talk easily about AA to almost anyone. These quiet disclosures helped him to lose his fear of the alcoholic stigma and spread the news of AA's existence in his community. Many a new man or woman came to AA because of such conversions."

(Last paragraph, pg 185 and first paragraph, pg. 136 of Tradition Twelve in "12x12")

"No AA need to be anonymous to family, friends or neighbors. Disclosure there is usually right and good". (Bill W. - Jan. '55)

"Anonymity is real humility at work. It is an all-pervading spiritual quality which today keynotes AA life everywhere. Moved by the spirit of anonymity, we try to give up our natural desires for personal distinction ...

We are sure that humility, expressed by anonymity, is the greatest safeguard that Alcoholics Anonymous can ever have."

(Last two paragraphs, pg 187, of Tradition Twelve in "12x12")

"Big shotism and phony thinking had to go" "To gain enough humility to stay alive we had to give up what had been our dearest possession -- our ambitions and our illegitimate pride."  
(Bill W, 1955)

Dr. Bob states on anonymity: "Since our tradition on anonymity designates the exact level where the line should be held, it must be obvious to everyone who can read and understand the English language that to maintain anonymity at any other level is definitely a violation of this Tradition (12)

An AA who hides his identity from his fellow AA's by using only a given name violates the Tradition just as much as the AA who permits his name to appear in the press in connection with matters pertaining to AA."  
(*Dr Bob & The Good Oldtimers* Page 264.)

\*\*\*\*\*

### THE A.A. CHESS GAME

After the game is over the King and the Pawn go back into the same box.

\*\*\*\*\*

## HISTORICAL Facts of AA



Here is one member's findings concerning...

### Group or Meeting ?

When choosing a name for a gathering of alcoholics it does not seem to matter if the word "group" or "meeting" is used.

In the GSO pamphlet, "The AA Groups" it states "any two or three alcoholics gathered together for sobriety may call themselves an AA group, provided that, as a group, they have no other affiliation." It also states "you are a member if you keep coming back. No formal application is required."

What is a "home group"? It is where I accept responsibilities and try to sustain friendships, so states the pamphlet, which

also says I attend on a regular basis and vote on group conscience matters.

Many "home groups" register with the General Service Organization of AA and elect General Service Representatives (GSR's) who attend quarterly District meetings.

I am beginning to see a simple fact. I have been looking for the differences between "groups" and "meetings" and instead I find a connection between them.

The Aberdeen Building is the best place to explore this idea. As a historical sidelight, the Aberdeen Community Building was a Works Progress Admin. Project (WPA) and was dedicated in 1935 by First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt. In 1959 the fledgling AA group of Aberdeen got permission to use the building, which was in great disrepair, and it has been leased to them yearly since that time.

All the monies contributed by the groups and meetings

that use the Aberdeen Bldg. are handled by the steering committee and used for the upkeep of the building and for the special events that occur there

The current meeting schedule, as updated by the Sandhills Intergroup, lists 19 groups and meetings held weekly in that building. The names and formats are according to the whims of the founding members and 10 have been designated as "groups" and 9 as "meetings". Only one of those groups has been registered with the GSO and that is the *Keep It Sober Group* that meets every Tues. and Sat. night at 8 pm.

So, here we are back to Tradition Three. They are a group if they say they are. Typical of most AA situations, there are no absolutes.

As we know from experience, when we need a meeting we care not whether it is a "group" or a "meeting"...we gather because we have a mutual desire to stop drinking.

---

## TRAVELING HIGHLIGHTS

---



---

### CONTINUING MY JOURNEY

#### "Reaching out"

Wherever I travel I put "first things first" and locate my next meeting place. Help is within easy reach in most towns, villages and hamlets.

Every meeting I attend offers a spiritual experience being among the messengers. No matter what my circumstances, 95% of my recovery is simply "showing up". Believe it when you hear ... "those who stay...stay sober."

In 1995 I spent three weeks at Myrtle Beach writing vignettes of happier times during my childhood. Much of the bad times had colored by adult life. My

sponsor suggested that this would be cathartic.

While sitting in a restaurant and writing on a legal pad a woman approached and asked, "are you a writer?". I replied "I suppose I am." After telling her my subject matter she went to her car and returned with a book she has authored about a bundle of Nebraska memories. She signed the book and encouraged me to continue my writing journey.

I attended a meeting that night to pick up my six year sobriety chip. She gave it to me! Nothing was said in the restaurant about AA. Coincidence? I'm told that this is when GOD doesn't wish to remain anonymous.

In 2004 I went to Naples, Florida, for refuge from the cold weather. Upon arrival I used the phone book (yellow pages) for an AA contact. The directions were... "go to the entrance to your condo cluster, look to your left and turn right at the yellow caution

light". It was the "24 Hour Club". There were many daily meetings within walking distance. Coincidence??

Last summer at Topsail Island I stopped at the police station to ask directions to the AA meetings with no response. After all, cops take us drunks to jails, not to meetings. Next I stopped at a small convenience store to ask for info when a woman popped up from behind the counter and said, "Honey, I'm on my way there." She handed me a schedule booklet for 2 counties. Coincidence?

One of my favorite meeting places is the Camel Club on Oak Island. Meetings on the beach are spiritually invigorating, but, like all meetings the people are respectful of the meetings beginning and ending in a timely manner. The same people with a common problem gather to help themselves by helping others.

At times I just need to be among folks like me who

are living one day at a time without alcohol. When I first admitted that I needed help I became willing to go to any lengths. One favorite message that I received from a woman at the Camel Club was that when she needs to talk to someone she picks up her phone list and dials and says, "This is your lucky day...I need help." For me to have a meeting, all I need is another recovering friend and a cup of coffee.

Sometimes AA reaches out to me. Once upon a time when I was among all passengers asked to de-board a plane at the Miami International Airport, an announcement was heard, "All friends of Bill Wilson are meeting in the Eastern Airlines lounge." That meeting made re-boarding much easier.

Another time I was attending an NCAR Convention, the emergency contact bulletin board had a message that read, "Friends of Bill Wilson are meeting in Room 216 at 7 pm". Convening a group of friends in recovery was

so comforting. Upon entering the room I heard laughter.

Memo:

The hand of AA is always there. Today I need to reach out, grab hold and hang on. Life gets better the AA way.

Submitted by AA member,  
Joyce M.

\*\*\*\*\*

## CARRYING THE MESSAGE

In 1952 the book, "The Power of Positive Thinking" by Norman Vincent Peale, was published. In the last chapter Dr. Peale writes:

"For many years I have been interested in the problem of the alcoholic & in the organization known as Alcoholics Anonymous. One of their basic principles is that before a person can be helped he must recognize that he is an alcoholic and that of himself he can do nothing;

that he has no power within himself; that he is defeated. When he accepts this point of view he is in a position to receive help from other alcoholics and from the Higher Power.

Another principle is the willingness to depend upon the Higher Power from whom he derives a strength which he does not himself possess. The working of this power in men's lives is the most moving and thrilling fact in this world. No other manifestation of power of any kind is equal to it.

.....There is nothing more difficult to overcome than the problem of alcoholism I ... show conclusively that if there is a Power able to deliver a person from alcoholism, this same Power can help any other person to overcome any other form of defeat he may face. The Power that can accomplish this difficult feat can, I assure you, help you to overcome your difficulties whatever they may be."

Norman Vincent Peale

## SPOTLIGHT ON OUR GROUPS



### KEEP IT SIMPLE Beginner's Meeting

The "Keep It Simple Beginners Meeting" has, and is, undergoing a number of changes. Often referred to as the "Hospital Group", in reality that was a misnomer as they were never a "group" and they led something of a vagabond existence.

Originally founded in 1974 when the hospital had only a small detoxification unit, in the 1980's and 1990's it was often one of the most heavily attended meetings in the area. There was often an attendance of 70 to 80 people in the days when it was meeting in the "old" hospital auditorium.

Over recent years the meetings have been forced to move several times due to the needs of the hospital

and various construction projects. One of the persistent problems with the meeting was that, despite large attendance, only a handful of people were willing to assume responsibility for service work and so it remained a meeting rather than a group.

The constant change of venues, not surprisingly, caused great instability and the meeting developed a "case of the dwindles".

The low point was around Dec. of 2005 when there might be no more than an average of five or ten people at a meeting.

Some consideration was given to just shutting down the meeting, especially since the number of patients in the hospital for alcoholism treatment or detox had reached a low ebb.

It would have been a disappointment to close down a meeting that had been in existence for more than 30 years so a small group that was still coming to the meeting decided to make a

concerted effort to save it. The few remaining members started actively asking for help and support from the AA community.

They also decided to re-emphasize the fact that this was a meeting specifically designed to meet the needs of the beginner, engage them in recovery and give them a place where they would be comfortable in early sobriety and allow them to get their feet wet in service work.

Slowly the meeting re-energized and grew. A more formal service structure emerged and a steering committee was formed. A GSR was elected and members took responsibility for the various mundane things that must happen to keep a group going.

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 are comfortable.



Early in the revitalization process a group conscience decision was made to formally become a group (as opposed to just being a meeting) and we are now listed as such.

Our GSR goes to District and Intergroup meetings, as well as other AA functions and conventions. We also actively supported the AA Group at Women's Prison in Troy, providing them with books, literature and "Grapevines".

This revitalization has been exciting to watch, but now another change had taken place....the meetings have moved to the new First Health Specialty Clinics Bldg on 35 Memorial Dr.

A large room has been prepared for our use and has a small kitchen and our own bathroom facilities. The seating arrangements are more conducive to face-to-face interactions and discussions than when we all had to face forward in the auditorium.

Hopefully this room will be the home of the "Keep It

Simple Beginners Group" for a long time. We meet on Fridays at 8pm and Sundays at 2pm and hope to see you there !

Submitted by: Steering Committee, "KISBM"

\*\*\*\*\*

## SANDY HILLS



Thanks to Sam S. for the clever double AA in the word GRACE.

\*\*\*\*\*

## DO YOU JUST BELONG

Are you an active member,  
The kind that would be missed?

Or are you just contented  
That your name is on the list?

Do you attend the meetings  
And mingle with the crowd?

Or do you stay at home  
And crab both long and loud?

Or are you satisfied to be  
The kind to "just belong"?

Do you ever go to visit  
A member who is sick?

Or leave the work for just a few  
And talk about the clique?

There is quite a program  
scheduled  
That means success, if done,

And it can be accomplished  
With the help of everyone.

So, attend the meetings  
regularly  
And help with hand and heart.

Don't just be a member,  
TAKE AN ACTIVE PART.

(Reprinted from the non-conf.  
Approved magazine, "AA  
Chips from New Bern",  
Nov. 1949, Edition.)

\*\*\*\*\*

## **District 52 News**

### **Unity Day a Success**

In July the District sponsored a report by Newton P., our state's delegate to the General Service Conference. We had a great turnout, good lunch and fellowship, and an interesting recap of what goes on in worldwide AA. Our thanks to all who helped make this event possible.

\*\*\*\*\*

### **Participating in Service**

We have been working to increase the level of participation in the service structure and so far have 11 groups that have selected GSR's and given updated information about their group to GSO and the Area Committee.

Although we are happy with this progress we still have about 70 meetings in District 52, which means that many of you have chosen not to be represented in the Service structure or to give GSO

accurate info about your group.

We hope that if your meeting or group is not participating that you will reconsider.

For more information you can call Jim M. at 295-1285.

\*\*\*\*\*

### **Next District Meeting**

The next District Meeting will be Saturday, October 13 at 2:00 at the Aberdeen building.

The meeting is open to all AA members. We hope your group will be represented.

\*\*\*\*\*

### **Area Assembly**

The next Area Assembly will be November 16-18 at the North Raleigh Hilton and we hope our District will have a respectable attendance. Please consider setting aside money for your GSR or Alternate to attend.

## **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](http://www.sandhillsaa.org)

\*\*\*\*\*