



Volume 7, #3, September, 2008

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HERE'S YOUR CHANCE TO "LITERALLY" ANSWER THE CALL ...and be of service to AA

It's time for a complete overhaul of our Answering Service list. It has been 3 years since we've done that.

If you are on the current list you will not be included on the revision unless you sign up.

Anyone who is a member of AA in Moore County with one year or more of sobriety will be eligible.

The Ans. Sv. works like this: a caller dials our 800 # and they will reach an operator who can provide meeting information, including directions.

If the caller wants to talk to an AA member the operator will explain that she is not a member of AA

but will contact one of us on the list and that we will call them back ASAP.

Then the operator refers to our list and will call until she gets an actual answer. It often takes 10 or more calls to reach a member & that is why:

**WE NEED EACH and
EVERYONE OF YOU !**

Sign up sheets were sent to all the Home Groups, but if you missed that, or are new to the area and want to join in this critical service work send an email with your name, last name initial only & your phone # to Deirdre: bledle@yahoo.com

(A suggested guideline to aid you in your 12th Step calls will be provided to anyone requesting it.)

AN INTERVIEW WITH RANDALL M.

(In 2002 I interviewed Randall for the second issue of our Newsletter. I thought it would be fun to see if there had been any changes since then; but he informed me that it's pretty much the "same old story" ...so, here is the interview as it appeared then. Ginnie D.)

Q. Randall, can you tell us what it was like when you started your AA journey?

A. I was in the detox unit of the VA hospital in Fayetteville and Bill Mc and another fella 12th Stepped me there. They told me their drinking stories and I couldn't believe that anyone else drank like I did. They carried me to the clubhouse on German Street for my first AA meeting.

Q. I understand that you were one of the originators of the Aberdeen Group.

A. Yes, we originally met in a room over the old Aberdeen Fire Station.

Then we got permission to use the Wilder Community Building which was badly in need of repairs. Most of the windows were broken and it had an old coal furnace which we had to stoke up hours ahead to stay warm. The first coffee pot we got on credit for \$9.

Q. How many meetings were there in Aberdeen in 1960?

A. We started at two a week, Tues. and Sat. and they were always Speaker Meetings. (You might say I was raised on Speaker Meetings.) I was in charge of getting the once-a-month speakers and they came from far and wide.

We would have up to 100 people at those meetings. One time we had a busload from West Virginia come to an Anniversary Meeting & they spent the night with group members.

Q. I seem to remember something about a group of golfers from Canada.

What was that about?

A. Oh, yes, that was the gang from the Waterloo

Group in Canada. There are about 16 of them and they come down to play golf and to pick up their chips at the Aberdeen Meeting. They've been doing this for about 25 years. I guess they don't have the chip system up there.

Q. Is it true that you met Bill Wilson?

A. Yes, and here's how it came about. In 1964 I was working at McCain Hosp. in a rehab program for the patients, who were all tubercular cases then, and I received a * "Marty Mann Scholarship" to go to a two week course on alcoholism at Columbia University in NY City.

That paid for the trip and the course and the ABC board paid my salary. It was while I was there that I met Bill (at a cocktail party !!) and I got his autograph too. I also went to the first AA clubhouse on West 24th St.

Q. I would imagine that you've sponsored many people over the years. Is

there anything that you would pass on to the newcomers?

A. Just like it's always said...get a good sponsor, don't drink and go to meetings.

Q. What is the secret of your many sober years in AA?

A. When I first came to AA my wife of that time told me to "get fixed or don't come back home". Well, I didn't go back and all these years later I'm still working on that "fixing" part....ONE DAY AT A TIME.

*(Marty Mann was the first woman to become sober in the AA program.

She had TB as a young girl and was interested in the rehab program at McCain which combined the treatment of Alcoholism and TB.

Marty was 25 years sober when Randall received his scholarship.

She is one of the most influential people in the 20th Century in the field of alcoholism.

She founded the National Council on Alcoholism... now called the National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence.

Marty Mann's vision greatly changed the attitude of Americans toward alcoholism, changing it from a moral issue to one of public health.)

STEP 6 ... "Were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character."

The six "P's" of Step 6

Perspective

Pain

Prayer

Patience

Process

Payoff

SPOTLIGHT ON OUR GROUPS



KEEP IT SOBER GROUP

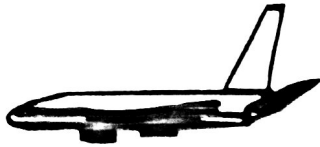
It seems only fitting that we highlight the Aberdeen group in this issue of the Newsletter, since Randall M. was a founding member and most of the articles herein are by current members.

The group is very active and meets on Tuesday, (OD, NS) and Saturday, (OSP, NS) nights.

The name was changed to "Keep It Sober Group" in 2004 when a few dedicated members decided to bring the group back to it's original status.

Now it is one of the most highly attended groups in Moore County and the members are very active in service work and carrying the AA message.

TRAVELING HIGHLIGHTS



FOUNDERS DAY TRIP

This is my story about our Founders Day trip to Akron, Ohio. It's Wednesday, June 4th just before midnight when we get underway.

I will be traveling with fellow Keep It Sober Group members Kelly W. and Richard M. We take turns driving and arrive in Akron about 8am on Thursday.

We are welcomed upon our arrival by our gracious hosts for the weekend, Albert and Mary. I soon learn that the Akron AA members are some of the nicest and most trusting people I have ever met.

We are given free reign of their beautiful home and told to come and go as we please. We retire for a quick nap and I soon discover that sleep will be at a minimum while in Akron. However, tears, laughter and lots of wonderful fellowship will keep us going.

It's around noon and we head out to tour the special places that Akron has to offer. First stop is 855 Ardmore Ave, the home of Dr. Bob and Ann Smith. WOW !!

There's a giant banner hanging at the front of the house saying "WELCOME HOME". We walk up the steps and two guys practically fight over who will give us the tour. We walk inside and it's like going back in time.

The home has been completely restored. It's just like it was during the years Dr. Bob lived there. Up-stairs we visit the bedroom where Dr. Bob and the other early members would detox "The New Man".

Our knowledgeable guide tells us that "the new man", when detoxed, would then help with the next guy. Many of the first 100 sobered up in this very place. Did I mention tears ?

Next we're off to Mt. Peace Cemetery, the site of Dr. Bob's grave. It is a very humble grave site with a simple head stone. No mention of AA or that Dr. Bob was a co-founder. Just a granite flower pot with the words "Honesty, Purity, Unselfishness and Love" engraved on it.

We now head back to our hosts home and get ready for a party across the street. We meet

many Akron members and others who make it a yearly ritual to attend Founders Day.

Friday we are up early and off to register at Akron U. We spend the day taking in more historic AA sites, including the Mayflower Hotel, where Bill W. made "the call" looking for a drunk to work with.

Next we are off to 714 Portage Path, the "Gate House Lodge". This is where Bill and Bob met for the first time on Mother's Day, 1935.

Inside we are given a tour and then we get to the parlor where Bill and Bob sat and talked that day.

I could not help but think of how my life has changed because of that meeting so many years ago. I have never felt the presence of GOD like I did at that moment. This is a very special place, indeed.

Back to the Akron U. for the Early Bird Speaker and then dinner.

Friday night we get a real treat, ...a chance to give back. We work the registration desk from 8:00 'til midnight.

Saturday we're up early again and off to a local meeting in Akron. My travel mate Richard M. tells his story at our host's Home Group.

Then back to Akron U. for more fellowship and the afternoon speaker.

That night another speaker and then a party at our host's home. Man, I need sleep !

Sunday morning and I am up early again...this time 5:30 AM. But, it's worth it. I have been asked by my friend Tom to ride in the lead car carrying the wreath to Dr. Bob's gravesite.

We will be followed by approx. 2,800 motorcyclists from down town Akron to Dr. Bob's grave site. This will be followed by a memorial service.

My friend Dirk, from England, and I will carry the wreath from the car and set it at Dr. Bob's grave.

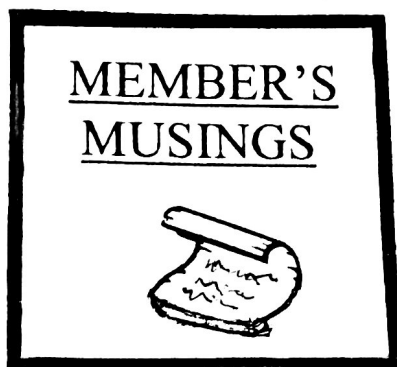
This is followed by the service and then a fellow member plays "Amazing Grace" on the bag pipes. Words can not describe this experience.

Well, it's time to leave now and we say our tearful goodbyes and head back home.

It's been an experience of a lifetime and I will surely never forget my trip to Akron.

Chuck A., grateful AA member
Keeping It Sober Group





MAKING AA my PRIORITY

Having been in the rooms before there are two priorities that remain the same. First, the solution, secondly AA must be my priority.

When these are my priorities all else takes care of itself. I am able to stay out of the way.

Within the last 9 months I have slipped away from my priorities. Therefore my sobriety date also "slipped away".

Returning to the rooms last September, knowing what I had ahead of me, needless to say I felt overwhelmed, dying inside, a soul sickness only a real alcoholic can relate to !!

Committed to a marathon in November, needing to train for that but also I needed to stay sober. What's my priority? AA or training for the marathon?

Without hesitation I made AA my priority ! Being so scared of not staying sober, then, only then, I decided to practice what I had been told time and again. JUST PUT AA FIRST !

The AM of the marathon, at the starting line, I knelt down and said my prayer, "God, I'm doing this on a wing and a prayer ...let's roll". Ending the race with the best time I had ever obtained was the real "God Wink" for me.

It was at mile 20, along a long stretch, no one in front of me and no one behind me, saying out loud "how am I doing this. I feel great and have hardly trained. All I have been doing is AA ! AA!"

Overwhelmed with the God conscious moment I realized God had carried me the whole way! I did AA, He got me to the finish line.

I have had a lot of God Winks.

When I am doing what I love to do my mind is clear. That is running, that is when I find peace and I am able to see & feel the presence of God.

I have many more experiences I would love to share, but I will close with this:

Once again, June of 2008, I slipped away from my priorities. Therefore my sobriety date slipped away also.

Once again I am reminded to start each day like I did my marathon, with a prayer asking for God's help, letting God and AA be my priority and remembering at the end of the day, when I put my head down SOBER, with God's help, I have made it to the finish line...once again.

One Day At a Time !

I also thank God for my friends and the best Home Group ever. They have walked me through this relapse.

If I do not have God and AA as my priority I am then shut off from being able to see what all God places in front of me, mostly the awesome people that

have literally talked me through this relapse.

See, I know today that it is God talking through my friends in AA. I choose today to not put limits on my Higher Power, which I choose to call God.

AA member: Pat M.
Keeping It Sober Group.

CARRYING THE MESSAGE

A GALA OPENING

In the mid-seventies my wife Susan and I moved to Easton, Connecticut.

Little did we know that there had never been an AA meeting in Easton ...as it was very conservative and old fashioned.

We took a chance and visited the local Episcopalian Church. We introduced ourselves to the minister and told him of our interest in starting an AA meeting in the town.

Since there are no coincidences in AA I will just say that he welcomed us with open arms, explaining that his own Mother's life was "saved" by her attending AA meetings !! He just said "What night do you want it?" and didn't ask for a

rental fee.

We selected Tuesday night and rounded up about ten of our friends who lived in the area. As they sauntered into the basement room that night a fellow by the name of Bob S. came in with a very elegant looking lady, roughly in her sixties.

Bob said to me, "Do you know who this lady is?" to which I replied "No."

The lady was Marty Mann, the first female member of Alcoholics Anonymous and author of "New Primer on Alcoholism" a much recommended book for people who were experiencing alcohol problems.

My wife Susan was leading the meeting that first night and she asked Marty to be our very first speaker...to which she gladly accepted. It was an unforgettable experience as she told of her first meeting with Bill W. and the other "firsts".

This was a profound beginning to our meeting, which is still going, some thirty five years later. I was privileged to return for their anniversary last year and be the guest speaker. I mentioned this fact and, much to my surprise, they were not aware of this founding night event. It truly was a "gala beginning."

AA member, John O.

The HISTORY of the AA ABERDEEN building

Anyone who has attended meetings in Aberdeen for any appreciable time has undoubtedly heard stories about the history of the Wilder Avenue building...some factual and perhaps some enhanced to fit the personality of the tenant.

Most of us know that it is the property of the Town of Aberdeen which leases it to the Aberdeen group for the purpose of AA meetings and other AA events.

It has been used for these purposes for as long as anyone can remember with the exception of Randall M.

Randall remembers when the building was used by the town as a Community Center. However, Randall says it was abandoned for that purpose in the 1950's.

It was the first Aberdeen group, consisting of about six members, who dressed up the building, making repairs and improvements & they began to have exclusive tenancy of the

building in 1959.

Randall also recalls that after it was restored to an attractive facility some of the town commissioners attempted to reclaim the property for it's originally intended use.

It was because of the heroic stand of the Aberdeen group of founding fathers, and with the aid of the mayor and John D. McLean, the owner of Aberdeen Hardware, that the AA group prevailed & the Wilder Avenue facility has been used continuously by AA since 1959.

The construction of the building was a project of the National Youth Administration (NYA), a part of President Franklin Roosevelt's Works Progress Administration (WPA), which was created in 1935 to provide part time jobs to high school and college students in need of funds to continue with their educations.

On April 28, 1940, the first lady of the United States, Eleanor Roosevelt, made a brief stop in Aberdeen to inspect the building which was near completion. She was greeted by a crowd of 500 people and it is believed to be the first time that a first lady visited Aberdeen.

One of the well wishers asked Mrs. Roosevelt the question on everyone's mind: "Is your old man going to run for a third term?" She quickly replied, "I

haven't asked him, nor do I intend to". Of course Mr. Roosevelt did run and was reelected.

Another story about her visit has survived appropriately. A black limousine, having as passengers Mrs. Roosevelt and several secret servicemen, stopped in front of the Post Office and, as a car door opened, a bottle of whiskey fell out and rolled down the street.

Could that have been an omen of things to come???

Submitted by:
AA member Bill C.

(Thanks to Randall M, Robert N Page III, Tony Parker, Iris Keith and Margaret Macleod for their contributions to this article.)

AA "Gems"

(referring to HOPE...)

"It's never too late to become what you might have been"

(referring to "GOD, as we understand Him"...)

"I get my milk from many different places...but I'm the one who churns the butter!"

DISTRICT 52 NEWS

District 52 is the AA Service entity made up of Moore, Hoke, Richmond, Lee & Scotland counties.

District meetings of the GSR's (General Service Representatives) from our groups are held four times a year.

Additionally, our officers and GSR's attend Area (State) Assemblies twice a year and our DCM (Chairperson) attends the two meetings each year of DCM's and Area officers for the state.

This is the basic process of keeping your Home Groups and Meetings connected to the Worldwide AA Organization.

District 52 now has 20 groups with GSR's to represent them, and that participate in the AA service structure. If your group has chosen not to participate we hope you will reconsider.

Our UNITY DAY event in July was a great success, with good attendance, good food, and a truly inspirational talk by Deborah A., our Alternate Delegate to the General Service Conference.

ELECTION DAY, Oct. 11

The next District meeting will be October 11 at 2 pm at the Aberdeen building.

We will be electing officers for the next 2 years and hope all GSR's will make an effort to attend or send an alternate.

It is especially important that we have good representation by the groups when our new "trusted servants" are elected.

The meeting is open to all who consider themselves AA members.

The next Area Assembly will be held at the North Raleigh Hilton, Nov. 7 - 9.

We hope you will send your GSR or an alternate.

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 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 every month at the AA building on Wilder Avenue in Aberdeen. The Sandhills Intergroup is financed solely by the local AA groups.

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