

# The NIGHT CAP

Published monthly by the San Antonio Central Service office of Alcoholics Anonymous in the interest of greater unity of members in local and Southwest Texas area groups.

Address all communications to: "THE NIGHT CAP" Lexington Building 109 Lexington Ave., Suite 215 San Antonio, Texas 78205 Phone 226-2523

VOLUME ONE

MARCH 1973

NUMBER ELEVEN



ABANDON YOURSELF TO GOD AS YOU UNDERSTAND GOD. ADMIT YOUR FAULTS TO HIM AND YOUR FELLOWS. CLEAR AWAY THE WRECKAGE OF YOUR PAST. GIVE FREELY OF WHAT YOU FIND, AND JOIN US. WE SHALL BE WITH YOU, IN THE FELLOWSHIP OF THE SPIRIT, AND YOU WILL SURELY MEET SOME OF US AS YOU TRUDGE THE ROAD OF HAPPY DESTINY.

MAY GOD BLESS YOU AND KEEP YOU -- UNTIL THEN.

-- ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS

\* \* \* \* \*

## AN INTERPRETATION OF THE TWELVE STEPS

**STEP NUMBER THREE:** Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God as we understood Him.

These first three steps, in our opinion, are the meat in the whole program. If you have studied these three steps closely and remained sober in the meantime, you are well on the way to a new and better way of life. You have admitted you are powerless over alcohol and that your life was made unmanageable by its consumption. You came to believe that a power greater than yourself could restore you to sanity.

Now you are going to make a decision to do something about the mess you have been in until now. Of course, there are those of us who are not strong enough to go any farther sincerely; the reasons are myriad, chief among them being that we have heard so many tales of sordid doings among some of the other alcoholics we have met that we have changed our minds about being an alcoholic and we have mental reservations about the whole deal. We "come to believe" wrongly, of course, that we can do a little social drinking.

Members of AA have no quarrel with you if you are not an alcoholic. If you think you can

do that "social drinking", we wish you the best of luck and some of us even think that the sooner you make the great experiment of trying to drink socially, the sooner you will get it over with and come back to AA and make it stick. And we all pray that you will come back and not be ashamed about it, for there's not much difference between coming back than there was in coming the first time.

But, if you are ready for this third step, it's a "booger" and a whale of an order. It's one thing to "make a decision" and something else again to "turn our will and our lives over to the care of God as we understand Him". But don't get in such a big hurry to get it done. After all, you took plenty of time to get yourself ready to come to AA in the first place, and you're staying sober for 24 hours at a time, and trying to the best of your ability to study and apply these suggested steps to yourself. So what if it does take you the rest of your life to get it perfectly?

While you're staying sober and trying to apply these steps you are broadening yourself in every way. So our advice is to "make the decision", and then really try to "turn your will and your life over to your God."

Also while you are trying, sincerely, to make this step you are gradually learning that the people around you have the same right to live and breathe and think as you yourself have. We are learning tolerance, and in case you don't know it, tolerance means "allowance of that which you do not wholly approve".

So, if it seems to you that it will take you too long to act on this third step, don't let it bother you. Just try, and do the best you can, and you will be pleasantly mindful that your Higher Power has gone actively to work on your behalf, and is actually creeping gradually into your everyday life and thoughts.

--- Arthur C., THE NIGHTCAP 1952

\* \* \* \* \*

TWO STREETS

Have you ever walked down rough, garbage-filled streets, with broken down buildings and unhappy people? Been forced to endure the stench and contamination until it gets to be an unendurable nightmare, and you wonder if there is anything beautiful left in the universe -- then to have a guiding hand suggest you move over a few streets to an easier way to your destination?

AA is that other street. People with smiles, buildings that seem to say welcome. The air filled with the fragrance of God-given flowers. Your step seems lighter, your tiredness is gone, and the further you go the more wonderful it becomes. At first there is unbelief, then fear -- For you have noticed there are other streets turning off which lead back to the agony you have left behind.

Then we notice the signposts of life, The Twelve Steps, leading the way. Are these correct? We had faith enough to find AA, how could we lose faith in something which allowed us to find this beautiful way of life? Isn't it simpler to have faith and accept and forever banish fear?

As we pass the third sign, "Turn our lives over to the care of God as we understand Him", we are on the correct path forever curving gently through the God-given pleasures of Sobriety, Love, Honesty, Happiness and Serenity.

However it is not complete. Fear is gone but we still find a vacancy in our hearts as we reach the 12th and final sign. Heed it for it brings companionship and ecstasy. Showing others our way of life is THE PATHWAY OF ETERNAL BLISS to an alcoholic !



GROUP NEWS

THE GOLIAD GROUP, 104 Avondale, will hold its monthly Barbecue on Sunday, March 18, at 6:00 PM.

THE DOWNTOWN GROUP, Sahara Club, 809 East Euclid, reminds you of its "Poor Boy Bingo" each Saturday night at 8:00 and its dinner the first Sunday of each month at 1:00 PM.

THE HAVEN, 1640 West Woodlawn -- The monthly dinners have been discontinued until the month of May, when we hope to have the parking lot paved, fair weather, and facilities for outdoor eating.

The Haven is having a birthday! We took in our first guests on March 16, 1972. Won't you help us celebrate on Sunday, March 18, 1973? We're starting at 1 PM with an Open House, including refreshments, and having an out-of-town speaker for the 5 PM Haven Group Meeting. Join us to make it a Happy Birthday.

GROUP 12, Club 12, 102 Thames, now has an Alanon Beginners' meeting running currently with the AA Beginners' meeting on Sundays at 4 PM. The attendance at Alanon is growing as the meeting becomes known. Tell your 90-day beginner to bring his Alanon with him. The regular Bingo will be held at 7 PM on March 24. Bridge is played each Friday after the meeting. Everyone welcome.

HARMONY GROUP, 2208 N. Zarzamora, holds Closed Meetings each Thursday. Alanon meetings are also held on Thursdays. An Open Speaker's Meeting is presented each Saturday.

FORT SAM HOUSTON GROUP is One Year Old this month. They are now in a new location, Building 1115, Ft. Sam Houston, two buildings from the Community House. Facilities include a huge meeting room, new furniture, lounge area, separate rooms for AA, Alanon, Alateen, and Alatoms, all of whom meet each Thursday. An Open Speakers' Meeting is held on Mondays.

TWENTY-FOUR HOUR GROUP, Twenty-four Hour Club, 1203 Fredericksburg Rd. -- Good news from 24 Hour Group! We are now having monthly dinners at 1 PM on the last Sunday of each month, followed by Bingo. Join us for good food and games.

KING WILLIAM GROUP, St. Benedict's Hospital and Nursing Home, Ground Floor Dining Room, 323 East Johnson, needs your support. Attendance has fallen off. So join them on Tuesdays at 8:15. Alternate Open Speaker and Discussion meetings.

\* \* \* \* \*

BASIC BEGINNERS' ALCOHOL EDUCATION PROGRAM

An eight-week program is now being held at the Community House, Building 1123, Fort Sam Houston, each Wednesday at 8:00 PM for the alcoholic beginner. The meetings are open to anyone with a drinking problem who wants to learn about the nature of this illness. This includes civilians, as well as active duty and retired military and their dependents. The Twelve Steps of Alcoholics Anonymous are discussed in their relation to daily living. In addition to films on alcoholism and problem drinking, there are lectures by qualified and professional guest speakers. For further information, call 221-5463.

\* \* \* \* \*  
WEDDINGS: Pat L. and Bob R., Feb. 3, 1973

\* \* \* \* \*

MEMO TO:ALL AA MEMBERSSOUTHWEST TEXAS AREA CONFERENCE

How can I say thank you for your support during the year 1972?

You elected me your Delegate to the General Service Conference.

I asked for your financial support so that we could carry on the business of the Area Conference. You came through beautifully.

I asked for your attendance at the Area Workshop prior to the General Service Conference last year. You were there and gave me guidance on how to vote on questions to be presented at the New York Conference.

I asked for your prayers that I might adequately represent Alcoholics Anonymous at the General Service Conference. You must have prayed because I felt comfortable, when the Conference closed, that I along with the other Delegates had voted on the issues constructively.

I asked for your subscriptions to The Grapevine. You gave me more than one hundred.

I asked for your support for the Area Conference held in Brownsville in October, 1972. You were there in great numbers. It was a wonderful three day meeting.

Many new AA Groups were organized during 1972. Our Southwest Texas Area fellowship is really growing!

I want to thank the Groups for a fine start in 1973. Margaret H. reports the Group Questionnaires are being returned promptly.

Your contribution to the General Service Office in New York is important. It is one of its main sources of income. I would like to urge all groups to remember that

their donations to the GSO are necessary to its maintenance. It operates on a budget just as your Group does. One way of giving is the Monthly Plan: send 25¢ for each member in the Group every month; for instance, ten members at 25¢ each equals \$2.50.

Many of you had the pleasure of visiting with Paula C., Co-Editor of the Grapevine, at the State Convention last June. It would be nice if all alcoholics subscribed to this very fine AA magazine. It is a great supplement to our literature. The cost is \$3.50 a year. GSRs: I hereby appoint you as my Grapevine agents! So -- begin talking Grapevine subscriptions to your Group. Bring the names, addresses, and ZIP codes of those who wish to subscribe to me at the Area Conference Workshop. I will give you a receipt for the money turned in. It would be a thrill for me to present Paula with another 200 subscriptions from our Southwest Texas Area.

I am looking forward to a great 1973 Workshop which will be held March 31st and April 1st at the Quality Inn in San Antonio. Hope to see all of you there. Thanks a million for your complete cooperation.

-- Elves S.  
Southwest Texas Area  
Conference Delegate.

TO YOU AND AL-ANON

My life was like a river  
Swollen and raging from many storms.  
You built a bridge  
And offered me a crossing,  
Safe and strong and sure.  
I stood on the bank alone and afraid  
But your outstretched hand urged me on.  
My steps were faltering and unsteady;  
Often I slipped in the mud and grime.  
But you showed me your strength, and God's.  
Now I stand on the bridge,  
Safer, stronger, surer,  
Your strength and your faith  
Became my bridge  
Over troubled waters.

-- Lola L.

8TH ANNUAL SOUTHWEST TEXAS AREA

PRE-CONFERENCE WORKSHOP

The Workshop will be held Saturday, March 31st, and Sunday, April 1st, at the Quality Inn (formerly the San Antonio Inn), 10803 Austin Highway in San Antonio. Each group in the Area Conference is asked to send a representative -- a GSR or Alternate.... And a very special invitation is issued to all AA members. If you have attended a Workshop before you know what a rewarding and informative AA experience it is. If you haven't... Come and find out what you have missed.

theme!!

The theme and agenda of the General Service Conference in New York will be presented for discussion. All groups will participate in a review of the progress, problems and success of AA in their respective Districts. Come help our Delegate be informed and prepared about the Area Groups for his attendance at the General Service Conference in New York.

dinner anyone??

Plans are being made for all interested in joining together for dinner Saturday night, March 31st. Advance reservations are required for dinner. Notify the Conference Secretary by March 28th by mail or phone - call San Antonio 512-826-0469.

\* \* \* \* \*

28TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION

Due to the recent death of our beloved Earl A., Chairman for this year's anniversary, Kate R. has been appointed Chairman. She said that Arthur C. is M.C. and that plans for the celebration remain as scheduled for Thursday, April 12, 1973, with a banquet in the Anacacho Room of the St. Anthony Hotel, price \$6.50. Kate wishes to remind everyone that this is an Open Dinner for both AA's and non-AA's. Big Book John H., ticket Chairman, assisted by Jimmy F., says tickets will be available at Groups, Clubs and the Central Service Office by the first week in March.

\* \* \* \* \*

YOUR CENTRAL OFFICE.....

A good Twelve-Stepper-- Your Central Office. Our responsibility to the still suffering alcoholic is to be here when they call for help.

Your BUCK- A- MONTH contribution makes this possible.

You can't take it with you, so give your Buck to your Central Office to-day!

--Jeanne W.

\* \* \* \* \*

GENERAL SERVICE REPRESENTATIVES

Meeting will be held Sunday, March 11, 7:00 PM at Club 12.

\* \* \* \* \*

MONTHLY INTERGROUP MEETING

Sonny M. and Brendon B. will speak at the meeting to be held Sunday, March 11, 8:15 PM, at Club 12. The Sunset Group will chair.



CENTRAL SERVICE OFFICE  
REVENUE AND EXPENDITURES  
CALENDAR YEAR 1972

REVENUE

Group contributions	\$3,867.50
Buck-a-month members	1,815.00
Sale of literature	733.27
Intergroup meetings	642.87
Individual contributions	297.00
Special events:	
State convention	718.00
Other events	398.67
Total Revenue	<u>\$8,472.31</u>

EXPENDITURES

Secretary Salary	\$2,275.00
Rent	1,793.40
Telephone	991.90
Printing	817.07
Literature	754.61
Office Expenses	709.87
Answering service	314.75
Postage	297.88
Speakers expenses	181.70
Miscellaneous	236.03
Total Expenditures	<u>\$8,372.21</u>

Net Increase in Cash \$ 100.10

Cash Balance, 12-31-72 \$ 200.78

\*\*\*\*\*

INSTITUTIONS/REHABILITATIONS  
COMMITTEE

Joe W., Chairman of the Institutions/Rehabilitations Committee, would like to let the members know that the Texas Department of Corrections in Huntsville, Texas, has been advised that a committee has been formed in San Antonio. One of the functions of the committee is to assist in helping persons expressing a desire to continue in AA in the freeworld. Tex Ryan from the Department has written to say that he is happy to hear the committee has been formed and that all Alcoholism Counselors have been informed also. Joe would like to ask that members wanting to help on this committee call the Central Service Office, 226-2523. Both men and women are needed.

! JAMBOREE!

Make plans to attend South Texas' most loved AA get-together - the 19th Annual Coastal Bend Jamboree. Corpus Christi - Sheraton Marina Inn - March 9, 10, 11, 1973. For further information write Chairman, 19th Annual Coastal Bend Jamboree, 310 Jones Building, Corpus Christi, Texas, 78401.

\*\*\*\*\*

HOSTS FOR FRONTIER GROUP MEETING

The King William Group will host the March Saturday night meetings of the Frontier Group at 8:15 P.M. at the Alcoholic Rehabilitation Center on Southton Road.

\*\*\*\*\*

PUBLIC INFORMATION COMMITTEE

Abel G. spoke to a Catholic Youth Group on Feb. 29; Orlean O'C., Al-Anon, spoke to the same group. The Public Information Committee also furnished an AA Speaker for a group of youngsters aged 9 to 13 at the Kindred Elementary School.

\*\*\*\*\*

NIGHTCAP STILL NEEDS

Thank you for your Nightcap contributions. We still need articles, fillers, jokes, cartoons and personal news of interest. Articles must be limited to 300 to 400 words. Material sent in will not necessarily be used in the same month; we are trying to build a back-log of Nightcap items. All materials will be appreciated. Send to The Nightcap, c/o the San Antonio Central Office, Lexington Building, 109 Lexington Ave., Suite 215, San Antonio, 78205.

\*\*\*\*\*

IN MEMORIAM:

Earl A. - Active in AA for many years, died Feb. 9, 1973.

Current Meeting Directory dated May, 1972 is available from Groups or the Central Service Office and is changed as follows: (All meetings will be held at 8:15 PM unless otherwise noted.)

FT. SAM HOUSTON

Open Speakers meetings are held Mondays. Closed Discussion meetings - Thursdays.

Alanon, Alateen and Alatot meetings - Thursdays.

OPEN DOOR

Discontinued Thursday meetings. Holding Open Discussion meetings - Fridays.

GRUPO UNIDAD

New Group holding Open Speaker meetings, Saturdays. Address: 311 N. W. 24th St.

PILGRIM

Discontinued Wednesday night meetings. Holding Open Discussion meetings Sundays.

BREES

New Group holding Closed Discussion meetings Thursdays. Birthday last Thursday in month. Open meeting. Address: Sunset Ridge Church of Christ, 2367 Brees.

Al-Anon meetings are held Thursdays.

BROADWAY

New Group holding Open Discussion meetings, Saturdays. Address: Christ Lutheran Church, 6720 Broadway.

NORTHEAST

New Group holding Open Discussion meetings, Saturdays. Address: John Calvin Presbyterian Church, 8102 Midcrown.

WELCOME

Meetings discontinued.

SERENITY

Closed Discussion meetings are held Tuesdays 7:00 PM and Open Speaker meetings are held on Fridays - regular time.

NORTHWEST

Closed Discussion meetings are held Mondays.

Al-Anon meetings are held Mondays.

VALLEY HI

Closed Discussion meetings - Tuesdays. Birthday last Tuesday in month, - Open meeting.

Al-Anon meetings Tuesdays.

Al-Ateen meetings Tuesdays.

GROUP 12

Al-Anon Beginners' Meeting 4 PM Sundays in conjunction with AA Beginners' Meeting.

\*\*\*\*\*

When nature first created man, monkey and bull, she endowed man with forty years of life, the monkey with forty and the bull with twenty.

The man wanted more, and the monkey and the bull volunteered to help him out.

"Twenty's enough for me," said the monkey. "And I'll give him ten of mine," said the bull.

And thus it came about that man's life runs to 70 years on the average, and is divided into these three periods:

First forty years: normal living; next twenty: monkey business; last ten: shooting the bull.

--Stolen.

AREA NEWS

Thanks to Eve S. of Corpus Christi for sharing her thoughts on gratitude with us.

\*\*\*\*\*

GRATITUDE - MY GREAT REVOLUTION

One of my early memories is sitting on the front porch of our farmhouse wishing for something I could not possibly have, and my Mom telling me how a cow will wonder from pasture to pasture, always seeking the greener grass on the other side of the fence, getting more and more lost until someone has to finally go and find her and bring her home. And then saying, "Eve, if you don't learn to content yourself where you are, some day you will end up being one of the loneliest people in the world". She tried to teach me to count my blessings instead of worrying about my wants. But in my youthful self-centeredness I couldn't see that I had any blessings. Blessings were something other people had that you wanted. Certainly I didn't consider a good home and family, living in a decent community and having relatives and neighbors who were concerned for my health and welfare as blessings. Nor good eyesight with which to see people and things you loved, nor ears to hear a bird or good music, or two hands and two feet. These were simply necessities to which everyone was entitled - not something to thank God for. Let's get on with the pretty clothes and fancy homes and all the other pretties and baubles which seemed so important.

Much later I found what I thought was a 100% gold-plated blessing - ALCOHOL. This was what I had been talking about all the time. This was the cure for all that unrest and discontent and envy. And my new status with myself, the sense of poise and belonging and well being, all gave me new incentive to work and improve my own life. Then there were all of these jolly new friends to play around with and enhance my self esteem. But all too soon my new friend alcohol began insidiously to destroy this beautiful sense of well being, and a far deeper discontent became my constant companion. And as people gradually faded out of my life - me, my discontent and my bottle made up the unholy threesome which was my prison and from which there seemed

no escape. But escape did come - when the desire for sympathy and pity became subordinate to the desire to stop drinking. At that precise moment Alcoholics Anonymous opened the door to Hell and let me out.

Just not drinking would have been enough for me when I came to AA. That was all I hoped for or expected. But the marvelous thing about it all is, if you stay in AA there's more to come. The shock of my first meeting in finding these people and this program of living, with God in charge, has stayed with me through 13 years of trying to learn to live in this program. I felt the most overwhelming sense of gratitude I had ever known. But gratitude as an emotion soon fades. And this is when you either begin to live the AA program or all the old unrest and discontent sneak back upon you. A grateful heart is a happy heart - and to achieve this I must practice gratitude day in and day out. No matter what a person's circumstances, in any life only about 10% is wrong - the other 90% is right, but the 10% is what we dwell on. The secret is to reverse this and dwell on the 90%. This calls for that old thing my mother tried to teach me - count your blessings. First I had to realize that a blessing is not something spectacular or far off but blessings are those things near at hand which I used to take for granted. The simple ability to eat and sleep, just being able to sit still, having a job and the health and mind to work and pay my way, still having a mind which I could have so easily destroyed beyond return, most of all not having to drink and having had the joy of coming face to face with God and his mercy in Alcoholics Anonymous.

\*\*\*\*\*

Noticing that his Scottish guide usually went bareheaded in all sorts of weather, a London sportsman made him a gift of a fur cap with a heavy ear-flap. On his next hunting trip he asked the old Scot how he liked the fur cap. "I have not worn it since the accident." was the gloomy reply. "What accident?" asked the sportsman. "Jeck McLeod offered to buy me a drink and I didna' hear him."