



September 2001

Will We Squander Our Inheritance?

Years ago when the plan for direct access to our own affairs via the early cool, fence of delegates was still in the talking stage, Bill wrote to Dr. Bob: *"The groups will eventually take over, and maybe they will squander their inheritance when they get it. It is probable, however, that they won't. Anyhow, they really have grown up; AA is theirs, let's give it to them..."*

WILL WE SQUANDER OUR INHERITANCE? IF SO, IT WOULD BEGIN WITH THE GROUPS.

Watch for the squanderer when it's time to elect a new secretary. How many refuse to serve because they don't want the responsibility or haven't got the time; or push it off on to some poor guy who hasn't been sober long enough to get his own affairs in order, let alone take on the responsibility of a group.

We squander our inheritance when the new man or woman stands alone on the sidelines. While no one takes the time to see that he has literature (if there is literature) or to get his telephone number. Somebody tells him, "Keep Coming back." Will he want to?

Are our meetings informative or merely showcases of sobriety? Maybe he wants what we have, but how is he going to get it unless WE tell him. Unless WE pass on what was given to us? Unless we care and share and take him by the hand over the first hurdles of his first few meetings.

Does the speaker have a message of sobriety, or merely relate his drinking experience: Anyone at his first AA meeting already knows how to get drunk; he can sit on a bar stool and relate to other drunks.

Do we explain the program to him or are we afraid we will scare him away? Drunk driving raps didn't scare him. We claim you can't scare a drunk into quitting; yet we're afraid to mention our twelve step program especially "the God part" because it might scare him away! This, despite the fact that we are now over 2,000,000 members, and 25,000 groups. The key to A.A.'s First Legacy of Recovery is still the twelve steps and the mutual give and take between one alcoholic and another. All our service machinery is geared to make this possible. As Bill said of his first meeting with Dr. Bob *"I realized that I needed this alcoholic as much as he needed me!"*

LISTEN TO THE SQUANDERER WHO SAYS, "AA SHOULD RELAX ITS TRADITIONS."

Usually the person who says that doesn't even know the Traditions. Or "I've done my share;" "I don't want the responsibility;" "I don't have time to go to the meetings anymore; etc. etc."

It is the squandering of the A.A. member who will donate time, energy, and money to everything in the field of alcoholism except A.A., while proudly proclaiming to anyone who will listen, "A.A. save my life." Far be it from me to try to minimize the importance of education, medical treatment and rehabilitation. But does it make sense to educate, treat and rehabilitate the alcoholic and leave our own services lacking? Despite all the efforts of our friends in medicine and psychiatry, A.A. is still the most effective method of recovery from alcoholism. What a pickle the educated, treated and rehabilitated alcoholic would be in if there were no groups because no one wanted the responsibility, no one to answer the phone, and no money to pay for the phones.

Only we A.A. members can support and maintain the Legacies of Unity and Service.

ONLY WE CAN DESTROY THEM!

Have you ever wondered where you and I would be if our pioneering members had settled or just their own sobriety? Suppose they had said in effect *O.K. We've got ours. We are Just going to sit back and enjoy our own sobriety. We do not want to get involved. We do not want responsibility." Would A.A. be world-wide? Would there be any General Service? How about books and literature?

WOULD THAT PHONE HAVE GONE UNANSWERED ON THE DAY THAT YOU CALLED?

WOULD YOU BE ALIVE AND SOBER TODAY! ? The editor

A DAY OF EMOTIONAL SOBRIETY with Polly P. of Cypress, CA

This workshop came about as a result of our group's appreciation of the San Antonio Central Service Office. Many of the new women that attend our meeting do so as a result of that first phone call to CSO.

We want to do our part to see to it that this vital service is always there to serve Alcoholics Anonymous in this community.

We also plan on having some fun, so please pre-register and join us for a great day!

When: Saturday, 9/29/01

Time: 9:00am to 5:00pm

Where: Leon Springs Dancehall (24135 I-H 10)

Exit # 551, Boerne Stage Road/Leon Springs

For whom? Everyone, this includes men

Send pre-registrations to: Emotional Sobriety, C/o Char, PO Box 17932, San Antonio, TX 78217

Make checks payable to Woman's Big Book

Pre-registration (per person) \$10.00 Registration *at the door* - \$15.00

Proceeds to benefit the San Antonio Central Service Office

Sponsored by Woman's Big Book - 7:00 m Wednesdays

T
H
E
N
I
G
H
T
C
A
P

**SERVICE: Work done or duty performed for another or others:
Act of giving assistance or advantage to another**

AA AS A WHOLE

If ya'll haven't heard yet, there is a new Phone Duty Chairperson.

Hello, my name is Alisha M and I am glad to be of service to A.A. as a whole.

I take this opportunity to give back the freedom, love, help, and serenity that were so freely given to me by numerous of people. And what an honor it is!

I was thinking back when I first even heard of A.A. I was living my life happily to my standards until someone came up to me and asked if I ever thought I had a drinking problem. Of course I thought I didn't. He mentioned that if I ever got tired of living in hell I could go to this thing called Alcoholics Anonymous, AKA A.A. Well about a year went by, but I always heard that question in the back of my head. I knew nothing of A. A. and thought to get in you had to pass a certain test or ritual that I just knew was going to be something cult-like.

I did get tired living a drunk's life, so tired that I was on the verge of committing suicide. I remembered the name of A.A. and I called the hotline, sober, and there was a voice from heaven. I was surprised to hear a human voice answer, not some machine. Needless to say, I didn't die that night, but talked to a very understanding person. Days went by, I stewed more on what was said in that phone conversation, I called back and, YES, another live giving soul was there to tell me the how, when, where, and the what of A.A. meetings.

So the least I can do is be there to answer the phones when another "Alisha" calls. I also can be there when someone needs information on meeting places or times.

I will never be too busy to help another alcoholic, that is what our primary purpose is.

Ask yourselves where would you be if no one answered the phone when you called. A phone call of some kind was made to get you where you are today. Let's keep the line communication open and make Bill W proud.

I never could remember the name of the person I talked to, but I thank my God every day for her. I also thank God every day for all of you because WE make it happen. I would also like to thank all the current volunteers that are giving their time to help.

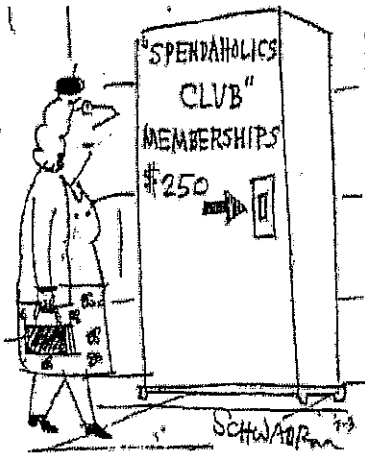
Great things are going to happening, be a part of it. You'll be glad you did.
To reach me call (210) 545-2002.

I have been around Alcoholics anonymous for 4 years, and I have been looking for the fellowship that was like the one when A.A. first started. Well, sadly I haven't found it, but I have to ask myself, "What have I done about that?" When I did ask myself that question, the answer was plain, nothing. So I came to the realization that I have to get involved with A.A. as much as my time allows me to. So that means more service work, talking to new comers about the real Alcoholics Anonymous design for living, not a design to stop drinking. I need to be readily available to an alcoholic who still suffers. Whether it is making a 12-Step call or answering phones, so information can get to that new comer, going to meetings and sharing my experience, strength and hope, not my war stories that may scare that new comer away. I only say this because when I have kids I want A.A to be around for them, God forbid if they ever need it. I don't want A.A. to get so watered down that they don't receive the help that they are going to need. So I leave every A.A. member with a plea. Please get involved; don't let an opportunity to help someone pass you by. Let us pass on the Design for living to that alcoholic who still suffers.

I mentioned service work earlier; I would like to elaborate on that. There are all kinds of ways to do service work, and I am talking doing more than cleaning up after a meeting or chairing a meeting. Let's continue the service work outside the meetings. We can volunteer our time in addressing envelopes so that we can get newsletters out on time. We can volunteer to be put on the 12 Step list so the phone duty volunteers can direct an alcoholic to someone who give more time to them. We can answer phones so that we can valuable information to a visitor from out of town or to a person who needs to come to a meeting for whatever reason. Once we get an alcoholic in to a meeting, they will eventually return. I believe there is not one A.A. member too old or to young to answer some phones or volunteer time to someone who desperately needs our help. There was someone there for you, return the gift. You get more out of it than you think.

Alisha M San Antonio

- CSO BOARD OF TRUSTEES
- Madonna M
 - Louis R
 - Corky C
 - Ed C
 - Randy S
 - Andy L
 - Judy F



© 2001 H. Schwabner. Don't let Veterans Media Service

	July '01	YTD '01
Alamo Hts		\$275.50
Broadway	500.00	\$600.00
Community	48.00	\$108.00
Colonies North		\$300.10
Callaghan Road		\$25.00
First things First		\$1234.70
First One Today	10.00	\$20.00
Fort Sam Houston		\$148.00
Freedom Group		\$55.00
Free at Last		\$54.35
Generic		100.00
Grupo El Libro Grande	10.00	\$55.00
Grupo Esperanza		\$30.00
Grupo Unidad	10.00	\$50.00
Grupo y Paz	10.00	\$80.00
Halt Group		\$60.00
Hunt Ingram Group		35.00
La Vernia Group	200.00	200.00
Last Call Group		\$30.00
Lambda		\$200.00
Marymont	25.00	\$25.00
N.E.Group	\$100.00	\$100.00
New Downtown Group		\$16.00
New Life	\$10.00	\$30.00
N. San Pedro Grp	\$50.00	\$293.00
Oak Hills Group	\$272.50	\$1339.44
Oblate Group	52.40	\$52.40
Perernales Valley Grp		\$119.20
Pleasanton		\$50.00
Road Of happy Destiny		\$218.00
Rush Hour Group	71.08	\$789.39
San Antonio NO. Women	\$50.00	\$50.00
Schertz-Cibolo		\$1,200.00
Serendipity Group	\$100.00	\$350.00
Stahl Rd Group	\$100.00	\$100.00
S.W. Loop Group	\$33.60	\$33.60
Tezel Rd Women		\$30.00
Twelve	\$360.00	\$2520.00
UC TGIF	\$50.00	\$80.00
Universal City		\$320.00
Valley Hi	\$40.00	\$160.00
Windcrest	\$56.00	\$81.00
Women's Solution group		\$10.00
Woodlake	\$20.00	\$140.00
<u>AREA</u>		
Boerne Noon		\$400.00
Blanco	25.00	
New Braunfels Grp		\$531.62
Kerrville(Fellowship Grp)		\$126.40
Utopia Group	\$10.00	
Tolerance Group		\$100.00
Total	2,178.58	13,146.58
Birthdays	00.00	\$832.00

A GOOD SECRETARY

It is the duty of the Secretary to see that the meeting runs smoothly, since they are the trusted servants elected for that responsibility.

A Secretary can make or break a meeting. There are some things a good Secretary will keep in mind. Only suggestions, mind you - -but they are based on what has been tried and deemed successful in helping a meeting grow and be recognized as "a good meeting."

1) The Secretary should be reliable and be at the meeting when necessary. He or she should be willing to consider suggestions past secretaries and old-timers may make.

2) He or she should help set up the meeting, socialize with newcomers and old-timers alike to make everyone feel welcome.

3) If the Secretary is responsible for getting speakers, or topic leaders he/she should try to get individuals who haven't spoken at the meeting often. It is often individuals from out of the area who keep people coming back. If a Program Chair has this responsibility, the Secretary should pass along this suggestion. The Secretary or Program Chair should call speakers to remind them of their appointed time and date.

4) Announce who next week's speaker will be; many times meeting members may have heard them just a few night's previous; Or, it may be someone they are looking forward to hearing, and they can tell others to be there.

5) In selecting a leader, never choose a newcomer unfamiliar with the meeting, who does not know what to do, and usually spends much time qualifying. It's the speaker's/topic leaders experience; strength and hope people are there to hear.

6) If chips are given, remind recipients to keep their thank you to a minimum. Try to give the speaker as much time as possible as much as an hour, whether they use it all or not. It is discourteous to invite someone to your group (they might have to come a long way, too), and then don't give them enough time.

7) After the meeting, the Secretary should make sure the place is cleaned up properly. If any of the regular clean-up crew is often absent, replace them with reliable volunteers.

8) It is important that EVERYONE does his or her job. If the Secretary gets there late too often, or thinks all they have to do is greet the speaker and or pick a topic leader, she/he is not a good Secretary. A good Secretary sees to it that everyone with a responsible job at the meeting gets all the help they might need.

9) The good Secretary sets an example of AA in action that all who attends can readily see.

Only **suggestions**, but they work. Anyone can be a Secretary, a Treasurer, or a Leader. But it's old-timers who usually do these jobs the way they can help make a meeting grow. The Editor

date	One month Ending	Year to
PROFIT & LOSS STATEMENT July 01		
Revenue		
Sales	5,571.35	41,306.49
Nightcap Contributions	\$36.00	309.00
COR Meeting Contributions	\$11.00	58.00
Group Contributions	2178.58	13,147.29
Individual Contributions	92.30	1,414.65
Birthdays	00	62.00
Memorial Contribution	50.00	50.00
Total Revenues	\$7,939.23	56,347.43
	8,885.50	22,018.63
Total Cost of sales	2,762.87	13,133.13
Gross Profit	(946.27)	34,328.80
Accounting Service	351.00	1,377.00
Depreciation	00.	1,250.00
Salaries	2,972.34	19,669.34
Payroll Tax	709.34	1,709.34
Rent	912.00	6,270.00
Equipment & storage leases	327.31	1,570.31
Utilities	276.78	1728.30
Telephone & Answering system	190.05	1,556.19
Repairs & Maintenance	704.27	1,716.81
Office Supplies,	55.00	2,123.74
Supplies	261.00	641.20
Postage & Freight	93.65	810.67
Advertising	47.00	329.00
Nightcap printing and postage	214.34	1920.44
Other personnel expenses	273.05	469.69
Miscellaneous Expense	441.01	441.01
Bank and Credit Card Fees	169.58	663.75
TOTAL EXPENSES	7997.72	44,246.797
Operating expenses		
Interest Income	2.74	11.74
Income from AA in SA	16,808.00	16,808.00
Total		
NET income	7,866.75	6,901.75

****NOTE****This statement has yet to be approved by the board of Trustees due to the recent CPA change. If there are any corrections, They will be published in the next issue with the

THINGS WE CAN NOT CHANGE

Ralph T Long time member of the Broadway Group. Neither fire nor wind, birth nor death can erase our good deeds. -- Buddha

THINGS WE CAN NOT CHANGE

Margruite O Long time member of Group 12 and Canyon Lake groups

Faith is believing what you know ain't so. Mark Twain

OUR THREE LEGACIES:

RECOVERY

Step Five

"Admitted to God, to ourselves, and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs." Twelve Steps to deflate the ego. Step Five is difficult but necessary to sobriety and peace of mind. Confession is an ancient discipline. Without fearless admission of defects, few could stay sober. What do we receive from Step Five? The beginning of true kinship with man and God. We lose our sense of isolation, receive forgiveness and give it; learn humility; gain honesty and realism about ourselves. It's necessary to practice complete honesty and avoid the danger of rationalization. How do we choose the person in whom to confide? The true benefits are tranquility and consciousness of God. The oneness with God and man prepares us for the following Steps.

UNITY

Tradition Five

"Each group has but one primary purpose - to carry its message to the alcoholic who still suffers."

It's better to do one thing well than many badly. The life of our Fellowship depends on this principle. The gift to the newcomer is a gift from God.....passing on this gift to others is our one aim. Sobriety can't be kept unless it is given away.

SERVICE

Concept Five

"Throughout our world service structure, a traditional "Right of Appeal" ought to prevail, thus assuring us that minority opinion will be heard and that petitions for the redress of personal grievances will be carefully considered."

More than a century ago a young French nobleman named De Toqueville came to America to look at the new Republic. De Toqueville was a worshipful admirer of democracy. He speculated that the greatest danger to democracy would always be the tyranny of apathetic, self-seeking, uninformed or angry majorities. Only a truly dedicated citizenry, quite willing to protect and conserve minority rights and opinions, could guarantee the existence of a free and democratic society. In this light it is easy to understand the Rights of "Appeal" and "Petition" which are an integral principle of our service structure.

NONALCOHOLIC VACATION--IS THIS AN OXYMORON OR WHAT???

Page 84 of the Big Book... "We will seldom be interested in liquor. If tempted, we recoil from it as from a hot flame... We are not fighting it, neither are we avoiding temptation."

Bill W. was certainly not referring to vacations, especially my alcoholic vacations when he wrote these words--vacations which involved slurping margaritas seated in palapas beach bars overlooking Mexican ocean sunsets, clinking wine glasses on moon drenched Caribbean cruises, sipping champagne with the lights of Paris as a backdrop glittering brighter and brighter with each luscious swallow.

"Recoil from it as from a *hot* flame???" One constant hot flame *alcoholic* vacation after another comprised the first ten years of my marriage--we toured the world with the itinerary of wine and champagne as important to us as our passports.

When I crawled into AA for the first time on July 21, 2000 and said the words, "I am an alcoholic," I never realized that the most difficult part of my sobriety would be my vacations, always synonymous of course with alcohol. Vacations are supposed to be fun, bucolic, an answer to life's drudgeries, escapes into lives of the rich and famous, and excursions into paradise.

What is one supposed to do on a beach sober--does one really pass up those little bars? What is one supposed to do on a cruise sober; does one really go to a Bill W. meeting? What does one do in Mexico sober--does one really not drink frozen margaritas with just a touch of salt on the rim? What does one do after skiing all day in Breckenridge sober--does one really not sit by the fire with a hot buttered rum?

During my first three months of sobriety, travel was not even in the picture as I attended every San Antonio AA meeting known to man, crying, and getting on my knees twice a day to ask God to keep me sober. This in itself was quite a task due to arthritis; therefore, vacations were far down the list.

After receiving my ninety-day chip, I cockily decided I had all the answers to alcoholic problems and ventured out with a bus tour group to Oaxaca, Mexico, never of course realizing until 1000 miles later that this vacation would be a torture chamber of sobriety. Each evening the tour group would gather in some precious Mexican restaurant and drink. Several even had flasks, which they would then take to their motel rooms. I became totally mesmerized with watching these people drink I stared at the carafes of wine, the bottles of Tecate, and the pitchers of margaritas and I obsessed.

It was on this vacation that I realized that the entire world drank and everyone but me could drink without difficulty. Self-pity filled my entire being. "Why me God?" I asked to the skies as I went to bed at 6:00 p.m. each night to eat crackers in my room and watch Mexican CNN. The avoidance game on this vacation was in full swing.

My nine-month chip saw me walking across Spain and Portugal for three weeks this past spring. Each day our group would do a six mile walk in some part of the Iberian Peninsula and each night at 10 p.m. (the Spanish eat at this ungodly hour--no wonder Mexico wanted to be independent) we would sit down to a huge meal complete with dozens of bottles of red wine on the table for all to partake, gratis. It seems as if the wine was included as part of our trip as a charitable gesture on the part of our tour guide and, naturally, the drinking people when they realized I did not drink, would all clamor to sit at my table so that they could have my share.

It was then I realized that the entire world was made up of drunks except me and that no one could drink without difficulty. Therefore, on this trip I decided to haughtily take everyone's drinking inventory, busily counting the number of glasses of wine each person had, noting at what time each evening Frank would begin mumbling incoherently (it's his medication you know), watching Bill's wife carry him off to bed (he always drinks a bit too much on vacations, you know), and labeling Lorena a true alcoholic as she drank two bottles of wine by herself each evening while quizzing me as to why I didn't drink, usually when her face had fallen in the flan dessert. How superior I was to all of this--I was a saint of sobriety.

My one year chip found me in San Miguel de Allende staying with a very sober Mexican family and attending the Academia for two weeks, brushing up on my Spanish, especially words such as "Vino", "Cerveza", "Alcoholico~", and "Borracho." Surprisingly there was a Mexican AA meeting right across the street from my school. I attended several of these hoping to really improve my Spanish, but it seems that only alcoholic Mexican men attend Mexican AA meetings and I felt rather out of place when I said the words, "Yo soy alcoholico y una mujer tambien. Lo siento."

Even after one year, I found, however, that those bougainvillea filled courtyard bars with their splashing fountains and strains of Mexican guitars wafting out onto the street still caused a bit of temptation. I finally located an English-speaking AA meeting, which allowed gringos, Mexicans, and even women to attend. Each evening I would walk the three miles of cobblestone streets in desperation, not looking to the right or left at those bars, to this meeting held in a centuries old building in a room painted like a bar.

At this meeting I was treated as a celebrity because I was a visitor; each word that came from my mouth was a pearl of wisdom because no one had heard me speak my tired clichés before. I was featured at their weekly speakers' meeting for my first time ever and was told I was the best speaker they had ever heard (it is a small town). I received my one-year hand made San Miguel de Allende silver/bronze chip from this meeting in a ceremony filled with loving smiles and congratulations as the church bells rang and my spirituality soared.

At last I had found the secret to nonalcoholic vacations. Obviously avoidance of traveling, going to bed at 6 p.m., taking everyone's alcoholic inventory or obsessing over large pitchers of margaritas was not part of that secret. The answer, instead, resided in my finding an AA meeting wherever I was, raising my hand and saying, "I am a visitor from San Antonio." People would listen with baited breath because I was new; they were in awe because I could discuss AA in San Antonio and tell about my beautiful city and urge them to visit.

The true gift, however, was in my listening, truly listening, to people from all over the world share their stories with the underlying realization that we are all alike in our quest for sobriety. We are "safe and protected. The problem has been removed. It does not exist for us. We are neither cocky nor are we afraid. That is our experience and that is how we reach it so long as we keep in fit spiritual condition." We can go anywhere and do anything without alcohol because God is at our side.

Sherill H San Antonio

Old-Timers come to call.

Christmas 1997 was my first Christmas sober for many a year. After two stiff drinks, I attended my first meeting of Alcoholics Anonymous on a Wednesday night, on December 17, 1997. My hair was long, my beard was down to my bellybutton, and I didn't smell too good, either. I asked, "If I join this club, can I learn how to drink like a gentleman?"

I didn't want to stop drinking completely; I just needed to cut down. An old-timer sitting on a couch along the sidewall asked, "Are you new here?" I said, "Yes." He said, "Well, shut up and sit down." Thus began my membership in what was to become my home group. This group was located on the outskirts of San Antonio, Texas and held meetings every day.

As the Christmas holiday season approached, I learned that it was traditional for my home group to bring in food and stay open around the dock on Christmas Eve and New Year's Eve. A sign up sheet was passed around so folks could sign up for a particular hour through out the night. I signed up to come in from 2:00 AM to 4:00 AM on Christmas morning, 1997.

When I relieved the fellow who had preceded me, he wished me a merry Christmas, told me there was ham and turkey in the fridge, and left me alone. I made a turkey sandwich, poured a cup of coffee and sat down at the meeting table and started to read an ancient Grapevine.

After a while, the old couch along the sidewall looked very inviting, I decided the next best thing was to take a little nap. As I was drifting off to sleep, I thought I heard some cars pull up out front of the old school building where we held our meetings. I opened one eye to see a bunch of well-dressed old-timers enter the meeting room. As I sat up to greet them - they disappeared!

The old-timers, who had passed on, returned that Christmas night for a brief moment to reassure this new comer that I was not alone. Charles M. Cook, San Antonio

SURRENDER

What does it mean to surrender? I heard a lady at a meeting say that only you know inside if you have surrendered. Only you know if you have turned your will and life over to God. Only you know whether you are your own higher power. For me, God has taken away my desire to use on a daily basis. However, that is only a small part of my "ism".

The rest of it is how to live (my) life on life's terms. That is why after being sober for almost 6 years I still need to go to (my) A.A. meetings, help others and pray to my higher power which I choose to call God, to ask for help and be willing to help, to know that I can only surrender one day at a time. That yesterday is gone, tomorrow might not come and all I have is today to enjoy. Thank God for A.A.

Michael C San Antonio

Why not try the program?

I've been in AA for a couple of years now. I have a sponsor and together we worked the steps. I do service work because she told me that people who do service stay sober. I make coffee for my home group and I visit a local rehab to speak to new people.

I hear a lot of people come into meetings nowadays who talk about how their therapist told them to do this to stay sober or how the counselor wants them to talk about some non alcohol issue at a meeting. It gets to the point where you don't know if you are in an AA meeting or some sort of group therapy session.

I am an alcoholic; I go to AA to hear the experiences of other alcoholics and to help new people recovery from alcoholism. I think that counselors are a wonderful idea and the program supports members to seek outside help. However, at an AA meeting I don't think it is appropriate to confuse the focus of the meeting by bringing in a topic unrelated to alcoholism or worse bring in a topic that your therapist wants you to talk about that is unrelated to alcoholism. What you do with your counselor or psychiatrist is your business and I really don't want to know about it, if it isn't related to alcoholism.

Many people begin to speak at a meeting by saying Well, my counselor said or Hi, I'm < name > and I'm dual addicted with low self worth and a sibling rivalry complex and a fear of bla bla bla... Part of the reason I say Hi, my name is Pat and I'm alcoholic is humility. If I add all these other labels= dual addicted etc, etc, I am trying to make myself unique and terminal uniqueness was one of my character defects. The focus of AA meetings should be alcoholism and not these outside issues. If your therapist wants you to talk about non-alcohol related issues at an AA meeting I believe you should find a new counselor, he or she is obviously lazy or unable to help you with your other problems.

I have even seen counselors and other professionals (in the alcoholism field) who themselves have alcohol problems come into the rooms and try to preach non-AA solutions to our problems. Unfortunately, many of these well meaning people have a tough time staying sober. Again, AA works quite well and when we try to run the program in ways contrary to the Big Book and the 12 and 12 it doesn't seem to work.

All I can say to anyone who is having trouble staying sober is: Try the program of AA. You are not unique. I don't care what other types of problems you might have. Many of these other issues will take care of themselves if we work the AA program of recovery. AA has worked for 60 plus years, and you often hear the question asked, how does it work? The answer is it works just fine. Try the program it can save your life.

Pat S. San Antonio

"Finish each day and be done with it. You have done what you could. Some blunders and absurdities no doubt crept in. Forget them as soon as you can. Tomorrow is a new day you shall begin it well and serenely....EMERSON

Group Forum

WORKSHOPS

The Next Frontier: Emotional Sobriety

The Wednesday night Women's Big Book Group is bringing Polly P to San Antonio for a One-day workshop for men and women.

Saturday September 29th 9-5 PM, Leon Springs Dance hall Pre Registration \$10.00 Further Information call 820-3573

Road Trip

El Nueva Dia Bilingual Group of Victoria TX Celebrates its 19th Anniversary Sun Oct 21st at Noon J.C. Hall Next to the community center Food ,Fun ,Fellowship, Free

GOD'S LITTLE INSTRUCTIONS

- DON'T NOD ON THE PHONE.
- YOU ONLY GO DOWN THE SLIDE HEAD FIRST ONE TIME.
- IF YOU WAIT UNTIL YOU'RE REALLY SURE, YOU'LL NEVER TAKE OFF THE TRAINING WHEELS.
- * SOMETIMES YOU HAVE TO MAKE UP THE RULES AS YOU GO ALONG.
- IF YOU TRY TO CATCH TWO BUTT'ERFLIES WITH ONE NET, THEY'LL BOTH GET AWAY.
- DON'T BLOW BUBBLES INTO THE WIND.
- TH R E HOPS G ET YOU JUST AS FAR AS ON E LEAP.
- IT'S EASIER TO SPEND THE MONEY IN SOMEONE ELSE'S POCKET THAN THE MONEY IN YOUR OWN.
- IT'S OK TO ORDER VANILLA EVEN IF RAINBOW BUBBLE GUM ICE CREAM IS ON THE MENU.
- FLOWERS AND CACTI GROW OUT OF THE SAMEDIRT.
- IF YOU DON'T LIKE THE BIRTHDAY GIRL, DONT GO TO TH E PARTY.
- ROTTEN EGG' UNLESS YOU'RE ABSOLUTELY SURE THERE'S A SLOW KID BEHIND YOU.
- * PEOPLE KNOW WH EN YOU'RE LETTING THEM WIN.
- * WHEN YOU'RE BEING DRAGGED LET GO OF THE LEASH.
- IF YOUR MOTHER WANTS TO HOLD YOUR HAND, THERE'S PROBABLY A GOOD REASON. YOU'LL HAVE A LOT MORE RESPECT FOR A BIRD AFTER YOU TRY MAKING A NEST.
- KIDS ARENT SUPPOSED TO HAVE CLEAN FINGERNAILS.
- APOLOGIZE FOR IT BEFORE YOUR MOTHER NOTICES THE STAIN ON YOUR SHIRT.

GROUP UPDATES

NEW GROUP*

The Acceptance Group
7150 Stahl Rd. (behind Sonic Drive in)
Rolling Oaks Christian Church
N/S O-Lecture Format -Basics 7:30 pm

*****NEW GROUP*****

Monday 7:30 pm N/S -C -Big Book study
Castroville, Medina Valley United Meth-
odist Church
POC: Willard M 830-665-5650

*****NEW GROUP*****

Love and Tolerance Group
O-Disc Min-Sat p.m Sun p.m
Winners Club 5723 Kenwick
For more info 210-680-5496

*****GROUP TIME CHANGE *****

Lake hills Group N/S O-D 8 p.m Tues
&Thursday
1 Mile north of 1283 on
Park Rd 37 at Lighthouse Church

****GROUP FOLDED****

Schertz- Cibolo 7 pm Sunday
meeting has folded

****GROUP FOLDED****

Spirit Of Hope
Mission Vista Hospital Tues 7 pm

*****MEETING MOVED****

Kelley Special meeting has moved to the
Pyramid Chapel on Lackland AFB
The new name is Kelley -Lackland Spe-
cial
POC Tom M 219-2946

The New Hispanic District of San Antonio

Now has a new address 935 New Laredo
HWY San Antonio TX 78211
Point of Contact 928-1251

The Fundamentals in Retrospect By Dr. Bob Sept. 1948

It is gratifying to feel that one belongs to and has a definite personal part in the work of a growing and spiritually prospering organization for the release of the alcoholics of mankind from a deadly enslavement. For me, there is double gratification in the realization that, more than thirteen years ago, an all-wise Providence, whose ways must always be mysterious to our limited understandings, brought me to "see my duty clear" and to contribute in decent humility, as have so many others, my part in guiding the first trembling steps of the then infant organization, Alcoholics Anonymous.

It is fitting at this time to indulge in some retrospect regarding certain fundamentals. Much has been written; much has been said about the Twelve Steps of AA. These tenets of our faith and practice were not worked out overnight and then presented to our members as an opportunist creed. Born of our early trials and many tribulations, they were and are the result of humble and sincere desire, sought in personal prayer, for divine guidance.

As finally expressed and offered, they are simple in language, plain in meaning. They are also workable by any person having 'a sincere desire to obtain and keep sobriety. The results are the proof. Their simplicity and workability are such that no special interpretations, and certainly no reservations, have ever been necessary. And it has become increasingly clear that the degree of harmonious living, which we achieve, is in direct ratio to our earnest attempt to follow them literally under divine guidance to the best of our ability. Yet there are no shibboleths in AA. We are not bound by theological doctrine. None of us may be excommunicated and cast into outer darkness. For we are many minds in our organization, and an AA Decalogue in the language of "Thou shalt not" would gall us indeed.

Look at our Twelve Traditions. No random expressions these, based on just casual observation. On the contrary, they represent the sum of our experience as individuals, as groups within AA, and similarly with our fellows and other organizations in the great fellowship of humanity under God throughout the world. They are all suggestions, yet the spirit in which they have been conceived merits their serious, prayerful consideration as the guidepost of AA policy for the individual, the group, and our various committees, local and national.

We have found it wise policy, too, to hold to no glorification of the individual. Obviously, that is sound. Most of us will concede that when it came to the personal showdown of admitting our failures and deciding to surrender our will and our lives to *Almighty God, as we understood Him*, we still had some sneaking ideas of personal justification and excuse. We had to discard them, but the ego of the alcoholic dies a hard death. Many of us, because of activity, have received praise, not only from our fellow AAs, but also from the world at large. We would be ungrateful indeed to be boorish when that happens; still, it is so easy for us to become, privately perhaps, just a little vain about it all. Yet fitting and wearing halos is not for us,

We've all seen the new member who stays sober for a time, largely through sponsor-worship. Then maybe the sponsor gets drunk, and you know what usually happens. Left without a human prop, the new member gets drunk, too. He has been glorifying an individual, instead of following the program.

Certainly, we need leaders, but we must regard them as the human agents of the Higher Power and not with undue adulation as individuals. The Fourth and Tenth Steps cannot be too strongly emphasized here--"Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.... Continued to take personal inventory and when we were wrong promptly admitted it." There is your perfect antidote for halo poisoning.

So with the question of anonymity. If we have a banner, that word, speaking of the surrender of the individual -- the ego -- is emblazoned on it. Let us dwell thoughtfully on its full meaning and learn thereby to remain humble, modest, and ever conscious that we are eternally under divine direction.

Alcoholics Anonymous was nurtured in its early days around a kitchen table. Many of our pioneer groups and some of our most successful meetings and best programs have had their origin around that modest piece of furniture, with the coffee pot handy on the stove.

True, we have progressed materially to better furniture and more comfortable surroundings. Yet the kitchen table must ever be appropriate for us. It is the perfect symbol of simplicity. In AA we have no VIPs, nor have we need of any. Our organization needs no title-holders or grandiose buildings. That is by design. Experience has taught us that simplicity is basic in preservation of our personal sobriety and helping those in need.

Far better it is for us to fully understand the meaning and practice of "thou good and faithful servant" than to listen to "With 60,000 members, you should have a sixty-stories-high administration headquarters 'in New York with an assortment of trained 'ists' to direct your affairs." We need nothing of the sort. God grant that AA may ever stay simple.

Over the years, we have tested and developed suitable techniques for our purpose. They are entirely flexible. We have all known and seen miracles--the healing of broken individuals, the rebuilding of broken homes. And always it has been the constructive, personal Twelfth Step work based on an ever-upward-looking faith, which has done the job.

In as large an organization as ours, we naturally have had our share of those who fail to measure up to certain obvious standards of conduct. They have included schemers for personal gain, petty swindlers and confidence men, crooks of various kinds, and other human fallible. Relatively, their number has been small, much smaller than in many religious and social-uplift organizations. Yet they have been a problem and not an easy one. They have caused many an AA to stop thinking and working constructively for a time.

We cannot condone their actions, yet we must concede that when we have used normal caution and precaution in dealing with such cases, we may safely leave them to that Higher Power. Let me reiterate that we AAs are many men and women that we are of many minds. It will be well for us to concentrate on the goal of personal sobriety and active work. We humans and alcoholics, on strict moral stocktaking, must confess to at least a slight degree of larcenous instinct. We can hardly arrogate the roles of judges and executioners. Thirteen grand years! To have been a part of it all from the beginning has been reward indeed.

**SAN ANTONIO METROPOLITAN SERVICE ORGANIZATION
MINUTES OF THE AUGUST 19, 2001 MEETING**

In Attendance:**District 1A DCM** – Mike C.**District 17 DCM** – Steve J. (Secretary)**Hospitals / Institutions Chair** – Bob T.**District 16 DCM** – Barbi H. (Treasurer)**District 19 DCM** – Bill T. (Chair)**Absent:****District 1E DCM** – Len A.**District 1F DCM** – Frank E.**Archives Chair** – Tom H.**Cooperation with the Professional Community / Public Information Chair** – Glenn C.**Central Service Office Liaison to SAMSO** – Judy F.**SAMSO to Central Service Office Liaison** – Vacant**District 18 DCM** – Gil C.**Grapevine Chair** – Martha H.**Corrections Chair** – Marvin Q.

Meeting called to order by **Bill T.** at 6:40 PM with Moment of Silence and the Serenity Prayer.

Pam M. - Read the Traditions. New GSRs: **Ruben** – Last Call Group; New DCMs: None

Announcements: None**Presentations:**

The Central Service Office Phone Duty Chairperson – **Alicia** – introduced herself and encouraged the Groups and Members to get more involved in Phone Duty service. Volunteers can contact Alicia at 545-2002.

New Spanish District: The District has 4 Groups and 3 Committees (La Vina, Correctional, and Public Information). The District address is 935 New Laredo Hwy, Suite #2, San Antonio, TX. 78211.

Central Service Office Liaison to SAMSO – (Absent – *No Report*).

SAMSO Liaison to Central Service Office – Vacant

Chairman's Report – **Bill T.** – Bill mentioned the H&I article in July's Nightcap. Due to lack of participation by the AA Community, the H&I Committee has removed two institutions from the H&I list – Zero Tolerance and Safe-Haven. In addition, three more facilities are slated to be cut from the list. Bill also noted that the H&I Committee has had to say **NO** to five facilities due to lack of participation by the AA Community. Bill encouraged all the members to help the H&I Committee in carrying the message to institutions – we should be reaching out our hand rather than saying **NO**.

Secretary's Report – **Steve J.** – Asked for a motion to approve the minutes as printed in the *Nightcap*. **Chris** made the motion; seconded by **Teresa**. All approved.

Treasurer's Report – **Barbi H.** – Submitted the report for July. Donations were \$405.26 with expenses of \$303.95 for a balance of \$4,427.03, of which \$1,350.00 is earmarked for Area Workshop attendance by the five Standing Committee Chairs, leaving an available balance of \$3,077.03. A motion was made by **Teresa** to accept the report as given. **Bob** seconded the motion. All approved.

Archives – **Barbi H.** for **Tom H.** – Nothing new to report. **The Archives Committee holds its meetings on the 1ST Sunday of each month at St. David's Episcopal Church, 1300 Wiltshire, at 7:15 PM. Tom can be reached at 696-5228, or email at teh543@sprynet.com.**

Correctional Facilities – **Marvin Q.** (Absent – *No Report*). **The CFC Committee holds its meetings on the 1ST Wednesday of each month in the Alanon room at Club 12 at 102 Thames at 7:00 PM. Marvin can be reached at 365-9973.**

Grapevine – **Martha H.** – (Absent – *No Report*). **The Grapevine Committee holds its meetings on the 1ST Monday of each month at Jim's at 410 and Blanco at 7:00 PM. Martha can be reached at 344-6588, or email at JHernden@aol.com.**

Hospitals / Institutions – **Bob T.** – Bob mentioned that he cut two facilities from the H&I list – Zero Tolerance and Safe-Haven, and that 3 more facilities are slated to be cut. The cuts are due to lack of participation by the Groups. **The Hospitals/Institutions Committee holds its meetings on the 2ND Saturday of each month at the Winner's Club (Snack Bar Area) at 11 AM. Bob can be reached at 628-7340 (Pager), or e-mail at anotherdrunk@r67.net.**

Cooperation with Professional Community / Public Information Chair – **Glenn C.** – (Absent – *No Report*). **The CPC / PI Committee holds its meetings on the 2ND Wednesday of each month Club 12 at 102 Thames at 7:00 PM. Glenn can be reached at (H) 342-2330, (Pager) 220-9281, or email at GlennC3663@aol.com.**

District 1A – Mike C. – The District has a new meeting – the Love and Tolerance Group, which meets at the Winner's Club Mon-Sat at 2:00PM and Sundays at 3:00PM. The District will be combining resources with District 17 to conduct a Workshop to be held in early November.

District 1E – Len A. – (Absent – No Report)

District 1F – Frank E. – (Absent – No Report)

District 16 – Barbi H. – The District is doing well. Club 12 and Group 12 will be celebrating their Anniversary the weekend of August 24-26. The District is preparing for the October elections.

District 17 – Steve J. – The District is in the planning stages of a Workshop to be held in early November. The Workshop will be conducted by both District 17 and District 1A. The Marymont Group will be holding their annual picnic on October 7TH at McAllister Park, Pavilion 3, starting at 12 noon.

District 18 – Gil C. – (Absent – No Report)

District 19 – Bill T. – The Groups are healthy. The Walzem Rd. Group has joined the District. The District is preparing for the October elections.

Old Business –

Bilingual Committee: Since the Inter-District approved the purchase of Translation Equipment, it was agreed that SAMSO would establish a Bilingual Committee. At the July Inter-District meeting, Bill T. asked the GSR's to solicit their Groups for volunteers and to have them attend the Inter-District meeting, so that they can elect a Chairperson and become a viable Standing Committee. Bill T. was pleased to report that one volunteer was present – **Enrique C.**, but more are needed.

New Business – None

Adjourned – 7:45 PM with the Lord's Prayer

Respectfully Submitted: Steve J. – SAMSO Secretary Printed as Submitted

COR MEETING MINUTES 8/19/01

Meeting called to order by Vicki S. at 5:35 pm with a moment of silence followed by the serenity prayer and a reading of the Traditions.

Attending: Sandy C and Donna S. of **Freedom Group**; Rai S., **Thursday Nite Stahl Rd Group**; Lauren C., **SA North Women's Group**; Vicki S., **Colonies North Group**; Tim Mc., **Acceptance Group**; Roy H., **Highlands Group**; Debbie B., **Walzem Rd. Group**; Jarrod Stringer, **Marymont**; Randall H., **First Things First Group**; Sherill H., **Women's Big Book Group**; George A., **Universal City Group**; Corky C., CSO Board representative, and Bill T., CSO Manager.

Previous Meeting Minutes: Members agreed to accept the previous meeting minutes as published in the *Nightcap*.

CSO Report: Corky C. announced the Board did not meet in August as a quorum had not been met. The web site is under construction and they could use help. A name has been selected: AA of SA.org

New Business:

Postcard notification of CORs: Roy H, of Highlands Group volunteered to send out reminder postcards for the September meeting.

Old Business:

Phone Duty: Alisha Mc. introduced herself and informed the members of the slots available: Aug 24 and 31 will be covered with Randall's help. In September, Lauren volunteered to cover Sunday's from 9am till 1 pm. with her group's participation. Other available slots: September, Friday's from 5pm to 10pm and Friday's from 10pm till 9am Sat. Jarrod will talk to Marymont Group about these slots, as will Roy H of Highlands Group. If anyone is interested in signing up for a regular time slot, Alisha asked that you contact her at 545-2002.

Groups with no COR's: A list of current groups which are not represented with Central Office Reps was circulated so that volunteers may visit those groups and try to solicit active participation. COR Guidelines were distributed for handouts during the visits.

Nightcap Committee Report: Sherill announced the Women's Big Book Group will continue to assist in the assembly and mailing of the Nightcap and added they still request articles of Experience, Strength and Hope from local group members. Bill T. mentioned that he received several positive e-mails regarding the latest edition that contained 4 articles from local members. He also reminded the group that his deadline for articles is the 20th of the month and to limit the length to a page. A motion was made to elect an editorial committee to review the incoming works, but was dismissed as unnecessary at this time.

A basket was passed, and the meeting adjourned at 6:20 pm., closing with the Lord's Prayer.

Respectfully submitted by Lauren C., Recording Secretary Printed as submitted

September Birthdays

1YR

Sam G
Mike V
Anita P
Earnest C
Pete M
Diane D
Virginia H
Mark D
Mike M
Royce S
Seferino T

Christine S
Mark R
Hector R

2YR

Rosie L
Katie H
Allison T M
Audra S
Mike K
John T
Vicki H
Melissa S
Jimmy H
Larry W
Royce S
Randy R
Erica C

David B
Roger D
Merianne B
Tammy DeG
Frances G

3YRS

James G
Buddy M
Terry S
Dick T
Gabriel B
Scott B

4 YRS

Tom T
Francesca C

5 YRS

Mary Alice S

6YRS

Tony B
Georgia J

7YRS

Jill C
Irma W
Benny S
Jarrod S
Steven B

8 YRS

Roger Y
Dennis D
Gil C
Clyde L

10 YRS

Lynn J
Turner A
Terry K
Billy V-Z
Bill H
Clayton M

11 YRS

Concetta R
Boyce J
Karen I
Glenn C
Glynn B
John R
Price B
Debbie L

12 YRS

Jim Mc
Matt P
Danny M

14YRS

Joe B
Jackie S
Phillip P

15YRS

Dick D
Debbie M
Jim D

16YRS

Lois C

17YRS

Michele A
Jerry W
Danelle C

18YRS

Larry S
James R
Sylvia O
Sonny H
Diana B

19 YRS

Henry M
Hank S
Cathy M

24YRS

Bill H

25YRS

Mae W

27 YRS

Bill M
Paul R

29 YRS

Fran R
Tom R

34YRS

Nick M

39YRS

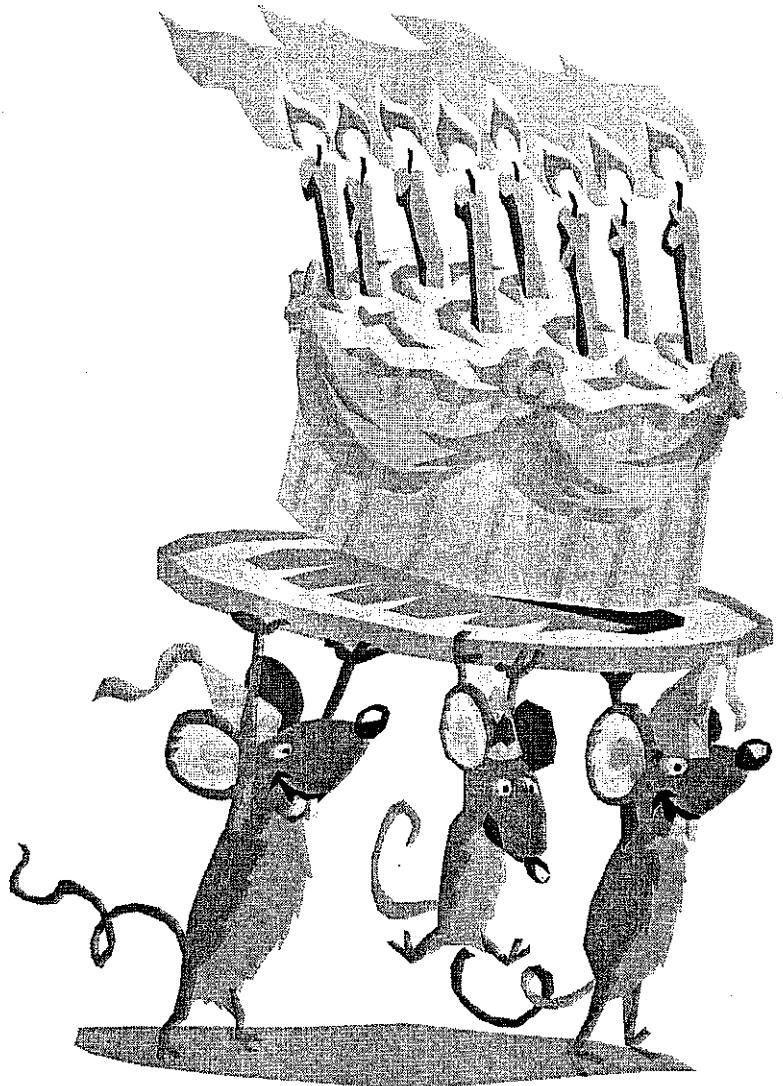
Roger D

44YRS

Gordan K

51YRS

Dade R



BIRTHDAY NIGHTS

Last Sunday Birthday Night -New Life Group (Birthday Night open speaker)

Last Monday Birthday Night Alamo Hts.

Last Tuesday Birthday Night-Valley Hi,- Windcrest,-Santa Fe-
New Acceptance-Life Support

Last Wednesday Birthday Night -Oblate- Women's Big Book-
Northwood

- Last Thursday Birthday Night : Goliad-Devine- Ft Sam -North San Pedro -Stahl Rd
- Last Friday Birthday Night: Pearsall (Come as you are)- SW Loop-Colonies North El Libro Grande- Rush Hour-Group 12-Marymont
- Last Saturday Birthday Night Schertz-Cibolo-Lambda-Winners club

Service Opportunities Available

HOSPITAL & INSTITUTION MEETINGS

Monday

- 8 pm O-Disc Patrician Movement, 222 E. Mitchell Phone 213-4561
- 7:30 pm O-Disc Southton Juvenile, 3621 Farm Rd. Juvenile Hall

Tuesday

- 8 pm O-Disc Transplant Hospital, 8026 Floyd Curl Phone 358-4000
- 7 pm O Disc S.A.S.H, 5800 S. Presa Phone 532-8811
- 8 pm O Disc Salvation Army, 1324 S. Flores Phone 223-6877
- 7 pm O-Disc Laurel Ridge 1604 & Redland Rd. Colorado unit Phone 534-5124

Wednesday

- 8pm O Disc NIX Hospital, 4330 Vance Jackson, Detox Unit
- 8pm O-Disc S.A.M.M Shelter 910 W. Commerce Phone 224-5838

Thursday

- 8: 15pm O Disc Audie Murphy V.A., 7400 Merton Minter (617-5300)
- 8 pm O Disc Women At The Well, 221 Post (Phone-472-2787)
- 8 pm O Disc Transplant Hospital, 8026 Floyd Curl, (Phone 358-4000)
- 7 pm O- Dis Laurel Ridge, 1604 & Redland Rd.

Saturday

- 8:15pm O Disc A.R.C, 10290 Southton Rd. Phone 633-0201

SERVICE COMMITTEE TIMELINES

Archives Committee every first Sunday 7:15 @ St Davids Episcopal Church 1300 Wiltshire POC Tom H 696-5228

Grapevine Committee every first Monday @ Jims 410 & Blanco 7 pm POC: Martha H 344-6588

Correctional Facilities Committee every first Wednesday in the Club 12 Al-non room. POC Marvin Q 365-9973 7 pm

Cooperation with Professional Community/ Public Information every second Wednesday @ Club 12 , 7 pm POC: Glenn C Pager 220-9281

Hospitals and Institutions Committee every second Saturday 11 am @ Winners Club POC: Bob T pager 628-7340



"I'm sorry your hypnotic suggestions didn't stop my drinking — maybe you can make my wife believe it's a pleasure living with a drunk."

POWERFUL PRAYER

After a very bitter divorce that ended our 19-year marriage, my former spouse soon remarried and moved out of state.

I was new in sobriety and had very bitter feelings toward her. Since she was "out of sight, out of mind," I didn't have to deal with it.

I had been sober about two years when a very strange "coincidence" occurred. When I went to pick up my adult daughter to take her to an appointment, she said she wasn't feeling well and canceled her appointment. With this unexpected free time, I went by the post office to pick up my mail. As I was walking into the building, I heard someone call my name. I looked around and, not recognizing anyone, kept walking. Once again someone called out, "Hey, George." This time I spotted the person, but I still didn't recognize him. He approached me and introduced himself. It turned out that this man was an acquaintance from years past.

After exchanging brief updates on our lives, he said, "You know she's moving back here, don't you?" "She who?" I asked warily.

Ronda, your ex. Her and Hugh are moving back here in October. "No kidding! I didn't know a thing about that." I responded.

When I asked my daughter later if she knew about her mom moving back to town, she said, "Yes, but Mom didn't want you to know. How did you find out?" "I was at a loss about how to deal with this situation. It hadn't been too long ago that I was seriously considering hiring a "hit man" to "take care of my problem." Now I had to face reality and deal with my emotions toward my ex-wife like an adult.

After moaning about this situation at an A.A. meeting one night, I was advised to "pray for her." "You've got to be kidding," I thought, pray for a person that I would just as soon see dead?

Our Big Book gives us directions on how to deal with all of life's situations and, sure enough, the directions I needed were right there on page 552. "If you have a resentment you want to be free of, if you will pray for the person or the thing that you resent, you will be free. ask in prayer for everything you want for yourself to be given to them... even when you don't really want it for them and your prayers are only words and you don't mean it, go ahead and do it anyway... for two weeks."

I felt as though I was being forced into dealing with this situation, but I grudgingly followed the directions anyway.

Each morning I prayed for Ronda's health, prosperity, and happiness, just like our textbook said to do. At first, I didn't feel as though I "meant" it, but through clenched teeth, I said that prayer. Gradually I began to mean those words, to truly wish for her well being. I gave my daughter a note to give to her mom in October. The note simply said, "Please call me so we can begin to bury the hatchet, for our children's sakes at least." A month went by and no phone call. I continued to say that same prayer each morning, trusting those directions. Another month went by and still no phone call. "Maybe it is God's will that Ronda and I do not speak to each other," I began to think.

Finally, after returning from my home group's A.A. meeting one Thursday night, there was a message on my answering machine from Ronda. She simply said, "George, this is Ronda. Please call me at." Understand that I hadn't had her telephone number in over two years that is how little she trusted me. After my morning prayers the next day, I called her and we set up an appointment to meet at a restaurant the next afternoon.

When I got there, she was sitting in a booth with her husband. They both rose to greet me, then we all sat down. After a somewhat guarded but friendly 30-minute conversation, I decided to depart. As we were winding up our conversation, Hugh began drawing or writing something on a paper napkin. As I arose to leave, he pushed the napkin toward me. Not only did he write down their telephone number, but their address too, and said, "Well, now that you have our address, come by for a cup of coffee some time." I asked Ronda if that would be O.K. with her, and she said, "Yes."

What a shock! All that bitterness, all that anger, all that resentment—gone! And more shocking still—Ronda trusted me to know where they lived! It would be a stretch to say that we became fast friends, but, to this day, we can call one another and speak in civil tones and not feel our blood boil.

I thank God for giving me the willingness to "follow directions" and I thank my A.A. friends for their patient, wise advice on how to deal with resentments and how to live life one day at a time without drinking. George A. San Antonio, TX

MIDDLE OF THE ROAD

In some sections of A.A., anonymity is carried to the point of real absurdity. Members are on such a poor basis of communication that they don't even know each others last names or where each lives. It's like the cell of an underground. "In other sections, we see exactly the reverse. It is difficult to restrain A.A.'s from shouting "too much before the whole public, by going on spectacular "lecture tours" to play the big shot.

"However, I know that from these extremes we slowly pull ourselves onto a middle ground. Most lecture-giving members do not last too long, and the superanonymous people are apt to come out of hiding respecting their A.A. friends, business associates, and the like. I think the long-time trend is toward the middle of the road which is probable where we should be."

Letter, 1959 **As Bill Sees It**

ROTATION = MAXIMUM EFFICIENCY

One of the most valuable resources of any organization is the experience of those who have gone before. The sharing of what they did right, and the sharing of the mistakes they made, becomes a solid foundation for continued healthy growth. Because of the wise and spiritual principle of rotation, we in Alcoholics Anonymous are blessed with a constantly vital and growing pool of people whose primary aim is to serve the fellowship. They are willing to share both success and failure in order to preserve what we have been given. How then can we continue to benefit from the experience of those who have rotated?

My understanding of rotation has led me from one service job to another. I do not believe rotation means "I quit." I do not think rotation means "I've done my time, now it's someone else's turn." I do believe rotation means that "I have made my contribution in this capacity, where can I be of use next?" I feel a deep need to pass the message on. I have an obligation to the new person to pass on the message of recovery. But my obligation goes beyond today. It extends to those who will come through the doors of Alcoholics Anonymous fifty years from now, when I am dead and gone. Part of our message must be how to preserve this precious gift so that those yet to come will have the same chance at recovery and life that we had.

From the beginning of AA, the concept of sponsorship has been one of our most important means of passing on experience. My early sponsors lovingly showed me simple and direct steps I could take that would produce very specific results. They demonstrated these results in their lives in such a way that I wanted what they had. I followed their suggestions and got the same results. I began to recover and walk the spiritual path as they did. How nice it was to have someone who had been over the path show me the rough spots and to explain the new things that were happening to me. When the time came, my sponsors shared with me about serving the fellowship. I was to do for the new people what had been done for me. I was to make my time and my experience available.

One of the things I like best about spiritual people is that they are seldom rude. They don't often demand their own way, nor do they seem to be driven by a need to be right all the time. They do seem to be around and available, but usually wait to be asked. As I have gone from service assignment to service assignment, I have found that those who preceded me were always willing to share with me, but they also allowed me to make my own mistakes. They would tell me what they had done, what had worked and what had not. Often when I would go to my service sponsors, they would listen, then say, "Let's see what the manual says", or "How does that idea fit the concepts?"

A "loving invitation" always seems to work with me, and I notice that it works for most of you. Perhaps one of the best ways for us to continue to benefit from our rotated servants would be to request that they put on a workshop at an assembly, or to be on a panel with others who share their experience. I once heard that the condition of "Bleeding Deaconism," was caused by service people who got out of service. I love the action of service. I love service people. I would be less if I could not participate. I do not need a rifle, but I do need a job. If this is so for me, then perhaps it is so for others. I need to ask them to continue to be a part of my service life so that their precious learning is not lost. I need, and have service sponsors. When I am allowed to help plan a function. I try always to give out those "loving invitations". I call on the phone or stop by and visit. I do not always agree with my sponsors, but I always listen. But if I don't ask, there will be nothing to listen to.

As is usually the case, the answer to most of my questions is in the question itself. "How can we continue to benefit from the experience of those who have rotated?" The best way I can think of to benefit from their experience is to be certain that they are a part of mine.

Don P. Aurora, Past Trustee.

NIGHTCAP SUBSCRIPTION FORM

NEW _____ RENEWAL _____ ADDRESS CHANGE _____ GIFT _____ AMOUNT PAID _____ DATE _____

SUBSCRIPTION COST \$3.00 for 1 YEAR \$6.00 for 2 YEARS \$9.00 for 3 YEARS OTHER

PLEASE PRINT:

HOME PHONE _____

NAME _____

RETURN TO:

ADDRESS _____

CENTRAL SERVICE OFFICE

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

8804 TRADEWAY

SAN ANTONIO, TX 78217

E-MAIL ADDRESS _____

CENTRAL SERVICE OFFICE OF SAN ANTONIO, TX
8804 TRADEWAY
SAN ANTONIO, TX 78217
(ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED)

CSOSA@STIC.NET

NON-PROFIT ORG.
U.S. POSTAGE PAID
PERMIT NO. 2807
SAN ANTONIO, TX