



SOBRIETY VARIETY

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MAY/JUNE 2012

Note: We are reformatting the HCIA Sobriety Variety Newsletter to become a bi-monthly publication to be published in even months.

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APRIL/MAY 2012 VOLUNTEERS

Office :

April: Jake M., Pat H., Frank D., Billy C., Marty C., Charles M., Dan H., Michael N., Lizz R., Claire C., Jeanne R., Wendy F., Eileen B., Mike S.

May: Marty C., Michael N., Charles M., Dan H., Jeanne R., Pat F., Claire C., Frank D., Billy C., Norma A., John B., Frank M., Jim H., James B., Mike S., Aimee, Kevin P., Kristen K.

Hotline :

April: Georgetown Group, Jim G., Mary Jo B., Mark A., Meredith H., Allandale Group. Maggie B., Gordon K., Keith F., Bouldin Group, Suzanne Mc F., Rick P., Susan P., Rudy W., On the Colorado Group, Mike W., Louise P., John Mc M., Kevin B., Lake Travis Serenity Group

May: Eileen B., Chris F., John B., 1313 group, Gordon K., Rick P., Mark A., Darrin A., Wimberley group, John McM. Mary T., Lambda L&LL group, James B., Antonio L., Karin S., Marty C., Western Trails group, Laney H., Jim G., Lee A., Jim H.

Thank You for your service!

Extra! Extra!

Read All About It!

My apologies for the late edition this month. Thankfully, you all have taught me to take care of family. Thank you for all the prayers for my mother.

Happy 77th Birthday AA

Tradition Five

Each Alcoholics Anonymous group ought to be a spiritual entity *having but one primary purpose*—that of carrying its message to the alcoholic who still suffers.

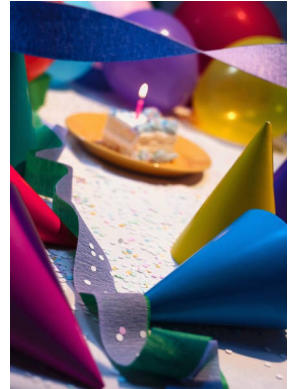
An incident at a women's meeting brought the importance of Tradition Five to light for me. When the secretary asked if there were any AA announcements, a woman with a few years of sobriety announced that she had flyers for a women's retreat and that those interested could see her after the meeting. When she finished, a woman with loads of time in sobriety blurted out, "That's not an AA announcement!" The whole room went quiet. I noticed that the faces in the room revealed many emotions, but the most common was confusion.

At our next meeting, I talked with the secretary. She had called our central office about the validity of the statement and received contradictory responses. We truly did not know if announcing a retreat for women was AA or not.

A few days passed, and the question kept bouncing around in my thoughts. I decided to call Jane, who had spent most of her sobriety in and around district and area meetings. When I explained what had happened at the meeting, I heard her chuckle. She said that she could not tell me whether what the woman had said was right or wrong, but that she had a story that would help me to understand the situation and to make my own decision.

At her home group, there was a woman who made teddy bears. She decided one day that she had too many and so she brought them to a meeting to be given away during the raffle. (The raffle is a common event at most meetings in the Northeast and consists of people buying tick-

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*Recovery, Unity and Service: still working after all these years.
Do you have all three legacies in your sobriety?*

SERVICE OUR THIRD LEGACY

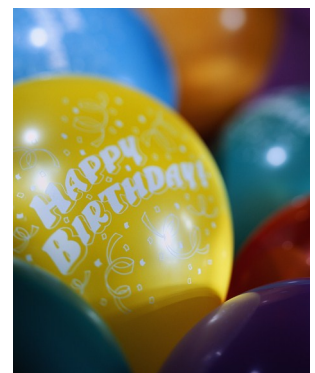
A presentation given at the 62nd General Service Conference.

Hi everybody, I'm Steve, and I'm an alcoholic, Panel 61, Area 39, Western Missouri. I have the privilege of serving on the Public Information Committee.

It is an honor to be asked to share my experience on service, our third legacy. A little over 17 years ago I walked through the doors of Alcoholics Anonymous and it was suggested to me I get a sponsor. After some deliberation, I did. My sponsor told me we were going to do the steps and get involved in the AA service structure. I then began my journey into our third legacy.

The dictionary defines service as; work done by one person or a group that benefits another. It defines legacy as; something handed down from an

HCIA Birthday Club
April 2012
None
May 2012
New Members
Mary Jo B. Westlake - 40 yrs.
Denise F. Leander - 8 yrs.



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April, 2012

Donations From

Area AA Groups:

Hope Group - \$295

Northland - \$300

Promises (Austin) - \$45

Wednesday Rush Hour - \$73

A Way Out (Austin) - \$400

The Promises (Kyle) - \$49

Keystone - \$294

The River Group - \$25

Principles of Recovery - \$110

Higher Power Hour - \$540

Any Lengths - \$118

Allandale - \$392

Bridge to Shore - \$901

Sunshine Group - \$165

A Way Out (Bastrop) - \$54

Lost Pines - \$36

New Beginnings - \$460

Round Rock Big Book - \$60

Bluebonnet - \$124

Desire to Stop - \$211

East Austin - \$157

On the Colorado - \$10

Triangle Group - \$35

Saturday AM Serenity - \$104

Marble Falls - \$100

Austin Citywide - \$150

Llano - \$90

Spiritual Awakenings - \$14

Buda 2nd Chance - \$29

Buda Big Book - \$45

Carry This Message - \$343

Keep 1st Things 1st - \$848

Total \$6,577



From its earliest beginnings, A.A. has always incurred expenses — whether it be the cost of a pot of coffee or the price of a place to meet. In the early days, these costs were often absorbed by individual A.A.s or nonalcoholic friends who offered their parlors and living rooms for A.A.s to meet in.

However, as A.A. outgrew the generosity of these early friends and members, the Fellowship's need for income became more and more apparent. (Where Spirituality and Money Mix, AAWS)

May, 2012 Donations From Area AA Groups:

Wimberley - \$30

1313 - \$505

Phelan Rd. - \$10

Northland - \$59

The River Group - \$25

Lake Travis Serenity - \$500

North Austin 24 - \$175

Thurs. Men's (R. Rock) - \$114

Friday Nite Alive - \$65

Freedom From Bondage - \$50

Renegade Ducks - \$50

Allandale - \$479

Bridge to Shore - \$278

Into Action (Lockhart) - \$100

Florence Renaissance - \$59

Sunset Canyon - \$3

Wimberley - \$30

Primary Purpose (Austin) - \$700

Brushy Creek Serenity - \$25

Any Lengths - \$268

Some Are Sicker Than Others - \$48

Total \$3573

Got a question about the 3 legacies that has you stumped? Write in to the Hill Country Intergroup Ask It Basket!

hciaaskitbasket@gmail.com

Articles requested on your personal journey through sobriety, steps 10, 11, & 12, traditions and concepts. Please submit to hcinewslettereditor@gmail.com!

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ets to win Conference-approved AA literature and bumper stickers.) At the next business meeting for this group, the elders informed the woman that she could not contribute teddy bears to the raffle because only Conference-approved literature could be given away. There was a vote and it was decided that the teddy bears, no matter how cute they were, had to go. Even though the no's were a majority, my friend Jane felt it was neither a clear nor a good group conscience vote.

A few weeks passed and Jane went to the bears and the others who had voted ma to the district. For some reason, the ed to let the group decide, which gave the okay to distribute teddy bears during the

So, the teddy bears were ready to be rafa man with some time sober who had and at her very first AA meeting. The wom handed her a Big Book. She was not im a teddy bear instead. The man told her her sober. She insisted that she really meeting with the teddy bear. She was nev main.

When I came to AA, I did not know that drinking was my problem.

district meeting. The woman with the teddy against the majority had brought their dilem district felt this was a group issue and decid woman and the others, in their minds, the raffle.

fled at the next meeting. At this meeting was come with a woman who was two days sober an won the raffle (of course) and the man pressed and informed him that she wanted that the teddy bear was not going to keep wanted the teddy bear. The woman left the er seen again, but the teddy bears still re-

Jane's example helped me in understanding our Fifth Tradition. It was a simple message that I could bring back to my home group. From that point on, we have tried to be very careful what we include in our AA announcements and raffle.

When I came to AA, I did not know that drinking was my problem. A teddy bear might have seemed, in my sick mind, an easier, softer way to solve my problem. I could have been the woman who did not come back. We never truly know what newcomers will hear at their first few AA meetings that will help them to stay sober, but we can be responsible for what we make available to them, so that they can get the help they need to understand the disease of alcoholism.

*Kathi A.
Acton, Maine*

Reprinted with permission from the AA Grapevine May 2002

The AA Board has the following approved literature

"Where do I go from here?"

Whenever you seek out there in the AA world again, you find the same old words with the same old problems.

No matter where you are, you'll still have your old story of hope, despair, and the one problem that can make all the others seem not so big or not so real.

You're not the only one who has come here to face up to a drinking problem. There are about 2,000,000 of us who are not alone anymore.

Back in 1935, we got our first book that showed how to live with a drinking problem. They wanted to stop, but couldn't do it alone.

Their families and friends couldn't do it for them. There was no general idea of what to do, except to treat, treat, or send them to a hospital. It was either of these or drink. Willen's didn't work, either. The committee proved promise that had been in promises, some mean ones and some sweet ones. But it didn't.

Each of the two men had been diagnosed as alcoholic. None of them was. They were just people who had a drinking problem.

My strange conscience may not and I hope it shows that you can be a member of AA without being a drunkard.

SPOTLIGHT ON SERVICE!!!

Looking to do something different in your sobriety?

Learn what AA is and What AA isn't!

Join the Treatment Committee

District 3 b/c – Randy R. – 3b.3c.treatment@gmail.com

District 22 – Debbie G. – treatment@district22swta68aa.org

District 29 – Currently not filled. Please visit webpage for more information.

District 2 – Karen M. – kaarmail@aol.com

District 13 – Unknown



Tradition Six

Problems of money, property, and authority may easily divert us from our primary spiritual aim. We think, therefore, that any considerable property of genuine use to A.A. should be separately incorporated and managed, thus dividing the material from the spiritual. An A.A. group, as such, should never go into business. Secondary aids to A.A., such as clubs or hospitals which require much property or administration, ought to be incorporated and so set apart that, if necessary, they can be freely discarded by the groups. Hence such facilities ought not to use the A.A. name. Their management should be the sole responsibility of those people who financially support them. For clubs, A.A. managers are usually preferred. But hospitals, as well as other places of recuperation, ought to be well outside A.A.—and medically supervised. While an A.A. group may cooperate with anyone, such cooperation ought never go so far as affiliation or endorsement, actual or implied. An A.A. group can bind itself to no one.

1. Should my fellow group members and I go out and raise money to endow several AA beds in our local hospital?
2. Is it good for a group to lease a small building?
3. Are all the officers and members of our local club for AAs familiar with "Guidelines on Clubs" (which is available free from GSO)?
4. Should the secretary of our group serve on the mayor's advisory committee on alcoholism?
5. Some alcoholics will stay around AA only if we have a TV and card room. If this is what is required to carry the message to them, should we have these facilities?

Taken from the Traditions Checklist published by the AA Grapevine

Began in November 1969 and ran through September 1971



The sixth of our 12 Points of A.A. Tradition is deemed so important that it states at length the relation of the A.A. movement to money and property.

Too detailed to print here, this Tradition declares in substance that the accumulation of money, property and the unwanted personal authority so often generated by material wealth comprise a cluster of serious hazards against which an A.A. group must ever be on guard.

Tradition 6 also enjoins the group never to go into business nor ever to lend the A.A. name or money credit to any "outside" enterprise, no matter how good. Strongly expressed is the opinion that even clubs should not bear the A.A. name; that they ought to be separately incorporated and managed by

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those individual A.A.s who need or want clubs enough to financially support them.

We would thus divide the spiritual from the material, confine the A.A. movement to its sole aim and insure (however wealthy as individuals we may become) that A.A itself shall always remain poor. We dare not risk the distractions of corporate wealth. Years of experience have proven these principles beyond doubt. They have become certainties, absolute verities for us.

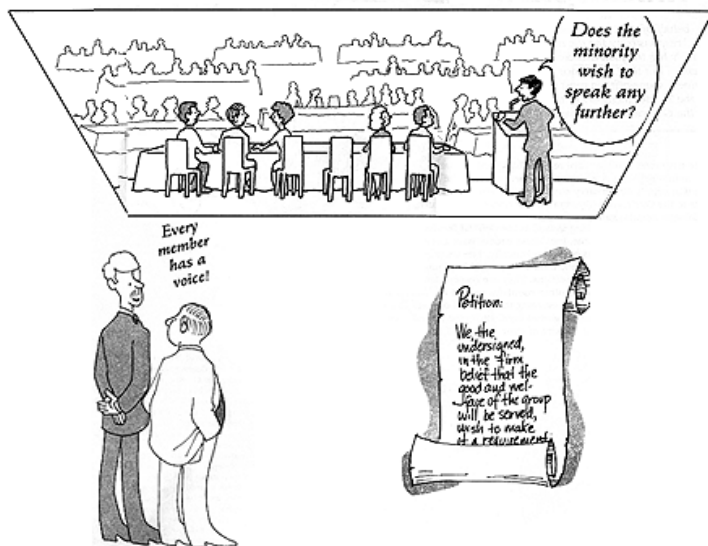
Thank God, we A.A.s have never yet been caught in the kind of religious or political disputes which embroil the world of today. But we ought to face the fact that we have often quarreled violently about money, property and the administration thereof. Money, in quantity, has always been a baleful influence in group life. Let a well meaning donor present an A.A. group with a sizeable sum and we break loose. Nor does trouble abate until that group, as such, somehow disposes of its bank roll. This experience is practically universal. "But," say our friends, "isn't this a confession of weakness? Other organizations do a lot of good with money. Why not A.A.?"

Of course, we of A.A. would be the first to say that many a fine enterprise does a lot of good with a lot of money. To these efforts, money is usually primary; it is their life blood. But money is *not* the life blood of A.A. With us, it is very secondary. Even in small quantities, it is scarcely more than a necessary nuisance, something we wish we could do without entirely. Why is that so?

We explain this easily enough; we don't need money. The care of our A.A. procedure is "one alcoholic talking to another," whether that be sitting on a curbstome, in a home, or at a meeting. It's the message, not the place; it's the talk, not the alms. That does our work. Just places to meet and talk, that's about all A.A. needs. Beyond these, a few small offices, a few secretaries at their desks, a few dollars a piece a year, easily met by voluntary contributions. Trivial indeed, *our* expenses!

Nowadays, the A.A. group answers its well wishers saying, "Our expenses are trifling. As good earners, we can easily pay them. As we neither need nor want money, why risk its hazards? We'd rather stay poor. Thanks just the same!"

Bill W. AA Grapevine May 1948



Concept V

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.

Illustration from Twelve Concepts of World Service Illustrated; AAWS

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ancestor or a predecessor from the past.

I remember when I first started going to our Area Assembly I would sit on the back row and think to myself, "What is this all about, and what is the overall purpose?" I sat and listened to these people called Area Officers and someone called a Delegate to our General Service Conference, and wondered if I would ever become one of these people. My sponsor told me one of these days you could be up there, but meanwhile we have work to do.

He showed me an inverted triangle in a book we call the Service Manual, and told me it was my lucky day. He would start me at the top of the triangle, and I would get the privilege to work my way down. That is exactly what happened. It never once entered my mind I was being of service and/or becoming a part of the legacy.

Our book tells us that we need to be of maximum service to God and to others. Before I came in to the program this concept never played a part in my life. I have found that being of maximum service to God and to others is inconvenient, time consuming, and sometimes expensive. I have also found that not being of maximum service to our program, and those of us to some thoughts I had at last year's day of the Conference, I walked in would call the Super bowl of the around the room and saw 92 other United States and Canada, our and all of our office personnel here?" I thought my Area had made the biggest mistake in the history of Area 39.

I went to my room that night and asked the God of my understanding for help...

God and others is deadly to me, come. I would like to share Conference. Sunday, opening to the ballroom and saw what I AA service structure. I looked over Delegates from across the Board of Trustees and Directors and thought "what am I doing

I went to my room that night and asked the God of my understanding for help, and here is what he came up with: this Conference week is not about me, and this week is not about you all. This week is about my daughter and my son, and your daughters and your sons. It is about the people that have not yet found this God giving gift of life. It is about making sure that Alcoholics Anonymous is here tomorrow.

I realize that the Super bowl is not played here in New York, it is played in our Areas, our Districts, and in our groups throughout the United States and Canada, and the World, for that matter. I realize that we here at Conference are just the equipment managers. We provide the equipment so that our groups, Districts, and Areas can be better equipped to be of maximum service to God, our fellowship, and the people that have not yet found our life giving program.

My alcoholic perception of becoming a delegate meant being an elite member of our service structure. During past years, I thought I was in service to become a Delegate. I realized I was not in service to become a Delegate, the fellowship was training me to be of service and to carry the message of Alcoholics Anonymous in whatever capacity it takes to insure our survival and the survival of the alcoholic who still suffers.

Being of service to my group, my District, my Area, and the fellowship as a whole, is not about becoming a legacy. It is about our survival. No matter what the cost we have to make sure this program is here tomorrow.

Concept VI

Excerpt from Twelve Concepts of World Service Illustrated; AAWS

We have seen that the “final responsibility and ultimate authority” for A.A.’s service activities rest with the A.A. groups (Concept I), but to carry out this responsibility they must delegate to the Conference (Concept II). The Conference, in turn, must delegate administrative authority to the General Service Board of Trustees. Again, it is helpful if you are familiar with both the Conference Charter and the Bylaws of the General Service Board to understand this relationship and the freedom of action that the trustees must have.

The trustees have the legal for the operation of A.A. embraces A.A. publishing as Office) and of the A.A. Grape- have a combined cash flow of nually. The trustees are also information activities. They Twelve Traditions. They are A.A. message to other coun- are A.A.’s “bankers,” oversee- and investing A.A.’s substan- text of Concept Xi for a more functions.)

Bill makes the point that alt- ways a spiritual one,” never- a “large business operation.” whole service structure re- poration. The A.A. groups are gates represent them, like meeting; the General Service the directors of a ‘holding company (the General Service Board) actually owns and controls the two ‘subsidiaries’ (A. A.A.W.S S. and the A.A. Grapevine) which carry on the. . . services.

“This very real analogy makes it. . . clear that, like any other board of directors, our trustees must be given large powers if they are to manage the. . . affairs of Alcoholics Anonymous.”

On behalf of A.A. as a whole, our General Service Conference has the principle responsibility for the maintenance of our world services, and it traditionally has the final decision respecting large matters of general policy and finance. But the Conference also recognizes that the chief initiative and the active responsibility in most of these matters should be exercised primarily by the Trustee members of the Conference when they act among themselves as the General Service Board of Alcoholics Anonymous.

and practical responsibility World Services, Inc. (which well as the General Service vine, Inc. These entities many millions of dollars an- responsible for A.A.’s public are the guardians of the responsible for carrying the tries around the world. They ing the financial operations tial Reserve Fund. (Read the detailed account of their

hough “our objective is al- theless our world service is “Indeed,” he says, “our sembles that of a large cor- the stockholders, the dele- proxy-holders, at the annual Board Trustees are actually company.’ And this holding

17 years

Millions of alcoholics helped!