



Good News



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The following is a reprint from "Bastile by the Bay" for Friday, May 31, 1974. This is a regular weekly column in the San Quentin News, by George Schroeder.

FANTASIA

Johnny B. Goode is a hard-working, two-job WASP. He has never, "thank God," spent one day behind bars. He believes in helping his fellowman with advice concerning the wisdom of living a straight life.

Johnny B. Goode has good credit, pays his bills promptly, hasn't beat his wife since joining AA, and visits those who have not as yet learned that honesty is the best policy.

Johnny B. Goode is a regular visitor to those places where people are kept who have not learned that the good things in life are not free, but painfully expensive if one is caught taking them without paying cash for them.

John often tells those who play and must pay that, "But for the grace of God, it might be me here today."

Johnny B. Goode, I remember you. Still free, good and unbelievably phony, yet functioning and out there somewhere telling others to be good.

Oh, how I do remember your goodness and superficial self-righteousness as you stood before us, the not-so-good, who had fallen by the wayside and now must learn our way back — to what? The good life? The right life? The 8 to 5 lunch-bucket junket through a workman's day, your day Johnny B. Goode, a day of earning your daily bread by the sweat of your brow. The quick trip home for dinner before going on to yet another job. Such a worker you were Johnny.

Good workers reap their reward. I know you did, for I remember well

the numerous items pilfered from the places you worked at that found their way into your own modest dwelling. You never got rich, Johnny B. Goode and you never really hurt anyone; for what are a few light bulbs, steaks, assorted pieces of clothing or other incidentals that weren't firmly nailed down in the many homes and business places your workday took you to?

Yes, you were good, and I will never forget you; for you taught me that a thief is not always considered a bad guy if he has the ability to work a 16-hour day to make crime pay. And if he can convince himself, and others, that stealing small is nothing more than a fringe benefit of living the good, hardworking life.

May the good thief, Saint Dismas, smile upon you and protect you from the truth.

General Service Trustee

At the April General Service Conference, Stan W., of Fairfax in Marin County, was elected to serve a four-year term as trustee on the AA board of twenty-one members, fourteen alcoholics and seven non-alcoholics.

Stan has been very active in AA service; H & I Committee work, two terms as Northern California Conference secretary; Pacific Region Assembly delegate, and delegate to the General Service Conference from the California Northern Coastal area.

"My wife talks to herself."

"So does mine, but she doesn't realize it. She thinks I'm listening."

Question — "Is sobriety important?"

Answer — "You can bet your life it is!"

14th Annual Roundup

With her left leg in a cast, Candy B. of Tiburon, Marin County, spoke at the Young People's Meeting at the 14th Annual Desert AA Roundup in Palm Springs, held, as usual, the weekend after Memorial Day.

Registration totalled 4227, over double the posted capacity of the Convention Center at the Riviera Hotel and Country Club. In spite of the resulting physical discomfort, enthusiasm ran high, and many members boasted attending every year.

The Roundup is a privately owned and operated, socially-oriented event, restricted to those wearing official badges issued upon payment of a \$5.00 registration. Morrie S. of Palm Desert was the chairman.

This year's theme was "Principles over Personalities." Speakers included popular Clancy I. of Venice, CA; Colleen D., "the boss's daughter"; Norm A. of Monrovia; Dr. Tom O'S. of Louisiana; Marguerite C. of Houston; and Jack B. now of Kansas, formerly of New York, in addition to Candy.

Book Price Hike

Paul G. of the San Francisco Central Office has announced that effective immediately the price of "the Little Red Book", "Eye Opener", and "The 24-Hour Book" has been raised by their publisher to \$2.50 each. All are available at the Central Office.

DEADLINE THE 15th

A deadline means just that! The Good News deadline is the 15th of every month. Any mail received in the Central Office after 5 p.m. on the 15th cannot be included in the next issue, nor can any news be telephoned in after that time.

A New Member Speaks

A new member from one of the AA groups at the California Medical Facility, Vacaville, California, shares experience, strength, and hope:

"I have just returned from an AA meeting here in Vacaville. I'm an inmate here. Tonight's meeting was very stimulating. I have attended six meetings to date. The first five meetings I attended, I found rather boring. Maybe what the principal speakers were saying wasn't related to me and my problems — caused boredom within me.

"In tonight's meeting, one of the speakers touched my feelings. He said that he was a loner, that he always tried to do things by himself. Before he would ask for help with a problem, he would just get drunk and forget about it. I related to his experience, because this is the type of person I've been all my life. So I'm writing this letter to express my feelings and newfound hopes. I know that AA can work for me."

—G.S.O. Institutions Bulletin,
June 1974

Danger: Wet Drivers

One out of every 25 drivers on the road between 6 p.m. and 3 a.m. is legally intoxicated, "not just drinking, but drunk," according to Administrator Douglas T. Toms of the Federal Traffic Safety Program.

He calls for a wide-ranging attack on highway deaths, including a crackdown on drunken drivers, probationary licenses for youthful drivers, and restricting some older drivers to daylight driving. Toms says that more than half of the nation's 56,000 annual traffic deaths could be blamed on alcohol.

RUMMAGE SALE

Stepping Stone, a recovery house for alcoholic women, at 255 - 10th Ave., San Francisco, is holding its annual rummage sale on Saturday, July 20, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Donations of clothing and all kinds of miscellaneous items are needed for the sale, and can be dropped off at the house from now on.

Alanon Dance

Friday, July 26 will mark the presentation by the San Francisco Alanon Intergroup of an open speaker's meeting. Speakers will be Jack C., AA and Lu C., Alanon.

Put on your dancing shoes and share in an evening of fun and fellowship. The address is: Hope Lutheran Church, 55 San Fernando Way, Daly City.

T-I Drydockers

Don't be discouraged by reports of AA's being refused admittance at the Treasure Island gate. The group is genuinely glad to see visitors from the outside world. For those who want to attend this 8:00 p.m. Wednesday AA Meeting, the Good News has been given these easy directions.

First, do not drive over. Take the 7:41 p.m. Treasure Island bus from the East Bay Terminal in San Francisco. Get off at Building 218 and walk over to the East Chapel in Building 215.

To return after the meeting, which ends at 9:00 p.m., walk back to Building 218 for the 9:15 p.m. return bus to S.F.

From Oakland, the bus leaves 14th and Broadway at 7:40 p.m., arriving T-I at 8:05 p.m. (or one hour earlier). The bus returns to Oakland leaving T-I at 9:05 p.m.

FRIDAY ALL-GROUPS

Rod H., of the Pedro Valley Discussion group is the first speaker on July 5 at the Friday Night Central All Groups at Unitarian Church, Franklin and Geary, San Francisco, at 8:30. The host group that evening will be the Cow Hollow Young People's of San Francisco.

Other speakers and hosts for the month are:

July 12, Gene D., Myrtdale, Calistoga; Ignacio;

July 19, Randy P., Westlake; San Bruno Tuesday.

July 26, NO MEETING
CHURCH CLOSED.

Doors open at 7:30. Coffee and Arms-Length before and after.

SONOMA ANNIVERSARY

The Guerneville and Monte Rio Fellowship is celebrating an anniversary on July 20, 1974. They are having a 6:00 p.m. potluck, followed by a meeting. Dr. Gil of Mill Valley will be the speaker. This event will take place at St. Hubert's Hall, directly behind the Guerneville Fire Department.

Generosity

*If you would do good, then
do it today,*

*Do it gratis nor linger
around for your pay:*

*Let the deed be a gem that
you cast overboard,*

*Not a hook that is baited
to fish for reward.*

— Steingrímur

Thorsteinsson (1831-1913)

Diablo Monthly

The monthly First Saturday Speaker Meeting will be held on July 6; Sylvia M. is the speaker. St. Timothy's Church, 1550 Diablo Rd., Danville is the location. Directions from San Francisco and the East Bay are: 580 to 680 (24), Diablo Exit; three miles to the church.

Pleasant Hill Shut-In

Ted H., an AA fellow, has been a shut-in for quite some time, and his close friends have requested GOOD NEWS make this announcement. Ted would like visitors. His present address is the Bolita Convalescent Home, 550 Patterson Blvd., Pleasant Hill.

Cousin John was driving his car the wrong way down a one-way street in a rather drunken condition and was stopped by an officer who asked him where he thought he was going.

"I'm not really sure," said Cousin, "But wherever it is, I must be late, because everybody is coming back already."

FROM SACRAMENTO

By JEAN B.

Food for Thought in planning your day.

The greatest sin: Fear.

The best day: Today.

The most agreeable companion: One who would not have you any differently from what you are.

The greatest deceiver: One who deceives himself.

The greatest invention of the devil: War.

The best play: Work.

The greatest comfort: Knowledge that you have done your work well.

The greatest mistake: Giving up.

The most expensive indulgence: Hate.

The cheapest, stupidest and easiest practice: Finding fault.

The greatest stumbling block: Egotism.

The most dangerous person: The liar.

The greatest puzzle: Life.

The Checker Game

Life is like a checker game. In the checker game the object of the game is to get our set of checkers over to the other side of the Chess board. In doing so we care not what we do to get there, then get a "king", this king then, can go anywhere he chooses on the checker board. However, after the checker becomes a king it is still the same checker, made of the same material . . . Just more of it.

Applying the moral of the story, is that no matter what we do in life, we human-beings all want the same things in life, — LOVE, KINDNESS, UNDERSTANDING AND ENCOURAGEMENT IN THE THINGS WE DO FOR OTHERS. How did the king checker become a king? Basically, by the opponent going to the other side and placing his spare checker on top of the other checker. Without helping our fellowman in his or her endeavors, how can we become a better individual? We must CONTINUALLY HELP AND PRAISE EACH OTHER to keep the good things for ourselves.

Reflections

—Marge G., Glasgow, Ky. in SEARCH

I believe I was born with my life pointed in the direction of Al-Anon. After being in the program for six year, which is a comparatively short time, I am finding in it what I have been striving for. My feelings of frustration, fear, inadequacy, insecurity — not being a total person — are beginning to be overcome in this program. I claim no great talent for any one thing — but my selfish goal is accepting and liking me as I am today — with all of my yesterdays as gone; some sad, lonely miserable days; some happy, beautiful good days. When I totaled, I find they have been the foundation laid for me today. Before alcoholism became a part of my life, during and now, they are what I have made each one to be.

I was asked by a still suffering Al-Anon member at the Kentuckian Conference, "Why do so many of you say, 'This is my life, this is the greatest thing that ever happened to me' — tell my why. I'm looking for answers, not statements. You are so narrow to say this, there are a lot of other things in life." My feeling is that this is a total program or way of life if I use it in all areas of my life, not just when I am dealing with Al-Anon alone, but every day. I'm very selfish when something has been given me — I want to keep it! But hidden away, I find no joy in having it. It has to be shared with others. The more I share it the more joy I receive. This is Al-Anon to me.

Why can't the Twelve Steps be a way of life? And striving to use them and the slogans doesn't mean it is necessary for me to "shout them from the house top" or force them down someone who isn't ready for them, but to use them in my life that others may see and feel them through me.

No, I don't always use the Al-Anon tools I've been given. I run ahead and do it my way until I hit the wall that doesn't move, and then God, whom I choose to call my Higher Power, says to me, "Marge, try it my way." You see, I turn it over to Him and a better way is mine for the asking. Someone said you can't push a man up the hill if he doesn't want to climb.

Getting to know and like myself has been the most difficult task I've been given. I continue to find myself picking up bad habits that I have played havoc with my inner peace and harmony with my fellow man. A psychiatrist once told me the things I would not accept of myself. As we are told in Al-Anon, the only one I can really change is me so my serenity is sought this way. Live and let live.

Thus through the experiences of tragedy, sorrow, sickness, joy, happiness, serenity, trial and error, getting up, falling down and up again, sticking my foot in my mouth, sticking my nose in other people's business, and the many sides of me that are Marge is a little part of God's plan being used to share experience, strength and hope with others. To love is to give.

ONE THING AT A TIME

Sometimes our fulfillment in the AA program seems to come slowly — too slowly. This is not the time for discouragement; the question is, what can I do where I am? Just to meet the demands of sobriety twenty-four hours a day is, at this time, sufficient.

Sobriety is progressive. When we feel we are not making progress, let us stop and think if we are "going to AA or growing in AA."

The founders and early workers did not have the great resources that now exist in the AA program — they had no one upon whom to depend but themselves; they used what they had. You know the results.

Those of us who are waiting for the Big Experience should work with what we have moment by moment. If we practice steadfastly what we have learned of the AA Steps and principles, we will know the great experience.

Everything has a starting point. Honesty is one of the best for sobriety. Honesty is a solid foundation. Honesty is the ability to question oneself, and the basic for humility in the truest sense.

Unconcerned about getting credit for our accomplishments, let us keep before us the challenge of being good members of AA and remember to carry the message to alcoholics and to practice the Steps and principles in all our affairs.

CARRYING THE MESSAGE

By NANCY C.

The high spot in Public Information Committee activities in June, was our participation in staffing the booth at the American Nurses Association Convention. Ralph L., co-chairman of the PI Committee, took over the responsibility of getting the booth set up and people to staff it, at the last minute, because of my sudden illness. He and George D. of General Service deserve special thanks for their most successful efforts.

In addition to the convention, six classes at Mission High School were visited, at the request of the social science teachers there.

Arthur K. and I spoke and answered questions for roughly an hour and a half with a group of special, ungraded students. These are boys and girls who are junkies, drunks, prostitutes, or from troubled families. You name the problem: it's in this class.

At first, the abject hopelessness of many of the students seemed a blank, insurmountable wall. Then we realized that the room was actually quiet — the students were listening.

Later, there were many questions, and a special thanks from the teacher who pointed out that we had got through to this unfortunate group — which really surprised her!

Roger O'D. also spoke to the regular Mission High classes and reported enthusiastic responses.

Our radio show needs your support! Not only do newcomers often catch the show, but there are many shut-ins in the Bay Area who listen regularly, according to our mail. If you can spare an hour to help tape a regular meeting, please call the San Francisco Central Office, (415) 982-4473, and they will put you in touch with the radio committee.

As a man with 27 years of sobriety remarked recently, "you never know when sometime you will say just exactly what someone needs to hear." So, how about some radio volunteers?

En Espanol

El Grupo Renovacion de Richmond, efectua sus sesiones, en el 1426-13a. Calle, San Pablo, California, los martes y sabados, apartir de las 8 p.m.

(The Richmond Grupo Renovacion holds its meetings at 1426 - 13th St., San Pablo, CA, Tuesdays and Saturdays, 8 p.m.)

NOURISHMENT FOR Non-Cooks

Alcoholics are notorious for poor eating habits. The following series is offered to those with limited cooking facilities. Readers are invited to submit suggestions for menus using the basic mixture.

BASIC BALL INSTRUCTIONS

Mix thoroughly with clean hands: 2 pounds hamburger meat; 1 15-oz. can Spanish rice, 1 egg, ½ cup cracker crumbs. Mold into tennis-ball-size lumps. Put each into separate plastic bag, tie securely, and freeze in ice-cube compartment. Makes 8 ½-lb. servings.

BASIC BALL MENU NO. 1 — Meat Loaf Dinner

Bake a ball, uncovered, in 375 deg. oven for 1¼ hours if frozen, 45 minutes if thawed. Simultaneously, bake a potato for one hour. During the last 10 minutes, boil a vegetable like cut-up carrot or peeled ear of fresh corn, etc., and top meat loaf with shredded cheese. Serve with rolls and pass the catsup.

(This will be a regular column provided there is reader support).

Grover S. Clarke, Jr., was born December 31, 1923, and died, May 18, 1974, in San Francisco. He is survived by his wife, Carmelita, of the San Francisco fellowship.

Interment was on May 22, 1974, was at his place of birth, Savannah, GA.

Grover first came to AA in 1947 in Chicago.

SANTA CLARA NEWS

The Santa Clara County All Groups meeting will be held on Saturday, July 13, at the San Jose Alano Club, 122 Fair Ave., 8:30 p.m. Host group will be the "Try It, You'll Like It" Group, which meets Wednesdays at noon at the Club. Speakers will be Mary and Harry L. of Hawaii. A dance will follow the meeting.

The annual AA Unity Picnic will be held at Blackberry farm, 21975 San Fernando Ave., Cupertino, July 28, from 9:00 a.m. to dusk. This affair is sponsored by East Bay, Santa Clara County, Livermore and Hayward Intergroup Service Centers. Tickets may be purchased in advance for \$1.50 for adults and \$1.00 for children. They may also be purchased at the gate; however, the prices will be higher. Barbecue facilities are available. Coffee will be served.

There will be a 2 p.m. AA meeting, with Gene D. of Calistoga as the guest speaker.

San Bruno Anniversary

The 26th Anniversary of the San Bruno Discussion Group will be celebrated on Tuesday, July 30 at 8:30 p.m. The festivities will be at St. John's Church, Sylvan and Mastick Streets. Speaker for the meeting will be John F. of San Carlos. After the meeting, coffee and cake will be served with Arms-Length fellowship.

NCA Reminder

The National Council on Alcoholism — Bay Area is the national voluntary health agency in the alcoholism field (similar to the Heart Association or the Cancer Society). The Council's purposes are to provide information about alcoholism and treatment for the illness to anyone seeking information.

NCA has Information Centers in Oakland, Walnut Creek, San Rafael, San Mateo and San Francisco. The San Francisco Center is now open from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. Monday through Friday and 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Saturday.

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Please send your captions to the above cartoon to Good News, 166 Geary St., Room 804, S.F., CA 94108. The winning caption earns its sender a year's subscription to the Good News and will be printed in a later issue.

Marin Alano Bingo

The new Marin Alano Club at 1360 Lincoln Ave., San Rafael, CA, is holding a series of bingo games from 10 to 12 p.m.

Gina H. has taken over the manager's job, and will be on hand to answer questions about the club, at either of these telephone numbers (415) 454-9974 and 454-9735. AA members and guests are welcome.

Fred's snack bar is open from 5 to 11 p.m. with a variety of sandwiches and two dinner specials each evening.

AS OTHERS SEE US

The article which follows was sent to us by a non-alcoholic social worker who has great knowledge of, and faith in AA.

What makes a truly successful AA Group?

I have been sitting for some time trying to analyse this problem, and I have finally decided I cannot do it. I have — as an interested onlooker, not an alcoholic — attended dozens of meetings, in different places and countries, and had fully intended to set down in neat, concise headings what seemed to me the fundamentals of a good meeting.

But because AA is a way of life and very akin to religion, it somehow defies analysis, and its essence is as indefinable as a man's faith in God. This is no doubt why AA succeeds with people who seemed to be unquestionably in the "dead loss" category.

Having said that — and also admitted that very few church congregations (and here I speak from many years of fairly "committed" church membership) show the tolerance, compassion and unity of the better AA meetings — I also feel entitled to say I have often been bored to extinction (and watched new recruits being effectively driven away) by the length and tedium of many talks. It seems, alas, that sobriety can result too often in intoxication with the sound of one's own voice. A good chairman must somehow find a way to stem this flow (especially when a speaker is visiting the group for the second or third time and many people know his story almost by heart); and must encourage as much participation as possible from the "floor," even if this means effacing himself pretty completely.

FREE OURSELVES

"A human being," Albert Einstein once wrote to a friend, "is a part of the whole, called by us 'Universe,' a part limited in time and space. He experiences himself, his thoughts and feelings as something separated from the rest — a kind of optical delusion of his consciousness. This delusion is a kind of prison for us, restricting us to our personal desires and to affection for a few persons nearest to us.

"Our task must be to free ourselves from this prison by widening our circle of compassion to embrace all living creatures and the whole of nature in its beauty.

"Nobody is able to achieve this completely, but the striving for such achievement is in itself a part of the liberation and a foundation for inner security."

N.Y. Times

A business man, filling out a form at the post office, was approached by an old lady who asked if he would address a card for her. This he did. Next she asked if he would write a short message on the card. Again the polite man agreed and wrote her message. "Now, is there anything else I can do for you?" he asked.

"Yes," replied the lady. "Add a P.S. 'Please excuse the writing!'"

The telling of one's story has a strongly therapeutic effect on the teller, especially on the first attempt; and if one is really struggling to arrive at the truth about oneself, the story should be a little different each time, as the teller gains fresh insights. An experienced chairman will know when a new member is ready to speak, and will provide opportunity and encouragement. But after the tale has been told three or four times (preferably to different groups) that member should be ready for the later steps in the programme and will probably benefit personally (as well as gaining in popularity) if he (or she) disciplines himself to the briefest of contributions. At a meeting where no outside speaker is available, a general discussion on one Step or Tradition is certainly more profitable than a re-hash of someone's too-familiar story, or a dissertation composed mainly of platitudes from the Big Book.

The acid test of a speaker is the cost to himself. If he has genuinely unburdened himself without reservation or euphemism, and examined and admitted his reactions with honesty, he will have found the experience difficult; but he will have helped someone in the group, and also helped himself. Once a member begins to enjoy speaking, the chances are that he will reach no one and become a bore.

PRIORITIES

One of the many functions of this fellowship of ours is the basic one, the one that is essential, namely that function of, with the help of the Higher Power, restoring us to sanity and enabling us to lead a normal life.

What then is normal life? To me a normal life is a life which I can enjoy to the full, insofar as circumstances will allow me. To enjoy life at home with my wife and family, to be able to do a day's work with a minimum of

mental stress and strain, and to try to do every thing in moderation, to try to get my priorities right without allowing any one priority to subdue the others to too great an extent.

It is true that my sobriety is my number one priority because without it I would have no priorities whatsoever, but by the same token, I must never allow even this important priority to become an obsession, because it takes many aspects of life linking together, to give me a reasonable measure of contentment, because no human being has, at all times, a full measure. Life does not allow it.

I am the type of AA who could not quote the 12 Steps and Traditions off by heart, despite the fact that I have read and discussed them many times, and I hope to stay that way because each time I do read them they have something new to offer me.

I could not quote the preamble off by heart, despite the number of times I have read it, but by the same token I know my AA, and I try to practice it to the best of my humble ability, but experience had taught me that going to meetings just for the sake of going, is of little benefit at all to me. I get much more satisfaction, strength, and hope by going to meetings because I really want to go.

What I am trying to say is, that as far as I am concerned, and I mean me, is that I don't want to use meetings just to fill the gap.

First things first, we are told, and in this search for peace and contentment it is up to each individual member to decide which things are first for him or her, because, assuming that our Sobriety tops the list, and it must, each and everyone of us will have our own individual list of priorities. So it therefore follows, that because our fellow AA does not appear to work the program as we do, we must not be too quick to criticise, because as all AAs know, the program was made for drunks

and can be twisted and turned to suit individual needs in the search for Sobriety.

Rich or poor, good or bad, educated or illiterate, all this fellowship offers us is Sobriety. If the quality of our Sobriety is good enough, then that goodness will eventually come to the surface, and when it does surface, we begin to feel a greater degree of inner peace, a feeling which the whole human race is searching for, a feeling which we AAs can achieve by working the program our own way. I say working the program our own way, not to try and change it to suit ourselves. Just for the record I am still working at it — My Way.

JIMMY C. (Thornliebank).
via Roundabout (Scotland)

A NATION OF DRUNKS?

Are more Americans becoming alcoholics?

Apparently so.

The American Hospital Association recently declared that 25 to 30 percent of all adult medical-surgical patients in metropolitan hospitals, regardless of diagnosis, were found to be suffering from alcoholism.

A recent study in San Francisco at the Mount Zion Hospital reveals that 50 percent of all fracture cases resulted from drunkenness.

What happens in many cases is that physicians book patients into hospitals under diagnosis other than alcoholism. "This is unfair to the family, the hospital, the nursing staff and the patient," declares Dr. Marvin Block, assistant professor of clinical medicine at the State University of New York in Buffalo. "It helps the patient deny the problem."

By way of: C.A.T.C. News, Chicago
Secretary's Newds Letter (S.F.)

THE DRIVER'S SEAT

We, in AA, hear so many times the remark "Get out of the driver's seat and turn our will and lives over to the care of God, as we understand Him" — which is the third step of our program. What do we turn over? Do we sit back and let Him take care of us for twenty-four hours of each day? In a way, this would be nice for some people if it was possible. We would become a machine with God just pushing the buttons.

The majority of every day trials and tribulations we can handle with the free will that God gave us. For a number of years, I could handle alcohol with the will He gave me, without too much trouble. Then came the day that I couldn't handle it and then the trouble came. The reason being, I didn't have the humility to slide over and say, "God take over because I can't drive anymore with safety." I spent years fighting humility and had nothing but trouble with alcohol.

Alcohol is not the only thing we must get out of the driver's seat about. There is anger, envy, jealousy, hate and down the line of character defects that must be removed. I'm still an alcoholic, just as I still have all of the above traits and each one, when I stay in the driver's seat, can cause me trouble to the point of mental collapse.

Alcoholic or non-alcoholic, when any character defect has gone overboard, as drinking did to us alcoholics, we must slide out of the driver's seat. It takes humility and prayer to get God to take over. It's not like driving a car, you don't stop and say to Him, take over. He may be sitting along side of you, but God in His wisdom knows if you have true humility or your purpose is a single accomplishment.

Serenity is to know yourself and to pray each day for help in correcting the character defects you don't have the ability to control yourself. Only you and God know the defects of character that you can't master.

Join hands with Him. It's a great life if you do.

LEOR.
Silver Dollar (N.D.)

Peninsula All Groups

Phyllis McG., of Alameda Island Fellowship will be the speaker at the July 6 meeting of Peninsula All Groups. The host group will be Menlo Tuesday, Woman's. Meetings are at St. Matthew's Episcopal Auditorium, Baldwin Avenue and El Camino, San Mateo at 8:30 p.m. Doors open at 7:30 p.m.

Other speakers and host groups will be:

July 13—Harold F., Warm Springs, Fremont; San Bruno Discussion;

July 20—Jim C., Peninsula; Malomahoo;

July 27—Jim H., Brown Baggers.

Coffee and Arms-Length before and after meeting.

BOOK REVIEW

A recently published book, **Problem Drinking Among American Men**, written by Don Calahan and Robin Room, and published by Rutgers University Center of Alcohol Studies, selected 1,561 men representing the 21-59 age group. In a supplementary survey of 768 men in San Francisco, they confirmed findings previously gathered in their national survey. A few of their findings are surprising:

Drinking problems are especially common among the 21-24-year-olds.

The strongest prediction of adult drinking problems is an involvement in heavy-drinking surroundings.

The authors regard as "pointless" the argument about the relative importance of environment versus personality in the development of an individual into a drinking problem.

The report winds up with a confession about what research specialists in the field still don't know, but would dearly love to find out.

Calahan and Room admit understanding "only poorly" the process by which excessive drinking and smoking become habits. They point out that unless we understand the basis for excessive consumption of alcohol, tobacco and calories, "... we certainly cannot hope to cope with our hardy perennial, the problem drinker in America."

H and I BroadSides

PART ONE

By BOB H. (Chairman of Area 2)

In the pamphlet, "Questions and Answers on Sponsorship," a concluding paragraph strikes home for alcoholics like me. "One of the pressing needs of institutions' sponsorship is for closer contact with inmates just before their release from prison and just after they are discharged. This help need **not** take the form of material gifts. The important thing is to make the ex-inmate feel that he is welcome in the group — a welcome given by members who, 'but for the Grace of God,' might have been inmates themselves."

There has always been a crying need for outside AA members to act as sponsors for AA member inmates. The problem seems to be in getting a flow of information started between the insider who needs sponsorship and the willing outside AA member.

For example, each Tuesday night at 7 p.m., there is an H & I Sponsored meeting in the state facility at Vacaville. The Ross Marsh Fellowship is a traditional AA group except for size limitations required by security. These men also have meetings during the week without outside participation.

The meeting format would be familiar to any AA member who attends large group meetings: The Serenity Prayer, How It Works, and, for the first half of the meeting, an inside chairman who introduces a series of inmate speakers. He, in turn, introduces the outside chairman and the outside speakers.

For a final half-hour, there is a period of Arm's-Length AA, an opportunity for one-to-one discussion with a lively interchange of ideas and questions. The most frequently asked question is, "Can you help me find a sponsor in ..." and the man will designate the locale in which he hopes to be paroled eventually.

When inmates reach out for help like this, those of us who have the good fortune to attend these meetings want the hand of AA to be there.

And we write down the man's name and number, and, when we get home, we try to direct the request to an Area Chairman or H & I Representative who knows the location and some of the local members.

Part I of a two-part article

Sacramento-Area Meetings

Five new meetings are announced for AA members in Sacramento and Sacramento Valley area as follows:

Sunset Wednesday Step-Study Group (O), 5809 Gibbons Drive, 8:00 p.m.

Loyalton Thursday Nite (O), Highway 49, 1½ miles West of Loyalton, Holdens Apartments, No. 8, 8:00 p.m. (916) 993-4769.

Tuesday's Children Group (Women's, C), 1040 West Capitol Ave., 8:00 p.m.

Georgetown AA Tuesday, (O), Buckner Hall, end of Church Street behind the Georgetown Community Methodist Church, 8:00 p.m.

Step and Tradition Study Meeting, Wednesday (O), First Christian Church, 3900 Folsom Blvd.

Camino-Pollack Pines Beginners' Group, Friday, Camino Hotel Bldg. (C).

A sixth and new meeting has been announced, but the day and time are missing at this writing. The new beginners' open AA meeting is at Cache Creek Lodge, 4½ miles north of Woodland on Road 96B, between Road 18 and Road 18A in the vicinity of Yolo. This last meeting begins at 8:00 p.m.

For further information, inquiries should be addressed to the Sacramento Central Office, 1412 - 20th Street. The telephone is (916) 443-8138.

A HAPPY MAN

If you observe a really happy man you will find him building a boat, writing a symphony, educating his son, growing double dahlias in his garden, or looking for dinosaur eggs in the Gobi desert. He will not be searching for happiness as if it were a collar button that has rolled under the dresser. He will not be striving for it as a goal in itself. He will have become aware that he is happy in the course of living life twenty-four crowded hours of the day.

"I've been widowed three times," said the drunk draped over the bar. "My first two wives died of eating poisoned mushrooms. The third, poor soul, passed away as the result of a concussion."

"Concussion?" asked the bartender. "How did that happen?"

"A very sad case," sighed the widower. "I couldn't get her to eat the mushrooms."

What Is Sociable About "Sociable Drinking"???

One guy complains his martini isn't dry enough and another who is buying a round for the house accuses the bartender of over-charging him. Someone else falls over a bar stool and throws a punch at the man who helps him to his feet. Over and over, again, the fellow plays a torch song on the jukebox. Some drunk will denounce the boss for refusing to cash his check. Another guy drops a handful of coins on the floor and then spends a long time on his hands and knees looking for them. A belligerent drunk will challenge the biggest man in the place and the guy who came in for a fast one before dinner will be there at closing time. After drinking a short beer a man will sarcastically ask if the house ever buys a drink. The chap who has just been rebuffed when he tries to crash a party of strangers denounces them for being big shots. Another is absorbed in making rings on the bar with his wet glass. A woman drinking rye with a beer chaser will explain the sickening effects of fancy cocktails.....SOCIABLE?????????

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SATURDAY, JULY 6 —

FOURTH OF JULY DANCE — Please come and bring your friends and dance to tunes by Bill Gryder's Velvet Four — Come and hear it for yourself.

SATURDAY, JULY 20 —

MID-MONTH DANCE — Enjoy dancing to music by Bill Gryder's Velvet Four — Fine prizes round out the evening — Top this off with AA Fellowship and what more can you ask!

SATURDAY, JULY 27 —

AA BIRTHDAY DANCE — Share the fellowship of AA Birthdays with your AA friends — Fine records — and Cake and Coffee. No donation for the Birthday Night Event.

We'll be there to give you a warm welcome! Come and visit with old friends — and meet new friends — at our dances.

PLEASE — NO CHILDREN — THANK YOU!

TRADITIONS

General Service Office in New York has asked that the Traditions be read in our meetings, and many are wondering "Why should we sit and listen to all that reading?" Have we ever asked ourselves what would have happened had we walked in to our first AA meeting and found no one there? Well, with no traditions — eventually there would be no groups. Traditions tell us that our Service Boards and Central Offices should be supported by the groups. Traditions tell us that Clubs and Rehab Houses are no part of AA, but are set up for social and rehabilitation purposes, and that they may have AA members on the governing boards, provided that anonymity is not broken at the public level. Traditions also tell us that we must ever remain non-professional and as AA members, may not accept fees for twelfth step work. If AA members are prone to be employed as professionals, traditions demand that they do not "thump the tub" for their pet enterprises. This is breaking anonymity.

Above all, let us all remember that the Traditions came into being long after the advent of AA itself.

During those trying times our forefathers made their mistakes and came up with answers and after much heartache, cleared the path for you and me.