



# Good News



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1975

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## Fall Northern California Conference This Month!

The complete program for the fall conference of the Northern California Council of AA will be found on pages 4 and 5 of this issue of Good News.

The conference, to be held the weekend of October 3rd in Sacramento's new convention complex at 14th and L Streets, is expected to be a "block buster". See you there! Complete Al-Anon and Alateen programs, too. Bring the whole family.

## Thanks for the Memory

The Western world seems to be going on a bit of a nostalgia binge at the moment — and was it ever thus? At any event, nostalgia is being used in a number of quarters to pluck at our heartstrings — and, the cynic might say, at our purse strings, too.

Organizers of entertainment, designers of fashion and vendors of all sorts of goods are delving into the past and offering us the misty-eyed sort of stuff that daydreams are made of; at least if we are old enough to be able to cast our tottering minds a few decades past.

Quite a few films and plays are being based on the period of 30 or 40 years ago; most of the dress fashions are reminiscent of clothes worn earlier this century, and record companies and radio stations are churning out discs of some of the tunes that set hearts leaping when today's grandparents were the trendy youngsters.

"Down Memory Lane," for instance, is the title of one such record collection and it contains old favorites of around the 1930's and 40's, Remember "Smoke Gets in Your Eyes," "Moonlight Bay," "Among My Souvenirs," "I'm In the Mood For Love" . . . it's all enough to make any middle-aged romantic drift off on a sentimental journey.

*(Continued on page 8)*

## 22nd Anniversary Brisbane All Groups

On Sunday, November 2 at 7:30 p.m. Dr. Gil A. of Mill Valley will speak at the 22nd Anniversary of Brisbane All Groups.

The meeting will be held at the Brisbane Elementary School at San Bruno Avenue and Glen Park, directly across from the Brisbane Fire Department.

There will be a lavish buffet after the meeting, arms-length before and after.

### YOU ARE COSTING US MONEY!

PLEASE send us your new address before you move. Everytime we have to pay return postage (10¢) make out a second address change (30¢) it hurts. We can handle address changes accurately and on time only with your help.

## Why Marathons?

Over the Labor Day weekend, the Valencia St. Groups of San Francisco held their second annual "marathon" discussion meetings. Attendance was high — more than 175 showed up for the Sunday buffet — and those who helped organize the event reported that it was most successful.

Gage S., who arranged the schedule of speakers and many other details, said that he and other AA members in the Bay Area had begun the marathons because of their own feelings of loneliness during those long four-day weekends. Picture a newly recovering alcoholic faced with such a holiday: it may seem that everyone else is "celebrating"—perhaps acquaintances and co-workers are going out of town, to parties and picnics, many activities that probably involve drinking. At Christmas and Thanksgiving there are many AA festivities that assuage that loneliness — but the so-called lesser holidays often give an alcoholic that old feeling of being "left out". The temptation to indulge in self-pity, or to seek "companionship" in the old haunts becomes insidiously strong. At the very hours when the impulse to

*(Continued on page 3)*

## Am I an Alcoholic?

Do you or do I fit the "stereotype" alcoholic? I have struggled for many years trying to fit into the stereotype mold, or wondering if I fit at all.

I was 22 when I came into AA six years ago, with people in and outside of the program saying, "You don't look or act like an alcoholic", or, "you're too young."

I continued to come to meetings and listened to all the stories, experiences and the "yets".

I drank some more to prove that I wasn't an alcoholic—and, instead, proved that I was. I realized that alcoholism is a progressive disease.

I still had, and have, many "yets" left. However, many times, I thought: "I want to be able to get this program now; it doesn't make sense to keep drinking for many more years and have a longer wreckage of the past. Why go through all that?"

I learned from listening that I felt, when drinking, as badly as, if not worse than, anyone else in the program.

People didn't think I fit the stereotype, because I didn't have experiences around other people. I drank alone. I had hallucinations, blackouts and DT's alone. I believe today that there is no stereotype alcoholic; that experiences can't be identified from one to another. It's the feeling badly enough that brings us to AA, and it's the feeling better that keeps us here.

There is no need to try to figure what an alcoholic is. The only requirement for membership is " . . . a desire to stop drinking."

J.T.

Time is too slow for those who wait; too swift for those who fear; too long for those who grieve; too short for those who rejoice; but for those who love, time is not.

Henry Van Dyke



## The Link

### California Northern Coastal Area of General Service

The Fall General Service Assembly of the Northern Coastal Area of California will open at College of San Mateo, Saturday, November 8, at 10 a.m.

Alternate Delegate, Dean K., outlined the following program:

**Morning:** An unstructured workshop featuring Cora Louise B., of General Service, New York, who will answer questions and comment on GSO operations. Delegate George D. will moderate.

**After Lunch:** Area Chairman Paul V. will preside at a brief business meeting for area officers and district chairmen.

**2:30:** Presentations on "The Role of the GSR", "Sponsorship", "General Service and Public Information", "What Makes a Good Area Officer", and "The Hows of 12 Step Calls". After a coffee break, workshops on each topic.

**5:30:** Dinner in the cafeteria followed by the "AA Follies" — staged by Ozzie O. and cast of Moraga.

**8:15 p.m.:** Recap of the workshop discussion followed by an open speaker meeting. Chairman, John B., San Mateo; speaker, Cora Louise B., New York.

Cora Louise's itinerary appears elsewhere in this issue. As you can see, she is covering a lot of bases, and many members will have a chance to meet her.

Her presence here is especially pleasing to area General Service because of some misunderstandings which occurred during the past year. In December, when a delegation from New York presented the results of the AA Survey to the Convention in San Francisco as their primary contribution, some local members felt it was overly promotional and not enough time had been allowed for individual appearances.

This was pointed up at the September 10 meeting of 23 Public Information chairmen, during a lively discussion about the difference between "attraction" and "promotion." As Martin K., San Mateo, summed it up at that meeting, in order to be attractive, we must be visible. P.I. activity establishes that visibility. For this reason Cora Louise's appearances will be particularly appreciated. It is to be hoped that we "in the provinces" can now have more direct liaison with New York, and that her visit will smooth the way.

At the same meeting, by the way, Elaine K., Mountain View, gave a de-

tailed account of activities at the Inter-group Speakers' Bureau for North Santa Clara County. Elaine is head of the bureau, and gave us a capsule course (gleaned from her training by Nancy C., former San Francisco P.I. Chairman) on how to set up a public information committee.

All interested members are welcome at this November 8 meeting.

Ralph L.

## H & I BroadSides

Having been in Hospital and Institution work for ten years, I've seen many things change in regard to the policies of the institutions we serve. The manner in which we service the facilities hasn't changed too much — as far as carrying the message is concerned. That is the same.

But the facilities have placed more restrictions on us. I believe we should accept these changes gracefully and with understanding. We should remember we are the institutions' guests, and should abide by their rules and regulations.

We should always remember that the only purpose of the Hospital and Institution Committee of the Northern California Council of AA is to carry the message of AA to the alcoholic who is confined. The committee's activities are based on, and governed by, the Twelve Traditions.

Our committee is organized, of course, to avoid confusion and duplication of effort. We are a service committee and our responsibility has many facets.

Most important of these are:

1. To the patient or inmate group within the facility.

2. To the facility: courteous acceptance and compliance with its wishes.

3. To the fellowship: conducting ourselves in a manner above reproach, to ensure that we will not say or do anything that will reflect unfavorably on the committee or AA as a whole.

As members of this committee we can not, and do not, speak for AA. However, each of us who participates is automatically representative of AA.

Jerry G.  
General Secretary

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**Let's Be Friendly  
With Each Other!**

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## Cora Louise's Itinerary

Cora Louise B., staff member from the General Service Office in New York will arrive in San Francisco, Saturday, November 8, for a weeks visit in Northern California. Northern Coastal and Northern Interior Areas' General Service committees have planned the following itinerary during her visit.

Saturday, November 8 — Northern Coastal Fall Assembly, College of San Mateo.

Sunday, November 9 — Open AA Meeting, 11 a.m., In-Between Fellowship, 4710 East 14th St., Oakland. Evening, Monterey County Districts service meeting, Monterey.

Monday, November 10 — Monterey, Santa Cruz and San Jose central offices. Evening, service meeting with combined Santa Clara and San Mateo County districts.

Tuesday, November 11 — Central offices in San Mateo and San Francisco. Evening, San Francisco districts' General Service meeting, St. Mary's Cathedral.

Wednesday, November 12 — Central offices in Oakland and Concord.

Thursday, November 13 — Sacramento central office. Evening, General Service districts' meeting, West Sacramento.

Friday, November 14 — Evening, Northern Interior Area's Public Information meeting, Sierra Room, Red Lion Motor Inn, Sacramento.

Saturday, November 15 — Northern Interior Area Bi-annual election assembly, Stockton Inn, Stockton. (Cora Louise will be featured speaker.)

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**One Day at a Time!**

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## Peninsula All Groups

Jim A. of Stockton will be the first speaker of the month for Peninsula All Groups. The host group will be Twelfth Step Study Group of Redwood City.

Peninsula All Groups meets each Saturday at St. Matthew's Episcopal Church Auditorium, El Camino Real and Baldwin Ave., San Mateo. The time is 8:30 p.m. Doors open at 7:30 p.m.

Other speakers and host groups for October will be:

October 11 — Father Bernie, San Francisco Fellowship; San Bruno District.

October 18 — George M., Internationalist; Miracle Group, Redwood City.

October 25 — Cliff J., Sacramento; Foster City.

Coffee and arms-length AA before and after the meeting.

## News From El Cerrito

Brandy from Larkspur will speak at this month's birthday meeting of El Cerrito Fellowship.

The meeting, to be held on Saturday, October 25, at 8:30 p.m., at 11231 San Pablo Ave., will be followed by birthday cake, coffee, brim and tea.

Arms-length AA before and after. Come and share.

## Why Marathons?

(Continued from page 1)

drink may be most compelling, there are probably no regularly scheduled AA meetings.

To fill this need, the "marathon" approach was tried last year with encouraging results. This year, participation and enthusiasm were even greater.

Each of the regular Valencia St. group secretaries took charge of meetings each day and evening of the weekend. Doors opened at noon each day and the meetings ended at midnight. People were urged to come at any time during those hours. Many came and stayed throughout several different speakers and discussion topics. A surprisingly large number of AA's from out of town came into the City especially for the marathon. Best of all, a great many newcomers attended.

It is doubtful that the Valencia St. building will be available for similar marathons in the future, due to new regulations made by the landlord. Those who so ably arranged the Labor Day weekend hope that other groups in the City will join them in plans for more marathons at some other location. The general reaction of those who participated was that there should be more such events and that four full days of sharing our experience, strength and hope was an unforgettable adventure.

Pat M.

## Napa Downtown Second Anniversary

The Napa Downtown Group will celebrate its second anniversary Friday, October 17. Sam P. of San Francisco will be the evening's speaker.

Napa Downtown meets in the Continental Hall of the First United Methodist Church, 4th and Randolph Sts., Napa.

Dinner will begin at 7 p.m., followed by the meeting at 8:30 p.m.

## SF Young People's Seventh Anniversary

On Saturday, November 1, at 8 p.m., San Francisco Young People's Group will celebrate their seventh anniversary. A speaker meeting will be held in Gresham Hall, Grace Cathedral. (Enter on California Street between Jones and Taylor Streets.)

Following the meeting, there will be a live band for dancing and refreshments. Everyone is welcome.

## Box 459 Requests:

## Share your Detox Center Experience — It's Needed!

Is your group doing enough about prospective new AA members sent to you by a detox center — in comparison to what your group does about helping an alcoholic who walks in off the street on his or her own?

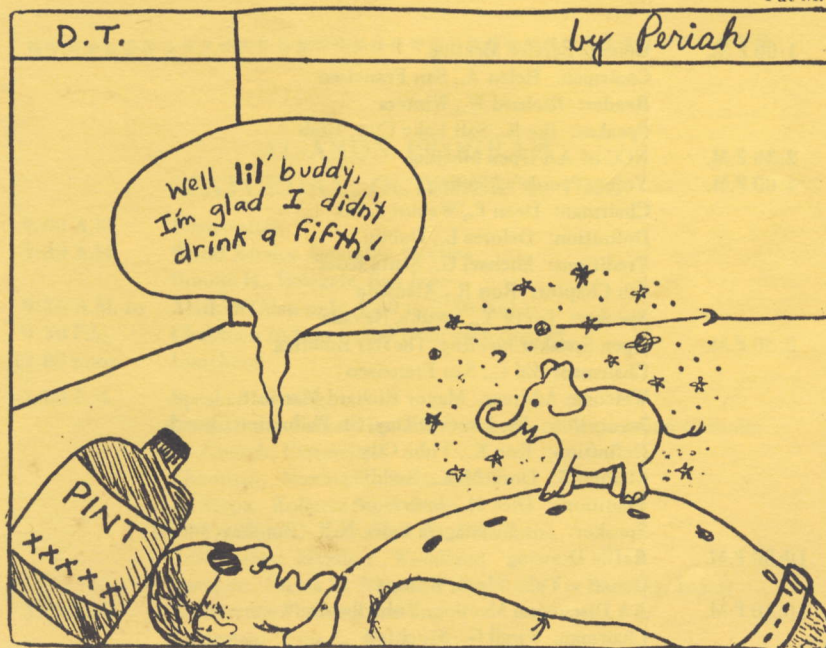
Whoever you are, dear AA reader, please tell us your experience with this. (We need actual firsthand experience, of course, not just generalized guesses or impressions.)

As shown in the Final Report of the 1975 Silver Anniversary General Service Conference, the sponsorship needed for professionally referred problem drinkers is of increasing concern in AA, as professional interest in helping alcoholics steps up.

We know of some groups that go all out to sponsor the man or woman sent by a court or A.S.A.P. program, rehab facility or alcoholism information center. Other groups may seem less friendly to such newcomers, we hear. What about group?

Please tell us, so we can share your experience with others. Thanks.

Write Box 459, Grand Central Station, New York, N.Y. 10017.





## Al-Anon —

## Acknowledging Gratitude

When we feel disappointed, sad, or mad, it is hard to hear the voices, or recognize the gestures, of people who care.

It is easy to feel sorry for ourselves. When things do not happen according to our expectations and wants, an opportunity for self-pity presents itself. It is easy to sit back and think about our misfortunes.

When we feel depressed, we actually choose to not think about our fortunes. We choose to forget that we have friends or family members who love us. This is a big mistake. We need to think about and recognize loving gestures. It is beneficial for us and for those who care.

In Al-Anon and AA, we speak of making amends to those we've "hurt". Members of both groups recognize that our depressions are detrimental to ourselves. Few remember how much our suffering hurts those who love us.

Making amends to those who love us means more than saying, "I'm sorry I feel depressed!"

It is helpful if we can say, "I recognize that you are worried about me, and I appreciate your caring."

It is best if you can show an attitude change. This is most rewarding.

If a caring person says, "Gee, I see you are feeling poorly; will you come to dinner with me?" Say, "Yes." Give yourself a chance to have a good time, and acknowledge your gratitude. (If you saw a child feeling terrible, and you were able to cheer that child, you would feel fantastic.) Give your caring friends an opportunity to know this fantastic feeling. This is the best way to make amends to those who love us.

In Al-Anon, we learn to stop thinking about our misfortunes and to concentrate on our fortunes.

We learn to:

1. Stop our self-pitying behavior;
2. Recognize caring gestures;
3. Show appreciation; and,
4. Start working on making ourselves happier.

Tina C.

" 'Listen, read, think, use' says Al-Anon to those who really want a better way of living."

## ANNUAL FALL CONFERENCE NORTHERN CALIFORNIA COUNCIL OF A.A.

OCTOBER 3, 4, 5, 1975

SACRAMENTO CONVENTION CENTER  
14TH & L • SACRAMENTO

### FRIDAY, OCTOBER 3, 1975

8:30 P.M. Kick-Off Meeting, Little Theater  
Chairman: Gordon R., Santa Clara  
Definition: Ron B., Rodeo  
Chapter 5: La Verne P., San Francisco  
Traditions: Lee R., Santa Rosa  
Speaker: Burt K., Long Beach

### SATURDAY, OCTOBER 4, 1975

9:00 A.M. Registration — Theater Building  
10:00 A.M. H & I Open Meeting  
Chairman: Bart B., San Francisco  
Guest Speaker: Robert Thomas, Associate Warden, Folsom Prison  
AA Speaker: Ed O., Sacramento  
11:15 A.M. Steering Committee Meeting, Northern California Council Of AA

### LUNCH BREAK

1:00 P.M. General Service Meeting  
Chairman: Helen A., San Francisco  
Reader: Richard W., Winters  
Speaker: Ike B., Salt Lake City, Utah  
2:30 P.M. NCC of AA Open Meeting  
4:00 P.M. Young People's Meeting  
Chairman: Dean P., Walnut Creek  
Definition: Delores L., Dublin  
Traditions: Michael G., Santa Rosa  
6th Chapter: Ron R., Alameda  
Speaker: Joyce Y., Sparks, Nevada  
8:30 P.M. Open Speaker Meeting, Theater Building  
Chairman: Ed C., San Francisco  
Welcome Address: Mayor Richard Marriott  
Invocation: Fr. James O'Day, St. Philomine Church  
Definition: Ron K., Yuba City  
Chapter 5: Doris McK., Redding  
Traditions: Dick H., Anderson  
Speaker: Joe S., Niagara Falls, N.Y. (Bombay, India)  
10:30 P.M. Raffle Drawing  
Dance — Yuba/Placer Rooms  
10:30 P.M. AA Discussion Meeting, Yuba Room  
Chairman: Virgil G., Stockton



**SUNDAY, OCTOBER 5, 1975**

10:00 A.M. Combined Meeting – Hospital & Institution and General Service  
 Subject: "Service, Who Needs It?"  
 Moderator: Marge K., Broderick  
 Reader: Audiene W., San Jose  
 Panelists: Richard N., Redding  
 Jack W., Sacramento  
 Bob F., Madera  
 Jack C., Belmont  
 Judy K., San Ramon  
 Ollie O., El Cerrito

**LUNCH BREAK**

1:30 P.M. Open Speaker Meeting  
 Chairman: Mona A., Aptos  
 Definition: Sam F., Susanville  
 Invocation: Rev. Max Fell, El Camino Baptist Church  
 Chapter 5: Stan G., Napa  
 Traditions: Phyllis G., Red Bluff  
 Speaker: Barbara R., Burbank

All AA meetings except the three Open Speaker Meetings  
 will be held on the 2nd floor in the Yolo/Sacramento Rooms

Speaker Meetings held in the Theater

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**AL-ANON PROGRAM****SATURDAY, OCTOBER 4, 1975**

9:00 A.M. Registration  
 9:30 A.M. World Service Assembly Meeting  
 Bonnie H., Delegate, San Jose  
 9:30 A.M. to Alathon (Men only 4:30 to 5:30 P.M.)  
 9:30 P.M. Chairmen to be selected from each district.  
 12:00 noon Luncheon  
 1:00 P.M. Speaker Meeting  
 Invocation: Father Hannan, Our Lady of Assumption Catholic  
 Church, Carmichael  
 Chairman: Maxine K., Sacramento  
 12 Steps: Roberta N., Auburn  
 12 Traditions: Rosemarie W., Folsom  
 3 Obstacles: Myrtle J., Woodland  
 Speaker: Husna S., Niagara Falls, N.Y. (Via Bombay, India)  
 3:00 P.M. Conference Planning Meeting  
 Chairman: Irma C., Chico

**SUNDAY, OCT. 5, 1975**

9:00 A.M. Alateen Sponsor's Workshop  
 Workshop: Traditions  
 Chairman: Betty S.,  
 Citrus Heights  
 10:30 A.M. Spiritual Meeting  
 Invocation: Father  
 Timothy O'Connor,  
 Christ the King Re-  
 treat Center  
 Chairman:  
 Tillie K., Carmichael  
 12 Steps: Mary L., Davis  
 12 Traditions: Pauline S.  
 Sacramento  
 3 Obstacles: Joann M.,  
 Grass Valley  
 Speaker: Audience  
 Participation  
 Lord's Prayer: Sung by  
 Rose F., Sacramento

All Al-Anon meetings to be held in  
 Sutter/Placer Rooms

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**ALATEEN PROGRAM****SATURDAY, OCT. 4, 1975**

9:00 A.M. Registration  
 9:30 A.M. World Service  
 10:00 A.M. Discussion: "Am I  
 Responsible?"  
 Chairman: Collette C.,  
 San Jose  
 11:15 A.M. Traditions: Cheryl H.,  
 Sunnyvale  
 2:15 A.M. Pre-Conference Meeting  
 for March 1976  
 3:30 P.M. Speaker Meeting,  
 "Sharing Experience  
 Strength and Hope"  
 Chairman: Diana R.,  
 Carmichael  
 Speakers: Gary H.,  
 Carmichael  
 Sheryl J., San Rafael  
 (Balance is Point Your  
 Finger Meeting)

**SUNDAY, OCT. 5, 1975**

10:00 A.M. Spiritual Meeting  
 Sheila M., San Jose  
 Julie C., Mountain View

All Alateen Meetings to be held  
 in Yuba Room



## Donation Not Duration

When one of the so called "old timers" who has not been at a meeting for a long time was asked why he stopped attending meetings and abandoned the people who helped him, his answer was that he has talked too much and is becoming boresome to the members who have heard him many times over the years. "Besides," he said, "I have contributed my share to the group and it's about time some of the younger members take over some of the responsibilities."

When a person starts thinking like that, he should stop long enough to recall that AA time is measured in 24 hours, and that our fellowship has not made any plans to retire any member who has been in AA for a certain number of years. The old-timers and the young-timers working together as the guardians and the builders of our fellowship.

Certainly the years will slow a person down, and force him to give up some of his activities, and we should be ready to let them go when the time comes. Yet, there are many things that the old-timer can contribute to his group and to the fellowship. His presence at a meeting and a word of encouragement to the newcomer attending his first AA meeting can be an example that this fellowship works if he will follow the AA principles. Our value to our group is not measured by our duration, but by our donation. The years may wrinkle a person's skin, but the loss of gratitude will wrinkle a person's heart. If there were no old-timers, there would be no young-timers.

There are also times when the old-timer boasts about the "good old days" . . . when large crowds attended the AA meetings and the members were more dedicated to their group than they are today. Perhaps he would change his mind if he would pause and consider how AA is branching out with other groups conveniently located, with more opportunities for the members to meet and help each other. Surely, this branching out would not be going on without the men and women whose gratitude is real and is backed up by honest devotion to their group. They are men and women who are contributing to the well-being of others and receiving satisfaction from their achievements.

A self-centered life is an indication of self-pity, and the cure for such a con-

dition is not found in giving up all activities, but in actually doing unselfish things. Hobo notions have a way of sneaking up on our trains of thought and if we don't stop and kick them off, they will stall the train.

No person is as uninteresting as the person without interest, and the pitiful person is the one who chose to be a spectator, rather than a participant. The tragic person is the professional griper who points out the faults in others instead of the good points. The happy person is the one who squanders himself for others. He knows that life is too short to be selfish.

Edward B., Oregon  
Intergroup News

## Sonoma Picnic

Sonoma County Intergroup will hold a free picnic Sunday, Oct. 5, at McNear Park, 11th and F Streets, in Petaluma, from noon until whenever.

There will be a potluck with hot dogs, cold drinks, hot coffee and Dave's super spareribs.

The afternoon will feature live entertainment, prizes, fun and games.

## A Good AA

A good AA is not measured by the height of his body, but by the depth of his soul; not by the height he reaches for learning, but the depth to which he stoops for serving; not only thankful of what he may get, but is grateful for what he can give. He is one who always makes happy the sad things, and strives for clearness, but for wisdom; he would rather be right than popular. He would rather be called foolish by men than selfish by God. His battlefields are the homes of the hopeless; also jails, hospitals and prisons where those abandoned by others turn to him in hope; and how very well he knows that it is not the strength of his will, but the gentleness of his touch that soothes the most desperate of sick men, the ALCOHOLIC. So let each of us keep bright the flame of a compassion which must burn brightly and steadily in every true AA heart. For it is true that if ever our lamp of charity burns dim, the lamp of another may go out entirely! The highest dignity and greatest nobility on earth — for us to earn — is the simple but exalted title of . . . a good AA!

Silver Dollar

## Santa Clara Valley News

The next Santa Clara All Groups meeting will be Saturday, October 11, at 8:15 p.m., at the Alano Club, 1122 Fair Ave., San Jose.

This meeting will be hosted by the Hospital and Institution Committee. It should be very informative.

## Myrtledale Oktoberfest

Once more, the Myrtledale AA groups will hold their annual Oktoberfest, Sunday, Oct. 5, at the Calistoga Fairgrounds.

There will be a meeting at 3:30 p.m., featuring Mary R. of San Clemente as guest speaker.

Following the meeting, there will be a buffet with homemade German bratwurst and the famous Myrtledale brown bread.

Also, there will be live German music.

## What Maturity Is

Maturity is the ability to control anger and settle differences without violence or destruction.

Maturity is patience. It is the willingness to pass up immediate pleasure in favor of the long time gain.

Maturity is perseverance, the ability to sweat out a project or a situation, in spite of heavy opposition and discouraging setbacks.

Maturity is the capacity to face unpleasantness and frustration, discomfort and defeat, without complaint or collapse.

Maturity is humility. It is being big enough to say "I was wrong"; and, when right, the mature person need not experience the satisfaction of saying "I told you so."

Maturity is the ability to make a decision and stand by it. The immature spend their lives exploring endless possibilities — then they do nothing.

Maturity means dependability, keeping one's word, and coming through in a crisis. The immature are the master of the alibi. They are confused and disorganized. The lives of the immature are a maze of broken promises, former friends, unfinished business, and good intentions that some how never seem to materialize.

Maturity is the art of living in peace with that which one cannot change.

—Anonymous



# Good News

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and Business Manager

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## LETTER

September 9, 1975

Dear Editor:

This is in answer to "Newcomers Get Involved".

Here in Redding, four groups meet at the Alano Club, where the only clean-up is emptying ashtrays and wiping off tables. This is done by whoever volunteers, as a general rule. Newcomers are invited to help whenever they feel ready, and usually they do so fairly soon.

Most chairmen ask the newcomer if he or she wishes to say anything or ask any questions. Usually, this is done toward the end of meetings.

New steering committee members are voted on by the existing steering committee. Some groups require six months' sobriety for steering committee membership, while others try to judge each person's apparent readiness.

We rarely have speaker meetings, and then usually invite out-of-town speakers.

We prefer secretaries who have at least six months' sobriety. People handling AA phone calls at night are required to have six months' sobriety.

Secretaries ask newcomers to chair meetings after three or four months' sobriety, or as soon as they are willing.

We are anxious to hear what others do. I enjoyed your article. Something like this is a good way to stimulate participation.

Jean S.

## EDITORIAL

### News About Good News

Several members of the fellowship send us an occasional check for \$3.00 to do with as we see fit. We have been remiss in individual thank-yous.

There are now four new subscribers who are curious as to how they came to get the Good News. Three are newcomers. One is ill and rarely can get to meetings. So if anyone else would like to send a gift subscription to Good News — either as an anonymous gift or with your name, we'll be happy to handle it. Meanwhile thank all of you anonymous benefactors out there. (Money sent to us this way is always used for new subscriptions. Good News expenses are handled in other ways.)

We need still more news! It's much better to see more and more group news arriving at the Central Office before the fifteenth of the month — and it is okay as long as it gets there by the fifteenth, but our staff feels like crying crocodile tears when 6 or 7 stories arrive after the deadline. Please remember that we have no leeway on our deadline with the printer. Send us your news preferably as early as you can.

Several new AA's are helping out with the mailing, typing, etc. for Good News. If you have at least one year's sobriety and would like to try your hand at writing, typing or clerical work, please call the Central Office (415) 982-4473. We're growing and could use some extra help.

Thank you group secretaries and individual subscribers for your response to the September bills. We're not quite out of the woods yet. But we're getting there!

Ed C., Editor

### Give Happiness to Others -- The Rewards Are Beautiful

#### 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.

## Learning to Listen

The above title may sound incongruous, but how in God's name do you learn to listen? That's what I thought when first I heard the saying: Then I discovered it meant what it said; so I tried to apply myself to it, found it could be absorbing and like everything else in this wonderful Fellowship could help me find a better quality of sobriety.

It means that when I go to a gathering of fellow members I try to rid my mind of the day's pettiness and concentrate on what is being said, to pick out the things I like, to put aside anything that irks me, to follow the pattern which seems to thread through most alcoholic stories, to pick out the similarities which show in a story, to think less of self and to have compassion for others. It isn't easy but in learning to listen instead of giving lip service, I have to give ear service and not pretend, but to listen intently, especially to someone who may be going through mental torment and wish to talk themselves out.

I have not been very successful so far but as long as I apply myself to the AA program of recovery I will be able to keep trying to "Learn to Listen."

The Roundabout (Scotland)

The shortest way to do many things is to do only one thing at a time.

Richard Cecil

### Friday Central All Groups

Joe S. of Park Presidio Group will be the first speaker of the month, Friday, October 3, at San Francisco Intercounty Fellowship Friday Night All Groups. The host group will be California Street.

All Groups meets on the main floor of the Alano Club, 414 Grant Ave., at 8:30 p.m.

Other speakers and host groups for the month will be:

October 10 — Beth T., Stepping Stone; Excelsior.

October 17 — Meek M., Redwood City Tuesday; Sunset.

October 24 — Florette P., Gratitude Group; Potrero Hill.

October 31 — Gage S., Saturday Matinee; Groupo Progresso.

Come early and bring a friend. Coffee and arms-length before and after the meeting.



## Thanks for the Memory

(Continued from page 1)

"Down Memory Lane" is a pleasant place to stroll occasionally in a quiet moment, and we should not shun it. But we can never live there again. A quick trip back in time on the wings of a nearly forgotten song; a sigh for old tender feelings stirred, and then it's back to the world of reality, the world of today. And it's not a bad world, either, for a recovering alcoholic.

But for each of us our past is a part of us and we cannot simply obliterate it by pretending it didn't happen. Neither can we change it now. As one philosopher put it: "Even God cannot change the past."

We alcoholics must face the facts of the past just as we face the facts of today. What happened then was the result of our illness; what happens today is the result of our sobriety — and today we are responsible.

We have no need to take on a burden of shame or blame. The Serenity Prayer, surely, has the answer for those who feel oppressed by their drinking days.

Now that we have left the bottle back there we can face each day with confidence and joy and gratitude. Today we live.

But memory lane will serve us well if we occasionally remember that once we were practising alcoholics on the way down. Today we are recovering alcoholics on the way up.

And the view gets better all the time.  
The News (Victoria, Australia)

## Gay Al-Anon Group

Do you live with an alcoholic, does a relative, friend or lover have a drinking problem? Now a new Al-Anon group has been started with men and women of the gay community in mind.

Meeting on Tuesday evenings 8 P.M. at Acceptance House 1710 Golden Gate (between Divisadero and Broderick) San Francisco.

When you go on your next 12th Step call — REMEMBER — you are going to see the sick person not because he is an ALCOHOLIC (only he can make that statement) BUT BECAUSE YOU ARE!

## SAN FRANCISCO ALANO CLUB Chinatown Gate

414 Grant Avenue, near Bush Street

The Alano Club is open from 10 a.m. to 10:45 p.m. Sunday to Thursday, and from 10 a.m. to midnight, Friday and Saturday. AA meetings daily. Your friends are welcome, too. Come and join in the fun! (Information for the Entertainment Calendar was not submitted for October's Good News).

## Positively Negative

We drank for happiness and became unhappy.

We drank for joy and became miserable.

We drank for sociability and became argumentative.

We drank for sophistication and became obnoxious.

We drank for friendship and made enemies.

We drank for sleep and awakened without rest.

We drank for strength and felt weak.

We drank "medicinally" and acquired health problems.

We drank for relaxation and got the shakes.

We drank for bravery and became afraid.

We drank for confidence and became doubtful.

We drank to make conversation easier and slurred our speech.

We drank to feel heavenly and ended up feeling like hell.

We drank to forget and were forever haunted.

We drank for freedom and became slaves.

We drank to erase problems and saw them multiply.

We drank to cope with life and invited death.

The Roundabout (Scotland)

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