



GOOD NEWS



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By the Northern California Council of Alcoholics Anonymous

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Fresno Election

Treasurer Dianne J. Rotates Out; David K., Rohnert Park Elected

With one-ballot swiftness, David K. became NCCAA's new treasurer. Dave hails from Rohnert Park in the North Bay and is a C.P.A. with worlds of accounting experience. He has owned his own accounting firm and now works for an accounting firm in San Francisco. He has been active in General Service as well as H. & I. He was the treasurer of the Santa Rosa Conference when we were there last and will be a big asset to NCCAA. Happy Counting, Dave!

I don't know when or where Dianne J. attended her first NCCAA conference, but I first met her at the

Santa Rosa conference in June of 1985. We became acquainted and kept bumping into each other at conferences for the next year. I know that I took her to her first Steering Committee Meeting and Open Delegates Meeting at Santa Rosa and insisted she subscribe to the GOOD NEWS so that she would have a line on when the next conference would be. (I wanted to be sure she would know when and where the next one would be so she would be there.)

The sparks flew at the Oakland conference in 1986 and in December of that year she moved from Para-

dise, California and I moved from Menlo Park and we bought a condo together in Sunnyvale. We both became involved in the workings of Zone 34 (Santa Clara County) where I became Intergroup Rep. and then Zone Chairman.

In March 1989 Dianne was elected as NCCAA Treasurer after being nominated by Zone 34 and was re-elected in 1991. She has served us well as treasurer and been involved in many committees. She headed a committee that drew up the present conference guidelines that are currently used by our conference committees to aid in putting on our conferences. It is our understanding that these same guidelines are used throughout Northern California by other committees that are putting on conferences. Through prudent spending, cost control, plus the generosity of all those who have attended the Conferences, NCCAA was able to send over \$10,000 to New York Central Office in her last year in office.

We will all miss Dianne as treasurer and salute her for a job well done. Thanks again, Dianne from all of us. She plans to remain active in the affairs of the Council, so we have not seen the last of her. She has been asked to chair a committee that will look at revising our *Purpose, Structure, Functions* booklet and plans to stay active in Zone 34 doing whatever is necessary.

**Ron J., Editor, GOOD NEWS
Sunnyvale, CA**

Redding Readies For Next NCCAA Meeting June 25-27; Fair Weather Promised

The Redding gang, under the direction of Jim H., chairman, is meeting and getting all prepared for the "Free Drawing" (No longer called a Raffle) when NCCAA invades Redding during the weekend of June 25 thru 27, 1993. We have planned to use the Holiday Inn, 1900 Hilltop Drive, as our host hotel. The hotel will be holding a block of rooms for us until June 4, so get your reservations in early. Their telephone number is (916) 221-7500 should you wish to call. Be sure to mention NCCAA as it may help to defray expenses.

Speakers for the event have been

confirmed and include: Patty O., Mission Viejo, California for Friday night, Jim W., Aledo, Texas for Saturday night, and Howard P., Culver City, California will close the conference on Sunday.

Bill C. (CNIA Delegate from Fresno) will address the General Service meeting followed by Robert R. from San Jose at the Young People's Meeting on Saturday afternoon.

Guy J. promised that the weather would not be too hot in June when he presented the bid to the Steering Committee last year. We'll see, maybe he has an "in" with HP.

News From The Chairperson

It is hard to believe that my first year as your chairperson has passed so quickly. It has been a privilege, and again I thank you for all your love and support. The Fresno Conference was incredible. All the speakers were marvelous; they were present at all our meetings, service as well as recovery. The Fresno Committee came through big time, and the Hotel and Convention personnel were the best. I wrote a lot of thank you letters! And, of course, I want to especially thank the two thousand plus loving AAs who came and supported, one more time, the oldest and best conference in North America.

It was Dianne J.'s last conference as our Treasurer, and we are all deeply grateful for the outstanding service that she rendered us. She has been an invaluable source of information for me and a loving and supportive friend this past year as well. I am not letting her have any time off, however. I have asked her to chair the committee that will up-date our Purpose, Structure, Function Booklet, and she will help Zone 34 put together their next NCCAA conference bid.

I warmly welcome David K., our new NCCAA Treasurer from Rohnert Park. He is highly respected, very competent, and a great team player. He has been quietly working behind the scenes on NCCAA, General Service, and Hospitals & Institutions Committees, applying his expertise to the problems at hand and solving them.

At our Steering Committee and Open Delegates' Meetings in Fresno, several important business items were passed. Monterey's bid for the 1996 Spring Conference brought to the Open Delegates' Meeting in Redding on June 26. We will talk about NCCAA taking its inventory, guidelines for using interpreters for the hearing impaired, using the Third Legacy Procedure to elect our Council Chairperson and Treasurer, forming a committee to update our *Purpose, Structure, Function Booklet*, and the appointment and term of the Finance Committee Chairperson as well as the structure of the Finance Committee.

I would like all of us to re-examine the role of the NCCAA group delegates and zone chairmen. We currently have 24 zone chairmen (out of a possible 48), and no one knows how many group delegates. Each group is entitled to elect two group delegates, but how many are? The group delegates elect their zone chairman. How many zone chairmen hold zone meetings?

GOOD NEWS

Newsletter of the

Northern California Council
of Alcoholics Anonymous

Articles of interest to our readers are welcomed and may be mailed to the editor at:

Post Office Box 64090,
Sunnyvale CA 94088-4090

Deadline Guidelines (Not Set in Stone)

December 10 for January-February
February 10 for March-April
April 10 for May-June
June 10 for July-August
August 10 for September-October
October 10 for November-December

My information tells me few, if any, is the answer to each of these questions; yet we have just put on an incredible conference, possibly the best one any of us have ever attended. So, do we adopt the attitude that if it works, we don't fix it; or is the good the enemy of the best here? I do not
(See CHAIRPERSON, Page Five)

Good News Policy The Good News is the newspaper of the Northern California Council of Alcoholics Anonymous and therefore is a vehicle for you, the members and supporters of the Council to express your views. The views expressed here are those of the writers, and are not intended to represent the opinion of Alcoholics Anonymous or NCCAA as a whole, nor do they necessarily reflect the views of the staff of the Good News.

If you would like to contribute articles to the Good News, we welcome your participation. The guidelines are as follows: "It (Good News) reports the activities of the Council, Hospital and Institution Committee, General Service, and other articles of interest to AA members. News is written about the conferences for the benefit of members unable to attend. News of activities of the Groups in Northern California may also be included."

RECAP

When I came to AA, Bill W. was still active. His articles appeared from time to time in the Grapevine as one of its best features. Has it ever occurred to you that our magazine could be a medium wherein elder statesmen and past trusted servants might share with AA at large?

I can recall Twelfth Step calls performed in the 60's. The messenger did not automatically become the sponsor. Nor did he drop the newcomer after the first contact. He followed up. He identified himself as an alcoholic. He took the newcomer to a variety of meetings. He introduced him to sober members from whom he could get phone numbers. He made clear that his Twelfth Step work was vital insurance for his own sobriety. He stressed the importance of Conference-approved literature.

In those days, outside facilities were few in number. We used to introduce many a fearful, sweating, shaking sufferer to our groups. We would tell them there were no foolish questions in AA. However, more recently, we have heard some foolish answers. We have heard people confusing alcohol with problems other than alcohol. But there is a bright side. Many groups read the Traditions at meetings. Others devote one full meeting a month to a Tradition-study. My Service District devotes a portion of its monthly meetings to treatises on the Traditions and the Concepts. Our Intergroup conducts monthly workshops on AA principles. All of this bodes well.

FRANK B., Napa, CA

(Frank is a regular contributor to GOOD NEWS. Thanks again, Frank.)

Was My Leg Being Pulled?

By Jack Alexander

Ordinarily, diabetes isn't rated as one of the hazards of reporting, but the Alcoholics Anonymous article in the Saturday Evening Post came close to costing me my liver, and maybe AA neophytes ought to be told this when they are handed copies of the article to read. It might impress them. In the course of my fact gathering, I drank enough Coca-Cola, Pepsi-Cola, ginger ale, Moxie and Sweetie to float the Saratoga. Then there was the thickly frosted cake so beloved of AA gatherings, and the heavily sweet-

"They were good-looking and well dressed"

ened coffee, and the candy. Nobody can tell me that alcoholism isn't due solely to an abnormal craving for sugar, not even a learned psychiatrist. Otherwise the AA assignment was a pleasure.

It began when the Post asked me to look into AA as a possible article subject. All I knew of alcoholism at the time was that, like most other nonalcoholics, I had had my hand bitten (and my nose punched) on numerous occasions by alcoholic pals to whom I had extended a hand - unwisely, it always seemed afterward. Anyway, I had as understandable skepticism about the whole business.

My first contact with actual AAs came when a group of four of them called at my apartment one afternoon. This session was pleasant, but it didn't help my skepticism any. Each one introduced himself as an alcoholic who had gone "dry," as the official expression has it. They were good-looking and well-dressed and, as we sat around drinking Coca-Cola

(which was all they would take), they spun yarns about their horrendous drinking misadventures. The stories sounded spurious, and after the visitors had left, I had a strong suspicion that my leg was being pulled. They

"My fingers were still crossed"

had behaved like a bunch of actors sent out by some Broadway casting agency.

Next morning I took the subway to the headquarters of Alcoholics Anonymous in downtown Manhattan, where I met Bill W. This Bill W. is a very disarming guy and an expert at indoctrinating the stranger into psychology, psychiatry, physiology, pharmacology, and folklore of alcoholism. He spent the good part of a couple of days telling me what it was all about. It was an interesting experience, but at the end of it my fingers were still crossed. He knew it, of course, without my saying it, and in the days that followed he took me to the homes of some of the AAs where I got a chance to talk to the wives, too. My skepticism suffered a few minor scratches, but not enough to hurt. Then Bill shepherded me to a few AA meetings at a clubhouse somewhere in the West Twenties. Here were all manner of alcoholics, many of them the niggers at the fringe of the movement, still fragrant of liquor and needing a shave. Now I knew I was among a few genuine alcoholics anyway. The bearded, fume-breathing lads were AA skeptics, too, and now I had some company.

The week spent with Bill W. was a success from one standpoint. I knew I had the makings of a readable report but, unfortunately, I didn't quite believe in it and told Bill so. He asked why I didn't look in on the AAs in

other cities, and see what went on there. I agreed to do this, and we mapped out an itinerary. I went to Philadelphia first, and some of the local AAs took me to the psychopathic ward of Philadelphia General Hospital and showed me how they work on the alcoholic inmates. In that gloomy place, it was an impressive thing to see men who bounced in and out of the ward themselves patiently jawing a man who was still haggard and shaking from a binge that would end up in the gutter.

Akron was the next stop. Bill met me there and promptly introduced me to Doc S., who is another hard man to disbelieve. There were more hospital visits, an AA meeting, and interviews with people who a year or two before were undergoing varying forms of the blind staggers. Now they seemed calm, well spoken, steady handed, and prosperous, at least mildly prosperous.

Doc S. drove us both from Akron to Cleveland one night, and the same pattern was repeated. The universality of alcoholism was more apparent here. In Akron it had been mostly factory workers. In Cleveland there were lawyers, accountants and other professional men, in addition to laborers. And again the same stories. The pattern was repeated also in

"Once rollicking rumpots, they were now sober"

Chicago, the only variation there being the presence at the meeting of a number of newspapermen. I had spent most of my working life on newspapers and I could really talk to these men. The real clincher though, came in St. Louis, which is my hometown. Here I met a number of my (See, Was My Leg --, Page Four)

Was My Leg

(Continued from Page Three)

own friends who were AAs, and the last remnants of skepticism vanished. Once rollicking rumpots, they were now sober. It didn't seem possible, but there it was.

When the article was published, the reader mail was astonishing. Most of it came from desperate drinkers or their wives, or from mothers, fathers, or interested friends. The letters were forwarded to the AA office in New York and from there were sent on to the AA groups nearest the writers of the letters. I don't know exactly how many letters came in, all told, but the last time I checked a year or so ago, it was around 6,000. They still trickle in from time to time, from people who have carried the article in their pockets all this time, or kept it in the bureau drawer under the handkerchief case intending to do something about it.

I guess the letters will keep coming in for years, and I hope they do, because now I know that every one of them springs from a mind, either of an alcoholic or of someone close to him, which is undergoing a type of hell that Dante would have gagged at. And I know, too, that this victim is on the way to recovery, if he really wants to recover. There is something very heartening about this, particularly in a world which has been struggling toward peace for centuries without ever achieving it for very long periods of time.

(Reprinted from *AA Grapevine*, May 1945, via *Oregon Newsletter*, Portland Area Intergroup, Portland)

HUMOR

Heard any new jokes lately that are fit for publication? Please send them to the Editor. This column needs your help!

This is not a joke!

In whine veritas

An old friend of mine who has been to drug and alcohol hell and back says they were sitting around his AA meeting the other day, discussing former White House Chief of Staff Michael Deaver, when one of the group observed:

"Deaver is the kind of guy who gives alcoholics a bad name."

That is not only a funny line, it is dead on, as any recovering alcoholic will tell you.

Deaver was convicted earlier this week of two counts of lying to a grand jury and one count of lying to a congressional subcommittee that was investigating his lobbying practices. Until U.S. District Court Thomas Penfield Jackson barred the issue, Deaver's attorney contended that Deaver perjured himself because his memory was impaired by alcoholism.

In the "Big Book," the Alcoholics Anonymous manual for learning to live again, the dirty deeds that men and women do under the influence of alcohol are referred to as "the wreckage of the past." AA members are urged to deal with that wreckage, not dismiss it. Seven of AA's 12 Steps of Recovery deal in one form or another with owning up to alcoholic behavior, acknowledging faults, making amends and "promptly admitting" wrong-doing.

There is nothing in the Big Book about how it's OK to whine, "The booze made me do it."

Says my friend, "If you accept Deaver's argument, then you could say that drunken drivers aren't responsible when they kill people, and, by extension, Charles Manson's followers weren't responsible for the murders they committed because they were drug addicts."

AA members, most medical authorities, and even insurance companies believe alcoholism is a disease. A popular slogan at AA meetings is,

"We are not bad people trying to be good, we are sick people trying to get well." But alcoholism is not a treatable disease in the traditional medical sense. One can't take radiation, antibiotics or aspirin and get rid of one's alcoholism. AA, surely the most successful treatment in existence, maintains, the only cure is abstinence from booze and adherence to its 12 Steps.

While AA recognizes that irresponsible behavior is certainly a symptom of the disease—Lord knows each member has heard and told enough horror stories to last a lifetime—the organization insists that that behavior must be dealt with if an alcoholic stands any chance of recovery.

Said my friend, "Society can't deal with alcoholism if alcoholics are automatically forgiven any bad behavior. Deaver's disease does not forgive his transgressions."

There is another declaration in the Big Book that my friend thinks Deaver and his lawyers should note:

"We may lose our position or
(See IN WHINE, Page Five)

DELTA INTERGROUP PRESENTS
6TH ANNUAL SPRING FEST AND

SPAGHETTI DINNER

Saturday May 1, 1993

American Legion Building

Lodi, California

Registration begins - 9:30 a.m.

Registration \$2.00

Dinner \$5:00

Send pre-registration to:

Spring Fest Committee

2514 South Ham Lane

Lodi, CA 95240

Speakers:

Jim M. - - Sacramento

Danny O'C. - - San Jose

Ilene W. - - Beverly Hills

Chairperson

(Continued from Page Two)

know. As your Chairperson, I remain impartial in order to facilitate our business meetings; but I would really like to know what you think.

Finally, I would like to remind you that we have 24 County/Zones without chairmen. To the right you will find a zone map that illustrates the need for us to reach out to the people in these areas to let them know what a wonderful experience serving in NCCAA can be. If you know someone in one of these County/Zones that would like to act as a contact, please give me his/her name and phone number.

Yours in love and service,

DIANE O., Saratoga, CA

In whine

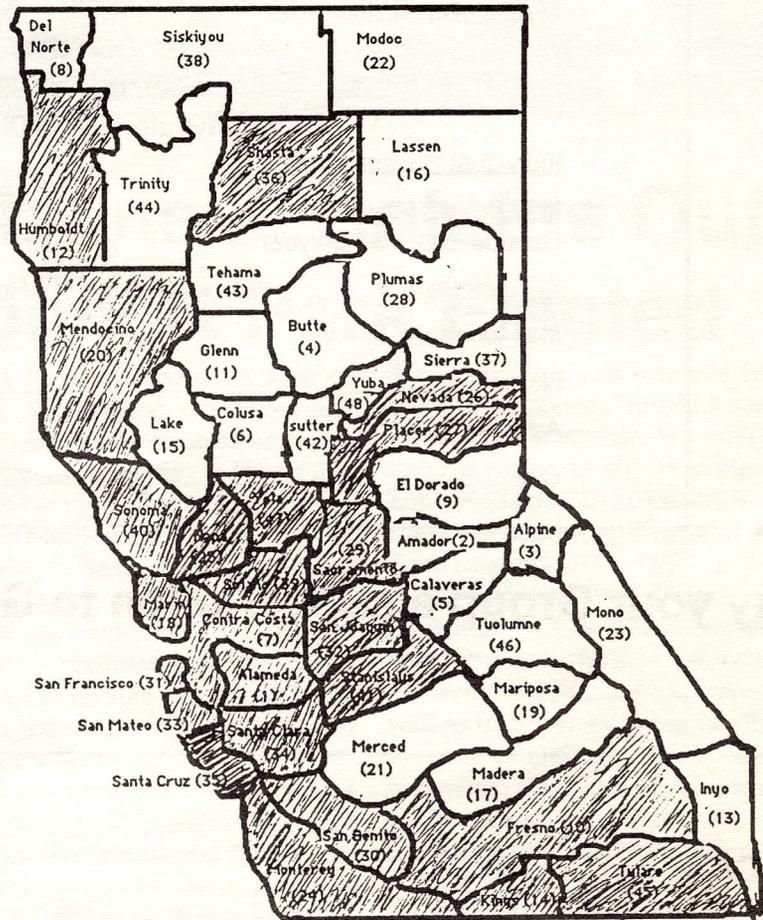
(Continued from Page Four)

reputation or face jail, but we are willing. We have to be. We must not shrink at anything."

(By Stephanie Salter, San Francisco Examiner, December 20, 1987. Stephanie Salter is an Examiner columnist. This article was submitted to the GOOD NEWS in 1987 by John O., El Cerrito, CA)

NCCAA CONFERENCE DATES	
1993 Conferences	
REDDING - June 25, 26, 27	
STOCKTON - October 8, 9, 10	
1994 Conferences	
OAKLAND - March 25, 26, 27	
MONTEREY - June 24, 25, 26	
MODESTO - October 7, 8, 9	
1995 Conferences	
FRESNO - March 10, 11, 12	
SAN MATEO - June 2, 3, 4	
SACRAMENTO - Oct. 6, 7, 8	
1996 Conferences	
MONTEREY - March 8, 9, 10	
MARK YOUR CALENDARS	

Zone Map



The following Zone/Counties have no representation at our Conferences:

Zone	County	Zone	County
2	Amador	19	Mariposa
3	Alpine	21	Merced
4	Butte	22	Modoc
5	Calaveras	23	Mono
6	Colusa	28	Plumas
8	Del Norte	37	Sierra
9	El Dorado	38	Siskiyou
11	Glenn	42	Sutter
13	Inyo	43	Tehama
15	Lake	44	Trinity
16	Lassen	46	Tuolumne
17	Madera	48	Yuba

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