



GOOD NEWS



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By the Northern California Council of Alcoholics Anonymous

JANUARY
1995

Are We Really Self-Supporting?

"How many people attended the last NCCAA Conference?" the treasurer was asked when the financial statement was being presented. "Just take the amount of money we collected for registration and divide it by the five dollars that it costs to register and you'll know," replied the treasurer.

Unfortunately, that's not true. How many people did you see without badges at the last NCCAA Conference you attended? I saw a

lot of them and asked myself, "Why?" What does it mean to those of us who pay our fair share of the costs that so many other people freeload at our expense? What does this behavior have to do with the spiritual principles of our Traditions? In Alcoholics Anonymous we are proud to be able to say, "we are self-supporting through our own contributions" (AA Preamble). Are we living by that principle at our NCCAA Conferences?

Sometimes the right to attend our conferences without registering and paying \$5.00 has been defended using our Traditions. Tradition Seven says "the AA groups themselves ought to be fully supported by the voluntary contributions of their own members," and Tradition Three says that AA membership ought not "ever depend upon money or conformity."

Attendance at an NCCAA Conference (See SELF-SUPPORTING, Page 4)

News From The Chairperson

A standing ovation for the Modesto Committee who put on a five star first Conference. Their charismatic leader, Bob O., exemplifies Concept Nine's essay on leadership in Alcoholics Anonymous. I heard no criticism at all, only praise and the desire to attend a second NCCAA Conference in Modesto. The Red Lion Hotel staff, as well as the Conference Centre employees, treated us like family and attended to every need immediately and efficiently. The entire weekend was impressive with the main speakers and other participants really out-doing themselves. Thank you. My praise cannot be high enough. And the Hispanic community — what a delightful addition they were with their speaker meeting, marathon meetings, mariachi band and baile. Ole!

Our Steering Committee and

Open Delegates' Meetings at the Conference were productive and well-attended. We have the strongest Steering Committee that NCCAA has ever had (80 strong) with all the County/Zones and Intergroup/Central Offices in Northern California represented. It is exciting!

In our meetings, we had an update from Dianne J. who is compiling, as a guideline for future committees, a book of motions acted upon by the Steering Committee. John G. reported on his effort to update the current delegates' roster, and we discussed ways that zone chairpeople have reached out to their local groups to attract new delegates. The Sacramento Committee presented a bid for the Fall Conference on October 3-5, 1997. It was approved by the Steering Committee.

(See MORE FROM, Page Four)

GOOD NEWS Quarterly Publication Is Approved

When the GOOD NEWS Editor, Ron J. suggested to the Steering Committee in Stockton that the GOOD NEWS be published four times a year instead of the usual six times, they agreed that four times would be enough to carry the news of the Council.

Present plans call for publishing a year-end issue in early January containing the financial statements for the previous business year.

An issue is planned for the months around each conference. That is, a Spring issue in April, a Summer issue in July, and a Fall Wrap-up in October. It is hoped that this reduced schedule will entice more of you to participate in sending articles of interest for publication.

A Time-Tested Program of Recovery

Going to meetings and not drinking do not treat my alcoholism. Working the Twelve Steps treats my alcoholism. If all I do is go to meetings and not drink, eventually I'll suffer from untreated alcoholism. Untreated alcoholism comes out of depression, anxiety, fear, hostility, apathy, boredom, despair, and other unpleasant symptoms.

With unfortunate frequency, I've seen men and women with varying amounts of sobriety beset by those crippling conditions. Some of them have ten, fifteen, twenty, or more years of going to meetings and not drinking. Some wind up drunk. Others end up in the hospital with "nervous breakdowns." Some kill themselves. Many try to solve their problems by taking mood altering drugs provided by doctors who should know better but obviously don't.

In the foreword to Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions, we read "AA's Twelve Steps are a group of principles, spiritual in nature, which, if practiced as a way of life, can expel the obsession to drink and enable the sufferer to

become happily and usefully whole."

In my experience, that is 100 percent true. Precise, specific, and definite, the Steps offer a path to growing mental, emotional, and spiritual health. They provide direction for lives of expanded joy and usefulness.

Perhaps sleeplessness is caused by something as simple as too much coffee. Possibly, anxiety, or uneasiness can be relieved by a program of exercise designed to drain off tensions accumulated during the day. On the other hand, my symptoms may be the inevitable result of untreated alcoholism. Once again, going to meetings and not drinking do not treat my alcoholism. The Twelve Steps treat it. Meetings and sobriety can create a climate where my alcoholism can be treated by working the Steps. If I don't use the Steps, I'm eventually going to develop all those painful and unhappy symptoms because of my failure to do enough with the program to get what AA offers.

Six years ago, an AA I knew was deep in depression and riddled with fears from untreated alcoholism. He put himself into a treatment facility. He had been sober for eleven years and had worked the Steps. That's right! Eleven years of sobriety — and suffering so severely from untreated alcoholism that he put himself into an

(See TIME-TESTED, Page Five)

Tempus Fugit

As 1994 melds with 1995 the phenomenon of change comes into play, namely the rotation of officers, committee members, and general service representatives in our Coastal, area structure. New candidates assume new responsibilities in the execution of AA's Third Legacy. And those leaving office can be regarded as a pool of potential service-sponsors.

Although many shy away from intergroup and general service, the picture is becoming rosier as time flies by. More speakers are incorporating service-principles, plus their personal service-experience, into their recovery talks and comments. They explain how service enhanced their recovery. They are proof that people in service don't drink. An AA truism declares: "When everything else seems to fail, nothing will so insure sobriety as working with another alcoholic." This can be done in a variety of ways: twelfth-step calls and sponsorship, to name two. It also can be done by working with others in service.

When recovery-speakers include service principles and experience in their talks, they make service attractive. They bring an answer to their listeners' question: "What's in it for me?"

Bill W. endorsed positive change. He said we have to grow or else deteriorate. However, he also said we ought not to tinker with our basic principles; we should not try to amend our Steps and Traditions.

(See TEMPUS FUGIT, Page Five)

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

Tentative Deadline Guidelines

(Not Set in Stone)

First week in January for January Issue
April 1 for Spring Issue
July 1 for Summer Issue
First week in October for Winter Issue

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."

Northern California Council Of Alcoholics Anonymous

Statement Of Revenue and Expenses for The Year Ended December 31, 1994

08-Jan-95	1994 <u>OAKLAND</u>	1994 <u>MONTEREY</u>	1994 <u>MODESTO</u>	1995 <u>FRESNO</u>	1995 <u>SAN MATEO</u>	<u>GENERAL</u>	<u>TOTAL ALL FUNDS</u>
Revenue							
Pre-Registration	\$ 1,455	\$ 1,695	\$ 2,035	\$ 305		\$	\$ 5,490
Registration	7,664	5,050	6,310				19,024
Free Drawing - Raffle	1,396	1,364	2,172				4,932
Literature		139					139
Seventh Tradition - Marathon Meetings	735	248	616				1,599
Seventh Tradition - Speaker Meetings	2,180	2,648	2,075				6,903
Seventh Tradition - All Other Meetings	280	353	497			97	1,227
Other Revenue							0
Total Revenue	<u>13,710</u>	<u>11,497</u>	<u>13,705</u>	<u>305</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>97</u>	<u>39,314</u>
Expenses							
Convention Center	(A) 8,333	(A) 3,258	4,391	330			16,311
Delegate Ribbins	45					169	214
Dance Band	400	425	500				1,325
Flowers and Decorations	338	223	315				875
Free Drawing Expense	494	450	440				1,384
Good News Expenses						394	394
Insurance	1,192	1,192	1,195	1,196	1,195		5,970
Literature		139					139
Mailing	108	30	23			450	611
Marathon Meeting Expenses	41	110					150
Miscellaneous Expenses	10						10
Printing	1,106	896	1,297	797	11		4,106
Registration Costs		15					15
Sign Language Interpreter	240	240	240				720
Speaker/Committee - Dinner	526	462	315				1,303
Speaker/Committee - Lodging	1,641	2,219	1,647				5,507
Speaker/Committee - Travel	1,515	2,381	1,849	335	108	342	6,529
Steering Committee Expenses						907	907
Steering Committee Officer Expenses						1,742	1,742
Steering Committee Telephone						874	874
Contribution to A. A. W. S.						455	455
Total Expenses	<u>15,987</u>	<u>12,039</u>	<u>12,212</u>	<u>2,658</u>	<u>1,313</u>	<u>5,333</u>	<u>49,542</u>
Excess (Deficiency) Of Revenue Over Expenses	<u>\$ (2,277)</u>	<u>\$ (542)</u>	<u>\$ 1,493</u>	<u>\$ (2,353)</u>	<u>\$ (1,313)</u>	<u>\$ (5,236)</u>	<u>\$ (10,228)</u>
(A) Includes Expenses Paid In 1992 and 1993	\$ 5,370	\$ 1,192					\$ 6,562
Cash Balance At Statement Date							<u>\$ 16,334</u>
Prepaid Conference Deposits and Expense for 1995 At Statement Date (Fresno and San Mateo)							<u>\$ 3,666</u>

JANUARY 1995

GOODNEWS

PAGE THREE

More From The Chairperson

(Continued from Page One)

tee and accepted at the Open Delegates' Meeting.

The Steering Committee Meeting on December 4 at the Diablo Alano Club in Stockton produced some very exciting sharing. We began by discussing changing the number of delegates per group from two to one. This sharing evolved into a discussion of the role of the NCCAA group delegate as it exists today. It has changed dramatically from the early days when there were fewer groups and only one conference in Northern California. New groups and new conferences have proliferated. Few groups have NCCAA delegates. Most people who wear the blue delegate ribbon do so because they decided at the conference to sign up to represent their homegroup. Delegates do not elect zone chairpeople. Zone chairpeople have come, in great part, through other service structures and have been "appointed" by the NCCAA Chairperson. Most do not hold zone delegate meetings because there are no delegates in their zones. It is not the "big deal" that it used to be when we were the only conference in Northern California. So, do we need group delegates, or is our strong, healthy Steering Committee enough to guide NCCAA through the years ahead? And how about the distribution of flyers? If we had no registered delegates, would our lines of communication be jeopardized?

This is the Big News that we are discussing, and all of you are welcome to participate by attending the Open Delegates' Meeting in Fresno. We invite everyone to give us whatever input they feel is important. Also, please do not forget that we will be electing the NCCAA Treasurer at the Fresno

Conference. Your vote is always important. All group delegates and Steering Committee members are eligible to vote.

Finally, at the December 4 Steering Committee meeting, we approved the four speakers that the Speaker Selection Committee had selected for the Spring Conference in Monterey in 1996. For your information, they are: Friday night, Peggy M., Bellevue, Nebraska, Saturday afternoon, James D., San Jose, California, Saturday night, Scott R., Sherman Oaks, California, Sunday morning, Greg M., Kaneone, Hawaii.

All four were our first choices, and we feel very blessed that they were able to accept our invitation.

See you in Fresno. The Committee is ready for us with their usual Standard of Excellence. Thank you John W. and Company.

Yours in love and service,

DIANE ☺, Chairperson,
Cupertino, CA

(Clip this out for your wallet)

NCCAA CONFERENCE DATES

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
- SAN JOSE - May 31, June 1, 2
- REDDING - Oct. 11, 12, 13

1997 CONFERENCES

- FRESNO - March 14, 15, 16
- OAKLAND - June 6, 7, 8
- SACRAMENTO - Oct. 3, 4, 5

**Please Pre-Register
Early & Mention NCCAA
To Your Hotel**

Self-Supporting

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ference is not the same thing as membership in Alcoholics Anonymous. Throughout the weekend in any city that hosts an NCCAA Conference there are AA meetings that welcome anyone with or without money. The choice to attend NCCAA comes from wanting what we have provided. We meet in large comfortable facilities and pay travel expenses for specially selected AA speakers. We who attend are the ones who pay the bills. Many conferences take the total cost of the event and figure a fair share per attendee thus charging \$10 to \$50 to register. Our \$5.00 registration allows everyone to enjoy the weekend for a modest share of the expenses. The rest of the contributions come from the Seventh Tradition buckets at each meeting and donations for tickets for the free drawing. Our last two conferences lost money while many people attended without registering.

What is the solution? Turnstiles that refuse admission to anyone without a badge? Bouncers? I suggest that tried and true AA principle—sponsorship, one drunk talking to another. What message do we carry to the local AA members when NCCAA comes to town? Do we tell people that it costs only \$5.00 to register or do we imply that you don't need money because AA is free? Do we offer to pay the registration fee for a newcomer who can't pay? I came to my first NCCAA Conference financially assisted by AA friends who wanted to share a special adventure in sobriety.

Set a good example. Members of the local committee should be the first to pay their \$5.00 registration. Then it will be easy to carry the message that registering helps to cover the expenses of the

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A Time Tested Program

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alcoholic treatment hospital. He went through the three week program, taking part in psychodrama, group therapy, counseling, testing, evaluations, etc.

Both of those facilities speak highly of AA and describe its important role in their treatment approach. However, no one in either place told this man that if he worked through the Twelve Steps, he'd get rid of his depression and fears. Although the facilities employ AA members as counselors, no one seemed to understand that the answers for a drunk at any stage of sobriety are to be found in the Big Book. Not surprisingly, when the man began to take Fourth and Fifth Steps, and make amends, he found freedom from his symptoms.

Another man I knew was sober sixteen years and had been acutely depressed and afraid during the last six years of that period. Then he ran into some people who explained to him that, while sober sixteen years, he had managed to miss most of the AA program. He had never worked the Steps. Now, he began. He, too, found his fears disappearing and his depression lifting.

"When you've been sober for years, it's hard to believe that your answers still lie in the Big Book," explained a man who had a similar experience after a number of years of not drinking. "I started to think that I needed psychotherapy or hospitalization. I suffered from untreated alcoholism because I hadn't done enough with the Steps. When I got busy with them, it was like walking into a large room with one small light. As I continued to take inventories and Fifth Steps and make more amends, the light gradually became brighter."

"One of the problems of get-

ting fouled up with a substantial amount of sobriety is that a person finds it almost impossible to understand that his answers still lie in working the Twelve Steps. I didn't drink during this time, but ultimately I would have without the freedom that came from using the Steps.

Both the Big Book and Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions point out with powerful clarity that the AA program is not just for staying sober. Sobriety is the beginning, not the end. The AA program is a transforming prescription for a life of growing health, usefulness, and joy. By working and re-working the Twelve Steps on a continuing, lifetime commitment, we experience the promises spelled out on pages 83 and 84 in the Big Book and the guarantee quoted earlier from the foreword of Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions.

Those guarantees, telling what you and I may expect as a result of working the Steps, speak of wholeness. They don't describe alcoholics who traded drunkenness for sober terror or dry despair. The Big Book and the "Twelve and Twelve" promise us the capacity to live soberly, confidently, usefully, and joyously — if we treat our alcoholism by working the

Twelve Steps. If I haven't experienced the program's promises, it is because I haven't fulfilled the program's conditions.

*From "Messenger" via
MIRUS, Minneapolis, MN*

Self-Supporting

(Continued from Page Four)

conference. In Alcoholics Anonymous we take no action that are personally punitive (Warranty Five). We can coerce no one, but each of us can set a good example and carry the message that we are self-supporting through our own contributions. Let it begin with us.

BARBARA M., Eureka, CA

Tempis Fugit

(Continued from Page Two)

Perhaps it should be resolved that any call for a radical change be tabled until a review of pertinent traditions be completed. Such a review should not only entail a study of the 12&12. We should also include such sources as *Pass It On, The Language Of The Heart, The 12 Concepts, AA Comes Of Age*, and other writings of Bill W.

FRANK B., Napa, CA

Love Is - - -

Love is friendship that has caught fire. It is quiet understanding, mutual confidence, sharing and forgiving. It is loyalty through good and bad times. It settles for less than perfection and makes allowances for human weaknesses.

Love is content with the present, it hopes for the future and it doesn't brood over the past. It's the day-in-day-out chronicles of irritations, problems, compromises, small disappointments, big victories and common goals. If you have love in your life, it can make up for a great many things you lack. If you don't have it, no matter what else there is, it's not enough.

Submitted by Guy J., Redding, CA



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