



GOOD NEWS



Est. 1948

Published Four Times a Year in Elk Grove by the
Northern California Council of Alcoholics Anonymous

Fall 2003

DO YOU REALLY KNOW THE HISTORY OF THE H&I COMMITTEE AND HOW WE FUNCTION?

My name is Marcel A., and I am an alcoholic. I am the newly elected General Chairman of the Northern California Hospital and Institution Committee, and I would like to share my experience with you. First I want to thank you for taking the time to read this article. Having an accessible avenue to obtain information and communicate our thoughts is an essential component in establishing an amenable relationship in a community: H&I is available to answer your questions and listen to your concerns.

When we speak of the Northern California Hospital & Institution Committee, we are directly related to the 9th Tradition: "AA may create service boards of committees directly responsible to those they serve." At the present time Northern California H&I services approximately 750 meetings per week and takes meetings into twenty-three prisons. The H&I budget for 2003 calls for \$385,000 for books and literature and \$35,000 for the AA Grapevine in both English and Spanish. The figure amounts to about \$12.70 per meeting, or the cost of one Big Book, one 12&12 and a small handful of pamphlets. Much effort is spent in keeping expenses to a minimum. With the ever-rising cost of postage, shipping and storage, the cost of distributing the literature, tapes and Grapevines to all the areas in Northern California is a big expense and cannot be avoided.

In 1942 Warden Clinton Duffy of San Quentin Prison reviewed files and found that the recitative rate was high among men with drinking problems. He contacted Warren T. from Richmond, who along with an inmate named Ricardo, **held the first** (See "H & I" on Page 2)

GALT FELLOWSHIP'S 32nd ANNIVERSARY Dinner-Speaker Meeting NOVEMBER 1st

On Saturday, November 1, 2003 you are invited to the best Roast Beef Dinner in Northern California AA served at 5:30 PM and stay to hear Tom I from Southern Pines, North Carolina speak at 7:00 PM. It will be held at the Littleton Civic Center, 123 Civic Drive in Galt. You can contact Mary R @ 209-748-2698 or Keith M @ 209-745-2268 for information.

DELTA INTERGROUP'S FALL FEST In TRACY OCTOBER 18th

The Delta Intergroup invites you to the 10th Annual South County FALL FEST on October 18, 2003 at the Tracy Community Center, Corner of East & 10th Streets in Tracy. The first speaker starts at 11:00 AM, The Old Timer's Panel is at 2:30, Marcel A of San Francisco will speak at 4:00 PM and after a Tri-Tip Barbecue dinner Cliff R of Oceanside will speak at 8:00 PM.

CNIA TO HOLD ELECTION ASSEMBLY IN MARIPOSA NOVEMBER 14th - 16th

The California Northern Interior Area (07) will have their Election Assembly on Friday - Sunday, November 14-16, 2003 at the Mariposa County Fairgrounds in Mariposa. The elections begin at 1:00 PM on Saturday. The Saturday night speaker, at 8:00 PM, is our Pacific Region Trustee, Phyllis H. Contact your GSR for details.

CNCA Report on Page 2

FROM OUR CHAIRMAN:

Time To Focus

We have some things in front of us right now that we need to focus on, and that is increasing the attendance at our three Conferences we hold each year and also to stress the importance of keeping our costs down for these Conferences. As of this writing, we have only about 75 pre-registrations for the Fall

(See "CHAIRMAN" on Page 3)

NCCAA 56th Annual Fall Conference

Redding, California

October 4, 5 & 6, 2003

Friday	8:00 PM	Wilma W. Hawaii
Saturday	3:30 PM	Debbie D. Concord, CA
Saturday	8:00 PM	Cliff R. Oceanside, CA
Sunday	11:00 AM	Michael E. Evans, GA

H & I

(Continued from Page 1)

successful institution meeting. In June 1946 AA was invited into Folsom Prison. That same year the Northern California Council of Alcoholics Anonymous (NCCAA) was established. It became the communications link between the groups in Northern California and AA Headquarters in New York (later the General Service Office). Because of the increasing interest of AA members outside the San Francisco area to participate in prison work, the committee resolved to become an autonomous committee of NCCAA, thus forming the Northern California Hospital & Institution Committee (H&I). As time went on H&I started providing meetings to other facilities, including lock-down mental institutions, jails, detox units, juvenile halls and women's facilities.

The *Pink Can* money is used to purchase and distribute literature to institutions and other facilities. The "*Pink Can*" violates no AA Tradition. The money is from AA members for AA members. We are self-supporting through our own contributions. No H&I member is paid for service and is not reimbursed for expense incurred carrying the message into institutions regardless of the distance. It is not unusual for an H&I worker to drive well over 100 miles for a weekly or monthly institution meeting. These travel expenses are a personal contribution of the individual. One of the fears expressed early on in the implementation of the "*Pink Can*" was that it would subtract from the support of the meetings. This should not happen if the AA group secretaries announce (before the baskets are passed) both the importance of supporting your group (thereby supporting the service entities it contributes to), and the purpose of the "*Pink Cans*." Also, the H&I Committee requests that the cans be passed separately from the baskets so as to avoid confusion.

All of the H&I Committee's expenses and income are compiled and published each month. Any member of Alcoholics Anonymous can look at the complete books simply by asking the treasurer - Perry O. (650) 903-0321. The report of contributions is by county. Please provide a self-addressed envelope for receipts, as writing sometimes may be difficult to decipher. The receipts will be forwarded to you along with

the latest monthly financial statement and a self-addressed envelope for the next month's contribution. All groups in Northern California are encouraged to have an H&I representative at their local area committee. Any member of Alcoholics Anonymous is welcome to attend any Northern California H&I meeting whether at the local area or the General Meetings that are held in February, June and October each year (usually on the second Sunday).

I was first introduced to H&I while trying to detox once again, weighing eighty-five pounds and dying of alcoholism. A 250 pound giant from H&I shared the message of Alcoholics Anonymous and planted the seed of hope that night. I have had two to three service commitments in H&I for over fourteen years. I have participated in meetings in over seventy facilities and have gone into the prisons for thirteen years, seeing where the deadness and darkness of the disease of alcoholism can take you, but also having experiences that have made my heart sing.

I was at the Vacaville Institution around Thanksgiving one year, and we were talking about gratitude. A young man raised his hand and said, "I am grateful for quiet in the room tonight. I have been watching the flowers in the courtyard. I watch them open and close. That is like me. I open, but I still close." What a gentle expression of feelings from a man coming from a very violent world.

The true joy of happiness: Every day have something to do, somewhere to go, someone to call, someone to see, someone to love, but most important - every day have something to give to someone - Recovery, Unity and Service.

The Northern California Hospital and Institution Committee welcomes and appreciates the opportunity to answer questions and clarify misinterpretations. I want to thank all who participate in H&I service and encourage others to join us. I also want to thank all the other service entities: General Service, Teleservice, PI/CPC, Bridging the Gap, and to all those to make the time to extend their hand to the still suffering alcoholic.

What a beautiful gift to be able to celebrate another day of life.

Marcel A. - H & I Chairperson

From CNCA DELEGATE'S CORNER

Lately, I've received several concerned letters about some websites that bash AA's good name, or right out state how AA doesn't work. There have also been books published and articles written on the same subject. One outside organization went so far as to put flyers for their brand of treatment on the cars of AA members in parking lots during meetings. I was asked, "What can we do about these people??"

The best reaction is no reaction. It's always frustrating when someone tries to hurt AA's reputation, or outright claims it doesn't work especially when people like you and I are living examples that AA can and does work. The Long Form of Tradition Ten reminds us, "*No AA group or member should ever, in such a way as to implicate AA, express any opinion on out-side controversial issues-particularly those of politics alcohol reform, or sectarian religion. The Alcoholics Anonymous groups oppose no one. Concerning such matters they can express no views whatever.*" Then Tradition Eleven says, "*Our public relations policy should be guided by the principle of attraction rather than promotion. There is never need to praise our-selves.*"

Another good source to teach us how to respond to our critics is in our Warrantee Five, found in Concept Twelve of the Twelve Concepts of World Service: "*For much the same reason we cannot and should not enter into public controversy, even in self-defense. Our experience has shown that providentially it would seem, AA has been made exempt from the need to quarrel with anyone, no matter what the provocation. Nothing could be more damaging to our unity and to the worldwide good will which AA enjoys than public contention, no matter how promising the immediate dividend might appear Almost without exception it can be confidently estimated that our best defense in these situations would be no defense what-ever-namely complete silence at the public level.*"

What wisdom and humility! No one likes to be criticized or slammed. Unfortunately, AA will always have its critics, but we will continue to be blessed with very close friends who highly praise AA and recommend us to their friends, patients, parishioners,

inmates, employees and loved ones. If we stick to what we do best-helping that drunk out there who stretches out his or her hand to us for help-and not engage those who try to weaken the unity we so depend upon, then through God's grace, AA will continue to be just fine for as long as He needs us.

Gratefully serving,

Doug G, Panel 53 Delegate

CHAIRMAN

(Continued from Page 1)

pre-registrations for the Fall Conference in Redding in October. As a basic rule of thumb, pre-registration is usually 15% of the attendance for a Conference. 1125 attendees is an okay number for Redding, but I would like to see it at 1500. San Ramon is hosting the Spring Conference, and Stockton will be the Summer Conference, followed by Yuba City in the Fall. The Redding Conference is the first Conference affected by the change we voted on and accepted Pre-registration will be \$8 and Registration will be \$10 at the Conference itself.

Our prudent reserve is currently half of what it should be, and at this rate, we could easily cease to exist in

**From the Archives...
An Article from Time Magazine February 1940**

"Alcoholics Anonymous" Last week one of the best-known teetotalers in the U. S., John D. Rockefeller, had 60 people to dinner. No cocktails were served, for several of Mr. Rockefeller's guests were members of "Alcoholics Anonymous," a widespread, publicity-shy group of one-time guzzlers who have cured themselves.

Psychiatrists no-w generally consider alcoholism a disease. specifically a psycho- neurosis. Alcoholics generally drink, not just because they like liquor, but to escape from something - mother fixation, inferiority feelings, an intolerable domestic situation, social or economic maladjustment. They may suffer the torments of tile damned, even while drinking themselves into a stupor, and especially in the brief period between waking up with a

<u>Birthdays</u>			
July-	Marji H	San Jose	2 years
	Jose D	Santa Cruz	3 years
	Tom E	Sacramento	5 years
	Larry M	San Pablo	9 years
August-	Richard M	San Leandro	9 years
	Jim A	San Jose	10 years
	Barb P	Red Bluff	14 years
	Kathy C	Half Moon Bay	15 years
September-	Naomi B	Monterey	3 years
	Michael C	Gilroy	7 years
	Peter L	San Jose	11 years
	Ed B	San Jose	13 years
	Sheila B	Daly City	14 years
	John G	Fresno	23 years

a short time. This is reality! We need to get people to register for our Conferences, even if they won't be able to attend, to show their support.

It is getting harder and harder to find affordable sites for future Conferences. The places we have used in the past, like Monterey and Fresno, are getting out of our budget. We, as a group of people who love and support our conferences, need to get out there in their local areas and try to find facilities. Whether it's a hotel with a large enough Conference room for us, or change our venue and start looking at fairgrounds, or colleges, or something large enough to hold the audience that we hope to

remorseful, clattering hangover and getting down the first drink of the day. psychiatrists try to help them by discovering the hidden reason for drinking and showing how it can be removed. But cynics in sanatoriums, watching a sober man walk out the door full of good intentions, often bet on how many days or weeks wild elapse before he is back. Nagging by families usually makes things worse.

About five years ago a traveling salesman named Bill, after repeated alcoholic relapses, was pronounced hopeless by his doctors. Bill was an agnostic, but some- one asked him if he couldn't believe that there was some power bigger than himself - all it God or whatever he liked - that would help him not to drink. The idea was that though Bill was always willing to let himself down, he might be more reluctant to let God down. Bill tried it, found that he had no trouble resisting the desire to drink. He was cured. He told his discovery to others, and the cure spread. These

attract. We need your help on these two issues! You can contact me either through our NCCAA website at (<http://ncc-aa.org>) or jcornish@hotmail.com. Talk to people in your area and see what facilities may be in your area that has possibilities and let me know and I will guide you through the procedure for submitting a bid to the Steering Committee and the Delegates.

In the meantime, please register for the Redding Conference! We need your support.

In love and service,

Joe Cornish - NCCAA Chairperson

reformed drunkards called themselves "Alcoholics Anonymous," now number about 400 in towns all over the U. S. They do their missionary work on their own time, as an avocation.

Aware of his interest in liquor control, some of the group wrote to John D. Rockefeller two years ago-asking not for money but for advice. Mr. Rockefeller asked a representative to look into their doings, grew so interested that he helped to publish a book, *Alcoholics Anonymous* (Works Publishing Co.; \$3.50), in which some members described their battles with the demon and how they won.

Professional opinion on the usefulness of Alcoholics Anonymous is divided. Some psychiatrists think the group is making a mistake in not leaning more heavily on medical guidance. Others feel that it gives something that psychiatry does not, should be encouraged to the fullest extent.

Time-, February 19, 1940