



# GOOD NEWS



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Northern California Council of Alcoholics Anonymous

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## Happy New Year

### Valley Intergroup Service Center's 33<sup>rd</sup> Anniversary Dinner

The Valley Intergroup Service Center will hold its 33<sup>rd</sup> Anniversary Dinner on January 17, 2004 at the Alameda County Fairgrounds Cafeteria. Doors open at 5:00 PM. A Drawing will be held at 6:00 PM and A Tri-Tip Dinner will be served. Tickets are \$10.00 in advance (see your Intergroup Rep) or \$-12.00 at the door. and the Speakers start at 8:00 PM. Leslie C. of San Rafael is the main speaker. Parking is free if you mention you are with the Valley Intergroup Dinner.

### Special Steering Committee Meeting

The Steering Committee met in Stockton on December 6<sup>th</sup> to discuss our current financial position. Ande M. brought a very comprehensive report covering conferences dating back to 1996. It was very useful in answering questions about our current prudent reserve. We are healthy but still under our prudent reserve. If you have any questions regarding the enclosed report for the Redding Conference, you can contact your County Chairperson, Intergroup or Committee Representative. If you cannot contact them, or don't know who they are, please contact Joe C. or myself.

### From the NCCAA Chairman's desk...

Here is the schedule of Conferences to be held in 2004. Mark them on your calendar!

March 12, 13 & 14 - San Ramon

July 9, 10 & 11 - Stockton

October 1, 2 & 3 - Yuba City

In the even numbered year, we have elections for NCCAA Chairperson. This will happen in San Ramon. Following is the process we use as defined in our Purpose, Structure, Function.

"The Steering Committee of the Council will sit as a Nominating Committee for the purpose of accepting nominations for the election. The roll will be called of all Steering Committee Members who may or may not place a name in nomination. After the roll of the members has been called, the nominations are considered closed. The Nominating Committee will then discuss the qualifications of the nominees.

### The California Northern Interior Area Election Assembly in Mariposa

The California Northern Interior Area 07 had their Election Assembly in Mariposa. They have elected their Panel 54 officers:

Paul C.	Delegate
Marianne H.	Alt. Delegate
Roger B.	Chair
Rafael C.	Alternate Chair
Carolyn S.	Treasurer
Melody T.	Registrar
Lee W.	Recording Secretary

There will be appointed positions filled sometime in December or January for our Accents Publisher, Grapevine, Literature, Archives and Translation Committees.

The CNIA Winter Assembly will be held 10:00 AM to 4:00 PM on January 17<sup>th</sup> at 1226 N Wilson Ave. in Fresno. It will be hosted by the 3 Fresno Districts (41, 42 & 43) and the Spanish Linguistic District (53). Registration is \$8, Lunch is \$5 & Coffee is \$4. Contact Roger B. for information.

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### NCCAA 57th Annual Spring Conference San Ramon, California - March 12, 13 & 14, 2004

Friday	8:00 PM	Larry J.	Dallas Texas
Saturday	3:30 PM	Kenna M.	South Pasadena
Saturday	8:00 PM	Guiseppe D.	Montebello
Sunday	11:00 AM	Susie J.	Mariposa



## 6 Steps ??

Works Publishing Inc. printed an A.A. publication titled "The Society of Alcoholics Anonymous". It was reprinted from The American Journal Of Psychiatry, Vol. 106, No. 5 November, 1949. It contained the text of the talk Bill gave at the 105th annual meeting of The American Psychiatric Association, Montreal, Quebec, May 23-27, 1949.

As Bill told of his meeting with Ebby T. he said "The particular practices my friend had selected for himself were simple:

1. He admitted he was powerless to solve his own problem.
2. He got honest with himself as never before; made an examination of conscience.
3. He made a rigorous confession of his personal defects.
4. He surveyed his distorted relations with people, visiting them to make restitution.
5. He resolved to devote himself to helping others in need, without the usual demand for personal prestige or material gain.
6. By meditation he sought God's direction for his life and help to practice these principles at all times."

"This sounded pretty naive to me. Nevertheless my friend stuck to the plain tale of what had happened - no evangelizing. He related how, practicing these precepts, his drinking had unaccountably stopped. Fear and isolation left and he had received considerable peace of mind. With no hard disciplines nor any great resolves, these attributes began to appear the moment he conformed. His release was a byproduct. Though sober but few months, he felt he had a basic answer. Wisely avoiding any argument, he then took leave. The spark that was to become Alcoholics Anonymous had been struck." Later in his talk Bill said, "...the Twelve Steps of the present-day Alcoholics Anonymous. The heart

of our therapy, and a practical way of life, these "Steps" are little but an amplified and streamlined version of the principles enumerated by my friend of the kitchen table."

Bill concluded his talk with, "...We of AA try to be aware that we may never touch but a segment of the total alcohol problem. We try to remember that our growing success may prove a heady wine; that our own resources will always be limited. So then, will you men and women of medicine be our partners; physicians wielding well your invisible scalpels; workers all, in our common cause? We like to think Alcoholics Anonymous a middle ground between medians and religion, the missing catalyst of a new synthesis. This to the end that the millions who still suffer may presently issue from their darkness into the light of day!

I am sure that none, attending this great Hall of Medicine will feel it untoward if I leave the last word to our silent partner, Religion:

God grant us the serenity to accept the things we cannot change, courage to change the things we can, and wisdom to know the difference."

A special Thanks to Don H. for preserving our history. He will be our Workshop speaker in San Ramon. We hope you can come.

## Have you visited your Web Site yet?

<http://www.ncc-aa.org/>

### You'll find:

The History of NCCAA  
Our "Purpose Structure & Function"  
Past issues of the "Good News"  
A list of Future Conferences  
A list of upcoming Speakers  
Flyers - Future & Past  
Programs - Upcoming & Past  
Information on our Archivist  
Guidelines for Hosting a Conference  
A Link to AA General Service  
And More...

## 2004 Sacramento Spring Fling Conference Now at Memorial Auditorium and Clarion Hotel

The Sacramento Spring Fling Group will host the 2004 Spring Fling Conference at a new location on February 27<sup>th</sup>, 28<sup>th</sup> & 29<sup>th</sup>. They will have the main Speaker meetings at the Memorial Auditorium at 1515 J Street and the Al-Anon Meetings, Marathon Meetings and Workshops at the Clarion Hotel at 700 16<sup>th</sup> Street.

To register or for more information you can visit their website [www.sacspringfling.org](http://www.sacspringfling.org).

### "Chairman" continued

and select a slate of nominees, recommended to be at least three (3). Those nominees selected will then be voted on by the Council Steering Committee and Delegates at an election held at the NCCAA Open Delegates Meeting of this same annual Spring Conference.

Steering Committee Members and all registered NCCAA Delegates are eligible to vote in this election. Fifty-one percent (51%) of the total vote will elect. Balloting will be by a secret ballot. If after two (2) ballots, no nominee has fifty-one percent (51 %) of the total vote, the nominee with the least votes will be eliminated and voting will continue until one nominee has fifty-one percent (51%) of the total vote cast; in other words, a majority of the total will elect."

NCCAA Council Chairperson is allowed to be re-elected to a second term.

Each AA meeting group is entitled to two Delegates, so encourage people that go to Conferences, to get involved and register as a Delegate. Register at the NCCAA Delegates table when you get there and pick up your blue Delegates ribbon.

See you in San Ramon!!

Joe Cornish - NCCAA Chairperson

## As AAs travel around the world

### First to Cuba...

We just returned a few hours ago from taking part in a magnificent event - the 3-day celebration, in Holguin, Cuba, of the 10th anniversary of the founding of AA in Cuba. I went with my wife, Ruth, and Bruce K. from San Francisco, the guy who rounded up seven of us in the first place to go to Havana in January 1993. This visit was quite an eye opener. From our first meeting on 1/18/93 with six Cuban alcoholics, all of whom subsequently went out and drank, there are now 160 groups throughout the country and an estimated 3,000 active AA members. Full General Service structure with staffed office in Havana, trustees, districts, areas; central offices in all the larger cities, the works! 400 members attended the 3-day event in Holguin. Unbelievably moving experience. During the all-day sessions at the 10th Anniversary event last Saturday, a Cuban woman rounded up my wife, the other American woman with us, and around twenty other Cuban women, and said, "C'mon, let's have a meeting of just us women!" They went into a part of the big church where the conference was being held, and shooed out a bunch of guys, then they spent over 3 hours in what turned out to be Cuba's very first women's AA meeting! Ruth tells me that during the meeting, two of those present came out as gay, saying that it was the first time in their lives they had felt comfortable talking about it in a group of any kind. One of them had mentioned it once in an AA meeting, and was pretty much scolded by the men present. Cuba is what Americans would consider quite "backward" when it comes to issues of gender and sexual orientation. Based on previous experience, I have a feeling that women-only AA

## Birthdays

October-	Denise C	Redwood City	1 year
	Pete K	Groveland	10 years
	Lu R	Stockton	15 years
November-	Vanessa G	Hollister	4 years
	Joe C	Redwood City	17 years
December-	Rick S	Burlingame	1 year
	Dave V	Union City	7 years
	Steve M	Elk Grove	14 years

meetings may take hold in Cuba. Sort of on the same subject, we were invited to a private home that night by a friend of the oldest AA in Cuba (ten years), who said "We've killed a large pig and want you to come help us eat it." Who could turn down such an invitation? When we arrived, said porker was duly spread-eagled on a large table, perfectly roasted and delicious, and we shared it with a couple of dozen Cuban AAs. One of them was Matica, the first woman to get sober in AA in Cuba, whom I had met in a hospital in Havana in June of 1993, and who claimed I was the first person she had ever met who was alcoholic and talked to her on an equal basis! Wow, what a feeling!

For those who erroneously think Cuba represses religion, the Roman Catholic Bishop of Holguin gave the official inaugural welcome to the event, stating, in a fairly long and passionate address, that not only is AA an example of true democracy in action, but also an example of how Cuba should not reject new concepts just because they come from supposedly "alien" (i.e., yanqui) sources.

Arkie

### Now on to Russia...

#### "I met myself on Vacation"

Recently my wife and I took a vacation during which we visited her parents. They are very nice people who are retired and on pension. They live in the same apartment that they have been in for forty plus years in a quiet

provincial town on the banks of the Volga River in central Russia.

Day one: Dad met us at the train station when we arrived at 4:30 AM, then took us to their apartment and started feeding us special Russian dishes that he had prepared for us.

A little background, dad consistently drinks two liters a day of Russian Vodka and mama is a serious non-drinking co-dependent. They each have their rolls in the game that they play, as in all drunken, dysfunctional families. Myself, I have twenty plus years of recovery, while my wife is a black belt Al-anon. We can handle this for a few days.

After a while, I start finding that I am getting somewhat irritated by this situation. I have enough of a problem understanding the Russian language without having to hear it coming out slurred by a staggering, obnoxious drunk. Still, he is a nice person, as most of us alcoholics are when we are not deep into our disease.

Dad is a man in his seventies. He does not think that he has a drinking problem. On the contrary, he is quite proud of the fact that he is able to drink as much as he does. He still has his wife and home. He does the shopping and cooking since mom does not get around very well. The title, "Functional Alcoholic" comes to mind.

Here is a man that lived through World War II as a young child in war torn Belorussia. The trauma and terror for a young person must have been overwhelming.

Continued on page 4 - "Russia"

## Marveta Carlson

A devoted member of our NCCAA Steering Committee and the Turlock Group passed away at the end of October with 31 years of sobriety. She will be missed.

### "Russia" continued

He is stuck there with the stories he continually tells. He tells that he is a hero, that his dead father and brothers were heroes. The reality is that he is a scared little boy who started drinking young to escape the horror and terror of his early childhood in the war. The drinking helps the scared, young person to numb the pain and escape from the terror of his life.

He tells stories of he and his family being heroes because he desperately needs to have at least one in his life and feels that he is one because he has survived. He does not see that he has been hiding from life, he is scared and afraid of life sober. There are too many terrifying things going on in life that scare him if he is not drunk.

He walks into the room from the porch where he has just had a smoke and is calling to his daughter to pay attention to him and listen to his stories. He needs to be the center of attention so he is telling the same stories that he has been telling before. The ones where he is the hero and of how he has cooked for kings and queens. Another story where he was saved during the war by his trusty dog. These are all stories from the past, he has none from the present because he has been hiding for many years from the scary world in a bottle. Day two, it is beginning to get to me. I have to look at what is really bothering me, what is it in me is being triggered? I want to go to an AA meeting, but there are none in this part of Russia. I have to settle for taking a walk with my wife and create our own meeting. I talk about the fact that there is something here that I need to learn about myself. I do not

identify it at this time but it feels much better being able to share in a meeting, even if it is only a meeting of two. We return to the apartment after a few hours.

I have worked in our county recovery facility for eight years as an outpatient therapist on a part time basis for clients in early recovery. I have been very involved in H&I for fifteen years, on the steering committee for NCCAA for thirteen years. With this background I ought to be able to handle a basic drunk. What is it that is bothering me? Suddenly it dawns on me. The light goes on. I am seeing me! This scared little boy who is hiding in a bottle is the same person that I was for twenty five years prior to my being given the gift of recovery. This is the person that I would be had I continued drinking and lived that long. This is the person I would become if I were to pick up a drink again. This is me and it is extremely **wry!**

Keith H., Any Lengths Fellowship, Forestville, Ca.

## 20 Questions

I've heard many people say in meetings that they were asked the "20 questions". I began to wonder where I could find the "20 Questions". Then I heard some members from the Coastal Area discussing them and my curiosity got the best of me.

I looked at the Central Office. I looked through brochure from Box 459 for the Conference Approved Literature and couldn't find it.

I finally happened across them on a pink card from the Northern California Hospital & Institution Committee. I immediately looked to the bottom of the card to find where the H & I Committee got their "20- Questions". I found they came from pamphlet P-9. I had looked through all the pamphlets I thought, so I had to find out the title for P-9 to solve the puzzle. No wonder, I never thought to look in the pamphlet titled " MEMO to an INMATE who may be ALCOHOLIC".

So if you are as curious as I was, here are the "20 Questions" reprinted from pamphlet P-9, pages 13 & 14:

- 1) Did you lose time from work due to drinking?
- 2) Did drinking make your home life unhappy?
- 3) Did you drink because you were shy with people?
- 4) Has drinking affected your reputation?
- 5) Have you gotten into trouble with money because of your drinking?
- 6) Did you associate with people you didn't respect and hang out in places you didn't want to be in when drinking?
- 7) Did your drinking make you careless of your family's welfare?
- 8) Has your drinking decreased your ambition?
- 9) Did you want a drink "the morning after"?
- 10) Did you have a hard time sleeping because of your drinking?
- 11) Has your ability to work decreased since drinking?
- 12) Did drinking get you into trouble on the job or in business?
- 13) Did you drink to escape from problems or worries?
- 14) Did you drink alone?
- 15) Have you ever had a complete loss of memory as a result of drinking?
- 16) Has a doctor ever treated you for drinking?
- 17) Did you drink to build up self-confidence?
- 18) Have you ever been arrested, locked up, or hospitalized on account of drinking?
- 19) Have you ever felt guilty after drinking?
- 20) Did you have to have a drink at a certain time each day?

## Do you have an article

Please send in your articles or ideas for articles to the Post Office address on the back page or e-mail them to me at smangold89@comcast.net. You can also see our old Newsletters at our NCCAA website.