



Good News



Est.
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1987

N.C.C.'s 40th YEAR

The following has been extracted from the late Dean K.'s "C.N.C.A. History", page 136:

A decision was finally made to form some sort of informational organization for A.A. Groups in Northern California only. Among those involved in these discussions were John C., Fred C., Ray H., Bob G., Pete B., Les F., Don H., and Clarence R., all of San Francisco . . . Nick N. of Oakland, Ed A. of Alameda; Horace B. of Marin County; Dave D. of Palo Alto; Ray P. and Vic S. of Sacramento. The upshot of these discussions was an organizational meeting called March 23, 1947 at the Oakland Alano Club, 423-15th Street, which was attended by representatives from most of the A.A. Groups in Northern California at that

time. This organization was named . . . the Northern California Council of Alcoholics Anonymous . . . At the Council's third meeting in Sacramento September 14, 1947, representatives showed up from A.A. Groups in Reno, Nevada, asking to be included . . . and the name was changed to Northern California-Nevada Council of Alcoholics Anonymous . . . (When Nevada elected their first Conference Delegate in 1955, the Reno Groups withdrew . . . and the name reverted back to Northern California Council of A.A.)."

For another account of the history of N.C.C., as well as a history of the origin of Good News, please refer to the article, "A Nevada Friend Writes" by Ken B., Reno, Nevada, which appeared in the Jan.-Feb., 1985, issue of Good News.

The Lord's Prayer

A friend of mine who just came into the program asked me recently how A.A. could claim to be a spiritual rather than a religious program when every meeting was closed with the Lord's Prayer — straight from the King James version of the Bible, and a part of many Christian religious services. I didn't give her a very good answer at the time. I had asked this same question early in my sobriety, and had been told that there was a close relationship between the Steps of A.A. and the Lord's Prayer, and I had not thought about it further for some time. I decided to consider the question some more, and always being willing to rush in where angels (and theologians) fear to tread, I'll set down some of those thoughts later.

But first, it might be good to look back briefly on the earliest days of A.A. — the days before the fellowship was even called Alcoholic Anonymous. At that time, the "movement" was very much based on Protestant Christianity. At one time, some of the members of the movement felt that they should call themselves the "Jamesians" since many of their ideas for living sober were based on the New Testament writings of James. (Bill W. himself said that the first three Steps of A.A. were based in part on the Epistle of James.) The King James Bible and Christian religion were very much a part of the lives of those first persons who stayed sober. Many of them thought that it was necessary to have had some sort of grand revelation from above in order to

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Election Report

The California Northern Coastal Area elected its officers for 1987-88 at the San Francisco Hall of Flowers as follows on November 8, 1986:

General Service Delegate: Michael G. (San Francisco); Alternate Delegate: Frank P. (Belmont); Chairperson: Barbara W. (Eureka); Secretary: Alan S. (Napa); Treasurer: Ann C. (San Francisco); Recording Secretary: David H. (Fremont); Assembly Coordinator: Tom T. (Corte Madera); Literature/Grapevine Chairperson: Clare Floom (Mountain View).

The election assembly followed Third Legacy Procedure. The number of registered voters (337) dwindled down somewhat by 6 p.m. In the

case of the Delegate, since there was no single, two thirds edge in the votes, the top two candidates' names were placed "in the hat". The first name "out of the hat" was that of Michael G.

The same condition prevailed in the case of the alternate delegate and the first name "out of the hat" was that of Frank P. Regarding the remaining offices, each winning candidate received the necessary two thirds majority.

The Third Legacy procedure is set up to avoid "politics," to avoid creating a disgruntled minority.

Frank B.
Lakeport

Getting the Message

It's 3:45 in the blessed A.M.! And what is this alcoholic woman doing with her lights on — washing down the pre-dawn heebee-jeebies? No, for me those days are gone — I'm on my way to an Area business meeting. Half an hour down the road I join with the rest of the group and we're headed for Oakland. The first few comments are devoted to coffee, but soon it's a mini A.A. group in that car.

By breakfast, Sandra has given me new insight on teenagers. Gene brings up the literature question facing the DCMs and we poke into that for awhile. Sponsorship comes up, and some newcomers are remembered who haven't been seen lately. A few quiet resolves are made — I'll pick up the phone when I get home and check on . . .

We're alert and ready for work when we reach the meeting place. (Funny, some of those people act like they just got up!) Good friends are there and we gather up all the hugs we can before our long trip home. Until dinner we discuss the business that came up. This coming week it will be the topic of announcements at meetings and we want to clarify anything we might have missed. Eureka and Fortuna may be a long way in miles, but we're rich in sharing.

A few of us doze off. Talk gets more serious. I find I have a private connection with my Higher Power that is similar to John's. We mention gratitude that we're in this car and not in that bar. Talk fades out, and we reach for some A.A. tapes. And by 10, we're home. This has been a rich day indeed.

Think of us the next time you have to go a long way for an A.A. event. Getting there is really half the fun. And don't feel limited to carrying the message. Some of us go out and get it!

Marion S., Eureka

THE LORD'S PRAYER

(Continued from Front Page)

achieve sobriety. In fact the early version of Step Twelve was: "Having had a spiritual **experience** . . ." rather than "Having had a spiritual **awakening** . . ." (emphasis mine). Apparently it was not until Bill W. and others formulated the ideas of what was to become the Big Book that it was fully clarified that A.A. really was for anyone and everyone who had a problem with alcohol, regardless of their religious, or lack of religious, background. It was in writing the Steps for the purpose of the Big Book that the concept of "God" became the concept of "God, as we understand Him," and this is basic to A.A.'s being spiritual rather than religious.

So we need not argue with the historical fact that A.A. was initially an outgrowth of Protestant Christianity. However, quite early on, wisdom, and I would even call it Divine wisdom, prevailed; A.A. actively renounced all religious sectarianism, and called itself strictly a spiritual program.

Now to my elaboration on my idea of how the A.A. Steps are related to the Lord's Prayer.

We begin, "Our Father, who art in heaven." Step Two is related to this, in that we "Came to believe that (there is) a power greater than ourselves . . ."

"Thy will be done on earth . . ." Step Three is related to this, in which we become willing to turn our **will** . . . over to the care of God as we understood Him.

"Give us this day our daily bread." Again, this is Step Three, where we are willing to turn our **lives** over to the care of God. A little more explanation: The prayer does not say "Show us how to earn our daily bread," it says that we are, in fact, putting our trust in God that He will provide for us — turning our lives over to His care.

"Forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us." This is the biggie! The way in which we carry this out is in Steps

N.C.C.

Financial Statement

December 31, 1986

Northern California Council of A.A.

Balance of funds — 1/1/86	\$16,050.36
Income	34,152.63
Less Expenses	(41,233.43)
Prudent Reserve (on hand)	8,969.56

Expenses:

Auditorium & Room Rentals	9,337.97
Speaker Expense	5,320.46
Raffle Expense	815.73
Mailing Expense	2,444.75
Printing	5,175.84
Local Committee Expense	977.01
Officers Expense	2,975.46
Conference Supplies	1,381.99
Good News	600.00
S.F. Cent. Ofc.	300.00
Literature	2,167.89
Dance Bands	1,700.00
Insurance	1,493.20
Interpreters	1,000.00
Decorations	516.30
Telephone	719.53
Alanon Expense	1,299.30
Bank Charges	8.00
General Service - N.Y.	3,000.00

Expenses for 1986 \$41,233.43

Four through Ten. In these Steps we identify our own trespasses as well as what we perceive as trespasses against us, and we do something about all of them. In this process we relive our own consciences (forgive us our trespasses), and we unload our past resentments (as we forgive those who trespass against us).

"Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil." It may not be stretching a point too fine to relate this to parts of Steps Eleven and Twelve: "Praying only for knowledge of His will for us and the power to carry that out," and "tried . . . to practice these principles in all our affairs."

Finally, again we have a reaffirmation of our faith in a power greater than ourselves, Step Two, in "For Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever."

Don G.
Sunnyvale

Coastal Area Link

It is said that people in service don't drink. Therefore, it's assumable that service principles are good for the individual as well as for the Fellowship. Take, for instance, the Twelve Concepts. Incidentally, one of the presentation/discussion topics for the 1987 Conference will be "How we can live the Twelve Concepts in Service."

The Concepts are packed with principles. Among these is the **Right of Decision** which entitles our leaders to a certain discretion and latitude. The **Right of Participation** insures a voting status in proportion to responsibility. The **Right of Appeal** guarantees a hearing for minority opinion. The **Right of Petition** provides a just resolution of grievances. Significant is the statement that "these general principles can . . . be used to good effect throughout our entire structure."

The Concepts set standards for qualified leadership. They recommend a careful selection process for personnel, and they envision a sound, practical, Third Legacy structure.

That would preclude the establishment of unqualified, unrestrained authority of any kind. They declare for the separate incorporation of "large, active and dissimilar operations." They warn against "undue concentration of money or personal influence in any service group or entity." They endorse authority equal to responsibility and they emphasize that double-headed, executive direction should be avoided.

It is interesting to observe that the Concepts seem to be a sequel to the treatise on Tradition Two. Indeed they reiterate the final authority of the groups in regard to the larger issues of the Fellowship. Nevertheless, they also recognize the limitation of group conscience as a totality, and, the obligation of trusted servants to make judgments, "sometimes to the point of disagreeing with uninformed or biased group opinion." They point out that we often trust the Conference (a minority) "to act as A.A.'s group con-

Group Inventory

Recently several of us were standing around after a meeting talking about this, that and the next thing when one of the fellows mentioned something about it being easier to handle inches rather than miles. What he had in mind was the question of what is usually available in the way of a welcome, a message and a follow through for the A.A. newcomer.

Put rather simply, there are some A.A. meetings that un-intentionally overlook taking a group inventory from time to time with the result that a newcomer may be neglected, may not necessarily receive the A.A. message and, therefore, may fail to enjoy the benefits that are otherwise offered by the fellowship.

In other words the group's weaknesses and strengths conceivably could become the newcomer's weaknesses and strengths. Accordingly and figuratively, a newcomer would be obliged to move but "inches" to enter into A.A. ways with a strong group whilst with a so-called weak group a newcomer might find a gap between his/her reach out for help and the hand of A.A. which is always there, thus, conceivably, obliging the person to move miles before beginning to digest the A.A. way of living a life of sobriety.

Pages 33/4 of the conference approved pamphlet, "The A.A. Group", sets forth the detail of how a group inventory is taken. Whether or not a group does a group inventory is a matter for the group conscience in most of our service affairs."

The Concepts are a careful arrangement of checks and balances. On the one hand they depict a certain autonomy. On the other hand they provide against excesses and abuses. Authority is a crucial term. Without it, effective functioning is impossible. However, when we speak of authority, we mean the right and the power to serve; never a right to govern.

Frank B.
Lakeport

science to decide.

Recently a feeling for the need of an inventory was felt by members of the San Francisco District (06) so an inventory was taken.

Some large meetings have a steering committee that more or less checks the group's inventory on a monthly basis.

Other groups remain strong by informally meeting the needs of newcomers, usually through spontaneous, voluntary actions of its members.

And there are still additional groups that prefer to go along in accordance with their own tempo and style which sometimes obliges all concerned to go that extra mile or more to achieve the promises.

What then does it take for a group to undertake its inventory? Probably a "grass roots" need expressed within the group itself. When? Who knows? Somewhere it is written that, "To everything there is a season and a time to every purpose . . ."

Thy will be done.

Herb J. (06)

RECOVERY

Webster's Dictionary defines Recovery: The act of regaining health; getting back something lost; getting oneself back to a state of control, balance, composure.

A pretty good description of recovery in A.A. except in my case it does not mention the pain and the length of time it took me to get where I am today.

After a slow start in the program I finally had 3½ years of sobriety, only to start drinking again for another year and a half. I know the way NOT to recover. You stop going to meetings; you think you can do it yourself.

Thankfully I came back to the program and was able to profit from my mistakes.

My first year back in A.A. was beset with serious problems but God kept me so busy I didn't have time to

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C.N.C.A. Archives Committee

On Sunday, November 9th, the Archives Committee held an Open House in conjunction with the Election Assembly held on the previous day in San Francisco. It was felt that the time frame would allow a convenient opportunity for "out of town" A.A.'s to visit. And some did. Not many, about twenty overall and of that number maybe six to ten were first time visitors.

On the other hand, after years of experimentation and trial and error, a new method of display has rather

RECOVERY

(Continued from Page 3)

think of a drink.

I went to a lot of meetings; I started to listen and I became teachable; I knew working the steps was the key to our recovery so I worked the steps in the order given not cafeteria style as I had done before.

As commitments were met I began to like myself. Gradually each day became an adventure.

Today I use the 3rd step each morning, turning my will and my life over to the care of God for better or for worse.

I take each day as it comes; one day at a time. I plan but don't plan end results and this works for me.

At the end of the day I use the 10th step, taking my daily inventory and thanking God for giving me another sober day whether it has been good or bad. Just being alive is a blessing.

I live a well-balanced life in and out of A.A.

I have the tools for Recovery: the 12 Steps, the 12 Traditions, the Big Book, The Serenity Prayer, the Meetings and the Fellowships. I need to use them all the time. Recovery is a Journey not a Resting Place.

My guideline for spiritual progress lies in the Promises. Today I'm at peace with myself, with others and with God. I love life. I love A.A.

Catherine S.
Stockton

caught on in a big way. Three tables were used at the Election Assembly. On each table two folders of memorabilia were placed together with other assorted items of interest including a first edition of the A.A. big book. Well, throughout the occasion, apart from the Agenda activity, A.A.'s came to the display and browsed through the material in accordance with their own tempo and inclinations.

One lady spent considerable time trying to locate a reference to the group her mother joined in 1946 in New Jersey. Another lady read a copy of a letter her mother had written about an A.A. film that had won a prize at the San Francisco Film Festival. A historian sat down for an hour or so and read some unpublished material about the first New York City group.

Fortunately the material in the display folders is interchangeable so that the contents will be found to be arranged so as to be of interest in the locale where shown.

For further information see your District Archivist.

Thy will be done.

Herb J. (06)

Take Time

Take time to laugh

It is the music of the soul

Take time to think

It is the source of power

Take time to play

It is the source of perpetual youth

Take time to read

It is the fountain of wisdom

Take time to pray

It is the greatest power on earth

Take time to love and be loved

It is a God-given privilege

Take time to be friendly

It is the road to happiness

Take time to give

It is too short a day to be selfish

Take time to work

It is the price of success.

*As children bring their broken
toys with tears for us to mend,
I brought my broken dreams to
God, because he is my friend.*

*But, then instead of leaving
Him in peace to work alone,
I hung around and tried to help
with ways that were my own.*

*At last I snatched them back and
cried, "How could you be
so slow?"
"My child," He said,
"What could I do? You never did
let go."*

Author unknown

1987 Events

JANUARY

10: C.N.I.A. ASSEMBLY, Stockton

31: DELTA INTERGROUP UNITY DAY, Ripon Community Center, Ripon, Ca. 1:00 p.m.

FEBRUARY

13-15: SPRING FLING, Red Lion Inn, Sacramento

MARCH

6-8: P.R.A.A.S.A. ASSEMBLY, Woodlake Inn, Sacramento

13-15: N.C.C.A.A. CONFERENCE, Fresno Convention Center, Fresno.

28: C.N.I.A. PRE-CONFERENCE ASSEMBLY, Jackson, CA.

APRIL

17-19: RENO SPRING FESTIVAL, Bally Grand Hotel, Reno, Nev.

Announcement from San Francisco (06)

Now A.A. meetings are easily accessible to tourists, commuters, as well as others, who may be traveling along the Lombard St. part of U.S. Highway 101 in San Francisco (06). The address is 2118 Greenwich St. between Fillmore St. and Webster St. Further, Greenwich St. is south of and separated from Lombard St. by Moulton St.

During the week there are noon-time and 3:30 p.m. meetings plus some evening and night-time meetings. For further information about meetings and usually ample parking call (415) 567-1775.

Space became available in the rear of a store front last February. And then, one by one, the meetings started up, some quite large, so that by now they total about eighteen and are continuing to increase in number.

Heretofore, the whole of the Marina district was limited to about three meetings, all located at St. Mary's Church on the corner of Steiner St. and Union St. First there was the Pacific Heights Group which started up in the late 1940's or early 1950's and continued for about several decades prior to dissolution. More recent groups, Cow Hollow Young Peoples Discussion and the Marina Discussion continue to meet on a regular weekly basis.

So from just two meetings in the Marina district there is now quite a hub of meetings. And it would be remiss not to point this out to out-of-towners who might care to stop by for a little fellowship and a cup of coffee.

DEADLINES FOR MATERIAL

Dec. 10 . . Jan.-Feb. issue
Feb. 10 . Mar.-April issue
April 10 . May-June issue
June 10 . . July-Aug. issue
Aug. 10 . Sept.-Oct. issue
Oct. 10 . . Nov.-Dec. issue

Sharing

Hi,

I would like to talk about Hospital & Institution and how important this function is, and how it helps me in my sobriety.

I battled alcohol for 16 years and wound up in juvenile court many times for my drinking, baffled and confused all the time. My drinking went on through my teenage years and then I was going to the adult jails for nothing else but my drinking.

I never heard about Alcoholics Anonymous or alcoholism and was living with a disease I knew nothing about. After two alcohol rehabilitation programs I surrendered to alcohol. It just kept beating me up and I knew deep down I couldn't drink normally because every time I tried I wound up in jail. So the solution for me is Alcoholics Anonymous.

I started going to lots of meetings and got a sponsor and began working the Twelve Steps with my sponsor and got involved at the meetings making coffee, mopping floors and putting the chairs away and becoming a secretary of a meeting. At one of the meetings I was introduced to Hospital & Institution and decided to give it a try. Going into a jail to have an A.A. meeting for the inmates is something I needed to hear when I was in jail, and now I have the opportunity to spread the A.A. message and bring hope to the inmates in jail who have a problem with alcohol, that there is another way to live — without alcohol.

It is very rewarding sharing at the meetings and listening also to the inmates who share, tells me nothing has changed out there. Volunteering for Hospital & Institution is a great way to stay sober and spread the A.A. message to the alcoholic who is still suffering.

— Reprinted from the
Northcoast Unity

Larry P.

The Assembly in April — Your Business

The Pre-Conference Assembly for the California Northern Coastal Area will be held in Loleta next April, a chance to see the Second Tradition at work. Loleta wasn't chosen by some corporation president we never heard of. The location was carefully thought out and offered by our local service workers for the Area to use.

The theme of the Assembly and the topics to be discussed there weren't picked by a panel of experts to be handed to us A.A. members for approval. They came from you and me, who asked our General Service Representative (GSR) a question, or complained about something that happened at a meeting. The GSR brought it up at a District meeting. The District said, "Ask the Delegate." (The person from our area we elect to take our concerns to New York.) Eventually that question was asked by enough A.A. members to cause it to be put on the agenda for the Conference.

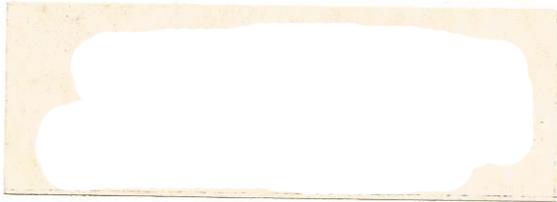
The GSRs then asked their groups what their interpretation of each topic is, and it is these answers that will be shared with the Delegate at the Pre-Conference Assembly.

All this is "their" business because you don't hold an office? You hold the most important office of all in this amazing society of ours — the A.A. member. It is your **informed** opinion that keeps A.A. going. And when the time comes in your sobriety when you ask yourself, "Is this all there is?" the answer is the Third Legacy: Service. Tune in next month to find out how you can become involved in the Pre-Conference Assembly.

— Reprinted from
the Northcoast Unity

Marion S.





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