



GOOD NEWS



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Published Bi-Monthly in Sunnyvale, California
By the Northern California Council of Alcoholics Anonymous

SEPT. - OCT.
1992

Do you know the way to San Jose?

All roads will lead to San Jose this October when the NCCAA will hold its 45th Annual Fall Conference. We have chosen the Fairmont Hotel as our host hotel and they have offered special rates for us if we register early. A list of nearby hotels has been provided which also offer special group rates. Most of these hotels are on the Light Rail System, which will provide almost door-to-door service, a trip in itself.

Downtown San Jose has undergone great changes since we were

last there, including two interesting museums, a shopping pavillion with many shops and many new restaurants for your dining pleasure. The Light Rail System clatters and clangs by the door of the Civic Auditorium every 15 minutes.

Speakers for the weekend event were chosen some time ago and include John K. from Chino Hills, CA as the Friday night speaker, David A. from Dallas, Texas will speak on Saturday night. Donna B. from Santa Monica will speak to the Young

People on Saturday afternoon, with Brian M. from New York City finishing up on Sunday morning and will close the conference.

Many workshops and service meetings, as well as both English and Spanish speaking marathons are planned. A dance will follow the raffle drawing on Saturday night. As always, badges will be required for admittance to the dance so be sure to register early.

Pre-Registration forms are pouring into the Treasurer's office, coming via the San Francisco Central Office thanks to Erwin K. If you get yours in the mail soon, your badge will be waiting for you when you arrive at the conference.

What is being billed as "The Last Air Show" featuring the Navy's Blue Angels will take place Saturday and Sunday at Moffett Field (a few miles north in Mountain View), which is closing soon. You may want to take this in on your way home Sunday. Hope to see you there for a fun weekend of fellowship.

News From The Chairperson

Recovery

Recovery through service in NCCAA continues to be an exciting adventure. I am still overwhelmed by all the love and support that pours my way from all over Northern California, and words cannot express the gratitude that I feel toward my great team of officers. They have done a tremendous amount of work in the past six months. We talk on the phone regularly and have visited future Conference sites in eight different cities.

Contracts Signed

Contracts have been signed through 1994. We finally secured a host hotel for the June 1994 Conference in Monterey-Casa Munras. They were very generous. They reminded us that the Blues Festival will be held at the Fairgrounds the same weekend. It will be imperative that we make our hotel reservations very early. We will prepare for all of you a more extensive hotel list. There are

20 hotels/motels on Munras Avenue alone. Monterey in June should be interesting. The two key words are: early reservations.

Oldest and Best

The Conferences held by NCCAA are the oldest in the AA world—and, of course, the best. They are grassroots AA at its best, and there are plenty of opportunities for everyone. Besides four main speaker meetings, there are excellent service panels, as well as marathon meetings in English and Spanish. Beginning at 3:30 p.m. on Friday, there is a smorgasbord of things to do that does not end until 1:00 p.m. on Sunday. For fifteen years, I have had the joy of widening my circle of friends through participation in NCCAA Conferences. Being a part of the hometown committee provides a very special opportunity to bond with friends and to be of service to AA's coming from out-of-town.

(See CHAIRPERSON, Page Four)

**NCCAA'S
45th ANNUAL
FALL CONFERENCE
OCTOBER 16, 17, 18, 1992
San Jose Civic Auditorium
145 West San Carlos
San Jose, California
NCCAA Will Be Using
The Fairmont Hotel
170 South Market Street
(800) 527-4727**

*Please Reserve your rooms early,
and be sure to mention NCCAA
no matter where you stay.*
PLEASE REGISTER NOW!

CNCA Delegates Report

Everyone I've talked to has expressed great enthusiasm for the spiritual experience of the Pacific Regional Forum held in Santa Clara. It truly was a once-in-a-lifetime experience. Presentations by General Service Office and Grapevine Staff, Trustees, and Directors told us far more about the jobs these trusted servants do for us than could ever be learned simply by reading the literature. Questions during open sharing time, ask-it-basket, and arms length sharing provided information about a wide variety of topics including finances, translations, group records, group problems, moving GSO out of New York, the computer, and the new offices. If you weren't there, ask someone who attended to tell you about it. (See article on Page Three)

A written report of the Forum will be mailed to all who registered. The report may be translated into Spanish.

Delegates from all five California Areas and other interested members attended a meeting held prior to the Regional Forum to discuss subjects related to asking for additional Conference Delegates for California. The sharing covered a lot of ground. Here are some of the highlights:

1. Our Regional Trustee told us that he could serve well even with several more Areas in the region and that the Conference could easily handle a dozen or so more Delegates.

2. Only three of the five Areas in California feel a need to continue discussing the possibility of asking for an additional Delegate.

3. Because of the 1992 Conference action, each Area in California may apply separately, but communication among us should continue ("we share our experience, strength, and hope with each other.")

4. After an Area has agreed that asking for an additional Delegate is the chosen course of action, the process required to complete the request for it is lengthy. Even if we agree today, we probably couldn't have the request ready in time to submit it to the 1993 Conference.

5. There are many factors to consider. So far, our discussions have focussed on size/travel distance and under-representation at the General Service Conference. It is important, also, to look at how well our groups are being heard within our Area. Can one Delegate adequately communicate with 2000 groups? Do we lose some of our GSR's and DCM's because they feel lost and insignificant in the crowd?

Two excellent presentations were made on the pros and cons of new Delegate areas at the General Service Conference. Contact your DCMC or me if you'd like to read them. Part of our Summer Assembly will be spent discussing this important subject. I hope you'll be there prepared with questions and comments. I'll bring copies of the request for a new Delegate Area so you can see what the General Service Conference suggests

(See DELEGATES, Page Five)

Prayer

The Archives reveal particular prayers which have been adopted by AA. The Prayer of Saint Francis is considered as a topic for meditation on page 99 of the **Twelve and Twelve** and, in 1955, at the St. Louis Convention, Bill W. recited this prayer from the podium.

On page 196 of **Alcoholics Anonymous Comes of Age**, Bill commented on the Serenity Prayer as follows: "Never had we seen so much AA in so few words...friend Howard...exclaimed, 'We ought to print this on cards and drop one into every piece of mail...' For several years afterward we followed his suggestion, and with amazing speed the Serenity Prayer came into general use and took its place alongside our two other favorites, the Lord's Prayer and the Prayer of Saint Francis."*

The book, **Dr. Bob and the Good Oldtimers**, reports that saying the Lord's Prayer was a regular practice of the early Ohio groups. The Big Book encourages members of particular religions to continue with their accustomed prayers in their personal life.

We know that AA is not a new religion, nor is it affiliated with any religion. However, we also are gratefully aware of the fact that AA has been the spiritual beneficiary of religion, even as it has been the beneficiary of medicine and psychiatry regarding mental and physical well-being. Thus, on page 2 of **Alcoholics Anonymous Comes of Age**, we read that "There was the beloved Father Dowling whose personal inspiration and whose recommendation of AA to the world did so much to make our

(See PRAYER, 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

Deadlines for Material

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

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."

Depression, aka Stinking Thinking

This is about depression, also known as Stinking Thinking.

I moved to Reno in June of 1985 from Redwood City, California. I moved my wife and my dog and myself here to pursue a gambling/retirement lifestyle. I was fifty years old and had worked for the IRS as a Revenue Officer. I was nine years sober in AA.

1985, '86, '87, '88, '89, '90 were the years of the pink cloud. Six years of uninterrupted happiness and success. I became a proficient gambler. I grew to love Reno. I enjoyed retirement.

In January of 1991 I had a heart attack and by-pass surgery. Then I had a stroke. Then I contracted emphysema. I began to experience periods of depression. Even thinking about suicide.

I called my sponsor in despair. "You are going to need professional help," he said. "You are coming to terms not only with sickness, but with what you want your life to be at age fifty-six."

So I sought therapy. It helped. It made me see depression in a larger context. But oh, how those AA tools, principles, and slogans helped! "It is a program of action." I joined World Hello and Loners International and began corresponding with other shut-ins and sick people. I started to share my experience, strength, and hope in a new way, and the lessons in courage and faith that I learned from albies and shut-ins far worse than myself.

I began to study depression as once I had studied alcoholism. I gave it my full attention. I learned how people dealt with it and overcame it. I am still learning.

As of the date of this writing I am not depression-free, but there has been progress. The pink cloud is gone, but so is stinking thinking. The worst thing about depression is that it will trap you into self-pity.

And the downward spiral begins. Negative thinking re-inforced by negative feeling. Gratitude goes out the window. Faith and trust in God vanish. And, in the words of the Big Book, "We are at the jumping-off place."

The message I would leave you with if you are experiencing depression is: "Don't give up! Seek profes-

sional help. Work with your sponsor. Help another alcoholic. Get into service. And above all, live one day at a time."

HANK H., Reno, Nevada.

(From The Bracer, Reno, NV)

(Editors note: Hank was my first sponsor in 1979. It was good to hear from you again, Hank. Glad you're alive and well. Ron J., Editor)

VISITING THE FORUM

Other than being a past General Service Representative (GSR), this was my first experience with an actual General Service event.

The PACIFIC FORUM was held in Santa Clara the weekend of July 24th and appeared to have attracted people from all the western states. I saw Nevada, Utah, Washington and Oregon badges as well as California. Actual registrations numbered something over 600, but there were many hundreds more than that in the main hall Saturday evening. Registration, by the way, was free.

I don't know about you, but even with a fair amount of service in General Service, it has remained a bit mysterious; who are those people and what do they do? The FORUM proved to be interesting, maybe even fascinating, certainly informative and entertaining. Those of you reading this who were there would probably agree.

Sharing sessions were numerous and timely. Subjects discussed were all pertinent and covered a broad range of AA pros and cons, concerns and interests. I attended the meeting whose topic was "The Home Group." The discussion was lively and had the benefit of many old timers who spoke freely and eloquently of their experiences and memories of the importance to ~~them~~ of having a home group. Other sessions and workshops focused on finances, special interests

and sponsorship to name a few. Regional delegates as well as representatives and delegates from New York addressed the assembly on a variety of AA business type matters. Believe me, talking about AA business in front of several hundred recovering alcoholics can be pretty delicate, but the FORUM speakers did quite well. They speak highly for General Service and AA.

Saturday evenings "Ask-It-Basket" was a highlight, a genuine treat in terms of AA workings. Three microphones allowed individuals to pose their specific questions to the podium. There were queries, comments and suggestions regarding almost every imaginable item: meeting format, newcomers, smoking and health, the new computer system in New York, and on and on ad infinitum.

A steady stream of people went to the microphones to ask their questions and voice some concerns. Everybody I heard cares a great deal about Alcoholics Anonymous. The many delegates and representatives fielding the questions also care about the continuing health of AA. That was real obvious. My personal thoughts on leaving the FORUM that night were basically two:

1. AA service can be pretty exciting and rewarding.
2. Alcoholics Anonymous is healthy and in good hands.

JOE M., Oakland, CA

The Name is Born

ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS

Some years ago, one of the original 100 members of AA gave a talk in California on AA history. What follows are excerpts about the birth of the Big Book.

We had pretty well gotten the book (Big Book) together. The original idea was to call this book **One Hundred Men**, and that was the thing we were working on through 1938 while the book was being printed. Then all of a sudden one of these women got into the picture.

Florence R. got sober, and as the book was getting near to completion, she had been sober about a year. She said, "Hey, what do you mean **One Hundred Men**? It should be **One Hundred Men and One Woman**."

Well, we thought a minute and realized that would be a hell of a thing to put on a marquee, so we thought we had better change that name. Then there was heckling over what we would name the book.

In the original red book, the words "Alcoholics Anonymous" were not in it anywhere. No mention of group in the book. All those things were coming after. I mean, the name came after the book was finished; so that is why the name was not in the book. We talked about alcoholics in the book, but not about Alcoholics Anonymous.

Then an interesting thing hap-

pened—like everything does in AA—things that come from the damndest spots. We were figuring on using **Exit** for the name of the book, or **This Way Out** or **The Way Out**.

The Way Out was winning by a long shot when we sent somebody down to the Library of Congress in Washington, D.C. to check up on how many titles were on hand. There were 12 **The Way Out**'s registered! And we thought we had better not bring it to 13! So we threw that out.

About this time we had just pulled a guy out of the state hospital up there named Joe W. who had been the founder of the New Yorker Magazine. Joe had a "wet brain" and the hospital didn't think he would stay out very long.

Well, Joe got in one of these meetings and in a very lucid moment, he said, "Hey, let's call this Anonymous Alcoholics." No one said anything for a few moments; Anonymous Alcoholics. Even better—Alcoholics Anonymous. And before you know it, that is where the name came from.

Joe W. went back to the nut house and has been there ever since. So you never know where these things come from. Joe came out of the state hospital just long enough to give us the words "Alcoholics Anonymous." *From THE HUMMER, Calistoga, CA Via MIRUS, Minneapolis, MN*

Chairperson

(Continued from Page One)

New Blood Needed

The NCCAA Steering Committee is always excited to get new blood. Most of the 48 County/Zones in Northern California are not represented and so miss out on our wonderful message of recovery. If you are living in a County/Zone where there is no representation, just maybe you are the one who is supposed to carry the message. Just maybe you live in a County/Zone where there has never been a Conference, yet you have the facilities to easily hold one. Just maybe you will be the one to tell the groups in your zone that they are each entitled to two NCCAA Delegates. And just maybe they will want you to be their Zone Chairperson; and, as such, you will undoubtedly lead them through the first NCCAA Conference ever held in your County/Zone.

Steering in Stockton

NCCAA Steering Committee meetings are held at 11:00 a.m. on Saturday during each Conference and then approximately six weeks after each Conference on a Sunday at 1:30 p.m. at the Monte Diablo Alano Club in Stockton. Our Structure, Purpose, Functions booklet as well as our Conference Guidelines contain a wealth of valuable information for anyone interested in learning more about us. Try us; you'll love us!

And, p.s., don't forget to subscribe to the Good News. It is what you are reading right now! It is full of good news and is the best read in Northern California.

God bless,

DIANE O., Saratoga, CA

**NCCAA 46th Annual
Spring Conference
Fresno, CA
March 12, 13, 14, 1993**

**Help Wanted—
Subscribers, Contributors,
Writers, Critics,
Assistant-Editors,
Would-be Editors
See GOOD NEWS Editor**

Prayer (Continued from Page Two)

society what it is.”* And, on page 39, we read that “AA got its ideas of self-examination, acknowledgment of character defects, restitution for harm done, and working with others straight from the Oxford Groups, and directly from Sam Shoemaker, their former leader in America, and from nowhere else.”*

**(Reprinted with permission of AAWS, Inc.)*

FRANK B., Napa, CA

HUMOR

As usual, Joe came home late and not very sober. "Why, oh why," said his long-suffering wife, "do you have to come home half drunk every night?"

"I run out of money," Joe replied.

Two thoroughly bombed citizens staggered into an amusement park and bought tickets for the roller coaster.

After they had zoomed up, down, and around for a while, one said to the other, "This bus is making good time, but the road is in terrible condition."

From the Grapevine

NCCAA CONFERENCE DATES

1993 Conferences
 FRESNO - March 12, 13, 14
 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 - October

MARK YOUR CALENDARS

Delegates Report (Continued From Page Two)

as important information to be gathered as part of this process.

Another part of our Summer Assembly will be devoted to discussion of the theme of the 1993 General Service Conference, "AA Takes Its Inventory—The General Service Conference Structure." To prepare for discussion of the theme and workshop questions for the 1993 Conference, we'll all need to study the Conference Charter (pp S31-S34 in the AA Service Manual). There will be presentations at the Conference on Articles 1, 3, 4, 10, 11, and 12. The other six articles will form the basis of one of the Conference workshops. As further background, you might want to read the original version of the Conference Charter with all the footnotes explaining the changes that have been made by Conference action since 1955.

Several members of the General Service Board have responded to the letter I wrote as the result of the motion we approved at our May Assembly regarding the "outreach pro-

gram." One Trustee congratulated us on our action and said that he knew that other Areas shared our feelings but that we were the only one who put our ideas in writing. A new member of the Board who hadn't been part of the "outreach" activities said that the letter is a valuable contribution to the Board's thinking on this subject and the concepts developed in the letter will be carefully studied. Please ask your DCMC or me if you'd like to see a copy of the letter I wrote.

A past Trustee speaking at the Regional Forum told us about the joy of watching the AA process at work. We let everyone have their say no matter how many times we've heard it. We're not a goal-oriented society. It's the means, not the end that's important. Our Summer Assembly on September 12, in Ferndale will allow us to participate in the process together again. I look forward to seeing all of you there.

With love from your trusted servant,
BARBARA M., Eureka, CA
 CNCA Delegate

Coming Attractions

Oct. 16-18
 Fri. - Sun.

45th ANNUAL FALL NCCAA CONFERENCE
 San Jose Civic Auditorium
 San Jose, CA
 PLEASE PRE-REGISTER EARLY

Oct. 30, 31 &
 November 1
 Fri. - Sun.

13th ANNUAL C.C.Y.P.A.A. (Calif Coastal Young People of AA) CONFERENCE BY THE SEA
 Host Hotel: The Doubletree
 Monterey, CA

Nov. 5 - 8
 Thurs. - Sun.

31st ANNUAL HAWAII CONVENTION
 Sheraton Waikiki, Honolulu
 Registration: \$70 / person

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