



GOOD NEWS



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Ho! Ho! Ho! 'tis the Season!

The Holidays—Friend or Foe?

In my recovery and in sobriety, the topic comes up every year. Friend or foe? Festivities or fear?

At a recent meeting the discussion centered on how and why the upcoming season can be a threat to many of us. It is still October and many are already becoming concerned. AA flyers in the mail, announcements at meetings, and invitations from friends leave no doubt as to the approaching season.

Many fellowships and intergroups schedule around-the-clock marathon meetings. Some plan meals and other events to give us a place to go and a healthy reason to be there—namely, to protect our sobriety.

As a child my holidays were often marred by the near poverty we lived in as well as the active, rampant alcoholism in the family. Most of my memories are less than fond. These memories include the importance of the church and school I attended because of the activities and events that took place. In my case, these institutions provided more joy and substance than the home I was raised in. Not that nobody cared in the home, or that there wasn't effort put into having fun and making the season special, it was just practically impossible with all the insanity and disfunction that existed.

At age 13, my own drinking started and went on for the next 23 years. Like so many of us, I passed the disease of alcoholism on to my spouse and children. We all know the sadness, loneliness and tragedy that goes with alcoholic drinking and that's what I offered to my family, friends and employers.

Alcoholics Anonymous came into my life in a big way in 1974. God said I was ready and I was. I had not been asking for help nor did I even care anymore. My family was a 1000 miles away and I had pretty much resigned myself to alcohol. God had other plans.

The holidays were right around the corner! What was I to do? Who would I spend time with? Where would I go? The Fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous answered those questions and provided for all of them. Quickly I decided to avail myself of everything AA was offering to me.

New friends and buddies invited me to parties. The Alano Club was planning several sobriety oriented festivities. I found myself spending more time with people who were genuinely sober and very sincere about their recovery. These were gifts of love from God and the lovely men and women of Alcoholics Anonymous. I stayed sober that first holiday season by taking advantage of all the love and help that came my way, including tons of extra meetings and close contact with the Fellowship. The disgust, sadness, despair and loneliness I had lived with for 36 years were greatly diminished. It was a happy season for me, probably for the first time in my life.

(See HOLIDAYS, Page Four)

Council to Elect New Treasurer in Fresno

The office of Council Treasurer has become more of an Accounting position than just a Book-keeper who writes checks and pays bills. Oftentimes the Treasurer is called upon to review contracts to determine their appropriateness for Council needs and their financial impact.

Perhaps we should review the qualifications for Council Treasurer again as found in our Purpose and Structure Booklet. They follow:

"The Council Treasurer is elected at the Spring Conference of the ODD number years, and serves a two (2) year term. This office is restricted to no more than two (2) consecutive terms.

It is recommended that the Council Treasurer have a minimum of 5 years continuous sobriety, a service background and experience in accounting and bookkeeping.

The Treasurer should have the time available to be responsible for all Council Funds and to work very closely with the Council Chairperson. A financial report of each Conference is to be prepared and presented at the Pre-Conference meeting following the Conference.

Financial statements as of June 30 and December 31, of each year are to be prepared."

News From The Chairperson

I feel so richly blessed after experiencing the second conference of my term as your Chairperson. Both the Santa Rosa and the San Jose host committees did a terrific job for us, and I am grateful. They have made my job very easy thus far. And the Fresno committee is off to a racing start. They are way out in front with their plans. Thank you, one and all.

I want to thank the other members of my team, too: Dianne, Ron, George, John and Paula. They never cease to amaze me with their energy, love and support. Our Steering Committee is growing, and I thank all of you for your tireless efforts on behalf of NCCAA. Dianne, our Treasurer, rotates in March at our Conference in Fresno. She will be hard to replace, and I will really miss her after all her invaluable help these past months. If you are interested in serving NCCAA as Treasurer for the next two years, I would definitely recommend that you talk to Dianne so that you thoroughly understand what the position requires.

Often at conferences people come to me with ideas and thoughts. Inez shared some of these with me in writing, and I thought I would pass them along to you as food for thought. We can always improve the methods we use to carry our message of hope

to the alcoholic who still suffers. Most of us agree that our Purpose, Structure, Functions Booklet needs to be updated. It was last revised in 1986, so it is probably overdue.

NCCAA encompasses 48 Zones (Counties). Very few (less than 20) are represented by a Zone Chairperson. A Zone Chairperson does not seem to have an adequate way of contacting the groups in his/her zone. There is a definite need for more group contact. How can this be accomplished? Does each group need two delegates or is one enough now? No zone delegates' meetings are currently being held. The only meetings in a zone appear to happen when there is a conference, and then the meetings are host committee meetings and not zone meetings. Should zone chairpeople hold meetings with their delegates at least three times a year, one before each conference? How could this be accomplished with the enormous growth in Northern California?

Inez suggested that handouts could be made available at the registration table at each conference. They would make people aware of our 48 zones (counties), what a zone chairperson does, the responsibilities of the group delegates, and how to get involved. NCCAA could also do what the General Service Committees and the Hospitals and Institutions Committee do so well at our conferences: hold workshops and panels to improve awareness and to increase participation. Round table discussions have been found to be very useful at

(See CHAIRPERSON, Page Five)

Friends of AA

Imagine yourself covering the 1955 Convention, reporting the speeches of honored guests like Dr. Harry Tiebout, AA's friend in psychiatry. Tiebout and two colleagues had persuaded a medical society and a professional association to let Bill W. read papers about AA. You're recording Tiebout's admission that AA taught him about the drunk's need to hit bottom, to accept a Higher Power, to be humble.

He is telling how he found that hitting bottom meant surrendering, quitting the fight, admitting defeat, accepting powerlessness and the need for help. He is citing the AA who disclosed that, after repeated nose dives had cut him down to size, he had been sober ever since. He is endorsing surrender as an essential disciplinary function, since the return of the full-fledged ego can happen at any time; years of sobriety are no insurance against its resurgence; no AA, regardless of veteran status, can relax his guard against a reviving ego, against smugness and complacency.

He places the pink cloud state as the aftermath of surrender whereby the ego, full of striving, just quits and the drunk senses internal peace and quiet and as enormous feeling of release. He logs the AA's flight to the pink cloud where he thinks he has found heaven. And now he reveals how the ego, slowly making its comeback, forces a descent from the cloud back to life where, with AA's help, the alcoholic can learn to become a sober person and not an angel. He avows that the ego is not dead and buried, that its capacity for rebirth is

(See FRIENDS, Page Three)

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."

TWELVE TIPS ON KEEPING YOUR HOLIDAY SEASON SOBER AND JOYOUS

(This is being reprinted this year as a service to those who may be newcomers or have not read it.)

Holiday parties without liquid spirits may still seem a dreary prospect to new AAs. But many of us have enjoyed the happiest holidays of our lives sober—an idea we would never have dreamed of, wanted, or believed possible when drinking. Here are some tips for having an all-around ball without a drop of alcohol.

1. Line up extra AA activities for the holiday season. Arrange to take newcomers to meetings, answer the phones at a clubhouse or central office, speak, help with dishes, or visit the alcoholic ward at a hospital.

2. Be host to AA friends, especially newcomers. If you don't have a place where you can throw a formal party, take one person to a diner and spring for the coffee.

3. Keep your AA telephone list with you all the time. If a drinking urge or panic comes—postpone everything else until you've called an AA.

4. Find out about the special holiday parties, meetings, or other celebrations given by groups in your area, and go. If you're timid, take someone newer than you are.

5. Skip any drinking occasion you are nervous about. Remember how clever you were at excuses when drinking? Now put that talent to good use. No office party is as important as saving your life.

6. If you have to go to a drinking party and can't take an AA with you, keep some candy handy.

7. Don't think you have to stay late. Plan in advance an "important date" you have to keep.

8. Go to church. Any church.

9. Don't sit around brooding. Catch up on those books, museums, walks, and letters.

10. Don't start now getting worked up about all those holiday temptations. Remember—"one day at a time."

11. Enjoy the true beauty of holiday love and joy. Maybe you cannot give material gifts—but this year, you can give love.

12. "Having had a..." No need to spell out the Twelfth Step here, since you already know it.
(From MYRUS, Minneapolis, MN)

Hospital & Institution Corner

The GOOD NEWS would sure like to hear from someone in H & I. We really need your articles to keep our readers informed of your important inspirational services to still suffering alcoholics.

Friends of AA

(From Page Two)

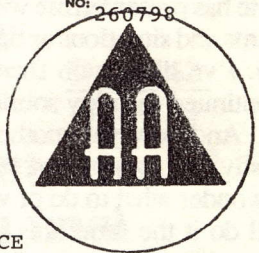
astounding, and, never to be forgotten. And now he concludes with the following recap:

While surrender can produce sobriety by its stopping effect on the ego, the latter will return unless the AA learns to accept a disciplined life, thus permanently checking the tendency for ego comeback. A single surrender is not enough. Continued endeavor is necessary, the Steps, repeated inventories—not just one—and the 12th Step itself, a routine reminder that one must work at deserving sobriety. As for Tradition, pay heed to the teachings of experience or you will court disaster. [Dr. Tiebout's complete address is found in AA COMES OF AGE.]

FRANK B., Napa, CA

GSO Receives Funds

The General Service Office has received NCCAA's contribution of \$2,700 and acknowledged it with a very nice letter to our Treasurer and the following receipt. This contribution was recommended by the Finance Committee and approved by the Steering Committee and the Delegates.

AA GENERAL SERVICE OFFICE		NO: 260798
RECEIVED \$	2,700.00	
CREDITED TO:	SPECIAL NORTHERN CA COUNCIL	
LOCATION:	SAN FRANCISCO, CA	
Your contribution is gratefully received.		
With it we can continue to bring A.A.'s message of hope to alcoholics everywhere.		Treasurer General Service Board of A.A.
NORTHERN CALIFORNIA COUNCIL C/O SAN FRANCISCO CENTRAL OFFICE 1540 MARKET STREET, SUITE 150 SAN FRANCISCO CA 94102		
BOX 459, GRAND CENTRAL STATION, NEW YORK, N.Y. 10163		

With warmest A.A. greetings from your General Service Staff

CNCA Delegates Report—Nov. '92

One of the interesting opportunities I have as Delegate is receiving newsletters from other Areas. When I was a G.S.R. I enjoyed finding out what other groups were doing, and as Delegate I enjoy reading about what other Areas are doing.

The Southern Minnesota Area Assembly (they're the people who suggested the moratorium on literature until all literature and service pieces some into conformity with each other and our singleness of purpose) has created a literature subcommittee to "focus efforts on the study of our literature for duplication, inconsistencies, and singleness of purpose." In conjunction with this, one of their districts held a sharing session about the several pieces of literature addressing young people, and shared their results with the subcommittee. I'm not suggesting that we tackle this specific project, rather that we reaffirm the task of the Area Assembly to address the issues of concern to AA as a whole. There's a motion before our Assembly that we discontinue business meetings at our Assemblies in order to be concerned solely with the World Service affairs of Alcoholics Anonymous. While

this motion may swing the pendulum a bit too far, I believe that as an Area Assembly we should be concerned with topics of broader concern.

Approximately 50 D.C.M.'s picked up copies of the questionnaire prepared by the Conference Grapevine Committee. I hope you've held fruitful discussions with the G.S.R.'s in your sub-district and will be sending the completed questionnaires to me by December 1 so I can return them in a single mailing by December 31.

Results of the 1992 membership survey are being tabulated at G.S.O. Of the 18 groups randomly selected in CNCA, five chose not to participate. The results will be available in 1993—probably following the General Service Conference.

Final Conference Reports in Spanish have arrived. I'll be delivering most of them to District 16 and 17 at the Election Assembly. I'll keep some of them for those of you who serve Spanish language groups in other districts. If you need one, please let me know.

I've received letters from members of the Grapevine staff and Corporate Board asking for some ideas

about the possible reasons for the steady drop in Grapevine subscriptions. I have a few theories of my own, but as a faithful reader of the Grapevine, I don't know much about why people don't subscribe or why they don't renew their subscriptions. I'd love to hear your thoughts on this subject so I can pass them on to the folks at the Grapevine.

It's exciting to talk to those of you who have been elected to serve in new jobs for Panle 43. Rotation is a sound spiritual principle. I continue to marvel at the process. Congratulations to all of you who have accepted another two year journey into the fourth dimension of existence of which you had never even dreamed.

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

HUMOR

An alcoholic bank teller got into a non-stop poker game one Saturday night. It continued all through Sunday into the small hours of Monday morning, and the bank employee barely had time to shower, shave and change before going to work.

Badly hung over from booze and fatigue, he was sorting a pile of silver coins at his window, just before opening time, when he rested his eyes for a moment and half dozed off.

Soon after, a young woman pushed a twenty dollar check at him and said, "Four fives."

He awoke with a jerk, shoved the pile of coins at her, and asked blankly, "When did you get in the game?"

(Grapevine)

HOLIDAYS

(Continued from Page One)

Eighteen years have passed between then and now. I've gone through the Steps and have experienced most if not all of the Promises. Life has presented me with new concerns and situations as time has gone by. I've dealt with them and have continued to enjoy sobriety.

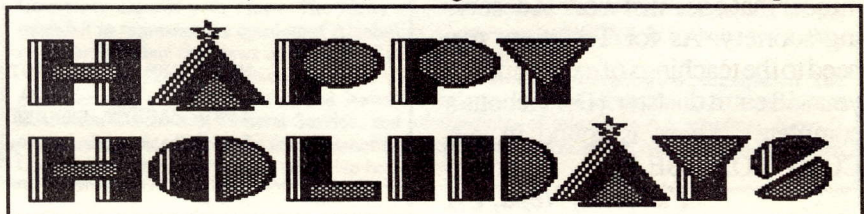
And now yet another season of festivities approaches. No longer do I wonder what to do or where to go. I'll do it the same this year as I've been doing. Extra meetings, AA parties and gatherings. That's what I'll do.

When fears and bewilderment are

mentioned in reference to this time of year we can all pass on our experiences. The fears are real and valid. Just look at where we came from! But we have also learned that it is not necessary to succumb to alcohol. Let's encourage one another, particularly newcomers, to participate in the season by participating in AA.

Our lives don't have to be tragic nor must we be lonely anymore.

JOE M., Oakland, CA



Chairperson

(Continued from Page Two)

Pacific Region Service Assemblies. Round tables for NCCAA Group Delegates, Zone Chairpersons, Intergroup Representatives, etc. could be scheduled for Friday night after the speaker meeting when there is no dance.

All of us representing the various service entities need to work together. Each and every one of us, no matter which service we are involved in, have one common denominator: we all come from a Homegroup—a Spiritual Entity—having but one primary purpose which is to carry the message to the alcoholic who still suffers. We are all concerned with the best way to accomplish this purpose. There cannot be any “them” or “us.” We must all work together. I believe that in NCCAA we do this well. But can we do it better? How can we improve communication with our existing group delegates and zone chairpeople? How can we improve participation in the zones (counties) throughout Northern California? Please share your ideas with me. Thank you again. See you in Fresno.

Luv,

DIANNE O., Chairperson
Saratoga, CA

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 - Oct. 6, 7, 8

MARK YOUR CALENDARS

Northern California Council Of Alcoholics Anonymous

1992 San Jose Preliminary Financial Statement

Pre-Registration (359)	\$1,795.00	
Registration (1744)	<u>\$8,720.00</u>	
TOTAL REGISTRATION (2103)		\$10,515.00

Raffle	\$2,074.00	
Literature	\$379.11	
English Speaking Marathons	\$321.69	
Spanish Speaking Marathons	\$137.66	
General Service Meetings	\$129.00	
NCCAA Steering Committee	\$33.53	
H&I Meetings	\$110.72	
Early Bird Speaker Meeting	\$54.10	
Friday Night Speaker Meeting	\$511.40	
Young Peoples' Speaker Meeting	\$326.23	
Saturday Night Speaker Meeting	\$1,385.81	
Sunday Morning Speaker Meeting	<u>\$371.53</u>	
		<u>\$5,834.78</u>
TOTAL INCOME		\$16,349.78

EXPENSES

Printing	\$1,218.41	
Mailings	\$133.03	
Speaker/Committee Travel	\$927.00	
Speaker/Committee Dinner	\$449.03	
Speaker/Committee Lodging	\$2,023.45	
Insurance	\$1,118.78	
Sign Language Interpreters	\$240.00	
Convention Center	\$6,304.10	
Sound & Lighting Labor	\$625.08	
Raffle	\$368.10	
Flowers & Decorations	\$290.00	
Band	\$400.00	
Literature	\$419.21	
Security Guards	\$290.00	
Registration Expense	<u>31.43</u>	
TOTAL EXPENSES		<u>\$14,837.62</u>
REVENUES LESS EXPENSES		\$1,512.16

This is a Preliminary Statement & subject to change when final figures are in.

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