

AA

# GOOD NEWS

AA

September Issue

September 2001

## Special points of interest:

- Santa Rosa Conference
- Redding Conference
- Volunteers Needed
- Blast from the Past
- Keeping the Meeting Alive
- Step 2
- Letter from the Editors
- Calendar of Events
- 50th Anniversary of Good News

## Volunteers Needed

As always, volunteers are needed to put on these Conferences.

Being a volunteer at our conference has always been a way to show our gratitude

For more information how you can be of service please call:

Phyllis H. (530)243-4520

### Positions Needed

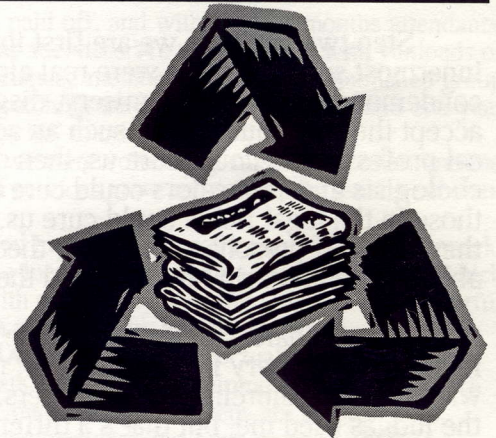
7th Tradition  
Registration  
Free Drawing  
Accounting

## Good News 50th Anniversary Year

As we continue with our series of "Blast from the Past" articles we are reminded of how much the NCCAA has contributed to AA as a whole.

The NCCAA was started because of the need for a conduit of Northern California people in AA . 54 years ago there were not the other AA service entities available, that most of us saw when we first got sober.

It is important that we remember what worked for us when we first got sober . It is also just as important to remember the service entities that provided the necessary



*Unity- Recovery -Service*

linkage keep AA strong and healthy.

**"Be there for your  
Conference"**

## Redding Conference

Redding Convention Center October 5,6,&7 2001

### Friday October 5, 2001

8:00 pm

Otto M.

Plano Texas

### Saturday October 6, 2001

3:30 pm

Ben M.

Rocklin California

8:00 pm

Opie O.

Merritt, B.C., Canada

### Sunday October 7, 2001

11:00 am

Lorraine M.

Magalia, California

## Step Two

A friend once asked me to talk about my understanding of the ‘Spiritual Aspects’ of the program of recovery we know as Alcoholics Anonymous. I was a few months sober, had been going to lots of meetings and working the steps with a sponsor, so I thought I had a pretty good understanding of the program. I said, “Let’s see, step three mentions God as *we understand Him*, and that sounds kinda spiritual. The eleventh step talks about Prayer and Meditation. Tradition two discusses our ultimate authority as a loving God. My friend let me babble on like this for a while before he interrupted with ‘Wrong~ There are no ‘Spiritual Aspects’ of the program! *It is a spiritual program, lock, stock and barrel.* From the first step, through the traditions, to the twelfth concept of service, from page zero of the Big Book to page five hundred and whatever, it is all about spirituality.”

Step two is where we are first introduced to the spiritual nature of the program. Having admitted to our innermost selves that we were real alcoholics, that we were victims of a hopeless state of mind and body that condemned us to a life of misery, disgrace, and devastation, and to an early and ugly death, we also had to accept the consequences of such an admission: that no human power could relieve us of our malady. If medical professionals could cure us, then detox hospitals would discharge well people and they don’t. If psychologists and counselors could cure us, then treatment centers would turn out well people, and they don’t. If those in the legal fields could cure us, then drunk tanks and penitentiaries would release well people, and they don’t. If preachers and other theologians could cure us, then spiritual retreats and workshops would enable us to go and sin no more, and they don’t.

It was a hard fact for me to face, that left to my own will, I would die drunk, and soon. I tried every method of recovery I could think of, most of them more than once. I tried the emergency rooms and detox wards. I tried churches and preachers. I tried psychologists and counselors. I tried the judges (well, actually, the judges tried me, but that’s a different story.) In the end, with all human power exhausted, I was still powerless over my drinking, and the unmanageability in my life was getting worse each day. If I was to live, I had to find and tap into a power that could do for me what no human power had been able to accomplish: a power *greater than human*.

Obviously.

I found that power in the rooms of Alcoholics Anonymous. I had no use for talk of God, of mysterious, powerful beings that lived in the clouds. But in the rooms of AA, I heard stories of people whose histories were as bad or worse than mine, but who had gotten well. I could identify with the tales of hopelessness and helplessness, and when they told of the destruction they had done in their lives and the lives of those who loved them, I could say to myself, “Yeah, I did that.” And, most importantly, I could see in their eyes, and hear in their voices, and tell by the way they lived their lives, that everything had changed for them.

Whether by connecting with Big JuJu, or throwing down the bones, or through prayer and meditation, or whatever, something had restored them to sanity. Some power had done for them what no human power had been able to do for me. Once I got out of my own self pity and selfish fear long enough to really listen to what was being said, once I got honest enough to believe what was right in front of me, I had no option but to believe that a power existed, greater than my own, which could do for me what had proved absolutely impossible for me to do for myself. This belief, I feel, is the root of the spirituality that allows us to recover from a hopeless, pitiable, fatal condition.

What is this Power that can do this for me? I haven’t a clue. I’ve had no great revelations, no deep insights into the nature or purpose of this Power. But I had to accept the obvious fact that pretty much any power could do a better job than I of restoring some sanity to my life. Coming to believe that this Power could and would if honestly sought is today a cornerstone of establishing some peace in my life. More than that, it has given renewed purpose, even radiance, where there was once just an empty shell

Ed V.

A person starts to live when he can live outside himself. –Albert Einstein

**KEEPING THE MEETING ALIVE**

**From** The Home Group Heartbeat of AA

At a recent meeting of our home group on the *First Tradition*, it was suggested that one of the ways we could actively promote the principle of unity was to draft a letter sharing our recent experiences with readers of the Grapevine

About three years ago, two people sat down in a church at a meeting where attendance had dwindled down to just the pair of them and an occasional third or fourth. The meeting — though established many years previously and having been quite well attended during several periods -was dying The two discussed abandoning the meeting It was several months behind on its small rent, and the weekly attendance didn't give much hope for survival

A group conscience of the two has held, the two people decided they would fight to keep the meeting alive, that they would show up every week not matter what, and that (since they had little else to do) they would study the Big Book. The format was simple read a couple of paragraphs, then comment on what was read

A strange thing happened The few people who did show up started to come back — every week The small group grew slowly and developed a personality There was a lot of laughter, warm-hearted friendliness, and a sense of unity in our common goal of survival linden the levity was a profound seriousness when it came to studying the Big Book and reaching out to newcomers

The potent combination of fun and recovery straight from the Big Book soon paid off, and within a few months attendance was close to a dozen After the first year the group had grown to over twenty regular attendees We were blessed with vanloads of people from various treatment centers, so there was ample opportunity fur the experienced members of the now-established group to reach out, and soon we were all busy sponsoring people through the Steps and watching the sixty-day six-month and one-year chips passed out with a regularity that brought tears to our eyes and the "age of miracles" to our doorstep

After the first year we were nearly caught up on back rent, after the second, we were voluntarily raising our own rent and paying it quarterly in advance Our contributions to central office, area, and general services grew and will likely remain substantial

The group became a magnet for Big Book "thumpers" and 'soon we felt the need to expand to another night during the week. Six of the more active members met at a roundup to discuss it and, after securing a location, we began a second meeting, which also took its topic from the Big Book It is based strongly on the Fifth Tradition With our rapidly growing numbers and powerful desire to carry the message we also started a women s meeting, and began hosting a meeting with a recovery center

We elected officers in compliance with the suggestions of the pamphlet "The AA Group." and they actually attend their respective meetings and report back to the group We call ourselves Fifth Traditionalists and constantly remind ourselves and each other that the reason we are here is to help the new person find what we have discovered through the Steps not to glorify ourselves, not discuss ad nauseating lengths our own opinions or feelings, but to give to others what has been given to us

Chair people rotate so that no one person influences a meeting for too long. Anniversaries are regular and much celebrated occurrences There is a great sense of purpose and satisfaction among us If we could say one thing above all else t would be that when we followed the directions given in tie book *exactly*, the newcomer recovered when we followed the Traditions exact/y the group flourished

It took some of us a very long time to discover these simple truths But our AA experience is now so fulfilling, so positive so full of harmonious action we hope we never forget them.

Kathryn K Phoenix AZ



" I began to go meetings"

## SANTA ROSA WELCOMES NCCAA CONFERENCE

The NCCAA has been welcomed to Santa Rosa. It was (as Keith H. would say) FANTASTIC.

We heard lots of people say why haven't we been here before. Then we heard "we have, it's just been so long since the last one here.

We were all pleasantly pleased with the outstanding service of the Santa Rosa Volunteers.

Also the people at the concession booth for the Veterans Hall were very accommodating. Our hats are off to all who participated in this outstanding conference.

We are all looking forward to our next visit to Santa Rosa. Let's not let it be so long between visits.

See ya next time,  
Santa Rosa



Santa Rosa

## Blast From the Past

PUBLISHED OCTOBER 1980

AA Roulette: First Published in the Grapevine January 1954

Have you been dry for quite a long time? Is AA becoming a little boresome, something that is certainly needed by most of the group, but in your case has probably served its purpose? Do you secretly believe that, with all the knowledge you now have of alcoholics and alcoholism, you could probably handle the stuff; are you perhaps toying with the idea that some day, when time and place and all other factors are just right, you may TRY IT AGAIN?

If those are your conscious or subconscious thoughts, if you feel that another try at the bottle might be a pleasant thrill why don't you try instead, the thrill of Russian Roulette? You know...that game where you put only one bullet in a revolver, spin the cylinder, point the thing at your temple and pull the trigger? The odds in Russian Roulette are very much in favor of the player: four chances out of five no harm whatever would be done(not even a hangover). Of course, there IS that fifth chance...that ONE chance that would mean disaster.. curtains...the end...but the chances are, four out of five, that wouldn't happen to you on the first try.

Now, you think that's silly? You think only a moron would do such a thing; and what does that have to do with your taking a drink, anyway? Here's what it has to do with it, my fellow alky: you're planning a much more foolish and dangerous game -you're going to play AA Roulette.

In AA Roulette, you must (mentally) select four other players who are "good AAs" with

Blast from the Past Continued from Page 4

a good period of sobriety behind them. You would bet your last dollar that not one of them would take a drink—ever. But, for the sake of this game, we'll, presume they have the same idea in mind that you have, that they could take a drink or two without doing any particular harm. Although you think YOU could do it, you don't believe THEY could; you've learned too much about alcoholics to believe that. Well, if you've forgotten to look at yourself honestly, let's look at you through their eyes: THEY don't believe YOU could do it, either. So, the consensus indicates that each of the five will get drunk and not one of them will emerge from the spree a controlled drinker, after pulling the trigger and taking that first drink. So what? Five good AAs, who have grown to appreciate their sobriety, each have a slip. What harm has been done, that is, to the individuals themselves? The chances are that one or two of them will come back into AA with no apparent harm having been done at all, perhaps even stronger for having learned a lesson the hard way. We'll stretch the point, for the purpose of the game, and say that such happens to four out of five. But according to the law of averages as we have witnessed it over the years, it just doesn't stand to reason that five out of five will make the grade. At least one of the five will never come back and his slip will eventually end in disaster or death. At least one of the five is now having his last chance at sobriety. You probably agree with that premise, but "It would not happen to me," you say... and "would not happen to me echoes in four other minds. The grim consensus again indicates that not one of the five has a better chance than any one of the other four.

Of course, the odds are it wouldn't be you; four chances out of five a slip for you wouldn't mean death or disaster.

Do you want to pull the trigger and find out? I don't.

F.W.M. Sharon, Pa

### Calendar of Events

- |               |  |
|---------------|--|
| Oct. 5, 6 & 7 | 54 <sup>th</sup> NCCAA Annual Fall Conference – Redding CA               |
| Oct 13        | San Mateo County Fellowship Anniversary Party Burlingame CA              |
| Nov 1-4       | 40 <sup>th</sup> Annual Hawaii Convention Honolulu HI                    |
| Nov 16-18     | Yosemite Summit Conference Curry Pavilion, Curry Village                 |
| <b>2002</b>   |  |
| Feb 14-17     | 38 <sup>th</sup> Annual International AA Women's Conference – Denver Co. |
| Mar 8,9,&10   | 55 <sup>th</sup> NCCAA Annual Spring Conference – Monterey Ca.           |

### Letter From the Editors

We would like to thank all of the people who attend and participate in our conference. It was with great joy that we were once again a part of our conference in Santa Rosa. We received over 35 New subscriptions at the conference and more in the mail.

Please feel free to stop by the Good News table in Redding to share with us. And if you have a event to place or something to be considered for publication stop by or e-mail us at [carinainaa@aol.com](mailto:carinainaa@aol.com)

In Service with Love,

Carina & Rich H. Livermore Ca.

# NCCAA

Good News

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