

ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS



S . C . I . F .



VOLUME 100, ISSUE 6

NEWSLETTER DATE JUNE 2005

SINGLE PARENTS/GETTING SOBER — THE DIFFICULTIES

When I got sober my first daughter was 2 ½ years old. I'd finally experienced a psychic shift and I became willing to go to any lengths for my sobriety. I got a meeting schedule and figured out how to get to 90 meetings in 90 days—no small feat for a single mom with a demanding job. At first, I didn't take my daughter with me because I didn't want her exposed to the AA stories that were shared in the meetings—sort of ironic considering she'd been living in one of them.

Scheduling a sitter on a daily basis proved impossible, so I packed up a small basket of toys to distract my daughter and headed off to meetings. I chose large, chaotic groups because I felt self-conscious having my daughter with me and I did not want to run the risk of being voted-out of a closed meeting or asked to leave—a practice which is euphemistically referred to as directing a member to an Open meeting. But I was in dire need of Step & Book Study meetings—most of which are Closed.

Through trial and error, intuition and respect for the fellowship, we found our way. The West County proved incredibly loving and tolerant of our situation: we were welcomed in meditation meetings, book studies, speaker/discussions, you name it.

Some of these meetings appear in the schedule as Closed and some as Open.

My experience of why a meeting chooses to be Open or Closed has varied greatly and does not necessarily address a policy on children. Closed meetings can use the distinction to designate it a sex-specific meeting (male or female, gay or lesbian), or to keep the discussion limited to problems dealing only with alcohol (no drugs) while still others try to limit the signing of court papers to those who have a desire to stop drinking. Conversely, I have been to Open meetings with a very low tolerance for children.

It would be incredibly helpful to the parent seeking fellowship if meeting policies regarding children were clearly stated in the schedule: independently of whether or not the meeting is Open or Closed. With this in mind, it seems a meeting can fall into one of about five categories:

CC---Child care (kids are attended to in a room separate from the meeting).

CF---Child Friendly we allow well-monitored children **CT**---Child Tolerant.

(we won't ask you to leave if you show up with a child, but please find another meeting if you plan to bring them regularly).

3C---Children under 3 Children under 3 welcome.

NC---No Children -- (we won't ask you to leave--this and *only* this time—UNLESS your child is disruptive, but you must find a different meeting if you choose to bring your child with you)

NOTE: the notion of never asking a member to leave a meeting—for whatever reason—is the opinion of this author and does not represent AA as a whole.

Why not determine which category describes your meeting and let the rest of the fellowship know? In the meantime, if you meet a mother in desperate need of a meeting, please send her to Sober Sisters (CC) on Tues in Sebastopol or Women's Growing Pains (CF) on Fri in Santa Rosa. If you meet a father in the same situation, tell him we're working on it...

Yours in the fellowship,

Ryn L.

BIRTHDAYS

Boston Bernie C. 06/01/1969

Astra D. 06/30/1987

Dewey R. 06/01/1992

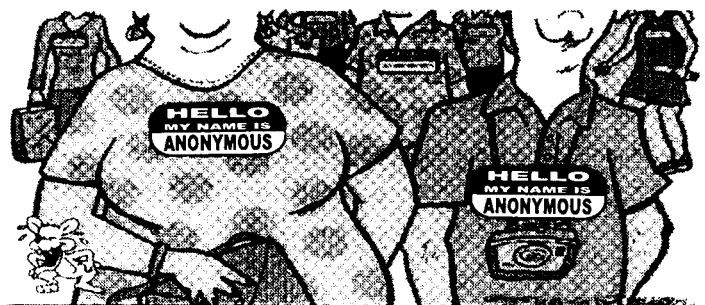
Dennis B. 06/07/1995

Brian R. 06/04/1999



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WELCOME TO TORONTO, AA CONVENTION-GOERS

NEED HELP?



**AA HOTLINE
544-1300**

Responsibility Pledge

*When anyone, anywhere,
reaches out for help,
I want the hand of A.A.
always to be there.*

*And for that,
I Am Responsible*

*GOD grant me the Serenity
to accept the things I cannot change
Courage to change the things I can,
and Wisdom
to know the difference.*

TELESERVICE

(707) 544-1300

I have been asked more than once exactly how does teleservice and the hotline work?

Well, it's a really simple thing. Which is good since I need simple things in my life. At the top we have the most important person, the caller. This is anyone who takes action by picking up the phone and dialing our number. Most of the time they just want meeting information. Sometimes they want help for a loved one. Sometimes they just want to talk. Sometimes they are drunk. Sometimes they are about to get drunk.

Many times it is a combination of the above. In any case they initiate the call. Next we have the phone line volunteer. This is the person who answers the phone. This person may give up a solid night's sleep to talk with someone they don't even know at 3AM.

They have made a commitment to ensure that the hand of A.A. is there when someone reaches out. They can fulfill their commitment anywhere that they have access to a phone. As long as they have a schedule, Sonoma County road map, the men's 12th step list, the women's 12th step list, a higher power and their phone; they are set. I have covered shifts while at a meeting, sleeping (which I try not to do at meetings), eating, walking, riding, driving (I do pull over), working and almost every other activity that I engage in. Assisting the phone line person are the 12th step volunteers. These people will be contacted by the phone line person with the phone number of someone who called in and wishes to talk at length with an alcoholic. It's not quite the 12th step work the old timers talk about, but it's pretty close. It's not like we drag them to hotels to detox anymore.

But, it's not uncommon for a volunteer to take their higher power and another sober alcoholic to meet with the caller. The 4th most important person in this service chain is the daily coordinator.

There are seven of them and they form the heart and soul of the teleservice committee. They maintain contact with the phone line people that volunteer on their day. They are called when a phone line person cannot cover their shift, needs to ask a question or anything else comes up.

They come to our monthly meeting and give a short report. Next we have the other committee members: phone line scheduler/coordinator, 12th step coordinator, recording secretary and chairperson. The phone line scheduler keeps track of the all the shifts, presents a monthly report and is a visible contact point for teleservice (their number is in the newsletter).

The 12th step coordinator maintains the 12th step volunteer lists, presents a monthly report and is another visible contact. The recording secretary takes the committee meeting minutes, types them up and presents them at the next meeting.



Lastly the chairperson is elected by the SCIF based on a recommendation by the teleservice committee, is another visible contact, presents reports to the SCIF steering committee and general meetings and (probably because the chairperson is the one that everyone else sees) gets credit for everyone else's hard work. Caller, volunteer or committee member; the teleservice committee has a place for you.

Call NOW!

WHAT IS PI/CPC?

PI/CPC is the acronym for Public Information/Cooperation with the Professional Community. We speak to groups whenever asked about Alcoholics Anonymous. In addition, committee members distribute AA literature and local meeting schedules to courtrooms, police stations, libraries, emergency room waiting rooms.

The PI/CPC committee prepared and distributed a letter in "Information for your Doctor" through GSR's to members who indicated an interest in sharing these packets with their physicians. AA literature in the packets included *AA as a Resource for the Health Care Professional*, *A Brief Guide to Alcoholics Anonymous*, *AA at a Glance*, *Information on AA* and the Sonoma County Meeting Directory.

We distribute AA literature to social workers in hospitals, law enforcement agencies, the court system and the clergy using literature from

General Service such as *Members of the Clergy Ask About AA*. We speak to Rotary and other service organizations when asked. We are available to accompany professional guests to open AA meetings.

If you are interested in this type of service, you may wish to review the AA pamphlet *Speaking at non-AA meetings*. As this booklet states, speaking to professional groups allows us "to inform the public concerning the role of AA in the community, and above all, to carry the message of our recovery to alcoholics through a third person". We do not speak for AA, but we answer questions on the basis of our personal AA experiences in our own words.

Speaker training is the second Wednesday (June 8th) at 7 pm in the room adjacent to the underground parking area at City Hall.


A Really Good Thing

The Sonoma County Fellowship now offers a meeting with child care!! Using the Marin Fellowship as an inspiration (it boasts 9 childcare meetings a week), Sober Sisters, a Closed Women's meeting in Sebastopol, made a decision to offer child care to the alcoholic mother who is in recovery. After a little research and several months of steering committee meetings, Sober Sisters elected a child care coordinator to facilitate a smaller committee which in turn procured a room, organized a "sitter" schedule and in March, launched the daycare. Do you think your Home Group would benefit from child care that is independent, yet supportive of the meeting???? It may be easier than you think... contact

rynlongmaid@sonic.net for more information.


An alcoholic was walking along the beach when he saw a bottle. He stopped and rubbed it and a genie popped out. "You have 3 wishes" said the genie. The alcoholic said, "I'll take a bottle that is never empty." Whamo, he has a bottle that is never empty and quickly starts to drink. The genie taps him on the shoulder and says, "And what are your other two wishes?"

"Oh", says the alcoholic, "I'll have two more like this one."



A new definition for 13th stepping....Steps 1 + 12,

"My life is unmanageable and I want to share it with you!"



HAPPY TRAILS

This months meeting/hike will be on Sunday June 26th. We will hike the Bear Valley trail in Point Reyes to Arched Rock and Miller's Point on Drake's Bay. Meeting/picnic will be midway in Divide Meadows for hikers who do not want to continue to Arched Rock. We meet at SRJC parking lot at 10:00 to carpool. Coffee and goodie stop in Point Reyes Station. Bring a smile, lunch and water. Questions?

Call either Jeanine or Colleen for info

POSITIVE SUBMISSIONS

Two men, both seriously ill, occupied the same hospital room.

One man was allowed to sit up in his bed for an hour each afternoon to help drain the fluid from his lungs. His bed was next to the room's only window. The other man had to spend all his time flat on his back.

The men talked for hours on end. They spoke of their wives and families, their homes, their jobs, their involvement in the military service, where they had been on vacation.

Every afternoon when the man in the bed by the window could sit up, he would pass the time by describing to his roommate all the things he could see outside the window.

The man in the other bed began to live for those one hour periods where his world would be broadened and enlivened by all the activity and color of the world outside.

The window overlooked a park with a lovely lake. Ducks and swans played on the water while children sailed their model boats. Young lovers walked arm in arm amidst flowers of every color and a fine view of the city skyline could be seen in the distance.

As the man by the window described all this in exquisite detail, the man on the other side of the room would close his eyes and imagine the picturesque scene.

One warm afternoon the man by the window described a parade passing by. Although the other man couldn't hear the band - he could see it. In his mind's eye as the gentleman by the window portrayed it with descriptive words. Days and weeks passed. One morning, the day nurse arrived to bring water for their baths only to find the lifeless body of the man by the window, who had died peacefully in his sleep. She was saddened and called the hospital attendants to take the body away.

As soon as it seemed appropriate, the other man asked if he could be moved next to the window. The nurse was happy to make the switch, and after making sure he was comfortable, she left him alone.

Slowly, painfully, he propped himself up on one elbow to take his first look at the real world outside. He strained to slowly turn to look out the window beside the bed.

It faced a blank wall.

The man asked the nurse what could have compelled his deceased roommate who had described such wonderful things outside this window. The nurse responded that the man was blind and could not even see the wall.

She said, "Perhaps he just wanted to encourage you."

Epilogue:
There is tremendous happiness in making others happy, despite our own situations.

Shared grief is half the sorrow, but happiness when shared, is doubled.

If you want to feel rich, just count all the things you have that money can't buy.

"Today is a gift, that's why it is called the present."

Declaration of Unity

*This we owe to A.A.'s future,
to place our common welfare first,
to keep our Fellowship united.*

*For on A.A. unity depend our lives,
and the lives of those to come.*

Two Wolves

One evening an elderly gentleman told his grandson about a battle that goes on inside people. He said, "My son, the battle is between two "wolves" inside us all. One is Evil. It begets anger, envy, jealousy, sorrow, regret, greed, arrogance, self-pity, guilt, resentment, inferiority, lies, false pride, superiority, and ego. The other is Good. It breeds joy, peace, love, hope, serenity, humility, kindness, benevolence, empathy, generosity, truth, compassion and faith." The grandson thought about it for a minute and then asked his grandfather: "Which wolf wins?"

The grandfather replied simply, "The one you feed."



How many male alcoholics does it take to change a toilet paper roll?
Nobody knows...
it's never been done!

SCIF MINUTES OF APRIL 25, 2005

SCIF General Meeting

The Preamble, Tradition 4 and Concept 4 were read.

INTRO OF NEW REPS: Ray from the Serenity Fellowship, Enid from Mature and Sober, and Bob from A Vision for You.

April Birthdays: Jim 7 years, Jeff 2 years.

Minutes of March 28, 2005, SCIF General Meeting were reviewed and then approved.

REGISTRAR: Deborah discussed sign-in/registration forms and announced that she will do roll-call next month in order to facilitate paperwork accuracy.

H&I: Mark P. reported that H&I meets on the first Wednesday of each month with an orientation for folks new to H&I taking place at 5:45pm followed by the business meeting at 6:15pm.

GENERAL SERVICE: Kenin explained that the General Service Rep is the link between the individual groups and the General Service Office in New York. Information flows back and forth from the Group, the Area and the General Service Conference through the GSR's. GSR's all of over the world have become the key to the Unity of AA and insures that the individual will be heard and that any changes to AA as a whole come as a response to the needs of ALL AAs, not just a few. As Bill W. wrote in 1955, the General Service Conference should become the guardian of the Traditions of AA, the voice of the group conscience of the entire Fellowship, and the sole successors of its co-founders, Doctor Bob and Bill.

PI/CPC: Dave: absent.

BRIDGING THE GAP: Susy indicated that the primary purpose of BTG is to introduce the newly released residents of treatment facilities to AA in their local community. BTG utilizes a list of AA volunteers to match up with the newly released AA newcomer and take them to their 1st meeting. All that is required to be a volunteer is 6 months sobriety, working knowledge of the steps and a car is helpful. We did 5 presentations last month and had 42 requests last month, with 21 local requests and 21 out-of-district requests. In need of volunteers with 6 months sobriety, from East and West Sonoma County.

INTERGROUP CHAIR: Steve filling in for Bob: no report.

VICE CHAIR: Steve B. indicated that 1 new rep attended orientation tonight at 7:30, and 3 total announced themselves as new-please attend orientation next month if you have not already.

TREASURER: Tom and directed everyone to page 5 to review monthly financial report, elaborated on the Year to Date Totals for expenses and contributions. Explained that based upon yearly

totals averaging, Teleservice expenses average \$850.00 per month, Newsletter costs average \$575.00 per month, Running of Central Office costs average \$1840.00 per month, Schedules costs average \$300.00 per month, Pamphlets costs average \$300.00 per month and indicated that he is available by phone for any questions regarding Intergroup finances.

BOOKSTORE: Bookstore is doing real well. Gloria reminded Reps that to volunteer at bookstore, one must have a minimum of one year sober. Many gracious folks have stepped forward to volunteer but currently lack the one year of sobriety. New York Central Office has notified the Bookstore that all books, except the Big Book, will increase in price by \$1.00 each. Volunteer openings on Saturdays 11am-3pm and Fridays from 2pm-6pm. Gloria reminded everyone that the deadline for Toronto registration is May 18th. The bookstore receives regular notifications/flyers regarding upcoming out-of-area sober events including a recovery trip to France; cruises on the Riviera, etc... these event flyers are located at bookstore

OUTREACH: Maurice welcomed all of the new reps to Intergroup and explained that the goals of Outreach are to assure that as many meetings as possible have an Intergroup Rep. He thanked Thomas, Chuck, Jonqui, Jess and Linda for stepping forward to be a part of the Outreach Committee. He indicated he would like folks who would be interested in helping Outreach in the areas of Healdsburg/Cloverdale, Sebastopol, Sonoma/Kenwood, Bodega/Gualala to come up to him after the meeting.

ACTIVITIES: Craig reported that the meeting/dance that occurred on April 9th at the Sebastopol Community Center would have been better attended had he been able to get the word out earlier. Craig indicated that he was extremely discouraged that only 6 of the original 34 people, who promised to help clean up in exchange for free entry to the dance, actually did and 4 of them were from Marin County. Last year, in response to a need expressed by AA members, Intergroup Reps and their groups, the Activities Committee created a policy whereby folks who could not afford the entry donation, could volunteer to help set up or clean up at the Dance. Had the other 28 folks paid, the dance would have broken even financially. As a result, Craig indicated that this policy is currently under review for revision for all future dances. Craig will be publishing his email address in the newsletter next month so that anyone with ideas for Activities, suggestions, or questions may email him accordingly. He can also be contacted by phone 206-0360. Upcoming events in the works are a Picnic in June and a Meeting/Dance in August-more info to come.

SEMINARS: Susy indicated that the next seminar will be a panel on Steps 10 & 11 on Saturday May 21st From 3-5pm at the bookstore.

ALCATHOINS: Brian indicated he has verbally se-

cured the Fifth Street Light location for all three 2005 Alcathons. He will bring the contract to the next Steering Committee meeting for review and approval.

TELESERVICE: Dave L. indicated that there are four open shifts and two committee positions available and then directed everyone to the wonderful calendar on page 6 of the newsletter and pointed out when Teleservice meets; invited everyone who is interested to show up.

NEWSLETTER/COMMUNICATIONS: Charles indicated that he enthusiastically welcomes sobriety related submissions from AA members including poems, stories, birthdays, and any other ideas folks may have. Our newsletter is just that: OURS and for all of us to contribute to.

OLD BUSINESS: Printed Pricing on Newsletters and Meeting Schedules: much whole-hearted discussion ensued regarding the printed price (a price that is not charged- literature has been and still is free for the taking) that has been placed on this literature purely to illustrate to folks what the cost of printing is for these items. The original idea came about as a symbolic gesture to highlight to groups that our literature is an expense that we all pay for through our group contributions. Finally, it was moved and seconded that Reps bring this issue back to their groups for a group conscience indicating either yes, keep the pricing on the literature or no, remove the pricing from all future literature. Reps are to bring group consciences back to next month's general Intergroup meeting.

GROUP SHARING:

Mike announced that the Santa Rosa Friday Night Traditions Group is in need of support. Paul S. wrote an article in the newsletter regarding the 18th annual Cache Creek Meeting to take place June 25 and 26th—only 150 spots reserved for AA this time sign up soon, flyers on table.

Gratefully in Service, Kim M.



JUNE 2005

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
			1	2	3	4
			Hospitals & Institutions S.R. Senior Center 5:45: New Rep Orientation 6:15: Business Meeting			
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
	General Service Faith Lutheran Church 6:45: Service Manual Study 7:00: New Rep Orientation 7:30: Business Meeting		PI/CPC S.R. City Hall 7:00: Speaker Training 7:30: Business Meeting			
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
FOUNDERS DAY PICNIC Doyle Park, Santa Rosa Sonoma Ave. & Doyle Park Dr. 11:00 AM - 4:00 PM Meeting at Noon SUN, FUN, FOOD & VOLLEYBALL Celebrate AA's 70th B'day	SCIF Bookstore 6:30: AA Teleservice Business Meeting 7:15: ICSC Meeting 8:00: Intergroup Steering Committee Meeting					District 18 (Spanish) 5519 Old Redwood Hwy. Windsor 4:30PM
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
		Bridging the Gap SCIF Bookstore 6:30: New Rep Orientation 7:00: Business Meeting				
26	27	28	29	30		
Happy Trails 10:00: SRJC Parking Lot at Bailey Field	Intergroup St. Luke Lutheran Church 7:30: Newsletter Collating 7:30: New Rep Orientation 8:00: Business Meeting	General Service District 12 Officers Meeting - 6:15 SCIF Bookstore				

AA Hotline/Teleservice

Scheduler: Andi P.

12 Step Coordinator: James C.

Santa Rosa Hotline: 544-1300

Long Distance: 800-224-1300

Petaluma Hotline: 762-54122

Sonoma Hotline: 938-2027

Spanish Hotline: 545-7417

Intergroup Officers

Intergroup Chairs/Committees

Chair: Bob K.

Vice-Chair: Steve B.

Activities: Craig G.

Alcathons: Brian A.

Secretary: Kim M.

Treasurer: Tom R.

Hotline: David L.

Outreach: Maurice

Registrar: Deborah P.

Seminars: Susy

Newsletter: Charles W.

Letters to the Editor

Dear Charles W,

I enjoy and look forward to the information I find in reading the Fellowship News. However, I was disappointed and saddened in reading the Harmless Humor Section in the May edition. I assume the role of editor includes making sure whatever goes in the newsletter does not violate AA traditions and that if a submittal does violate AA traditions that it would either be denied or modified to not violate the AA traditions. Specifically, I am referring to the political "joke" regarding a drunk driving incident that killed a woman in the career of a Senator of Massachusetts. That political situation had layer upon layer of tragedy in it and was anything but funny.

Once into political jokes that target specific politicians or political parties, humor becomes harmful to AA because we are all pulled into controversy that we can not resolve.

I suggest editing out all jokes of a political nature and sticking to the traditional jokes of AA. It's only a suggestion.

Sincerely, Pat M.

Dear Pat M.,

Although my initial reaction to your letter was disappointment I write you now with brimming gratefulness. I was taken aback by your comments because I didn't agree with them. My first thoughts were, lighten up, talk to your sponsor pal, be more positive, it's just a joke, etc. I assumed you were being pessimistic and digging deep to find something that wasn't there; hunting for controversy. However, what I feel now is the resonance of yet, another lesson learned in sobriety. Why should I be disappointed? I can't please everybody. My ego wants to and my self-centeredness thinks I can but my humility in sobriety reminds me to be tempered in my thoughts and reactions; to be accepting of all views and appreciative and considerate of all my brothers and sisters feelings. So, I thank you for taking the time to respond. I apologize for letting something in that you found suggestive of unpleasant times. I will try harder to weed out anything synonymous with controversy. As well, YOU READ THE NEWSLETTER. You didn't use it as scratch paper. You took the time to read through it and even more time to write to me. For that, I bawl a resounding "THANK YOU". Considering that this newsletter is primarily private with a limited circulation I am happy at the simple fact that it is being read. Yours in service, Charles W.

CONTACT INFORMATION

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New York, NY 10163

CA Northern Coastal Area Treasury

PO Box 884222 San Francisco, CA 94118

Sonoma County PI/CPC*

PO Box 11350 Santa Rosa, CA 95406

SCIF BOOKSTORE

750 Mendocino Ave., #10 Santa Rosa, CA 95402



Gloria's Corner

Hello Fellow AA's,

I want to thank Don for helping me with the last inventory. Also, thanks to Jim L. for doing the landscaping outside.

It looks GREAT! The bookstore needs someone every other Tuesday AM 10-2. July will be our 1/2 sale on ALL chips.

See you soon. *-Gloria*

(SCIF Bookstore Manager --- phone # 707-546-2066)

Editor/Web Servant: Charles W.

Directory Changes: Russell

Sonoma County General Service

DCMC: Margrete V.

Alt. DCMC: Kenin H.

Registrar: Chris B.

Archives: Cory B.

Grapevine: DJ S.

Literature: Michael Q.

Newsletter: Adam B.

Bridging the Gap: Bob F.

PI/CPC: Yannick Wets

Recording Secretary: Donna K.

Treasurer: Robin M.

H & I: Kelly T.

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