



sonoma county Intergroup Fellowship NEWS

MARCH 2008

Get the latest meeting listings, upcoming events, and more, at www.sonomacountyaa.org

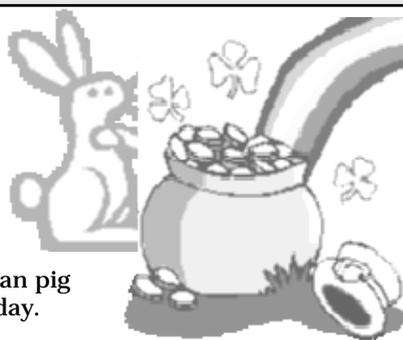
March Celebrations

There's St. Patrick's Day, of course, on the 17th, and this year, Easter is March 23. And March is International Women's History Month—you probably knew that. But SCIF doesn't have any dances, or alcahons planned, so what else is there to celebrate?

Albert Einstein was born on March 14, 1879. Your degree of celebration would, of course, be relative. You can pig out on green eggs and ham on the 2nd, Dr. Seuss's birthday. Speaking of ham, the first of March is National Pig Day.

The Barbie Doll was introduced on March 9th, 1959. The 9th is also No Smoking Day and the first day of Daylight Savings Time. And Uranus was discovered on the 13th, 1781, by William Herschel. Don't forget Uranus.

Cosmonaut Aleksei Leonov took the first space walk on March 18, 1965. The swallows return to Capistrano on the 19th. National Quilting Day is in March, but, according to the National Quilting Association's web site, it's on the 15th, or the 17th, or... I don't know.



Inside This Issue

| | |
|-----------------------|--------|
| Calendar | Page 6 |
| Chair | Page 3 |
| Contacts | Page 2 |
| General Service Group | Page 3 |
| Contributions | Page 5 |
| H&I Report | Page 6 |
| Meeting Changes | Page 8 |
| PI/CPC Report | Page 3 |
| SCIF Financials | Page 5 |
| SCIF Minutes | Page 2 |



Birthdays

| | | |
|------------|---------|----|
| David P. | 3/29/87 | 21 |
| Tom R. | 3/31/02 | 6 |
| Randi A. | 3/13/06 | 2 |
| Allison H. | 3/23/06 | 2 |
| Dave A. | 3/28/06 | 2 |
| Adrian R. | 3/3/07 | 1 |

March Seminar

Sobriety Across

Generations

Wednesday, March 19
6:30 – 8:30 PM
SCIF Bookstore



2nd Annual Women's Hat Luncheon

Saturday March 15 Noon
Tickets on Sale NOW

Westview Christian Church
3950 Doubles Drive
Santa Rosa 95407

- Buffet
- Hat Contest
- Speaker
- * Jan W. ~ San Francisco
- Prizes
- More...

For tickets, or to volunteer, call Wynny.

Come and have lots of fun!

Please, no children.

(...more stuff to celebrate in March...)

The first public basketball game was played March 11, 1892. Students beat teachers, 5-1 in front of 200 spectators. The first women's basketball game was March 22, 1893 at Smith College.

March 3 is National Anthem Day. In 1931, Congress adopted Francis Scott Key's composition as the national anthem. He wrote it in 1814.

Alexander Graham Bell patented the telephone on March 7, 1876.

Babe Ruth hit his first professional home run March 7, 1914, in Fayetteville, N.C.

March 8 is International Working Women's Day.

March 9 is Cabin Fever Day as well as Panic Day. The 26th is Make Up Your Own Holiday Day. The 27th is National "Joe" Day—if you don't like the name you were given, you can call yourself Joe on this day.

The 12th is Girl Scout Day. They were established in 1912. The Campfire Boys and Girls were established March 18, 1910. There's more....

January Sonoma County Intergroup Fellowship General Meeting

The meeting opened with a moment of silence in remembrance of Gloria P., followed by the Serenity Prayer.

PREAMBLE: Sheila M.
 TRADITION 1: Maureen O.
 CONCEPT I: Dale E.

Introduction of new representatives:

Rick F. Wednesday Matinee, S.R., 1:30 pm Wed.
 Connie C. Quitting Time, Pet, 5:30 pm Thurs, Sat, Sun
 Sheila Mc. First Things First, Orenda, S.R., 8 pm Mon.
 Esther S. Kenwood Meeting, 8 pm Wed.
 Christopher T. Traditions Group, Santa Rosa, 8 pm Fri.
 Toni R. Just for Today, Cotati, 11 am Sat.
 Linda R. Serenity Fellowship, Santa Rosa, daily.
 Martha C. Serenity Fellowship, Santa Rosa, daily.
 Suzanne B. Sober Sisters, Sebastopol, 5:45 pm Tues.
 Bob K. Simply AA, Santa Rosa, 8 pm Sat.
 Rich S. Newcomers and Oldtimers, S.R., 8 pm Wed.
 Christina Tuesday Night Beginners, S.R., 8 pm Tues.
 Jan J. Friday BYOB, Santa Rosa, 7:30 pm Fri.
 Nan B. Healdsburg Group, Healdsburg, 8 pm Fri.

January Birthdays:

| | | | |
|------------|------|-----------|----|
| Sheila M. | 1 yr | Sue D. | 17 |
| Kristie | 2 yr | Laurie E. | 18 |
| Dave O. | 3 yr | Larry O. | 19 |
| Paul E. | 3 yr | Rebecca | 22 |
| Barbara F. | 4 | Jan J. | 23 |
| Carol B. | 6 | Gene H. | 30 |

LIAISON REPORTS:

BRIDGING THE GAP: John B. The purpose of BTG is to introduce newly released residents of treatment facilities to AA by taking them to their first meeting. By providing a temporary contact, BTG helps newcomers make the transition to AA in their community. If you are interested in volunteering, you should have at least six months sobriety and a working knowledge of the steps. The monthly meeting is held at the Bookstore the third Tuesday at 7 pm. They are particularly looking to expand the list of local contacts in the next few months. Please mention Bridging the Gap in your meeting announcements. In the month of January, they had 39 contacts: 16 were local, 10 were out of the district, 10 were out of the area and 3 requests came into the district from outside sources.

GENERAL SERVICE: Lauralyn C. The Agenda Topics Workshop Day is February 16th at Bethlehem Lutheran Church, from 9 am to 3:30 pm.

HOSPITALS AND INSTITUTIONS: Mark V. H&I takes meetings into hospitals and institutions where people cannot get out to meetings. The H&I Business meeting is the first Wednesday of each month, at the Senior Center on Bennett Valley Rd. New rep orientation is at 5:30 pm; the regular meeting is at 6 pm.

PI/CPC: Nick R. PI/CPC meets the 2nd Wednesday at the Santa Rosa City Hall. Speaker training is at 7 pm, business meeting 7:30 pm.

SOCYPAA: Sean M. SOCYPAA has a ski trip scheduled February 8-10. SOCYPAA has five meetings per week.

SPANISH INTERGROUP: Elvia P. stated she has to resign as Spanish liaison. She asked for a replacement, preferably a Spanish speaking male.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

ACTIVITIES: Laurie E. Activities is down \$408 for the year, but they started with a \$650 deficit. The New Year's Eve dance lost \$97. She asked that we really promote the Valentines Dance.

ALKATHONS: Dale E. The Alkathons made \$615. Dale thanked the fellowship for their support, Jeff S. for taking the reins of the Thanksgiving Alkathon, SOCYPAA for their help with the New Year's Alkathon. Some of the meetings were double booked and the people involved handled those situations with a spirit of cooperation.

ICSC: Rich S. Bookstore revenue was down \$400 in January, but the gross profit was 41% YTD, over the 40% goal. They reviewed the last inventory, items that have gone on sale, and the job applications for new Bookstore Manager. Diane W. attended the Disaster Preparedness Seminar for Intergroup Fellowships.

NEWSLETTER: Dave H. No report.

OUTREACH: Barbara F. welcomed Serenity Fellowship's two new reps.

SEMINARS: Donna L. The January 23rd seminar went very well. The next seminar will be Wednesday, March 19 from 6:30 to 8:30.

(Continued on page 3)

INTERGROUP OFFICERS

| | |
|------------|----------|
| CHAIR | Diane W. |
| VICE-CHAIR | Bob P. |
| SECRETARY | Donna L. |
| REGISTRAR | Nan B. |
| TREASURER | Pat H. |

COMMITTEE CHAIRS

| | |
|----------------|--------------|
| SEMINARS | Donna L. |
| ACTIVITIES | Laurie E. |
| OUTREACH | Barbara F-K. |
| COMMUNICATIONS | Dave H. |
| ALCATHONS | Dale E. |
| TELESERVICE | Dave R. |

AA TELESERVICE

| | |
|------------------------|---------|
| PHONE LINE COORDINATOR | Dave R. |
| 12 STEP COORDINATOR | Rich S. |

AA HOTLINES

| | |
|---------------|--------------|
| SANTA ROSA | 707-544-1300 |
| LONG DISTANCE | 800-224-1300 |
| PETALUMA | 707-762-5122 |
| SONOMA | 707-938-2027 |
| SPANISH | 707-829-1272 |



All shifts are currently filled!

Join the crew of
 Teleservice Heroes
 today!

PI/CPC Report

Your PI/CPC Committee continues to provide information about Alcoholics Anonymous to community groups requesting information and to make other community groups aware that we have an informational service available.

Committee members are in the process of contacting all those on the speakers list to determine if they are still interested in speaking, their availability, and their email addresses.

At the last Area PI/CPC meeting, there was discussion about a program in New York that pairs AA members with medical students to introduce them to what AA is. Your local committee is gathering information to see if such a program is feasible here in Sonoma County.

If you want to be part of these exciting times, speaker training is held on the 2nd Wednesday of the month at 7:00 PM with the business meeting following at 7:30 PM in the employees' lounge underneath Santa Rosa City Hall. To be a speaker, there is a suggested two years' sobriety requirement with a working knowledge of the Steps and the Traditions. Other committee tasks do not have that requirement.

Margie A,



General Service Report

At General Service Area 06 it is very interesting to see a wide array of topics and motions being discussed with concern for A.A. as a whole, with love for fellow alcoholics, and respect for their opinion and view point.

The last Area meeting was just after a major storm that pushed through. It was wonderful to see the great number of trusted servants that did not let the weather deter them from fulfilling their service commitments.

I invite and encourage any and all to check out General Service and see service in action.

In Gratitude,
Dale E.

A Note From the Chair

“Alcoholics hate change.” And yet, we have changed everything in our lives in order to sober up and live right. So, maybe we don't hate change any more than most human beings do. We change when we have to, but reluctantly.



When it comes to our group meetings and our Fellowship, though, we resist changes. The cry, “But we've always done it that way!” is often heard, even when “that way” may not be working as well as we'd like. Fear strikes: what if the new way doesn't work well either?

But sometimes change is unavoidable. As you read this, we have a new Manager at our Central Office/

(Continued on page 4)

SCIF General Meeting *(Continued from page 2)*

TELESERVICE: Dave R. reported all the slots are full.

OFFICER REPORTS:

CHAIR: Diane W. Applications will be taken until February 11th for the new Bookstore Manager. Intergroup gave a bouquet of flowers at the Memorial service for Gloria P., our Bookstore Manager who just passed away. The Bookstore inventory on January 1st went well, took three hours and had 14 volunteers. It was discussed at the Steering Committee meeting that the Newsletter cannot publish attendance requests for meetings.

VICE CHAIR: Tim P. He thanked the attendees for allowing him to be of service for the past 20 years.

TREASURER: Larry O. We finished the year with a bang. Group contributions in December were \$6140, for the year \$56,579. The Alkathons made a profit of \$615. All taxes are paid. Net income for December is \$2,318; YTD, \$16,746. The Bookstore made \$3209, Activities lost \$546 but started with \$650 deficit. Bottom line is a net \$16,746. He recommended increasing the prudent reserve by \$5000 to \$30,000 because it is necessary and we have the money at this time to do it.

SECRETARY: Nan B. asked for and received acceptance of the December Business meeting minutes.

REGISTRAR: Susy E. There were 364 meetings a week in Sonoma County in December, and 146 were represented at the last Business Meeting making 40% representation.

OLD BUSINESS:

The representatives voted overwhelmingly to re-elect Rich S. to another term with the ICSC committee rather than elect a new nominating committee to go through the usual procedure. This was given the fact that no one volunteered for the nominating committee last month.

The vote to increase the prudent reserve was tabled until next month.

ELECTION OF NEW OFFICERS:

Elections were conducted as the meeting progressed. Vice-Chair, Secretary and Treasurer had one volunteer per position so no voting took place. Chair had two volunteers and took three votes to get a 2/3 majority. Registrar had three volunteers and took one vote to get 2/3. The results were as follows:

Chair, Diane W.
Vice-Chair, Bob P.
Treasurer, Pat H.
Secretary, Donna L.
Registrar, Nan B..

SUMMATION: Tim P. reviewed the 2008 officer election results. Intergroup is well supported by the groups as evidenced in the group financial contributions and attendance numbers.

The meeting closed with the Lord's Prayer.

Gratefully in Service,
Nan B.

Just What Is an Alano Club Anyway?

Alano Clubs are not part of AA, they are “outside enterprises” as described in our traditions and discussed at length in the 12x12. But they do play an important role in the recovery process and have done so for many years in many cities.

Alano Clubs have an extensive history; they were originally created as club houses for recovering alcoholics in the 1930's, soon after the founding of AA. Initially called 24-hour clubs, they were founded and operated apart from A.A. by recovering alcoholics and their families for companionship and sober recreation, and soon came to be called AA's Second Miracle. Alano Club is the most common name for thousands of recovery clubs around the world that provide a safe haven for the recovering alcoholic. They sometimes have a different name like Triangle Club or Friendship Hall. They all have the same goal, to provide a safe place for the traveler, for local residents and for their families to recover and stay recovered from the disease of alcoholism. Many, including the Santa Rosa Alano Club, rent space to other 12 Step Meetings in order to support the recovery community and to help the club pay its expenses.

There are two Alano Clubs in Sonoma County:

Santa Rosa Alano Club
465 Kenwood Court
Santa Rosa
(707) 528-1936

Sonoma County Alano Club
955 Petaluma Blvd. South
Petaluma
(707) 782-0588

Both your clubs provide a snack bar, TV and pool table along with other amenities. The Santa Rosa Club has free wifi, a computer and a lending library for its members to use. It offers:

Clubs generate income to pay the rent, utilities and other expenses in five ways: Membership Dues, Meeting Rents, Fundraisers, Charitable Contributions and Sales from Snack Bars and 12-Step Items. They all (or at least the ones this author has known and loved) suffer from a chronic lack of funds and depend upon volunteer help to stay open.

- Musical evenings on Wednesday nights from 7-10 for musicians and their appreciators;
- Bingo from 8:30 to 10:30 p.m. every third Saturday after the AA Eating Meeting;
- Second Sunday Scrabble at 2:00 p.m.;
- Movie Nights upon occasion.

If your head is not a safe place to be, and you would like to hang out with others trying to stay sober, come join us for the Second Annual St. Patrick's Day Dinner and Meeting, dinner starting at 3:00 p.m., meeting at 6:00 p.m. on Sunday, March 16th at the Santa Rosa Alano Club.

Both your clubs could use your support; give them a call to find out how you can help.

Karen M.

Note From the Chair *(Continued from page 3)*

Bookstore. Some things there are going to change. Some of those changes will be initiated by the new manager, some at the request of the ICSC. Most of the changes will be in back-office procedures, but you may notice some of them. Certainly, you'll notice a new face and a new personality at the office. I encourage you to support our new manager and the volunteers as changes are made or as changes you hoped for don't happen. Remember, this new job is a change for the worker and the bookstore staff, too. Just imagine what a challenge you would have if you had to deal with all of us!

Let's welcome and support our intrepid new Bookstore Manager. Volunteer for the March 31 bookstore inventory. Consider taking a shift as a bookstore volunteer the next time an opening is announced. Stop by the office and say hello and welcome. Let's make this change with patience, love, tolerance, and gratitude.

Diane W.

More March Celebrations

Harry Houdini was born Ehrich Weiss on March 24, 1874. This is also Chocolate Covered Raisin Day.

Robert Wilhelm Eberhard von Bunsen, inventor of the Bunsen burner was born on March 31, 1811.

The Eiffel Tower opened on March 31, 1889.

The first day of Spring is the 20th! It is also Big Bird's birthday, the first day of Purim, and, for some, the Festival of Extra-Terrestrial Abductions Day.

The 22nd is National Goof-Off Day.

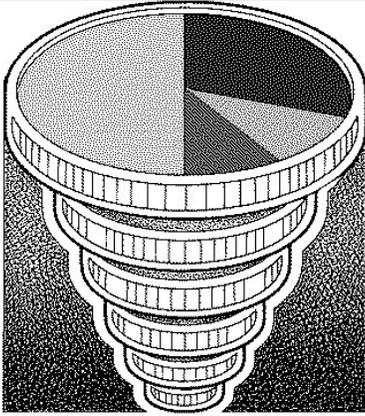
Some people say March 5th is Multiple Personalities Day, but don't ask me, or me either.

Coca-Cola was invented on March 29, 1886. Alaska was purchased from Russia on March 30, 1867. The first pencil with an eraser was patented on the same day in 1858.

The FDA approved Viagra on March 27, 1998.

Have a great March. Don't forget William Herschel.

SCIF FINANCIAL SUMMARY JANUARY 2008



Example of Suggested Group Contributions to AA Service Entities

- 50-70% to Intergroup
- 10-30% to Local General Service
- 10-20% to CNCA
- 10-20% to GSO New York

| | Jan. 2008 | | Jan. 07 | | Year to Date | | 2008 | 2007 |
|-------------------------|-----------|---------|---------|-----|--------------|---------|------|------|
| | Income | Expense | Net | Net | Income | Expense | Net | Net |
| Group Supported: | | | | | | | | |
| Central Office | | | | | | | | |
| Groups | | | | | | | | |
| Individuals | | | | | | | | |
| Teleservice | | | | | | | | |
| Web Site | | | | | | | | |
| Newsletter | | | | | | | | |
| Interest | | | | | | | | |
| <i>Subtotal</i> | | | | | | | | |
| Self Supported: | | | | | | | | |
| Bookstore * | | | | | | | | |
| Activities | | | | | | | | |
| Alkathons | | | | | | | | |
| Seminars | | | | | | | | |
| <i>Subtotal</i> | | | | | | | | |
| TOTAL | | | | | | | | |

| Assets & Liabilities | | Memo: |
|----------------------------|--|---------------------------|
| Cash in Bank & Petty Cash | | Cash in Bank & Petty Cash |
| Prepaid Expenses | | Prudent Reserve |
| Liabilities | | Liabilities |
| Subtotal | | Operating Reserve |
| Literature Inventories | | |
| Property | | |
| Total Assets & Liabilities | | |

* Cost of Sales portion of expense is estimated.

GROUP CONTRIBUTIONS

| Meeting | Jan | YTD | Meeting | Jan | YTD | Meeting | Jan | YTD |
|------------------------------------|-----|-----|--------------------------------------|-----|-----|---------------------------------|-----|-----|
| 11th Step Meeting | | | Kenwood Step Study | | | Sebastopol AA Noon Movement | | |
| 2 X 12 Plus Step Meeting | | | Lost & Found Group | | | Signs of Sobriety | | |
| AA Sonoma, Friday Night Fellowship | | | Monday Mood Swings | | | Sonoma Valley Fellowship | | |
| Access Sonoma County | | | Mon Night Alcoholics Only Step Study | | | The Sunday Niters Group | | |
| Any Lengths Group | | | Monte Rio Step Study | | | Thurs. Night 12 X 12 Discussion | | |
| Book & Discussion, Sonoma | | | O God It's Monday | | | Up The Steps | | |
| Breakfast Club | | | Open Door | | | Warm Springs Fellowship | | |
| FAHA Home Group | | | Quitting Time Group | | | We're In The Now | | |
| Fourth Monday | | | Rule 62 River Readers | | | Women's Book Group | | |
| Keep It Simple | | | Saturday Serenity | | | Young People's Tea & Recovery | | |
| | | | | | | Total | | |

90-Day Trial

*The following is re-printed from the January 1959 Grapevine. The author is unknown.
Dave H., SCIF Newsletter*

Much of what you will hear in AA is quite different from what most of us expected. Some of the suggestions given are directly opposed to your habits of the past. Even our AA language is strange; it may often seem to be contradictory yet some of our phrases, while unique, have a meaning useful to us which perhaps only we as alcoholics can understand and appreciate.

Already you have heard about "hitting bottom," surrender and compliance. You've been told perhaps "ya gotta hit bottom" and "ya gotta surrender in order to win." This "hitting bottom" and surrendering can and do happen at the same time, but perhaps it is worthwhile thinking about them separately.

Someone has said that our "bottom" is that point we reach "beyond which we do not want to go." But how are we to know when we hit bottom? Perhaps you have already hit many bottoms and you didn't want to go down further--but you did. Maybe you too can remember when you looked at others critically and said "I never drink alone"--"I only drink

what I can afford"--"It's awful to drink sherry out of a half-gallon crock"--"I'll never drive when drinking"--"If I looked as awful as she does I'd quit"--"I never lost a job through booze"--"I've never been in a hospital because of alcohol"--etc., etc. . . . yet many of us, later, passed these bottoms and went on to other--seemingly bottomless--bottoms.

Even today we hear the stories of other alcoholics and in fearful trepidation we say "If I ever was as bad as he I'd surely quit," but I wonder if we would or could. Too often suffering and degradation leads only to more suffering and deeper degradation. Hostilities within lead to hostilities without. A defense appears for every failure. Catastrophes are minimized. Defiance sets in and we almost dare the world to do its worst to us:

Yes, even up to the grave.

Any and all of these things can happen to us. We can break our back and our bones. We can lose our jobs, our family and our friends. We can wreck our cars, our health and our self-respect. All of these can happen, and keep on happening, unless something special happens to us when these things occur.

(Continued on page 7)

HOSPITALS AND INSTITUTIONS



“As active alcoholics, we lost our ability to choose whether we would drink. We were the victims of a compulsion, which seemed to decree that we must go on with our own destruction.

“Yet we finally did make choices that brought about our recovery. We came to believe that alone we were powerless over alcohol. This was surely a choice, and a most difficult one. We came to believe that a Higher Power could restore us to sanity when we became willing to practice AA’s twelve steps.

“In short, we chose to “become willing” and no better choice did we ever make.”

[Letter from Bill W., 1966]

First of all, thank you to all the new meeting reps who attended the February meeting of the H&I Committee—we are really glad you are here. Our new liaisons are Ed, representing the Wednesday 12 x12 (Rohnert Park); Shannon, Young and Sober; Miles, A Vision for You; Saul, Out of the Ashes; Mary, Sebastopol noon meeting; Rachel F., Third Step Group; Odan, Up the Steps; Sharon, Early Birds (Petaluma); Penny, (didn’t catch your meeting); Sherry M., Wednesday Matinee; Bruce, Outsiders; Reuben, Friday Beginners; Marcy, Came to Believe; John, Men’s Smokeless Group; and Angie C., Eye-Opener (Sonoma).

We’d like to extend a warm welcome also to our visitors Brian, Kathy, James, Paul B., Dave D., Mike H., Mitch Julie and Tommy.

Many happy returns to the following who are celebrating February sobriety birthdays: Jeff, with 2 years; Kelly, 17; Greg, 4; Deborah, 3; Mardi, 13; George,

(Continued on page 7)

Sober Riders



10 AM
2nd Sunday of the
month.

For information,
call Judy R.

| SUNDAY | | MONDAY | | TUESDAY | | WEDNESDAY | | THURSDAY | | FRIDAY | | SATURDAY | |
|---|--|--|---|---|----|--|--|----------|--|--------|--|--------------------|--|
| SCIF Bookstore750 Mendocino Ave. Suite 10 Faith Lutheran Church.....4970 Newanga Ave. St. Luke Lutheran Church.....905 Mendocino Ave . S.R Senior Center704 Bennett Valley Rd. S.R. City Hall Employee Lounge...First St. and Santa Rosa Ave. | | | | | | | | | | | | National Pig Day 1 | |
| 2 SOCYPAA 1551 Montgomery 7:15 Business Mtg. | 3 General Service Faith Lutheran Church 6:45 Service Manual Study 6:45 New Rep Orientation 7:30 Business Meeting | 4 | 5 Hospitals & Institutions S.R. Senior Center 5:30 New Rep Orientation 6:00 Business Meeting | 6 | 7 | 8 | | | | | | | |
| 9 Daylight Savings Time Begins | 10 SCIF Bookstore 6:00 Teleservice Meeting 7:00 ICSC Meeting 8:00 Intergroup Steering Committee Meeting | 11 | 12 P/CPC S.R. City Hall 7:00 Speaker Training 7:30 Business Meeting Newsletter 6:30 SCIF Bookstore | 13 Access Sonoma County SCIF Bookstore 6:30 Meeting | 14 | 15 | | | | | | | |
| 16 SOCYPAA 1551 Montgomery 7:15 Business Mtg | 17 Saint Patrick's Day | 18 Bridging The Gap SCIF Bookstore 6:30 New Rep Orientation 7:00 Business Meeting | 19 | 20 First Day of Spring! | 21 | 22 General Service Area 06 Committee 320 N. McDowell Blvd Petaluma | | | | | | | |
| 23/30 Easter (23rd) | 24/31 Intergroup St. Luke Lutheran Church 7:30 New Rep Orientation 8:00 Business Meeting | 25 General Service District 12 Officers Meeting 6:15 SCIF Bookstore | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 | | | | | | | |

90-Day Trial (Continued from page 5)

That "something special" might have many names. Right now I'd like to call it ego deflation, the kind of deflation that brings us to the point where we realize that we just do not "know it all." That could be the point of surrender. The disaster, embarrassment, shame, and suffering are not enough; the surrender is the vital force.

Fortunately for some of us the surrender resulting from ego deflation comes to us before the disasters are too many or too great. Why it should come early for some and later for others would be difficult to explain. The fortunate ones can only be grateful for this special grace and live a disciplined life so that the doggone ego will not re-inflate. Its power for revival is truly terrific and we must be ever vigilant. We'll talk more about that at another time.

But for now--to whom or to what do we surrender? Perhaps the first important part of the surrender comes with the knowledge that alcoholism is a disease--and acceptance of the fact that you are a victim of it . . . meaning, of course, that our great ego finally realizes that we can no longer safely take even one drink. That's a very good beginning. Other surrenders will follow, for I believe you will see the need to practice at least in part the Twelve Suggested Steps. Truly accepting the fact that we are the victim of a serious insidious, progressive, and fatal disease (unless it is arrested) is also an admission that without help we are completely unable to help ourselves.

It was Dr. Timeout who said that surrender rather than compliance, paves the way for the spiritual awakening which he and many of us believe is the "act of giving up one's reliance on one's omnipotence."

Quite likely some of you here tonight have not totally surrendered, or experienced this particular spiritual awakening. If so, you wouldn't be the first to enter AA's door just because others thought he was an alcoholic. Many come, we know, just to keep peace at home or on the job or because they have had recent troubles which they may still feel are of an accidental or temporary nature.

That's quite all right. I was one of those, too. I first came here just wanting to stay sober until I got a new job. That was over eight years ago and I'm still here, and in the new job for eight years too.

So regardless of why you come, even if it was only to get in out of the rain, or to escape the whip of someone's scorn or the lash of critical voices--make the most of it. Be a good sport--give yourself a break.

Right now, you are physically sober and no doubt intend to stay sober. The only big mistake would be to adopt an attitude of bitterness because circumstances have forced you into AA. A few rare ones decide they will comply only because they must. They will stay sober if it kills them, but they are not going to like it. Someday they will show those other people how wrong they were, etc. etc. That is a form of bitter compliance that can be very miserable and of course totally unhelpful.

Why not be a good sport? Give yourself a break. You're here, you're sober, your agreement with yourself and with AA is only for twenty-four hours. Why not use those twenty-four hours to your own benefit? You have only recently hit a new bottom, probably--or you would not be here. Nothing can be gained by waiting to hit the next bottom. It's a good time to remember: you were not too wise or all-powerful in your latest bout with alcohol. Attend lots of meetings, listen hard and apply at least part of what you hear to yourself.

Keep an open mind. Relax. Don't fight it. You will hear a great deal about the ravages of this disease of alcoholism on others. You will meet with some nice people, with experiences like yours, who have found that alcohol is unnecessary. You will agree that those who deny a master outside themselves are never masters of themselves. Give a bit of thought to the Twelve Suggested Steps, the slogans and the literature, and a bit of practice. You can help others and your group, too. Pray a bit, too--if you can. If you can't, don't worry about it. Relax--give yourself a break.

I'd like to suggest that for a period of three months you decide to stay away from a drink twenty-four hours at a time, and also decide to attend many meetings--every night if possible. Surely you can spare ninety days from your life. They might prove to be the most useful ninety days in your entire lifetime. You may learn whether or not you are an alcoholic, and that's a good thing to know.

You will meet with some who have surrendered, who have accepted the fact that by themselves they could not live without alcohol. They will tell you that surrender feels good. They do not have to fight anymore. They are no longer constantly on the defensive. They feel free and pretty good.

So why not give yourself a break and use these ninety days to your good advantage. You may find you don't have to be a poor loser, that somewhere along the way you win by surrendering. —*Grapevine, 1959*

H&I Report (Continued from page 6)

10; James, 7; and Arty, 4. "Monthly" birthday celebrants included Karen, with 18 months; Anne, 7; Paul, 7; Dave, 6; Reuben, 18; and Marcy, 9.

Dave R. shared his gratitude in being a part of the Hospitals and Institutions Committee over the years. He first heard the message in a DDP presentation and decided that AA made sense to him. Six months later, he arrived at the doors of H&I. He has taken meetings into facilities such as Oakcrest and Orenda. He related how his service has enhanced his sobriety, knowing that he can be responsible for planting the seed of hope to other alcoholics.

Do you have some hope of your own that you'd like to share with a suffering alcoholic? Why not check out H&I? All are welcome to the next meeting of the Committee on Wednesday, March 5, at 6:00 p.m. at the Santa Rosa Senior Center located at the corner of Bennett Valley Road and Rutledge Avenue (one block east of Santa Rosa Avenue). The orientation, which begins at 5:30, is also open to all—we hope to greet you there!

In service,
Mardi

| NEW MEETINGS | ADDRESSES | BOOKSTORE |
|--------------|-----------|-----------|
|--------------|-----------|-----------|

Healdsburg
 Sun 9:00 AM (O)(W) There Is A Solution
 Senior Ctr.
 133 Matheson St.

Santa Rosa
 Thu 7:30 PM (C)(W) Primary Purpose Group
 Big Book Study
 Christ Tabernacle
 1363 Fulton Rd.

Sebastopol
 Sun 10:00 AM (O) Sober Riders
 2nd Sunday
 Horseback, various trails
 Call 829-7263

Sonoma County Intergroup Fellowship
 750 Mendocino Ave. #10
 Santa Rosa, CA 95402

Sonoma County General Service
 PO Box 536
 Santa Rosa, CA 95402

Area 22 H & I Treasurer
 PO Box 192490
 San Francisco, CA 94119-2490

General Service Office
 PO Box 459, Grand Central Station
 New York, NY 10163

CA Northern Coastal Area Treasury
 PO Box 884222
 San Francisco, CA 94188

Sonoma County PI/CPC*
 PO Box 11350
 Santa Rosa, CA 95406

SOCYPAA
 P.O. Box 5784
 Santa Rosa, CA 95402

*Funded solely through Sonoma County General Service

SCIF CENTRAL OFFICE
 750 Mendocino Ave., Suite 10
 Santa Rosa, CA 95401
 Manager: Linda W.
 Phone: (707) 546-2066
 Fax: (707) 566-9677
 E-mail: aa@ap.net
 Hours: Mon-Fri 10-6
 Sat 11-3

*The bookstore is staffed by volunteers and is some-
 times closed for lack of manpower.
Call first!*

The Bookstore is closed on these Holidays:
 Memorial Day May 29th
 Independence Day July 4th
 Labor Day September 4th
 Thanksgiving November 23rd
 Christmas December 25th
 New Year's Day January 1st

MEETING CHANGES

Santa Rosa
 Fri 10:30 AM Women's Growing Pains
 moved to Methodist Church at
 1551 Montgomery Drive

Fri 7:30 PM Traditions Group
 moved to 4930 Newanga, 8:00 PM

Windsor
 Wed 8:00 PM Windsor Group
 moved to Lutheran Church
 167 Arata Lane

Thu 7:30 PM Redwood Winners
 moved to Lutheran Church
 167 Arata Lane

NO LONGER MEETING

Petaluma
 Sat 6:30 PM New Life Group

Santa Rosa
 All meetings at the Fifth Street Light,
 525 Fifth St., have closed.
 Mon - Fri 9 AM
 Mon - Fri 12:15 PM
 Mon 7 PM

MEETING CODES

- (C) Closed meeting, alcoholics only.
- (O) Open meeting, anyone can attend.
- (W) Wheel chair access to meeting area.

*To report meeting changes:
 Contact Russell*



CONTACT INFORMATION

Newsletter/Web: Dave H. aa.news@dslextreme.com
 Meeting Changes: Russell

Sonoma County General Service

DCMC: Padee M.
 Alt. DCMC: Lauralyn C.
 Registrar: D.J. S.
 Archives: Larry F.
 Grapevine Rep: Doug F.
 Literature: Randy S.
 Newsletter: Dale E.
 PI/CPC: Dave R.
 Treasurer: Annie T.
 Access Sonoma County: Susan C.
 Bridging the Gap: Allen H.

Hospitals and Institutions
 Chair: Don S.
Sonoma County Young People In Alcoholics Anonymous
 Liaison to SCIF: Jolie B.

For a one year subscription send in either
\$8 per year for regular mail or \$4 for emailed PDF (circle choice) to
Fellowship News Subscription
 750 Mendocino Ave. Ste. 10, Santa Rosa, CA 95401

Name: _____ Apt _____
 Address: _____ : _____
 City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____
 Phone: _____
 E-Mail: _____
 Old Informa-
 tion: _____

New Correction Renew E-Mail Cancel