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FROM THE GRAPEVINE



*"You know the first thing this guy will worry about? His anonymity!"*

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**DISTRICT 55**

APRIL, MAY, JUNE, 2014

# NEWSLETTER

## BEING A NEWCOMER

I decided to go to A.A. meetings because I have a history of drinking too much. Recently I had purchased a car and loved driving it around. Then my neighbors served me alcohol and I got in my car with a Mike's Hard Lemonade after I had taken Ambien. I blacked out and hit QFC Grocery store. My car was totaled and I had to sell it. I got a DWI, but when I went to court it was reduced to reckless driving and the prosecutor waived the jail sentence.

I called AA and got a ride to a meeting where I got several phone numbers. I felt very shy and uncertain when I went to my first meeting. I tried to listen to the others talk, but had a lot of trouble hearing what they said. It seemed to me that the people at the meetings had their acts together and that their problems were in the past.

The people in the meetings talked a lot about their spirituality which was foreign to me. Prayer and meditation were difficult for me. It also seemed that they all knew each other and that they had genuine friendships. I felt separate from them and found it awkward to converse with them. I kept looking at the clock and dreaded being called on to share, I felt I had nothing to say.

It was also tough for me to get to meetings without a car. I had to ask for rides. Most people said "no", but a few special people could be counted on to help me out. I asked several women to be my sponsor and finally one agreed. My sponsor has encouraged me like few others have. She listens to me and tells me to work on getting rid of my expectations of other people. She has also gotten me into praying and meditating more. Meditation is so difficult for me....it's hard to push aside my worries and be quiet in my mind.

Working on step four, taking inventory, has proved painful. I have had to write out a list of people in my past with whom I had difficulties. I have had to face the reality that I cannot control what other people do and say. This gives me a sense of powerlessness, and I have yet to come out on top of my emotions and to shift my attitudes towards others.

I am still a "newbie". I am looking forward to spiritual growth. My favorite story in the book is "Acceptance is the Answer". Unlike some, I have not had an easy spiritual awakening. I am not religious and don't go to church. I majored in English and an important lesson was that readers must approach literature with a "suspension of disbelief". I am still struggling to suspend my skepticism and to feel more confident, as well as to accept reality and know what I can't change. It would be wonderful to feel "a part of" at the meetings. I have gotten to lead meetings and received wonderful feedback from the people in attendance. At five months of sobriety I look forward to each meeting, especially the chance to be around people in recovery who are working on improving their lives and being of service to A.A.

Susan H.

**LAW OF THE UNIVERSE: IF YOU KEEP ON DOING WHAT YOU'VE BEEN DOING,  
YOU'LL KEEP ON GETTING WHAT YOU'VE BEEN GETTING (GOOD OR BAD)**

**ACTIVITIES**

***Next Up: Spring Fling & Auction***

One of the best, most fun activities put on by the Activities Committee is the Spring Fling & Auction. The purpose of the auction is to raise money to fund the District 55 Activities. We're able to charge very little for our Gratitude Dinner even though we bring in speakers from far away and pay for their travel and lodging.



Since "AA is self supporting through our own contributions" and people other than AA members attend the auction, how can we raise money this way and still adhere to the Traditions? The answer to this question is that all the **contributions**, the items which are to be auctioned, are donated by AA members. Anyone who is at the auction can make a purchase, but it is not a contribution, it is a purchase. In this way we can have the money available to pay for our other activities such as the Christmas Dinner, New Year's Alcathon, Founder's Day, and the summer picnic with District 22 without taking money from the 7th Tradition.

As usual, this year the Auction will be at MacLeay Grange Hall, May 3rd. Setup 9 AM (this is a great fellowship time), open meeting 11 AM, lunch at noon, and auction starts at 1 PM. Everyone is asked to bring useable items, artwork, good stuff. In the past some members have donated their services, such as yard work or house cleaning; and one member even donated boat rides on his sailboat.

So bring your stuff, bring yourself, bring your potluck (hot dogs, hamburgers and fixin's, and drinks provided by the District) and bring MONEY. There are treasures to be had at super bargain prices. Get ready for amazing, ridiculous FUN!

***Founders' Day With District 22 - June 7th***



The official founding day of Alcoholics Anonymous is June 10, 1935, Dr. Bob's first day of sobriety, and we have our Founders' Day Celebration on the closest Saturday which, this year, is June 7th. This year we are cooperating in a joint Founders' Day with District 22. The party will be held at the Sequim Garden Club in Pioneer Park, 387 E. Washington St.

- SETUP:** Starts at 9 AM
- FELLOWSHIP:** 10 AM to Noon
- LUNCH:** Noon to 1 PM
- POTLUCK;** Hot Dogs, Hamburgers & fixings, and Drinks furnished by the districts, you bring side dishes and desserts.
- A.A. MEETING** 1 PM

***BE READY FOR SOME FINE FELLOWSHIP AND FUN!!!!***



**FEATURED GROUP: LIFE'S A BEACH**

The District 55 meeting schedule calls Life's A Beach a "Meeting held outside regardless of weather." We are the only "smoking" meeting in the schedule and we are avidly dog friendly (to the extent of having a service position of "stick thrower"). We celebrate the change of seasons with our "Group Anniversary" in the Spring, and our "End of Summer Party" in the Fall.

This April, Life's a Beach celebrated 12 years of meeting weekly around the fire ring at Marlyn Nelson Park at Port Williams beach. In the course of those 12 years, only once did a storm drive the group indoors to a member's nearby home, and twice we have sought refuge under the picnic shelter at another park.

The group had actually formed earlier, but initially meetings were postponed over the winter. In April 2002 when meetings resumed we acknowledged that a little rain or snow had never kept any of us from a drink, so why should weather interfere with a meeting? By then the home group dogs (most with significant sober time and all with impeccable skill at living in the moment) occasionally outnumbered our human members, and the dogs swung the vote in favor of year-round meetings.

Our message is joy, and our model is service. A good proportion of our members engage in on-going AA service outside the group, Corrections volunteer work is particularly popular. So we continue—always with a fire, often with fine weather, frequently with an eagle or two to bless us, and always with a dog or ten to remind us not to take ourselves too seriously..

Grateful Home Group Member, L. H.



**FEATURED GROUP: UNDER NEW MANAGEMENT**

**Everything you ever wanted to know about the Steps and Traditions, but were afraid to ask...or never got around to figuring out on your own.**

Maybe that's too big a promise, but if you'd like to participate in an in-depth study of AA's 12 Steps and 12 Traditions, show up on Mondays at 5:30 PM, upstairs at St. Luke's. Bring your own Twelve and Twelve or use one of ours. We read one paragraph at a time and discuss that paragraph at length before moving to the next paragraph. This is a closed meeting, alcoholics only, and is wheelchair accessible.

Under New Management held its first meeting on June 14, 2011, with its new name, time, and format. It had been called "Closer Walk" before that, but now only the basic text and location remain the same.

Jim & Barb M.

**15th ANNUAL NORTH OLYMPIC ROUNDUP MAY 16th - 18th**

If you've never attended one of these roundups you've missed a lot of fun and inspiration. This year there'll be an Ice Cream Social on Friday night, a spaghetti dinner, costume party, and dance on Saturday night, and a spiritual breakfast on Sunday morning.

Friday during the day there will be an AA panel and an AA speaker workshop, at night there'll be another AA speaker and an Al-Anon meeting. Saturday there will be Al-Anon speakers and AA speakers during the day, and a Young People in AA speaker. Saturday night will be the main AA banquet speaker.

Sunday morning will start with a breakfast and an AA countdown. Then the final "Spiritual Speaker", and the roundup closes. This is an event not to be missed with speakers from Texas, California, and from Washington State as well. Get a flier at a meeting you attend and send it in. The basic price for all the whole weekend is only \$20 (meals etc. are extra) See You There!