

# MOUNTAIN DOG INN'S

MAY 1981

NEWSLETTER OF INTERGROUP OF WESTERN NORTH  
CAROLINA, 107 PARKWAY OFFICE BUILDING,  
ASHEVILLE, N.C. 28801\*\*\* PHONE 704-254-8539

## UP-COMING EVENTS

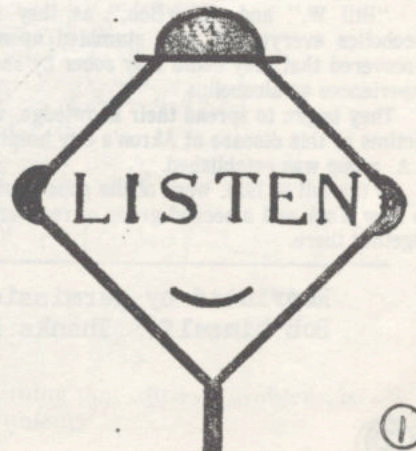
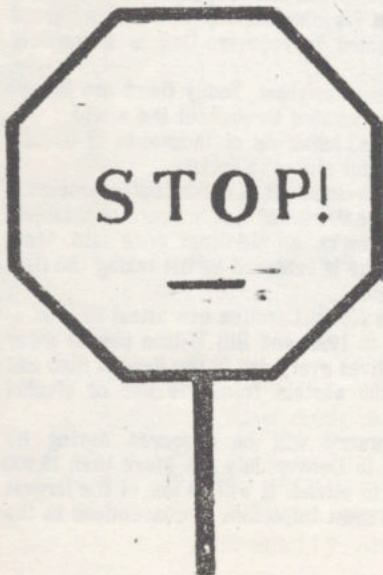
Happy anniversary to the "Hope Group for women" who celebrated their first anniversary on Wednesday, April 21, 1981.

MAY 9=10, 1981: G. S. R. meeting in Raleigh, N.C. at the Mission Valley Inn. Plan to attend with your alternate.

MAY 17, 1981: There will be an Institutional Committee meeting this date at 1:30 P. M. at the Allen Center 331 College Street, Asheville, N. C.

MAY 17, 1981: Intergroup of Western North Carolina will meet this date at 3: P. M. also in the Allen Center.

JUNE 5,6,7, 1981: Don't forget to get your reservations for the RETREAT at Mars Hill College. Tend to this right away. Those of you who would like to commute from surrounding areas there will be a fee of \$10.00. We had rather have you send your \$40.00 and stay for the food, lodging and heaps of fellowship.



# BOB TERRELL

## 40th Birthday

Since man first squeezed the grape, resistance to its spirits has been a problem.

The giddy-headed feeling derived from a bottle has been for some a tranquilizer, and for others a slow but sure death.

How to handle alcohol is one of the burning questions of mankind.

The best way, of course, is to leave it alone — but there are those who cannot.

For them, there used to be little or no hope.

Forty years ago today, things began to change. In Akron, Ohio, a stockbroker named William Wilson and a physician named Robert Smith got together to share their experiences as drunks.

At that meeting was born the organization of Alcoholics Anonymous, and a chain reaction of hope was launched for alcoholics from every walk of life.

### Recovery Became Possible

For the first time, recovery from the disease of alcoholism became possible for men and women who had been considered disgraces to their families and in their communities.

At that time — June 10, 1935 — few persons thought alcoholism to be a disease.

An alcoholic was considered to be an incorrigible. Period.

"Bill W." and "Dr. Bob," as they became known to alcoholics everywhere, had stumbled upon a miracle. They discovered that they could stay sober by sharing their similar experiences as alcoholics.

They began to spread their knowledge, working with other victims of this disease at Akron's city hospital — and the first A.A. group was established.

In the fall of 1935, word of the good works in Akron spread to New York and a second group of recovering drunks banded together there.



BOB TERRELL

By late summer of 1939, when there was a third group in Cleveland, A.A. had a hundred sober members. In four years, membership had grown by only 25 persons a year.

That same year, 1939, the book, "Alcoholics Anonymous," appeared. Based on the experiences of the first hundred members, this basic text explained A.A.'s philosophy. The core of it was the well-known 12 Steps of Recovery. To the alcoholic, this has become known as the "Big Book." More than a million copies have been sold to date.

The book helped launch A.A. nationwide, but perhaps even more than that, an article that appeared in *The Saturday Evening Post* in 1941 put A.A. on the map.

### It Works Fine, Thanks

The magazine story produced thousands of pleas for help, and the tiny A.A. World Service Office in New York was swamped with requests for assistance and orders for the *Big Book*.

By 1950, a hundred thousand recovered alcoholics were members of A.A. and when they held the first international convention in Cleveland that year, the 12 Traditions of A.A. were adopted.

The organization became global in the years between 1950 and 1960, and it was apparent that the A.A. way of life could transcend barriers of race, creed and language.

The only requirement for membership was that a person be an alcoholic who wanted to recover. One is a member simply by saying so.

The fellowship continues to grow. Today there are 800,000 members in 25,000 groups located throughout the world.

Through A.A.'s efforts, hundreds of thousands of drunks have been restored to useful places in society.

"A. A. is not an achievement, it is a continuing process," said Dr. John L. Norris, chairman of A.A.'s board of trustees. "When asked how A.A. works, an old-timer once said, 'Just fine, thank you!' Abstinence is achieved by not taking the first drink — one day at a time."

Hundreds in Western North Carolina can attest to that.

Dr. Bob Smith died in 1950, and Bill Wilson passed away in 1971, but their legacy lives every day in the lives of men and women and children who abstain from the use of alcohol through the efforts of A.A.

A.A.'s 40th anniversary will be observed during its international convention in Denver July 4-6. More than 15,000 have registered already to attend. It will be one of the largest — and really one of the most important — conventions in the nation this year.

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Bob himself. Thanks Bob. H.C.C



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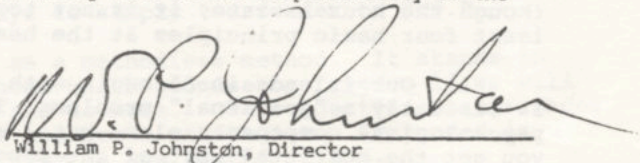
April 23, 1981

P R E S S   R E L E A S E

(For Immediate Release)

TRANSFER OF THE DETOXIFICATION UNIT

Effective April 28, 1981, the Detoxification Unit at Western Carolina Center, Black Mountain facility will be transferred to the grounds of the Alcoholic Rehabilitation Center, Black Mountain. Available patient beds will be reduced from thirty-one to sixteen. Due to the reduction in beds, it is imperative that all admissions to the Detoxification Unit be by appointment only. Appointments for admission can be obtained by calling 669-3456. Arrival at the Center without an appointment may result in a denied admission to the Detoxification Unit. Individuals transporting patients for admission should remain with the patient until a determination has been made as to the availability of bed space. In the event no bed space is available, transportation of the patient back to his home or community will be the responsibility of the party accompanying the patient.



William P. Johnston, Director

"My wife doesn't understand me," complained the man. Turning to his closest neighbor, again he cried, "My wife doesn't understand me! Does yours?"

"Well, I don't know," came the reply. "She never mentions you."

*Sunshine Magazine*

# Learning From A.A.

Earl Jabay

For almost twenty years now, I have closely watched Alcoholics Anonymous - the organization and the individuals in it. Initially, I strongly opposed A.A. Obviously, it was not a Christian group. The Bible had no place in it, except using the Lord's Prayer to close a meeting.

I also felt AA was naive. It made no use of that great body of psychological insights and techniques which I felt should be a part of an alcoholic's recovery.

I was wrong.

Now I realize that AA understood far more about God and troubled people than I did with my theological and psychological training. The truth of this got through to me when I honestly admitted that my ministry was having very little effect on people, while the lives of many in AA were being dramatically transformed. Hopeless alcoholics, laden with many kinds of mental illnesses and interpersonal problems, were finding sobriety and a whole new way of life. I sensed that they were a new breed of people. Not only were those who practiced the AA program sober, they also had joy and peace of mind. All this began with two men in 1935. Now there are 750,000 members in 22,000 groups in ninety-one countries around the world.

Frankly, as a Christian, I am jealous. Why did not this miracle happen in and through the Christian Church? Has the church of the twentieth century been by-passed as was Israel in the first century? I think not. But, as with Israel, the purpose of God is to provoke us to such a jealousy that we would arouse ourselves, learn from our mistakes and turn from our ineffective methods of handling broken persons.

Alcoholics Anonymous has a great deal to teach Christians, and though the hour is late, it is not too late to learn. There are at least four basic principles at the heart of the AA program:

1. Our friends in AA begin with an understanding that alcoholism is basically a "spiritual" problem. True, there are physical and psychological components also, but I am told over and over that "until you get the spiritual part of the program, you won't have serenity in being sober." Consequently, the organization's "12 Steps" deal only with spiritual and moral matters.

A clear distinction is made in AA groups between a spiritual program and a religious program. In a spiritual program, one comes into an obedient relationship with higher power. Religion, however, has to do with worship, theology, Bibles, prayers, etc. The suggestion is made to deal first with the spiritual issues before making use of various religious resources. First things first. First settle the God-issue by resigning as god and asking him to be the Power higher than oneself.

Nearly all religious leaders in the field of pastoral counseling do not see alcoholism as a spiritual problem. They feel it is fundamentally a psychological and social problem. So long as we hold to this error, the church will have no effective ministry to alcoholics.

2. The recovering alcoholics in AA are encouraged to honestly name their problem and confess their complete inability to handle it.

Each speaker at a group meeting begins with: "My name is (first name), and I am an alcoholic." It takes many years before a person can name and claim a problem. Until that happens, the alcoholic is dishonest about himself and he will try to manage his own life. One cannot be helped until he realizes that he alone is "powerless over alcohol" - in the past, now and in the future because the problem can be arrested, but never cured.

Why could not church membership begin with such honesty? Does not every person have some area in his life which he can name and claim as an uncontrollable problem? Are alcoholics the only ones who need to be honest?

All of us go out of control in one way or another. It makes little difference whether it is with alcohol, food, neurosis, worry, homosexuality, suicidal tendencies, marital strife, or a nervous breakdown.

We must make a place somewhere in the Christian community where we can honestly name and claim a problem which we absolutely cannot manage.

3. The most basic teaching of A.A. is the need to surrender "our will and our lives over to the care of God."

When the alcoholic finally "hits the bottom," it means that his intense suffering has finally reached an unbearable point, that he is finally speechless as to what to do about his problem, and that he is teachable to A.A. members who are themselves recovering alcoholics. Prospective members of A.A. are bluntly told to drink as long as they wish, but when they are serious about sobriety, they should come to A.A. where the secret is, according to one member, "to take the cotton out of your ears and shove it into your mouth."

In the A.A. group, the new member finds a friendly, supportive fellowship, but there is no doubt about the fact that things will be done the A.A. way. It's a no-nonsense program which is marvelously inoffensive because of love, humor and openness.

And basically, what A.A. says is simply "surrender to God."

I think of A.A.'s approach as a methodless method. It stands in sharp contrast to all human methods which promise us freedom if we will only understand more, feel more and do more. The suggestion to surrender ends all that. It is the end of all human strategies. Surrender is a methodless method because "all" hope is now placed in God.

4. A.A. understands that spiritual discipline makes us free.

Each member of A.A. has a sponsor and a group from whom he receives advice. All members are equally under higher power, and leaders are simply servants of the group.

Discipline is at the heart of the "12 Steps." It is suggested that a member practice moral inventory, admitting "to God, to ourselves, and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs." The alcoholic is also encouraged to make amends to those wronged. The disciplines of prayer and meditation also are recommended, as well as the need to reach out to help other alcoholics.

As one is obedient to God through a sponsor and a group, God gives the gift of daily sobriety to the alcoholic. Along with this gift comes growth in serenity, freedom from "stinkin' thinkin'," and a compassion for others. In a word, the alcoholic becomes increasingly freed from his worst enemy - himself.

It is true, Alcoholics Anonymous is not a Christian organization. It makes no formal commitment to Jesus Christ. Many A.A. members, however, are increasingly coming to know Christ as Lord and are discovering the power of the Holy Spirit in their lives.

What we Christians desperately need now is the grace of God to learn from A.A. For some reason known only to our Lord, he has chosen those to be Christians who are particularly slow to learn. It is not that we are stupid. We are, however, willful and we lack humility. How better can we learn humility and submission than by learning about spirituality from the people whose lives God has transformed in Alcoholics Anonymous?

**\*\*Earl Jabay is affiliated with the Third Reform Church in Raritan. He is the author of The God Players, Search for Identity and The Kingdom of Self.**

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Professor, to parked motorist: "I say, your tubular air container has lost its rotundity."

Motorist: "What—?"

Professor: "The cylindrical apparatus which supports your vehicle is no longer inflated."

Motorist: "But—"

Professor: "The elastic fabric surrounding the circular frame whose successive revolutions bear you onward in space has not retained its pristine roundness."

Just then a small boy come along and shouted: "Hey, mister, you got a flat!"

*The Kleinknecht Encyclopedia*

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Interviewer: "We need a responsible man."

Applicant: "That's me. Wherever I worked, when something went wrong, they told me I was responsible."

— B. E. Yates, West Monroe, Louisiana.



**"This is the moment I hate —  
when the sickening deadly  
SILENCE hits you!"**

NOTE: This is a letter received in the Intergroup office April 30, 1981. Also, there was an enclosed written to her Dad. We will print in Mountain Doin's this letter next month.

Dear Anyone,

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I had to say goodbye to my dad (my dream). I have been trying to figure out for so long what it all means and why. I have realized no matter how hard someone tries to help - the drinker only can help himself. And I have had so many questions that I thought I would never find the answers to. I found that not being able to understand it, is an answer within itself. In order to finally let go - I needed to send my letter. My father has made it clear that he doesn't want to know how I feel - he is trying to forget that part of his past. I wanted somebody, though, to understand my story.

Thank you.

ENVY

Envy is the deformed and distorted offspring of egotism; and when we reflect on the strange and disproportioned character of the parent, we cannot wonder at the perversity and waywardness of the child

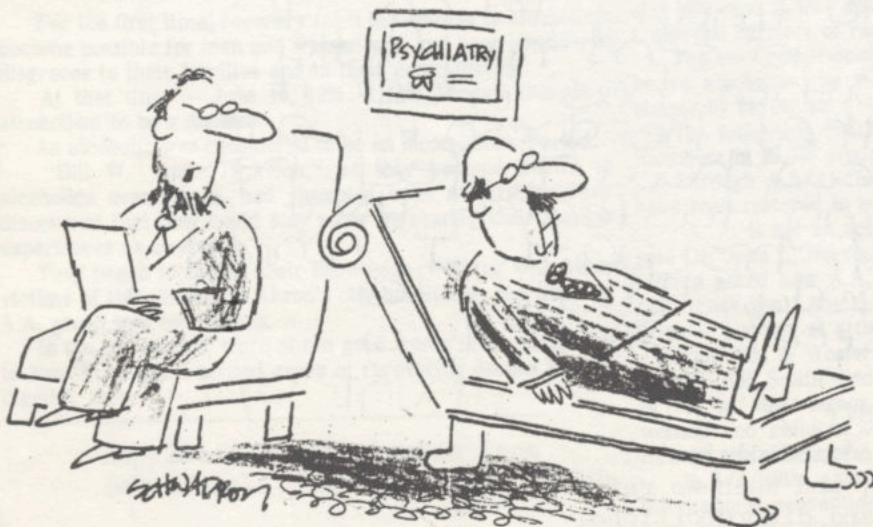
Hazlitt

Anything that causes a problem, is a problem.



HAPPY BIRTHDAY

NAME	GROUP	YEARS
Howard McC.	Brevard	4
Rob H.	Brevard	8
Pauline H.	W. Asheville	4
Margaret B.	W. Asheville	6
Hugh H.	Traditional	3
Dick W.	Hendersonville	34
Gen G.	Blue Ridge	16
Frankie S.	Blue Ridge	15
Jane P.	Blue Ridge	6
Judie V.	Blue Ridge	4
Jim L.	Victoria	5
Miriam K.	Victoria	2
Jim P.	Victoria	9
Hugh C.	Fletcher	9
Betty P.	Bakersville Ser.	2
Rick R.	Bakersville Ser.	8
Newman G.	Cherokee	4
Nancy W.	Sylva	10



"Punctuality? Don't worry, I know all about commas and full stops."

"We in the psychoanalytic field don't refer to your problem as 'depression' any more, Mr. Chetham. We simply say 'temporary recession'."