

MOUNTAIN DOIN'S

SEPTEMBER  
1981

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

AA AA AA AA AA

Our District Committee Member requests that we restate the request that all donations for the District Committee fund be sent to the Intergroup Office and marked in care of that fund. Checks should be made out to

DISTRICT 7 COMMITTEEMAN FUND

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DISTRICT MEETING: Sponsored by Blue Ridge group for  
Sept 27 at St. John's IN THE WILDERNESS

Eatin' 1:30; Meetin' 2:30; Speaker Joe F.; S.C.  
Y'all come for what has been one of our finest meetin's

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The Big Book Group of Black Mountain will host an  
INTERGROUP BENEFIT MEETING

Mon. Sept. 28<sup>th</sup> at 8:00 PM.

Out of town Speaker; lots of cake and coffee; and  
FELLOWSHIP FOR ALL St James Ep. Church,

417 Vance Avenue, Black Mountain.

## EDITOR'S CORNER

When I consider that there are many sources from which I draw strength, and many ways, little and looming large, that the gift of sobriety is not only given but strengthened, I am almost amazed that they seem not to be available to all. I suppose they are, but as with the program itself, there is a price to pay. When I came to the fellowship, I didn't come for a visit--I had run out of places to run into for me; then I could run-into A.A. That was part of the price. To keep what was given me, I had to for perhaps the first time in my life, give to another without counting and without expecting anything in return, but what I got in return was beyond price; I was allowed to continue to grow in the fellowship, not without pain for that would have been of less value--even to me.

I catch me wanting to give away that growth too, along with the message of the program of recovery; and then I catch me, I wasn't given the growth, just the right to grow; could I have stood all the growing pains at once, and I must answer honestly that I could not have.

It has taken years for me to be able to say it, but all of you waited patiently--for this too,

I love you. ED



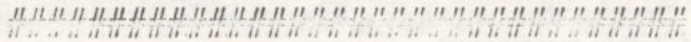


Word has come to us that the Hendersonville Group has moved to the lower level in the Nuckols Building, with entrance on Second Ave. W. --across from the Sheriff's Department--Hope It Doesn't scare 'Em away gang.

AA AA AA AA AA

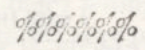
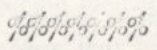
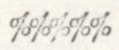
The latest word\*\*\*\*\* District 7 picnic where--Lake Julian Park when--- Sunday October 4, 1981. time---- 11:00 AM UNTIL----

Bring your own soft drinks and picnic lunch; Coffee will be served.....



A NOTE ON BIRTHDAYS\*\*\*\*\*

The office co-ordinator asks me to render apologies in advance if there are any birthdays missed, but there is no way to actually confirm them unless the groups supply the info. So come-on groups, this is part of YOUR RESPONSIBILITY.



Intergroup:  
Regular meeting  
Sept 20--3:00PM  
Allen Center, as usual, all welcome.

Thank Tri-County  
C.O. Newsletter  
An Un-Scientific Survey

A member said recently that he had heard that if you asked your Higher Power to keep you sober today you probably would not get drunk. This thought obsessed him (doesn't everything) so he began to ask others about their own experience. So far, he has not been able to find anyone who has returned to do more "research" who began drinking on a day when they asked for this help.  
Can it be that this simple tool is all that is needed to stay sober? Or is it that those who use this tool are the ones who also practice other AA principles in their daily affairs? Any comments?



## ECSTASY

We ought not to settle for tepid A.A., for half-measures in taking the Steps, or for too much of the stale and flat in our sober days. Not if we want to stay sober.

No, I think we have to keep looking for something better than dullness, better than average living, better than mediocre spirituality. In an article called "The Search for Ecstasy," written for the A.A. Grapevine, philosopher Gerald Heard said, "It would seem . . . that none of us is living in a sufficiently tonic way, so as to be able to meet the stresses to which we are now bound to be exposed, without breakdown. . . . Alcoholism (like all addictions) is not at base a search for utter sedation. It is a desire for that *ecstasis*, that 'standing out' from the landlocked lagoons of conformity, out onto the uncharted high seas where the only map is the star-set heavens."

Breathes there anywhere a sober alcoholic for whom this passage is not deeply meaningful?

A few years ago, I sat in a New York bar talking to a newspaperman who had just lost another job for drinking. He was interested in my A.A. story. But he was lit up like a Christmas tree, angry, and thoroughly uninterested in any gab about regenerating *him*—that day.

A thought came to me. I said, "You know, H—, I think one of the great pleasures of way-out drinking is just that feeling of being miles apart from the boobs. You're running on a different track. Different clock. Different music. Really existentialist kick. On the knife's edge of pleasure-pain, progress-disaster." And more stuff to that effect.

I saw that I had an attentive listener at last. H. said that that was it exactly. It was living way-out that appealed to him, disasters or no. Living like the boobs was a bore, a drag, an accursed impossibility.

I think now that this thoroughly unsuccessful Twelfth Step effort (I pray H. may be in A.A. somewhere by now) helped *me*. I've never since stopped being aware of the fact that as an alcoholic I had better not set my sights on being just like everybody else, just as ordinary, just as unleavened. As a matter of fact, I don't really know anything about being ordinary—that is, nonalcoholic—so I ought not to set up some phony idea in my mind about normal living. No, let me stick with Mr. Heard's approach for a while. His emphasis is the one for me.

If as an alcoholic I am to "stand out from the landlocked lagoons of conformity" and stay sober, how am I to do it? Join a revolutionary gang? Go hippie? Take up Yoga?



"In All Our Affairs"

Ah, but I *have* an answer. Take the Twelve Steps. Dull? Have I tried it? I certainly didn't attempt much beyond the first three Steps my first couple of years in A.A. My reaction to the last nine Steps was that they were put in to round out the picture; they were pious rather than practical. One hardly needed to go *that far* . . . and so on.

But I had, along the way, a bit of perverse luck. I got into some rather heavy weather: Job, health, family, everything seemed to go soberly haywire all at once. And I was moved (I see it now as a spiritual shove) to try the Fourth and Fifth Steps, inventory and confession. I didn't do a good job. I wrote some of the inventory, but not all of it. I told some of the wrongs, the pressing ones—but not all. Nonetheless, I had an exciting year of spiritual progress out of it. I was in some important way *changed*.

There came a slowdown, as evidently there always must. I began to think Steps Six and Seven needed more work. Interesting. Difficult. Existentialist. Knife-edge of disaster-progress. Strange new awareness of God, of self.

I saw that there could be no "lagoons of conformity" for the man who will face his character, confess it, become willing to change it, and ask God to change it.

Dynamite! Dare I set it off? Can't I just sort of let the whole thing go, and settle for modest, quiet, unexceptionable, not very spiritual, average living? After all, X can and Y can and Z can.

Are they alcoholics? Well, no. And do I really know anything about their spiritual lives? Well, no.

Back to me. I needed to be *other*. That's why I drank. I still need to be other. Having tried the toxic way of drugs and excess, let me try the "tonic" (in Heard's phrasing) way of the Steps, the way of health and joy. The Steps are the specific medicine for the thing that's wrong (or right—it doesn't matter) with me: alcoholism. They are the way to be other—and sane into the bargain.

I've come this far: I know now that what is involved in taking the A.A. program entire, as the early A.A.'s gave it to us, is not the prospect of turning into some sort of repulsive goody-goody. It's the threat of being truly alive, aware, and even perhaps *ecstatic*. I'm coming to believe that if I do not accept all of what this program offers (demands?), but instead walk away from it as somehow more than I bargained for, I might get drunk.

In other words, if I do not take A.A.'s Twelve Steps seriously and in full, I cannot expect to be "on the program."

Vermont



Send your favorite stories, quips, and news clips



TWO INDICATORS OF TROUBLE.

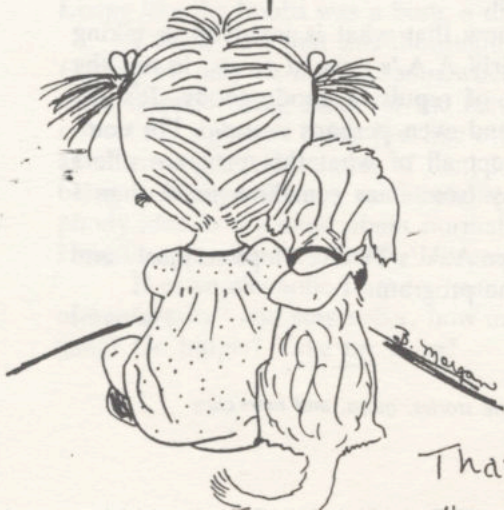
"The assumption that one has all the answers, and the contrary, that one needs to know no answers, but just to follow A.A., are two indicators of trouble. In both cases open-mindedness is notably absent. Perhaps the commonest manifestation of the return of ego is witnessed in the individual who falls from his pink cloud, a state of mind familiar to you all. The blissful pink cloud state is a logical aftermath of surrender. The ego, which is full of striving, just quits, and the individual senses peace and quiet within. The result is an enormous feeling of release, and the person flies right up to his pink cloud and thinks he has found heaven on earth. Everyone knows he is doomed for a fall. But it is perhaps not equally clear that it is the ego slowly making its comeback which forces the decent from the pink cloud into the arena of life, where, with the help of A.A., he can learn to become a sober person and not an angel...

Dr. Harry M. Tiebout

at the 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Convention---

cited in A.A. COMES OF AGE, p 249

"Mr. God, Mama says I'm being corrected because she loves me. I don't understand why you correct people you love, but she told me to think about it. Mama says she's Your child and You correct her too because You love her...but Mr. God, she never never sits in this corner!"



Thanks to

# LATEST SURVEY SHOWS RISE IN NUMBER OF WOMEN AND YOUNGER PEOPLE IN A.A.—

A GENERAL SERVICE OFFICE RELEASE - JULY 1981

NEW YORK, N.Y.— In the survey just completed among recovered alcoholics in A.A. in the U.S. and Canada these following indications:

- 34% who have joined since 1977 are women.
- a rise in young people from 11.3% to 14.7%.
- 25% of newcomers joining since 1977 is 30 & under.
- 4% is under 20--read 20 & under

This survey was compiled from questionnaires filled out by approximately 5% of the total of 476,000 recovered alcoholics who are active in groups in the U.S. and Canada.

One important segment of the survey, directed at determining how newcomers are initially directed to AA, shows; 42% directed by another AA.

33%, up sharply--directed as a result of guidance received from councilors and rehabilitation centers.

(released from the secretary, PI Committee, GSB.)

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ANNOUNCING: Ala-Teen group, meeting Thursday nites  
Fletcher, NC--Methodist Church--8:00 PM.

WE'LL CLOSE with something that may sound familiar to all of you out there. It concerns an alcoholic who was lying in a gutter, nearly passed out. Finally, he opened his eyes and saw another inebriate, on rubbery legs, clinging to a nearby lamppost. "If I ever get that bad," he told himself, "I'll quit."







AUGUST BIRTHDAYS

Bob L. Blue Ridge	1yr
Delores C. Victoria	1yr
Sam R. Murphy	2yrs
Otto H. Brevard	1yr
Bennett J. Brevard	28yrs
Bill B. Brevard	1yr
John A. Blue Ridge	12yrs
Archie D. Blue Ridge	6yrs
Joe S. Blue Ridge	19yrs
Ernie G. Victoria	6yrs

HI!

*Happy Birthday*



**OF INTEREST TO US**



FROM THOSE WHO ARE INTERESTED IN U

*U.S. to focus on alcoholism*

**A Message Stamp**