

MOUNTAIN DOIN'S

Central Office Newsletter

JANUARY 1997



Published by the North Carolina Mountain Central Office (Districts 70, 71, & 80). Address: 107 Park Place Offices, 70 Woodfin Place, Asheville, NC 28801. Phone: Buncombe County: 254-8539. Elsewhere in WNC: 1-800-524-0465

New Winter/Spring 1996-97 Where and When now Published

Copies of the new Winter/Spring 1996-97 are now available from Central Office at the reduced price of five cents each. All Groups or individuals are invited to mail or phone in their orders.

Southeast Regional Forum Held in December 1996

The 1996 A.A. Regional Forum held at the Radisson Hotel in Asheville was an outstanding success. A full report on the Forum was not possible for inclusion in this January issue of Mountain Doin's and will be published in the February issue.

Ask-It-Basket sessions were a highlight of the Forum and below is published a sampling of the type of questions asked daily of the G.S.O. that mirror the nationwide concerns in the Fellowship. These were published in a 1996 issue of the G.S.O.'s *Box 4-5-9*, and include the G.S.O. answers.

Question: Help! We are a small, fairly new group attempting to follow the Traditions. Understanding that each A.A. group is autonomous, our conscience voted to send flowers bearing our group name to late members' funerals and present members' weddings. Are we breaking Traditions?—*C.C., Kansas*

Response: The collective experience of this office is that the use of Seventh Tradition contributions is limited by the Fifth Tradition: "Each group has but one primary purpose—to carry its message to the alcoholic who suffers." Usually, if individual members wish to do something like sending flowers, they would do so separately. That is because Seventh Tradition contributions are used generally only to support the group and its service expenses.

Q.: I started my sobriety on July 28, 1994. I am having trouble dealing with my anger and frustrations;

I lose my temper with my wife, then apologize. She is tired of hearing "I'm sorry, it won't happen again," and I don't want to lose her. Any help would be greatly appreciated.—*D.G., Tennessee.*

R.: It is not unusual to have feelings of anger and frustration when one stops drinking after a period of abusing alcohol. Do you have a sponsor? You see, each of us is encouraged to get a sponsor (often an A.A. member of the same sex, who has been sober a while and has an understanding of the Twelve Steps). Most of us share our deepest feelings, fear, and problems with a sponsor, who can often point the way toward progress in recovery through the practice and application of the Steps. Also, it might be helpful for your wife to participate in Al-Anon meetings on a continuing basis.

Q.: At the close of the meetings, many groups make it a practice to hold hands while reciting the Lord's Prayer. Our group does not do this; but we have been criticized by some A.A.s and accused of "breaking the chain." Are we?—*L.P. New York*

R.: The custom of hand-holding began fifteen or twenty years ago. At the time, many groups didn't like it at all, but today the objectors are in the minority. However, whether or not to hold hands at an A.A. meeting has no bearing on the Traditions. It is a matter of group autonomy and personal preference.

Q.: Do you know where I might obtain literature on women in the history of A.A.?—*L.K., Virginia*

R.: The Big Book includes the personal stories of
continued on page 2

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Ask-It-Basket (continued from page 1)

thirteen sober women, and there are numerous references to female members throughout the basic text. 'Pass It On,' the story of co-founder Bill W.'s life and how the A.A. message reached the world, includes a wealth of information about A.A. history, and some about early women members such as Marty M., who joined Alcoholics Anonymous in 1939. Additionally there are numerous references to pioneer women in A.A. in *Dr. Bob and the Good Oldtimerss*, as well as material in *A.A. Today*, published by the *Grapevine*.

Readers' Forum

Live Letters

Drugs and Alcohol—the Difference

What is the difference between drugs and alcohol? All alcohol is addictive, all drugs aren't. That is one difference. Doesn't everybody know that? My mother did and she was born in 1889. I couldn't believe the letter by BG in your December issue. To quote: "Drugs are addictive. No doubt about it. But alcohol may not be."

I have been taught that Alcohol is an addictive drug, in the same way that nicotine, caffiene, and cocaine are. And that Alcoholism is addiction to that drug. We become alcoholics because we drink alcohol, not because we did not choose out ancestors well. True, studies have found evidence of hereditary predisposition to addiction to the drug alcohol. With those same ancestors, I'm certain further study will find that you are also more likely to become addicted



to other drugs if you choose another form, be it powder, pill, or smoke, rather than liquid. We inherit the propensity to become addicted, we do not inherit the disease.

There are also hereditary genes that make addiction harder to come by. But some of us have overcome that. We just kept hanging in there. Use enough, drink enough of an addictive drug, you'll become addicted. I know of no evidence of genes that prevent addiction to alcohol or any other drug.

Certainly BG wrote a well-intended letter, but he only has part of the story. I couldn't help wondering what the young drug addict thought when he read the letter. "Wow, maybe I've got the right genes, and I can switch to alcohol." "If you are in that category and are reading this, don't even consider it. If you are addicted to another drug, drink alcohol and you'll find that you are already an alcoholic. You can no more switch to alcohol than anyone of us can switch to grass. It's all addiction. From a *real alcoholic*. —JW

Central Office Phone Log



"I am responsible . . .
When anyone, anywhere,
reaches out for help, I
want the hand of A.A.
always to be there.
And, for that, I am
responsible."

Phone Log 11-4-96—11-29-96

Answering Service Calls	166
General Information	7
A.A. Help	6
Family Help (Al-Anon)	7
Meeting Information	71
Central Office Business	73
Medical Help (Hospital, Detox, etc.)	0
P.I. Calls	0
Others	7
Visitors	49



Fellowship News

Meeting change: **The Fellowship Group's** 6 p.m. Fletcher meeting on Tuesdays has moved to St. Barnabas Church, Crescent Hill Drive, Arden.



Acceptance Group

D. Maurice	1-1-85	12 years
Suzanne T.	1-1-92	5 years
Brian M.	1-1-96	1 year
Faye M.	1-5-93	4 years
Ann Mc	1-5-95	2 years
Annie M.	1-5-83	14 years
Chad W.	1-8-96	1 year
Larry M.	1-10-96	1 year
Flow V.	1-11-95	2 years
Steve H.	1-15-95	2 years
Dan T.	1-20-96	1 year
Dyana P.	1-20-89	8 years
Richard K.	1-22-96	1 year
Sue C.	1-27-81	16 years
Lynn D.	1-25-84	13 years
Margie C.	1-26-76	21 years

Asheville Grace Group

Dana J.	1-15-96	1 year
Kathy Y.	1-21-96	1 year
Mark M.	1-23-86	11 years
Blake B.	1-25-95	4 years
Chris C.	1-25-95	2 years
Charlie B.	1-27-96	1 year

Brevard Group

(Due to a computer "glitch" the December A.A. Birthdays for the Brevard Group were omitted from the December issue of *Mountain Doin's* and are published here).

Jimmy C.	12-17-83	13 years
Sharon H.	12-18-80	16 years
Woody P.	12-28-90	6 years
Sandy W.	12-29-88	8 years

Conscious Contact Group

Thomas G.	1-2-96	1 year
Kate B.	1-24-93	4 years
Jack B.	1-12-96	1 year
Suzanne B.	1-24-75	22 years

Cumberland Group

Stuart C.	1-27-88	9 years
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Hendersonville Group

Ann Marie D	1-6-89	8 years
Janie R.	1-17-95	2 years
Tom R.	1-30-75	22 years

Hendersonville Happy Hour Group

Jerry M.	1-4-90	7 years
Arlene H.	1-19-95	2 years

Marion Group

Buddy F.	1-5-87	10 years
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Midday Group

Bert B.	1-25-87	10 years
Emily H.	1-15-58	39 years
Bill N.	1-4-84	13 years
Joe V.	1-20-96	1 year
Bob P.	1-26-96	1 year

Traditional Group

Ken H.	1-1-83	14 years
Bruce L.	1-1-88	9 years
Shelly C.	1-2-95	2 years
Alberta C.	1-24-93	4 years
Kate B.	1-24-93	4 years
Cress R.	1-14-96	1 year
Fred W.	1-2-96	1 year

West Asheville A.A. Group

Bruce L.	1-1-88	9 years
Joe V.	1-20-79	18 years
Chad W.	1-8-96	1 year
Alberta C.	1-28-95	2 years

Into Action

A.A. is more than a set of principles; it is a society of alcoholics in action. We must carry the message, else we ourselves can wither and those who haven't been given the truth may die. *As Bill Sees It p.13*

I desperately wanted to live, but if I was to succeed, I had to become active in our God-given program. I joined what became my group, where I opened the hall, made coffee, and cleaned up. I had been sober about three months when an old timer told me I was doing Twelfth-Step work. What a satisfying realization that was! I felt I was really accomplishing something. God had given me a second chance. A.A. had shown me the way, and these gifts were not

only free—they were also priceless! Now the joy of seeing newcomers grow reminds me of where I have come from, where I am now, and the limitless possibilities that lie ahead. I need to attend meetings because they recharge my batteries so that I have light when it's needed. I'm still a beginner in service work, but already I am receiving more than I'm giving. I can't keep it unless I give it away. I am responsible when another reaches out for help. I want to be there—sober.

Daily Reflections p 347

The best cure for anger is delay

Treasurer's Report

*N.C. Mountain Central Office, Inc.
Financial Report
for the month of November, 1996*

INCOME

Group Contributions

Acceptance Group	\$60.00
Asheville Grace Group	\$300.00
Canton Easy Does It Group	\$20.00
Common Sense Group	\$10.00
Culowhee Valley Group	\$10.00
Day By Day Group	\$45.00
Edneyville Group	\$100.00
Hendersonville Happy Hour Group	\$100.00
Hendersonville Group	\$90.42
Hendersonville Midday Group	\$150.00
Maggie Valley Group	\$25.00

Marion Group	\$50.00
Pathfinders Group	\$10.00
Six O'Clock Open Group	\$55.00
Sylvan Valley Group	\$50.00
Tryon group	\$50.00
Tuesday Night Men's Group	\$60.00
West Asheville Group	\$50.00

Total Group Contributions **\$1,235.42**

Financial Statement December 2, 1996

Bank Balance 11-13-96	\$3,039.45
Outstanding checks	-\$2,164.50
Accruals	~\$192.10
Cash on Hand	\$103.37
Accounts Receivable	\$711.90
Bank Deposit 11-15-96	\$1,059.37
Bank Deposit 12-2-96	\$1,458.25
Balance December 2, 1996	\$4,015.74

How Closing Meetings with the Lord's Prayer Became an A.A. Custom

For many centuries, the Lord's Prayer has been offered by various religious denominations both in public prayers and in private worship. It is also said by non-religious groups, including athletic teams, before or after meetings and games. But when did it become a widespread A.A. custom to close meetings with the prayer? And why, if A.A. "is not allied with any sect (or) denomination," do we use this Christian prayer?.

A.A. archivist Frank M. says: "Old-timers' memories differ as to exactly when the Lord's Prayer was first used in A.A. According to members who came into the Fellowship in 1938 and 1939, it was said at meetings then. Co-founder Bill W. thought it might have been a carryover from the custom of our fore-runner, the Oxford Group, but he was never really sure."

During its fledgling years, Frank notes, the Fellowship was more religiously oriented than it would be later. The main emphasis was not on one's drinking history, but on surrender, acknowledging one's character defects, and learning through the shared experience to live better lives—socially, ethically, and religiously.

In those days, there was no A.A. literature; in fact A.A. didn't even have a name. And so the early groups leaned heavily on Bible reading for inspiration and guidance. Meetings probably closed with the Lord's

Prayer because, as Bill explained, "it did not put the speakers to the task, embarrassing to many, of composing prayers of their own."

The religious slant changed as it became evident that A.A.'s program of recovery could cross all barriers of creed, race and religion—and as the Fellowship developed Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions and other literature of its own. Yet, the use of the Lord's Prayer persisted in A.A., as it has everywhere else.

Frank points to a letter on the subject written by Bill in 1959. Responding to an A.A. member who had questioned the practice of closing meetings with the Lord's Prayer, Bill said, "This prayer is of such widespread use and recognition that the argument of its Christian origin seems to be a little far-fetched."

Stressing that the leader of the meeting usually asks attendees to join him in the Lord Prayer only "if they wish to," Bill observed, the worst that happens to the objectors is that they have to listen to it . . . doubtless a salutary exercise in tolerance at this state of their progress!" He further added that most A.A.s believed in God as we understand him, and have faith that communication and strength are obtainable through his grace since this is the general consensus, it seems only right that the Serenity Prayer and the Lord's Prayer be used in connection with our meetings."

Of course, Frank is quick to note, "The final decision about saying the Lord's Prayer or about any other group activity rest with the majority, or group conscience." As Bill said time and again, group conscience in the long run "will be wiser than the opinion of any single leader."

Excerpted from Box 4-5-9.



Calendar of Events

Events listed here are presented solely as a service to readers, not as an endorsement by the General Service Office or by the North Carolina Mountain Central Office. For any additional information please use the addresses or phone numbers provided.

33rd Annual International A.A. Women's Conference, February 13-16, 1997, Chicago Marriott Downtown, 540 North Michigan Avenue, Chicago, Illinois. Reservations must be received no later than January 15, 1997. For information phone: Karen T. 312-637-0170, or Merri M. 708-848-5062 or 312-520-5062 Or Cathy W. 847-803-8562, or Laura Z. 847-831-3538.

15th Annual TCYPAA February 28-March 2, 1997. At the Radison Read House, Chattanooga, TN 37402. For information call Lorri M. 423-265-6367.

Great Britain Convention, 1997, to commemorate 50 years of Alcoholics Anonymous in Great Britain. Blackpool's 'Wintergardens' complex in the seaside resort is the location for the convention. on 13, 14, and 15 June, 1997. A.A., Al-Anon, and Alateen meetings and workshops will take place, plus Cabaret, Dances, and Discos. Information on travel and a wide variety of accommodation in Blackpool may be obtained by telephoning or writing to:

North West Conference Connections,
Conference House,
242 Whitegate Drive,
Blackpool FY3 9JW, England.
Phone: 01253 699772/3 Fax: 01253 699774

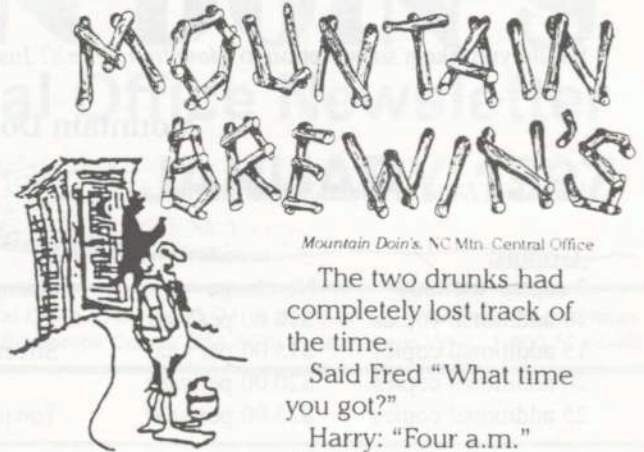
Faith— a Blueprint, and Work

The idea of twenty-four hour-living applies primarily to the emotional life of the individual. Emotionally speaking, we must not live in yesterday, nor in tomorrow.

But I have never been able to see that this means the individual, the group or A.A. as a whole should give no thought whatever to how to function tomorrow or even in the more distant future. Faith alone never constructed the house you live in. There had to be a blueprint and a lot of work to bring it into reality.

Nothing is truer for us of A.A. than the Biblical saying "Faith without works is dead." A.A.'s services, all designed to make more and better Twelfth Step work possible, are the "works" that insure our life and growth by preventing anarchy or stagnation.

From *As Bill Sees It*



Mountain Doin's, NC Mtn. Central Office

The two drunks had completely lost track of the time.

Said Fred "What time you got?"

Harry: "Four a.m."

Fred: "Wow! I guess your wife will hit the ceiling!"

Harry: "Guess so. She's such a rotten shot."

X X X

The pair of romantic alky's left the bar and boarded a train for their homes in a nearby city. Suddenly, the train went through a dark tunnel. when it emerged again into the light the male alky said: "Wow! If I'd known that tunnel was so long, I'd have held you and kissed you."

"Goodness!" responded the girl. "Wasn't that you?"

X X X

The two alkys hadn't met for years.

"And is your wife still as pretty as she used to be?" asked the first.

"Oh, yes." replied the second. "But it takes her much longer."

X X X

The couple had new neighbors and the wife was interested in watching them. In a few days, she commented to her husband: "They seem a most devoted couple., Jack. He kisses her every time he goes out, and even waves kisses to her from the sidewalk. Why don't you do that?"

"Why don't I?" replied alcoholic Jack. "Good heavens! I don't even know her yet!"

X X X

"Excuse me, but I can't wait any longer," grumbled the alky in the hotel bar. "You've been on that phone for ten minutes and you haven't said a word."

"Sir, I'm talking to my wife. Do you expect me to interrupt her?"

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