

RECOVERY

HOTLINE: 541-548-0440

Volume 08 Issue 5

AM I REALLY SOBER?

What a question. Of course I'm sober. I think. Well, you do know, I am in my seventeenth year without a drink. But still, the question has been raised. For some reason, when Liz asked me to write my story, that was the first thought that came to me. Am I really sober? After giving the question some thought, I am not so certain. So I guess I had better take a look.

The traditional way of telling one's story and the way that you are all familiar is to dwell on "what it used to be like," then a little bit about "what happened" and, oh yes, if there is time "what it is like now." So I am only going to briefly relate my "what it used to be like" part because if you are alcoholic and are reading this, you already know what it used to be like for me from your own very real personal experience. If you haven't had a "what it used to be like" experience, you probably won't be interested in reading any further.

"She promptly sent me to Alanon meetings where the attendees there seemed to talk a great deal about people who drank and behaved like I did. "

So at late middle age, I was finally beaten into the condition and the realization that I was never going to be able to drink alcohol successfully. And prior to that time I did a lot of damage. Like I said, you already know the story. I was a slow learner. I persisted in trying to drink normally even though both my grandfather and my father had died from alcoholism. $\bar{\mathrm{I}}$ just couldn't control my drinking. So I decided to go to a therapist to see if I could fix this problem of not being able to drink alcohol successfully. Of course I lied to her about my drinking (I was seeking help - right). But I did acknowledge that my dad had a drinking problem. She promptly sent me to Alanon meetings where the attendees there seemed to talk a great deal about people who drank and behaved like I did. Little did I know that my therapist saw right through me from the time of our first meeting. I wonder why? Oh yes, I discovered later that she was one of us, a recovering alcoholic. She had me pegged from the very start. So after some weeks of hemming and hawing and sipping, I finally showed up at my first AA meeting on a Monday night in the basement of a bank in my neighborhood in suburban Atlanta. For nearly two years, I regularly went to meetings, didn't drink, nor did I ask anyone to take me through the steps. The result was nil. I remained the same miserable human being that I was when I was still drinking. I thought I would be "just fine" if I attended meetings, socialized with people in the program and talked the talk. Walking the walk I avoided. You see, I was terminally unique. I had the plug in the jug so I was good to go. Here is an excerpt from the Big Book that adequately and accurately describes my condition at this point in my "sobriety."

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... "We were having trouble with personal relationships, we couldn't control our emotional natures, we were a prey to misery and depression, we couldn't make a living, we had feelings of uselessness, we were full of fear, we were unhappy, we couldn't seem to be of real help to other people"...

I have heard this excerpt called the bedevilments. I was surly bedeviled even though I regularly attended meetings and was not drinking. Was I really sober?

One evening I was asked to join a group of men who was taking a meeting to Dick B's house. Dick was terminally ill with liver cancer. Dick had long term sobriety and was well respected for his willingness to help other alcoholics achieve sobriety. When he shared in this meeting, there was never any mention of the nature of his illness or how much pain he was in. He shared only his experience, strength and hope. After attending several of these weekly meetings, it became apparent that Dick was losing ground fast. He never faltered – experience, strength, hope was always the subject. During one of those meetings, I had that "ah ha" moment; that realization that I wanted and could have at least some of what he had. Not the cancer, of course, but the character traits, the peace, contentment; in short the **sobriety** that he was enjoying even though he was dying.

..."that realization that I wanted and could have at least some of what he had. Not the cancer, of course, but the character traits, the peace, contentment; in short the *sobriety* that he was enjoying even though he was dying."

After that meeting, I asked my friend Mel to become my sponsor. His response surprised me. He asked me what I expected him to do, why I wanted a sponsor. I didn't know how to answer him. He then said that if I wanted to be taken through the steps, he would be happy to do that. And that once we completed the steps if I wanted him to be my sponsor, he would do so. The implication was that if I was willing to complete the steps I would have a sponsor. So I did complete the steps under Mel's guidance and supervision. As you know, it wasn't easy, but as a result of working those steps, the God of my understanding took it upon himself to begin to change me, to change my thinking and to change my behavior. Was I really sober then? The jury is still out.

So with that brief look at what it used to be like and what happened I guess it is now time for me to take a look at my "sobriety" today and ask that guestion again. Am I really sober?

How would I know? Is there a standard for determining myself as being sober? Well for me, just putting the plug in the jug and keeping it there was a good start. That would at least classify me as being "dry." Should I consider the

misuse of other mind altering street, prescription, and over the counter drugs? For me that is essential. Not to discuss in AA meetings, but certainly to be on my checklist of those things that I must avoid to ensure my sobriety. Are there other things that I should look at in considering my sobriety? You bet. A few years ago I came across a definition of sober that I copied to a front inside page of my Big Book: "No alcohol and showing no excessive or extreme qualities of fancy, emotion, or prejudice." Now these are some desirable attributes that I can work on the rest of my life. And God forbid, there seem to be more. Here are some other qualities I have found to be attributed to being sober: reasonable, rational, realistic, practical, down-to-earth, without excess or exaggeration, having no illusions, and facing reality in a straightforward way. These attributes all seem to be pragmatic. I have not even addressed here all of the spiritual qualities attributed to sobriety and found throughout the Big Book, (e.g.: patience, tolerance, kindliness, and the greatest of them all, love). So you see, I have a lot more work to do.

"And I thought all I had to do was stop drinking, go to meetings and listen to George's wisdom and then I would be "just fine." Not so. "

And I thought all I had to do was stop drinking, go to meetings and listen to George's wisdom and then I would be "just fine." Not so. Every day I experience some discomfort, some learning experience that leads me back to the Big Book, back to the steps, back to my sponsor, back to a meeting. I learned some time ago that there are no short cuts, that I cannot do this by myself and that this is a life long process.

Am I really sober? I don't think so. But I'm working

on it.

Submitted by Gary S



TRIVIA OUESTION OF THE MONTH:



What is the common phrase used in describing the Grapevine?

e-mail Eddie at gogo@bendbroadband.com with the answer

Cover Photos by Charlene C— "Bachelor with Buttercups" and "Summer in Eastern Oregon." Many thanks, Charlene, for your beautiful photos!

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JAIL TIME

No...not **THAT** kind of jail time. We're talking here about jail time as an AA service commitment. Central Oregon AA members take regular meetings into three correctional facilities: the Deschutes County jail in Bend, the county's newly re-opened Work Center adjacent to the jail, and the brand new Deer Ridge Correctional Facility in Madras.

Here are some attention-getting numbers from a Conference-approved pamphlet entitled "Carrying the Message Into Correctional Facilities" [and bear in mind that these statistics have most certainly grown since the publication of this pamphlet a number of years ago]:

There are over 63,357 AA's in confinement and over 2,432 prison groups throughout the United States and Canada. These meetings answer only a fraction of the need for more groups in correctional facilities all across the country. Many there reach for, but don't find, the hand of AA.

Here in Deschutes County, the hand of AA IS there. But many more AA hands are needed, especially now with new meetings being taken into the Work Center and up at Deer Ridge in Madras.

"There are two AA's who deserve the lion's share of the credit for making sure the hand of AA is always there in our area correctional facilities. They are Jim R. and Harry C."

Here's what's involved in becoming part of this vital service: it is suggested you have at least a year of sobriety. There are about six hours of orientation classes managed by the Sheriff's Office and the county. When I signed up, the classes were broken up into two sessions on different days and they were well run, taught me a lot, and even had some fun moments.

Volunteers, as you might expect, have to go through background checks. Finally, volunteers cannot have been in the Deschutes County jail in the past year nor can they be currently under the supervision of the Department of Parole and Probation.

Men and women AA volunteers are needed. At the county jail, for example, meetings are brought to the inmates every Tuesday evening. Usually there are four meetings in two separate rooms...two meetings in each room, each meeting lasting an hour, run back-to-back. So it's a two-hour commitment...and there's no requirement that you do a meeting every week. Some folks can only do one trip to a correctional facility a month. And this commitment, as with all service in AA, not only carries the message to others, but deepens and enriches the sobriety of those who carry the message.

There are two AA's who deserve the lion's share of the credit for making sure the hand of AA is always there in our area correctional facilities. They are Jim R. and Harry C. I've known these men and done correctional facility meetings with them for over a year and I am continually amazed by their dedication and their enthusiasm for this important AA service work. And I never tire of hearing their stories and watching how closely the inmates at meetings listen to Jim and Harry tell how it was, what happened, and what it's like now.

Signing up for the corrections facilities volunteer orientation could not be easier. Simply call Intergroup which can put you in telephone touch with Jim R. or Harry C. and they will get you the application you need and you're on your way. Harry told me recently they could use, right now, at least twenty-five additional volunteers.

There is another way to carry the message into correctional facilities. This way reaches beyond our county and

beyond Oregon's borders. It's called the "Corrections Correspondence Service" program and it's run out of the General Service Office in New York. It is exactly what its name implies: members of AA writing letters to fellow AA's who are in correctional facilities. I love the headline of a story about this program that appeared in a recent issue of the GSO Publication **Box 4-5-9**:

"A.A. Scales the Highest Walls ---All For the Price of a Stamp"



The headline tells the story! The **Box 4-5-9** piece informs us that last year Corrections Correspondence Service volunteers corresponded with 2,059 members [1,534 men, 525 women] in jails and prisons across the U.S. and Canada.

GSO receives between 100 and 150 letters a month from inmates asking to participate in the program.

In a recent exchange of emails with Gayle S. R. who manages the Corrections Correspondence Service at GSO, Gavle shared with me that the Service, at the moment, has more female AA volunteers than female inmates who wish the Service. That is a happy situation indeed. Gayle says they will never turn away female volunteers but that they need to be patient and understand that they could be in for a long wait time [a brief side note: the Corrections Correspondence Service, as you might expect, suggests that women correspond with women...men with men]. As for male AA correspondence volunteers, Gayle reports that a recent **Box 4-5-**9 article on this subject spurred an increase in volunteers but she quickly adds, "that is subject to change at a moment's notice. Especially after the July issue of the **Grapevine** that comes out each year in a thread-bound issue for inmates, we get a big upsurge in [inmate] requests for the Correspondence Service."

How to become a Corrections Correspondence Service volunteer? You can simply go to www.AA.org and pretty quickly find your way to the pamphlet on the Service that includes a volunteer form you can print and mail to the Corrections Facilities Desk at GSO in New York. If you're a GSR

or your group's literature person, of the pamphlet are readily avail-inclusion in your group's literature The pamphlet explains the Service and shares very helpful guidelines ing to inmates... guidelines based,



might imagine, on the experience, strength, and hope of those who have gone before in the Service.

A closing thought: it's from a piece written for the **Grapevine** back in March, 1953 by an inmate at Folsom Prison. I found it a beautiful summary of what getting AA into correctional facilities is all about:

AA in prison is like an oasis in the Sahara; it's the smile of a friend when all else seems forsaken. AA in prison is a device to shrink a man's head and expand his heart. AA in prison shows us where real happiness begins and selfishness ends. AA in prison is for all men [and women] who seek peace of mind and who have found the courage to look into themselves.

By Bruce Cummings

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Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	
				1	CO speaker mtg-7 pm Tumalo speaker Mtg-7 pm	Redmond potluck speaker mtg-6 pm	
4	5	Tuesday night AA Speaker mtg-7 pm	7	8	Tumalo speaker mtg-7 pm	10	
1 1 District 5 GSR Mtg 4 pm	12	13	14	15	16 CO speaker mtg-7 pm Tumalo speaker mtg-7 pm	17	
18	19	20 Madras birthday Mtg-7:30 pm	21 La Pine potluck/ speaker mtg-6 pm; speaker-7 pm	22	23 Tumalo speaker mtg-7 pm	24 Intergroup potluck speaker mtg-6 pm	
25 Intergroup advisory Board mtg-5 pm Intergroup IGR mtg-5:30 pm	26	27	28	29 Ochoco Camp Out	30 Ochoco Camp Out Tumalo speaker mtg-7 pm	Ochoco Camp Out Intergroup Circuit Speaker Mtg, - 7:00 pm	
Central Oregon Speaker Meeting District 5 GSR Meeting Intergroup Advisory Board Meeting Intergroup Circuit Speaker Meeting Intergroup IGR Meeting Intergroup Potluck Speaker Meeting La Pine Potluck Speaker Meeting Madras Birthday Meeting Ochoco Group Camp Out Redmond Potluck Speaker Meeting Tumalo Speaker Meeting Tuesday night AA Speaker Meeting			Environmental Center TEC St. Charles Medical Center, Ponderosa Rm VFH Hall St. Charles Medical Center, Sage Rm Brooks Hall, TEC La Pine Community Park St. Patrick's Church See Flyers for Directions Redmond Community Church Fellowship Hall Nazarene Church			16 NW Kansas, Bend 469 Wall Street, Bend 1253 NW Canal, Redmond Veterans Way, Redmond 1253 NW Canal, Redmond 469 Wall Street, Bend Finley Butte Road, La Pine Madison & J Street, Madras Prineville 10 & Cedar, Redmond Bruce Avenue, Tumalo 1270 NE 27th, Bend	



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1 Ochoco Camp Out	2	3	4	5	CO speaker mtg-7 pm Tumalo speaker mtg-7 pm	Redmond pot- luck speaker mtg-6 pm
8 District 5 GSR Mtg 4 pm	9	Tuesday night AA Speaker mtg-7 pm	11	12	Tumalo speaker mtg-7 pm	14
15	16	17 Madras birthday Mtg-7:30 pm	18 La Pine potluck/ speaker mtg-6 pm	19	20 CO speaker mtg- 7 pm Tumalo speaker mtg-7 pm	21 Beginning of Summer Picnic
22 Intergroup advisory Board mtg-5 pm Intergroup IGR mtg-5:30 pm	23	24	25	26	27 Tumalo speaker mtg-7 pm	28 Intergroup potluck speaker mtg-6 pm, CO Intergroup deep sea fishing trip
29	30					
Beginning of Summer Picnic Central Oregon Speaker Meeting CO Intergroup Deep Sea Fishing Trip District 5 GSR Meeting Intergroup Advisory Board Meeting Intergroup IGR Meeting Intergroup Potluck Speaker Meeting La Pine Potluck Speaker Meeting Madras Birthday Meeting Ochoco Camp Out Redmond Potluck Speaker Meeting Tumalo Speaker Meeting Tuesday Speaker Meeting			Cline Falls Environmental Center Depoe Bay (see flyer) TEC St. Charles Medical Cent St. Charles Medical Cent TEC— Madras Oasis Gro La Pine Community Park St. Patrick's Church See Flyers for Directions Redmond Community Cl Fellowship Hall Nazarene Church	er, Sage Rm up Sponsoring	Cline Falls Park 16 NW Kansas, Bend Charter Bus & Boat 469 Wall Street, Bend 1253 NW Canal, Redmond 1253 NW Canal, Redmond 469 Wall Street, Bend Finley Butte Road, La Pine Madison & J Street, Madras Prineville 10 & Cedar, Redmond Bruce Avenue, Tumalo 1270 NE 27th, Bend	

VOLUNTEER

YOUR SERVICE CAN BENEFIT OTHERS

Volunteers for Jails needed for meetings for the following: Deer Ridge Corrections, Madras Deschutes County Jail D.C.J. Work Release Center Jefferson County Jail Applications available at the Redmond Alano Club or contact Harry C-Hchris9143@Bendbroaband.com or 548-3824 (See related article on Page 3)

Hotline Shift

Substitute/Fill-in opportunities One year sobriety preferred 12 Step List. Call Pat R 420-4741



Thanks for Stepping Up! New Entertainment Chair — Kevin K Entertainment Secretary —Tom L



These are some of the responses received from the question, "What is your greatest service memory or your favorite service work?"

My favorite service work is being involved with the Intergroup entertainment committee. I have meet so many wonderful people in recovery from all over Central Oregon. Kevin K

Continued Column 2

MILESTONES

Diana Mc	05/05/06	2 Years			
John S	05/06/06	2 Years			
Steve P	05/09/05	3 Years			
Kim A	05/14/06	2 Years			
Jennifer C	05/15/90	18 Years			
ATTIT	UDE ADJUST	MENT			
Melissa	05/03/05	3 Years			
OPEN H	HAND FELLO	WSHIP			
Tom A	05/10/00	8 Years			
Reed	05/31/97	11 Years			
REDMOND REBELS					
Donna T	05/26/07	1 Year			
Susie L	05/28/03	5 Years			
Melissa					

Service Work, Continued

First-ever Twelfth Step call with my sponsor. Guy's apartment door was practically barricaded with empty vodka bottles. We got him to the local VA hospital. They got him on an IV hooked to one of those rolling IV stands. We spent an hour getting his paperwork done and getting him admitted. As we went to get him from a waiting area where we'd left him, we saw him skittering out the front door, in paper slippers and one of those butt-baring hospital gowns, IV still in his arm, dragging the IV "tree" behind him...down the hospital's entry stairs. He hailed a cab, ripped out the IV, and disappeared. Never saw him again. My sponsor watched all this, turned to me and said, "Well...what the hell. We're still sober. Let's go home." Bruce Cummings

I would have to say Potluck Chair. I was 3 yr. sober - was told to travel all over Dist. 5 and personally invite people in the meetings to the monthly potluck. It allowed me to learn to speak in front of people, meet all kinds of different AA's, and also the importance of keeping the potluck tradition alive for the fellowship. Finally, it taught me to do the footwork, and let go and it would be a success with my HP's help. It was a lesson I learned every month for 2 years and it worked out every time. Guess I had to learn that lesson. Jane S

Please share your favorite service work or story. E-mail connayr@hotmail.com

UDEOMNING AVE MIS

May:

1st Central Oregon Intergroup Circuit Speaker Meeting, May 31

This will be held at the VFW Hall, Redmond, 7:00 pm. Featuring Stan M from Las Vegas, OPEN speaker meeting, no potluck. This event is FREE. Stan has a great story, so be sure to come!!!



Ochoco Campout

The Ochoco campout is May 29 thru June 1st. This is a group camp; trailers are welcome, and there is plenty of room for tents. Walton Lake is located about 7 miles from the campgrounds for people to go fishing or canoeing. Saturday there will be a potluck followed by a speaker meeting at 7:00 p.m. Sunday morning is "The Real Men Cook Breakfast." You ladies will not want to miss this!

Directions: From Prineville, 25 miles east on Hwy 26 and County Road 23. This is about 9 miles from the junction with US Highway 26 and across from the Ochoco Ranger Station.

June:

Central Oregon Intergroup's Annual Deep Sea Fishing Trip, June 28.

Round trip charter bus transportation from Bend to Depoe Bay. Eight hour fishing charter. Cost: \$135.00 per person. Must pre-register with \$35.00 deposit before June 15th. Contact: Dave B 906.395.6659 Kevin K



TREASURER'S REPORT

Submitted by Margot B.

Treasurer's Report Central Oregon Intergroup 2008	16-Mar to 15-Apr		YTD	AVERAGE MONTHLY BUDGET
		-		
INCOME				
Group Donations	1,735.65		5,848.26	1,949.42
Book & Coin Sales	1,849.70		6,445.00	2,148.33
Newsletter	38.00		35.04	11.68 27.57
Potluck	-		82.72 45.12	15.04
Entertainment Interest Income	4.77		9.20	3.07
Total Donations and Interest Income		-	12,465.34	4,155.11
EXPENSES				
General Checking				
Rent	245.00 33.12		980.00 169.10	245.00 56.37
Advertising (Dex West) Phone	162.22		663.57	221.19
Hotline	-		-	221113
Newsletter	115.00		460.00	153.33
Purchases	512.97		2,115.55	705.18
Postage & Office Expense	16.07		16.07	5.36
Management Fee	800.00		3,200.00	800.00
Bank Charges (Rev. \$56 & checks)	-		23.89	7.96
Other/Misc (Mar.Potluck-Rent)	75.00		175.00	58.33
Donations (GSO & Oregon Area)	1,000.00		1,000.00	333.33
Schedules	1-		-	-
Electricity	51.78		219.57	73.19
Total General Checking Expenses	3,011.16		9,022.75	2,659.25
Office Account				
Office Supplies	-		69.35	23.12
Postage	-		41.00	13.67
Hotline	1 264 01			1.512.70
Purchases Web Site	1,364.91		4,538.10	1,512.70
Other	-		-	-
Total Office Expenses	379.30	82	4,648.45	1,549.48
Net Revenue/Month	237.66		(220.25)	-
TOANGEEDO		=		
TRANSFERS				
General Checking Deposits IN by Office	3,199.95		12,264.58	
Transfers (OUT) to Office	(672.19)			
Transfers (OOT) to Office Transfers IN from Savings	(672.19)		(4,056.62)	
Transfers (OUT) to Savings	-		(1,000.00)	
Total General Checking Transfers	2,527.76	-	7,207.96	
Savings (prudent reserve) Account				
Transfers IN	=		1,000.00	
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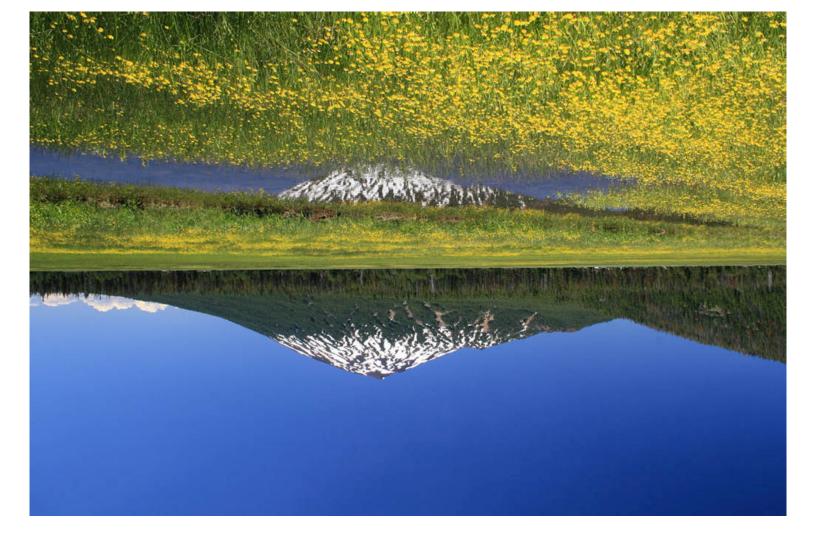
DONATING GROUPS	16-Mar	
2008	to	
Group	15-Apr	Year to Date
24 and Alive	45.00	180.00
ABC Group		8-
As Men See It	180.00	180.00
Attitude Adjustment		472.50
Back to the Big Book	131.27	131.27
Big Book Study (LaPine)		-
Burns Group		-
Eastside Early Risers		300.00
First Things First		1-1
Heppner Miracles		
High Noon Big Book Study		155.00
Livng in the Solution		40.15
Madras Oasis Group	100.00	100.00
Men's Book Study		,/·
Men's Stag Meeting		150.00
Monday Downtown		75.00
Monday/Wednesday 5:30		63.00
New Horizons	287.16	859.12
Open Hand Fellowship	80.00	
Primary Purpose		414.00
Redmond Rebels		600.00
Rule 62 Group	The second	-
S.O.S. Group (Redmond)	30.00	90.00
Safe Harbor	246.00	
Saturday Morning Alive		87.00
Sisters Group		50.00
Sisters High Noon		-
Sober Desire	68.00	124.00
Sober on Sunday		-
Sobriety Maintenance		-
Spiritual Awakening	200.00	200.00
Spiritual Breakfast	83.00	307.00
Springriver Book Study		
Step Sisters	138.25	302.25
Steps to Sobriety		-
Sunday Serenity		-
Sunriver Open Group		120.00
The Nooner		-
Thursday Women's Meeting		
Tuesday Night AA		1=
Tuesday Night Survivors		-
Tumalo Friday Night	34.80	34.80
We are not a Glum Lot		375.00
W-F-S Group		-
Women at Work	67.17	67.17
Women in Serenity		-
Anonymous		-
CD Sales		-
District 5 - AFG Donations	45.00	45.00
Potluck		-
Entertainment		-
Intergroup 7th Tradition		-
Total Control of	4 202 02	

1,735.65

5,848.26

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