



Central Oregon AA's

CONSCIOUS CONTACT

AA HOTLINE - (541) 548-0440 / APRIL 2015

APRIL HAPPENINGS

Area Updates . . .

The definition of a closed meeting on the website and in the schedules is being changed to "Closed meetings are for A.A. members only, or for those who have a drinking problem and have a desire to stop drinking."

If you or someone you know is having a birthday in the month following this issue, please let Judy W. know at least a week before the end of the current month.

IG Potlucks (held the 4th Saturday of the month) **are in grave danger of ending!** Dave W.'s term as Potluck Chair ended about 4 months ago but Dave generously agreed to continue until such time as someone stepped up to fill the position. That time has now ended. **If the Potluck Chair position is not filled by the end of April, there will be no more potlucks until it is.** Call Dave for details about the position.

PI/CPC is recruiting new members to help distribute literature; re-contacted members involved in local media; continuing to develop contacts at public and private radio stations; connecting with Deschutes County prevention staff for local schools to receive schedules and literature; Ads in the Source weekly and Bend Bulletin with the AA Hotline phone number.

Calling for volunteer AA members, who may be interested in helping spread the message to professional groups, who come into contact with alcoholics. This is the CPC (Cooperation with Professional Committees) part of presenting AA to community groups. We have scripts and specific training ideas for presentations. If you are comfortable talking to groups and have at least one year of sobriety please contact Thom D. at 971-237-1373

INTERGROUP OFFICERS

CHAIRPERSON

Vickie M (541) 410-3481
chairperson@coigaa.org

VICE CHAIRPERSON

Reed K (541) 771-8097
vicechair@coigaa.org

SECRETARY

Lauren G (541) 420-7705
secretary@coigaa.org

TREASURER

Dan P (541) 480-0571
treasurer@coigaa.org

NEWSLETTER

Judy W (541) 706-9327
jwoodfill@quiltwombat.com OR
newsletter@coigaa.org

SCHEDULES

Joan C (541) 550-0568
schedule@coigaa.org

HOTLINE

Samantha R (541) 604-5319
hotline@coigaa.org

POTLUCK

David W (541) 610-6624
potluck@coigaa.org

WEBSITE

Steve G (541) 385-7827
webmaster@coigaa.org

ENTERTAINMENT

Teryce O (541) 390-5320
entertainment@coigaa.org

AL-ANON LIAISON

Kristel M (541) 350-7845
al-anon_liason@coigaa.org

DISTRICT COMMITTEE MEMBER

Vera F (541) 408-7470

ADVISORY BOARD COMMITTEE

Mike S (541) 815-7458
Peggy R (541) 480-4019
Cody M (541) 420-0774
Samantha R (541) 604-5319

OUR INTERGROUP OFFICE

M-F 9:00 am -1:00 pm
337 Antler St., Suite B
Redmond OR 97756
(541) 923-8199 www.coigaa.org

OREGON AREA TREASURY

1900 NE 3RD Street
Suite 106-172
Bend OR 97701

DISTRICT 5

P. O. Box 7241
Bend OR 97708

GENERAL SERVICE BOARD

Grand Central Station
P.O. Box 459
New York NY 10164-0371

AA HOTLINE



All positions are currently full, but don't hesitate to contact Samantha R. to find out when positions open up.

To qualify you must:

- Have a working telephone
- Have 6 months of sobriety
- Have an AA sponsor
- Be working the AA steps
- Be attending AA meetings regularly
- Participate in a brief training

If you are willing to give back what was so freely given to you, please call:

Hotline Chairman: Samantha R. (541) 604-5319

APRIL BIRTHDAYS



Tabitha D.	4/01/08
Brian B.	4/02/02
Robin R.	4/08/89
Lydia P.	4/11/04
Suzann D.	4/12/06
Rick A.	4/13/12
Nancy L.	4/20/81
Jimmy F.	4/20/13
Michelle T.	4/21/13
Tommye H.	4/21/99
Kathryn L.	4/24/89
Nancy K.	4/27/02
Christy H.	4/29/13

(Let us know when your birthday is, and you'll be in the newsletter. Ed.)

MEETING CHANGES

BEND

Monday 5:30 pm Primary Purpose Newcomers Open, TEC

Tuesday 5:30 pm Primary Purpose Closed Discussion, TEC

Wednesday 5:30 pm Primary Purpose Closed Book Study, TEC

NEW *Wednesday* 7:00 pm We Agnostics, Open Discussion, TEC

Thursday 5:30 pm Primary Purpose Closed Grapevine, TEC

1st & 3rd Friday 7:00 pm CO Speaker Meeting, Eastmont Church, 62425 Eagle Road

Friday 5:30 pm Primary Purpose Closed Discussion, TEC

CRESCENT

Saturday 7:00 pm, changing to 6:00 pm.

LaPINE

Wednesday 7:00PM Living Sober, Discussion; and 2nd *Wednesday*, Potluck 6:00PM, Speaker 7:00PM, will now be meeting at Community Church, 16565 Finley Butte Road.

SISTERS

Wednesday 7:00 a.m. Men only meeting at the Lutheran Church 386 N. Fir Street.

Step Four - Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.

THE IDEA of "morals" scared hell out of me for years--the years before my drinking became unmanageable, then the alcoholic years, and even the first three or four years after I had found the shelter of Alcoholics Anonymous.

Nothing could dull the edge of what I realize now was simply cold fear. I was frightened at the very mention of "morality," because it posed too big a problem for me--big because it was simple. If I accepted the challenge that the consideration of morality hurled at me, I would have to begin dividing my life--and the things I did every day--into two long columns headed "right" and "wrong."

Try this simple experiment, and you'll discover exactly why I was scared. Pop into your neighborhood gin mill or a local cocktail party. Find the drunkest lush around and start a discussion about "right and wrong" with him (or her). What you will hear will be roughly equivalent to the confusion in which I lived for nearly a quarter of a century. Or turn back your own psychic clock to those boozy meditations, crazy distortions, and amoeboid transformations of "rights" and "wrongs" by which you lived--or tried to live--while you were on the sauce.

Like most enlightened moderns, I had come under the wing of Uncle Sigmund Freud. (My analyst's analyst had been analyzed by Freud in person, so I drunkenly thought of myself as a legitimate great-grandson of the great man himself.) Years of probing into the sexual enigmas of individual and collective living left me, like many of my generation, believing the vague dictum that bore the imprimatur of the Vienna school of psychology: "*Everything* has to do with sex." I knew, therefore, that I was somehow liberated from the repellent, antique morality of Queen Victoria. I was free, morally speaking, to pursue the truth of my own nature and to rise above the tyrannies of repressed (and therefore "wrong") sex.

Accordingly, again like many of my generation, I was literally *obsessed* by sex, an obsession (but not, thank God, a compulsion) only second in importance to alcohol in my life. Drinking, for at least a dozen alcoholic years, was not a moral matter at all; that is, it seemed to have nothing to do with right or wrong. Alcohol meant survival; anything that kept me alive, I assumed, was necessary and hence, in the philosopher's words, "beyond good and evil." So I did not see alcohol as a problem, except at the moments when I dimly noticed (with frequent amusement) that the stuff was killing me. But this subtle observation appeared almost totally irrelevant to the clear truth that booze was also keeping me alive. Such a state of affairs is too much of a puzzle (a moral puzzle, when you get right down to it) for any man's gin-soaked brain, including mine.

What I am getting to (slowly) is that morality for me centered, I thought, on matters having to do mostly with sex. Drinking unleashed a panorama of sexual fantasies within me. (These fantasies, let me add, were rarely implemented in life. The business of living was just too jammed up with wide-screen and stereophonic hangovers, the logistics of getting the next drink while battling for social survival, and the exhausting labor of achieving the maximum possible intoxication. There was just no time or energy left to turn those sex dreams into reality.)

Imagine, then, how I felt after a dry year in our Fellowship when I first bruised my sensitivities upon Step Four. A *moral* inventory! "Rights" and "wrongs"! Sex! More than this, it was suggested that I commit my inventory (one way or another) to writing. I made a few scratches on a yellow pad, thought a bit about the anti-pornography legislation being proposed in those days, and retired in a sulk to a closed AA meeting where questions could be submitted anonymously on slips of paper.

Before the meeting even began, I wrote, "Why does the Fourth Step ask us to take a *moral* inventory? Why not just an inventory?" I folded the paper discreetly and slid it under an ashtray on the speaker's table at the front of the room.

I had never seen the leader of that meeting before, and I have not run into him since. In his qualification, he explained that he was a professional gambler, whose usual beat was in Nevada, and that "business" (having to do, I gather, with the sport of kings) had brought him to the East

for the current season. His story was nothing short of inspirational. His ten years of sobriety--in the midst of the uncertainty of his particular occupation--were clearly a triumph of living a day at a time. He seemed to have absolute confidence that his higher power cared as much about decks of cards, dice, and roulette wheels as it did about more sacred and cultural artifacts. To me, that was both astounding and comforting.

Eventually, he unfolded my question and looked at it as if it were a hopeless poker hand. He read it aloud and repeated, "Why do we take a *moral* inventory?" He paused and examined the ceiling. Then a weary look overcame him, a look indicating that he had indeed thought about this before. His voice was so low I could hardly hear it, as if he were reluctantly sharing a sure thing on tomorrow's daily double.

"The reason we take a *moral* inventory," he said carefully, "is because the word 'moral' forces us to divide into rights and wrongs the things we do--and have done--to ourselves and others. This forces us to make decisions--personal decisions--and asks us, in effect, where we stand as human beings, what we hold to be right and wrong, whether we're alone in the dark of night or with other people."

Quite suddenly, I realized that I was in the company of an extremely wise man, and I listened closely to the ensuing discussion. Nobody even brought up the topic of sex! Our gambling man had set the tone for the discussion; it centered mostly upon the maintenance of sobriety and upon the clear thinking and strength required to stand up as a man or a woman, ready to be counted, ready to affirm, "This I believe to be right--this I believe to be wrong," and ready to try to live just that way.

I spent the rest of that evening with my copy of *Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions*. I came to see, first, that on the analyst's couch I was able to do a lot of things, but never to take (even with the help of a skilled therapist) a true moral inventory; then, that until I did I would be adrift in the contemporary relativism of wishy-washy, vaguely "scientific" amorality. I thought of the words "right" and "wrong" as they applied to the brilliant men who invented bacteriological warfare and nuclear warheads. I thought of Ernest Hemingway's "emancipated" notion that what was moral was what *felt* good, and I tried to think about, not only what felt good *now*, but what could be counted upon to feel good tomorrow and the day after.

I thought about sex. Certainly, the wake of joy and sorrow we leave behind us in our pursuit of instinctual pleasure *is* a moral matter (and a measure of character), as Bill wrote. So are the numerous choices that the pursuit forces us to make in daily life. We must consider, not only whether we are adhering to a certain social concept of what is "right," but how we feel if we do not adhere to it, when (as sometimes happens) the spirit is willing, but the flesh commands otherwise. Certainly, I thought then (and still do), the implication of a willingness to "stand up and be counted," the *real* moral imperative of life, takes us far beyond the simple roster of "rights" and "wrongs" concerning "genital commotion" (as psychologists often call it) and into the entire realm of human relationships.

In my solitude, I asked myself, "What *do* I believe in? What *would* I stand up and be counted for? What do I *really* consider right and wrong?" And immediately I understood that I had now begun to take a meaningful "searching and fearless moral inventory"!

That evening passed nearly five years ago. I am still trying to answer, to my own satisfaction, those three simple questions. How sorry I am to say that I do not yet know the final answers, even for myself--and certainly not for you. But I think I am on the track in pursuing them within our AA program, and I think I am pursuing them well, because I am sober. I think the answers have something to do with love, a word I do not use freely. And they cleave close to Bill's observation that, when we were drinking, "Of true brotherhood we had small comprehension." Without love and brotherhood, I think, we might each turn into the sort of walking moral-disaster area that I was before I first met the Fourth Step.

G. N. G.
May, 1970
Queens, New York

Tradition Four

Each group should be autonomous except in matters affecting other groups of AA as a whole.

This morning, as I was reading the book Thank You for Sharing--Sixty Years of Letters to the AA Grapevine, I came across letters in a section regarding a story about the Lord's Prayer in AA meetings. As I read from letter to letter, each opinion voicing valid concerns and viewpoints from both sides of the issue, it occurred to me that there may be no better reason for AA members to learn the Traditions and our service structure, and how they allow us to operate, than this topic. It is virtually as old as our Fellowship itself, and returns as regularly as clockwork.

Personally, I have never felt the need to argue about whether or not the Lord's Prayer belongs in AA meetings, because I know that the Fourth Tradition tells me that "Each group should be autonomous except in matters affecting other groups or AA as a whole." Therefore, I know it's the group's choice to recite this prayer and not some proclamation that came down from on high.

But change in AA does not occur from the top down, and a letter to the General Service Office in New York is not a letter to the "powers that be." Besides, regardless of how much or how well we write, all GSO staff is going to do is reply that they support the group's autonomy and they leave the decision where it belongs, in the hands of the individual members. AA's service structure is inverted, and any changes in AA come from the Fellowship and from the groups themselves.

In other words, we can write all the letters we want, but if we don't like something that is going on in our AA meetings, regularly attending group business meetings is one way to begin changing it. Once in the business meeting, we begin to see how the group functions, how our Traditions work, and how the service structure ticks. Reading the pamphlet "The AA Group" will give a better idea about how everything meshes.

If we feel strongly about a topic, we can bring it up in the business meeting. A motion may or may not get passed. But one thing is for sure, we'll see where the power in AA rests: on the shoulders of each member who feels strongly about a topic and seeks to change or defend it. We'll also be less likely to be drawn into arguments about it again, too. Safe in the knowledge of how change really happens in AA, we might sit back, listen to the new person's impassioned pleas, and ask, "So, why don't you attend the business meeting next week if you feel that strongly about it?"

Dave R.
April 2008
Manchester, New Hampshire

We are not a glum lot . . .

AFTER the husband's fifth trip to the host's bar for refills, the wife said, "Aren't you embarrassed to go back so many times?"

Hubby: "Nope. I keep telling them it's for you."

Once over lightly . . .
May 1971

ON THE GROUNDS that birds are also members of the animal kingdom, we throw in another story in that category. The city hall of a certain municipality was infested by a flock of about a 100 pigeons, committing their usual nuisances. The janitor, who had been raised on a farm, came up with an idea he claimed his grandfather had found effective years before. The plan was to soak several bushels of cracked corn in whiskey and put it out for the birds to eat. It would make them drunk and sick, and discourage them from returning. So the city fathers tried it, and the next day about 300 pigeons showed up, an hour earlier than usual.

Once over lightly . . .
February 1974

After completing the Fourth Step, Johnny was faced with some big chunks of truth about himself. Hoping to hang on to a few of his character defects, he visited his doctor seeking validation.

"Doctor," he cried. "I'm just not able to do all the things around the house that I used to do."

When the doctor's examination was complete, Johnny said, "Now, Doc, I can take it. Tell me in plain English what's wrong with me."

"Well, in plain English," the doctor replied, "you're just lazy."

"Okay," said Johnny. "Now give me the medical term so I can tell my wife."

At Wit's End
November 2009

The optimist says, "My glass is half full." The pessimist says, "My glass is half empty."
The alcoholic says, "Are you going to drink that?"

At Wit's End
July 2007

A MAN AND HIS WIFE WERE DINING out at a pub. The husband kept glancing at a woman busy downing several drinks at the bar. As the evening wore on, she grew drunker and more boisterous.

The wife asked, "Do you know her?"

"Yes," sighed the husband. "She's my ex-wife. She took to drinking right after we were divorced, seven years ago. I hear she hasn't been sober since."

"My goodness!" said the wife. "Who would think a person could go on celebrating that long?"

Ham on Wry
September 2006

APRIL 2015

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1	2	3 CO Speaker Mtg. 7pm, Eastmont Church, 62425 Eagle Road, Bend (enter on NE Providence Dr.) Speakers: Dave G. (Sacramento, CA) 26 yrs.; Barrett H. 2 yrs.	4
5	6	7 Tuesday Night AA Speaker Mtg. 7 pm Church of the Nazarene	8 LaPine Potluck Speaker 6 pm Park & Rec. 16565 Finley Butte Rd., LaPine	9	10	11
12 District 5 GSR Mtg. 4 pm. TEC	13	14	15	16	17 CO Speaker Mtg. 7pm, Eastmont Church, 62425 Eagle Road, Bend (enter on NE Providence Dr.) Speakers: Matt C. (Seattle) 34 yrs.; Sandy B. 4 yrs.	18
19 Entertainment Committee Meeting 4 pm TEC, Bend	20	21	22	23	24 Bend Birthday Mtg. TEC. 7 pm Speaker:	25 IG Potluck, Calgary Baptist Church on Main, Prineville. 6:00 pm; speakers at 7:00. Sponsoring Group: Prineville
26 IGR Advisory Board Mtg 4:30 IGR Mtg 5:30 pm TEC	27 Step Sisters Speaker Mtg. 7pm TEC	28	29	30		

MAY 2015

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1 CO Speaker Mtg. 7pm, Eastmont Church, 62425 Eagle Road, Bend (enter on NE Providence Dr.) Speakers:	2
3	4	5 Tuesday Night AA Speaker Mtg. 7 pm Church of the Nazarene	6 LaPine Potluck Speaker 6 pm Park & Rec. 16565 Finley Butte Rd., LaPine	7	8	9
10 District 5 GSR Mtg. 4 pm. TEC	11	12	13	14	15 CO Speaker Mtg. 7pm, Eastmont Church, 62425 Eagle Road, Bend (enter on NE Providence Dr.) Speakers:	16
17 Entertainment Committee Meeting 4 pm TEC, Bend	18	19	20	21	22	23 IG Potluck, Brooks Hall. 6:00 pm; speakers at 7:00. Sponsoring Group: Attitude Adjustment
24 IGR Advisory Board Mtg 4:30 IGR Mtg 5:30 pm TEC	25 Step Sisters Speaker Mtg. 7pm TEC	26	27	28	29 Bend Birthday Mtg. TEC. 7 pm Speaker:	30