



Central
Oregon's
May 2016
*Conscious
Contact*

AA Hotline– 541-548-0440

MAY HAPPENINGS

Central Oregon Area Updates . . .

The Entertainment Committee has an immediate need for volunteers to help with the 2016 Ochoco Campout coming up June 9th through the 12th. Volunteers are needed to help with setup, cleanup, and potluck planning for this event. If you are able to give time and service by volunteering for the Campout please contact Vickie M. for further details (contact information below). Additional information about this year's Ochoco Campout can be found on the COIGAA website.

Two long term Members will be leaving the Entertainment Committee in October. The Committee is in need of new members who can give their time and efforts to continue making Central Oregon AA events possible. Please contact Entertainment Committee Chair, Vickie M. at (541) 410-3481 (entertainment@coigaa.org) for more information, or attend the Entertainment Committee Meeting held the third Tuesday of the month, 7:00 pm at TEC.

Would you like your birthday listed in the Conscious Contact? If so, please email Megan M., at newsletter@coigaa.org, and let her know the month before and you'll be included!

Intergroup Officers

Chairperson– Bill O. 541-771-5145

chairperson@coigaa.org

Vice Chairperson– Mike S. 541-815-7458

vicechair@coigaa.org

Secretary– Lauren G. 541-420-7705

secretary@coigaa.org

Newsletter– Megan M. 503-740-2150

newsletter@coigaa.org

Schedules– Joan C. 541-550-0568

schedule@coigaa.org

Hotline– Mary B. 303-368-0872

hotline@coigaa.org

Potluck– Dave W. 541-610-6624

potluck@coigaa.org

Website– Austin M. 828-505-6052

webmaster@coigaa.org

Entertainment– Vickie M. 541-410-3481

entertainment@coigaa.org

Al-Anon Liaison– Kristel M. 541-350-7845

al-anon_liaison@coigaa.org

District Committee Member

Glenn B. 541-390-8959

<p>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</p>	<p>OREGON AREA TREASURY 1900 NE 3RD Street Suite 106-172 Bend OR 97701</p>	<p>DISTRICT 5 P. O. Box 7241 Bend OR 97708</p>	<p>GENERAL SERVICE BOARD Grand Central Station P.O. Box 459 New York NY 10164-0371</p>
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AA HOTLINE

Shifts Available:

Tuesdays 1:00 p.m.– 5:00 p.m. (4 Hours)

Mondays 9:00 p.m.– 9:00 a.m. (12 Hours)



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

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

Hotline Chair: Mary B. (303) 368-0872



May Birthdays!

Valerie H.- 5 Years on May 18th

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

Can & Bottle Drive

Support our 2016 Oregon Area Assembly

Drop Off Location: Phoenix Framing

1404 NE 3rd Street, Bend

541-382-6293

Across from the Red Lion

Hours: Mon/Fri 10:00-6:00, Sat 9:30-1:30

Step Five- “Admitted to God, to ourselves, and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs.”

When the Fog Lifts

My first drunk was a disaster. My parents went out for a New Year's Eve party. I was thirteen years old and I was alone. I decided to find out what drinking was about. So I stole a bottle of scotch from my dad's liquor cabinet and began to drink. I would take a drink and then get on my bike and ride around the block to see if I was getting what people called drunk. I did this several times until, somewhere along the line, I blacked out. I guess I finished most of the bottle but all I remember is coming out of the blackout in a hospital while my stomach was being pumped. My parents had found a red pill on the floor and thought I might be on drugs. It turned out to be a mint. Anyway, the police got involved, my school got involved, and the whole family was shaken up. I tell this story because this was the way I drank and used drugs for the next twenty years. I did not know how to stop. I got high every day.

Over the next twenty years, my family tried interventions and everything else to get me to stop. Nothing worked. I was miserable and I put many people in danger. One of things I loved to do was to go fishing in the ocean. I bought a boat and found out what a wonderful thing it was to go out into the ocean, forty miles off shore, and drink all day. No one hassled you. The only problem was that the people riding with me were afraid for their lives. I did not care: I went full speed ahead over the waves, screaming in a drunken stupor the whole way. One time I was out with a friend, drinking tequila, when a wave hit the side of the boat. I fell off the boat and banged my head on the side of the boat, almost knocking myself out. Even though I was in the middle of the ocean, I managed to get back onto the boat, only to fall off again. Only later did I realize how lucky I was to live.

Years later, a friend described how he and his wife booked a room in a hotel that overlooked San Diego Bay and my boat. They were there for an annual AA spring roundup. I had been telling this man for years that I would get sober one day, but every time I asked him for help, I would get drunk. He never lectured me. He just said, "When it hurts bad enough, call me." That year, after the roundup, it finally hurt badly enough. I checked myself into a spin-dry and gave this man a call. He was there in a matter of minutes and he soon became my sponsor.

We went to many meetings and we began to work the Steps together. However, because I was a control freak, this was not a quick change. A very patient man, my sponsor just stuck by my side. When we worked Step One, I could see how powerless I had become and how totally unmanageable my life was. When we went through Step Two, I could see how insane I was because I continued to do the same thing over and over, expecting different results. When it came to turning my life over to the care of a Higher Power, my sponsor helped me see that I could use the group at first, but in time, I would have to build a spiritual relationship. Most of my Fourth Step was focused on my resentments, fueled by how badly I had been treated by others. I tried to see my part in things, but at first I was faking it. Then I heard a guy at my Saturday meeting say he realized that all of his DUIs may have been due to his drinking and not others. Shortly after writing my Fourth Step, I was told I needed to share it with someone else. Oh my God, all the secrets I held dear to me that I thought no one knew about were on it. Could I let them go? Fear: "Forget Everything And Run." So, being the control person I was, I set out a plan. If we went fishing on my boat and worked the Fifth Step, maybe we would get interested in fishing and forget the details of this Step. This is where God stepped in again. I imagine him now, laughing and saying, "Nice plan, Bill, but I have other ideas." (Continued)

The day started out with me sticking a hook into my finger before we left the dock. Once that was taken care of we stopped to get bait at the bait dock, because to do a really good Fifth Step you must have bait, right? That day it was extremely foggy, as it is early in the San Diego morning. We sailed closer to the open ocean and could see only a few feet in front of the boat. We pushed on, but before we got a mile from the bay, kelp wrapped itself around my cool water intake, which made my engines overheat, so I had to forget about fishing and find a place to pull the boat over for awhile. Finally, I pulled into the Point Loma kelp beds and dropped anchor. What to do now, fish or Fifth Step? My sponsor looked at me and I went below to get the lovely pages and pages of my beginner's Fourth Step. Then we went topside and said the Third Step prayer, and I began to read all the things that I held so dear to me, mostly resentments. As I read, the fog began to lift and I discarded more secrets and, eventually, most of my Fourth Step. I started to feel lighter. I had discarded so many secrets--including the killer secrets. Then I looked around, and the fog had lifted even more. I saw that we were not alone. Almost twenty smaller boats had followed me when I pulled over in the fog and they had anchored next to me! To this day, I wonder how many of these people got to enjoy my Fifth Step. At the time, we just laughed; it did not seem to matter anymore. What a change! I was a person who held on to these secrets, convinced that no one would ever know. Now I couldn't care less if the world knew!

I am not suggesting that it is a good idea to share all these things with everyone; this is best done with one's sponsor. It was just that it happened and I did not care anymore. The power of my secrets and the past was lifted, along with the fog. When we were done, we paused and my sponsor took me into the Sixth and Seventh Steps. He pointed out that my character defects could be lifted; however, that would be like the remaining fog. Even though it was much lighter than before, there would still be some defects left. When more of the fog would be lifted was up to God, time, and continued work. I was raw, but felt lighter than I had for many years. So I went to lift the anchor to head home, forgetting about my little plans to fish. The anchor was stuck, however, and it was very difficult to get up. I look back and think that God was giving me another hint: I had held on to one secret that I was not ready to let go. It was my biggest secret: I was very ashamed of my sexual exploits while drunk. I did not share. I was not ready.

Many days or weeks later I went out and used drugs again. Not completely cleaning house (or boat), I slid back into old behaviors, soon back into drugs, although I continued to go to meetings. It was a terrible experience and I began to pile on more secrets. I went on a four day bender and finally hit bottom. I no longer wanted to be this way, so I met with my sponsor, changed my sobriety date, told everyone in meetings the truth about me, and began the Steps again. We have now worked through the Steps and I have had the pleasure of taking others on my boat to hear their Fifth Steps. I have had many wonderful experiences--each Fifth Step is unique and powerful. I no longer drive my boat or fall off it. God is at the wheel.

-Bill M., San Diego, California



Tradition Five- *“Each group has but one primary purpose – to carry its message to the alcoholic who still suffers.”*

Embracing Change and Tradition Five

Some months ago, I was asked to speak on the topic of "Embracing Change and Tradition Five." I came to AA in 1987 and have been sober since 1988. Personally, I have always resisted change both inside and outside of AA. I long for a home group where there is no chanting, AA birthdays are a simple announcement at the meeting with cake to follow after the meeting, the readings are not a group activity and the donation of a turkey for the annual Gratitude Banquet spurs a 30-minute lively discussion in the business meeting as to just how the donation of a turkey purchased with 7th Tradition monies is in line with the Tradition Five.

I was raised in a structured AA group where study of the Twelve Traditions was common and I am ever so grateful for those teachers. However, one of the drawbacks is that I occasionally become a bleeding deacon. Even as I worked on my presentation, I found it much easier to write about the changes in AA that I have difficulty embracing rather than those changes I do embrace. What I am continually learning is that the Twelve Traditions are guiding principles and it is incredibly important that I keep an open mind.

My first thought when I read Tradition Five was about our singleness of purpose. Many alcoholics and drug addicts receive the message in treatment that a drug is a drug is a drug and are sent to AA for help. While many are dually-addicted and qualify for AA because of the Third Tradition, this is not true for all of them.

Certainly anyone is welcome to attend an open meeting of AA, however many groups guided by Tradition 3 and Tradition 5 limit participation in such meetings to those identifying themselves as alcoholics. Other groups include a statement such as the following in the group format: "This is an open meeting, anyone is welcome to attend."

I think Bill W. said it best when he quoted the old proverb "Shoemaker stick to thy last. How well we need to heed the principle that it is better to do one thing supremely well than many things badly." He also said the Society of Alcoholics Anonymous cannot, it dare not, ever be diverted from its primary purpose. So as far as embracing change as it relates to the 5th Tradition, I think we must always strive to maintain our singleness of purpose.

Therefore our 5th Tradition declares "Each group ought to be a spiritual entity having but one purpose—that of carrying its message to the alcoholic who still suffers. So how do we do that and what changes have taken place over the years? Certainly technology plays a big role, both at the group level and in AA as a whole. (Continued)



Online Meetings:

I've had to open my mind to this. I've always felt there is nothing like the magic of looking into the eyes of another alcoholic and sharing our experience, strength and hope. I ask myself, why a member living in an active AA community would want to participate in an online AA meeting/group. But I am more open to this today.

- Online meetings serve a purpose to those AA members living in remote locations.
- Online meetings allow AA participation for those with a disability and/or inability to attend AA meetings in person.
- I now live in a small rural community and I know of one highly successful professional who is active in the community and guards her personal anonymity with the utmost care. Her online AA group has worked well for her for several years now. I believe she also holds a service position within it. In this way, an online group is carrying its message to the alcoholic who still suffers.
- Other technological advances allow groups to make online contributions to GSO, have access to district, and GSO web sites which provide meeting information, calendar activities and other information. All of these technological advances enhance the ability of AAs to stay connected to the program.

Celebrations:

In recent years, some AA groups have large celebrations in recognition of AA birthdays/anniversaries/milestones, etc. Many a spirited discussion has occurred when the group uses 7th Tradition monies to purchase birthday cakes, coins, and cards. Occasionally, big celebrations occur with people bringing gifts for the birthday people and in some communities, meeting time is used for "roasting" of the birthday people rather than sharing our experience, strength and hope with other alcoholics. This is a practice I have difficulty embracing.

How does this fit in with Tradition Five? Is spending funds on cakes, coins and cards helping to carry the message to the still suffering alcoholic? Some say yes, because it gives the newcomer hope. However, nowhere in Tradition 5 does it state that the still suffering alcoholic is always a newcomer.

The still suffering alcoholic may be someone we may or may not come in contact with outside of these meetings or the suffering alcoholic could be an AA member sitting in the chair next to you. Could the group carry its message to the still suffering alcoholic better through the purchase of AA literature, supporting the local AA telephone service or contributing to district, and GSO? I sometimes struggle with these types of changes and yet I believe strongly in the group conscience.

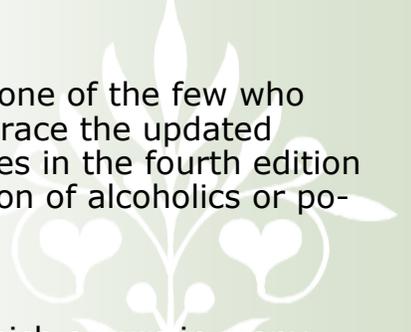
Updated AA Literature:

I would be happy with the same AA literature that was available in 1987 when I first walked through the doors.

I often refer to the second and third editions of the Big Book. I am one of the few who miss the old black and white Grapevine. Having said that, I do embrace the updated pamphlets, Grapevine, new Grapevine Books and the updated stories in the fourth edition of the Big Book. I believe the updates better serve today's population of alcoholics or potential alcoholics.

Chanting:

When considering changes in AA I can't leave out the "chanting" which occurs in many groups. I don't do it. Many AAs consider this to be a religious practice thereby causing some confusion (both inside and outside the AA community) since AA is a spiritual program and not a religious program. (Continued)



Service Participation:

Another change has to do with the decreased participation in service in some areas. While I certainly don't embrace this particular change, I do embrace possible solutions for this. I would encourage GSRs and DCMs to utilize their Standing Committee Chairs and elected officers.

We hear our standing committee chairs announce at every area function that they would be happy to come to your districts. Use them as a resource for workshops, literature, PSAs, videos, etc. Standing Committee Workshops are held quarterly in our area and group members can all benefit from attendance at these.

Take some road trips and share the fuel expense and double up in hotel rooms or stay with other AAs in their homes. It's fun. In short, utilize your trusted servants to help with the group's primary purpose. In closing, I'd like to quote the last paragraph of the forward to the fourth edition of the Big Book.

"While our literature has preserved the integrity of the AA message, sweeping changes in society as a whole are reflected in new customs and practices within the Fellowship. Taking advantage of technological advances, for example, AA members with computers can participate in meetings online, sharing with fellow alcoholics across the country or around the world. In any meeting, anywhere AAs share experience, strength, and hope with each other in order to stay sober and help other alcoholics. Modem-to-modem or face-to-face, AAs speak the language of the heart in all its power and simplicity."

—*Anonymous, Wash.*

On a Lighter Note...

Clear country skies

While meditating in the country, a poet noticed a farmer looking at him curiously.

"Ah," said the poet, "perhaps you, too, have seen the golden-red fingers of dawn speeding across the eastern sky, tethered stained superfluous islets floating in a lake of wine in the west, the ragged clouds at midnight, blotting out the shuddering moon?"

"Uh, no," replied the farmer, "not lately. I've been on the wagon for more than a year.

—*Bob M., Green Valley, Ariz.*

Pigeon duty

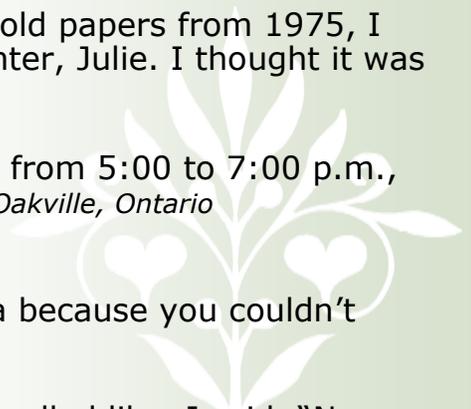
I have 43 years in the program. On going through some of my old papers from 1975, I came across an old phone message from my 12-year-old daughter, Julie. I thought it was clever and wanted to share it.

The note said: "The AA office called. You're on duty for pigeons from 5:00 to 7:00 p.m., so bring your binoculars and a bird cage. Love, Julie." —*Rae C., Oakville, Ontario*

The breathalyzer

When I first came around, I told my sponsor that I drank vodka because you couldn't smell it on my breath, and that I ate mints just in case.

My sponsor asked me if I knew what vodka and breath mints smelled like. I said, "No, what?" He said, "Vodka and breath mints." —*Ken K., Lowell, Mich.*



Time to Celebrate..!!

WFS is Celebrating 56 Years of
Continuous Service in
Central Oregon



Join Us On

Wednesday, May 11th

Potluck @ 6:00 PM

Turkey & Ham Provided

(A – L Salad or Side Dish / M – Z Dessert)

Speaker Meeting @ 7:30 PM

Two Speakers &

History of AA in Central Oregon

Discovery Christian Church

334 NW Newport

A composite image featuring a man in a suit shouting into a megaphone on the left, a large pencil pointing diagonally across the top, and a colorful abstract painting on the right. The text 'calling all artists!' is overlaid on the pencil.

calling all artists!

We are looking for artists to donate their work for the 2nd annual silent art auction. All proceeds will go to support the 2016 Area Assembly hosted by district 5.

Get those creative juices flowing! Auction will be held May 7, 2016

For more information contact Bonnie at theartfulbird@gmail.com

**Church of the
Nazarene
1270 NE 27th Street
Bend, Oregon**



**Birthday Speaker
Meeting!**

**Last Friday of Each Month at
7:00 p.m.**

May Speaker:

Kasey Z. with 5 Years

**Birthday Cake, Raffle, Sober Swag,
and More! Finishing with a sobriety
countdown of total years represented
by all the attendees!**



May 2016

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1	2	3	4	5	6 CO Speaker Mtg 7pm (Eastmont Church) Speakers: Anna W., 33 Years & Jayme, 5 Years	7 Redmond Potluck/ Speaker Mtg- Food 6pm; Speaker 7pm (Redmond Community Church)
8 GSR Meeting 4pm (TEC)	9	10	11 WFS Birthday Party Potluck & Speaker Mtg 6pm (DCC) LaPine Potluck & Speaker Mtg 6pm	12	13	14
15	16	17 Entertainment Committee Mtg 7pm (TEC)	18	19	20 CO Speaker Mtg 7pm (Eastmont Church) Speakers: Lar- ry, 26 Years & Brian, 4 Years	21
22 IGR Advisory Board Mtg 5pm (TEC) IGR Mtg 5:30pm (TEC)	23	24	25	26	27 Milestone Mtg 7pm (Church of Nazarene)	28 CO Potluck & Speaker Mtg 6pm (Brooks Hall)
29	30 Step Sisters Speaker Mtg 7pm (TEC)	31				

June 2016

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1	2	3 CO Speaker Mtg 7pm (Eastmont Church) Speakers: Mark L., 29 Years; Trina, 3 Years	4 Redmond Potluck/ Speaker Mtg- Food 6pm; Speaker 7pm (Redmond Community Church)
5	6	7	8 LaPine Potluck & Speaker Mtg 6pm	9 <i>2016 Ochoco Campout</i>	10 <i>2016 Ochoco Campout</i>	11 <i>2016 Ochoco Campout</i>
12 <i>2016 Ochoco Campout</i> GSR Mtg 4pm (TEC)	13	14 Tues. Night AA Speaker Mtg (Church of Nazarene)	15	16	17 CO Speaker Mtg 7pm (Eastmont Church) Speakers: Maureen H., 28 Years; Tim W., 26 Years	18
19	20	21 Culver/ Madras Pot- luck & Speaker Mtg 6pm (Culver Chris- tian Church) Entertainment Committee Mtg 7pm (TEC)	22	23	24 Milestone Mtg 7pm (Church of Nazarene)	25 CO Potluck & Speaker Mtg 6pm (Brooks Hall)
26 IGR Advisory Board Mtg 5pm (TEC) IGR Mtg 5:30pm (TEC)	27 Step Sisters Speaker Mtg 7pm (TEC)	28	29	30		