



Central  
Oregon's  
February 2017  
*Conscious  
Contact*

**AA Hotline— 541-548-0440**

**Central Oregon Al-Anon Spaghetti Feed &  
Speaker Meeting**

Date: February 11th, 2017  
Time: Doors open at 4:30 p.m.  
Location: St. Francis Church

**Please Register in Advance:**

[http://centraloregonal-anon.org/2017-spagetti-  
feed/](http://centraloregonal-anon.org/2017-spagetti-feed/)

*See enclosed flier for more details!!*

Intergroup Officers

Chairperson— Mike S. 541-815-7458

[chairperson@coigaa.org](mailto:chairperson@coigaa.org)

Vice Chairperson— Mark D.

[vicechair@coigaa.org](mailto:vicechair@coigaa.org)

Secretary—

[secretary@coigaa.org](mailto:secretary@coigaa.org)

Newsletter— Megan M. 503-740-2150

[newsletter@coigaa.org](mailto:newsletter@coigaa.org)

Schedules— Pat F. [schedule@coigaa.org](mailto:schedule@coigaa.org)

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Potluck— Alyssa T. [potluck@coigaa.org](mailto:potluck@coigaa.org)

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[al-anon\\_liaison@coigaa.org](mailto:al-anon_liaison@coigaa.org)

District Committee Member

Glenn B. 541-390-8959

Advisory Board Committee

Jerry C., Lauren M., Dan P. 541-480-0571

Cody M. 541-420-0774

## AA HOTLINE

Contact [hotline@coigaa.org](mailto:hotline@coigaa.org) for available shifts



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

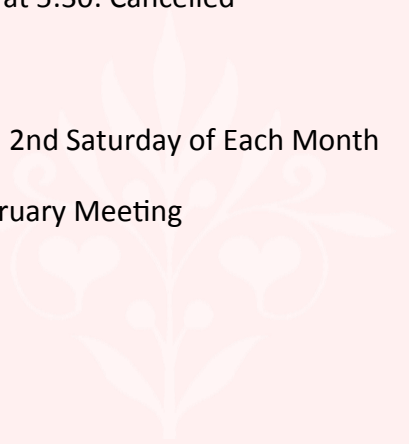


**Wayne S., 34 Years  
February 1st!**

**Do you have an upcoming  
sobriety celebration? Email  
[newsletter@coigaa.org](mailto:newsletter@coigaa.org) your  
name and sobriety date, and  
we will include it in upcoming  
newsletters!**

## Meeting Changes

- Tuesday      Prineville Sisters Offering Solutions Meeting at 5:30: Cancelled
- Saturday      Culver Meeting: Cancelled
- Saturday      Redmond Potluck/Speaker Meeting Change: 2nd Saturday of Each Month
- Saturday      Redmond Potluck/Speaker Meeting: No February Meeting



<b>OUR INTERGROUP OFFICE</b> M-F 9:00 am -1:00 pm 337 Antler St., Suite B Redmond OR 97756 (541) 923-8199 <a href="http://www.coigaa.org">www.coigaa.org</a>	<b>OREGON AREA TREASURY</b> 1900 NE 3 <sup>RD</sup> Street Suite 106-172 Bend OR 97701	<b>DISTRICT 5</b> P. O. Box 7241 Bend OR 97708	<b>GENERAL SERVICE BOARD</b> Grand Central Station P.O. Box 459 New York NY 10164-0371
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## **Step Two “*Came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.*”**

### **Chubby Gods, Skinny Gods**

When I first got sober, I seemed to be always sitting at a Second-Step table. Everyone there had their God. They talked about him like he was a cherished friend. Or more like a magical genie that granted them sobriety every day. They talked about “finding” him. Did they mean in a God catalog? They didn’t say.

One day I sat there and thought, Maybe I’ll just skip this Step. That night I went to bed and said to myself, What am I going to do about this “God thing”?

The next day I sat at yet another Second-Step table. Was everyone on the Second Step? This table had a few old-timers and they swore up and down that they kept relapsing until they found God. I cringed, wondering how a relapse was going to fit into my highly scheduled life. When you’re newly sober, there’s no room in your schedule to use the bathroom some days. At the table, one person said the Second Step is the foundation of the rest of the Steps. Without a good foundation in a building, they said, it’s sure to crumble. Without the Second Step, my house would disintegrate underneath me. I wasn’t ready for that kind of wreckage. How would I find time to clean up?

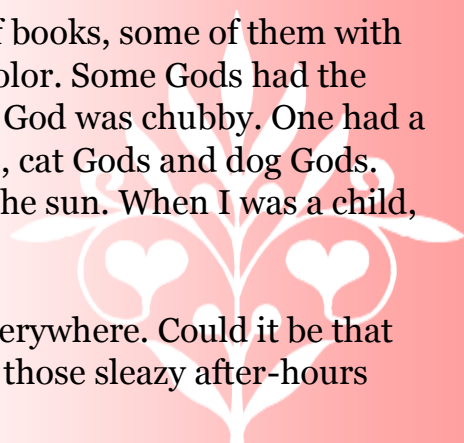
Later that night I talked to my peers in the halfway house about their Gods. They all said they were not too worried about it. Soon after that, one of them relapsed and had to move out.

As I kept coming to the AA tables, I soon noticed who had a God and who didn’t. Those without a God seemed to do OK but they would fight a lot and gossip. Others, I didn’t see any more. Some would leave and come back with horror stories of going back out. I went home confused. I said to myself, What am I going to do about this “God thing”?

One day I was gifted a small amount of time to be by myself with nothing to do. Idle time is scary for a newly sober alcoholic. Thankfully, I had no money. So I went to the library where I saw a poster of a church in Italy. The church was ornately decorated. I knew there must have been a reason they put so much work into that building. Oh, that’s right, God!

I looked up “religions” while I was at the library. I got out a stack of books, some of them with names I could not even pronounce. Gods of every size, shape and color. Some Gods had the iconic, skinny look of someone who needed medical attention. One God was chubby. One had a belly I could rub for good luck. There were male Gods, female Gods, cat Gods and dog Gods. There were planet Gods too, but I was too fair-skinned to worship the sun. When I was a child, I thought King Neptune was the God of swimming.

Back at the Second-Step table again, someone said that God was everywhere. Could it be that simple? I seriously doubted whether God was at the crack house or those sleazy after-hours clubs I used to frequent. (Continued)





I scanned the tables at my next meeting. I saw a man who looked like Neptune from the library books. He had Vietnam and Jesus patches all over his vest. I thought he must have all the God answers. As he spoke, at first he made a lot of sense. Then he started to quote verses out of the Bible in a “hell and damnation” tone of voice. Some got up to refresh their coffees as he spoke. I got the impression from this guy that his God was working for him. This man had 30 years of sobriety. I also gathered from the others that this man’s God wasn’t their God. He wasn’t mine, either. Scripture written in some Old-World language was not for me.

That night, as I lay awake in bed, I got the overwhelming urge to go out and get a drink. Not having any money, and being tired from my highly scheduled day, I white-knuckled my bed sheets and hoped the feeling would go away.

I woke up in the morning from a drinking dream that felt so real. As I washed my face, I realized I had not actually gone out to drink, I had only dreamed it. I knew I needed to get a God soon.

In group therapy at the house, we touched on the subject of God. One cranky older woman refused to seek a God. She said this was her 15th rehab. A young girl with dreadlocks and a ladybug backpack chose a unicorn for her Higher Power, which was how people referred to their Gods. It says in the Big Book that we can call him that, which makes God seem like a new concept but not as “new age” as having a unicorn as a Higher Power.

I went to an open meeting to listen to a woman who had been a waitress in Detroit’s Playboy club in the 1950s. It was hard to imagine her as a young beautiful girl, let alone a Playboy bunny. She told many stories of what she had done and seen during her drinking days. A lot was edited out, she told us. She said that she had trouble with the whole “God thing” until the old-timers made it real simple. My interest was sparked. She spoke my language. They simply told her she was not God and no man was. God is a power greater than ourselves that can keep us sober.

I sort of understood all that. But I didn’t understand where I could get acquainted with him. Was there a God meet-up? Would my God have a name? Would he be mad at me for all the stupid things I’ve done?

The former Playboy bunny said I should talk to God even if I didn’t know him. Every day, she said, “Talk to him. Pour your heart out. He’s the only one who really understands you. Eventually, you won’t feel uncomfortable doing it. It will be second nature to reach out to God. In the beginning, we are all strangers. With time, friendship with God blossoms, as it does with every friendship.”

That night in bed, I spoke uncomfortably to him about my day and our new relationship. I didn’t know how this relationship would work but I had faith in what people told me.

Now I’ve been sober four years. I am not uncomfortable at all talking to my God. It’s second nature. Through the years, I’ve had hardships and cravings but God has somehow helped me. I don’t know how it works, but my faith in God is constant and communication with him is comforting. - Michelle B. Hazel Park, Michigan, USA

**Tradition Two “For our group purpose there is but one ultimate authority— a loving God as He may express Himself in our group conscience. Our leaders are but trusted servants; they do not govern.”**

## **It's Up to the Group**

On the first Monday of every month, my home group studies a Tradition. We do this by reading one of the essays from the “Twelve and Twelve” one paragraph at a time, and pausing for sharing or questions. The amazing thing is that our attendance does not drop off on Tradition nights, and very seldom have I seen people leave when they realize it's a Tradition meeting. There may be some groaning, but this is also rare.

One of the things I believe helps our group have exciting and informative Tradition meetings is that we have several people with extensive service structure experience passing their experience on to newcomers and those new to service. Laughter is often part of the meeting, as tales of strength and hope are shared.

Like many in AA, I did not start out as a fan of our Traditions. I was one of those who groaned and complained, saying we should be talking about the Steps and not wasting time on the Traditions. Fortunately, my perspective and attitude changed.

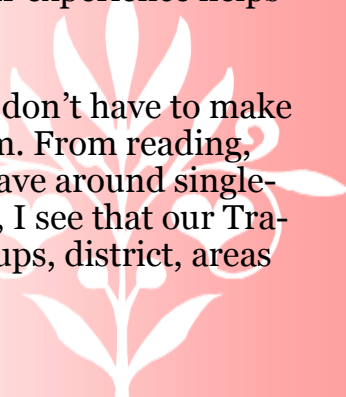
Once my home group got into one of those spirited discussion concerning the Traditions, and I came out on the short end of the stick. Thinking I was full of passion but realizing now that it was anger, I ran to my sponsor for support. He didn't get excited, nor did he offer to straighten out my group. He calmly told me to read the short form, the long form and the essay for each Tradition, finding support for my argument. The following week I went back to him and shared the things I found, and he suggested I go back through, but this time look for reasons why the group conscience was correct. He said I must always look at both sides of the coin.

I did, but I still found my argument to be sound, so he suggested I write the General Service Office (GSO) explaining the situation. A letter came back. I was hoping for vindication, but I received one of those famous letters expressing that on the one hand there is this and then on the other hand there is that, but that each group is autonomous and it is really up to the group conscience. I was then guided by my sponsor to go back to my group and share what I'd found through studying the Traditions and from the letter GSO sent.

From that day forward, that is how I've used our Twelve Traditions. This valuable lesson also showed me that studying the Traditions with others and learning from their experience helps broaden and deepens my understanding.

I'm grateful our AA pioneers took the time to develop the Traditions so we don't have to make the same mistakes, and when we do, we have a rally point to start over from. From reading, studying and discussing our Traditions I can see that issues we currently have around singleness of purpose and anonymity are not new issues at all. Most importantly, I see that our Traditions are not outdated, but relative and necessary tools that help our groups, district, areas and AA as a whole to solve problems with an informed group conscience.

- Alan S. Rio Rancho, New Mexio, USA



## ***On a Lighter Note...***

### **Sail away**

“How long have you been driving without a tail light?” asked the policeman after pulling over a motorist.

The driver leaped out of his car, ran to the back and gave a long, painful groan and put his face in his hands. He seemed so upset that the cop was moved to ease up on him a bit.

“Come on, now,” the policeman said, “you don’t have to take it so hard. It isn’t that serious.”

“It isn’t?” cried the motorist. “Then you know what happened to my boat trailer and my six cases of beer in the boat?”

*Bob M., Green Valley, Ariz.*

### **How dry I am**

Q: What are you left with when you take the alcohol away from the alcoholic?

A: The ick!

*Jim A., Oakville, Ontario*

### **Snake charmer**

A sober AA is walking through the park when he comes across a wino sitting behind two baskets.

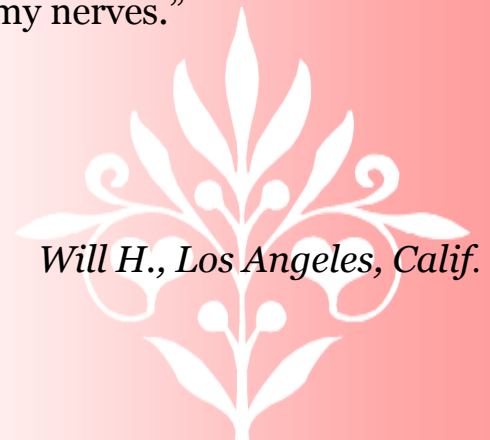
AA guy: “What’s in the baskets?”

Wino: “There are lots of snakes in this park, and I’m scared of snakes, so I keep a bottle of gin in this basket. And if I see a snake, I drink the gin to steel my nerves.”

AA guy: “And what’s in the other basket?”

Wino: “A snake.”

*Will H., Los Angeles, Calif.*





# **CENTRAL OREGON AL-ANON SPAGHETTI FEED & SPEAKER MEETING**

## **PLEASE REGISTER IN ADVANCE**

**\$10 Adults  
\$2 Children  
\$20 Family (2 Adults +  
Children)**

**<http://centraloregonal-anon.org/2017-spagetti-feed/>**

**Or contact Ali J:  
[webmaster@coigaa.org](mailto:webmaster@coigaa.org)**

## **SPEAKERS**

**AA Speaker: John J.**

**Al-Anon Speaker: Kristin T.**

## **WHEN**

**February 11th, 2017**

**Doors Open at 4:30**

**Dinner at 5:30**

**Speakers at 6:15**

## **WHERE**

**St. Francis Church**

**2450 NE 27th Street**



**First Presbyterian  
Church  
230 NE 9th Street  
Bend, Oregon**



**Birthday  
Speaker Meeting!  
Last Friday of Each Month at  
7:00 p.m.**

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





# February 2017

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1	2	3 CO Speaker Mtg 7pm (Eastmont Church) Wes C., 8 Years Sunriver & Marie K., 29 Years Bend	4
5	6	7	8  LaPine Potluck & Speaker Mtg 6pm	9	10	11 Central OR Al-Anon Spaghetti Feed & Speaker Mtg 4:30p (St. Francis Church)
12  GSR Mtg 4pm (TEC)	13	14	15	16	17 CO Speaker Mtg 7pm (Eastmont Church) Bon- nie C., 5 Years Bend & Cole J., 14 Years Bend	18
19	20	21  Entertainment Committee Mtg 7pm (TEC)	22 Culver/ Madras Pot- luck/Speaker Mtg 6pm (Culver Chris- tian Church)	23	24  Milestone Mtg 7pm (First Presbyterian)	25  CO Potluck & Speaker Mtg 6pm (Brooks Hall)
26 IGR Adviso- ry Board Mtg 5pm (TEC)  IGR Mtg 5:30pm (TEC)	27	28				

# March 2017

Sunday

Monday

Tuesday

Wednesday

Thursday

Friday

Saturday

			1	2	3 CO Speaker Mtg 7pm (Eastmont Church)	4
5	6	7	8 LaPine Potluck & Speaker Mtg 6pm	9	10	11 Redmond Potluck/ Speaker Mtg 6 pm (Redmond Community Church)
12 GSR Mtg 4pm (TEC)	13	14	15	16	17 CO Speaker Mtg 7pm (Eastmont Church)	18
19	20	21 Culver/ Madras Pot- luck & Speaker Mtg 6pm (Culver Chris- tian Church)  Entertainment Comittee Mtg 7pm (TEC)	22	23	24	25 CO Potluck & Speaker Mtg 6pm
26 IGR Adviso- ry Board Mtg 5pm (TEC)  IGR Mtg 5:30pm (TEC)	27	28	29	30	31 Milestone Mtg 7pm (First Presbyterian)	