



# The Wagon Wheel Idaho Area 18''s Newsletter

March 2013

Editor, Ralayne H.

## Editors Note:

As of this printing there have been only one article submitted to this newsletter and it was submitted months ago. My suspicion is all are busy planning on the Pacific Regional Area Assembly Service Assembly or PRAASA weekend. I am signed up as a greeter and hope that I am able to attend. My life has suddenly become a challenge and I am taking it one day at a time. Cancer has surfaced again in my family, this time it is my sister. She is not doing well and I just want to escape to Coeur d'Alene and take care of her. However, the tornado that runs through lives today is substantially smaller for this alcoholic. I am blessed through a loving sponsor and working the steps to have tools to help me with any and all that come my way in this life.

The program of Alcoholic Anonymous has taught me to pray and ask for direction, to suit up and show up, don't drink, go to meetings, help the next suffering alcoholic.

Also, my niece was in an accident and did not survive. I am very sad and I miss her deeply. I know these life challenges are just part of life, and I know if I walk through them I will emerge out the other side a stronger person and whom my Higher Power has designed be to be. Life on life's terms!

I am so grateful to be a sober member of Alcoholic Anonymous, to have the fellowship to help me to stay strong and have faith that I am right where I am supposed to be. Each year seems to have blessings and trials to reflect on.

I just celebrated my seventeenth AA birthday, in Sandpoint, Idaho. At the seven am meeting, there were: one thirty day, three four months, two six months and one eleven month birthdays. Therefore, it may be that this is going to be a year to remember.

This month's picture is on the happy road of destiny. We are so privileged to live in an area that has the most spectacular sun rises and sun sets.

I thank you for the privilege to serve as your newsletter editor. Please consider sending in your experience at Boise PRAASA for our Spring Assembly/Convention Edition.

In love and service,

Ralayne H.

## A LIFE (Abridged Version)

Russ K.

It's depressing to think that your greatest achievements in life happened when you were a senior in high school, especially when high school was 30 years ago. When the event had all the makings of a cheesy made-for-TV movie or maybe a teen radio song, it almost makes it worse.

The last football game of senior year, in front of the home crowd, and of course the "hero's" dad is in the stands for one of the few times in his entire career. Riding the bench this season like he has pretty much every year since he started playing in fifth grade, nobody expects much from the one

armed kid – but they always say they admire him trying. The home team stomps the visitors bad enough that the coach lets the scrubs go out and play, even the third-string tight end who hardly gets thrown to in practice, let alone in a game. Except for the fact that I didn't score a touchdown, Disney couldn't have scripted it any better: I'm wide open (what coach is going to tell his players to make sure they keep an eye on that crippled kid) and the quarterback actually throws the ball at me and to everybody's amazement, including mine, I catch the damn thing. Thirty yards and just like they say in the movies, the crowd goes wild. I still get goose bumps thinking about it sometimes.

Cut to a few hours later and the real handicap shows up. After working a shift at McDonalds – being a gridiron hero didn't pay squat back in those days – I got a ride to the kegger from my best friend (because I spent half my senior year grounded from driving) and proceeded to make up for lost time. Looking back on it, I'm not sure which was more embarrassing: drinking until I got sick every weekend, having it become such common knowledge that any time anybody else got sick they called it “pulling a Keely,” or the fact that everyone at school knew just exactly what “pulling a Keely” meant.

When you grow up with one arm, it is sometimes difficult to convince others that your greatest handicap isn't necessarily the one that they can see, but the one you fight on a daily basis in your mind. Trust me; if I had a say in the matter, I would much rather have a missing body part than to be afflicted with alcoholism. People are more impressed with the things you can do despite a physical handicap than they will ever be for overcoming an addiction that most of them see as a weakness rather than a disease, but it is much easier to be engaged in a physical battle than a mental one. Being a cripple is easy – playing “Otis the Town Drunk” is hard. Learning how to do something with one hand, while normally not a cake walk, is more like putting together the pieces of a puzzle: you know the outcome you want, whether it be a tied shoe lace, a shot made on the basketball court, or a wall built, and the task is simply how to achieve that

desired outcome with the tools you have been given. On the other hand, dealing with life in general without the chemical crutch you have used since high school is like going on a road trip without a map: you'll eventually end up *somewhere*, but chances are better than average it won't be anywhere near where you had planned.

I'm pretty sure I was an alcoholic from my very first drunk at about age thirteen, but it took another 35 years of practice to finally admit it truthfully, and have some small grasp of what it really means. I have spent the better part of the last three decades trying to get back that feeling I found in those early days. When I drank I was suddenly ambidextrous; for a while there I was just like everyone else.

I grew up around alcohol. I have old home movies showing parents giving sips of beer to toddlers; it's kind of shocking even to me to see it today, but back then it was just the way it was. We also survived swimming in drain ditches, riding bicycles without helmets, and school without computers or even calculators (gasp!), but with swats on the backside when you screwed up; hard to imagine in these politically correct days. I am way beyond blaming genetics, family, or the environment I grew up in for my disease – while I am sure that there may be a pre-disposition involved, ultimately it was still me that pulled the trigger. My brother and many others went through the same things I did, with the exception of the arm thing, and for the most part turned out fine (in my little brother's case, more than fine; I am so proud of him it hurts sometimes, which also has the added benefit of being one more in a long line of excuses to drink.) Whatever the reason /excuse/cause, the fact remains that in recovery or not, I am an alcoholic.

Everything I have done right in my life, from sports to working “normal” jobs to the single most important thing – my (ex) wife and children – I have managed to screw up by my drinking. I barely graduated high school because I would rather party than study. I dreaded every testing season because every year I would get the “why don't you apply yourself” lecture. I have always blamed dropping

out of college on the job I had at the time, but the truth is I was only working more hours to pay for more booze. I could have gone to the National Championships and possibly even the Olympics for handicapped skiing, but I convinced myself that I couldn't afford it when what I couldn't afford was to not buy booze. Every time I worked my way up at a job I have blown it by allowing my work to deteriorate, showing up smelling of booze, or just flat out showing up drunk, period. Up until the last couple of years, I've always made pretty good if not excellent money, but I have always been behind on my bills, from rent to child support & taxes, because I would rather spend it all on drinking than responsibilities. If the laws then would have been as severe as they are now I would have gotten my felony DUI 25 years ago. The first time I proposed to my first (and only) wife was when I was in a rehab unit trying to stay out of jail. The stay out of jail thing worked, and so did the proposal, eventually. Except for the three most beautiful children in the world, I'm not so sure anymore that either outcome was as successful as it seemed at the time.

For a long time I was what they call a functional alcoholic: I had the beautiful family, the good job, and friends who didn't wallow around in the gutter. There really isn't a specific instance I can point to and say that's where I crossed the line into complete chaos; I'm sure my ex could tell me, but I've been afraid to ask. I'd like to say that I woke up one day and it was all gone, but nothing that dramatic happened. It was more like a process of circling around the toilet bowl of life waiting for the big cosmic flush – and the end result/destination has pretty much been in fitting with the metaphor. In AA they teach you about taking care of the wreckage of your past – “We will not regret the past nor wish to shut the door on it” - but not a day goes by that I don't wish that I either couldn't remember the past, or that I had a time machine (every alcoholic's secret wish) to go back and change the last 25 years or so. I will go to my grave trying desperately to fix the damage I have done to my kids, my family, and most importantly – and the hardest to finally realize – to myself.

It has cost me my wife and children, my freedom, every decent job I've ever had, and most importantly my self-respect. Up until about a year ago, no one (including myself) would have ever thought that I would be a college student now, especially a sober one. If you had asked me then where I would be today, I probably would have told you in prison. I was awaiting re-sentencing on a felony DUI; re-sentencing because I had been sentenced earlier to probation, and eleven days later showed up to my first probation appointment smelling like a brewery. When my probation officer asked me how much I had drank the night before (this was at eight in the morning) I was semi-truthful when I told him only a couple, but it was a damn good thing he didn't ask me how many I had had for breakfast that morning. Why the judge didn't just ship me out to the State Pen where both I and the prosecuting attorney thought I belonged, I will never understand but be forever grateful for. Instead he sent me on what they call a Rider, where you go through a six-month treatment program at the North Idaho Correctional Facility up at Cottonwood. Like I said, I will never understand why I went there instead of just being warehoused south of Boise, and I probably won't ever be able to put into words what finally “clicked” while I was up there, but the one thing I am certain of is that Judge Petrie more than likely saved my life. Not only did it give me a lot of the tools I use to stay sober, but it put me in a place to start the ball rolling to eventually get me back here in school – so now you all know who to blame for that, too.

October 1<sup>st</sup> will mark my first year of sobriety, Lord willing, and for the first time in a long time I don't hate myself. I am actually proud of some of the things I'm doing for a change, and hopefully some of the wounds are starting to heal, especially with my children. I have goals that don't revolve around my next day's supply of beer and how to afford it, and I don't dread talking to my kids anymore. I'm a 48 year old unemployed college freshman and I kind of like it.

# 2nd Annual Coeur d' Alene Convention

of Alcoholics Anonymous

May 10 / 11 / 12 2013



## AA SPEAKERS

Larry T. - Torrance CA.  
Sharon C. - Los Angeles CA.  
Ken S. - Worley ID.  
Tonja P. - Bayview ID.

## AL-ANON SPEAKERS

Mary W. - Billing MT.  
Susan B. - Broken Arrow OK.

## Marathon Meetings

Workshops

Dance

Golf

Fellowship

Banquet

for more information, Contact:  
Maureen W. #208-660-6887-- Brad C. 916-759-7242  
cdavention@hotmail.com

## Volunteers Needed!

register at: [www.cdaconvention.org](http://www.cdaconvention.org)



Join us for the  
Seventh ANNUAL  
**The Steps Come Alive**



A Twelve-Step Workshop (for men & women) from the Big Book of Alcoholics Anonymous  
All Twelve Step programs welcomed

# Father Tom

April 6, 2013

Saturday 9:00 to 4:00

Lunch 12:00 to 1:00

Registration will begin at 8:00 a.m.

Continental **Potluck** Breakfast -bring your favorite morning dish to share

**LUNCH INCLUDED IN REGISTRATION!!**

**WHERE: Church of Christ**

**2000 N Eldorado Boise, ID**

This is a non-smoking facility (inside & out)

PLEASE NO PETS OR CHILDREN!

\*\*\*Questions? Call Maryellen at 208-761-7175 or email at [mememaher@msn.com](mailto:mememaher@msn.com)  
REFUNDS ARE NOT AVAILABLE. If you have registered and are unable to attend, give or sell your registration to a friend!

\*\*REGISTRATION will not be accepted without payment.

Mail your check and registration form to:

**The Steps Come Alive PO Box 7134 Boise, Idaho 83707**

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Email address \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Daytime phone \_\_\_\_\_ Evening phone \_\_\_\_\_

Registration Fee: \$10.00 postmarked on or before March 30, 2013

\$15.00 after March 31, 2013

## **Twelve Ways To Tell The Difference Between Your Sponsor And Your Therapist.**

1. Your sponsor isn't all that interested in the "reasons" you drank.
2. Your therapist thinks your root problem is your lack of self-esteem, negative self-image, and your poor self-concept.  
Your sponsor thinks your problem is a 3-letter word with no hyphens (YOU).
3. Your therapist wants you to pamper your "inner child." Your sponsor thinks it ought to get a job.
4. Your sponsor thinks your inventory should be about you, not your parents.
5. Speaking of your parents, your sponsor tells you not to confront them, but to make amends to them.
6. The only time your sponsor uses the word "closure" is before the word "mouth."
7. Your sponsor thinks "boundaries" are things you need to take down not build up.
8. Your therapist wants you to love yourself first; your sponsor wants you to love others first.
9. Your therapist prescribes caretaking and medication.  
Your sponsor prescribes prayer making and meditation.
10. Your sponsor thinks "anger management skills" are numbered 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12.

11. Now that you haven't had a drink in six months, your therapist thinks you should make a list of your goals and objectives for the next five years, starting with finishing up that college degree.  
Your sponsor thinks you should start today by cleaning the coffeepots, helping her carry a heavy box of literature to the jail, and making your bed.
12. Your sponsor won't lose his license to practice if he talks about God



### **KUNA GROUP NEW TIME**

**The Kuna Group invites anyone to attend our open meeting Monday and Thursday evenings at 7pm.**

**Mondays are open discussion and Thursday is our book study night. Our business meeting is held the 2<sup>nd</sup> Monday of each month at 8pm.**

**We hope you will stop by and introduce yourself and visit with our group.**

**We are located at 500 E Deer Flat Rd, next to the Kuna Life Church (Adjacent to the High School).**

**HOPE TO SEE SOME NEW FACES!!**

# IDAHO AREA 18 2013 SPRING ASSEMBLY & CONVENTION



The General Service Conference Takes  
Our Solution In Action

## FRIDAY, MAY 17, 2013

Golf Scramble (See info. On back)  
1pm—9pm Registration, Red Lion Hotel  
7:00 pm Andrew G. Moscow, ID  
8:00 pm Roundtables:  
GSR, DCM, H&I, CPC/PI  
Atkathon: Friday Noon - Sunday Noon

### CONTACT INFORMATION

REGISTRATION: Sandy & Craig R. (208)232-2336  
shedgepeth333@cableone.net  
EVENT CHAIRMAN: Barbara E. (208)406-4497  
barbaraengbretson@cableone.net  
EVENT CO-CHAIR: Mike M. (208)251-8076  
mlm449@hotmail.com

## SATURDAY, MAY 18, 2013

8am - 6pm  
9am - 5:30pm  
10am - 4pm  
11:30 am  
Speaker:  
6pm - 9pm  
Speaker:

9pm

## SUNDAY, MAY 19, 2013

9AM  
Speaker:

Detach and mail with your check to: 2013 Spring Assembly, P.O. Box

### EARLY RESERVATION PRICING WILL END

Please Circle One: AA Alanon

Item or Event:	Early (before April 1, 2013):
Registration	\$15 _____
Lunch Reservation	\$20 _____
Dinner/Banquet Reservation	\$32 _____
Breakfast Reservation	\$17.50 _____
Coffee Mug	\$5 _____
Golf Scramble - Circle One	Yes No

Total Amount of Check Enclosed \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Service Position \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ E-Mail \_\_\_\_\_

To avoid postage costs please include e-mail for reservation.  
Additional copies of this form are available at www.idaho

## IDAHO AREA 18

2013 Spring

ASSEMBLY AND CONVENTION



Proudly Presents

# A.A. Has Talent!

Show us YOUR Talent

Saturday, May 18, 2013



9:00 PM

Red Lion Inn  
Pocatello Idaho

Sign up early to save a spot!



Looking Forward

To an

Awesome Night

Of Fun, Laughter

& Talent!



Contact: Rick

E-mail: rickfwhittaker@gmail.com

Phone #: 208-252-1040

leave a message Day or Night

In loving Service, Rick

Entertainment Chair 2013

Spring Assembly Committee

**NEW MEETING>>>>>>>>>>STARTING FEBRUARY 15TH**

## **"TGIF SPEAK & EAT" MONTHLY MEETING**

*Sponsored by TVICO*

*What: Potluck / speaker meeting and...MORE!!  
(Hang out after the meeting and experience the "More")*

*When: The 3<sup>rd</sup> Friday of each month*

*Where: The Alano Club..... 3820 Cassia*

*Time: Potluck at 6:00pm  
(each month a different theme)*

*Speaker Meeting at 7:00pm  
(speakers from all over the Treasure Valley)*

*8:00pm...The Happening.....  
(movies, games, dances, etc.)*

*50 / 50 Raffle Drawing following Speaker Meeting  
(you must be present to win)*

Entertainment provided for  
the kids with movies, color  
books, puzzles, games,  
juice and cookies  
Complete with.....  
**ADULT SUPERVISION!**

If you would like to be a part  
of making this monthly event  
happen, join us at the next  
Planning meeting on.....  
January 28th, 5:30pm  
At Central Office.....  
1111 S Orchard Suite 180  
Any Questions or ideas call...  
Central Office 344-6611

## **NEW LOCATION**

### **DISTRICT 4 POTLUCK BIRTHDAY DINNER**

**FIRST CHRISTIAN CHURCH  
619 12TH AV. S.  
NAMPA**

**THIS WILL BE OUR NEW LOCATION THE  
SECOND SATURDAY OF EVERY MONTH  
STARTING MARCH 9TH.**

POTLUCK STARTS AT 6:30  
BUSINESS MEETING STARTS AT 4:00

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Banquet

for more information, Contact:

Maureen W. #208-660-6887-- Brad C. 916-759-7242

cdavention@hotmail.com

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**WHERE: Church of Christ**

**2000 N Eldorado Boise, ID**

*This is a non-smoking facility (inside & out)*

PLEASE NO PETS OR CHILDREN!

\*\*\*Questions? Call Maryellen at 208-761-7175 or email at [memeincher@msn.com](mailto:memeincher@msn.com)  
REFUNDS ARE NOT AVAILABLE. If you have registered and are unable to attend, give or sell your registration to a friend!

\*\*REGISTRATION will not be accepted without payment.

Mail your check and registration form to:

The Steps Come Alive PO Box 7134 Boise, Idaho 83707

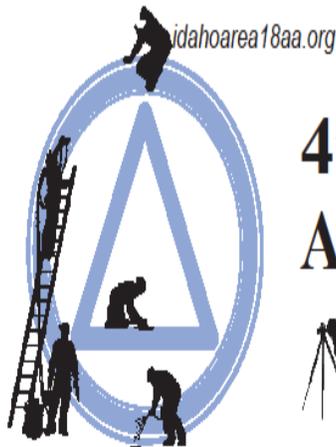
Name \_\_\_\_\_ Email address \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Daytime phone \_\_\_\_\_ Evening phone \_\_\_\_\_

Registration Fee: \$10.00 postmarked on or before March 30, 2013  
\$15.00 after March 31, 2013



## 4th Annual Area 18

# Pre-Conference Workshop — March 16, 2013 —

**10:00AM until approx. 5:00PM**  
**At C.S.I in the Taylor Bld. Rm. 276**  
**Hosted by Districts 2 & 10**

Lunch can be purchased at CSI cafeteria.  
Afternoon coffee and water will be provided.

**Great Service & Learning Opportunity!**  
**JOIN US!!!**

contact info:

Jodie R. 208-539-2611 /

or Thad N. 208-720-5381 / [thad@hydronicsunlimited.com](mailto:thad@hydronicsunlimited.com)

1<sup>st</sup> Annual Women's AA Luncheon  
April 13, 2013

Where: Red Lion Downtowner  
1800 Fairview Ave. Boise, Id. (208) 344-7691

Time: 11:00 - 2:00 pm

Speakers: Jan F. from Boise, Id.  
Carla M. from Tujunga, Ca.

Registration: \$35.00, all inclusive- lunch, speaker and free gift.

For more information contact: Julie W. (208) 830-2326  
Jeri T. (208) 377-9314

Registrations close April 10, 2013

Meal: Prime rib \_\_\_\_\_ Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Teriyaki chicken \_\_\_\_\_ Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
Vegetarian pasta \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_  
Home Group: \_\_\_\_\_  
Email address: \_\_\_\_\_

Cash or Check Total: \_\_\_\_\_

Make checks payable to:  
Women's AA Luncheon  
P.O. Box 191246  
Boise, Id. 83719



The conference will held  
in Boise, ID.

More information to come!

For the latest information go to or call us at:



[www.bacypaa.org](http://www.bacypaa.org)

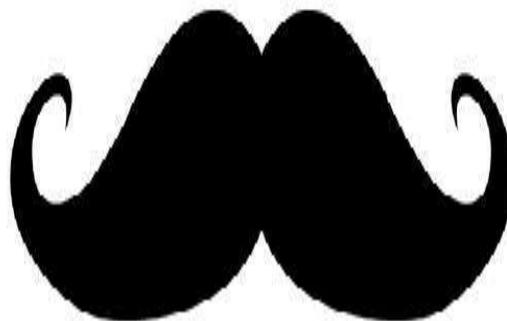
(208) 549-YPAA

\*(208) 549-9722

SaboteLine (s) 1. The phenomenon of sabotey occurring is an otherwise hapless individual brought about by evolutionary application of solutions resulting in a physical, mental, emotional and spiritual revolution.  
2. A conference celebrating the phenomenal occurrence of sabotey to formerly hapless individuals.

IFYPAA Presents...

# I Mustache You A Question



A Q&A panel about all things AA  
Serenity Hall 12-2pm  
March 23, 2012

For more information please contact Bree K. at 403-7822 or Josh D. 757-8016

Happy Meals A. A. Group & Lunch Bunch A. A. Group

Present

## Questions & Answers on Sponsorship

### WORKSHOP

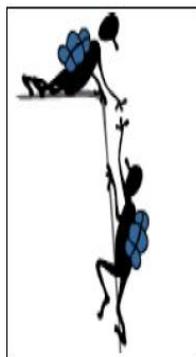


**1:00-3:30pm SERENITY HALL**



- Special Panels
- Refreshment
- Sobriety Countdown
  - Ask it basket

Serenity Hall  
600 S. Boulevard  
Idaho Falls, Idaho



### SPECIAL NEEDS - COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS OF BILL W.



We need lots of great volunteers to provide services for our Special Need AA members.

Special Needs people are those members who cannot get to meetings due to physical difficulties, illness, or age.

We need people who are willing to give rides to those with physical needs, provide home or hospital meeting visits, or take meetings into care facilities.

This is a wonderful opportunity to be of service for you and/or your sponsees. If you are interested or know someone in need,

please contact  
Central Office @ 344-6611  
or  
Eloise N. @ 342-6737.

It is every one's responsibility to pass it on.  
You never know when YOU might need a ride.  
Thank you.