



# The Wagon Wheel Idaho 18's Newsletter

August 2012

Editor, Ralayne H.

## Idaho Area 18 AA Fall

### Assembly/Convention

**October 12-14, 2012      "Anonymity: Our Spiritual Responsibility in the Digital Age"**

SUN VALLEY RESORT  
Sun Valley, ID

Hosted by District 2

Saturday October 13th  
AA History / Lunch with Jack J. ~ Hailey, Id

(You've never heard AA's remarkable history brought to life in quite this way! From the Washingtonians and Oxford Groups that paved the way, to the inspired founding of our Fellowship and beyond, Jack J. tells an intimate - and at times breathtaking story)

Meditation Workshop with Victoria R. ~ Bellevue, ID.

Saturday Night Banquet Speaker: Vernon G. ~ Hawaii

Sunday Oct. 14th  
Spiritual Breakfast Speaker: Jen L. ~ Hailey, ID.

I can remember times when I used to say to myself, "I need to stop doing this, but how..?" Well since I was 9 years old, I have known nothing more than drinking and using drugs. I just wanted the acceptance of other people and I could find it nowhere else but the bottom of a bottle or the last hit of that pipe.

I started selling when I was 14 years old. I was among the largest faction in my area and I could find a party anywhere. I tended to be the life of the party, only because I was able to let go and feel the rhythm of things. I had whatever money, drugs, or girls I wanted. I still felt alone somehow. I remember among the worst of times, shortly after I turned 17, heroine and alcohol became my favorite mix. I could do liquor without heroine, but the heroine could never go without a nice cold shot of Southern Comfort. I couldn't stand myself in my own skin. I was appalled at my actions and could do nothing to stop it. I was hopeless as I had ever been. I increased my heroine use, decreased my friend intake, and I wanted to overdose and die.

At this point, I was using about \$500 dollars worth of Oxycontin, heroine, and any alcohol I could

get my hands on per day. I had been on probation for over 3 years and I was at the last string. I felt an extreme emotion that was impossible to overcome just waking up again. I remember that, because at this point, I had lost almost all emotion. I couldn't feel for anything or anyone. It was a sensation that I couldn't handle, so I tried to cover it up one last time. I was stealing from everyone I knew, and was unwanted by everyone in my community. The last time I tried to chase that drink and drug was my last.

It was the night of July 24, 2011 and I had enough of everything. I had a lot of money with me and was on my way to pick up a lump sum that would definitely end it all. I was also arrested moments before buying all of my suicide. I was charged with possession once again, and forced into programs at the jail.

I sat in a cell with 9 other men, who would not stop talking while I sat curled up on my bed trying not to cry myself into dehydration. I was totally miserable and I couldn't stand it. While I sat in that cell, just before they took me into classification, I had a moment of absolute silence and I asked God to help me. With tears in my eyes and still coughing up blood, everything stopped. And help He did.

I had finally faced what I had done while on my spree and realized something needed to change. Forty-eight days later I walked out of the county jail and into the rooms of Alcoholics Anonymous. I found home. I was accepted and loved from nearly the first moment. The wonderful people in the rooms showed me what I needed to do to stop hurting those around me and act like a gentleman. I was introduced to a program that taught me how to live like a human being and keep my side of the street clear so that I could make a difference in a positive way. For that I am grateful.

Three months in, I had finished working my steps and gained a fellow alcoholic younger than my 19 years, and life seemed ok. One day however everything changed. I was still sober, but I realized I don't know who I am, don't know what my purpose is, and questioned why I needed to live. I had hit a completely depressive state where all I could think about was dying. I had talked to a few people about this and nothing I got from them was helping. I called my sponsor, my best friends, and talked to my family, but nothing was working.

On one account, I was trying to overcome that

feeling while hanging out with my best friend in the program, and I lost it. I had made a 10 mile walk where the only thought passing through my head was that, "If I jump, this car cannot stop in time". I needed something terrible bad. That hole was in my chest was back. I asked God again for help, but this time it wasn't coming. I was impatient I later found out. 4 hours after I began walking and had been cooped up in my room, my sponsee calls me wanting to do his first step and I was pleased to do so. I needed to get outside of my head. Shortly after he came to my house and we sat down for a good talk over the first step with some fresh brewed coffee. I had an epiphany at this moment.

I had a purpose. It wasn't to try to find myself, because the way to find myself is a journey I am just embarking on, and my purpose was to make the living amends for the walls I had torn down all around me, and the only way to do that was to pass on the message and help someone else like they had helped me. I felt instantly better about myself, and the thought of suicide in sobriety had left me. The rest of my feelings were still mostly numb at this point, but I had hit serenity within myself. I finally had peace and calm in my life. Far different from the chaos I was used to. The Big Book tells me that there is nothing better than working with another alcoholic, but that night I had believed it and truly felt it.

Alcoholics Anonymous is a FELLOWSHIP of men and women who share their experience, strength, and hope with each other, that they may SOLVE, their common problem and HELP OTHERS to RECOVER from ALCOHOLISM. That is what we do today and that is the way it works for me and I would love to continue practicing this wonderful gift that allows me to be ok with who I am and what I do, so that I can help the next man or woman who was just like I had been.

I hope this helps you for the news letter.

I apologize that it is kind of all over the place, but I have never really told that story before. You have free rights to change it as you please, use my name or not, this story is yours to do with as it can best serve the fellowship. Thank you for allowing me to send in my story, and hopefully I can be of service again someday :)

-Tim R.



Treasure Valley

Special Needs Committee

### **OUR SERVICE IS THE FIFTH TRADITION**

#### **Fifth Tradition Checklist**

**Do I ever cop out by saying, "I'm not a group, so this or that Tradition doesn't apply to me"?**

**Am I willing to explain firmly to a newcomer the limitations of AA help, even if he gets mad at me for not giving him a loan?**

**Have I today imposed on any AA member for a special favor or consideration simply because I am a fellow alcoholic?**

**Am I willing to twelfth-step the next newcomer without regard to who he is or what is in it for me?**

**Do I help my group in every way I can to fulfill our primary purpose? Does my group carry the message, or do we expect people to come get it?**

**Do I remember that AA old-timers, too, can be alcoholics who still suffer? Do I try both to help them and to learn from them?**

## **BOISE AREA AA'S WITH SPECIAL NEEDS NEED YOU!**

**Can you provide transportation to and from a meeting?**

**This is for one of us who is not able to drive, ride a bicycle,  
Or use public transportation. NOT someone without a license!**

**Can you and another AA take a meeting to a homebound AA?**

**At the Spring Assembly we were asked to do just that!**

**And we had no one to send!**

**Can you and another AA, (or more) take a meeting into a nursing home, assisted living facility, hospice, or other location?**

**One of us with a couple of other AA's did in Nampa where 3 of us live, and another resident asked to join the meeting! He wanted help to stop drinking! A new comer at a new meeting who had no other way to reach AA.**

**And before you ask, NO!  
T&C (old H&I) does not take meetings into these types of facilities.**

TVSPN  
208-344-6611  
PO Box 6411 Boise, Id. 83707-6411  
OR email us at: [Tvspn.specialneeds@gmail.com](mailto:Tvspn.specialneeds@gmail.com)

TREASURE VALLEY SPECIAL NEEDS  
AGENDA DISTRIC 5  
08-26-2012

Old Business:  
Representatives-

Volunteers-

New Business:  
Accessibility-  
On meeting schedule-

Actual-

Sub-committees- ONLY 1 AA IS NEEDED  
TO START A SUB-COMMITTEE

North/Eagle  
Center/Meridian  
South/Kuna  
Veterans.  
Transportation.  
Other

## LIES

Nobody has ever asked me why – after four and a half years of sobriety – do I still try to make it to at least one AA meeting a day? Had they asked, I could have pointed them at one loaded sentence from Jackie V.'s piece in the July, 2012 GRAPEVINE: "I have a disease that lies to me in my own voice."

You have taught me the importance of staying in the center of the Fellowship. ("Much like a herd," you said, "those on the fringe are most likely to get picked off!") So, I have a sponsor, I sponsor other men, and I have service

responsibilities in my home group and at the Area level. That said, I've noticed that when I go on vacation for several weeks – attending an average of only one meeting a week – I begin hearing some persistent lies repeated over and over in my mind: "You aren't *really* an alcoholic. You're cured and in control. You *can* drink like other people. One or two won't hurt you." A dangerous monologue for this recovering alcoholic!

I've heard that Adolph Hitler was particularly fond of one of Friedrich Nietzsche's philosophical tenets: If you repeat a lie often enough, people will eventually come to believe that it's the truth. I go to a lot of meetings because I have a healthy fear that without your daily dose of wisdom and truth telling, I might just begin to believe the cunning lies that my disease whispers to me in my own voice. And that could prove fatal.

(I also go to a lot of meetings because I love each and every one of you, and enjoy laughing with you! But that's a subject for another day.)

Brad P.  
Hailey, Idaho

## "Never Saying Never"

When I entered the rooms of Alcoholics Anonymous, I had spent much of my adult life in mental institutions. I was completely unable to function in this world. I had used alcohol since I was six years old to make temporary escapes. I would lock myself in my closet for days on end as my fear and anxiety consumed me.

Out of desperation I followed the suggestions given to me in meetings. I found a sponsor, worked the steps, and got involved in service. I could make coffee, help set up and help clean up. My sponsor observed my interest in history and suggested I might enjoy the Archives. I began regularly volunteering at the Area 18 Archives.

I was very comfortable being the proverbial "coffee maker". I would even say things to my sponsor like, "I will never hold any official office. I am good at things like setting up and cleaning up but not anything else." In reply I would hear words like, "not yet."

Well, at about two months sober my home group nominated and vote me in to chair a meeting (a NEVER for me). At about two years sober, my home group nominated and voted me in as Treasurer (another NEVER). At about four years sober I was nominated and voted into a position at District level (a definite NEVER).

I write this as a miracle of Alcoholics Anonymous.

Early on it was suggested I attend the District 4 Birthday dinners. With great anxiety, I did. It was suggested I say hello, and introduce myself to people I didn't even know.

I did. Eventually, someone asked me to read, and shaking from head to toe, I did.

I am not saying that following the suggestions was easy; on the contrary. These suggestions have put me in relationship with a God of my understanding. With this relationship, not only has my obsession with alcohol been removed, but I am living a life I did not ever imagine possible. At this time, I have not made any more visits to any mental institution.

Today, I am more careful about using this word "never". I am so grateful for Alcoholics Anonymous. I pray each day for God to help me stay in the suggestions and solutions outlined in the Big Blue Book of A.A. With this, I continue, 24 hours at a time, to live in that 4th Dimension the Big Book speaks. Thank you for letting me share. -Anonymous Member of AA

**Just a few of the things that Alcoholics Anonymous has blessed me with in the last 18 months.**

**It gave me hope in the early days that I could live a life of sobriety.**

Something magical happens when one alcoholic reaches out to another alcoholic. In those early meetings, I hung on their every word. The group members were about the only people I could depend on at that point in my life. I felt mistrust for just about everyone, and they understood me and knew what I was going through. They knew how tough it was to go an hour, a day, a week without a drink of alcohol. And they stood by me and cheered me on.

**It has given me a strong and unshakable relationship with God.**

There is a line in the Big Book of Alcoholics Anonymous that goes something like this: "The consciousness of the Presence of God is today the most important fact of my life." Indeed! I have grown and changed in ways I never could have imagined as a result of my being involved in the AA program.

**It has given me the gift of laughter!**

You just wouldn't believe some of the funny things that are said in meetings of AA. You've GOT to experience it! I just *thought* I could laugh before; now I really laugh! This is like no laugh you have ever heard before... you can feel it too your core.

**I have a wonderful closeness with my friends and family.**

When I was drinking, it was impossible for anyone to get close to me. I had so much to hide and so much I was ashamed of, so I would never let anyone completely in. Not so anymore!

**I no longer live in fear**

Before AA, I was a nervous wreck. You may not have known the extent of this to look at me, but on the inside, this was me. AA has taught me the difference between healthy and unhealthy fear. Unhealthy fear (mostly fear of people and places, in my case) kept me trapped and unable to live with any joy in my life. I now have an Answer to fear when it crops up. That Answer is God.

**I have a new love and tolerance for other people.**

Here is another Big Book quote: "We are people who normally would not mix. But there exists among us a fellowship, a friendliness, and an understanding which is indescribably wonderful!" Some of the wisest, most gifted, and down-to-earth people on earth are members of AA, and I am grateful to call them my friends!

**Mostly, Alcoholics Anonymous has given me a PURPOSE for my life.**

People are always on a quest for their purpose in life. Not us alcoholics; we of AA are very clear on ours: TO STAY SOBER AND HELP OTHER ALCOHOLICS TO ACHIEVE SOBRIETY.

My opinion: We all have as our main purpose in life, **bringing glory to God**. As recovering alcoholics/addicts, this translates to STAYING SOBER AND HELPING OTHER ALCOHOLICS/ADDICTS TO ACHIEVE SOBRIETY.  
**Katie Hug**

Teton Canyon Campout  
11th Annual  
Sponsored by Alta AA

August 24, 25 + 26, 2012  
Reunion Flats Campground Site #C  
Friday 7:30 pm meeting in place of Alta Church meeting  
Saturday 6:00 pot luck dinner, meat provided  
Speaker meeting to follow  
Sunday am fireside meeting informal  
Some camping spots available at Site # C call:  
Directions from Driggs: Follow signs (East on Ski Hill Rd, just past Boy Scout Forest boundary turn up Teton Canyon Road, before Camp turn right into Reunion Flats Campground) Dogs and kids welcome. Be sure to clean up after them and keep them from being disruptive during meals and meetings.  
Nancy-Gail or Ed 208-456-2356, cell 208-390-9499 leave a message.

ONE  
DAY  
AT  
A  
TIME

At a recent meeting a member shared a poem she'd written while in Florida awaiting her mother's passing.

Title: GOD  
Written: January 9, 2011  
Author: Tammy, Boise

God, you're amazing, your love is so great.  
It fills my heart so there's no room for hate.

With God in my life I can't go wrong,  
It's like the words to a beautiful song.

God's will; not mine, that's how I must live.  
Share what's been given, share it and give.

Life is a gift, precious and true,  
a gift that's been given from God just to you.

Live life to the fullest, and when the day is done,  
remember to thank the One above.

God has the answers, acceptance is key,  
I have to remember it's not all about me.

Today I am grateful, today I am free,  
I can look in the mirror and really love me!

Respectfully submitted, Bob A.

District 10 - District 2  
6th Annual H & I Awareness Family PICNIC

Meat and Drinks Provided  
Bring a Dish to Share!  
Meal Ticket  
Suggested Contribution \$5.00

WHEN:  
August 25, 2012  
1:00 pm

WHERE:  
Shoshone City Park  
Shoshone, Idaho

MUSIC  
SPEAKERS  
RAFFLE  
Raffle items needed  
50/50 DRAWING  
\$100 cash drawing  
Need Information?

Dave C. 308-8465  
Patricia 720-2038

Shoshone Rec District asks  
you to leave your dogs at home

### Labor Day Camp Out

Friday Aug 31<sup>st</sup> - Sunday September 2nd  
Rigby Lake  
Camp Fire Meetings  
Speaker Meeting  
Golf Scramble  
Volleyball  
Horse Shoes  
Swimming  
Sunday Breakfast  
For more info Call Beth @ 303-916-0682

### BEAR LAKE BASH!

Sept. 7<sup>th</sup> 8<sup>th</sup> 9th 2012

East Beach Campground at the lake

Potluck Saturday the 8<sup>th</sup> at 5:30  
with campfire meeting to follow.

The meat will be furnished as well as plates,  
cups, napkins, utensils, and plenty of coffee  
and punch.

Please bring a potluck dish to share.

Sunday breakfast at 9:00 with meeting to  
follow.

Bring your unused breakfast items such as  
bacon and eggs and we will cook them too!

Bring your camping gear for fair and/or foul  
weather.

The campsites have electric and water  
hookups.

There will be a District Meeting at 3:00 in  
the common area on Saturday.

Think  
Think  
Think

2012 Idaho Area18 Fall  
Convention/Assembly present's

AA'S GOT TALENT  
(We know you do!)

SO GET YOUR ACT TOGETHER,  
SHOW UP AND SHARE IN THE FUN!  
WE ARE LOOKING FOR ANY AND ALL  
OF THE FOLLOWING:  
MUSIC

POETRY

SKITS

COMEDY

VENTRILIQUISM

STUPID PET TRICKS

BIRD CALLS

MAGIC TRICKS

PLATE SPINNING

ANYTHING YOU GOT!

Come join in the fun and share your special  
talent with the world's most supportive  
audience!

To sign up contact Keith W. (208) 309-1131  
Saturday, October 13, following the Banquet  
Speaker Sun Valley, Idaho

Dear readers,

I am grateful for the out pouring of stories for this  
issue of the Wagon Wheel. If there was something  
missing please contact me through the Area 18  
Website at the Wagon Wheel and I will get it in the  
next issue which, is the Fall Assembly\Convention  
in October.

In love and service, Ralayne H.  
Your Idaho Area 18 Newsletter Editor.

Keep  
It  
Simple  
But  
Do  
It

**Home of PRAASA 2013 Are you  
involved?**

LIVE  
AND  
LET  
LIVE

## Unity

Like many members of Alcoholic Anonymous I start my day with the *Big Book* open to page 84. I take the time to read the next few pages, following the directions giving, and ending with paragraph two on page 89. I am always given such a huge sense of joy when I read, “We know you will not want to miss it.”

It has been my pleasure over the first eight months of 2012 to have the privilege to travel around to many places in the Northwest and experience A.A. and the members of this great fellowship first hand. I am often struck with a touch of nervousness walking into an unfamiliar room with new people. At almost every stop either I or another person will reach out a hand and begin the introduction process, which allows the nervousness to disappear. There is nothing better than this, just like page 89 states.

While in these places I have spent time talking to the local members about the fellowship in their particular home group, district, and area. I am so amazed at how differently a fellowship such as A.A. can do things from location to location and achieve the exact same outcomes. Some groups start meetings with “*The Serenity Prayer*” while others do not. Some read “*How It Works*” others read “*More About Alcoholism*.” Districts can have monthly meetings with small attendance while others meet every two months and have a large turnout. Even Area Committees are set-up differently and run their meetings in probably at least 92 different ways. The one item that each of these conversations always comes around to is unity- the common thread of A.A.

Bill writes on page 129 of the *Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions*, “The unity of Alcoholics Anonymous is the most cherished quality our society has.” Each time I have asked a member of A.A. “Are they, their groups, their districts, or their Areas treating unity as the most cherished quality” the answer has been that each level could be doing a better job. “I should get out to different meetings.” “We need to be more involved in what is going on in the larger A.A. community around us.” “Am I supporting unity with my voluntary financial

contributions?” “Um, no. Dang that does not feel good.” I have heard many of these statements and even said a few of them myself. “We stay whole, or A.A. dies.”

On a renewed basis I am finding that the statement, “Frequent contact with newcomers and with each other is the bright spot of our lives.” In my morning prayers I ask God to show my how and where I can bring unity to the fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous and my own life. It is a pleasure to have met so many of you inside of A.A. I can only hope that the unity we each bring to our recovery, groups, districts, and areas will continue to allow this blessing to be had by all who may want it.

Barry S.  
Idaho Area 18 Chair

Don't  
Let  
The  
Life  
AA  
Gave  
You  
Get  
In  
The  
Way  
Of  
Your  
AA  
Life