

THE WAGON WHEEL

MAY 2004

EDITOR, SHIRLEY S.

INDEX

Page 1	Editorial Ramblings
Page 2	Do I Trust my Trusted Servants (Delegate Jim's report at PRAASA)
Page 3	Madam Ez's Crystal Ball
Page 4	A little Bit of Humor
Page 5	Background of Self Support (GSO)
Page 6	Info from GSO Re: Toronto

The budgets for the coming year, July 1, 2004 to June 30, 2005 will be voted on also. Always remember, funds can be requested and approved, but it always depends on availability of the funds. Our finance committee does a great job pruning outrageous requests.

I'm anxious to hear Jim Mc's report from GSO. It should be a great assembly. Enjoy!!!!

Happy Spring! At the January business meeting Gary ?. from the west side of the state presented the desire to split off from Dist 4. There was much discussion, because most of the area committee had no idea of it. Then in the March business meeting, it was decided to welcome them to Area 18. So, we now have a district 11 in Area 18. I'm not quite sure of the new boundaries. Perhaps our Delegate or Alt Delegate will get us a new map. Jo P, Area Chair, suggested someone come up with a proposal for splitting districts for our guidelines. Perhaps this weekend. H&I West Rep, Steve reported how much they have spent on Big Books already and needing more funds. It was brought up that an Area in California has quite a surplus of funds and is willing to help H & I's in other areas. MUCH discussion followed. DCMs were to take this to their districts and see how everyone felt. Pink cans can work if they are used. Sort of like the Steps!

Del. Jim M. reported that group contributions for Area 18 went from 45% in 2002 to 54% in 2003. Great job! Let's try to raise the percentage again this year. Even if it's just a couple of dollars when you can, send it in. Would AA have been here for you if no groups contributed before you found AA? See the history of self-support on Pg 5.

7TH TRADITION COMPARISON

District	1/03-4/11/03	1/04-4/11/04
Dist 1	622.42	383.47
Dist 2	1,161.39	1,236.00
Dist 3	129.20	10.00
Dist 4	205.00	280.00
Dist 5	302.73	477.31
Dist 6	129.97	75.00
Dist 7	244.60	352.08
Dist 8	604.11	841.35
Dist 9	182.81	150.00
Dist 10	202.00	285.00

*How's your district doing? How's your group doing? How are you doing?
Thanks, Treas. Janice M. for the figures!*

Addresses for 7th Tradition:

Dist Treasurer: Ask your DCM.
Area Treas: Box 296 Middleton, ID 83644
GSO - Box 459, Grand Central Station,
New York, NY 10163
(Please, make sure your group # and Area #18 are on your check or money order to receive proper credit on your funds.)

OUR DELEGATE'S REPORT AT PRAASSA

Do we really trust our trusted servants? More appropriately, "do I really trust my trusted servants?" I think back to when I was a newcomer in this program. I did not trust anyone; I thought everyone had his or her own personal agenda and if it didn't include me, well rejection again. I wasn't too eager to get too involved in your program as I have been rejected all my life and you soon learn to just stay away from people, places, or things that might hurt.

I did not know what a trusted servant was for a number of years, yet alone trust them. I thought anyone in any form of authority was just that, authority. I did not know the concept that I have since learned from my involvement in AA.

It didn't take too long for me to come to Step Three. After much hesitation, I turned my will and life over to this higher power thing you all talked about. This power has come to be known by me as God. Now, God runs my life, the good and the bad. I am not unique in this. The program teaches us that we must let our higher power run the show. God knows we tried long and hard enough and the results didn't change. We all have our stories.

I am currently a Trusted Servant. Am I trustworthy? I think so, only because I have a higher power that is running my life. Do I have an agenda of my own? I truly do not think so. I hope I have the best interest of Alcoholics Anonymous in my heart and mind. Whenever I get to do service work, regardless of the fact if it's what I want or what the fellowship that I am involved in wants, I have to put the fellowship first. When I do this, I am trustworthy in my position and deserve your trust.

I believe almost everyone in AA, who actually knows what a trusted servant is, knows what Step Three is and is applying it to their lives. With that said, it's not important if I trust the trusted servants. What is important is I trust my higher power and the process of AA at the service level.

I also have to trust if any one person becomes a trusted servant in our program of AA, they too have a higher power and have completed Step Three and God, as they know Him, is running their show for them or they probably would not be in the position to be called a Trusted Servant.

Most of us can spot someone who wants a position in AA that would grant them the title of Trusted Servant who might have an agenda of their own. I have witnessed this many times. God, as well as the fellowship, seems to intervene and the election goes as God has planned all along. Regardless of any results in anything that has to do with AA, God as we know him has His own plan and we are just acting out His will.

There are those, too, who have been in AA for a number of years and are very resentful of Trusted Servants because they are not one. It is sad. Regardless of the

months or even the years some have, they just don't get the program. Some of us can not get over the fear of authority figures and they put Trusted Servants into that class. I hope they will keep coming back, we need them too.

Others get into a position and something changes in them. Some of us want to be AA gurus. This is mostly self appointed resulting from an ego problem. Are these folks trustworthy? Well, I can only speak for myself, but they do irritate me. What I need to do whenever I come across this is to try to change my judgment attitude into an attitude of love and understanding and say a silent prayer for them.

Service work as well as life doesn't come out the way I plan because sometimes, I forget to involve God. Just like when I share at a meeting, there seems to be what I was going to say, what I actually said, and what you actually heard. None of which is what the hell I meant in the first place.

But, if I can keep ego at check and act on my heart, my higher power as well as my love for this program, I will do just fine in whatever endeavor God puts before me. I have to remember I am doing his work!

Trusted Servants have a responsibility to serve with integrity and honesty and do our part to build trust among the fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous. A current trusted servant may be the first example of trust some newcomers get to witness.

There will be many, many more following me, and there was many, many more before me. I just happen to be blessed enough to currently be a trusted servant. Regardless of the service position you hold, whether you are a GSR, DCM, Grapevine Rep, or Delegate, you are still only a trusted servant, nothing more. You will never be the best GSR, DCM or whatever that there ever was. The only thing you can hope for is to do the best you possibly can, keeping in mind your higher power and your present ability. I know for a fact that service work has helped me stay sober more than I'll ever know.

A past delegate told me the afternoon I was elected for Area 18 Chair, "Jim, you won't be here long enough to do AA too much damage!" I was also told, "God doesn't call the qualified; He qualifies the called."

We are blessed in this program in the fact that any member of our fellowship has the right to do service work and thus become a trusted servant. It's a position that is not limited to the business minded or even people who know how to read for write. You don't need a college education, a job, or even a high school diploma. It does help to have a sponsor, but it's not a requirement. What you do need is an AA program that you have applied in your life.

Do I trust the trusted servants? Yes, because I trust the program of AA!

Jim M. Area 18 Delegate



Madam Ez says "Remember that silence is sometimes the best answer."

May 22 - Spring Dance - Rexburg
VFW Hall 8:00pm

Proceeds for State Fair Booth
Info: Cody @ 624-3982 or
Heidi @ 624-7129

June 4-6 Whickey Mike's Campout -
Dist 1: Joe J. 238-1007

June 5 - H&I BBQ & Speaker Mtg.
Boise Municipal Park (500 Walnut)
food & games -1:30 -5:30, Speakers
5:45 to 7:15, Dance 7:30 to 9:30
Info: Mark - 922-1443,
Kris 939-7528 or Ava 440-3314

June 12 - Founders' Day - Nampa
Grace Episcopal - 4:00 - 8:30

June 17 - Deadline for agenda items for
Aug 15 Business Mtg.

June 18-20 - Dist 7 Camp out - Green
Canyon - Newdale, ID (Rexburg)
Bill G. - 787-4010

June 25-26 Pebble Creek Campground -
Dist 1 - Joe J. 238-1007

July 9-11 Teton Canyon Campout
Info - Bill G - 787-4010

July 16-18 - Dist 10 Campout - 16 miles
N of Ketchum. Boulder View Campground

JULY 16-18 ISLAND PARK CAMPOUT
INFO - BILL G - 787-4010

AUGUST 4 - DEADLINE FOR
AGENDA ITEMS FOR OCTOBER 2
FALL ASSEMBLY BUS MEETING

August 6-8 - Dist 7 Campout - Twin
Creeks Campground (?)
INFO - JIM M. 865-2104

AUGUST 15 - AREA BUSINESS MEETING -
TWIN FALLS

OCTOBER 1-3 - FALL ASSEMBLY
BUSINESS MEETING IDAHO FALLS
SHILO INN

NOVEMBER 11 - DEADLINE FOR
AGENDA ITEMS FOR JAN 9 AREA
BUSINESS MEETING - TWIN FALLS.

January 9, 2005 - Area Bus Meeting - Twin
Falls.

March 11-13, 2005 - PRAASA - Tucson,
AZ. Info - Mike G. (623) 247-3746

Thanks getting the info to me!

<wagonwheel_15@hotmail.com>
or (208) 940-0647

SECOND WIND. . . That's what an AA speaker inevitably acquires when he or she says, "And now, in conclusion. . . ."

An AA member recently observed that AA reminds him of a log floating downstream. "On this log there are a million ants clinging to it - and each one thinks he's steering."

Erma Bombeck's variation on the Serenity Prayer. "God, grant me the serenity to accept what cannot be changed, and the wisdom to keep my mouth shut when I don't know the difference."

A minister was admonishing a half-bagged parishioner about drinking. "Don't you know that liquor is your worst enemy?" "But Reverend," replied the boozier, "just last Sunday, didn't you say we should love our enemies?"

Two winos looking through the newspaper saw a photo of a giant winery's new tanker, designed to transport staggering quantities of wine over the seas. Said the first drunk to the other, "At last, our ship's come in."

If I meet three fools in a row, one of them is ME.

Staggering down the street, a drunk passes a house and notices a child trying to reach the doorbell. Try as he might, the little guy just can't make it. The drunk stumbles up onto the porch. "Here, let me get that for you," he says, and rings the bell. "Thanks mister," yells the kid. "Now let's run!"

God kicks in ever-increasing shoe sizes until he gets my attention.

AA AAA - for those driven to drink.

"How you come you always hold your nose & close your eyes when you take a swig?" "Well," replied the drunk, "I likes my liquor neat, but if I sees it or smells it before it hits me gullet, I drool. And a drink 's just no good if it's diluted!"

Slips of the Lips:

Our leaders are but *twisted serpents*.

Our *lovers* are but trusted servants.

. . . usually men and women who are *constantly* incapable of being honest. . .

There *changes* are less than average, willing to *glow* along spiritual lines.

. . . and when we were wrong, *probably* admitted it.

At some of these we *barked*.

God could and would if he were *a sot*.

Alcoholics Anonymous is a fellowship of men & women who share their experience, strength and *hype* with each other.

A well known professor was being honored at an open-bar reception, and accepted a few too many freebies. When he was introduced, he rose from his chair, staggered across the stage toward the podium, and fell. The audience gasped. But the great educator, still flat on his back, announced clearly and cordially, "I think I shall dispense with my prepared remarks and simply take questions from the floor."

Never argue with an idiot. People watching might not be able to tell the difference.

My mind works like lightning. One brilliant flash and it is gone.

Jesse Jackson, Jim Baker, and Jimmy Swaggart have written an impressive new book. It's called "Ministers Do More Than Lay People."

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF SELF-SUPPORT

AA's evolving tradition of self support was to move a long way from the financially desperate period, around 1938, when Bill and others around him wished silently & urgently that John D Rockefeller would bestow the fledgling Fellowship with large donations.

In 1947 Bill said "Voluntary contributions or pledges of AA members ought to be AA's principal support, and eventually, its sole support." Although it was necessary in the beginning when AA desperately needed a little outside help (which he noted, made possible the Alcoholic Foundation, the book *Alcoholics Anonymous* and the General Office) times have now changed. He sensed "...a very powerful feeling...spreading among us that AA ought not to be takers from society, any longer. Instead, let us be givers."

Additionally, the news that every AA group had become self supporting would create invaluable goodwill in the outside world.

The General Headquarters-predecessor to GSO, published a monthly newsletter for distribution to the Fellowship. In the February 1949 issue, the purpose of voluntary contributions was defined: 1- To meet expenses of General Headquarters which operated a plan to serve alcoholics the world over, in keeping with AA's primary purpose (it was described as international Twelfth Step work); and 2- To meet those expenses of General Headquarters incurred in its operations as a coordinating center for all AA groups. The article emphasized the voluntary nature of contributions--they were "not dues or fees". It also stated that such contributions would "...be used for AA operating expense only.

Sept 1950 - lack of voluntary contributions led Bill to issue to the Fellowship a

five-page plea for support, including a request that the group secretaries call a special business meeting for the purpose of reading Bill's written pleas. "Without AA's services, we'd often fumble that new man/woman just coming in the door; without our services, we'd certainly spoil the main chance of those millions who don't yet know.

In November 1957, Bill wrote a Grapevine article entitled "Respecting Money", in which he juxtaposed outside contributions and self support: "Our spiritual way of life is safe for future generations if, as a society, we resist the temptation to receive money from the outside world. But this leaves us with a responsibility--one that every member ought to understand. We cannot skimp when the treasurer of our group passes the hat. Our groups, our areas, and AA as a whole will not function unless our services are sufficient and our bills are paid."

Ten years later, as if in conclusion, Bill wrote in the Grapevine, "Both these principles we understand: that AA wants no charity; that we support our own services. We understand--but we sometimes forget."

General Service Office

WELCOME NEWCOMERS ???

Four good reasons for not welcoming newcomers:

- 1: They might already be members. (If you don't know them, isn't it about time you did?)
- 2: I might have already met them. (Try, "You look familiar. Have we met before?")
- 3: I can't remember names. (Be honest. Haven't you called your own children by the wrong names once in a while? Admit your memory lapse, and make a point to remember or write down the name for next time.)
- 4: Someone their own age should greet them. (Aren't your best memories of grandparents and children? We all need friends of all ages.)

You can't be embarrassed in AA. We're all here for the same reason and for that reason, we all care about each other. For every person who resents your mistake, there will be 20 who are thrilled that you spoke to them. Take a chance--it's worth it!!

Service Material from the General Service Office

2005 INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION MOST FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS – REGISTRATION, HOTELS & TRANSPORTATION

In a little less than two years, the International Convention will celebrate A.A.'s 70th Anniversary, June 30-July 3, 2005, in Toronto, Canada. With a theme of "Am 'Responsible,'" A.A.s from around the world will converge on Toronto to celebrate sobriety, and share experience, strength and hope in meetings, panels and workshops at the Metro Toronto Convention Center, the SkyDome Stadium, and at other locations throughout that beautiful city. Members of the Fellowship, as always, are now gearing up for this wonderful event and the General Service Office is beginning to receive inquiries. So here are some answers to the most frequently asked questions regarding the Convention.

Registration

- Q** When will registration forms be available?
A Registration forms and housing information will be mailed in August of 2004 to all G.S.O.s, Central Offices and Intergroups and International G.S.O.s.
- Q** What about on-site registration?
A On-site registration will be set up in the South Building of the Metro Toronto Convention Center. Registration will open on Wednesday morning, June 29, 2005.
- Q** Will I be able to register over the internet?
A Yes. There will be links to forms to register and sign up for housing on the G.S.O. Web site.
- Q** How much will registration cost?
A Registration fees will be established in 2004.
- Q** Must everyone register? I thought I didn't have to pay to go to an A.A. event.
A Yes. Everyone must register. Attendance at this special celebration is voluntary and, as responsible A.A. members, "we pay our own way."

Transportation

- Q** Will local transportation be available?
A A.A. will provide transportation to and from most A.A.-assigned hotels and motels. This will be at no additional cost to the attendee. Toronto has an excellent and easy to use public transportation system and their routes can also be used (there may be a nominal charge for this service). Of the 13,000 rooms AA has blocked, nearly 8000 rooms are in downtown Toronto, so many members will be in walking distance or a short ride on public transportation from their accommodations. All housing blocked for this event is less than a 45 minute ride from the convention center and stadium.
- Q** What about special airline rates?
A As at other International Conventions, there will be special fares available. That information will be available with the August 2004 registration information mailing.
- Q** Where can I find information about crossing the border into Canada for this event?
A On the A.A. G.S.O. Web site www.aa.org there is another service piece called *Frequently Asked Questions About Travel to Canada for the A.A. 2005 International Convention* which provides information on many border crossing matters.
- Q** Where do I obtain more information about the 2005 International Convention?
A More information will be available throughout 2004 and 2005 in Box 4-5-9 and on G.S.O.'s website www.aa.org. All necessary information will be included in the registration packet which will be available August 2004. This packet will also list special telephone numbers to call for answers to specific questions about housing, the program, tours, etc. A.A.'s website will be updated as more information becomes available.
- We hope to see you in Toronto, Canada to celebrate A.A.'s 70th Birthday!

This we owe to AA's future
To place our common welfare first
To keep our fellowship united
For on AA Unity depends our lives
And the lives of those to come.