

MAY 2016

The Wagon Wheel

IDAHO AREA 18

NEWSLETTER



GOD
grant me
the SERENITY
to accept the things
I cannot change,
COURAGE
to change the things I can,
and WISDOM
to know the
difference.

“In The Rooms of AA”

I know when you speak
Your spirits flow free
From one to another and then into me
Each time I have fallen and comes a new day
I'm Blessed with some friends
To show me the way
As I lie here this morning with the rising sun
I find comfort in knowing the path I've begun
I hope You'll hear me
When I pray
God Bless the friends You've sent my way
In the Rooms of AA

by Peg
1st Speaker Meeting
March 6, 2016

Photo by Theresa O.



*"The reason birds can fly and we can't
is simply because
they have perfect faith,
for to have faith is to have wings."*

- J.M. Barrie, The Little White Bird

Dear Idaho Area 18 Friends,

Welcome to the May edition of the Wagon Wheel. My name is Susan Orison and I am an alcoholic. I currently will serve the Area for the next 2 years as your Newsletter Editor. I live in Bellevue, ID.

My sobriety date is January 28, 1989.

I am looking forward to your feedback, questions, or suggestions you might have, but mostly to share with you the stories of recovery, unity, and service.

If you would like to submit an article, story, joke, or picture please email me at

Newsletter1@idahoarea18aa.org.

I want to thank my graphic designer, Morgan B. for all her help in putting this together.

It wouldn't be so bright and colorful without her help!

Also Theresa O. for her amazing photo!

I hope to see you on the road of happy destiny.

*May God bless you
and keep you
until then.*

In loving service,

Susan O.

The Wagon Ho!

Coincidence or Magic in Mexico?

For many years I'd been traveling to Mexico with my very dear friend from high school, Beth. We'd try to go down every year and spend two weeks of fun in the sun and surf. We traveled and explored the Baja one year from Cabo San Lucas to La Paz and then over to Todos Santos and back down to Cabo in a rented VW convertible. The next year, we went to San Blas, which is about two and half hours from Puerto Vallarta, again traveling in a rented VW convertible. We fell in love with this place off the beaten path and this is where we ended up going every year for our annual two-week stay for many years. It was wonderful, exciting and always fun. Until my disease progressed so much that I became dangerous and unpredictable. Our last trip to San Blas and one of my last memories was on her birthday, February 19, 2002. I'd gotten so drunk and obstinate that I ended up ditching her birthday dinner party and finding my own party with people I didn't even know. The next day was so uncomfortable and I was so full of remorse but I never told her I was sorry nor took any responsibility for my actions.

Then in December 2002, I got sober. When I talked to Beth shortly after I came home from treatment, she told me she was so happy for me and so proud of me. During one of our heart to heart discussions, she'd told me that our last trip to Mexico was going to be our last trip to Mexico together. She was going to be done with me and my drunken antics. That hurt, but I completely understood. It was time to make amends and start over. So, we began to plan our next Mexico adventure. She suggested that we try someplace different and I was all for that! She'd heard about Zihuatanejo from a friend of hers. Immediately, we started to search for places to stay around the area. I found a sweet little place in Troncones where we'd stay the first week and then we'd travel to a little village called Barra de Potosi for the second week. Plans were made and so were our reservations. We would be traveling about two months after my first AA birthday and I was scared. I told my sponsor that I was full of fear about the trip.

"I know me and what I do", I told her. She said it was time that I started to trust my Higher Power and that Higher Power was going to take care of me. So I trusted.

Our first week in Troncones was magical. We stayed in little huts with thatched roofs right on the beach. Our host was so kind and spiritual. It was amazing and hard to leave. But it was time to travel to the next little village, Barra de Potosi. We took a taxi and drove into this little, poor, dusty village. The

taxi dropped us off in front of Casa del Encanto where we would be staying for the second week. We looked around and wondered what the hell had we done? We left paradise to come here? Then we walked through the gates of this little bed and breakfast. We were just in awe. It was so enchanting with so much charm and immediately felt at ease. Our host, Laura, showed us to our rooms.

Shortly after, she brought us each a cup of coffee and wanted to tell us about the village. "It's a little fishing village and it's very quiet. There are only about 300 people who live here and they are mostly fisherman. There's not a lot of nightlife, if any at all. Some of the people want to build a pool hall but the locals don't want it because it brings in trouble. But, we really do love this little AA hut across the street", she said as she pointed just across the street from our room.

"I'm sorry. What did you just say?!" and I asked her to repeat it. I couldn't believe it! I then told her I was an alcoholic in recovery and that I would love to go over to a meeting. She told me that they have meetings there every night at 7:30pm and it was 7:00pm.

She said, "I bet the guys are there already. Let's go over and I'll introduce you to them." So, she took me over and the guys were just opening the door to this little shack that had the AA sign out front that was almost as big as the shack. I was then introduced to Pancho, Tito, Hector and Roberto. They welcomed me into this little shack with a dirt floor and then they offered me coffee. They had a few chairs, a desk, a pulpit and the 12 Steps and 12 Traditions in Spanish on the wall along with the serenity prayer and pictures of Bill and Bob. I was home! Hector was the only one who could speak a little English and I even spoke less Spanish. But, it did not matter because we all knew that we were sharing the language of the heart. I spent every evening with them during my week's stay that year. Incredible!

Since then, I travel back to that little village almost every year. Though they no longer have meetings in Barra de Potosi (they moved the meetings to another village nearby) and the AA hut is in disrepair, I still see Pancho and Tito and they are still sober. I am sad that Hector and Roberto are no longer members but now there is a new member, Javier who just celebrated two years while I was there this last January.

I am so amazed that this fellowship is everywhere, even in a little fishing village in Mexico. But, I'm even more amazed that my Higher Power took care of me on that trip and continues to take care of me. Life truly is wonderful!

Shannon C.

"Should We Try and Get Them to See It?"

Good evening. My name is Mistie and I am an alcoholic. My sobriety date is August 31, 2009. My Home group is Dingalings, which is in District 5, Idaho Area 18. I currently serve as my Home group's Inter-group Chair and the entertainment chair for our 2016 Spring Assembly. The Big Book of Alcoholics Anonymous on pages 33-34 addresses the difficulties inherent in reaching out to the next generation of AAs: "To be gravely affected, one does not necessarily have to drink a long time nor take the quantities some of us have. This is particularly true of women. Potential female alcoholics often turn into the real thing and are gone beyond recall in a few years. Certain drinkers, who would be greatly insulted, if called alcoholics, are astonished with their inability to stop. We, who are familiar with the symptoms, see large numbers of potential alcoholics among young people everywhere. But try and get them to see it!"

In the 77 years since those words were first published, more and more young people have "seen it," they too have been cured from a seemingly hopeless state of body and mind. In 2014, the General Service Office conducted a random survey consisting of more than 6,000 AA members from the U.S. and Canada. According to the results of this survey, approximately 1 percent of AA members are under the age of 21, while approximately 11 percent of AA members are between the ages of 21 and 30.

Although I went to rehab when I was 25 years old and got sober at 27, I am clearly not a member of the next generation of AAs (I had a pager in high school, enough said). However, Ryan T. and Lily M. "are" members of the next generation of AAs. And Candice C. and Casey L. "were." Ryan picked up his 6 month chip at my Homegroup about a month ago. He is 17 years old and still in high school. Lily is 19 and has been sober for over a year and a half. Candice got sober at 16 and has been sober for 23 years now. Casey got sober at 20 and has been sober for 16 years. I am so thankful to each of these people for sharing their experience, strength and hope with me so that I can share it with you.

Ryan's first impression of AA at 16 was old people talking about their problems. He was confused about whether he could possibly have hit bottom when people were talking about how if they didn't quit drinking they would die. Lily was 17 when she came into AA and, according to her, "My first few months in the room were super lonely for me. I didn't have people reach out to me, the way that people talk about. I sat in meetings alone for a long time. Also, a lot of people would comment on my age and express doubts or make comparisons to their own drinking careers when they were my age, and a lot of the time, it almost made me feel like I wasn't 'old enough' to be an alcoholic."

Casey told me that when he came into AA at 20, he was young and hurting, but could not relate. According to Candice, who came in at 16, "When members said things like, 'I wish I would have quit drinking when I was your age,' and 'You're lucky you missed out on all the years of drinking,' it felt and continues to feel condescending, as though I didn't 'earn' my sobriety."

At 27, a few days before I finally got sober, I was meeting an ex to get enough gas for the drive from Tacoma back home to Moscow. I had been crashing in a Rastafarian drug dealer's apartment in Seattle, I hadn't slept or eaten in days, there was blood all over my foot, and T.J. said, Mistie, you're going to die, you need to go back to AA. I told him I would rather die than be boring. It talks about this on page 152 of the Big Book: "Someday he will be unable to imagine life either with alcohol or without it. Then he will know loneliness as few do. He will be at the jumping off place. He will wish for the end. We have shown how we got out from under. You say, Yes I am willing. But am I to be consigned to a life where I shall be stupid, boring, and glum, like some righteous people I see? I know I must get along without liquor, but how can I? Have you a sufficient substitute? Yes, there is a substitute and it is vastly more than that. It is a fellowship in Alcoholics Anonymous. There you will find release from care, boredom, and worry. Your imagination will be fired. Life will mean something at last. The most satisfactory years of your existence lie ahead. Thus we find the fellowship and so will you."

Casey's advice to us is to make sobriety attractive and always attempt to introduce a sense of fun into workshops or other activities. There are young people's groups all over...no newcomer will ever come back from WACYPA or ICYPAA thinking we are a glum lot! Casey also stressed the importance of getting on the web, such as through AA social media with an anonymous component. According to the Addendum to the Report from the 2015 Trustee's Public Information Subcommittee on the Public Information Comprehensive Media Plan, 86 percent of North Americans are on the Internet 6 hours per day and yet only 1 percent of current members were able to find AA via an online search. It is crucial that the hand of AA be where the potential alcoholic is. Casey's advice to us is to make sobriety attractive and always attempt to introduce a sense of fun into workshops or other activities. There are young people's groups all over...no newcomer will ever come back from WACYPA or ICYPAA thinking we are a glum lot! Casey also stressed the importance of

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Lily's advice to us: "I think the main thing is that we young people want to just feel like we're real people. We don't need to be talked to a certain way, we don't need to have things changed for us, we don't need to be categorized as a young person and treated differently. I think we just want a fair chance, and to be respected and not looked down upon. I had so much respect for the men and women in the fellowship who spoke to me the same way they would speak to the 40 year old newcomer. That was about it for me, I just wanted to be treated as a person and not a kid."

And Candice says, "First and foremost, be patient. Treat the next generation with respect, as they are our legacy to come. Alcoholics Anonymous cannot live without them."

My sponsor always tells me to find the fellowship I crave. There may be a young person in your Home Group who is at that jumping off place, who knows loneliness like few do. We need to be the fellowship that young person craves. On page 95 in the

chapter Working With Others, it tells us not to exhibit any passion for crusade or reform, to never talk down to an alcoholic from any moral or spiritual hilltop, to offer friendship and fellowship. It tells us not to push or prod, and that if he wants to get well we should do anything to help.

That's not preaching rigidity. That's not read the first 164 pages and then call me, underline this in black, underline that in red, use a ruler for straight lines, never text me I'm your sponsor you have to call me, the only way to pray is on your knees, you better say the lord's prayer after the meeting, don't say the f word, you can't go to that meeting because you introduce yourself as an alcoholic and an addict, don't wear that, never talk about drugs.

This is Alcoholics Anonymous. We are patient, tolerant, loving and kind. Our primary purpose is to carry the message. Reaching out to the next generation of AA's is absolutely essential because without them, AA will cease to exist. My little boy is a year a half. If he ever reaches out for help, I want the hand of AA always to be there. And for that, we are responsible.

Mistie B.

Home Group is Dingalings, which is in District 5,
Idaho Area 18

I knew I was
an alcoholic
by the way
I felt sober.

Joe B., Alcoholics Anonymous

gratitude for grace

Stay
patient
and trust
your
journey.



PRAASA 2016 TSNAC REPORT



I think, like many of us who attended this year's PRAASA, I am still recovering from the sheer volume of information so lovingly shared. For those of you who have not attended PRAASA, it is a packed weekend with very little down time. We started Friday with orientation at 11:30, followed by highlights from the Pacific Region Delegates and three wonderful panels, leading into the first Roundtable discussion from 8:30 until 10:30. The last panel on Friday night was very special, as our own Mistie B. presented the topic "Reaching Out To the Next Generation of A.A.'s". I cannot put into words the power of her message. She was met with a standing ovation at the end of her presentation. I felt blessed and honored to have Mistie represent Area 18 and encourage you to read the newsletter, where she will be submitting her presentation.

After panels, it was straight on to roundtable discussions. I attended the Corrections roundtable and received a wealth of knowledge. I must admit I felt very out of my league and have a lot left to learn. If I were to choose the overall message, it was how important the Bridging the Gap program was. One of the members shared a story of when a man was released from prison and had to travel back to his home town. This man had a layover of about 3 hours until his Greyhound bus picked him up to take him home and he was very scared he would walk straight into the bar. Two of our Bridge the Gap members met with this man and sat with him until his bus arrived. He didn't drink that day. Later that year, during an Area assembly, our BTG member who had sat with that man was thrilled to see this convicted felon standing in front of him sober and in service. That is why we do this work.

Saturday's 8:00am panel included our very own Delegate, Barry S., who presented the topic "The Tradition of Anonymity, What Has History Shown Us"? Barry's presentation was very thought provoking and has inspired me to learn more about the feasibility study. See Barry – I know for sure he'll share details. Again, I was proud to be represented at PRAASA by a stellar member of our Area.

Saturday is packed with panels, the Trustee's Report and the PRAASA business meeting, more roundtable discussions, a speaker meeting and more late night discussions. I attended the Treatment/Special Needs roundtable and, again, received a wealth of knowledge. Again, there was a focus on the importance of Bridge the Gap with Treatment Centers. There is some amazing work being done in our Region. As I am still learning more, I will continue to report Treatment activities on the Eastern side of the state.

During our discussion of Special Needs/Accessibility, I learned a lot about ASL translation and what some Areas are doing to meet that need. There are a lot of accessibility issues; physical disabilities, stay at home parents with small children, members in long-term care facilities and the elderly just to name a few. All of these needs seem overwhelming. I know in my district, one of the arguments in not expanding H&I into Special

Accessibility is that we don't have enough volunteers as it is. I take exception to this. We often say "We need volunteers!" (Insert martyr tone here), when what we need is to remember what an honor it is to be of service. Service is attraction, not promotion. If we are a servant leader instead of a bleeding deacon, we make service attractive. Tradition 11 anyone? I get the opportunity to sponsor women. Not all of them stay sober. Not all of them work the steps. Not all of them get involved in general service. But some do. Let's grow our trusted servants through sponsorship and attraction. Bill worked with a countless number of drunks before one stayed sober; we can continue to sponsor service one drunk at a time.

Sunday morning started off with the "What's On Your Mind" sharing session, followed by my personal favorite: Past Trustees Sharing Session. The overwhelming message I received was "Inclusion, never exclusion". A couple of days after returning home from PRAASA, I received the following Grapevine quote of the day in my inbox:

"Those who slip, those who panhandle, those who scandalize, those with mental twists, those who rebel at the program, those who trade on the AA reputation - all such persons seldom harm an AA group for long ... They oblige us to cultivate patience, tolerance, and humility."

AA Co-Founder, Bill W., August 1946

From: "Who Is a Member of Alcoholics Anonymous?"

The Language of the Heart

This is as pertinent today, perhaps even more so, than it was in 1946. I want the hand of AA always to be there for the suffering alcoholic now and for the suffering alcoholics of the future, which may include my children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren. I want the hand of AA to always be inclusive, never exclusive.

As is always the case, I have come home from PRAASA renewed and invigorated to serve and sponsor others through attraction into service. I hope to pass this on to some of you.

I love Alcoholics Anonymous.

Thank you from the bottom of my heart for your service and for allowing me to serve.

With Gratitude,

Candice C.

Humility
Through
Service

AREA 18

CURRENT TREASURER'S REPORT

SHOWING DISTRICT CONTRIBUTIONS TO IDAHO AREA 18.

Idaho Area 18
Receipts & Expenditures
Fiscal Year-to-Date July 1, 2015 through May 8, 2016

INCOME		EXPENSES	
2015 Fall Assembly Yield	5,767.34	Alternate Delegate	814.88
		Archives	879.98
Contributions:		Chairman	844.28
District 01	1,080.02	CPC-PI East	180.30
District 02	2,425.32	CPC-PI West	544.58
District 03	1,226.79	DCM	425.60
District 04	518.75	Delegate	3,515.93
District 05	2,542.35	Finance Committee	734.28
District 06	1,064.23	Grapevine	1,040.86
District 07	747.06	Newsletter	1,205.08
District 08	1,452.36	Operational Expenses	4,516.05
District 09	565.00	Secretary	1,006.93
District 10	1,196.91	Service Charges	(8.00)
District 11	245.00	SICYPAA Liaison	174.41
District 12	65.00	Treasurer	1,001.88
Other Contributions	463.33	TSNAC East	744.96
Total Contributions	13,592.12	TSNAC West	448.68
		Webmaster	627.16
Total Income	19,359.46	Total Expenses	18,697.84

THANK YOU DISTRICTS, GROUPS AND AA'S
FOR YOUR SUPPORT!

UPCOMING IDAHO AREA 18 EVENTS

For details please click the link below (pdf version)

Or go to the website: IdahoArea18aa.org



Treasure Valley Intergroup Central Office New Hours

(effective February 1, 2016)

10AM - 6:00Pm (Tuesday - Friday)

10AM - 3:00Pm (Saturday)

1111 S. Orchard St., Suite 180, Boise ID



2016

2016 Idaho Area 18 Spring Assembly

May 27th, 28th & 29th, 2016

The Riverside Hotel, Boise, ID

Annual TSNAC (H & I) Awareness BBQ

Saturday, June 4th, 2016 Veterans Memorial
Park, 930 N. Veterans Memorial Parkway,
Boise, ID

Pacific Northwest Conference 2016!

June 24th, 25th & 26th,

2016 Pendleton Convension Center,
1601 Westgate, Pendleton, OR

2016 Gem State Roundup

August 5, 6, and 7, 2016
Riverside Hotel, Boise, ID

15th Annual Teton Canyon Campout


August 19, 20, and 21, 2016

Reunion Flats Campground Site #C, ID

2016 Idaho Area 18 Fall Assembly!

October 7th, 8th & 9th,

2016 Shoshone
Bannock Hotel & Event Center,
Fort Hall, ID



2017

2017 Idaho Area 18 Spring Assembly!

May 12th, 13th & 14th,

Nampa Civic Center, Nampa, ID

We are not a Glum Lot

A social drinker died and went to heaven. St. Peter greeted her and began showing her around. When they came to a high wall, the woman was surprised to hear loud singing and laughter coming from the other side. "who's back there?" she asked. "Oh, those are the alcoholics," replied St. Peter. "They think they're the only ones up here."
-John C., Belfast, Ireland

"The early bird gets the worm, but the second mouse gets the cheese."

-Willie Nelson

◆ SIGN IN A LOCAL PUB ◆

If you are drinking to forget...
PLEASE pay in advance!

-AA Grapevine



"There's a dog and a kid following me around the house. Are they mine?"
Jack P.

MAY 2016

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