

July15, 2008

Osseo AA Newsletter

Suburban North Alano Vol. 1 Issue 10



www.OsseoAA.org

"One Day at a Time"

Independence Day



Hi All,

Summer is really going by fast. It seems that as I get older, it goes twice as fast. I hope everyone had a GREAT July 4th. I spent it with my family. Brothers, Sisters, cousins and nieces and nephews. Of course my kids and Grandchildren also. Those who know me realize I can never go anywhere without Hannah.

None of the family things would ever be possible without AA. I'm not sure if I'd still be on God's green earth if it weren't for AA. I know I wouldn't be attending any functions if I were still drinking. People wouldn't put up with me and alcohol. One or the other but the two combined (me & whiskey) are intolerable.

The other day in Squad 12, we had a meeting on Fellowship. Rocket had the meeting and did a great job. It really makes one think about what I've gained in AA. Some of my best friends are in the Osseo club. I know I can call them at any time of day or night and they're there for me. I was wondering how I could ever repay some of the things I've received in this program and I decided the best way is to pass it on to others. Help and encouragement to those who need it is repayment. Sponsoring, taking meetings and just cleaning up with others is great fellowship. Actually, writing this newsletter let's me air some of my thoughts. I want you all to know that I appreciate your help and patience with me in this regard.

As some of you may know, I'm on the board of directors for our alano. My term is set to expire at the end of September. Everyone needs to ponder the idea of putting your name in the hat for inclusion on the ballot for election to the board. We need four permanent members and two alternates. It's a great chance to give back to the club. The only requirements are one year of continuous sobriety and you must be a pledging member. It's a two year commitment and it gives you the opportunity to see how the club and facilities are administered.

I hope you enjoy the rest of summer and don't forget about the club picnic on the 26th of July.

Bob G.

Inside this issue:

<i>Tradition Seven</i>	2
<i>How to plant your garden</i>	4
<i>Meeting Minutes</i>	5
<i>Step Seven</i>	6
<i>International AA Convention Denver 1975</i>	7

Help!!!

- *We still need contributors. If it's just me writing, you're going to get bored.*
- *Check the website often as it's constantly changing. It's also a good way to keep up with the news. If you have club news, please send it in.*
- *Edited by Dani B.*

Every A.A. group ought to fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions.

This is a tradition that I hear often, at almost every meeting I attend. From my observations, it usually means \$1 in the basket that's passed around. Quite some time ago, I listened when someone (I can't remember who) said the cost of operating a group – rent, coffee expense, literature – has gone up a lot since \$1 was somehow established as the standard contribution. Since then, I have put \$2 in at each meeting I go to. I have felt very self-satisfied that I give more than the usual.

Then I read the Twelve by Twelve entry about the Seventh Tradition. It talks about the obvious dangers: A.A.'s struggle with this early on and the opportunity the General Service Office had to accept a large sum left in a will, but chose corporate poverty as a principle to live by. The choice was driven by the dangers we, as alcoholics, face when we have the power associated with control over large sums of money and potentially being beholden to any group or person that donated large sums. OK, I've got that.

It also talks about Bill W.'s personal experience with this tradition. He was willing to give sums he considered a sacrifice when doing Twelfth Step work because he loved to see the look on the faces of those he helped. When it came to passing the hat, he was much less generous. That revelation – that he was only willing to give based on the gratification he got – really hit me. That self-satisfied feeling evaporated because I have been doing exactly the same thing.

I plan to change my behavior in my home groups (yes, I have more than one). This is the part of recovery that is simply a fact of life and does not bring instant gratification – it costs money to operate a group, and it costs money to ensure A.A. stays around to help those who seek it. If I'm just visiting a group for one meeting, then maybe the \$2 is OK (although a beer would cost around \$5 in a bar). But in my home groups, where I get my salvation, I can be more realistic about my part providing the funds necessary to continue operating. This is a chance for me to be financially responsible, something I rarely did when I was drinking.

In a nutshell, it reminds me of the Responsibility Pledge:

When anyone, anywhere, reaches out for help, I want the hand of A.A. always to be there. And for that, I am responsible.

For Your Information....

Seventh Tradition – Long Form

The A.A. groups themselves ought to be fully supported by the voluntary contributions of their own members. We think that each group should soon achieve this ideal; that any public solicitation of funds using the name Alcoholics Anonymous is highly dangerous, whether by groups, clubs, hospitals, or other outside agencies; that acceptance of large gifts from any source, or of contributions carrying any obligation whatever, is unwise. Then, too, we view with much concern those A.A. treasuries which continue, beyond prudent reserves, to accumulate funds for no stated A.A. purpose. Experience has often warned us that nothing can so surely destroy our spiritual heritage as futile disputes over property, money, and authority.

Limited expectations yield only limited results.

- Susan Laurson Willig

Our thoughts determine our actions, and when our thoughts are negative, our successes are few. What we hold in our mind is certain to be reflected in the day's activities. And we are capable of fueling our thoughts positively, if we choose to.

Positive self-assessment and uplifting pep talks can become habitual if our desire to live up to our potential is great enough. The expectations we privately harbor, be they small or far-reaching, will set the pace for the progress we make today, and every day.

We can greet a challenge with eager anticipation when we've grown accustomed to believing in our capability for success. First, we must expect to handle, with poise, whatever confronts us.

No one but me determines my course today. My success begins in my mind.

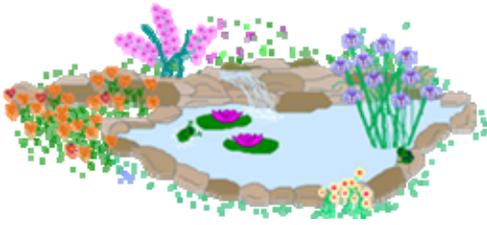
A.A. Thought for the Day

Keeping sober is the most important thing in my life. The most important decision I ever made was my decision to give up drinking. I am convinced that my whole life depends on not taking that first drink. Nothing in the world is as important to me as my own sobriety. Everything I have, my whole life, depends on that one thing. *Can I afford ever to forget this, even for one minute??*

How to Plant Your Garden

contributed by: Dani B

First, you come to the garden alone, while the dew is still on
the roses.....



For the garden of your daily living,

Plant three rows of peas:



1. Peace of mind
2. Peace of heart
3. Peace of soul

Plant four rows of squash:



1. Squash gossip
2. Squash indifference
3. Squash grumbling
4. Squash selfishness

Plant four rows of lettuce:



1. Let us be faithful
2. Let us be kind
3. Let us be patient
4. Let us really love one another

No garden is without turnips:



1. Turn up for meetings
2. Turn up for service
3. Turn up to help one another

To conclude our garden we must have thyme:



1. Time for each other
2. Time for family
3. Time for friends

Water freely with patience and cultivate with love. There is much fruit in your garden because you reap what you sow.

Squad Leaders Meeting

By: Monica G.

It was a fairly short meeting. The only subject on the agenda was finalizing the Annual Picnic. We went over the list of what each squad signed up to bring and with the donations, it looks like we have raised enough money to cover the food as well as prizes.

So we look forward to seeing everyone on Saturday July 26th starting at 3pm. Just a reminder that food will stop being served at 7pm.

Board Meeting

The board met on July 9th, 2008 at 7:00 PM. Scott C. and Laurie P. were not in attendance. Items discussed were nominations for the board and the annual picnic. Nominations need to come from the individual squads and Monica G. seems to have a real handle on the picnic. It was actually a very uneventful meeting. There is not a lot of things happening at this time of year. I guess that's a good thing. If everyone could remember to turn out lights and such when rooms are not in use, it would be greatly appreciated. If anyone in the club is a blacktopper or knows of someone that is, we could use an estimate for our parking lot. Also, please remember to keep smoking away from the front door. We need to be mindful of those that do not smoke.

Thanks and God Bless you all.

Limited expectations yield only limited results.

- Susan Laurson Willig

Our thoughts determine our actions, and when our thoughts are negative, our successes are few. What we hold in our mind is certain to be reflected in the day's activities. And we are capable of fueling our thoughts positively, if we choose to.

Positive self-assessment and uplifting pep talks can become habitual if our desire to live up to our potential is great enough. The expectations we privately harbor, be they small or far-reaching, will set the pace for the progress we make today, and every day.

We can greet a challenge with eager anticipation when we've grown accustomed to believing in our capability for success. First, we must expect to handle, with poise, whatever confronts us.

No one but me determines my course today. My success begins in my mind.

I've started to realize that waiting is an art, that waiting achieves things. Waiting can be very, very powerful. Time is a valuable thing. If you can wait two years, you can sometimes achieve something that you could not achieve today, however hard you worked, however much money you threw up in the air, however many times you banged your head against the wall. . .

--The Courage to Change by Dennis Wholey

“One Day at a Time”

Step Seven

by: a compilation of sorts

Humbly asked Him to remove our shortcomings.

The spiritual focus of Step 7 is humility, asking a higher power to do something that cannot be done by self-will or mere determination.

This step is the culmination of a great deal or preparation of working the "middle steps" of the [12-step](#) programs. After carefully taking a moral inventory, admitting our faults and becoming willing to have them removed, the final step in the process is to humbly ask for help in removing those character defects that may have been in effect for many years.

These faults can range from simply having been dishonest -- lying about problems to others -- or having held resentments against loved ones. Or these faults may involve much more serious offenses. Regardless, the 12 steps provide a path to freedom from the past and a opportunity to begin anew.

When I did this step, I checked the dictionary for the exact definition of humble. Upon finding that first the word meant -- not proud or haughty; not arrogant or assertive -- I could then become mentally ready.

For me, making a written list of what I perceived to be my shortcomings was important. How could I ask God for help without knowing precisely what was needed?

By doing this, I could focus on change in behaviors. My action was necessary, both in effecting new attitudes and in prayer.

Interesting topic, step 7. Not real easy to accomplish. Consider that this step requires 3 ingredients for a successful completion. First, it requires that we have a belief in the "Him" this step refers to. Second, it requires a knowledge of what those shortcomings are. And third, and perhaps most important, it requires a degree of humility.

These things do not just come to us overnight. They are acquired through the hard work of the prior steps, one through six. Without working through them, step 7 is nearly impossible to work.

It took me quite a while to even get down on my knees in prayer, having been raised in a religion that prohibited this act. Once I did, I realized that this was merely a gesture of humility, a position I could assume that gave me the self-assurance that I was being as humble as possible. What else could I do to demonstrate humility to myself?

Time to Prepare

Then I worked through steps 4, and 5, coming to grips with my past, reasoning out the exact nature of my wrongs, and realizing exactly what I would ask of my higher power.

Step 6 gave me time to prepare myself for the step 7 event. What was step 6? Working the first five steps, and then getting humble. Once that was done, step seven happened.

I woke up one morning, and realized the moment I opened my eyes that it was time to work step 7. I got out of bed, got down on my knees and did it, following my request with the seventh step prayer.

Oh what a joy! I suddenly felt very free and grateful!

AA International Convention 1975

by: Marge D. with Bud D. and Norm L.

Fourth of July 1975 AA International Convention at Denver Colorado

(A trip taken by auto by Norm and Betty L. of Elk River, Bud and Marge D. of Dayton (Squad 3 Osseo AA Club) meeting in Denver, Marilyn M AA, from Waverly, MN, her friend Marian Al-Anon from Waverly and another unnamed (really forgotten) friend from Waverly.

Written by Bud and Marge D. as remembered June 2008 and friend Norm.

This trip was about a year in planning. The tickets to the convention were sent for and paid for when the forms came out in the spring. Bud and I have childhood friends that lived in Turkey Creek Pass, southwest of Denver, so we wrote and arranged to stay with them. At the same time, we learned Marilyn and Marian, thereafter called M&M also were attending along with a friend from their group. These girls had recently joined our program, and were excited about going. What made it possible was having free room and board!!

Norm loved Roundups and large group meetings, so it was not a surprise that he latched on to this. He talked Bud into it, no matter that not any of the four of us had two nickels to rub together. We figured if God wanted us to get there He would! Sounds as if we were finally getting that part of the program. We sat around the kitchen table up at Norm and Betty's planning the trip. Norm had triple A; so we relied on this to get maps, plan our trip, ect.

Sometime before we left, Betty broke either her foot or her leg. She was on crutches and she was in pain all the time and she was crabby. They decided to stay in a motel or hotel near the convention center, so she could use the room in case she got physically stressed out. We left in Norm's father's Oldsmobile. We shortly learned Betty absolutely refused to drive after dark. We were routed through Kansas City because of Road Construction. As near as we can remember, we took 35 to Kansas City, 435 around the city, then 70 to Colorado. None of us can remember the timing. We had an extra day somewhere when we stayed to go to Mother Gabriini Shrine, visit Red Rock National Park and have a picnic with our host family. (3 pictures) I think we must have left a day early, because the men distinctly remember leaving for home on Sunday. This picture with Bud and Marilyn and Marian on the steps was fantastic. We were ALL smoking. We should have all stopped while we were ahead.

The Andrus family welcomed us with open arms. We stayed upstairs overlooking the driveway, and the girls stayed in the bedroom on the opposite side of the house. Sometime that first day Bud and Dale picked up the girls at the airport, and dropped off one at her brother's house in Littleton. I think we must have had a picnic at their house sometime on Thursday.

We weren't on our own until Friday. Dale and Anne had lent us their second car. It was a small wagon with a hatchback. Anne cautioned us not to leave it unlocked lest the insurance might not pay. We no sooner got out of the driveway (picture) when the red light for the oil came on and stayed on. Bud parked it as soon as he could and checked the oil, which was full, and resolved to tell Dale that night. Little would we know it would be in the wee hours of the morning. We had some type of directions to the convention center, got there without getting lost, registered, and met Betty and Norm. We poured over our programs each of us deciding which mtgs to go to, and which ones we would go as a group. We had never been in such a large group of people. Lots of people were slapping each other on the back; bear hugging, weeping, lots of emotions. Oh the wonder of it all!!

Coffee was set up on both sides of the convention center; with dozens of spigots all being piped from a huge vat or tank where they had poured brewed coffee. For a quarter you could get coffee right away. It was the talk of the convention. It just didn't taste very good.

I can't recall whether it was Friday or Saturday, but with that much latitude in emotions, I was trying to welcome three men definitely from a foreign county and couldn't speak English. Bud and Norm just kind of distance themselves from me. The more I tried to explain myself the farther away they got! These men just didn't get it. They thought I was trying to pick them up, and kept putting their hands up and backing away. They guys sure laughed about that one.

We did decide we needed a plan in case one person got lost or couldn't find each other. So I suggested they could put a note on the huge bulletin board, which was alphabetized under D for Dellwo. I still don't know why they thought that was dumb or funny but they did. Maybe they just needed a laugh.

Opening ceremonies were held with the flags from the nations attending. It was so impressive everyone cried. The Conference Theme was Let it Begin With Me, Every flag bearer repeated it in their own language and then led the way to the Platform with their flag. Opening night was a smash. I still remember all of us sitting together and the magnificence of the whole event with 20,000 alcoholics in attendance plus all the spouses, Al-Anons, and others. Deafening, definitely not for the feint of heart. I don't remember

much else about that first night, except it definitely was late by the time we left.

When we reached the car, we couldn't open it because the door locks stuck. So Bud had to give it some healthy shoulder pushes. On one such time, to the girl's horror, he dented the door around the door lock. They really freaked out, thinking we ruined a car to which we were entrusted. I forgot to tell you about those girls. It was an adventure to be with them at any time in any place. You never knew what they might do or say. But they had met their match with Bud. He said, don't worry I can take that dent right out with a toilet plunger. And then he had to go on to explain it would pull the dent right out. They had never heard of that one, and really didn't believe him, but really wanted to so we hadn't ruined Annie's car. We left to go out of town, and went round and round, and ended up at the hospital each time. Each time, it got funnier and funnier. Denver's roads are arranged like a spoke on a wheel, and we just didn't figure it out. We finally got the right highway heading to Littleton to drop off the friend, and she went in and tried to find a toilet plunger and looked in two bathrooms and couldn't find one. When she returned to tell us that, we thought perhaps they didn't need toilet plungers in Colorado! We continued toward the foothills, and by the time we got home to what the Andrus family called the "Turkey Creek Hilton" it was so quiet you could hear a pin drop. M&M went in to look for a plunger. They found one in the basement part of the house, which was really a stretch. In all the times, we've been out there; don't think I have ever been down there. Anyway, with this wonderful device, our confidence was again restored in Colorado. Bud did one large sucking out the dent. It was so loud it sounded like a shotgun. We were all giggling so hard and scared we had woke up everyone, but little did we know they were in our bedroom window watching and listening to our silliness the whole time. We got into bed thinking we had pulled one over on them. But the next morning we found out otherwise. Also we found out in the morning the oil light just stayed on, so another mystery solved.

Bright and early the next morning we got up to head into the full day of the Convention. People were still registering and milling around. Sometime that morning Bud's harem, as the girls called themselves, wanted to find some low cal snacks. It just wasn't as easy as it is now. We finally found some low fat cottage cheese, and diet drinks. And then on the way out, each of us bought a candy bar. Bud just didn't get this. He howled.

Meetings, meetings all day. I attended some of the Al-Anon meetings. That evening the key speaker was Lois W, and the guest speaker was an AA who was really good, but unfortunately I didn't write down this tale until this year, so can't recall who it was. But the real event that brought down the house was a drunk who wandered in off the street, and wanted to know what this was all about. They brought him up front on the platform and then got him some of that terrible coffee. And he wept because he didn't know this many people could be sober, who once were drunks. The whole auditorium shook with applause. I wonder if he stayed sober. It was marvelous.

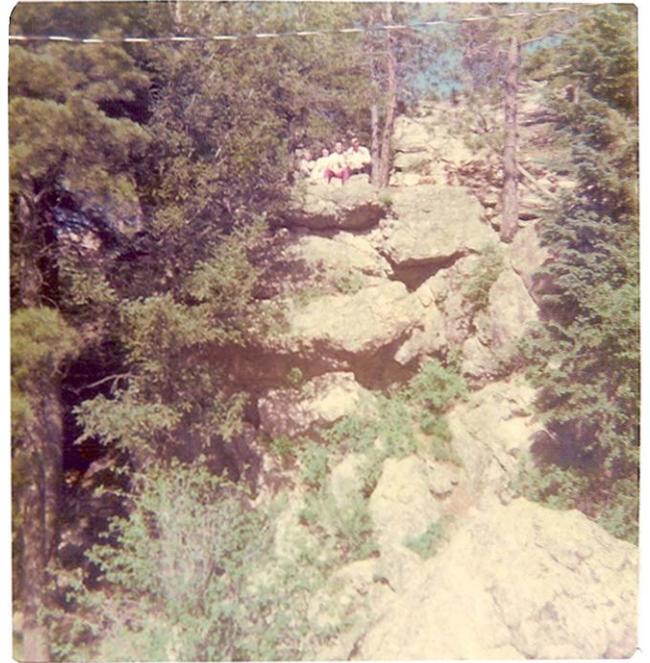
Oh Yes, it was late again. We had diligently locked all the doors, and Bud had to give it the shoulder heave again. But it wouldn't open, so in desperation he was trying all the doors, in case we forgot to lock one. You wouldn't believe it, but the hatchback was open, never locked the whole time. And us with all that banging! We started for home, but guess where we landed? The hospital of course, not just one time but also several. Bud thought he might be able to get a job there. And one time we dead-ended in a security area of a company and lights and sirens started to go off and we left that place in a hurry. Giggling all the time. We, again, found the right highway and left off our passenger at her brothers and got home to Turkey Creek. Sunday we slept a little longer, but not much. Still pretty tired on our way down the hill. Lots of teary good byes and a closing ceremony. On the steps as we were leaving a hitchhiker came with his backpack, just getting to the Convention. I asked him what happened and he said he was going west on one highway and somehow ended up going north. But eventually he got there from California. I said that I thought that was really good that he didn't give up and got there anyway and I was impressed. Norm and Bud asked what was going on and I told them. They said, oh he got lost? And I said no, he just went the wrong way. That phrase became a byword with them and then they would laugh at me.

Betty and Norm followed us out to the Andrus and we were ready to leave. We had planned to go the Zoo and then head home. We got to the zoo, and it was closed. Norm made the remark; we didn't need to go inside, there were plenty of monkeys sitting outside. I blew up at him, at least that is what Bud and Norm say now. I don't even remember the deal. We left for home and traveled up the highway going north along Wyoming. We took 90 all the way through South Dakota, stopping at Wall Drug, Mount Rushmore, some house that the law of gravity is weird, we read all the Burma Shave and Wall Drug signs. We really had fun again that last day, but the thing was neither of us were very wealthy. We were down to our last tank of gas. Guess that was before the credit card bonanza came along. And beside that Betty couldn't sleep in a moving car, but we had no money left for a motel. We took 169 going north from 90 and somewhere around Mankato we ran out of gas. We had to get a policeman to wake up a gas station person, and we got about 10.00 worth, whatever money we had left. We made it home with that gas on a wing and a prayer.

(Betty L. has since passed on. She will always be remembered for the most delicious caramel rolls. We were invariably sent off on fishing trips and other excursions with at least one pan of caramel rolls. It was one of the highlights of any AA trip. Bob G.)



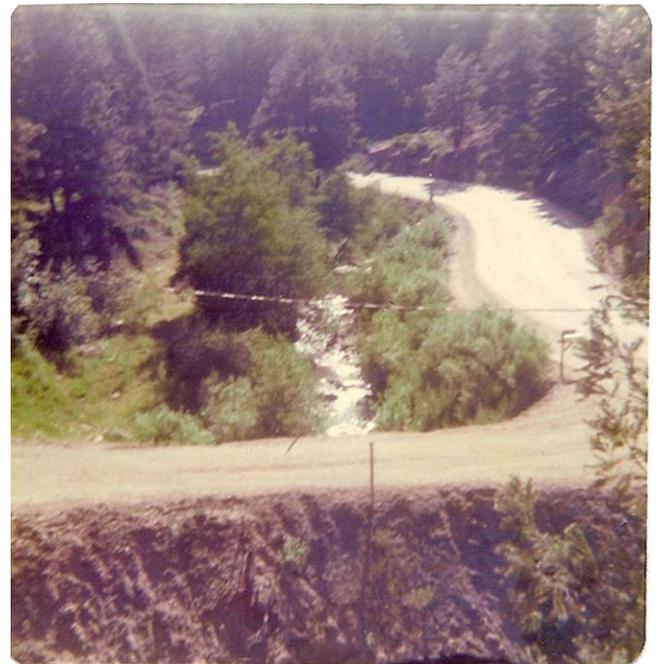
Group Picture, Denver1975



Picnic area on the rocks



Steps to the picnic area - The whole gang



View from front of house - Denver 1975

“One Day at a Time”