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Osseo AA Newsletter

Suburban North Alano Vol. 1 Issue 11

www.OsseoAA.org

"One Day at a Time"

Dog Days of Summer

Hello to everyone,

Well, the picnic has come and gone for another year. The food was great and the company was terrific. Thanks to Monica G., Karen E. and her husband Paul, Glory N. and everyone else who pitched in. The tent that Bob H. donated to the club worked out great. It kept the food in the shade for the afternoon and evening. We also left it up and put the picnic tables under it at the end of the day. I sure hope all of the smokers appreciate that.

We have another event coming up in September. Stan A. is going to celebrate 50 years of sobriety. We'd like to have an open house to celebrate this momentous event. I've never known anyone personally that has achieved that amount of sobriety. Soon I'll be able to say that I have a friend with 50 years.

I hope you enjoyed the adventures of Bud & Marge and Norm & Betty as they ventured out to the 1975 AA International convention. This month we're going to entertain you with their trip to the 1980 convention in New Orleans.

When my granddaughter Hannah read the story, she wanted to know who wrote it. I told her it was Marge D. and she was actually on the trip back in 1975. Her reaction was, "Is she still alive?" It kind of put things in perspective for me. I heard the story first hand upon their return back in 75. I guess I'm getting on in years also.

Bob G.

PS Don't forget that we need pledging members to run for the board!!

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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.*

Tradition Eight

by: Karen E.

Alcoholics Anonymous should remain forever nonprofessional, but our service centers may employ special workers.

Based on my reading of the Twelve by Twelve, this tradition was put into place because, in the beginning, people who were successful in AA were sought after by the public to professionally teach the principles. Unfortunately, I don't think I really would have listened to someone getting paid for this – that other motive (some guy earning a paycheck) would have always been there.

Then, as only alcoholics can, people became sensitive to AA paying people to perform work, regardless of what it was. If someone was paid to cook and clean in a sober house, “purists” would say they were making money off of their twelfth step work, or insist that pay be so low, it really amounted to volunteer work. Sometimes these people weren't even alcoholics! In any event, trying to staff necessary work for a place to function with alcoholic volunteers was not very successful. Many of us look at volunteer work as optional. For example, all those books the General Office ships out a year (into the millions) do not get boxed up and addressed by themselves!!

To me, this tradition is just a matter of practicality. In a nutshell, don't EVER charge a fee for Twelfth Step work, but hire a janitor to clean the club for heaven's sake!

A.A. Thought for the Day

Just try to remember what troubled us most a week ago. We probably will find it difficult to remember. Why then should we unduly worry or fret over the problems that arise today? Our attitudes toward them can be changed by putting ourselves and our problems in God's hands and trusting that everything will turn out all right, provided we are trying to do the right thing. *Has my mental attitude changed?*

Don't take yourself too seriously.

Just keep laughing. It is the best medicine.

When you laugh, you look better and feel better.

Squad Leaders Meeting

By: Monica G.

As always, I would like to thank the squad leaders that attended the meeting. It was short and sweet!

I opened by thanking everyone for all of the contributions, both monetary and physical, to the picnic that was held in July. It was a success. There was good food, fun and a good time was had by all.

I, per a pledging member's request, brought up the use of the Alano Club. There has been concern about how people are leaving the Club a mess and not locking up. We just ask that everyone has respect for the Club and pick up after themselves and those in their group and make sure that lights are shut off when you leave. And above all...lock the door behind you if you are the last one to leave.

No one had anything else to add to the meeting. I advised everyone that as of October my duties as Squad 12's leader and the Leader of the Squad leaders meeting will be up. So I will need to hand those duties off to another Squad leader.

We closed with the Lord's Prayer.

Board Meeting

The board met on Wednesday, August 13, 2008. We opened with the Serenity Prayer and introductions. Items of interest were Stan A.'s 50 year anniversary approaching. We want to do an Open House for Stan and his family. We also are going to do another omelet breakfast. Terry M. wanted to have it on the 19th of October. The American Legion is booked for that day so we reserved the club for the 26th of October. The club voted (at the General Meeting) to prepay our LP gas for the year. It's in the area of \$3600. We also discussed the need for increased pledges. If all pledging members were to increase their pledge by just \$1 per week it would greatly help. If you attend the club and you're not a pledging member, we urge you to pledge. We closed with The Lords Prayer.

We are each gifted in a unique and important way. It is our privilege and adventure to discover our own special light.

-- Mary Dunbar

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Please Help!!

Suburban North

Alano

Pledges



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We would like every pledging member to increase their pledge by \$1 per week. If you're not a pledging member, please consider pledging to the club.

Costs are rising and income is decreasing. We need your help!!

"One Day at a Time"

Step Eight

by: Bob G

Made a list of all persons we had harmed, and became willing to make amends to them all.

I once heard a woman speaker at the Gopher State Round-Up say that if anyone in the audience was in the Dominican Republic anytime between 1980 and 1987, she owed them an amend. That's about the way it was with me also. If I've ever met you before 1974, I owe you an amend.

My list was fairly large to start with and it's kept growing over the years. I am reminded of situations or places I've been and it immediately brings to mind my behavior in those situations or places. There are some people that will never make it onto the list because I simply do not know their name or anything else about them. To those I hope that my conduct since sobriety has been some sort of amend.

The first one on our list should be ourselves. We all did harm to ourselves through our drinking. I know it sounds kind of silly to put ones own name on the list but we were the ones most harmed by our actions. Secondly, we must include our immediate family. When I was drinking I used to think that I was not affecting anyone other than myself. I learned at a family day meeting in treatment that it was totally incorrect. My sister, God Bless her, helped me to realize that. She gets a great thanks every time that I see her. She tells me that it's not necessary but she is most probably responsible for saving my life.

The word "amend" means to change. That is what we all do when we accept the 1st step. We start to change. That in and of itself is an amend. Our changed lifestyle and attitude set an example for other people, both suffering alcoholics and non alcoholics.

After we've compiled our list we have to become willing. And willing to make amends to them all. Not just the ones that deserve it but, ALL of them. We have to take responsibility for our past transgressions and be willing to change for all persons we had harmed. I used to think that some of the people I had harmed deserved it because of what they had done to me. I was just getting even. I realized that this step applies to all the people I had harmed. I have to take into account my own actions, not the actions of others.

Now that I have my list compiled and I'm willing to change for all people, I'm ready to move on to step nine and make my direct amends.

Today I will catch up on the things I need to complete. I will take notice of the things I've started, and I'll work toward their completion. If I'm current with things I need to do, I can use this time to rest and do nothing.

Have I been procrastinating? Have I been putting something off until later that I can do now? I will look at my list of responsibilities or suggested activities, and today I will begin - or complete - those things I said I would do later.

Today is about completion.

AA International Convention 1980

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

1980 Seventh International Convention at New Orleans, LA. 3, 4, 5, and 6th of July

Norm and Betty L from Elk River, Bud and Marge D from Dayton

Squad 3 (The Naughty Squad) from Osseo Alano

This Convention was planned for at least a year ahead of time. This time again around the kitchen table with coffee cups and maps pencils and paper. Betty wanted to see her brother in Missouri on the way down, and Bud had bought tickets for all of us to see the Grand Old Opry for on the way home. We had both arranged for vacation time, and had more money than last time. We probably selected our hotel from the list mostly based on money, but thinking the inconvenience of being across town, was surely outweighed by the difference in cost.

This is a tale mostly about car trouble, but we also had plenty of other things happening. We left home in another Olds owned by Norm. Seems like he recently had worked on it like something major.

We probably either left Monday or Tuesday. They were holding a mock Mardi Gras parade on Thursday night and famous Bourbon Street turned into ice cream and Coffee Street. I am sure we intended to be there, but we didn't quite make it. The car probably started acting up right away. Norm drove to begin with, but the car was getting terrible gas mileage. Norm kept his foot on the gas and Betty kept telling him to slow down. When Bud took his turn driving he could tell the car wasn't shifting up. The car also started heating up on us. So we turned off the (beloved) air and stopped at a garage to find out about getting it fixed. This mechanic told us it was the transmission, and yes he would fix it, and no, not right away, it would be after the fourth of July weekend, which would be Tuesday when he started in on it. Sometime later Bud put a overflow tank on the radiator. We did stop at Betty's brother's in Missouri, but probably didn't stay long. It just got worse and worse and Norm drove faster and faster. In West Memphis, Arkansas, it got so bad Norm pulled off the highway to a gas station at the top of the intersection where the car stopped. After the steam cleared, the guys could see the spark plug wires were melted and fried. They asked the owner if we could leave the car there for a few days, he said yes. I am sure he never expected us to return to take it. The guys got us into a motel where it was cool. Norm called a cab and they headed for the airport where most the rental companies were located. This car smelled like urine and other types of human excretions. Very, very bad. The lady drove 85.00 miles per hour. Bud hollered at her and told her to let him out unless she slowed down. She screeched the braked and it was steel against steel. He said he rethought about being left on the side of the freeway in the heat. They did rent a nice car and returned to us. We thought they were gone a long time. Did I tell you this part of town was pretty sleazy? Bud thought the guy riding with the cab driver was her pimp. Bud and Norm walked after cigarettes and the hookers were out on the street. So much for that. Everyone's nerves were a little frayed by this time. We spent the night in the air conditioning and left in the morning.

We did arrive at our motel to another problem. It too was located in a red light district. The motel was large and run down. We had ordered connecting rooms, which we got, but Norm had no electricity on his side. I headed for the shower. When I was gone, Bud was arranging to move our room also.

We traveled through all the red light districts in New Orleans, I swear. Bars open and guys leaning on the posts, and scantily clad women looking for men. We were weaving our way through traffic, and Betty who was sitting in the front seat make some remark about a woman who was swigging from a bottle. The woman

heard her and threw the bottle at us. Norm speeded up a little.

The convention was held at the immense, air conditioned Superdome. We registered, got our programs and found seats for the Opening Ceremonies. There was a 30-foot high world map outline on a blue background behind the stage. The theme this year was "Joy of Living" and there was a flag ceremony with each flag bearer speaking the theme in their native language. There was a theme on Archives, with the first at an International Convention. Films were being shown continuously. Also new was a continuous marathon meeting day and night, from Thursday midnight to Sunday morning. A man who had sobered up just two days before in the marathon meeting was introduced before the crowd of 23,000.

On Sunday Lois gave a brief talk, and we had a surprise by the only son of Dr Bob spoke who is a member of Al-Anon. Marty Man was the keynote speaker and this too was a first to feature a woman. Marty died just two weeks after returning from New Orleans having survived three of the most often stigmatized health problem of the 20th century: alcoholism, tuberculosis, and cancer. The convention was an outstanding success, as it always is.

But now we checked out of the motel. We thought we could find anything that would be better than that place. I think that was Monday morning. We wanted to see something of the old part of the city and so we drove to the French Quarter. We bought tickets for a Riverboat Ride, but had to wait for the scheduled departure. We decided to get a bite to eat and sat down outside very close to where we parked, Norm said, do you see what I see? And Bud said where's the car? And Norm said, it was parked right there. It was inches into the no parking space and they had towed it that fast. The men took a cab to the police station, and then out to the lot where they had towed it. To make matters worse there were ugly scratches left on the car where the town slings had picked it up. So then they had to make out the paper work and call the rental company.

Finally they returned with the car, and the boat company made sure we could park in their area behind a fence. We did go out on the boat which was nice. I didn't realize the mouth of the River was so large.

We went to dinner at a restaurant called Pascales. I had heard about their famous Shrimp at work, so we had put that on our to do list. It was closed. As we were staying in the area one more day, we thought we would try Monday night. We found a hotel for the night, just driving by. It was a good price and large and looked nice and a great looking pool in the courtyard. We paid for our room, and it was not nice. Run down, rather shabby, no not chick, and I headed out to the pool. There were large holes where TV's had been fastened in the wall and ripped off. Yes, they had different TV's but hadn't fixed the holes. So that night when all the light went out, the bugs came out. Big, big, bugs that looked like cockroaches. In and out of the air-conditioning and the hole from the TV. Bud complained in the morning, loudly, he wanted his money back or he would report them. They said they didn't care go ahead. They had fumigation once a month, and the roaches were wood roaches and everyone had them. So much for that one. We did get to dine at Pascales. They usually only take reservations, but said they would make an exception for us. When we were seated our waiter tied over sized bibs on us. They served us wonderful fish soup a great salad, we ordered the special shrimp and they were served with the heads on. Well, that undone both Betty and Bud. I must say both Norm and I enjoyed it. Too bad for someone who can't get past colors and looks and use their good old taster. We were really done with New Orleans.

Bud still wanted to go to the Grand Ole Oprey, but Betty would not budge. There was no way she was going

to go. So we went back to the station where the Olds was parked, got a motel, and Bud and Norm looked for a car. All day!!!!!! In fact Norm got rummy. He just couldn't function. So Bud bought a cheap 350.00 67 Plymouth that needed work. He put plugs in it before he brought it back. They also went back and bought a tow bar with a bolt and trailer hitch to tow the Olds home. We still had to drive the car without air, because of towing the big car was a strain on the system and Bud was afraid this car would heat up. It turned out it wasn't the radiator that gave us grief but the battery. Norm was driving and Betty said Norman Norman, and he said yeah – she said wake up you're going to sleep and he said I'm not sleeping, the car is slowing down because it quit. The batteries dead and I'm pulling over. Bud got out and took the battery out of the Olds, we had no jumper cables, and so he used two tire irons to short out the posts. The car started and it was now light enough we could drive without the lights, thus saving the battery. As you probably figured out we had driven all day and all night. We drove until it got too hot for us, and then found a motel with air and tried to sleep. Once it got dark and cooler we were on the road again. That evening we were going up 35 saw a sign for a gas station sitting on top of a hill and pulled off the road. I can still see that station lit for a long ways away in the country. And it was closed, like really closed like not likely to open for a while. The car wouldn't start and Bud lost his teeth. He had us all looking for them, and found them in the door between the seat and falling out. Do you think everyone hooted at that one? I was trying to remember when he got those teeth. Probably not long before that!

Bud took Norm's battery out on the fender of the car and he knocked it off and it cracked. He must have hitchhiked to the 126 marker to find a station to put a charge in the battery. The cell was busted, but no place to buy anything. He hitch hiked back and the car started. We were off again!!

Until, we were on 35 at the weigh station North of I-80 in Iowa. We pulled in because the car started backfiring. The men at the station knew someone who sold us a used battery. They swore they used it all the time and gave us a good buy. We went to put it in and it didn't start. But they had jumper cables, so we did get going.

This next time we made it as far as Albert Lea on 35. It was hot and during the day. Betty and I sat under a tree. Bud hitchhiked in to Albert Lea to a parts store. He bought a battery on the condition they would take Bud back out to the car. Again, it was quite a ways, 2 or 3 miles.

We stopped on top of the Hill in Apple Valley to buy gas, then made it to Norm's to exchange this car for our truck. We were just leaving the garage when we heard a big whoosh. It was the back tire going flat, all the air gone. We had just made it home. Don't think this trip hasn't been repeated again and again and again, and even after all this time, is firmly entrenched in the heads of all that were there.

I won't forget the cars. Seems as if Bud and Norm fixed the Olds. And the Plymouth I drove for about a year. Someone had to clean up the plugs every now and then. It was sitting at the house and Norm asked if we would sell it. His daughter Sherry was in a financial bind and needed wheels. Bud said no, it had a new battery, so she could run the car, and when through just return the battery. About a year later, she bought a decent car and Bud had our Rick pick it up. He was living out on 23 at the time. He took out the battery and gave it to Bud. Someone saw it parked in the yard and gave him 20.00 for the starter. Someone else saw the rest of it and gave Rick 40-50 dollars for a demo derby.

I think our friendship might have been a little strained for a while, but we managed to laugh about it every time the story was retold. So instead of a terrible thing, it has made relationships stable. After all, if you can still speak to each other after a trip like that, you must have something! So the program works!