

The Ten Best Years

Ten years can be quite a hunk out of a man's life - or can pass as quickly as ten months. It all depends how those ten years are spent. As we grow older, the years seem to roll away much faster, and, for some of us, there is a sense of urgency, a desire to accomplish all those things we have always intended to do, but somehow have never quite gotten around to doing.

All this philosophizing has been brought about by the fact that I have recently completed ten years of continuous sobriety in AA. In looking back over all those 24-hour periods, I find that they add up to a lot more than just 3,650 mornings without a hangover.

The statistically-minded could get a whole flock of fascinating figures out of those ten years: 520 weekends spent constructively, instead of in a drunken stupor; ten sober Merry Christmases; ditto for New Year's; ten vacations which really were vacations; 520 Monday mornings on which I was able to face the whole darn world with a smile. . . the list could be endless.

But mere cold statistics cannot begin to tell the story. Nor can material gain through sobriety, although it has been highly significant. What value can you place on restored self respect? What price do you put on peace of mind? How much is freedom from fear worth? How do you put a dollar sign on all those wonderful new friendships?

In my own case, AA led to sobriety; sobriety led to a whole new way of life; a second, satisfying new career opened up for me, doing the kind of work I had really always wanted to do, but had been afraid to tackle. Not too many people, even nonalcoholics, get a chance like that.

These ten years have passed quickly for me, too quickly to accomplish all I had hoped. Yet how much better they have been than any ten years during my active drinking career. In those days, I was full of grandiose plans which never matured. In AA, I have learned that *Easy Does It*, and have acquired the patience to give my much more modest plans a chance to become reality. Perhaps I have learned a bit about my own limitations, and how to accept the things I cannot change. But I have also learned not to underestimate my own modest abilities, and to attempt things I would never have dared in the old self-doubting, fear-filled days. "One day at a time" - what a marvelous way to build a solid foundation. Ten years ago, at my first AA meeting, if anyone had suggested to me that I was going to stay sober for ten years, five years, or even one year, the thought would have terrified me. I might have turned around and walked right out of that door which swings both ways! All I was in search of at that time was a means to sober up from the current drunk. I hadn't thought about how permanent that sobriety might be. I knew only that I had come to the end of a long, hard road and *something* had to change.

What a relief it was when nobody presented me with a pledge to sign. Nobody told me I had to stay away from the bottle for a week, a month, three months, or a year. Gently, oh so gently, they suggested to me that I could postpone taking that next drink for just 24 hours. I don't believe it even occurred to me at that first meeting that this postponement could be continued. I was desperate, ready to grasp at any straw which would help me out of the terrible rat race. Somehow, shortly before that first 24-hour

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E.V.I. News

March 2003

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Emerald Valley Intergroup
1259 Willamette St. Eugene, OR
97401-3509
(541) 342-4113

AA Meetings: To The Newcomer



New:

Emotional Sobriety: Sunday Noon - 1:30pm. JESCO Club. 340 Blair Blvd

Changed:

Old Time AA has changed it's name to **One Day At A Time**. They still meet at 4th & A at the First Christian Church of Springfield on Monday nights at 5:30-6:30. See you there!

Canceled:

The Bottom Line: Tuesday 7pm (Will start up again the 1st week in April, new location to be determined.)

Please remember to let us know if your group stops meeting. It's a lot easier to remember when you are starting a meeting, but if you stop meeting remembering to remove it from meeting lists may save someone frustration and more when they really need a meeting. To submit changes of any kind please fill out a form in the "Meeting Book Changes" book at the EVI office. Ask a volunteer at the front desk for it. Thanks!

The following story is part of a letter received at EVI from Jeff P. - Blythe California. A powerful message for anyone who may consider a drink before even that short drive home. This story is continued from last month's EVI Newsletter and will be completed in the April newsletter.

From the first moment you are let off from the bus that transports you, in a cage, to the intake facility for your states department of corrections, you will begin to understand the magnitude of your punishment. You immediately begin to become familiar with a society that is unforgiving and incomprehensible from the outside world. You realize from this point forward, your only goal is survival. Your goals related to your family, or your life, no longer matter. The fact that you are sorry about drinking and driving and want things to change matter about as much as the guy's screams in the cell next to you. The sights are quite shocking unless you can imagine, in advance, living in a world that is completely made of steel bars, concrete and filth. Or, unless, you are used to looking into the eyes of predators or individuals who seem to have lost their souls and their desire to live. The first time you get a good look at the cell that will be your home tends to instill fear into the hearts of most. The realization that this small dungeon is your only refuge strikes you significantly. Then, the first time the bars are slammed shut in your face and you begin to understand that the life you used to know is gone, maybe forever, the new sounds begin to assault you.

Once you arrive here, you will never hear a moment of silence again. This alone, can have powerful physiological effects on a person. There is the constant sounds of boots scraping along concrete floors, guards practicing their accuracy of shooting at the range, prisoners yelling for guards, toilets constantly flushing, jingling of keys, or the screams and unintelligible out-

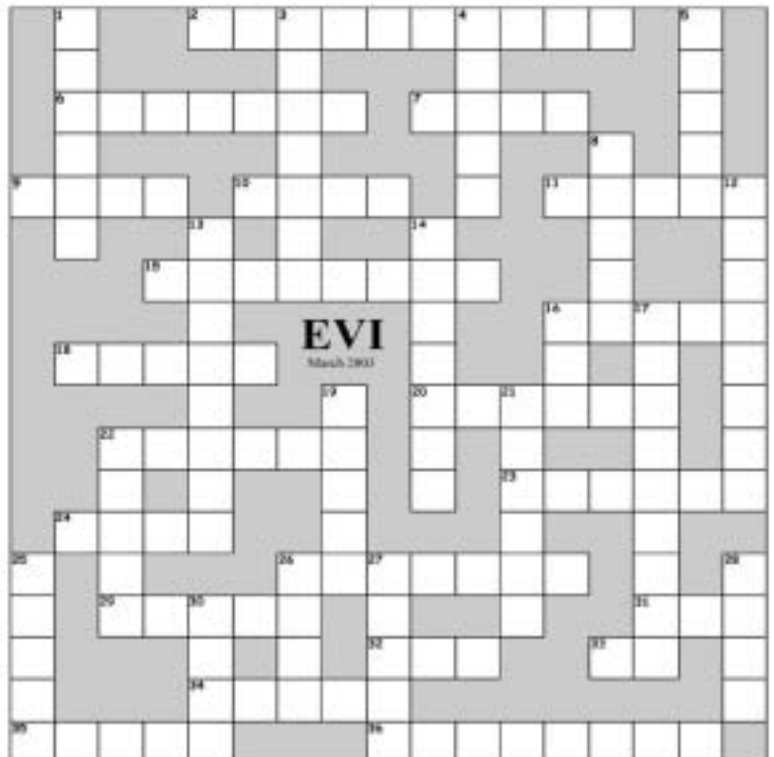
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Across:

2. The "A" part of AA.
6. City where Woman to Woman is held.
7. ... It is by dying that one awakens to Eternal Life. - ____ - (Page 99, 12&12).
9. Sacred Heart meeting. Sobriety for ____
10. The only requirement for membership is the desire to ____ drinking.
11. Oregon Area fifty something.
15. Center where Young People Candlelight meets.
16. Every morning (less Sundays) at the Unity Church. ____ Awakening
18. Founder of Serenity Lane (last name).
20. Meets at St. Mark's Catholic Church. ____ Group
22. Buckley House founder (first name).
23. EVI Business Meeting day.
24. 12pm, Springfield Lutheran. Serenity at ____
26. Location of the first Summerfest. ____ Inn
29. At Primary Purpose, smoke break is taken on the ____.
31. Continued to take personal inventory ... (Step #)
32. Alternate Oregon Area Treasurer (first name).
33. Saturday Monroe meeting. Friends of ____
34. Co-founded Springfield Monday Night in 1952.
35. Sunday at 7pm. Last House on the ____
36. Street where the previous EVI office was located.

Down:

1. St. Benedicts resident Border Collie. Lady - ____ - Rose
3. House incorporated for WFTS's mens facility.
4. The Happy Hour Group Location - ____ Cottage
5. Were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character. ____ Step
8. EVI office is behind ____'s
12. Harrisburg meeting day.
13. Every morning (less Sundays) at the First Christian Church - ____ - AM
14. Location of the first EVI office. ____ Building.
16. Nickname for Serenity Lane.
17. Retreat location up the McKenzie.
19. Name is an acronym that represents a bunch of towns in the area.
21. 5:30pm Monday, Springfield 1st Christian Church. Old ____
22. ____ Conscience
25. WFTS is a drug and alcohol ____ facility.
26. While on that pink cloud, life seems ____.
27. EVI Speaker Meeting chair (2002).
28. Al-____ literature on the east wall at the EVI office.
30. When we had taken the opposite ____ ... (Page 115, 12&12).



Emerald Valley Intergroup

Business Meeting Minutes - February 10, 2003

Meeting called to order 6:30 pm by Harold B. with the Serenity Prayer. 26 EVI representatives present for a quorum.

Announcements:

Group reps/secretaries please pick up flyers and announcements about Meetings, Speakers, Area Assemblies, Retreats, from the EVI Office. New Open Meeting, Mondays 7:00 to 8:00 pm at Temple Beth Israel, 42 W. 25th Ave, Eugene.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

CPC: Frank K. - Had a good month - put flyers out in both hospitals and police department.

H&I: Larry W. - Going good. Can always use more help.

Speaker Meeting: Mary Jean - Meeting is doing well. Angel will be rotating out soon. (See Flyer)

Treasurer: Tom L. - Group contributions are up from last month, but down from this time last year.

Office: Bob E. - Bill B. will be rotating in as new Office Coordinator in March. Diverter problems diminished in Jan. Need to work on getting office volunteers to fill out receipt book correct way. Need more women to help in shifts.

Literature: No Report.

Communications: John G. - New Communications business meeting time and day 1st Friday of the month at 6:00 pm at the EVI office, Adobe 5.0 software was purchased and installed. New Communications Chair elected John G. - 686-5602 Michael W. will be around to assist and this transition will take place over time.

Outreach: Ted H. - Outreach had meeting with AIS, it went well. Have Outreach meeting scheduled for February and March.

PI: Tom S. - Bob P. will become PI co-chair. Health Fair booth for PI was well staffed, thanks to all who helped. Tom S. rotates out as PI chair.

Answering Service: Carola K. - Had a few problems but they were taken care of, still need help with diverter so if your group can help take a shift or be an alternate contact us.

Newsletter: Teffany H. - Newsletter is going fine, can always use stories. May have crossword puzzle in March.

Archives: No Report.

Meeting Books: Elisabeth R. - New meeting books are out.

Activities: Mindy H. - Dance March 22, 2003. Live band (see flyer). Working on event for 4th of July.

NEW BUSINESS

Prudent Reserve presented by Tom L., EVI Treasurer, to approve EVI Prudent Reserve for 2003.

Motions:

Motion made by Tom L. to add to EVI By-laws the Treasurer, Vice - Treasurer and Chairperson's qualifications and duties as signatories to EVI bank accounts.

Motion passed.



EVI Office

1259 Willamette
Eugene, OR 97401-3509
Monday-Friday 9:00 am-5:00 pm
Saturday 9:00 am - 4:00 pm
Drop by for a visit!

EVI Web Site

www.efn.org/~eviaa

Meeting schedules, business meeting minutes, and much more.

The little squiggle in the address is found right next to the exclamation point on the keyboard. Save a book mark or favorite and check back often!

E.V.I. News

Emerald Valley Intergroup's Newsletter for the A.A. Community in Lane County

EVI News is a monthly newsletter of the Emerald Valley Intergroup. It is about, by, and for the members of Alcoholics Anonymous fellowship. Opinions expressed herein are not to be attributed to Alcoholics Anonymous as a whole, nor does publication of any article or event or notice imply endorsement by either Alcoholics Anonymous or EVI. (Exceptions: Quotations from A.A. books or pamphlets which are reprinted with permission of A.A. World Services, Inc.) EVI News is produced to support communication within the fellowship; please respect the anonymity of any A.A. member mentioned herein. EVI News reserves the right to edit any submissions for clarity, length, language, and editorial policy. Contributions gratefully accepted for consideration for publication.

Submissions due last Monday of each month. To submit articles or event information, mail them or drop them off at the EVI office c/o EVI Newsletter. Submissions can also be e-mailed to: eviaa@efn.org

Communication Committee (Newsletter & Web Site, Meeting Book) meetings are held at 6pm the first Friday of each month at the EVI office. Call John G (686-5602) with any questions.

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Contributions:

continued from page 2 (To The Newcomer)

(February/year to date)

Anonymous/Unknown 10.00/10.00
As Bill Sees It 0/0
Attitude Adjustment 338.47/338.47
Autumn Group 0/0
Brown Bag Group 0/0
Caduceus 0/113.00
Cottage Grove Noon 0/2.00
Cottage Grove Speaker Mtg 0/0
Courage to Change 0/0
District 19 0/0
Downtown AM Group 0/186.41
Drop The Rock 0/0
Fresh Start at Noon 0/0
Friday Night Stag 0/0
Get Well Group 0/10.00
Gratitude Group 0/0
The Great Fact Group 0/0
How It Works 0/65.00
McKenzie Bridge Group 0/0
McKenzie River Group 0/0
Men's Daily Reflections 0/0
Monday Mens Stag 121.50/131.50
Monday Night Beginners 0/0
New Freedom 90.00/90.00
New Freedom II 0/0
Primary Purpose 0/0
Recovery By the Big Book 0/0
Recovery By The Steps 30.00/30.00
Saturday Morning Steps 0/220.00
Search For Serenity 77.00/136.00
Serenity Seekers West 0/0
Sober Awakenings 0/0
Sobriety for Life 0/90.00
Springfield Monday Night 3.00/6.00
Sponsorship 0/0
Stairway to Sobriety 50.00/50.00
Sunday Morning B.B. 127.02/227.02
Sunday Sunshine 0/0
Sunlight of the Spirit 0/0
Sunday Night 12x12 0/0
SW Sunset 0/0
Thursday Men's Book Study 0/0
Thurs. Men's Spons. Group 0/0
Try God Group 291.70/291.70
Tuesday Men's Sponsorship 0/0
Tuesday Beginners 0/0
Veneta Gratitude Group 0/0
We Need Each Other 0/0
Wednesday Mens Noon 0/0
Wednesday Men's Stag 0/0
Women's How It Works 0/0
Women's Monday Night 0/0
Womans Rd. to Recovery 205.25/205.25
Total Contributions (month/year to date)
Group month/ytd 1343.94/2202.35
Fundraising:
Anonymous/Unknown 0/152.00
Faithful Fivers 45.00/110.00
Ind. Contributions/Other 3.79/16.74

bursts by those suffering from mental illnesses or nightmares. Of course, there is also the sound you hear that many attempt to disguise, the sound of someone crying into their pillow. But this sound pales in comparison to the rest.

After you have been processed at an intake center, you will be sent to one of your state's prisons. Upon arrival, you immediately are required to learn a whole new set of rules and codes. The failure to do this can be the difference between life and death. The moral norms that you may have been used to no longer matter. You will learn to live under the stress of knowing that, at any time, you may be required to participate in a variety of actions that could have life-long affects to your well-being. If you are successful with living on a general population prison yard, then you will live a life of self-segregation. You will witness firsthand the insane politics and dangers of prison life. You will be changed. This list also can go on and on.

The biggest fallacy would be to think that because you currently have everything going well in your life, that you could never end up here. If you can think back over the last year or two and remember just one instance when you drove a vehicle with alcohol in your system, then you have already taken the gamble I mentioned. You have already decided, that you alone, have the right to mortgage the lives of many people which is absolutely unconscionable on your part. You alone, have decided that it is fine if others suffer as a result of your actions. A very selfish way to think indeed.

It took me many years to gain some clarity on this problem, and on the disease of Alcoholism. The reason for this is pretty obvious at this point in my life, but very hard to explain. For most of my life, I was brought up around alcohol and it was one of the accepted norms around my house. I can remember great times that resulted from those around me consuming alcohol, specifically, my father. When you watch the person you idolize drink every single day, you become unable to find any error in the behavior. It was pretty cool when my brothers and I could grab a drink or two from him, or go looking for him at local bars to play a game of pool. Never realizing, that later in my adult life, when I was absolutely on top of the world, this accepted type of behavior would be the cause of my personal destruction. I should have taken more note of the problems that drinking caused between my parents to understand the ugly side is far more powerful. However, how many of us really want to concentrate on the ugly side of anything, let alone, a subject as personal as one's drinking habits. When I came to prison in 1993, I started to attend Alcoholic's Anonymous meetings as a result of my need to show the Board of Prison Terms that I had come to grips with the devastation caused by drinking and driving. Although, of course, I was not an alcoholic. In other words, I was there for all the wrong reasons. After a few years, it began to sink in that I was possibly going to spend the rest of my life in prison for a car accident. This revelation gave new definition of a drinking problem. Because of being completely irresponsible when it came to drinking, an innocent man was killed, and his family was destroyed. But, it is not only irresponsible to drink and drive, it is irresponsible to drink when you can not predict what type of person, or what type of behavior will result from the drinking. If you can't be completely certain, one hundred percent of the time, of what you will do, or who will be affected, when you take this drug, why would you then do so?? If we all went to a doctor for an ailment of some sort, and he stated to us that we needed to take this pill he prescribed, but, in doing so, there was a chance that we could die, that we could kill someone else, that we could lose everything that we own, that we could lose our families, that we could become disabled, or, that we could spend the rest of our lives in prison, we would ask this person if he were crazy!! None of us would take a drug that has these type of side effects, would we?? Well, apparently I did. This is the clarity of Alcoholism. It is a very seductive disease. It lets you forget about all the bad, all the ugly, and all the selfishness that goes with drinking. It is actually pretty amazing when you think about it. If we could harness that sort of power, and bottle it, we could make a fortune. But wait, someone already has.

To be continued next month...

March Calendar

- 1st Mon Steering Committee 6:30PM
Tue District 20, 6:30PM 418 A St. Ken L. 747-8270
Tue District 33, 6:30PM Pam G. 895-5478
Wed District 19, 5:15PM Jennifer W. 937-1070
Thur Speaker Mtg Committee, 7:00PM Angel 431-4924
Fri Communication Meeting, 6:00PM John G. 686-5602
Sat Cooperation w/Prof. Community, Noon
- 2nd Mon EVI Business Meeting 6:30PM
Wed District 6, 6:30PM Tim A. 726-8558
Sat Answering/Diverter, 9:00AM
Sat EVI Speaker's Meeting 7:30PM Country Club Rd.
- 3rd Mon Public Information, 6:30PM
Wed Activities, 6:30PM
- Last Wed H&I Committee, 6:00PM
Last Day Literature Committee, 6:30PM



Fellowship Events

March 15, 2003, Cottage Grove, OR, Pre-Conference Workshop.

Join us at the Alano Club from 10:30am-12:30pm to hear Darlene present the agenda items for the AA General Service Conference.

March 15, 2003, Eugene, OR, Angel's Birthday. Help Angel

Celebrate 30 years in our fellowship from 4pm to 7pm at Westminster Presbyterian Church, 777 Coburg Rd. Bring potluck dish and your favorite "Angel" story. Info: Gus P. 463-1691.

March 22, 2003, Eugene, OR, A Spring Fling Dance. AA Meeting 7:30pm, Dance 9pm to Midnight at Agate Hall (between 17th and 18th Ave. on Agate St.) \$5 suggested donation.

March 31, 2003, Eugene, OR, Pre Spring Fling. The Springfield Monday Night Group invites everyone to their Quarterly Potluck Dinner at 418 north A Street from 7-8pm. The meeting is from 8-9:30pm. Contact Bonnie at 988-1661.

April 4-6, 2003, Seaside, OR, "Willing to go to any lengths" 21st Annual North Coast Round-Up. Seaside Convention Center at 415 1st Avenue. Registration forms are available at the EVI office.

April 27, 2003, Eugene, OR, AA History Panel & Potluck. Join District 19 from 12:30-3:30pm at Agate Hall for AA & Al-Anon History, both local and world-wide. Contact John G. 686-5602.

Gratitude:



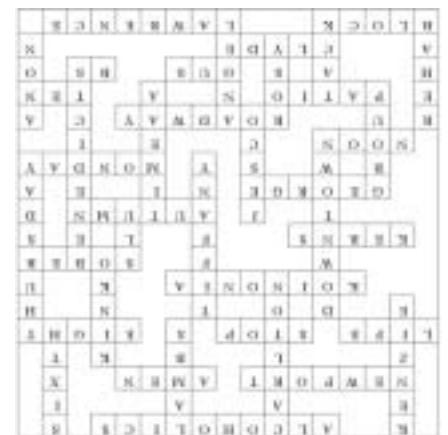
Currently Available Service Positions:

Women Volunteers are especially needed at the EVI office. **EVI Office Volunteers** work a four hour shift, once a week, or every two weeks. This is a fun way to get involved and get to know some other AA's in the community. It is recommended that volunteers have 3 months of sobriety. If you are interested, call the EVI office at 342-4113 ... or drop by!

Other volunteer opportunities: **H&I** has a constant, and varied need for people willing to do a little to a lot of service work. There is also a special need for women volunteers for Lane County Jail, CCC, Willamette Valley Treatment, etc. The opportunity for this type of service has really expanded, and H&I has been doing a great job, but they need the AA community to step up and volunteer. This is real service work.

The following positions are open: These positions take varying time commitments and are great ways to be of service. Contact the committee chairs for more information.

Office Co-Coordinator: Position opens in March. Business office experience helpful, retired person also helpful.





People:

OFFICE VOLUNTEER COORDINATOR
 Bob E. (747-2246), Bill B. (685-9216)
 ACTIVITIES
 Mindy H. (954-2048), Valerie Z. (683-1936)
 ANSWERING SERVICE
 Carola K. (736-8041), Jana (431-3839)
 ARCHIVIST
 Linda (345-5827)
 COOP. PROFESSIONAL COMMUNITY(CPC)
 Frank K. (345-7131), Vicky K. (688-5042)
 E.V.I. COMMUNICATIONS:
 John G. (686-5602)
 Newsletter: Tefany H. (746-1438),
 John G. (686-5602)
 Website: Darren (485-3474), Jessie (485-3474)
 Meeting Books: Elisabeth R. (747-5814),
 Lee P. (741-9824)
 E.V.I. SPEAKER MEETING
 Angel (431-4924), Mary Jean (485-7854)
 LITERATURE
 Letha M. (687-6623), Todd P. (689-4646)
 OUTREACH
 Ted H. (338-8380), Annie B. (431-6610)
 PUBLIC INFORMATION (PI)
 Todd J. (302-6377), Bob P. (434-1045)
 HOSPITALS & INSTITUTIONS (H&I)
 Chair: Larry W. (513-5626), Open
 HOSPITALS
 Chair: Steve S. (914-9258), Todd J. (302-6377)
 COOP. TREATMENT FACILITIES (CTF)
 Janis B. (935-8833), Cayce (520-5635)
 CORRECTIONS
 Chair: Tom R. (465-1832), Open
 H&I Coordinators
 Lane County Jail: Brenda K. (342-1668),
 Ted H. (338-8380)
 C.C.C. (Women's): Open
 C.C.C. (Men's): Tom R. (465-1832)
 Alma Work Camp: Bud W. (935-8833)
 Pathways: Kenny (461-2937)
 Serbu Detention: Jack C. (463-1040)
 Carlton House: Joe C. (554-3558)
 W.F.T.-Friday Night: Janis (935-8833)
 W.F.T.-Book Study: Leslie B. (606-5776)
 Serenity Lane-Speaker: Cayce (746-6990)
 Serenity Lane-B.T.G.: Gus P. (463-1691)
 Serenity Lane-Sat. Kurt J. (747-8925)
 L.C.P.H.: Todd J. (302-6377)
 Johnson Unit: Jill S. (302-1311)
 V.A. Meeting: Dennis (607-5127)
 E.V.I. STEERING COMMITTEE
 Chair: Harold B. (579-8087)
 Vice-Chair: Kurt J. (747-8925)
 Secretary: Roger H. (688-3641)
 Treasurer: Tom L. (683-7706)
 Vice Treasurer: Lori B. (684-8670)
 At-Large: Amanda W. (988-9656)
 At-Large: Bob T. (342-1588)
 At-Large: Steve O. (431-1205)
 At-Large: Jenne B. (688-1189)
 BOOKKEEPER: Kurt

25 Little Acts of Kindness

1. Say "Good Morning" to newcomers.
2. Treat your sponsor to coffee.
3. Take time to give directions to a meeting.
4. Write a letter to encourage a friend.
5. Offer to bring an elderly member to a meeting.
6. Take a shift at EVI.
7. Say "I love you" to your family.
8. Put extra money in the basket.
9. Help a mother with her child at a meeting.
10. Each time you get a new AA book, get one for someone else too.
11. Take a shift on the diverter.
12. Get coffee for the volunteers.
13. Bring flowers to someone celebrating 30 days of sobriety.
14. Say "Please" and "Thank You".
15. Offer your seat to a late arriver.
16. Take time to listen.
17. Baby sit for a single mom so she can go to a meeting.
18. Put two chairs away after the meeting -yours and someone else's.
19. Offer to sponsor a newcomer.
20. Offer to sponsor a not so newcomer.
21. Help a disabled person get to a meeting.
22. Bring doughnuts to your home group.
23. Forgive someone a debt.
24. Say "I'm sorry".
25. Call a member you haven't seen for a while just to say "Hi".

Kathy B. - Try God Group - Eugene



continued from page 3 (EVI Business Meeting Minutes)

Motion made by Karl B., H&I Chair. Motion - The H&I recommends that EVI votes in the H&I Chairperson once every two years and then allows for the H&I Committee to vote in all three subcommittee chairs and co-chairs. Motion passed.
 Motion made by Bob T. (On behalf of EVI Steering Committee). Motion - To allow the AI-Anon Information Service (AIS) to use the EVI facilities for their monthly business meeting and to permit an AIS non-voting liaison to attend the monthly EVI business meeting to assist in AI-Anon / A.A. cooperation. Motion passed.

OLD BUSINESS

Vacant Steering Committee Member at large. Nominations were opened, Jenne B. - 688-1189 was elected.
 Public Information Co-Chair position, Bob P. - 434-1045 was elected.
 Harold B. gave EVI Steering Committee meeting report.

Submitted by Steve O., acting Secretary

Echoes in the Valley

(Echoes in the Valley is a collection of wit and wisdom heard in and around the valley. While not always original, they are shared by local folk at local events. If you hear anything at a meeting that you think others would enjoy or benefit from, please drop it off in the Newsletter Box at EVI. Quotes are credited to the speaker with permission, otherwise they are anonymous.)

“Today when (stuff) hits the fan, I stand behind the fan.”
Angel – Friday Night Stag

“Sin is its own punishment. Virtue is its own reward.”
Steve S. on the 10th step - Monday Noon Stag

"I've heard that this program's not for people who need it, but for people who want it. Well, it's not for people who want it, it's for people who work it."
Anonymous - The Great Fact Group

Meetings are a part of my spirituality.
Jack C. - Gingerbread House (Mapleton)

“I think with a limp ... I'm an alcoholic!”
John M. - Stairway to Sobriety

“My spiritual awakenings were always with the wrong spirits.”
Pedro - Autumn Group

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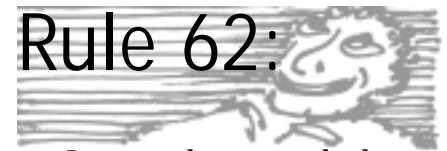
period was up, some good AA members “just happened around” to take me to another meeting, and I was launched on another 24-hour period without too much trouble. This pattern repeated itself until I found that I was going to meetings on my own, staying sober because the AA program began to make sense to me. Those first AA contacts and my wonderful sponsor gradually persuaded me to become active in group affairs - and I guess I was hooked! Although I read all available AA literature and tried to follow the Twelve Steps to the best of my ability, I didn't let myself become too involved in worries about “working the program.” I didn't question *why* I was an alcoholic - I simply accepted that self-evident fact and faced up to the equally evident truth that I must do something about it, not in a moment of fanaticism inspired by remorse for my latest escapade, but in a continuous, humble effort to be of help to still-suffering alcoholics.

Over the years, I have made possibly hundreds of Twelfth Step calls. I can count my successful ones on the fingers of one hand. But at least I have carried the message. How can we tell when the seed we have planted will grow and perhaps come to maturity? I knew of the existence of AA and of the fine work it was doing for some years before I made that first phone call for help. You see, like so many of us, I did not believe that I was an alcoholic until the hard fact became impossible to ignore.

Today, I am often asked by acquaintances who ‘knew me when’ whether I think it would be possible for me to go back to so-called social drinking. I have only one answer for these people: “I really don't know - and believe me, brother, I'm not about to try to find out!”

T. C., Ste. Therese de Blainville, Que.

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It seems that a man had forgotten his promise to take his wife to a very mod play that evening, and had gotten himself thoroughly bombed after work. He arrived home too late for dinner, and his spouse promptly dragged him off to the theater. Some time before the curtain rose, he became deathly ill, went looking for a rest room, and had great difficulty finding one. At last he came upon one that, oddly, had one wall missing. But he heaved his cookies in the proper plumbing and went back to his seat. “Did I miss much?” he asked his wife.

“No,” she answered. “This is one of those modern things, with dim lighting, and you can see into every room of an apartment. So far all that's happened is, some fellow wandered onstage, threw up into the toilet, said, ‘Boy, I feel awful,’ and walked off again.”

Instead of a play, the inebriate in this tale was attending a football game. He kept jumping to his feet at just about every bit of action on the field. Finally, a voice from behind shouted, “Sit down in front!”

“Don't be silly,” the drunk called back. “I don't bend that way.”

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Emerald Valley Intergroup
1259 Willamette
Eugene, Oregon 97401

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