

Monthly Reprieve

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RACINE AREA CENTRAL OFFICE'S MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

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Store is open Monday through Friday from 9:00 am—5:00 pm. Saturdays 9:00 am—2:00 pm; Closed Sundays

Feeling right at home when coming home

By: Stephanie H.

A couple of times a year I return to Wisconsin to visit family and friends. I depend on my AA family to be my ground transportation and continued sobriety support while in my home state.

While doing some service work at RACO in early sobriety, I met a young man, Mike, who came in to pay rent for his group. I recognized his name and face but I knew that he didn't know me. We had never been in a meeting together. Over the past few years we've developed a friendship through social media.

Prior to my most recent trip home Mike and I decided to meet. I was to call him when I arrived in Wisconsin. I was excited about this meeting - - Mike had always been kind and articulate in his written interactions with me and we seemed to have some similar interests. There would be so much for us to talk about!

Although my exact recollection of the details are a little sketchy, I remember calling a sleepy Mike and reminding him that we

were meeting for coffee but could he please pick me up because I had no transportation? The garrulous man in print seemed a tad shy and timid over the phone. I thought I heard a struggle in his voice as we tried to arrange a time convenient for him.

Finally, Mike arrived to pick me up and off to Starbucks we went. Since he was kind enough to be my taxi, I bought his coffee for him. We took a seat and there was an awkward silence between us. I had been so certain that there would be no shortage of topics for discussion. I couldn't imagine one coffee meeting being enough time.

Mike often cast his glance downward and I found myself hesitant to make eye contact. It became apparent that we were both painfully shy and possibly introverts, but who knew? Being my typical alcoholic self, I overcompensated for my shyness by excessive chatter and self-deprecating humor. Mike chuckled nervously from time to time and honestly I can't remember a word that he uttered to me or I to him. I don't think we

spent more than 45 minutes together there and he took me back to where I was staying. I kept thinking there was so much left unsaid and so many questions I had for him.

Our first real meeting didn't go at all as I thought it would. Upon reflection, nothing in my recovery has gone as I thought it would. Nothing has happened in my time but things have happened at the right time. That day a power greater than myself had placed Mike and I in that Starbucks together in that awkward situation. I am so thankful that I finally have the opportunity to meet Mike and that he took time from his Saturday to meet with me - another alcoholic.

Mike and I might interact better in writing than we do face to face, but that day we shared that common bond that only alcoholics understand. Both of us could have sipped our coffee in total silence for hours and still understood a plethora of unspoken information about each other. Whether he knew it or not, Mike was the AA meeting that I really needed that day. And for that I am grateful.

Eighth Promise

*"Self seeking
WILL
slip away"*



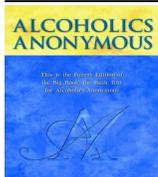
August Focus

Step Eight

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

Eighth Tradition

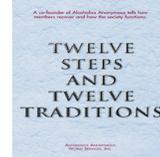
"Alcoholics Anonymous should remain forever non-professional, but our service centers may employ special workers"



Our Stories

An “Attitude Adjustment” through A.A.

By: *Wendie H.*



“The Seventh Step is where we make the change in our attitude which permits us, with humility as our guide, to move out from ourselves toward others and toward God.” Twelve and Twelve, P. 76

I walked into my first meeting of Alcoholics Anonymous long before getting sober and for reasons that had nothing to do with sobriety. I was back in treatment for the second time by the age of 17. I went to clear some trouble. The plan was to stay in treatment long enough to get the Navy recruiter to sign the addiction waiver I needed to escape my life. I trusted no one and my world was only as big as my own experiences – so, when people at meetings talked about being sober, I assumed they, like me, were lying to get what **they** wanted. I endured a couple meetings a week the treatment center required.

I figured the steps were like Girl Scout badges and I'd have to do at least some of them to get what I wanted. I had no interest in you, your ideas, your steps or your way of life.

Well, that treatment ended but the waiver had not been signed, so I haunted the AA club for a couple months to keep up appearances. While there I made a little cash hustling cards from the standard group of old guys to support my drinking. I played Penny cent Gin during the day and drank cheap booze through most of the night. When the Military refused to sign an addiction waiver AA was of no use to me and I pulled up stakes and put AA in my rear view.

The next four years brought many more treatments where I successfully

avoided AA meetings for the most part. When I couldn't avoid meetings listening to the “lies” in AA was like nails on a chalk board. Their happiness and peace were clearly fraudulent. (As if they had nothing better to do than deceive me!) People spoke of honesty, and willingness and it made me feel out of place and mistrustful. I could have tolerated the meetings if only I could have had a few drinks and sometimes that's exactly what I did. It was appalling that no one drank during meetings. For the next few years I popped back into AA periodically as required while in various half-way houses, treatment centers or psych wards.

One of the troubles I got myself into required some time on monitored Antabuse. Every weekday I had to go take Antabuse in front of a nurse. Naturally I compensated with other forms of intoxication. As soon as the nurse visits stopped I resumed drinking before the Antabuse had fully cleared my bloodstream.

Liquor had truly ceased to be a luxury and was in fact a necessity. Each treatment I got kicked out faster or they wanted me to stay longer. Five years and two days after the first time I ever went to detox, I wound up in the emergency room of the treatment center I'd walked out of a couple hours earlier to get drunk. I don't recall little about my last drunk but I clearly recall the next day seeing the look of horror on the faces of the women who sat with me through the night. They wouldn't even look at me. They wouldn't tell me what I had said or done but I knew it was bad. I'd seen that

look before – the horror of my presence. I was banged up bad this time so I decided I'd better stick around long enough to heal up a bit.

This treatment center barely let me stay and only had because I had agreed to go to a meeting every day. I spent the next 44 days finishing that 28 day program. I hit at least one meeting every one of those days. I was inappropriate, loud, sullen and often enraged, but I kept going. The Saturday I got out of treatment and having nowhere to go I popped up at a 10:00 a.m. meeting. I recall as I walked in the door old Shorty slapping the table and saying “well I never thought I'd see you again!” Odd as it sounds, his comment made me feel welcome. I kept coming back.

I didn't make it past Step one for the first three months. I'd gotten in the habit of going to meetings daily in treatment so I kept that up when I got out. I slowly started listening more and my shares went from rants of injustice to the occasional honest admissions that I didn't know how to live without drinking – that I missed my friend and only remaining companion.

I've said for years I accidentally got and stayed sober. I didn't come to AA wanting to be sober or to be a better person; I learned to **want** that watching you. By the time I got to Step 7 I understood the nature of my disease. I knew I was irreparably broken and I couldn't fix what I broke. I wanted the attitude change that would enable the changes I so desperately needed and I caught that from people in AA.



Events and Service Notes

When Anyone, Anywhere Reaches Out For Help, I Want The Hand Of A.A. Always To Be There ...

Are you an AA member with the desire to carry the message to the still suffering alcoholic? Your service is needed by the District 17 Special Needs/Accessibility Committee. No prior knowledge is needed, and there are tons of ways in which your service is needed. Be on the lookout for the volunteer signups like the one below circulating at the meetings, or bring this form to *your* meeting/group, or contact the Carly R at racinespecialneeds@gmail.com for other ways to contribute.

Whom We Serve:

- ✓ Physically disabled
- ✓ Deaf & hearing impaired
- ✓ Blind & visually impaired
- ✓ Learning or reading impaired
- ✓ Seniors and homebound
- ✓ Language barrier
- ✓ Single parents requiring childcare.
- ✓ Encourage Big Book tape study meetings in each district.
- ✓ Encourage groups to provide childcare.
- ✓ Update special-needs information on Where & When's.
- ✓ Bring meetings into the home, hospital, or long-term care facilities; encourage

How We Serve:

- ✓ Provide interpreters for meetings and events.
- ✓ Provide Braille A.A. literature and programs for special events.
- ✓ Assist the physically disabled at events; provide rides in special cases.
- ✓ Encourage wheelchair-accessible meetings and events.
- ✓ districts and groups to support regular meetings in special-needs facilities.
- ✓ Provide literature and hold workshops on special needs.
- ✓ Explore other special needs; work with GSO and other districts & areas.

Special Needs/Accessibility Committee: Contact: Carly R (chair)
racinespecialneeds@gmail.com

And For That, I Am Responsible !

District 17 Corrections

For those looking to jumpstart their involvement in service work, District 17 is in need of help in carrying the message to those in the Corrections system. There are many positions that fall under the heading of Corrections service work—Corrections Correspondence Service, Pre-release Contact Program, and AA meetings on the inside, to name a few. For those interested in getting involved—please contact Steve N. (Area 75 District 17 Corrections Committee Chair) at (262) 939-9676 or nova221sgn@wi.rr.com.

Upcoming Events & Activities

Fridays in August

Young at Heart
“ Young Peoples Meeting”
The Benjamin House
6:00pm

August 19th - 21st

36th Annual Green Lake Roundup
Green Lake Conference Center
Green Lake, WI

Saturday, August 27th

AA Anniversary Pot Luck
Dodgeville Serenity Club
401 N. Union St.
Dodgeville, WI
6:00-7:00pm

Friday, October 21st

66th Annual Area 75 Conference
Holiday Inn
4601 Calumet Ave.
Manitowoc, WI 54220

Have an event to add? Please email raconewsletter@gmail.com to have any upcoming events listed!



Help is Everywhere

District/Club Information

District 17		Racine, Wisconsin
Racine Alano Club 1140 Douglas Ave. Racine, WI 53404 (262) 634-9902	The Grove Club 1037 Grove Ave. Racine, WI 53405 (262) 634-9656	Benjamin House 4848 Highway H Franksville, WI 53126 (262) 886-9611
Benjamin House Website: http://www.benjaminhouseracine.org/		
District 7		Kenosha, Wisconsin
Kenosha Alano Club 630 56 th St. Kenosha, WI 53140 (262) 654-8246	Outcasts 1310 63 rd St. Kenosha, WI 53144	Soutport Lighthouse Recovery Club 8017 Sheridan Rd. Kenosha, WI 53143 (262) 653-9800
Kenosha Alano Club Website: http://kenoshaalanoclub.org		
District 36		Burlington 12 x 12 Club 724 N. Pine St. Burlington, WI
West Racine/Kenosha County		
District 6		Walworth County Alano Club 611 E. Walworth St. Delavan, WI 53115 (262) 740-1888
Eastern Walworth County		
District 12		Eastern Lake County, Illinois
Alano Club of Waukegan 2419 Washington St. Waukegan, IL 60085 (847) 662-9640	Zion-Benton Alano Club 228 Sheridan Rd. Winthrop Harbor, IL 60096 (847) 746-9842	
Alano Club of Waukegan Website: http://alanoclubwaukegan.com/		
Waukegan Hotline: (847) 623-9660		
District 10		Antioch Recovery Club 311 E Depot St.; Suite C Antioch, IL 60002 (847) 838-1882
Western Lake County		
Antioch Recovery Club: http://www.antiochrecoveryclub.org/		
Antioch Hotline: (847) 395-5988		

Alcoholics Anonymous is not affiliated with any club or other outside enterprise

Racine Area Central Office *Officers/Steering Committee*

Chairperson	Roxann D.
Co-Chairperson	Toni M.
Secretary	VACANT
Co-Secretary	VACANT
Treasurer	Pam L.
Co-Treasurer	Jessica N.
Staffing Coordinator	John B.
Co-Staffing Coordinator	Bruce P.
Newsletter	Kevin B.
Co-Newsletter	Stacy K.
Hotline Chairperson	Mark S.
Co-Hotline Chairperson	Jason A.
Literature Chairperson	Rachel M.
Co-Literature Chair	Deb K.
Procurement	Steve K.
Webmaster	Courtney L.
Co-Webmaster	Brian K.
Advisor	Darrel S.
3701 Durand Avenue #225B	
Racine, WI 53403	
(262) 554-6611	
24-Hour Hotline: (262) 554-7788	

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