

# Monthly Reprieve

Volume 12, Issue 3

March 2016

## 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

## Who I Am

by: Christina P.

"I didn't know who I was when I first walked through the doors of AA. You told me that I was the most important person in the room. You told me you would love me until I learned to love myself. You told me this was an experience I won't want to miss.

When I didn't "buy in", when I could only see and hear the differences, you told me to keep coming back. When I was scared, crying, and feeling alone, you told me to "get in the middle of the herd".

When I didn't know where to go, you invited me to your house. You invited me to

dinner. You asked me questions and shared your experience, strength and hope with me.

When I asked you, if you knew that I was going to relate to the book, you smiled and chuckled.



When I was irritated, frustrated and discontent, you told me I was the problem. When I asked about God,

you taught me about Group of drunks, and Good orderly direction. When I didn't know how to pray, you held my hand.

When I didn't want to do this, you understood. When I fought with you, you showed me acceptance, love and tolerance.

When I couldn't see myself, you gave me a new pair of glasses.

When I took you for granted, you showed me grace.

When I was through, you showed me... **you.**

### Third Tradition

*"The only requirement for membership is a desire to stop drinking"*



## March Focus

### Third Step Prayer

"God, I offer myself to thee, to build with me and do with me as though wilt. Relieve me of the bondage of self, that I may better do Thy will. Take away my difficulties, that victory over them may bear witness to those I would help of Thy power, Thy love, and Thy way of life. May I do Thy will always" Amen"

### Third Step

*"Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God as we understood him"*

## ***Third Step Hope - Deciding to Turn My Will and Life Over to G.O.D.***

*By: Rachelle V.*

After 2 1/2 years of sobriety, I reached an emotional bottom. I had not found a spiritual experience sufficient to recover from alcoholism.

I was in constant torment in my mind, blaming my husband for not helping me with my newborn and the household chores and feeling generally negative about life. All I did was cry and complain about my problems to anyone who would listen. I held most meetings hostage with my litany of woes.

I was attending 5 to 7 meetings a week, so I figured I was working a good program. I felt so sorry for myself that I decided maybe I should just start drinking again because I was just as miserable in sobriety as I had been drinking. In one last attempt to give this 12 step program a chance, I hit as many meetings as I could, even going back to attending Alanon meetings, in the hope of encountering a ray of hope.

In attending the Wednesday night Alanon meeting, which incidentally was the first meeting I had attended 5 years prior, when I had first come to Alanon looking for help with my co-dependency, I found my ray of hope. Her name was Carol. She talked in a very simple and direct way about the power of the steps and how they had changed her life. She was a teacher and I related to her because I was a teacher and I responded very well to the intellectual approach. I remember asking her very directly in the middle of the meeting, "Are you telling me in no uncertain terms that these steps have given you a spiritual experi-

ence and a completely new way of life?" She looked me right in the eye and confirmed that right now she had complete peace and could be completely in this moment. She could be in this meeting right now and not think about anything else but being present in this meeting. I so envied that! Even though I was in that meeting I was thinking of all of the chaos outside of that meeting that was waiting to swallow me up. I got her number and decided to "interview her" to be my next sponsor.

Over latte's at Wilson's Coffee shop, and notebook in hand, I asked her if she was to sponsor me, precisely how she would do it and what she would require of me. She explained the commitment that she would make to me and that she would expect in return.

She laid down the terms and I agreed as I was desperate to do something, anything to get well. I had a new baby girl and did not want to ever put her in danger from my alcoholism. I had a marriage I desperately wanted to end or save. I really didn't know what to do anymore. All I knew was that I had reached the jumping off place in sobriety. I couldn't go on, yet, I couldn't go back. My life and sobriety were on the line and I was quite literally putting my life into the hands of this woman.

I would say that this experience of making a decision to work with Carol was Step 3 in action for me. I decided to put my life into someone else's care. I committed to work the rest of the steps with her, all the way through Step 12, so help me God! I was going to give

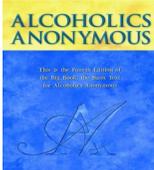
this program my all and find out if it really worked.

I aligned my will with her will for me. I followed directions. I attended the meetings she required of me. I met with her weekly. I completed the assignments. I put more effort into my step work with her and less into attending meetings.

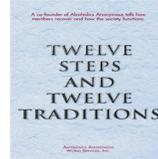
I stopped trying to solve my problems by talking about them. I didn't make any decisions unless I ran them past her. She gave me G.O.D. - Good Orderly Direction. I finally decided that I had a better chance of someone other than me running my life. It felt good to know that I did not have to make the decisions anymore! I put my trust in her and decided that if things didn't work out, I could blame her. But, my life (thoughts and emotions) got better! I let a complete stranger run my life and I was getting better? Wow. Yes, I was that desperate. Desperate enough to make a decision to commit my life into someone else's hands.

This third step experience has enabled me to have many more third step experiences. Allowing another human in and having it turn out wonderfully has allowed me to let God in. Who knows what will happen now if I now align my will more perfectly with my Creator?!





# Our Stories



## A Life Worth Living by: Lee H.

The warning signs were there. And as the years rolled by, I knew I was getting older and not getting any better.

My alcoholic story begins in the summer of 1966 in the basement bar of a school friend's parents house. It was there that I first drank with the purpose of getting drunk. From that day forward, for the next 37 years, I drank as often as I could, at first letting little get in the way of it, and toward the end letting absolutely nothing get in the way.

My first drunk, I imagine, was like every other alcoholic's. It was almost magical - I loved it! Alcohol for me was the missing piece of the puzzle -- the miraculous elixir. It "evened the playing field", per say - made up for shortcomings. It connected the dots! I had cracked the code! In an instant, I wasn't shy or awkward anymore! I was funny, crazy, outgoing and invincible.

This set of falsehoods would cloud my judgment, hurt me, and all who cared about me for decades. There were plenty of warning signs I blew through during those years that would have stopped a non-alcoholic in his tracks.

In high school, with an A on the line in my favorite class with a teacher I adored, I had prepared well for a forensics competition and should have been ready to compete. But I was too drunk on the Thursday night of the competition to be in any shape to compete. When my teacher asked if I was alright, I lied, said I didn't really care, and accepted my C. The summer

before college I crashed into a parked car and a bike rack full of bikes. I tried to run, but was in no shape to do that.

I was brought home by the police, who knew my dad so didn't cite me for drunk driving. Then off to college, rooming with a friend I'd known since junior high. We'd both planned to play football in college, but it never happened. He got kicked out of school for drugs, and I dropped out because I couldn't reconcile studying with my nonstop party mentality. Before I dropped out, the R.A. on my dorm floor sat me down and gave me this warning, I was becoming a "waste of a life were many. All along my friends and family, doctors, even the police kept asking me why? And my only answer was: I don't know. A life wasted.

June 18th 1998 I was in the sick room of the Grove Club, forced to attend an AA meeting because I was staying at a crisis center and spa after a three-day getaway at "Club Detox"!

I would not remain sober from that point on for 6 years. Still, I heard enough that day to point me in the right direction, and give me some hope. I heard, and finally believed, that I didn't have to live like this anymore, and I could have a meaningful life again.

Eventually, on April 23, 2004, I found my home in AA, with a host of wonderful friends. And with that, I began to repair relationships I had previously destroyed.

My name became re-associated with employment, a

drivers license, and insurance! These changes really came to me in an unexpected way. They came after working the 12 Steps and believing that I needed to carry the message to other alcoholics! It has been quite refreshing to think about people other than myself.

Belief in a Higher Power and a desire to do the next right thing, I've recently been attending AA meetings at the Veterans Hospital in Milwaukee with my good friend Rich N, which has again helped me through a time of need - because I sometimes forget that nothing helps us more than working with another alcoholic!

My college roommate, the friend I'd known since junior-high school, called me yesterday to tell me he's entering treatment at the VA in Milwaukee, starting today. He asked me if I would be his sponsor! I haven't seen him in 40 years, but I told him, "Of course I will, my old friend. I'm excited to work with you".

Is this the reason I've been to thousands of meetings and hundreds of visits to detox? Yes, I believe it is! I've figured what they told me all along was true" - to keep this gift I was given so freely, I must continue to give it away" - a life not wasted



## RACO Donations / Financials

Group	Jan	YTD
R. Alano 7am Daily Reflections	\$ 100.00	\$ 100.00
R. Alano Friday Nite CandleLite	\$ 30.00	\$ 30.00
Anonymous Donations	\$ 134.40	\$ 134.40
Benj. House Sunday 8am AA/Alanon	\$ 31.00	\$ 31.00
Benj. House 10am Sunday downstairs	\$ 13.00	\$ 13.00
Benj. House Wednesday 6pm Ism's	\$ 13.00	\$ 13.00
Benj. House Thurs. 1pm AA/Alanon	\$ 10.00	\$ 10.00
Benj. House Friday Young at Heart	\$ 10.00	\$ 10.00
Benj. House Saturday 10am	\$ 38.10	\$ 38.10
Birthday Club	\$ 34.00	\$ 34.00
Fox River Group	\$ 30.00	\$ 30.00
Grove Wednesday 4:30	\$ 100.00	\$ 100.00
Pleasant Prairie/Good Shep 12x12	\$ 70.25	\$ 70.25
Racine Transitional Care	\$ 100.00	\$ 100.00
RACO 12:15 Mon-Sat	\$ 100.00	\$ 100.00
Union Grove Visiting Vets Grp 75	\$ 50.00	\$ 50.00
<b>DONATION TOTALS</b>	\$ 863.75	
<b>Income Jan. 2016</b>	\$ 2,051.20	
<b>Expense Jan. 2016</b>	\$ 2,833.77	
<b>Net Loss</b>	\$ 782.57	
<b>Donations 2016 YTD</b>	\$ 863.75	
<b>Donations 2015 YTD</b>	\$ 772.45	



# Events and Service Notes

## RACO Volunteers Needed!!

The Racine Area Central Office has unfortunately had to close its doors during some daytime hours over the past few weeks due to a shortage of volunteers to staff the desk. If you or someone you sponsor has an interest in getting trained to staff the desk and be of service, please call RACO at (262) 554-6611 and we will get you in touch with John B.—RACO's Staffing Coordinator. No one who needs the services of RACO should ever be turned away due to a shortage of volunteers! Be of service to your central office today! :-)

## RACO Steering Committee Meetings

The Racine Area Central Office's 'Steering Committee' meets on the first **WEDNESDAY** of every month at RACO (6:30pm). The steering committee invites anyone who may be interested in Area 75 and District 17 events and happenings.

Please note the NEW day/time of the Steering Committee meetings—as they used to be held on Saturday mornings! If you or

someone you know might be interested in sitting-in on a Committee meeting or possibly filling an open position, please join us for a monthly meeting or email [raconewsletter@gmail.com](mailto:raconewsletter@gmail.com) for information on available positions and position requirements. We look forward to seeing you at the next Committee meeting!

## Literature at RACO

Have you browsed the Racine Area Central Office store lately? There is a wide selection of literature, coins, keychains, clothing and other recovery-related items at great prices!

Recently, there has been a particular interest and request for the text "A New Pair of Glasses" by Chuck C.

This particular book is quite

expensive when purchased from our supplier new. If you have any used copies of the book you would like to donate, RACO would greatly appreciate your generosity in sharing and/or donating.

Put this classic text to use by allowing others to experience "A New Pair of Glasses" themselves!

## Upcoming Events & Activities

### Saturday, March 12th

Tri-County Conference  
Kenosha, Wisconsin  
UAW Hall 8:00am kick-off

### Saturday, March 19th

St. Patty's Dance  
Grove Club, Racine, WI  
(also)

Badger Intergroup  
Waukesha Expo Center  
Speaker: Clancy I.  
Speaker @ 7:30pm

### Saturday, March 26th

Easter Party at the Grove  
1:00-3:00pm  
(also)

Bingo Night at the Grove  
7:00-9:00pm

### Wednesday, April 6th

RACO Steering Committee Mtg  
Racine Area Central Office  
6:30-7:30pm

### Saturday April 16th

Acoustic Café  
The Grove Club  
8:30pm

*Know of any upcoming events?  
Email [raconewsletter@gmail.com](mailto:raconewsletter@gmail.com)*



# Help is Everywhere

## District/Club Information

<b>District 17</b>		<b>Racine, Wisconsin</b>
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: <a href="http://www.benjaminhouseracine.org/">http://www.benjaminhouseracine.org/</a>		
<b>District 7</b>		<b>Kenosha, Wisconsin</b>
Kenosha Alano Club 630 56 <sup>th</sup> St. Kenosha, WI 53140 (262) 654-8246	Outcasts 1310 63 <sup>rd</sup> St. Kenosha, WI 53144	Southport Lighthouse Recovery Club 8017 Sheridan Rd. Kenosha, WI 53143 (262) 653-9800
Kenosha Alano Club Website: <a href="http://kenoshaalanoclub.org">http://kenoshaalanoclub.org</a>		
<b>District 36</b>		<b>Burlington 12 x 12 Club</b>
<b>West Racine/Kenosha County</b>		724 N. Pine St. Burlington, WI
<b>District 6</b>		<b>Walworth County Alano Club</b>
<b>Eastern Walworth County</b>		611 E. Walworth St. Delavan, WI 53115 (262) 740-1888
<b>District 12</b>		<b>Eastern Lake County, Illinois</b>
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: <a href="http://alanoclubwaukegan.com/">http://alanoclubwaukegan.com/</a>		
Waukegan Hotline: (847) 623-9660		
<b>District 10</b>		<b>Antioch Recovery Club</b>
<b>Western Lake County</b>		311 E Depot St.; Suite C Antioch, IL 60002 (847) 838-1882
Antioch Recovery Club: <a href="http://www.antiochrecoveryclub.org/">http://www.antiochrecoveryclub.org/</a>		
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	Courtney K.
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

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**24-Hour Hotline: (262) 554-7788**

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