

May 15, 2013

Osseo AA Newsletter

Suburban North Alano Vol. 2 Issue 10

www.OsseoAA.org

“One Day at a Time”



Happy Mother's Day

Greetings:

Hopefully spring will be here soon! I am sure we are all tired this this crazy weather! By the time you see this newsletter we will have held the omelet breakfast this past Sunday. I hope that everyone that attended had a good time and fellowship.

The new security screens have been installed in the lower back windows of the club. This should prevent anyone breaking in from those areas anymore. I want to thank those who remodeled the cash box, specifically Joe and Pat. It is like a mini Fort Knox now.

The next function on the horizon is the summer picnic. The dates and times will be posted.

If anybody has any concerns about the club, or suggestions for improvements, etc., please contact the board. We are here to serve the club.

I remain your humble servant,

Bob W

If anyone would like to get on the mailing list for this newsletter, please just submit your name and email address to any board member email Rebecca T. at becthomas23@gmail.com

Email addresses can be found on the club website: OsseoAA.org

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Want to Contribute?

- Contact Rebecca T. or any Board Member with stories or suggestions
- 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: Julee E.

A Brief History of Suburban North Alano
(Osseo AA)
By Stan Aydt

Osseo AA was started in the early 1960's by a small group of AA members from the Robbinsdale AA club. They wanted to start AA in the Osseo area, so they split off and started meetings in the members' homes.

When the present club property came on the market in foreclosure, the founders purchased it from the lien holder for the amount of the mortgage, about \$75,000.

The building was originally a two room elementary school in the Village of Maple Grove. The school was vacated in the 1950's and students were bused to Osseo. An investor purchased the property and made it into two apartments. The founders proceeded to clean out the building and do some remodeling to obtain two squad rooms on the first floor.

I joined the group in 1963 and at that time there were about 8 members and finances were of very tight. The founders had incorporated the property but had not filed for tax exempt status for either Federal or State. I went back to the original date of incorporation and using receipt and checks, brought the accounting up to date, and filed all necessary tax forms for the four previous years.

During the next several years we got new members from the court system, and some walk in individuals looking for help. As the membership increased, the need for more squad rooms was evident. The largest of the squad rooms also served as the General Meeting room and classroom for orientation of the new members. The basement was therefore cleaned and remodeled for the general meeting room. But in time this was not sufficient to house about 20 squads, plus an Alanon group and an Alateen group. An addition was added to the rear of the building giving the club two additional squad rooms and storage below for the tables and chairs, which is the structure of the building today.

When I first made contact with AA in 1958, I was 27 years old and referred to as the kid.

Now our membership is made up part with very young members, and most of dual addition. The younger members go through a period of changing the procedure of AA which has worked from the beginning. It's the old saying, "If it works, don't fix it."

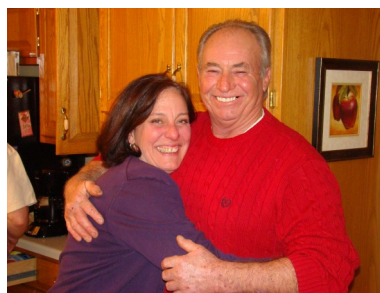
Bill W. once said "If you try to be everything to everybody, you will fail. I have no hear that our primary goal should be sustained; that is to help the suffering alcoholic."

Sincerely,
Stan Aydt

Do you have fun pictures you would like to share? There are many events and moments that would be great to share with the other members of our club.



Amber B and Pat M



Karen E. and Terry (aka Rocket)



2013 Women's retreat Park Rapids, MN

Jenny B, Monica G, Amber B, Karen E,
Rebecca T

Step Five

"Admitted to God, to ourselves, and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs."

ALL of A.A.'s Twelve Steps ask us to go contrary to our natural desires... They all deflate our egos. When it comes to ego deflation, few steps are harder to take than Five. But scarcely any Step is more necessary for longtime sobriety and peace of mind than this one. A.A. experience has taught us that we cannot live alone with our pressing problems and the character defects which cause or aggravate them. If we have swept the searchlight of Step Four back and forth over our careers, and it has revealed in stark relief those experiences we'd rather not remember, if we have come to know how wrong thinking and action have hurt us and others, then the need to quit living by ourselves with those tormenting ghosts of yesterday gets more urgent than ever. We have to talk to some body about them. So intense, though, is our fear and reluctance to do this, that many A.A.'s at first try to bypass Step Five. We search for an easier way--which usually consists of the general and fairly painless admission that when drinking we were sometimes bad actors. Then for good measure, we add dramatic descriptions of that part of our drinking behavior which our friends probably know about anyhow. But some of the things which really bother and burn us, we say nothing. Certain distressing or humiliating memories, we tell ourselves, ought not be shared with anyone. These will remain our secret. not a soul must ever know. We hope they'll go to the grave with us. Yet if A.A.'s experience means anything at all, this is not only unwise, but is actually a perilous resolve. Few muddled attitudes have caused us more trouble than holding back on Step Five. Some people are unable to stay sober at all; others will relapse periodically until they really clean house. Even A.A. old-timers, sober for years, pay dearly for skimping on this Step. they will tell how they tried to carry the load alone; how much they suffered of irritability, anxiety, remorse, depression; and how, unconsciously seeking relief, they would sometimes accuse even their best friends of the very character defects they themselves were trying to conceal. They always discovered that relief never came by confessing the sins of other people. Everybody had to confess his own. The practice of admitting one's character defects to another person is, of course, very ancient. It has been validated in every century, and it characterizes the lives of all spiritually centered and truly religious people. But today religion is by no means the sole advocate of this saving principle. Psychiatrists and psychologists point out the deep need every human being has for practical insight and knowledge of his own personality flaws, and for a discussion of them with an understanding and trustworthy person. So far as alcoholics are concerned A.A. would go even further. Most of us would declare that without a fearless admission of our defects to another human being we could not stay sober. It seems plain that the grace of God could not enter to expel our destructive obsessions until we are willing to try this. What are we likely to receive from Step Five? For one thing, we shall get rid of that terrible sense of isolation we've always had. Almost without exception, alcoholics are tortured by loneliness. Even before our drinking got bad and people cut us off, nearly all of us suffered the feeling we didn't quite belong. Either we were shy and dared not draw near others, or we were apt to be noisy good fellows craving attention and companionship, but never getting it--at least to our way of thinking. There was al-

ways that mysterious barrier we could neither surmount nor understand. It was as if we were actors on a stage, suddenly realizing we did not know a single lines of our parts. That's one reason we loved alcohol too well. It did let us act extemporaneously. But even Bacchus boomeranged on us; we were finally struck down and left in terrified loneliness. When we reached A.A., and for the first time in our lives stood among people who seemed to understand, the sense of belonging was tremendously exciting. We thought the isolation problem had been solved. But we soon discovered that while we weren't alone any more in a moral sense, we still suffered the pangs of anxious apartness. Until we had talked with complete candor of our conflicts, and had listened to someone else do the same thing, we still didn't belong. Step Five was the answer. It was the beginning of true kinship with man and God. This vital step was also the means by which we began to get the feeling that we could be forgiven, no matter what we had thought or done. Often it was while working on this Step with our sponsors or spiritual advisors that we first felt truly able to forgive others, no matter how deeply we felt they had wronged us. Our moral inventory had persuaded us that all-round forgiveness was desirable, but it was only when we resolutely tackled Step Five that we inwardly knew we'd be able to receive forgiveness and give it, too. Another great dividend we may expect from confiding our defects to another human being is humility--a word often misunderstood. To those who have made progress in A.A., it amounts to a clear recognition of what and who we really are, followed by sincere attempt to become what we could be. Therefore, our first practical move toward humility must consist of recognizing our deficiencies. No defect can be corrected unless we clearly see what it is. But we shall have to do more than see.

The objective look at ourselves we took in Step Four was, after all, only a look. All of us saw, for example, that we lacked honesty and tolerance, that we were beset at times by attacks of self-pity or delusions of personal grandeur. But while this was a humiliating experience, it didn't necessarily mean that we had yet acquired much actual humility. Though now recognized, our defects were still there. Something had to be done about them. And we soon found that we could not wish them away or will them away by ourselves. More realism and therefore more honesty about ourselves are the great gains we make under the influence of Step Five. As we took inventory, we began to suspect how much trouble self-delusion had been causing us. This had brought a disturbing reflection. If all our lives we had more or less fooled ourselves, how could we be so sure we weren't still self-deceived? How could we be certain we had made a true catalog of our defects and had really admitted them, even to ourselves? Because we were still bothered by fear, self-pity and hurt feelings, it was probable we couldn't appraise ourselves fairly at all. too much guilt and remorse might cause us to dramatize and exaggerate our shortcomings. Or anger and hurt pride might be the smoke screen under which we were hiding some of our defects, while we blamed others for them. Possibly too, we were still handicapped by many liabilities, great and small, we never knew we had. Hence it was most evident that a solitary self-appraisal, and the admission of our defects based on that alone, wouldn't be nearly enough. We'd have to have outside help if we were surely to know and admit the truth about ourselves--the help of God and another human being. Only by discussing ourselves, holding back nothing, only by being willing to take advice and accept direction could we set foot on the road to

straight thinking, solid honesty, and genuine humility. Yet many of us still clung back. We said, "Why can't 'God as we understand him' tell us where we are astray? If the Creator gave us our lives in the first place, then he must know in every detail where we have since gone wrong. Why don't we make our admissions to him directly? Why do we need to bring anyone else into this?" At this stage the difficulties of trying to deal rightly with God by ourselves are twofold. Though we may at first be startled to realize that God knows all about us, we are apt to used that quite quickly, somehow being alone with God doesn't seem to be quite as embarrassing as facing up to another person. Until we actually sit down and talk aloud about what we have so long hidden, our willingness to clean house is still largely theoretical. When we are honest with another person, it confirms that we have been honest with ourselves and with God. The second difficulty is this: what comes to us alone may be garbled by our own rationalization and wishful thinking. The benefit of talking to another person is that we can get his direct comment and counsel on our situation, and there can be no doubt in our minds what that advice is. Going it alone in spiritual matters is dangerous. How many times have we heard well-intentioned people claim the guidance of God when it was all too plain that they were sorely mistaken. Lacking both practice and humility, they had deluded themselves and were able to justify the most arrant nonsense on the ground that this was what God told them. It is worth noting that people of very high spiritual development almost always insist on checking with friends or spiritual advisors the guidance they feel they have received from God. Surely, then, a novice ought not lay himself open to the chance of making foolish, perhaps tragic blunders in this fashion. While the comment or advice of others may be by no means infallible, it is likely to be far more specific than any direct guidance we may receive while we are still so inexperienced in establishing contact with a Power greater than ourselves. Our next problem will be to discover the person in whom we are to confide. Here we ought to take much care, remembering that prudence is a virtue which carries high rating. Perhaps we shall need to share with this person facts about ourselves which no other ought to know. We shall want to speak with someone who is experienced, who not only has stayed dry but has been able to surmount other serious difficulties. Difficulties, perhaps, like our own. this person may turn out to be one's sponsor, but not necessarily so. If you have developed a high confidence in him, and his temperament and problems are close to your own, then such a choice will be good. Besides, your sponsor already has the advantage of knowing something about your case. Perhaps, though, your relation with him is such that if this is the situation, by all means do so, for you ought make a beginning as turn out, however, that you'll choose someone else for the more difficult and deeper revelations. This individual may be entirely outside of A.A.--for example, your clergyman or your doctor. For some of us a complete stranger may prove the best bet. The real tests of the situation are your own willingness to confide and your full confidence in the one with whom you share your first accurate self-survey. Even when you've found the person, it frequently takes great resolution to approach him or her. No one ought to say the A.A. program requires no willpower; here is one place you may require all you've got. Happily, though, the chances are that you will be in for a very pleasant surprise. When your mission is carefully explained, and it is seen by the recipient of your confidence how helpful he can really be, the conversation will

start easily and will soon become eager. Before long your listener may well tell a story or two about himself which will place you even more at ease. Provided you hold back nothing your sense of relief will mount from minute to minute. The damned up emotions of years break out of their confinement, and miraculously vanish as soon as they are exposed. As the pain subsides, a healing tranquility takes its place. And when humility and serenity are so combined, something else of great moment is apt to occur. Many an A.A., once agnostic or atheistic, tells us that it was at this stage of Step Five that he first actually felt the presence of God. And even those who had faith already often become conscious of God as they never were before. The feeling of being at one with God and man, this emerging from isolation through the open and honest sharing of our terrible burden of guilt, brings us to a resting place where we may prepare ourselves for the following Steps toward a full and meaningful sobriety .

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The 5th Tradition of Alcoholics Anonymous

“Each group has but one primary purpose—

to carry its message to the alcoholic who still suffers.”

Better to do one thing well than many badly. The life of our Fellowship depends on this principle. The ability of each A.A. to identify himself with and bring recovery to the newcomer is a gift from God... passing on this gift to others is our one aim. Sobriety can't be kept unless it is given away.



The omelet breakfast was a huge success!! Thank you, thank you to all of the hardworking volunteers that helped make this happen. There were 222 tickets sold. Many people were well fed and a good time was had by all. The bake-sale was very popular and was able to raise an additional \$213.00. In addition to that, there were scarves sold that gave us another income of \$120.00. As you all know, these fundraisers are essential to the make the events that we all enjoy possible and keep our Alano a great place to be.

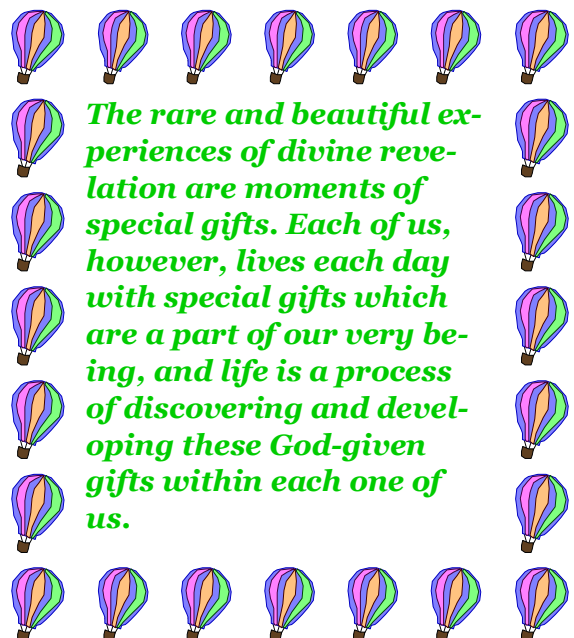
I just want everyone to know that Rebecca T. is now publishing the newsletter. I've really enjoyed doing it over the years. Thank you to everyone who has submitted an article. Please give Rebecca all the help that she deserves. She works hard for our club.

Also, Keith R. is now doing the website. In case you don't know him, just drop in to a board meeting on the second Wednesday of the month. He's the assistant treasurer (soon to be treasurer). I'm sure that he'll do a great job of it. He has a lot of experience in this area so it might even start to look like a real website.

Both Rebecca and Keith's email addresses are available on the website under Board Members.

The reason I am quitting all of this is I am experiencing some health issues and it will require most of my time if I am to attempt to recover. Thank you all for giving me the opportunity to serve. It's been a great run and I wouldn't trade it for anything. I love you all

Your humble (hopefully) servant,
Bob G.



Al-Anon/Alateen Affirmations

Tradition Five

“Each Al-Anon Family Group has but one purpose: to help families of alcoholics. We do this by practicing the Twelve Steps of AA ourselves, by encouraging and understanding our alcoholic relatives, and by welcoming and giving comfort to families of alcoholics.”

By Carolyn

When Win-Win On Wednesday started the beginners’ meeting we felt this would be a good way we could devote our time and energy to do what we do best, helping families of alcoholics.

In Win-Win On Wednesday’s Beginners meeting each new member remembers walking into the first Al-Anon meetings, full of shame and fearful about disclosing their situation to a room full of strangers. As they struggled to give the words voice and sometimes tears follow as they talk about the situation that brought them to the meeting. As each of us share in the meeting the beginners soon realize that they are not alone.

It’s no mistake that the introduction we read at the beginners’ meeting includes the fifth tradition. It’s like a mission statement that points us in the right direction every time we come together. We have but one purpose: to help *families* of alcoholics and the word family includes everyone, including the alcoholic.

First: *“We do this by practicing the Twelve Steps of AA ourselves.”*

In every family and relationship it always seems to go smoother when there are healthy people involved. Even if everyone is not practicing the Twelve Steps, the ones who do can’t help but be a positive influence on the group. You can see it working in your own home. Even though the alcoholic is still drinking, when you begin practicing

the Twelve Steps, things will improve gradually. The beginner stops driving themselves crazy by identifying the reality and recognizing truths. Courage and fellowship will replace fear. The serenity and peace that comes from the Steps will give new meaning to their lives and the lives of those they love. Balance and grace will flow day by day with God’s ease.

Second: *“We do this by...encouraging and understanding our alcoholic relatives.”*

It is a huge relief to the beginners’ to know more about what they can do without enabling. Feeling definitely hurt and angry, but could not accept that they no longer loved the alcoholic. Al-Anon gave them concrete tools to deal with the alcoholic, without losing sight of the person they so deeply cared for. Al-Anon was the first place they reached out to that allowed them to not only feel, but also to cultivate compassion towards the alcoholic in their life. When the alcoholic starts practicing the steps as well, it suddenly feels like they are on the same team. The ripple effect of the steps on the relationship is now strong and evident, regardless of its source.

Lastly: *“We do this by....welcoming and giving comfort to families of alcoholics.”*

Al-Anon is, above all, a fellowship. It is when we reach out to others that we are able to heal ourselves. Members find it is the place we are allowed to be angry, sad, and confused when we can’t figure out why we’re all of those at the same time. It is the place where we can have crazy emotions without having to jump into action or make decisions right away. It’s the place where we can vent, long and slow, in our own recovery until we are ready and able to take those first scary steps towards change.

We give a gift that will remain in the hearts and minds of the people that came to a meeting that we welcomed and gave comfort to when they needed it most. It will change their life forever.



PLEASE BRING ALL OF YOUR ALUMINUM CANS TO THE CLUB!!!

We'll even take BEER cans!!!

If we all participate in a can drive, it will fund our annual picnic. If you can, please bring cans (preferably crushed) to the club and throw them in the trailer on the side of the building.

No plastic bottles please

Not your brand of soda?
Let me know. I'll change
the picture!

