## PINEL L'AS county and SO. WEST <br> PASCO

## ${ }^{\text {PTL }}$ JAN. 1976 33540

## CENTRAL ORFICE OF PINELLAS COUNTY-11608 Seminole Bld. LIargo, Florida

Live and Let live-Don't judge or criticize others or conern yourself about what they do.
First things first-Do first what's most important-you'll get more done.
Think-Hold back that rash word or thoughtless action. Think before you make descisions.
Easy does it-Haste makes waste. Relax, get rid of tension and rushing.
Let go and Let God-You can't fix everything that's wrong with the world and your family. Let it go. God can't do His work if we're standing in the way. One Day at a Time-Today is the most important day of your life.
Listen and Learn-There's something of value to be learned from everyone you meet.


Thank you to all the groups who have worked so hard for the Unity Meetings and are responsible for over $\$ 1,000.00$ donated to your Central Office this past year. Cur special gratitude to Harold D. for his untiring offorts on our behalf. We are sorry to hear thet Harold is in the hospital. Get well soon.

## NEW GROUP

The Bayou Group will moet Saturday nights at 9:30 at the Covenant Presbyterian Church at 4201-6th. St. S., St. Petersburg. This will be a closed meeting.

The Tri-County Central Office has moved to 7404-A No. Florida Ave., Tampa. The new phone is 239-9623.

Larry \& Alice L. are the new Chaimen of the Faith Young Poople's Group. Many thanks for the fine work done in the past by Ed W.

## "EXCUSES"

WE HAVE HEARD...count1ess excuses... through the years--to JUSTIFY...cont inned use of alcohol...even as it created unspeakable misery and heartache for the user....and those around him: We have listened... with heavy heart....to the perverted logic of the resistant alcoholic explaining why he..isn't....an alcoholic... and why he needs no outside help--even as his hopes and dreams are fading and his dignity and self-resnect are being drained away--even as his mortal life is ebbing:

A frequent.. delusion.. of the alcoholic..is: "I'M different:" His nlea is...that his "pattern" of imbibing is "different or Unusual"... he drinks more..or..drinks less...or he hasn't been in jail..or a hosnital-or he still has a job..or...he's too educated ..or smart.. or rich... or that his BODY craves it.. and he just can't 1ive without it: What he OVERLOOKS is--that... though his ROUTE...is different---the direction is the SAME....and no alcoholic..ever escapes the fruits of his decision.

None but the alcoholic..can decide his final destiny--and if he seeks the truth he need ask himself but one simnle question: "IS MY DRINKING HURTING ME.. or...SOMEONE ELSE?" If the honest answer is YES..his entire illogical rationale crumbles....and it is TIIEN.. that he will decide on constructive action-mor resign himself to his own world of hopeless misery....and lonely ...failure:

If the honest answer is...NO-obviously then, his life should be free of ANY...Conflict or problems... resulting from drinking: His relationships with his family... and others....would draw nor deserve.. critical reproachment--f or he would never knowlingly...PERMIT...unnecessary ..or unimportant "social" drinking...

REMEMBER THAT CHRISTMAS
Twas the night before Christmas and all through the house Not a creature was stirring, not even a mouse.
I crept out of bed and went for a drink But not for the water that comes out of the sink.
I tried whiskey and win and mixed drinks to boot
And started off on a great drinking toot. It lasted all Christmas and New Years too Until my wife was ready to sue.
A divorce and disgrace and my life on the line
I said I would stop - just give me time. For myself on this world I was always on the top
I was stupid and foolish to think I could stop.
Came the day of truth when the price I must pay
For all of my foolishness and ill-health that day.
I found out my mind could not by itself Stop making me drink from IT on the shelf And then I found out in good ole $A$. $A$. I had that help in many a way. Ralph E. $3 \& 11$ Group
Jd IS WHEREVER MEN AND WOMEN FIND SUPPORT IN EACH OTHER..

$$
--\mathrm{H} . \mathrm{B} . \text { WALKER }
$$

CAPACITY CROWD CELEBRATE
NEW YEAR!S EVE
Scene; Sunset Country Club on Snell Isle in St. Pete
Sponsored By: The Home Group Players: 241 happy sober members of A.A., Alanon Spouses and dates.
This was the 7th Anniversary of the New Year's Eve Dinner-Dance which a sellout crowd attended.

Meeting new and old friends in the program gies you an overwhelming feeling of gratitude for "this gift of sobriety". Dinner was served at 7 P.M. and was followed by dancing to the wonderful taped music of Paul E.

At 9:30 P.M. a truly spectacular floor show was presented. The talented Jack C. is a masterful "Emcee", and Penny H. and Ray $F$. danced and sang as a duo. Louise P. "mimed in song" professmally and unexpected world entertainer Vicki Lynn" came on for a finale.

The "Money Tree" of $\$ 26$ was won by Jean T., wife of Bill $T$. of Home Group.

Peggy Tr.

## PASCO ANSWERING SERVICE

Calls for Help and/or information in the Pinellas-Pasco County Line Area, have been and are being taken by Ronnie and Harry $0^{\prime}$ I. at 237-4766. Calls from 937- and 934-will be speedily and effectively handled. We thank Ronnie and Harry for the great job they do on this.

## SAFETY HARBOR GROUP WILL CELEBRATE THEIR SECOND ANNIVERSARY ON FRIDAY. JANUARY 30th AT $70^{\circ}$ CLOCK WITH A POT LUCK SUPPER. Y'ALL COME !

The simplest form of 12 th stepping is to shake hands with as many people as you possibly can at meetings--especially the peopleyou dont know...G.....

WE PLAN TO HAVE THE YEARLY ANNIVERSARY DINNER AGAIN IN FEBRUARY AND FLYERS WILL BE OUT FOR THIS VERY SOON.

GOD SHOWS HIS HAND ALLRIGHT, BUT YOU GOTTA CALL TO SEEIT.
tWelve things to remember
The value of time
The success of perseverence
The pleasure of working
The dignity of simplicity
The worth of character
The power of kindness
The influence of example
The obligation of duty
The wisdom of economy
The virtue of patience
The improvement of talents
The joy of originating
Marshall Field

Anything that can happen, will
happen.....especially......to
an ALCOHOLIC.
I'm so think right now, I can't mad straight。
I AM ANONYMOUS, HELP ME
Running people down is a bad habit whether you are a motorist or a gossip

The best portion
of a good man's life: His little, nameless, unremembered acts of kindness and of love.


A recent survey shows that $99.4 \%$ of the people are happy when eriticizing the mistakes of others. There are no mistakes in this paper-aIt is merely an effort to make $99.4 \%$ of the people happy!
We are sorry when we do not get all the news or interests of A. A. in our Newsletter - welll keep trying to do better. This letter is a little late for for the Big Book Groups's anniversary - the second-which was Feb. 4th. Hope we get the 3rd. in time.

## IT'S OFFICIAL

The 5th annual Sun Coast Convention will be held May 21, 22 \& 23 at the beautiful Sheraton Sand Key Hotel.
The theme of the convention will be the thought provoking "Came to Believe".
The unavailibility of the Fort Harrison Hotel has created numerous problems for Chairman Ralph P. and the convention comittee, but all systems are "GO" now. Flyers will be out soon and next month's Newsletter will have further details.

Our Group Representatives meetings are growing slowly. All groups without a rep please try to interest someone in service. New York mentions always that too much time is being sprnt on recovery as a subject and not enough tire to moving into service. This is not an easy or easily understandable situation as we have no cut and dried rules or regulations, but we can become aware and make an effort. We are largely dependent on group reps for group news and events to appear in the Newsletter.

Tape volunteers flucuate geographically. Right now we have almost adequate coverage in the north end of the county, but we need Sunday and week-day people in the St. Pete area. Create an interest and ask around.

If we cannot do great things we can do saall things in a great way.

Central Service "At your Servicen. It has been brought to our attention that there are members of $A$. A. who are not aware of the functions of the Central Office so here are the five primary services offered:

1. A service and information center for all A. A. groups and members in the area.
2. A. A. information center for other agencies, institutions, Doctors, Clergyaen and the general public.
3. A general meeting center for comittees and members and anyone seeking help or advice on a drinking problem.
4. Central Office to channel all Twelve Step calls to the groups from the sick and suffering alcoholic calling for help.
5. It exists to aid the groups in their common purpose of "carrying the A. A. message" to the alcoholic who still suffers.


This Newsletter is yours - any A. A. nember wishing to contribute anything to the letter is encouraged to do so. We also would welcome any group donations. We do not make money on the Hewsletter. When we do, we'll let you all know. Perhaps any suxplus could be used to have a bigger and better publication. Right now we do not heve the staff to expend.

## Group Changes

The Faith Young Psople's Group will meet every Tues. and Thurs. night.

The New \& Used Group's oper meeting are on the 2nd. \& 4th. Thursdays.

TIO-RDGED RESPONSTBIIITY
2. Should we tell friends, neichbors, and co-workers we are in $A A$ ?
A. AA anonymity is a two-edged responsibility. Te should remain anonymous in terms of public media, but we should, if we have any hopes of carryins the nessade, smash oun anonymity at the private and semiprivate level.
It is not enough to help only after a still drunk alcoholic has, as the result of a diligent search, found his way to the "secret" organieration of AA. AA membership is not necessarily anythins, to be proud of, but it certainly is nothing to be ashamed of. It is, and should be, troated as a matter of accepted, and acceptable fact.

Thile we may not be quite ready to bellow our story through a megaphone from the top of the highest building in town, we certainly should be ready to let dostors, lawyers, clergymen, friends, and relatives know about AA and our affiliation with it.

> THE T PATMH TAIIS
> PAAYR ITHTS UP

This is the eve of my thirty-sixth birthday and I am sober, which is somethins that at one time seemed so far away. I owe this great blessing to AA and God.

To have faith in a hisher power is wondercul, and yet at times my faith is weak. This prayer has been a sreat help. The words are old but arranged so that when I had trouble asking for help, this made it a lot easier.

TODAY
Our Father, which art in Heaven, I thank you for this day. I am powerless over alcohol and through AA I do believe you can restore me to sanity.

T would like to turn over to you my drinking problem, as well as my will and my life, as I am unable to handle them.

Hy character has many defects. Among the most serious: Envy, pride, greed, lust, gluttony, anger, laziness. I wish to be rid of them but I am not able to do so by myself and ask that you help me.

Many I have hurt through my drinking, and I am mindful of these people today and stand ready to make amends this day if it should be your will for me.

If through my fault I should offend anyone today, I shall make amends promptly.
T need no longer walk alone, for AA and you, my Gor, are every moment mine, and my need is but one: To have knowledge of your will for me and the power with which to carry it out.

If you should choose to help another alcoholic through me, I will be grateful, as I wish to share my sobriety, which is a gift this day, and I hope to love my fellow man unselfishly, for love is delight in another's well being.

Fear and remorse need not be my companions, but faith and hope shall take their place this day. Amen.

I guess one day my faith was weak, or none at all, and I wanted help. But having been a stranger most of my life with God and a church, it was hard. The prayer helped me fill that open hand, and today it still brings me a little closer. -- AI $F$.

## Good morning God,

Are you still there? Forgive my little doubts, but I must share fears with you. Please care that I feel lost, and when despair comes over me, help me accept your will, no matter where your path may guide me. Let me say aloud, "I do belisve in hy higher power". Share your strength with me. Help me to prepare to face another day, eafe in your care.

> With love, a drunk
P. S. this is a prayer.

I got up early one morning and I rushed right into the day,
I had so much to accomplish I didn't take time to pray.

Problems all turbled about me and heavier came each task. "Why
"Why doesn't God help me?" I wondered
but remembered I didn't ask.
I woke up early this morning and paused before starting the day.
I had so mach to accomplishI had to take tire to pray.

## Anon.

I have twelve favorite subjects: eleven of them are myself......。

Boy! I sure can keep my conscience busy.

Anonymity is the greatest protection we have against taking that first drink.

If I have no regard for my own anonymity can anyone trust me to have any regard for theirs---We must guard the anonymity of our fellow alcoholics as zealously as our own.
Drinking is only part of the alconolic's problem. We may be revealing more about ourselves than we want to when we tell about our alcoholism.


FINANCES NEVER HAVE BEEN TOP POPULARITY IN A.A. BUT POPULAR OR NOT, THEY ARE WITH US TO STAY. AS A.A. ${ }^{\circ}$ S, WE HAVE PLEDGED OURSELVES TO SELF-SUPPORT, A TRADITION WHICH HAS MADE OUR FELLOWSHIP UNIQUE INDEED.

Continued support from groups \& members is vital if we are to maintain the good health of the Fellowship. With the rapid acceleration of growth, it becomes obvious that now is NOT the time to curtail group services. It is time to urge INCREASED FINANCIAL SUPPORT from a larger PERCENTAGE of groups. In the past four years the percentage of group contributing has fallen from $63.2 \%$ to 56.9\%. Of course, some groups are in depressed areas, unable to contribute much. However, if all groups would contribute SOMETHING, no matter how little, $A A^{\prime}$ 's proud Tradition of self-support would be safe.

In the past four years we have been able to contribute $\$ 55,000$ to the General Fund of the G.S. Board, the very fund that once subsidized us for quite a few years. It makes all of us feel good to know the Grapevine is doing its part in unifying our Fellowship

The *60-30-10 suggested group contribution formula be used where applicable and practicable, as well as the $\$ 3.65$ per year per member plan. And the 60-3010 plan should be encouraged by G.S.O and all delegates. (60\% to the intergroup (central office) $30 \%$ to G.S.O.; $10 \%$ to the area committee.

The TAMPA TRI-COUNTY CENTRAL OFFICE is celebrating it's FIRST YEAR ANNIVERSARY Feb. 26 th at 8.15 PM With an

ALL GROUP MEETING
At Palms Ceia Methodist Church Dale Mabry and Bay to Bay

We
centinue to wish them growth and success

DAUGHTER SPEAKS AT FATHER"S ANNIVERSARY MARILYN OF CLEVELAND, OHIO, A A MEMBER FOR 18 YEARS WILL SPEAK AT THE ANNIVER= SARY MEETING OF HER FATHER, TED HEALY ON HIS 34 th AA ANNIVERSARY. TED WILL ALSO SPEAK CENTRAL GROUP, 1431 CENTRAL aVENUE, ST. PETE MARCH 29, 1976 8FM

QUARTERLY CONFERENCE
APRIL 2,3,4,
RAMODA RANCH NAPLES FL

## (c) Ascension Group Tues. 8 P M Episcopal Church of the Ascension Corner of Bay and Pine Lambert Room Clearwater <br> Pn. 442-5306 <br> new meetings <br> Clearwater Group <br> (c) How It Works <br> Friday <br> 8 PM <br> Holiday Isles <br> (c) 12 Step Meeting Monday 8 P M

Holiday Isles
(c) NON-SMOKERS Meeting Sat. 8 P M

CORRECTION FROM LAST ISSUE:
Faith Young People meet ONLY on
Thursday NOT Tuesday also

If
we are
to climb up
to a spiritual
life, we need to
go back down to help
others find the way
Second floor tenant: "If you don't quit playing that saxophone you'll drive me stark raving mad."
First floor tenant: "It's too late. I

stoppped playing three hours ago."

## COMNG EVENTS

A. A.'s welcome to Al Anon's program of Feb. 27th at St. Dunstan's Church Auditorium! where the film "Lois' Story" will be shown. Donations are $\$ 1.00$.

There will be a Serenity Retreat at 3010 Perry Ave., Tampa on Feb. 27, $28 \not 29$ lead by Father Fred Lawrance. Call Tampa 229-2695 for further information.

State A. A. Convention will be August 1lth to the 15th. at the Deauville Hotel on Miami Beach. Registration forms should be out by the time you read this.

There will be two week-end retreats this year at St. Leo's Abbey so more can attend and still have swaller groups. Dates are May 21,22 \&23rd. and May 28, 29 \& 30th. More details later.

Feb 27 - 29th. there will be a Mixed Serenity Retreat at the Franscan Center in Tampa. Call Gerhard W. at 644-3376. The ineme is "Love Is-1

Agein - don't forget the 3lst, Anniversary of A. A in Pinellas County. Really something to celebrate on Feb. 29, at Trader Vic's, SheratonBel Air, St. Pete. Coffee \& Dinner gtarting at 1:00. There will be a prowinent out-of-state speaker. Donations are 6.75. Call Central Office for more details.


ST. MARY © CENTER
515 4th St. South An operating committee has been formed to handle these meetings.


SUNDAY MORNING BREAKFAST and $\bar{A} A$ OPEN DISCUSSION. You are Welcome to attend. From 8 to 10 AM , every Sunday at the HOWARD JOHNSON's RESTAURANT TREASURE ISLAND

## EINEO

PINELLAS SERENITY CLUB
9:30 P.M. 631 TURNER ST. Every SATURDAY. CLEARWATER COME AND ENJOY YOURSELF

A Memorial Service was held for Harold P. Davis at St Mary's Center in St Petersburg, Jan. 22, at 7: P M. We are taught life is eternal when we depart this earth. But the tremendous amount of service Harold gave will go on as long as this earth is in existence. Harold was a delegate to N. Y. He was secretary in our Central Office. He was a faithful and dependable person to take tape every week. He went on all the 12 step calls he received. We all know his dedication to the Unity Meeting.

This is just a little of what we know of his works. Only imagination can give us an inkling of the many people whose lives have been touched by him. In the Central Office a great number of people speak of, and ask of him. Let us go from here with a resolution to aim for the kind of service Harold gave to the Fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous.

We are also sorry to report the death of Chas. Venick who had only been in our area for one year but who had 26 years of sobriety. He was a maser of the $3 \% 11$ Group and in his short time here was a very active and hard worker especially for the Institutional Committee. He w111 be nissed.

## Brefor the Cripuer of (rom

## TO AVOID BEING POSITIVEIY NEGATIVE

We drank for happiness and became unhappy.....We drand for joy and became miserable.....We drank for sociability and became argumentative.....We drank for sophistication and became obnoxious.... We drank for friendshipand made enemies .....We drank for sleep and awakened without rest......We drank for strength and felt weak.....We drank "medicinally "and aquired health problems......We d drank for relaxation and got the shakes. ....We drank for bravery and became afraid.....We drank for confidence and became doubtful.....We drank to make conversation easier and slurred our speech.....We drank to feel heavenly and: ended up feeling like hell......We drank to forget and were forever haunted..... We drank for freedom and became slaves. We drank to erase problems and saw them multiply......We drank to cope with life and invited death.

THE PERSON THAT LOSES HIS HEAD IS USUALIY THE LAST ONE TO MISS IT.

ANYTHING...of TRUE VALUE... in his lifel (It is that simple for the NONmalcoholic.) As frequently as the man who IENIES his alcoholism-is the alcoholic...who... ADMITS it-_-bbut refuses to UNDERSTAND ITI He stoutly declares..that.ohe can handle
 nation...and furious anger. From the quivering heights of his wounded manhood....he scorns any such help as an unthinkable admission of "unmanly weakness"--and an...unforgiveable reflection on his All-American self-sufficienyl

Three roads are open. for this.."manly alcoholic". He can "try"...to. .handie it (control it)., and continue drinking, with ever-worsening complications (for NO.. alcoholic can ever learn how to control it)--until. he surrenders..or IESI

He can become...a "reformed drunk"-which means. that he merely stops drinking while retaining ALL the obnoxious character defects., and needs to drink-athat will make NOT drinking...a living Hellt

He can recognize his drinking as an illness, and gratefully accept ANY help... that will bring RECOVERYI Recovery..is not a CURE,..and doesn't begin...until...the alcoholic STOPS drinking: Recovery will contimuemonly so long as total abstinence is maintained-and it is our conviction--that NO method other than hA...offers so.. many answers to the alcoholic's needs!

One more fatal excuse we would dispel is: "AA won't work for MEl" Herbt Spencer must have had this alcoholic in mind when he said--"There is a principle which is a BAR.against ALL INFORMATION--which is PROOF against AIL ARGUMENTS...and which can not fail to keep a man in everlasting IGNORANCE. That principle..is contempt..prior to INVESTIGATION!" The alcohelic who says it WON'T work for him is dead right-for he has never HONESTLY tried i'l However, this doesn't mean it CAN'Tl We have never seen ANY ALCOHOLIC fail te recover. "who went to any lensths to follow AA's 12 Steps of reoovery. .with honestr. open-minde'ness and wilingness! There has never been.. any mystery about the failures--they simply tried to write their own terms!

Let no alcoholic believe that $A A$ is a "sissy-program"...or an easy way out..or he can do it in his spare timel It will take "guts"...perseverance..patience..., and all the "will-powar" he can muster to completely re-crder..a whole lifetime of wrong habits..attitudes and personality traits.... iut with God's help-it CAN be donel An alcoholic learns too--that he need never apologize for living the prinoiples that can only make him a usefuleredecente. . buman_being!

Never forget, "excuses"...are NOT. reasons for denying yourself your most precLous gift from God-----your ilfel

Zeproduced fron mrailmisimp

THE UNITY MEETING of course is held every Saturday, at 8:00 P.M. (open) at, ST. MARY'S CENTER 515 4th St., South ST. PETERSBURG, ELA.

## SUNDAY MORNING BREAKFAST and AA OPEN

 DISCUSSION. You are Welcome to attend. From 8 to 10 AM, every Sunday at the HONARD JOHNSON's RESTAURANT TREASURE ISLAND
## BINGO

PINELLAS SERENITY CLUB
9:30 P.M. 631 TURNER ST. Every SATURDAY, CLEARWATER COME AND ENJOY YOURSELF

COMMENTS ON TAPE SERVICE:
Participation by many more A A's, has increased. More are taking it on a substitute basis rather than regularily one night a week. The means more time involved for the secretary, and is a little more worrisome. But it is good to have different ones share and experience the service. We need Two regulars for tape in the Clearwater area for every sixth Sunday. We need Two regulars in the St. Petersburg area for every sixth Sunday. This is from $9 \mathrm{~A} M$ Sunday until 9 AM Monday. Anyone else willing or wishing to return to duty, or willing to try on a week-day as a substitute, or take it occasionally, please call the office. Remember many are called when there is no answer.

NEW GROUPS IN | AL-ANON |
| :--- |
| SEMINOLE - Al-AnOn |
| Alateen | Tues. 8 P M Calvary Methodist Church 11000 llOth Av M -West of Alt. 19

THE CONVENTION COMMITTEE DOES NOT WANT ANYONE TO THINK THERE IS NOT GOING TO E. A CONVENTION THIS YEAR. PLANS HAVE BEEN HELD UP DUE TO THE FT. HARRISON CHANGE WE WILL BE SENDING OUT FLYERS SOON ON THE PLACE AND PROGRAM

ABOUT SELLING NON A.A. MATERIALS
Occasionally, an upset member writes us that a local central (intergroup) officeor an A.A. group is selling literature or mementos that are not Conference approved.

Let it be made plain right away: NO AA SERVICE ENTITY-THE GENERAL SERVICE BOARD, G.S.O., OR THE CONFERENCE-HAS ANY POWER WHATSOEVER TO MAKE ANY CENTRAL OFFICE (OR ANY MENBER) DO ANYTHING, OR STOP DOING ANYTHING.
G.S.O. can only share exderience with
$r$ cend failure and crisis. ProHow well, though, shall we be able to meet the problems of success?"

At the International Convention in Miami Beach, the late Bernard Smith, nonalcoholic trustee wh played such an important role as creating our service structure, spoke on "Unity and Continuity." He talked of unity as a totality of RELATED Dacts. "Our Fellowship is composed of all the groups of $A A$, the separate areas of the General Service Board and all of its related service organizations, and the Conference.... and so the whole of the parts becomes ONE -the Fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous. This unity can have continunity only so long as the structure of Alcoholics Anonymous remains strong. Slowly and painstakingly," Bern continued, "we have built upon the spiritual foundation of this great Society a structure that can, with continued devotion, insulate this Fellowship against the ravages of time, of dissent, of Materialistic decay."


## DO: TRMCY TRIBUTE

This issue of Plain M'Straight" is boing "sponsered" by the Sunday Morming Group of Clearwater in Don's memory. Don was a member of this group when he died on March 10th. Because Don was a journalist and author, we folt this would be a fitting tribute to his memory and the A. A. Fellownip he loved. In the past he represented the Koinonia Group in General Service and was interested in the alcoholic patients at Morton Plant Hospital meetings. His most recent non-fiction book was What You Sbould Know about Alcoholism".

RENINDER: GROUPS WISHING ENTIRE TABLES PLEASE GET THEIR RESERVATIONS IN EARLY. THESE TABLES ARE ASSIGNED ON A FIRST COME FIRST SERVED BASIS. THE EARLIER YOU SEND IN YOUR REQUEST, THE BETTER OUR ACCOMODATIONS WILL BE.


YOU MUST TAKE THE STEPS
THE ESCALATOR IS BROKEN
"AA is the most important thing in my life," said an earnest speaker at our own group meeting the other night. "And it's easy to remember, too," he went on in all seriousness. "It's the first two letters of the alphabet."

## "Cameto Believe..."

## ste Anvual Suncosis Convention

## DATE: May 21,22 \& 23

PLACE: Sheraton Sand-Key Hotel, Clearwater Beach COST: Registration ${ }^{(1)}$

Registration \& Banquet
Alateen Registration $\$ 2$ - Banquet $\$$ The convention Conalttee recently were given a ${ }^{\text {Grand Tour }}$ of the Sheraton Sand-Key Hotel and found the facilities available to us to be excellent. Hotel roons will be 25 a night for double or single occupancy with those under 17 free. 3 rd or 4 th person sharing the room will be \$4 per person extra. Please make hotel reservations no later than 2 weeks before the conrention. A second mailing on it's way will include hotel reservation envelopes.
Flyers, registration form to. have been distributed at General Service meeting, Group Rep meetings and to all group Sec'y/Treas by mail. 111 materials have been and are available at Central Office so we find it difficult to bolieve that some of you haven't heard much about the details. How about it? Let's talk it up a little locally. Baside the fine panelists and eplendid main speaker, there will be ontertainment on both Friday \& Saturday nights! Reacmber this is YOUR Suncoant convention.

It is eoncouraging and a pleasure to see so many early reservations for the SUNCOAST CONVENTION arriving at the Central Office, especially from different areas of Florida and also from out of state.

## RESERVATIONS FOR BANQUET TABLES

When reservations are sent if for entire tables, we need to know the names of each person sitting at each table. If you are sitting at one persons table, please put their name in the corner of your registrations blank. Thank you.


HEARD AT A MEETING: "My slip was a sobering experience."

## THURSDAY

Change
from Tuesday
7:00 P.M.
Odessa Civic Center State Road 54 to Michigan Ave. Odessa, FL
Phone: 937-4766
12 Step Meeting
. Petersburg Group
1024 Central Avenue
St. Petersburg, FL 33705
Phone: 894-9407

12 Step Meeting Holiday Isles Group
St. Alban's Episcopal Church
85th \& Blind Pass Rd., Room 6 St. Petersburg Beach, FL 33706 Phone: 367-1429

Change Address

Omit

TUESDAY
New

New

* New

Onit

Baigis Meeting Group
8:00 P.M.
4355 Central Avenue, park in rear
St. Petersburg, FL.
Phone: 345-6040
"OD" 12 Step Group
St. Jude's Cathedral
St. Petersburg, FL 33710
"OD" Dunedin Group
Church of the cood Shepherd
Albert and Edgewater Drive
Dunedin, FL
Phone: 442-1593
"C" Ascension Group
Episcopal Churci, of Ascension
Bay and Pine Corner, Lambert Room Clearwater, FL
Phone: 442-5306

| * New: "Ci | Tues. Discussion Group <br> Calvary Methodist Church <br> 11000 110 Avenue North <br> Largo, FL | 8:00 P.M. |
| :---: | :---: | :---: |
| Omit | "O" | Recovery Group <br> S.T.A.R. House <br> St. Petersburg, FL <br> Phones 894-3937 |

MANY THANKS TO EVERYONE WHO CONTRIBUTED TO THE GALA, SUCCESSFUL 3lst ANNIVERSARY DINNER. Speaker Leo D. from Akron was terrific. The oldest members, male and female were present. The history of A A in Pinellas Co. was given by Bill B. The dinner was enjoyable by all.

## Be good to yourself!.



MEMBERSHIP DRAWING: Begins at 10 dollars. Increases $\$ 10.00$ a week. At this date $4 / 3$ is now \$90.00. Drawing at Bingo, MUST BE PRESENT TO WIN.

May 21-22-23
Come on and enjoy SPIRITUAL retreat. away from it all, get good chance to get talk over your life some real good A A. ver your life and problems with your fellows. In any meeting, nothing will be discussed that does not fall under the specific heading of A A material. St Leo College (Holy Name Priory, Girls Campus) For more information, flyers or registeration blanks, contact or call the Central Office.

## Dance:

HOME GROUP DANCE--APRIL 30th FRIDAY FREE FOOD AND DRINKS MUSIC FOR ALI AGES

## WEEKLY

Men's A A Luncheon at the FOGCUTMER 34 th St. \& Ist Av. S. St Pete. Thursdays 12 NOON

## To keep it, give it away!



## Sth Ammaal suncoast Convention

Our 5th Annual Suncoast Convention was a grand success. We had registered 386 AA and Al-Anon members, and 27 AlaTeens. These 13 people drank nearly \$1,400. worth of coffee! Of the registrations, 69 were from outside of District I and 14 were from out of state, with KY, VA, GA, PA, NY and Ontario represented!
Our banquet speaker; Dr. Weldon C. from Lakeland was excellent. We got him just in time as he is moving to Austin, TX. Many people worked behind the scenes, and worked hard. The "Praying Hands", painted and donated by Val S. was beautiful.
Special anniversaries over the weekend were BettyLou $D_{n} 2$ yrs., and Peggy T., 8 years.
Heavy rains and wind did not daunt the crowd of 295 who attended the banquet evening to hear the speaker and to enjoy the dance.

> Betty B.

## Coming Events

THE BIG ONE.... .....
Southeastern 32nd Annual Convention and the Florida 20 th Annual Convetion are combined this year.

Deauville Hotel
Miami Beach, Florida
August 11-15, 1976


Pray for the 50-and-50!
COFFEE NERVES?
Henry Daniels' catering service in Denver put together a $\$ 12,000$ coffeemaker capable of turning out 5,807.520 cups a day. It was for the International Convention of AA held last July. Mr . Daniels said he had been advised that the conventioneers are chain coffee drinkers, and "they drink 20 cups a day"!

THE TWENTY THIRD PSAALM - CREDIT The lord is my sponsors I shall not want. He maketh me to go to many meetings. He leadeth me to sit back relax, and listen with an openmind: He restoreth my soul, my sanity, and my health; He leadeth me in the paths of sobriety, serenity, and fellowship for mine own sake. He teacheth me to think, to take it easy, to live and let live and do the first things first. He maketh me honest, humble and grateful: He teacheth me to accept the things I cannot change, to change the things that I can, and giveth me the wisdom to know the difference. Yea though I walk through the valley of despair, frustration, guilt, and remorse, I will feer no evil; for Thou art with mes Thy program, Thy way of life, Thy twelve steps..... They comfort me. Thou preparest a table befors me in the presence of mine enemies --rationalization, fear, anxiety, self-pity, and resentment; Thou anointest my confused mind and jangled nerves with knowledge, understanding, and hope. No longer am I alone, neither am I afraid, nor sick, nor helpless, nor hopeless: My cup runneth over. Surely sobriety and serenity shall follow me everyday of my life, twenty-four hours at a times As I surrender my will to Thine and carry Thy message to others: And I will dwell in the house of My Higher Power, as I understand Him, daily, forever and ever. AMEN
Ralph P., Convention Chairman, would like to thank every one on the Committee who worked so hard and gave so much. He hopes that every one who came was able to take home a little of what was so freely given to us.

SERVICE IS THE RENT WE PAY FOR OUR ROOM ON EARTH

## IN CASE YOU DIDN"T KNOW

"Alcoholics Anonymous is a fellowship" - designed and administrated by a bunch of ex-drunks whose only qualification for membership is that they can't hold their likker and do not want to learn how. It has no rulessdues or fees - no nothin that any sensible organization seems to require. At mestings the speakers start on one subject and end up talking about something entirely different, concluding by saying, "I don't really know anything about the program except that it works."

The groups are always broke, but always seem to have money; they are always losing members, but always seem to grow they claim AA is a selfish program, but always seem to be doing things for others. Every group passes laws, rules, edicts and pronouncements which everyone blithely ignores. Members who disagree with anything are privileged to walk out in a huff - quitting forever - only to return as though nothing had happened, and to be greeted accordingly.

Nothing is ever planned more than 24 hours ahead - yet great projects are born and survive magnificently. Nothing in AA is according to Hoylehow can it survive? Perhaps it is because we have learned to laugh at ourselves: God made man - He made laughter too. Perhaps He is pleased with our poor efforts and makes everything run right no matter who pushes the wrong buttons. Maybe He is pleased not with our perfection, but with our sincerity; maybe He is pleased because we are trying to be nobody but ourselves.

We don't know how, but it works, and members keep receiving their dividend checks from their AA investment. IT'S SMART TO STAY SOBER! Submitted by Agnes $T$.

[^0]NDAY MORNING BREAKFAST and AA OPEN VISCUSSION. You are welcome to attend. 8:30 every Sunday morning at Sambo's. SAMBO'S - $1550-66$ th St. N. St. Pete.

$$
\begin{aligned}
& \text { WOMEN, IT IS NOW QUITE CLEAR, } \\
& \text { ARE VERY MUCH LIKE MEN, } \\
& \text { EXCEPT OF COURSE FOR HERE AND THERE } \\
& \text { AND SOMETIMES NOW AND THEN! }
\end{aligned}
$$

## G.S.R. Report - District One

May tenth meeting held at Central Office began with the usual roll call, and Secretary and Treasurar's report. The subject was brought up during Business Discussion that District One is allowed one committesman for each group. As we now have 48 groups, and but fiva committeemen, the District is entitied to elect one additional commetteeman.
Secretaries for all groups in the District have been sent an information sheet plus a form to be filled with the names of three or more key people who will take the responsibility for twelfth step work in their group area. These key people will contact other members to go out on twelfth step calls. It is imm portant that the groups fill out these porms and return them to Central office as soon as possible. So for, only six out of 48 groups have responded. Cooperation is needed in order to help the suffering alcoholic.
Group Rrpoert: Pinellas Park has added a meeting to its weakly schedule. This is an Open Discussion, held every Sunday at ons o'clock, at 6520 Park Blvd. Harold reported that 255 attended the meeting at Holiday Isles on Sunday, May 9th. Bob T. Prom Lakeland General first gave $A A$ talk and then according to the traditions of $A A$ gave a professional talk.
Our Goal - Every Group in Pinellas represented at each General Service Mesting!

Stew M.
"Man takes a drink, drink takes a drink, drink takes a nan." Chinese proverb.

MEN'S LUNCHEON - WEEKLY - FOGCUTTER 34 th Street and 1 st Ave. S. St.Pete Thursdays 12 Noon

A policeman stopped a well-dressed man who was singing loudly and staggering along the street in the wee, small hours of the morning and asked, "You got any explanation for wandering am round drunk at this time of night?"
"oppicer, honset," the reveler said, "if I had an explanation, I'd be home right now!"


GeS.R. Report-District One
June 14 th meeting, held at Central Office, began with usual roll call, and Sec ${ }^{\prime} y^{\prime}$ s, \& Treas, report. The first part of Business discussion was Leo S.'s report on the information sheets and forms that had been sent to the Secretaries for all grps in the District; to be filled with the names of 3 or more key people who will take the responsibility for 12 th step work in their group area. At last month's meeting it was reported that only 6 out of the 48 groups had responded. As of this month, 19 groups have responded.

Public Information Co-Chmn. reported a total of 15 hrs of D.W.I. classes, 20 hrs of lectures at various high schools, $2 \frac{1}{2}$ hrs on radio. One half hour on radio was a question and answer talk show.
roup Reports Serenity Annex, Clwtr. has meetings Mon. and Wed as well a.s Fri. noon.--Monday night, the new Al-Anon meet ing; Indian Rocks Beach has moved to 2400 Bay Blvd.; St Petersburg Grp. is moving but no definite location as yet.

Clearwater Grp. Sponsonship Comm. gave a report on their grp meeting on Sun.-with an attendance of 30. Emphasis was on how to make the walk-in newcomer feel welcome. Ralph P. gave a report on the 5 th Ann. Suncoast Conv., held at Sand Keyo He reported it was well attended, broke even financially--well, almost, with perhaps 5 or 10 dollars in the red.

Our Goal--Every Group in Pinellas represented at each General Service Meeting Stew M.

## Dance:

Home group dance July 30th Fri. Nite. Everyone welcometeverything free LIVE MUSIC.

## SPAGHETTI DINNER

Saturday, July 24, 1976
6:30 D.M.Eet Ssrenity club :-
631 Turner
Panel Mesting and door prizes at 7:30 Bingo and Draming at 9:30. Buy your tickats now - $\$ 2.00$ adult, $\$ 1.00$ for child under 12.

## In 2hemoriam: <br> "Scottie" <br> William D. Scott

Don Haskett
We have been sadly naglecting to report in our newsletter the tramendous amount of woiunteer work by our cochairmen, $\operatorname{yim} A$ a and Pat $p$. for public information and education. For instance, in ons months reports-
Clearmater Catholic
Light of Christ Church
10:30 until 1800
1 speaker - 2 groups
1:20 until 2:10
2 spaskars
St. Pete Jr. Collegs
Clearmater Campes
Health Fair
8:30 until 3:00
Christ presbyterian Church
Largo
Dinner speaker
2 hours
Northeast High
2 classes, 2 days
1 hour each
Boca Ciega High School
1 day, 11:50 until 4:45
3 spaakers
Canterbury High school
St. Pete, one hour
1 spasker
Clearwater High
1 hour - 2 speakers
Some months have bean busier. Thare have been radio and TV spots covered. The National Safety Council in charge of DuI (driving while intoriceted) classes had $2 A^{\circ}{ }^{\circ}$ s for forty minutes at the last sassion, of their DWI school. All this totals a fantastic amount of time and comordination with the voluntasis who serve on this comitit.

[^1]
## Retreats:

The loth Annual Spiritual Retreats for AA \& Al-Anon at the St Leo's College were a truly rewarding experiece for Ap-
oximately 200 guys and gals who attended. For the first time, a Retreat was made on two consecutive week-ends in May which made for smaller discussion groups and a much better chance for fellowship. Naturally some of us attending one $\mathrm{Re}^{-}$ treat missed seeing our friends who attended the other and vice versa; but all in all the real benefit of a Spiritual Retreat is not measured in how many friends we see but in how much closer we come to Gods as we understand Him, and thereby grow in our spiritual life.

From comments heard during and after the Retreats, both week-ends accompolis" het their purpose in this respect.

The first Retreat was opened by Chas. I. of Casselberry and the seond week-end by Clarence S., also of Casselberry. Both stressed the importance of Spiritua. growth to a happy \& successful A A life. Father Joe E., as usual kept everything on schedule \& nudged us, as only he can do, to keep the purpose of the Retreat in a "good, orderly, direction" "Nuff said. It was beautiful, rewarding and nspiring. Hope to see you at St Leo's ext May.

Ray $F$.
PS: And the food. - WOW!!!
WEEKENO RETPEAT: A Spiritual Retreat Exporience For Recovering Alcoholics (men and Women):....to improve our Canembious contact with God........" WHEN: July $9,10,91,1976$ WHERE: The Franciscem Center, 3010 Parry Avanue, Tampa, Fla., 33603 (813-229-2695). Conductad by Rev. Henry L. (nomber of the fellowship) Boston, Mass.
Retreat Cost: $\$ 35$ per person for the weekende lncludes a $\$ 5$ nonmafundable registration fes.
Beqinss Weakand retreat begins with regiefration \& room assingment 6:30 P.m. on Friday, July 9th. (No supper will be served on Friday.)
Patreat Egds: Sunday, July 11 th. apter lunch.
Addittonal Informetions please call or writs to Fransiscon cantar or contect George $0^{*} 3,485-9141$

BINGO every Saturday night at 9:30.
EARLY BIRD CAME RT 9:00
There is a mambership drawing evary woek m dues must be up to date and you must be present to win

Do you want to be ontape? WE NEED A WEDNESDAY AND A THURSDAY TAPE PERSON IN THE NORTH END OF THE COUNTY ALSO SUBSTITUTES-THOSE WHO ARE WILIING TO TAKE IT NOW AND THEN

## MElpWanted Volunteer!



Except for the extensive remodeling Ralph $P$. did in the Central Office 14 months ago, there has been no painting. up keep, repair, cleaning or painting done. Even if we are fortunate to find larger quarters it would a decent idea to leave this office in better condition than it is at present. Any volunteers who would be willing to paint the office in lighter, cleaner colors would be welcome. Is there anyone with an electric scrubber who would volunteer to clean the terrazo floor in the meeting room?
+++++ NEEDED +++++++++++++ NEEDED +++++ If anyone has, or knows of anyone with a spare set of drapes. 112 inches wide, 86 inches long ( 14 pleats) the Central Office drapes need replaced. A pair of 56 inch ones could be tacked together. Also anyone with a spare, or an old vacuum cleaner, the office is in need of one. The sec'y has been hauling one to and from the office from home, but it is now not in working order.
 TheTHTRD Edition of The Big Book is in stock at the Central Office. The number of personal stories has been increased to 44 in this edition. The basic text (pages 1 thru 164 ) remain unchanged. Thirteen new stories are included in sections headed "They Stopped in Time" and "They Lost Nearly All."
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## Coming Events

THE BIG DNE.... ....
Southeastern 32nd Annual Convention and the Florida 20 th Annual Convet-
ion are combined this year.
Deauville Hotel
Miami Beach, Florida
August 11-15, 1976

## The First Tradition

Our common welfare should come first; personal recovery depends upon A.A. unity.

## DO YOU BELONG?

Are you an active member, The kind that would be missed?
Or are you just contented
That your name is on the list?
Do you attend the meetings,
And mingle with the flock,
Or do you stay - - - -
And criticize and knock?
Do you take an active part
To help the work along,
Or are you satisfied to be
The kind that "Just Belong"?
Do you ever go to visit
Or call a member that is sick?
Or leeve the work to just a few, And then call them the "Clique"? There's quite a pregram scheduled. That I'm sure you've heard about, And we'll appreciate it if you, too, Will cone and help us out.
So came to meetings often
And help with hand and heart.
Don't just be a momber.
But take an active pant.
Joe S. brought from Chicago
THE BIG ONE - LAST CHANCE Southeastern 32 nd Annual Convention, and the Florida 20th Annual Convention are combined this year.

Deauvilla Hotel
Miami Beach, Florida
August 11-15, 1976
Reservation applications are now avallable at the Central opfice. This is truly the BIG one!

## A Declaration of Unity

This we owe to A.A.'s future: To place our common welfare first; To keep our fellowship united. For on A.A. unity depend our lives, And the lives of those to come.
Our individual sobriety depends on the group. The group depends on us. We soon learn that unless we curb our individual desires and ambitions, we can damage the group.

UNITY MEETING
Open
Saturdays
8:00 PM
St. Mary's Center
515 Fourth Street South
St Petersburg. FL 33701
The Committee far these meetings wishes to thank everyone who has helped and participated with these meetings. Especially those who have attended to make it a success. This Committee has done a great A. A. service since the death of Harold D. who was chairman.

A woman who was being bawled out by a policeman for jaywalking told him, "Sure I can read the 'Don't Walk' signs, but I thought they were bus company advertisements"

## FARLY BUT TMPORTANT

Father Joseph Mo, Baltimore, author and narrator of Chalk Talk, will speak at an open $\mathbb{A}$ meeting on Thursday, Nov. 1.8, at St. Jerame's in Iargo. Volunteers will bee needed for Committees such as serving coffee etc. More information later.
MEN'S LUNCHEON - WEEKLY - FOGCUTTER
34 th Street and 1 st hve. S. St. Pete Thursdays 12 Noon
SUNDAY MORNING BREAKFAST and AA OPEN
DISCUSSION. You are weIcome to attend.
$8: 30$ every Sunday morning at Sambo's.
SAMBO ${ }^{\text {S }}-1550-66 \mathrm{th}$ St. N. St. Pete.

DON ${ }^{\circ} T$ POINT A FINGER...


[^0]:    ONE OF THE FRINGE BENEFITS OF SOBRIETY IS THE ABILITY TO DISAGREE WITHOUT BE-COMING DISAGREEABLE.

[^1]:    MEN'S LUNCHEON - WEEKLY - FOGCUTTER 34 th street and 1 st Ave. S. St.pete Thursdays 12 Noon

