

THE 23 INFORMER

PA Area 60, District 23 P.O. Box 1698 Greensburg, PA 15601

www.aa-swestpa-dist23.org



ISSUE 188 - NOVEMBER 2013

DISTRICT 23 SERVICE CONTACTS

<u>DCM</u> – Lisa V.....	dcm@aa-swestpa-dist23.org
<u>Alt. DCM</u> – Margie S.....	altdcm@aa-swestpa-dist23.org
<u>Secretary</u> – Adam B.	sec@aa-swestpa-dist23.org
<u>Treasurer</u> – Vince P	treas@aa-swestpa-dist23.org
<u>Grapevine Rep</u> – Ed S.....	grape@aa-swestpa-dist23.org
<u>Archivist</u> – Ralph D.....	arch@aa-swestpa-dist23.org
<u>H & I Coordinator</u> – Ron Y.	hi@aa-swestpa-dist23.org
<u>Webmaster</u> – Lisa F.....	webmaster@aa-swestpa-dist23.org
<u>Alt. Webmaster</u> – John E.....	altwebmaster@aa-swestpa-dist23.org
<u>Literature</u> – Andy S.....	lit@aa-swestpa-dist23.org
<u>Special Needs</u> – Debbie H	needs@aa-swestpa-dist23.org
<u>Bridging the Gap</u> – Karen C.....	bridg@aa-swestpa-dist23.org
<u>Public Info/CPC</u> – John H.....	picpc@aa-swestpa-dist23.org
<u>Answering Svc</u> – Barry G... ..	answer@aa-swestpa-dist23.org
<u>23 Informer</u> –Colleen Z.....	editor@aa-swestpa-dist23.org

Toll-Free 24-Hour Hotline: 866-851-8459

COMMITTEE REPORTS

DCM REPORT

Hello District 23,

We are quickly approaching winter – don't let the weather keep you from working at your recovery. We didn't let weather get in the way of our drinking, did we?

I want to thank all the trusted servants who attended our Concept 4 workshop before this month's GSR meeting. Knowledge of the 12 Concepts is very important to us in our service positions. I am conducting these workshops every other month. Please join us if you possibly can. Also, if there is a topic related to service that you would like to learn more about, please tell me. I will be happy to conduct a workshop on that.

Saturday, October 19th was our annual Day of Sharing. I was only able to attend the morning half due to another service commitment, but I really enjoyed the time I spent there. I want to thank Margie and all the folks who worked hard to make it happen. The workshops were very well thought-out and presented, but I was disappointed in the attendance once again. We hold these events on Saturday to try to enable the most people to come. We heard the suggestions that District 23 hold our own DOS at St. Vincent College and made that happen. We will continue to try to accommodate members of our fellowship in the hopes that word will spread about what a great event this is. Everyone that does attend always talks about how much fun they have and how much they learn. Well, anyway, it was wonderful to see all the friends that did attend and a good time was had by all. Those of you who didn't come really missed out.

Lisa V.

DCM

H&I REPORT

Greetings fellow travelers.

It's November (checks calendar...), yep November. You know what that means, turkey! And gratitude. Turkey and gratitude, maybe not in that order. The H&I Committee is grateful this month (and every other month) for all of your donations to the Pink Can that help us take literature and carry the message to those who cannot get out to us. Thank you all.

Moving on to the people power front. **We are looking for someone to be a co-coordinator for the Juvenile Detention facility.** That entails taking a meeting into the facility the 2nd Sunday of the month from 3-4pm. **We are still looking for someone to step up and take over the position of coordinator for Torrance.** The coordinator makes sure that we have people covering the following meetings at Torrance: 1st Monday morning of the month from 9:30-10:30, every Monday night in the Hospital section and every other Monday night in the prison section. If you are interested or need more info, see me or come to our next H&I meeting (Saturday, November 9th).

Please continue to donate any conference approved literature to our literature drive. Our Opportunities in Service forms are always available; please volunteer to carry the message into any of the facilities that we cover. We are truly grateful and may we continue to work together to help save those alcoholics who still suffer and can't get to a meeting without all of our help. Without you we would not be able to provide literature and meetings to carry that message of hope.

H & I is in need of help. H & I is in need of help. We need AA members willing to serve as coordinators for some of our facilities. We also need 1 time speakers and home groups to take meetings into facilities and help us carry that 12 step message. The facilities which are in need of coordinators are: the Torrance State Hospital Monday meeting, BHS and the Westmoreland County Prison Friday meeting from 6 to 8pm. The facilities which need a one-time speaker or a home group to carry the message are Gateway in Greensburg, Torrance, Westmoreland County Prison (men and women), BHS and the Juvenile Detention Center.

If interested in serving, ask your SPONSOR then contact the chair or coordinator of that facility.

Rox Y

H&I Committee Chair

YOUR PAGE

Attraction: A Spiritual Approach

I recently attended a meeting I have made part of my regular meeting rotation called Dinner with Bill. Our practice is to choose a topic from "As Bill Sees It". We read the topic and then share our experience, strength & hope. That evening's topic was found on page 14 entitled "Newcomer Problems". One of the focal points was the experience of being hurt or confused when our advice gets rejected. The meeting was called to an end just before I got a chance to share. I would consider this offering the written version of what I would have said.

Many of our members shared their frustrations about trying to arm the newcomer with some of the significant advantages found in the solution to our common problem. There were good stories, too. I heard gratitude from one member who shared about their entire immediate family participating in the fellowship of AA and the joys and rewards associated with that experience. This member was decidedly blessed with the gift of observing spiritual growth among the people she loved.

Another member shared about some of the hurt and confusion entailed with attempts to chisel this program into the mind of a newcomer and suffering alcoholic. Chiseling is hard work and contempt prior to investigation makes the mind of a suffering recipient completely chisel-proof. As we went around the room, I noticed the sentiment of disappointment prevailing among those of us stymied in our attempts to carry the message. There were many of us.

As a person having some sales experience, I have become a student of the soft sell rather than any other method. One disadvantage we AA's have in carrying the message is that our track records are not the examples of a life well lived. Newcomers in the habit of comparing rather than identifying pick up on this and disqualify us before the first initial of our last name gets uttered. "A man convinced against his will is of the same opinion still." (Ben Franklin)

One young newcomer, filled with resentment, dealing with wreckage of the past, mandated to be in a room full of drunks, having to obtain written proof of his attendance from these drunks, finding himself in the company of well-intentioned AA's, is unconvinced and apprehensive. Accosted by waves of long term sobriety and cornered with the enthusiasm of a drawn out mini-lead, the newcomer wonders what kind of insane system of remediation he has fallen prey to? Our members disguise their hurt and rejection of the results by mumbling that old mantra: "This is for people who want it, not people who need it".

How do these opposing emotions and attitudes ever find harmony when inadvertently arrayed against one another? Sometimes they don't and by the rule of

unintended consequences, a person's life gets steered in a direction that becomes beyond recall. There are no referees or supervisors in these situations. One hopes that the will of the collective is good enough and strong enough to impart healing.

There are a couple of concepts I like to draw upon that are signposts in the traffic of recovery. The first is the often said tenet: "the newcomer is the most important person at any meeting." Another concept is one of our rewards: "we will lose interest in selfish things and gain interest in our fellows". A confluence of these two concepts provides a watershed moment. I choose to engage the newcomer on grounds with which he is most familiar; his recent history. I offer up the following: "I hate DUI's. What an expensive inauguration into AA! When I got mine, my whole family found out. I was fit for embalming. How about you?" I pose the questions in a friendly way, with a smile and without challenge. I wait for the response without interrupting.

The communique is not risk-free. The newcomer may not want to talk about things. The point is that the opportunity was proffered. The risk is worth the reward. The vulnerability takes courage. The attitude is not brashness, it is humility.

A couple of things happen. I have let him know that I am intimate with his situation. I have let him know that I need him to tell me that it is OK. Ownership of failure is mine, and I ask for his validation. We both share a common experience. I am asking and encouraging him to share his story. I have put my chisel away and drawn myself to him, offering up my vulnerability. I am interested in his story. Hopefully, he will drop his guard and open up. In this way, I will get to revisit fresh pain and humiliation, reminders of how I arrived. Keeping the pain fresh is the antidote for the quick forgetter. A newcomer may not have sage advice on sobriety, but can sure remind me why I want to stay sober. The newcomer's recent experience gets translated into wisdom when artfully extracted & refined.

The art of harvesting the newcomer's fresh experience for the benefit of ourselves takes a thousand meetings, but only twelve steps. There is no condescension; rather, there is an exchange of assets beneficial to both parties. By feeling understood, the newcomer walks away with an appreciation of his experience with AA. By listening, the old timer has reinforced the feeling of gratitude for not having to experience the recent humiliation of the newcomer. The germination of a future friendship is at hand.

Mike F.

Harrison City Hope

Your Page (continued!)

We met at such a young age.
I can still remember that first day,
We were both charmed into a daze
Yet we continued our relationship anyway.

Through all these long years
You have always been so loyal,
All the fight, the tears, the fears
Never did you run and coil.

Until the day I recalled Another
Who's love has no limits or bounds,
More than a sister, mother, brother, father
I know how crazy this all sounds.

You had to know this would not last
Today I am headed on a new path,
I shall leave you in the past
Regardless of your warnings and wrath.

My Friend and I will go on from here
Experiencing life like never before,
Remembering your face each day, each year
Wanting you less and Him more.

He came from the heavens above
To teach me, show me, guide my way,
With his faith, trust and love
I know I can make it just one more day.

ℒ. (Mt. Pleasant) 2013

PI/CPC REPORT

Mission Statement: Working together, public information committees convey AA information to the general public, including the media. The purpose of CPC in cooperation with the professional community is to better distribute AA information to those in contact with alcoholics through their professions. Like all of AA the primary purpose of PI/CPC service is to carry the message to the alcoholic who still suffers.

Hi everyone.

We had our monthly meeting Tuesday October 15th and continued discussions on how to proceed in carrying the AA message to the general public and professional community. We're reading guidelines and

are welcoming any input from AA's who may have experience with PI/CPC.
Also, Jillian D. and Ron L. composed a meeting format.
Next meeting: November 19th, 1st Presbyterian Church
300 N. Main St. Greensburg 6pm – 7pm.

John H., Jillian D. & Ron L.
PI/CPC

ANNIVERSARY!



Greensburg Sunday Night

29th Anniversary

Sunday, November 24th, 2013

Trinity U. Church of Christ

139 N. Main Street, Greensburg

6:30 Coffee and Fellowship

7:00 Dinner

8:00 Speaker – Mary R.

(Founding Member)

Covered dishes and desserts welcome.

TO ALL HOME GROUPS

If you wish to see your group's anniversary or other special event listed, please submit to the Editor no later than the first Monday of the month to have it appear in that month's Informer. My contact info is on the front of the newsletter. (editor@aa-swestpa-dist23.org)

Also, if your group has any changes, please contact the Editor, and it will be listed in the Informer.

Also, if you would like to see your article in next month's newsletter, please submit via the following email link:

editor@aa-swestpa-dist23.org

(Your submission can be kept anonymous if you so wish.....)

In love & serenity,

Colleen Z.

Editor