

NEWS GRAM

Volume 26 No. 3 C.A. World Service Office, P.O. Box 492000, Los Angeles, CA 90049-8000 Fourth Quarter 2009

C.A.'s 27th Anniversary

By Terry M.
Gilbert, Arizona, USA

It was 6 p.m. and the desert sky was darkening by the minute as we cleared security at the Arizona State penitentiary at Florence. As we crossed the massive yard of stone, concrete and barbed wire, over the loudspeaker echoed the words, "Cocaine Anonymous is on the yard." As I write this, it is November 18, 2009. Twenty-seven years ago, when someone whispered the fateful words, "Welcome to the first Cocaine Anonymous meeting," I wonder if they had any idea how God would use their inspiration and willingness to carry the loving, inclusive message of Cocaine Anonymous to prison yards like the one I'm on tonight, or to places like Russia, Iran, Germany, Scotland, Sweden and elsewhere around the globe, or even online over the World Wide Web.

The Hospitals and Institutions meeting we do at the state penitentiary is called the "Freedom from Bondage" group of Cocaine Anonymous. We meet from 6 to 8 p.m., beginning with a prayer and a round-robin check-in, followed by reading a story from our beautiful book *Hope, Faith & Courage*. We then discuss the story and end the meeting with a 10-minute meditation.

There is no trying to impress one another with stories of insanity—we all know about that. My good friend and sponsee Scott K. and I love doing this meeting. We leave my home in Gilbert, Arizona at 4:45 p.m. and don't get back home until around 9 p.m. It's a long drive to the prison, which is in the middle of the Arizona desert, but we don't mind the drive. We sometimes recall the miles driven to score cocaine. Even though neither Scott nor I have ever spent a day in prison, it doesn't matter or weaken our

effectiveness. As the inmates remind us, "We know how to do prison; we need Cocaine Anonymous to learn how to do life."

We recognize how important the H&I work we do is. These men would not have a meeting if it weren't for our Fellowship. One of the inmates put it this way, "Before Cocaine Anonymous came to our yard, we thought no one cared and that we were worthless. The program of C.A. has made us realize that we matter and that there are people out there who care." *[Continued on page 4.]*

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Trustee Corner

**By Trevor Scheible
Pacific North Regional Trustee
& WSBT Chair
Calgary, Alberta, Canada**

Personally, I would like to thank the World Service Board of Trustees for allowing me to chair the Board this year, and thank the Fellowship of Cocaine Anonymous for allowing me to serve as a Trustee. I am honored to serve with eight truly amazing people, whose love and dedication to C.A. knows no bounds. As a board, we strive to remember just how special this is.

We would like to take this opportunity to say thank you to Hayward H., outgoing World Service Trustee. Hayward has served his term, and we are grateful to him for his commitment to C.A. and for his friendship and leadership over the last four years. A replacement for the position of WST was not elected at this year's Conference, however Richard S., Trustee at Large, has stepped in to fill that role. Richard will be attending the WSOB meetings in person, when possible, and will participate via conference call for the remaining meetings.

We would like to say a special thanks to the entire World Service Office Board, as well as the Office staff. This group puts in many long hours, meeting twice a month. Keep up the good work.

We will be faced with many challenges this year. We are facing a large decline in 7th Tradition contributions. The global economy is very shaky right now, and we are not immune. If everyone in C.A. donated \$7.00 to CAWSO, we would have enough money to grow, do more translations, provide more services, and better carry out our mission. We would like to ask everyone to consider an extra donation to help this worthwhile cause.

The WSBT remains committed to serving the C.A. Fellowship to the best of our ability. If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact us through the "Contact the Trustee" link on www.ca.org, or contact your regional trustee directly. We look forward to hearing from you.

Note from the WSO

By Tom P.
WSOB Chair

Dana Point, California, USA

"I made it into this program because someone else worked their Twelfth Step on me. Someone passed it on to me. Someone was out there after they got clean and sober, caring about others. I need to never, ever forget that. Had they simply gone on with their lives and forgotten about people like me who were still out there using and suffering, I wouldn't be here today. My gratitude begins with that fact. It is with that gratitude in mind that I reach out to others, especially the newcomers. I need to have them in my life. That is where my spirituality begins."

My initial reading of these words took place standing at a podium in a workshop as part of my first convention in sobriety. Forty-eight days sober as I read this excerpt from a story in *Hope, Faith & Courage, Stories from the Fellowship of Cocaine Anonymous*, my voice cracked, my eyes filled with tears, and my heart opened. A story, in simple black and white letters on the pages of that book, had touched me deep within.*

Cocaine Anonymous has always touched me that same way, somewhere deep within. My first encounter with C.A. was with a member, Doug G., who picked up several of us from the treatment center and drove us to what was my first meeting of Cocaine Anonymous. At that meeting, the East Valley Men's stag in Tempe, Arizona, I met men of C.A. who were kind and made me feel welcome for the first time in a long time. Later that week, a man from that same home group brought the C.A. message into the treatment center as he performed H&I service work. Terry M. told his story on that Saturday morning for fun and for free. My life has not been the same since that first week. Cocaine Anonymous was opening the door for me to that special place deep within.

I left Arizona thirty-five days sober and on my way to a planned ninety-day stay at a sober living home in Dana Point, California. In my pocket-sized *Big Book*, I had written down the names and numbers of several persons who lived in southern California. I had asked for and received these names from the same men who had welcomed me at my first meeting. On my arrival in Dana Point, we were loaded up in a van and taken to a C.A. meeting in San Clemente, California. The meeting is named The Zoo and at that meeting, I met my sponsor. A voice boomed, "My name is David B____. I'm an addict and an alcoholic." I was stunned, not because the man had said his last name, but because I recognized the name. I opened the pocket-sized *Big Book* and the first name I had written down a few days earlier was his. God was speaking to me from that place deep within, and I listened. Two weeks later, my sponsor, David B., took me to a convention where I read the piece referenced above.

It has been over eight years since my first meeting of Cocaine Anonymous. Since that time, C.A. continues to be the most important aspect of my life. Unity, recovery and service in Cocaine Anonymous have recreated for me a life full of joy, awe and useful purpose. As I write this, it is November 18, 2009 and C.A. celebrates its 27th year of carrying the message to the still-suffering addict. Today I am privileged to serve this Fellowship as its World Service Office Board Chairperson. And today, our primary purpose remains the same—we are organized around carrying the C.A. message to the suffering addict. When I consider our primary purpose, that place deep within stirs.

*This passage is also contained in *Reaching Out*, one of the optional readings in the C.A. meeting format.

C.A.'s 27th Anniversary (continued from page 1)

Happy 27th birthday C.A.! The story of Cocaine Anonymous is still being written—a Fellowship of love, tolerance and service. In Cocaine Anonymous, we learn that there is no such thing as disposable people. So, as we began our meeting tonight, we joined in with all the groups from around the world when we said, "Welcome to Cocaine Anonymous." Much has changed in C.A. these past 27 years since that first meeting, and much has stayed the same. The Hope shines just as bright, the Faith continues to grow, and the Courage to carry the message to the

still-suffering addict anywhere at any time is still alive and well in Cocaine Anonymous.

So when they announce, "Cocaine Anonymous is on the yard," what it really means is light for the darkness, hope for the weary, and 27 years of love and experience right here for you and for me. Tonight we circled up, joined hands and sang together, "Happy birthday to you, happy birthday to you, happy 27th birthday dear Cocaine Anonymous, happy birthday to you, and many more. Keep coming back."

Letter from the C.A. World Service Conference Finance Committee

Dear fellow C.A. members,

Our primary purpose is to carry the message of recovery to the addict who still suffers. And certainly there are suffering—yet willing—addicts on the other side of our neighborhoods, towns, states, countries or even our world. How can we 12th-Step the addict beyond our immediate limited geographical area? How can one person, one group reach so many in need, and give back what has been so freely given to us?

We can! We do!

When the 7th Tradition donation that you put in the basket makes its way to the World Service Office, you have utilized a powerful tool to reach all corners of your country and our world.

Consider this recent note from a member of our Fellowship who resides in Iran—yes, C.A. is alive in Iran. She sent this email to our World Service Office Board Chair after participating in a remote meeting from the CALA convention. I think you will find it inspiring and worth your contribution to the basket. A portion of it has been reprinted here:

"Hello to you, our nice and kind sister and brother. We want to thank you. We start the Saturday morning with most of energy and love. Everyone in my home cried this morning. We have all the tears of joy in our eyes. We have the feeling to be near of you and we have feel that we

have most of sisters and brothers that we love us in other countries. Thank you, thank you to give us these good feelings and courage, hope and faith. We love you all!

Cocaine Anonymous World Services has opportunities to access different vehicles that your group or area may not have at their own disposal. Publishing and translations of books, chips and literature, access to drug court conferences, sponsorship of the national hotline, providing administrative support for new districts, areas and regions, mailing free starter kits, providing books to inmates, and fulfilling all worldwide orders for C.A. chips and literature are just a few of the duties of the World Service Office that your 7th Tradition donation supports. We are able to reach the far corners of the world to carry the message and bring the gift of hope and fellowship.

Perhaps we put a "currency" (dollar, euro, etc.) in the basket for our sobriety and an extra "currency" for our unknown brother or sister trying to find their way into the rooms. We are a loving and giving Fellowship. Our spiritual work is not done; please continue your generosity, and consider a greater contribution to the 7th Tradition basket at your home group.

Sincerely and thank you,

The Cocaine Anonymous World Service Conference Finance Committee

World Service Contribution Program

Cocaine Anonymous World Services depends on the financial support provided by individual members, groups, committees, Districts and Areas. We use your contributions as efficiently as possible, to maximize the services we are able to provide to addicts throughout the world. When you participate in the World Service Contribution Program, you ensure that we are able to serve the needs of those in our Fellowship, and reach even more with our message of Hope, Faith and Courage. And because your Contribution Program gifts are conveniently transferred by your bank from your checking account, savings account, debit card, or credit card account directly to the World Service Office, your contributions go farther than ever before. The C.A. World Service Contribution Program is safe, secure and confidential. You have complete control of the process, because you specify the amount of your contributions and when they are made. You can always increase, decrease or suspend your participation at any time by writing the World Service Office. Plus, your contributions may be tax deductible (consult your tax advisor). To help the C.A. World Service Office meet the needs of members, groups, areas and addicts still suffering, please fill out the authorization form below, attach a voided check or deposit slip (if necessary), and mail everything to the address shown. Thank you for your support.

AUTHORIZATION FOR DIRECT PAYMENT (ACH DEBITS)

YES! As a member of C.A., I want to participate in the C.A. World Service Contribution Program to help keep C.A. World Services going strong!

Cocaine Anonymous World Service Office
P.O. Box 492000
Los Angeles, CA 90049-8000
(310) 559-5833
cawso@ca.org

As part of my 7th Tradition contributions to Cocaine Anonymous World Service Office, I authorize Cocaine Anonymous World Service Office (CAWSO), to initiate variable entries to my account described below:

Type of Account: ☐ Credit Card ☐ Debit Card ☐ Savings

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☐ Monthly ☐ Annually ☐ One-time basis Effective date: ____/____/____ (MM/DD/YYYY)

This authority is to remain in full force and effect until CAWSO has received written notification from me of its termination in such time and manner as to afford CAWSO a reasonable opportunity to act on it.

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Address: _____

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PLEASE MAKE A COPY OF THIS COMPLETED FORM FOR YOUR RECORDS

(The complete World Service Contribution Program brochure, which includes this form, is available for download at www.ca.org/contribute.html)

A.A.'s "How It Works" and Cocaine Anonymous

By the World Service Board of Trustees

It has been a long-standing tradition in C.A. to read *How It Works* at meetings, conventions and events. Many of us grew up with it, so to speak, and feel a great devotion and love for the Fellowship of A.A. We owe a great debt to them for showing us the way and allowing us to learn from them. It can truly be said that without A.A., we as a Fellowship would not be where we are today.

Over the years, as part of our growth, C.A. has borrowed and adapted several readings from A.A. The 12 Steps and 12 Traditions have been gifted to all fellowships, to alter as needed. The only thing A.A. has asked of any 12-Step fellowship was to give the credit to them for the original version. *The Promises, A Vision for You*, and select other readings have been borrowed as well. Almost always, we use them in their original format, completely unaltered. The exception has been *How It Works*.

As long as most of us have been around, the C.A. version of *How It Works* included the word "cocaine" instead of "alcohol," as well as the alteration of the "three pertinent ideas." Somewhere along the way, we in C.A. thought that we had been granted permission to do so. Some old-timers assured us that verbal permission was granted, while others were sure that a written copy of such permission was out there somewhere. Events set in motion at the 2008 World Service Conference led the World Service Board of Trustees (WSBT) down a path to find a copy of this permission. After many hours spent diligently searching in every location we could think of, including the World Service Office (WSO), several past trustees' files, and other long-standing members' personal archives, the WSBT had to face the fact that we did not have any record of A.A. granting us the rights to alter any readings.

The question became what we could do to make right the situation we found ourselves in. The WSBT approved motions to address the situation. The first motion was to cease publication and distribution of any material and or literature containing *How It Works* in any medium. The second was to have the Trustee at Large investigate as to whether or not we have permission to reprint with redistribution (all media) of other A.A. literature/phrases, i.e., *The Promises* and *A Vision for You*. The next was to have the WSO set up a meeting, face to face, with A.A. to address the problem and ways to solve it, make amends, ask forgiveness, and how we can make further restitution. A record of the meeting via minutes should be distributed to the World Service Office Board and World Service Board of Trustees. The meeting would include the local Regional Trustee. This meeting has now taken place, and we have received an answer from Alcoholics Anonymous.

The WSBT would like to thank Alcoholics Anonymous for their graciousness in these matters. They were happy to meet with us and discuss the situation. The meeting was attended by John K. (A.A. WSB Chair), Valerie O. (A.A. Publications Director), Phyllis H. (A.A. General Manager), Tom P. (C.A. WSOB Chair), Trevor S. (C.A. WSBT Chair and PNR Trustee), and Robert L. (C.A. ANR Trustee). The entire matter was discussed at length, and much was said regarding the spiritual aspect behind what we as a Fellowship were trying to accomplish. Our desire to do the right thing was acknowledged and appreciated.

During the meeting, it was expressed to us how important it was for them to preserve A.A.'s purity of message. As a fellowship, they have a desire to help other fellowships, but they must look after their own house first, as do we. As a result, we have now received written permission

to continue to use all our current readings borrowed from A.A. They have asked, however, that we use them as originally written, unaltered in any way, and that we include a disclaimer supplied by them as well.

One of the other topics was our current inventory of *Hope, Faith & Courage Volume II*. With, appreciation of our request to this fellowship, Alcoholics Anonymous has approved our selling the remaining inventory of *HFC II* in the United States. We have a large quantity of books, approximately \$45,000.00 worth of inventory, and every copy contains the altered version of *How It Works*. During the meeting, we discussed ways to liquidate the supply, without undue financial hardship on the Fellowship of Cocaine Anonymous. There were some ideas, but none that seemed entirely feasible. We are eternally grateful to A.A. for the program of recovery and their willingness to help us work towards a solution to this situation. Books are now going back out to the Fellowship, and the message continues to be carried via this important tool. Unfortunately, out of respect for their wishes, future printings of *HFC II* will not contain *How It Works* in the altered format, if at all.

The WSBT started working on informing the Fellowship of the outcome of this process. It was at this point, however, that a newly presented letter, addressed to a long-term member and

dated November 29, 1990, was brought to our attention. We wish to assure the Fellowship of Cocaine Anonymous that we will diligently pursue further the impact this document may have on the process.

As the Fellowship of Cocaine Anonymous moves forward, we will realize that this outcome only helps us in our growth. Developing new readings, books, and other materials will strengthen us and provide tools we can use to carry the C.A. message. We will never forget where we came from and just how important A.A. and the *Big Book* have been to our development, but honoring them and their decision regarding *How It Works* will show how much we as a Fellowship have grown.

Update as of December 5, 2009: It is the position of the World Service Board of Trustees that the C.A. version of *How it Works* is not considered C.A.-approved literature. In the spirit of unity, our common welfare, and our observance of the Twelve Traditions, we suggest that your group have a business meeting to determine the well-informed group conscience as to what readings shall be used in your meeting formats.

[Editor's note: a copy of the current Conference-approved meeting format can be obtained from the World Service Office or downloaded at <http://www.ca.org/formats.html>.]

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My Home Group: “Get High on Hope”

By Earl H.
Sunland, California, USA

The first time I walked into a meeting of C.A. was in February 1986. I was there to “get some of the heat off.” My crazy addict behavior had driven my then wife to Co-Anon. She informed me that she was going to a Co-Anon meeting and there was a C.A. meeting next door; perhaps I might want to check it out. Being full of denial, but in constant trouble, I agreed to go just to make her happy. I was a little uncomfortable, not knowing anyone, but sat and listened. They read things and shared around the table about what was going on in their lives. They welcomed me and suggested I attend more meetings. Of course, I looked at all the “differences” and left thinking how great it was they had a place to go, but I’m not *that bad*. I’ll come back if it ever gets *that bad*. The truth was it was *that bad and much worse*.

It was a relatively new meeting that had been started four months earlier by the man who would become my first sponsor. He had something like two years clean, guru status, as the C.A. Fellowship was very young in those days. Although I came to the meeting regularly, I didn’t get clean and sober for another 18 months because I was running on self-will. Finally surrendering to the “Higher Power” I saw working in the members of my home group, “Get High on Hope,” I wanted what they had and was finally willing to do what was suggested.

There were lots of meetings starting up back then. I attended a lot of them over the years.

“Get High on Hope” was the meeting where I felt most comfortable. I fit in for the first time in a long time. Feeling a part of something good and special was exciting. I got my first sponsor and my foundation in recovery at that meeting. I met and kept some very dear friends there over the years. I have attended this meeting almost every Sunday night over the last 24 years and have known all the meeting secretaries. I’m even married to the current one!

Experiencing the meeting and the Fellowship growing and changing over the years has been challenging but I always keep coming back. Many of the secretaries and members have moved on to other

places and other meetings but have been replaced by other members.

I am so grateful and lucky to have found a “home group,” rotating through all of the commitments at the meeting, and I encourage my sponsees to attend and be of service as well.

We have always felt our meeting was a safe place for newcomers and we try to make them feel welcomed on their first visit. Our home group is a place to come and then become a productive member of society again. The group is the primary location where we carry out our primary purpose, to carry the message of recovery to the addict who still suffers. This group gave me the time, patience and love that I lacked when I got here.

The 12 & 12 states on page 130: *“Moreover, he finds he cannot keep this priceless gift unless he gives it away. Neither he nor anybody else can survive unless he carries the AA [C.A.] message.”*

At my home group, where I found my sponsor, my Higher Power, and my Fellowship, you taught me how to live a life filled with Hope, Faith and Courage.

[Author’s note: “Get High on Hope” is a participation meeting on Sunday nights at 7:30 p.m., located at 2902 Montrose Ave., La Crescenta, California, and is part of the San Gabriel/Pomona Valley Area of Cocaine Anonymous.]

The NewsGram is always looking for material that communicates a message of hope, faith and courage. We welcome original articles from our members sharing their experience with recovery, unity and service in C.A. If you have such an article (or perhaps an idea, cartoon, poem, story or other material related to recovery in C.A.) that you would like considered for publication in a future issue of the NewsGram, please send it and the completed release form on page 12 to: NewsGram Editor, c/o CAWSO, P.O. Box 492000, Los Angeles CA 90049-8000, or via e-mail to newsgram@ca.org. E-mail submissions are preferred. If you e-mail your submission, the form can be scanned and attached as a pdf or faxed to the WSO at 310-559-2554, Attn: NewsGram.

7 th Tradition July-September 2009		
Category or Location	Group Name/City	Total
ANONYMOUS	Anonymous	\$93.96
CANADA		
Alberta	Northern Alberta Area	\$542.50
HONG KONG	C.A. of Hong Kong	\$100.00
UK	Cocaine Anonymous Scotland	\$525.24
UNITED STATES		
Arkansas	Arkansas Area	\$1,500.00
Southern & Central California	Anonymous - Los Angeles	\$400.00
	Recovery in the Desert	\$147.26
	Common Solutions Group	\$50.00
	CALA - West Hollywood District	\$150.00
	CASD - San Diego Area	\$408.23
	OCCA	\$500.00
	WIECA	\$500.00
	LifePro	\$33.00
	Women's Stag	\$24.10
	Spirit of Studio 12	\$100.00
	WSOB	\$156.00
	Group # 1	\$30.00
	CALA Long Beach Compton District	\$928.32
	Central California C.A.	\$225.00
	Eastside Earlybird Attitude Adjustment	\$50.00
	Back to Basics	\$30.00
	CALA South Central District	\$298.67
	Sunday Night Madness	\$15.00
	Miracle of Women Conference	\$200.00
	One Puff, Too Tough	\$150.00
	Inland Empire Area	\$14.50
	Bagels By The Beach	\$25.00
	Oldtimers/Newcomer	\$15.00
	Friday Night Backbenders	\$30.00
	New Experience Group of C.A.	\$400.00
Northern California	C.A. Northbay Service Group	\$27.00
Colorado	The Promises Meeting/Group	\$120.00
	Dark Side of the Spoon	\$117.91
	C.A. of Colorado	\$150.00
Florida	South Florida	\$117.48
	District of Ft. Myers	\$100.00
	Florida Area	\$1,720.00

7 th Tradition July-September 2009		
Category or Location	Group Name/City	Total
Georgia	Coconuts	\$315.16
Illinois	Fresh Start	\$400.00
	Friday Night Hope, Faith and Courage	\$15.00
	IACA INC	\$2,900.00
	Northwest Suburban District	\$300.69
	South & West District	\$434.00
	NuStart Group	\$200.00
Indiana	Keepin It Real	\$25.00
Kansas	KC District of C.A.	\$250.00
	Wichita District Kansas	\$30.00
Maryland	New Way of C.A.	\$50.00
	DC-MD-VA	\$25.00
Michigan	Saturday Morning Alive	\$30.00
Missouri	Greater Missouri Area of C.A.	\$1,000.00
	Come and Get It	\$20.00
	Men's Meeting of St. Louis	\$175.58
Nebraska	C.A. of Nebraska	\$203.41
New York	C.A.'s Big Book Experience Group	\$30.00
Ohio	District of Columbus	\$1,000.00
Oklahoma	The Rock Stops Here	\$300.00
	Freedom For All	\$72.58
Oregon	C.A. of Oregon	\$1,200.00
PA/NJ/DEL	Cocaine Anonymous	\$392.00
	C.A. Sheraden	\$20.00
Rhode Island	Anonymous	\$124.00
South Carolina	Common Solutions Group	\$50.00
Texas	Bonnie Brae Group	\$202.65
	Anonymous	\$140.00
	Unit C	\$200.00
	South Central Texas Area	\$300.00
	Texas Area Service Committee	\$904.93
Utah	C.A. Central District	\$400.00
Washington	District 3-WA Area	\$155.68
Wisconsin	First Things First	\$60.00
	C.A. of Wisconsin	\$470.94
	Have you heard about group?	\$20.00
	Fri Nite Uncolas	\$41.00

WORLD CONTRIBUTION PROGRAM (for information on how to participate, see page 5 of this issue) \$3,994.00

Total July-September 2009 **\$26,445.79**

Have questions about how to handle your group's 7th Tradition? See the 7th Tradition pamphlet and the Financial Guidelines for Groups, Districts and Areas (both of which are available at www.ca.org), or contact your Regional Trustee.

My H & I Experiences

By Audz J.

Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada

In my early days of recovery, I was a client at a residential treatment facility. While there, different fellowships would come in and hold in-house meetings for the clients to attend. I was able to relate to the experiences and feelings of the Cocaine Anonymous panel members more than any of the other meetings. Before these panel meetings, I hadn't even been aware that Cocaine Anonymous existed. I got my first glimmer of real hope that I might be able to achieve satisfaction and happiness in a life without drugs and alcohol.

Panel members shared some of the horrors from their pasts then went on to speak about how good their lives had become. That gave me strength that I held onto until I was strong enough to face the horrors of my own past. Knowing others had been able to work through their pasts and gain freedom helped me believe that I could also get free, and to a large extent, I have. When panel members came in and shared their experience, strength and hope, I was able to see that the promises were true. Hearing a variety of different people on the panels showed me that *anyone* can achieve the promises if they follow this simple path.

Now I am an active panel member. I started speaking on panels at around eight or nine months clean. I was terrified of speaking in front of others, but when I was finished some of the clients came and thanked me! Some of them even told me of parts of my story that they connected to or that had inspired them. What a wonderful feeling, to think that something from my experience could actually help another on his or her path. That in itself showed me that "no matter how far down the scale we have gone, we will see how our experience can benefit others."* After leaving the facility, I felt amazing. I had this rush that left me feeling extremely happy and elevated. I now know that I was experiencing the natural high that panel members receive from giving back—the natural high that doesn't affect our clean date. Being an addict, I obviously love this and want MORE!

Like many addicts, when I look at my past using and the horrors I experienced, it seems that I should not have survived. I used to wonder why I was one of the lucky ones who escaped death and the grips of active addiction. I now believe that this is a part of the answer. I feel that I had to experience all that I have in order to help others. This has given me a sense of purpose in my life and helps me to give back what others so generously gave to me.

I am also able to give back to my roots in a way by participating in panel. I am now the alternate chair for the C.A. panel at the facility where I started my journey. The place where I first heard about C.A. The place where panel members came and shared their experience, strength, and hope with me.

It is incredibly spiritually rewarding to know that something so simple I have done can touch the life of another. Those times when I run into people at a meeting or even on the street who heard me share, who tell me the impact panel members had on their lives, make my heart so happy and fill me with a joy that is lasting.

**Big Book, page 84.*

ORDER YOUR ETERNITY COIN NOW!



Need a gift for a meaningful member? This elegant epoxy-finished coin is a perfect addition to any C.A. collection! The coin is gold-colored with the Eternally Grateful symbol in green on the front and the C.A. logo on the reverse. Order via the website at www.ca.org or contact the World Service Office at cawso@ca.org or 310-559-5833.

Help Write Our First Meditation Book



Wouldn't it be great to have a C.A. meditation book to read out of each day?
We need YOU to help make it a reality!

Perhaps you're thinking that with a Fellowship as large as C.A., more than enough submissions must have been sent in by now. Here's the reality: **We've received fewer than 150 submissions in over 4 years. That means we still need hundreds more in order to complete the book.** Or maybe you're thinking that you don't write well enough; never fear, we have committee members and a professional editor to help 'polish' whatever you write; what we can't do is come up with YOUR experience. Perhaps you already write about your recovery in journals, Step work or C.A.'s online meetings. We have our wonderful *Hope, Faith & Courage* books because so many of our members were willing to take the time to share their story. Why not submit your experience, strength and hope for the meditation book?

- ▶ **Content should focus on the C.A. message of recovery, for example:**
 - ▶ The application of the Steps and/or Traditions in your daily life.
 - ▶ Your experience with a Higher Power (not to be nosy, but just how do you communicate with the Higher Power of your own understanding?).
 - ▶ An experience you found particularly uplifting or powerful.
 - ▶ A solution to an issue or character defect you've dealt with.
 - ▶ A thought to ponder in meditation and/or throughout the day.
- ▶ **Personal experience must be the author's original content**
- ▶ **Length should be approximately 250 words or less**

In addition to a personal excerpt, each daily reading will contain a quotation from C.A. Conference-approved literature. If there's a particular passage that relates to your recovery experience, please share it with us. Please summarize your personal passage in a sentence or two to be used as the thought of the day.

February 7th

"What we failed to do alone, we can do together."
(Tools of Recovery)

We share our experiences at meetings because it helps us to stay sober. By sharing, we express our love for others who might be having the same difficulties and joys we have had. It helps us all to understand we are not alone and that we have common situations we work through on a daily basis.

Thought of the Day

I will share my experience today so that others may take comfort in the knowledge that others have been there and done that. I will share my experience today in the hope someone will help me. I will share today to bring us together.



For more information,
please call 310-559-5833

E-mail your documents to submissions@ca.org or by regular mail to:

CAWSO, Inc.
Attention: LCF Committee
P.O. Box 492000
Los Angeles, CA 90049-8000



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My Step 2 Experience

By Richard L.
Northampton, England, UK

Step 2: Came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.

So there I was: I had admitted that I was powerless and that my life became unmanageable as a result of being Powerless, and then I learned that the solution is a Power greater. I had no concept of a Higher Power when I first went through the Steps. It was suggested to me to speak to other people about their concept of a Power greater, which I took on board and started to explore the possibility of this "Power" that could restore me to sanity.

I sure needed to stop the madness going on in my life due to my drug taking. After 20 years of using drugs, my world had become pretty insane. If you are reading this, I'm sure you know what I am talking about. So, did I need to be restored to sanity? Hell yeah!

So here we are again at the Second Step, where I am informed that this "Power" could restore me to sanity concerning drink and drugs. I have realised that I have no control over drugs and have accepted that abstinence would be a good idea and that if I work the 12 Steps I would never again have to suffer from the terror, misery and pain of addiction. The only thing necessary is to come to believe in a "Power greater" that I have no understanding of. Great! What am I going to do?

I decided I needed to speak to my sponsor about the dilemma I was facing.

I told him I was struggling with this "Power" it talks about in Step 2. He asked me if I believe in the 12 Steps, C.A., meetings and the *Big Book* of Alcoholics Anonymous, to which I answered, "Yes, of course I do." It is evident that the 12-Step programme has saved many people from the scrap heap. I have heard many stories similar to mine while attending meetings from people who have overcome their own battle with addiction through working the 12 Steps and attending meetings. C.A. has been working just fine for 27 years; how could I not believe?

"Exactly," my sponsor pointed out. "Is that not a Power greater than you?" Step 2 states that we come to believe. You don't have to believe at this stage; all that is needed is a willingness to believe. My experience was that I did believe; yet I was complicating this simple step. It took asking someone else for help to "Keep It Simple," assure me that there is a "Power," and that anyone can access this "Power" as long as they are willing to believe.

That episode in my journey was over six years ago and today I do believe in a "Power" greater than me. I still work the Steps, attend meetings regularly, commit to service positions within meetings, sponsor others, talk to my sponsor, and try to live my life a day at a time. Today I am not obsessing about drugs, and I feel at peace with myself and the world. I am a happy customer of C.A.

Popcorn in Pop Cans

By Anonymous

I would like to express my gratitude for C.A. in Nebraska. I came to Omaha for treatment in February 1989. My life was a train wreck. I was living in Los Angeles, using and dealing cocaine. I had lost everything, including any hope that I would ever be able to stay clean. I came back to Nebraska to lay off for a while so I could be a better drug dealer. After a month or two of my best efforts, I found myself in jail on a few charges—which will happen when you get pulled over and then bust out of the police car. After having the door of my motel room kicked down and being cuffed on the floor in my birthday suit by about five police officers, I had a little time to think about how well my plan was working. It was while I was in jail that I decided to give the Steps one honest try. I had no other options at the time. I was looking at one to five years.

I was depressed and hopeless. I really did not want to go on living the way I was, but I really didn't think I could ever stop using cocaine. I was at the jumping off place, as I have heard it called. The only thing in my life I felt was certain was that I would use cocaine again, that I would experience all the pain and anguish involved with running out at some point, and that I would recover and try it again later. It was maddening. The using thoughts and dreams were nonstop. I really could not focus on anything and found no pleasure in life.

I was familiar with A.A. and that it was great for a lot of people, but you see we are talking cocaine and that is a different deal. I didn't know anyone that used like me who ever quit. They died or went to jail. So, I was really resigned to trying to stay out of jail until I died from using. This was my life and I had no hope of anything better.

However, my first week in treatment, I was asked if I wanted to go to the Cocaine Anonymous meeting. The mere mention of these words sparked a glimmer of hope, however skeptical I might have been. I went to the meeting where a woman named Liz chaired. She picked up the *Big Book*, read out of a story and related it to her own cocaine use in a way that only another addict can do. She gave me back hope that very first meeting. I kept coming back and

gained the faith and courage that was required to work the 12 Steps. It was a long and painful process, but I have been sober since my first meeting of Cocaine Anonymous over 20 years ago. It works, it really does.

Today my life is wonderful. I am so blessed with the host of friends I have and with my relationship with my Higher Power that it really is unbelievable. All I did was go to meetings, work the Steps and get a sponsor. I was once smoking popcorn out of pop cans, but my life has been saved by the grace I experienced through C.A. in Nebraska.

Unity Corner:

Unity and the Newcomer

By Glenn T.
Wichita, Kansas, USA

When we addicts crawl into the rooms of Cocaine Anonymous for the very first time, most of us are, at the very least, probably clinically depressed, some of us suicidal. We may have preconceived ideas of what recovery is or should be; most of us are clueless.

Consider this hypothetical situation: a newcomer finds him/herself in a meeting or at a group where there are mixed messages, general chaos and confusion, and egos and personalities abound. He or she would probably say, "If this is what Cocaine Anonymous is about, I want no part of it!" By God's grace, newcomers do find a *Fellowship that is united* in supporting, loving and sharing with the newcomer a message of hope, and the very same spiritual principles that we who have recovered try to live by on a daily basis.

So as we splash around in our newfound freedom and happiness, as we bask in the miracle of recovery, let us not forget how important our Unity is and how it affects the newcomer. After all, Unity is the thread that holds the fabric of our Fellowship together, strong.

Calendar of Events (continued on page 16)

January 15-17, 2010

23rd Regional Bilingual Convention

The Strength of WE

QUEBEC (Atlantic North)

LOCATION:

Holiday Inn Montreal-Midtown
420 Sherbrooke St. West H3A 1B4
Montreal Quebec, CANADA
(514) 284-4342

CONTACTS:

Real C., Registration Chair (514) 249-0242

February 5-7, 2010

14th Annual C.A. of Wisconsin Area Convention

The Hope, Faith & Courage Experience

LOCATION:

Country Springs Hotel Water Park Conference Center
2810 Golf Road
Waukesha, WI 53187
(262) 547-0201

CONTACTS:

Sheri J., Convention Chair 414-769-9550
Jennifer S., Registration Chair 414-491-6794
Thomas W., Outreach 262-385-2992

February 5-7, 2010

2010 Oregon & SW Washington Area Convention

Sunlight of the Spirit

LOCATION:

Red Lion at the Quay
100 Columbia Street
Vancouver, WA
(800) 733-5466

CONTACTS:

Merlinda S., Convention Chair
Bill H., Registration Chair 503-319-5835

March 5-7, 2010

Illinois Area Unity Convention

Step To It

LOCATION:

Hyatt Regency O'Hare
9300 Bryn Mawr Avenue
Rosemont, IL
(847) 696-1234

CONTACTS:

Robert H., Convention Chair 847-757-7188
Walter P., Registration Chair 630-696-5684

March 19-21, 2010

Pacific North Regional Convention

Unity At Work

Northern California Area

LOCATION:

Holiday Inn of San Jose
1740 North First Street
San Jose, CA 95112-4584
(408) 793-3300

CONTACTS:

Robert B., Convention Chair 408-242-1241
Ernest M., Registration Chair 209-601-7034
Deborah G., Program Chair 510-228-2492
Jo Ann J., Hotel Liaison 408-420-8060
Kevin W., Outreach Chair 916-519-2495
Kathy L. Hospitality Chair 415-368-4255

March 19-21, 2010

Atlantic South Regional Convention

Breaking The Chains That Bind Us

Memphis, TN Area

LOCATION:

300 N. Second Street
Memphis, TN
(901) 525-1800

CONTACTS:

Barbara J., Chairperson 901.337.8467
Kenny W., Vice Chair 901.337.0507
Delois P., Registration Chair 832.647.5299

Get Your Local Event Listed! Use the form at http://www.ca.org/event_form.html to get your event listed both on the web and in the NewsGram, or notify us by mail to NewsGram, c/o CAWSO, P.O. Box 492000, Los Angeles, CA 90049-8000, by e-mail to newsgram@ca.org, or by fax to 310-559-2554, Attn: NewsGram.

Calendar of Events (continued from page 15)

March 25-28, 2010

SGPVCA 18th Annual Convention

In the sunlight of the spirit

SGPVCA Area

LOCATION:

South Point Hotel Casino
9777 Las Vegas Blvd.
S. Las Vegas, NV 98183

CONTACTS:

Lonnie A., Convention Chair 626-689-0703
Linda R. Registration Chair 626-375-9063

May 14-15, 2010

12 Step Workshop and Boat Party

A Spiritual Experience Weekend

CAUK - South Central District

LOCATION:

Workshop:

The Bourne Spring Centre
St. Mary's Road
Springbourne, Bournemouth, BH1 4QP

Boat Party:

The Solent Scene
Poole Quay
Poole, Dorset

The workshop is a closed event. The boat party is closed to under 16's (due to insurance restrictions) and no stilettos.

CONTACTS:

Isha S., F&E Chairperson
Colin F., Out-of-Town Ticket Seller +44 (0) 7821 542 116

May 27-31, 2010

26th Annual World Service Convention

Farfrümusin

LOCATION:

The Hilton Milwaukee City Center
509 West Wisconsin Avenue
Milwaukee, WI 53202
(414) 271-7250 or 1-800-HILTONS

CONTACTS:

Quin B., Chair 414-550-5633
Jill E., Registration 414-534-6610

July 9-11, 2010

The Joy of Recovery

C.A. Holland

A celebration of C.A. Holland's 10th anniversary.
For more information, contact
convention2010@ca-holland.org or visit www.ca-holland.org/convention2010

Celebrate Around the World

By Rose J. and Kelley C.
CATW Co-Chairs
WSC Unity Committee

We are now seeking artwork for CATW in 2011. The 2011 World Service Convention Committee has selected a theme for the convention to be held in Phoenix, Arizona:

We

Please show your talent and submit your artwork ideas for Celebrate Around the World in 2011. Submissions must be received by August 15, 2010 so that we can take them to the World Service Conference. Art must be submitted in either jpeg or jpg format, and artists must release all rights to their artwork to CAWS and CAWSO, Inc. For more info or to submit your artwork, please contact catw@ca.org.