

HIGHER GROUND

June 2015

Tradition Six

THE moment we saw that we had an answer for alcoholism, it was reasonable for us to feel we might have an answer for a lot of other things. The AA groups, many thought, could go into business, might finance any enterprise whatever in the total field of alcoholism. In fact, we felt duty-bound to throw the whole weight of the AA name behind any meritorious cause.

Here are some of the things we dreamed. Hospitals didn't like alcoholics, so we thought we'd build a hospital chain of our own. People needed to be told what alcoholism was, so we'd educate the public, even re-write school and medical textbooks. We'd gather up derelicts from Skid Rows, sort out those who could get well and make it possible for the rest to earn their livelihood in a kind of quarantined confinement. Maybe these places would make large sums of money to carry on our other good works. We seriously thought of re-writing the laws of the land, and have it declared that alcoholics are sick people. No more would they be jailed; judges would parole them in our custody. We'd spill AA into the dark regions of dope addiction and criminality. We'd form groups of depressive and paranoid folks, the deeper the neurosis the better we'd like it. It stood to reason that if alcoholism could be licked, so could any problem.

It occurred to us that we could take what we had into the factories and cause laborers and capitalists to love each other. Our uncompromising honesty might soon clean up politics. With one arm around the shoulder of religion and the other around the shoulder of medicine, we'd resolve their differences. Having learned to live so happily, we'd show everybody else how. Why, we thought, our society of Alcoholics Anonymous might prove to be the spearhead of a new spiritual advance! We might transform the world.

Yes, we of AA did dream those dreams. How natural that was, since most alcoholics are bankrupt idealists. Nearly every one of us had wished to do great good, perform great deeds, and embody great Ideals. We are all perfectionists who, failing perfection, have gone to the other extreme and settled for the bottle and the blackout. Providence, through AA, had brought us within reach of our highest expectations. So why shouldn't we share our way of life with everyone?

Whereupon we tried AA hospitals. . .they all bogged down because you cannot put an AA group into business; too many busybody cooks spoil the broth. AA groups had their fling at education, and when they began to publicly whoop up the merits of this or that brand, people became confused. Did AA fix drunks or was it an educational project? Was AA spiritual or was it medical? Was it a reform movement? In consternation, we saw ourselves getting married to all kinds of enterprise, some good and some not so good. Watching alcoholics committed willy-nilly to prisons or asylums, we began to cry, "There oughtta be a law!" AAs commenced to thump tables in legislative committee-rooms and agitated for legal reform. That made good newspaper copy, but little else. We saw we'd soon be mired in politics. Even inside AA we found it imperative to remove the AA name from clubs and Twelfth Step Houses.

These adventures implanted a deep-rooted conviction that in no circumstances could we endorse any related enterprise, no matter how good. We of Alcoholics Anonymous could not be all things to all men, nor should we try. We saw as never before that we could not lend the AA name to any cause other than our own.

Bill W. Oct. 1952

Upcoming Events

June 13 – HMB Fellowship Day - Cairo, NY, See: www.aahmbny.org

June 20-22 – ESCYPAA, Rochester, NY. See: <http://escypaa.org>

July 4 - Independence Day Picnic - Schodack, NY, Hosted by District 18, See: www.aahmbny.org

Aug. 1-3 – 35th NYS Informational Workshop, Latham, NY [Please see the event flyer & Registration form here!](#)

This Month in AA History

June 26, 1935 - Bill D. (AA #3) gets sober

June 7, 1938 - Bill & Lois have argument, 1 of 2 times Bill almost slips

June 15, 1938 - One of the first uses of the term Alcoholics Anonymous

June 18, 1940 - 100 attend the 1st meeting in the 1st AA clubhouse at 334-1/2 West 24th St., NYC.

June 30, 1941 - Ruth Hock shows Bill the Serenity Prayer for 1st time

June 11, 1945 - 2500 attend AA's 10th Anniversary in Cleveland, Ohio

June 21, 1944 - 1st Issue of the AA Grapevine is published

June 13, 1945 - Morgan R. gives radio appearance for AA with a large audience, he is kept under surveillance to make sure he doesn't drink beforehand

June 1, 1949 - Anne S., Dr. Bob's wife, dies

For What Its Worth

According to the Guinness Book of World Records, Steven Petrosino is the Beer Chugging World Champion. On June 22, 1977, he drank 1 liter of beer in 1.3 seconds at the Gingerbread man in Carlisle, PA,

Before breaking the alleged house record of 56 shots in one day at Le Starter, a bar in France, Renaud Prudhomme passed out and died of alcohol poisoning. The bartender has been charged with manslaughter.

Finally, Brad Lee Davis, an Oklahoma man, has pleaded guilty to manslaughter after giving his stepfather an atomic wedgie that went too far when the elastic waistband cut off the victim's air supply. Davis had beaten his stepfather unconscious during a fight and then wanted to humiliate him further by photographing him with the wedgie. Police said the two men had been drinking beforehand. Who would have thunk? Google: Fatal Wedgie

Group Anniversaries

June 12, 1972 Tupper Lake - Thurs. Nite Group
July 7, 1998 Plattsburgh New Beginnings Group



Upcoming District Meeting Schedule

June 9 Elizabethtown
United Church of Christ, Court St.
July 14 Plattsburgh
Club 12, 1 Durkee St.
Aug. 11 Saranac Lake
Adirondack Med. Ctr., Rt. 86

All meetings start at 7:30