



THE ALTERNATIVE

INTERGROUP NEWSLETTER FOR THE READING AREA-JANUARY 2001

@@

MY HOME GROUP

When I came into AA I was confused, and very scared. I started to go to meetings in my neighborhood and found the one meeting I went to started to feel like home to me. I said to my new sponsor, "Hey Paul, what is it about this group that feels so good to me?" Paul looked at me and smiled and said "Welcome Home, Boy!" I stood there looking at him; see, I was used to him calling me boy, that was his way to right size me. What I was not used to was anyone welcoming me anywhere for a very long time.

Then he said now that this is your home you better take better care of it. "What do you mean?" I said. He looked at me again; then, I got used to him looking at me and said: "In Alcoholics Anonymous 10% of the people do 100% of all the work, now it's your turn." He went on to say: "We kept the doors open for you and you felt at home here, didn't you?" All I could do was shake my head yes. This simple man explained to me in words that I could understand, that if my homegroup was going to survive, it was up to me and the other new members of the group to do the service of the group. It started with the ABC's of service: Ashtrays, Books, Coffee. Back when I got sober we had alot more smoking meetings. Now I do service on the larger level; I serve my Homegroup, my District and my Area. Soon I will be rotating out of District service and I don't know what I will be doing next, but I'm sure that if I stay out of the way my Higher Power will figure out for me what I could not figure out for myself. My plans for my immediate future probably will include service to my homegroup, Dublin 10. It's a nice meeting, we meet at 10pm on Friday nights. It's a candlelight dicussion meeting in Dublin, Pa. If you're ever in town on a Friday night, please feel free to join us, we'd be happy to see you.

*Yours in Service,
Ted G.*

.....
A NEW BEGINNING

I managed to drink my way through all my friends. I had no one in the world to talk to. With increasing guilt and never-ending depression, I was too weak to continue this day-by-day suicide.

Thank God I knew of A.A., so I called. I had no idea what would happen--I just knew I didn't want to live if life was going to go on like it was.

Today I'm counting my blessings instead of my troubles. When I walked into the friendly atmosphere of my first A.A. meeting, I knew I was where I belonged. Here were people who thought and felt as I had. Here was the understanding I'd been searching for all my life. These people were my friends, and I felt (CONT.)



READING INTERGROUP, P.O. BOX 184, READING, PA 19607

A NEW BEGINNING (CONT.)

their sincere interest in me. With these new and enlightening doors opening up to me, I was able to make the eventual decision to stop drinking, a day at a time--because I, too, was an alcoholic. And with this came the only real freedom, the freedom of truth.

My sponsor used to say to me, "If I could only paint you a picture of how beautiful life can be without booze..." I wanted so badly to see the picture as it was in her mind. Well, now I'm living it and trying to paint it for others. A.A. has become a way of life and living for me. It has brought about a revelation of self, the discovery of an inner being, an awareness of God.

I wouldn't give it up or trade it for anything. And the only one who can take it away from me is me--by taking that first drink.

-----from *Alcoholics Anonymous*, page 355,
"A Teen-Ager's Decision"



THE GORILLA

Alcoholism is like dancing with a GORILLA. At first it is fun.
Then after one dances with the GORILLA a long time, one begins to become tired.
One tries to sit down.

The GORILLA wants to keep dancing,
and won't let you sit down.

One tries to pull away, but the GORILLA will not let that happen.

The more one tries the rougher the GORILLA gets.

Pretty soon one is beat up worse and worse.

One then realizes, I am dancing with a GORILLA.

The GORILLA won't let go.

It is a GORILLA.

One thinks to one's self, "I can control this GORILLA,
I was the one that asked the GORILLA to dance."

The GORILLA still won't let go.

Pretty soon one is in a big fight with the GORILLA.

The GORILLA keeps on dancing
until one is just hanging there in the arms of the GORILLA,
limp, lifeless, and out of breath.

The GORILLA finally lets go.

One doesn't know why.

One gets away from the Gorilla and stays away.

Everything becomes better.

Then off in the distance there is the GORILLA.

The GORILLA is dancing tirelessly.

One thinks to one's self,

"I think I'll go ask the GORILLA to dance."

Some do.

Some manage to stay away from the damn GORILLA.



Happy New Year...on the ice pond of sobriety, may you never have a single slip.

44th ALL IRELAND CONVENTION: Dolmen Hotel, Carlow. 20th, 21st & 22nd April, 2001. Contact Bonnie C. if you wish a copy of the program, I can mail it or hand it to you. Call for information.

THE PENNSYLVANIA STATE CONVENTION WILL BE HELD AUGUST 3RD, 4TH AND 5TH, 2001. THE NEXT PLANNING MEETING IS SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 10TH AT 11A.M. AT THE CLARION HOTEL IN CARLISLE. TAKE THE PA TURNPIKE TO EXIT 16, GO NORTH ON ROUTE 11 FOR ABOUT 1-1/2 MILES. THE HOTEL WILL BE ON THE RIGHT. CONTACT BONNIE C. FOR MORE INFORMATION.

We regret to announce the closing of the Recovery Riders meeting, at 8p.m. on Saturday nights. Please support your local group and get involved, to keep meetings open, especially for the suffering alcoholic new to the program.

~~~~~  
**STEP ONE: WE ADMITTED WE WERE POWERLESS  
OVER ALCOHOL--THAT OUR LIVES HAD BECOME  
UNMANAGEABLE.**

**WHY THIS INSISTENCE THAT EVERY A.A.  
MUST HIT HIS BOTTOM? THE ANSWER IS THAT  
FEW PEOPLE WILL SINCERELY TRY TO  
PRACTICE THE A.A. PROGRAM UNLESS THEY  
HAVE HIT BOTTOM. FOR PRACTICING A.A.'S  
REMAINING ELEVEN STEPS MEANS THE  
ADOPTION OF ATTITUDES AND ACTIONS THAT  
ALMOST NO ALCOHOLIC WHO IS STILL  
DRINKING CAN DREAM OF TAKING. WHO  
WISHES TO BE RIGOROUSLY HONEST AND  
TOLERANT? WHO WANTS TO CONFESS HIS  
FAULTS TO ANOTHER AND MAKE RESTITUTION FOR  
HARM DONE? WHO CARES ANYTHING ABOUT A  
HIGHER POWER, LET ALONE MEDITATION AND  
PRAYER? WHO WANTS TO SACRIFICE TIME AND  
ENERGY IN TRYING TO CARRY A.A.'S MESSAGE  
TO THE NEXT SUFFERER? NO, THE AVERAGE  
ALCOHOLIC, SELF-CENTERED IN THE EXTREME,  
DOESN'T CARE FOR THIS PROSPECT--UNLESS HE  
HAS TO DO THESE THINGS IN ORDER TO STAY  
ALIVE HIMSELF.** *Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions, pg. 24*

I have schedules and contact numbers for meetings out of the Reading area, call Bonnie!!!!!! Some of this information includes out-of-state meetings.

Wernersville has a men's meeting on Wednesday nights from 6:30 to 7:30, for their halfway house and other federal/state programs. Please contact Terry, number below, for information. This is men only and paperwork must be completed prior to going. *Any group wanting the Area 59 Corrections Committee to come to their group to put on a "Bridging the Gap" presentation, please call Terry at 717-445-6042. If anyone or any group is interested in volunteering for this program, tell your GSR or DCM or call Terry. Thank you.*

\*\*\*\*\*

### **WEBSITES&email**

**Akron Intergroup-website: [www.akronaa.org](http://www.akronaa.org)**

**Email: [ignews@akronaa.org](mailto:ignews@akronaa.org)**

**Minneapolis Intergroup-website: [www.aaminneapolis.org](http://www.aaminneapolis.org)**

**Email: [info@aaminneapolis.org](mailto:info@aaminneapolis.org)**

**SEPIA-website: [www.sepennaa.org](http://www.sepennaa.org)**

**East Valley Intergroup(Mesa, AZ)-**

**Email: [aamesaaz@fastq.com](mailto:aamesaaz@fastq.com)**

**[www.aaphoenix.org](http://www.aaphoenix.org)**

**The Grapevine-website: [www.aagrapevine.org](http://www.aagrapevine.org)**

**GSO(General Service Office)-website: [www.alcoholics-anonymous.org](http://www.alcoholics-anonymous.org)**

**Connecticut AA- website: [www.ct-aa.org](http://www.ct-aa.org)**

**Maine AA- website: [www.maintoday.koz.com/maine/aa](http://www.maintoday.koz.com/maine/aa)**

**Houston intergroup website [www.aahouston.org](http://www.aahouston.org)**

**A.B.E. Intergroup-website: [www.aalv.org](http://www.aalv.org)**

\*\*\*\*\*

**Reading Intergroup:**

*Bonnie C.: [JTBSFRIEND@aol.com](mailto:JTBSFRIEND@aol.com)*

*Michael L.: [ALPHALEH@aol.com](mailto:ALPHALEH@aol.com)*

*Rick F.: [freerick@quixnet.net](mailto:freerick@quixnet.net)*

*Harry S.: [hmjs@enter.net](mailto:hmjs@enter.net)*

*Stan S.: [sstoudt@aol.com](mailto:ssoudt@aol.com)*

*Randy F.: [Randy@simplyefficient.com](mailto:Randy@simplyefficient.com)*

*Jay K.: [JKUPI@aol.com](mailto:JKUPI@aol.com)*

*Clive C.: [clivealive@juno.com](mailto:clivealive@juno.com)*

*Terry McF.: [Tmaa93@ptd.net](mailto:Tmaa93@ptd.net)*

*Jimmie C.: [Dblwinrjimmie@aol.com](mailto:Dblwinrjimmie@aol.com)*



Grupo Tomalo con Calma will be celebrating their 12th anniversary on Saturday, February 3rd. Call 610-685-2260 or contact Angel.

iBienvenidos!

*The address for AA of Upper Bucks County is: District 47, P.O. Box 133, Sellersville, PA 18960. Telephone 215-721-3656.*

S.E.P.I.A. is having their Share-A-Day on March 4th at St. Joe's University Student Center, from noon until 5. There will be a planning meeting at the office at 444 N. 3rd St., on January 27th from 12-2.

**I CAME, I CAME TO, I CAME TO BELIEVE**

I have back issues of the *Alternative* from October 1999 to present. I also have copies of newsletters from Intergroups around the country. Contact Bonnie for the above.

**\*\*\*Institutional Commitments for January\*\*\***

**CHILDREN'S HOME**  
Sundays at 7:30p.m.  
7-Leesport  
14-Teathyme  
21-Alpha  
28-Teathyme

**ST. JOE'S(MH UNIT)**  
Mondays at 7p.m.  
1-Shirl  
8-Walnut Street  
15-Hilltop  
22-Walnut Street  
29-Hilltop

**WERNERSVILLE**  
Tuesdays at 7p.m.  
2-Leesport  
9-Leesport  
16-District 33  
23-Leesport  
30-Leesport

**WERNERSVILLE**  
Thursdays at 11a.m.  
4-Leesport  
11-Turning Point  
18-Turning Point  
25-Hilltop

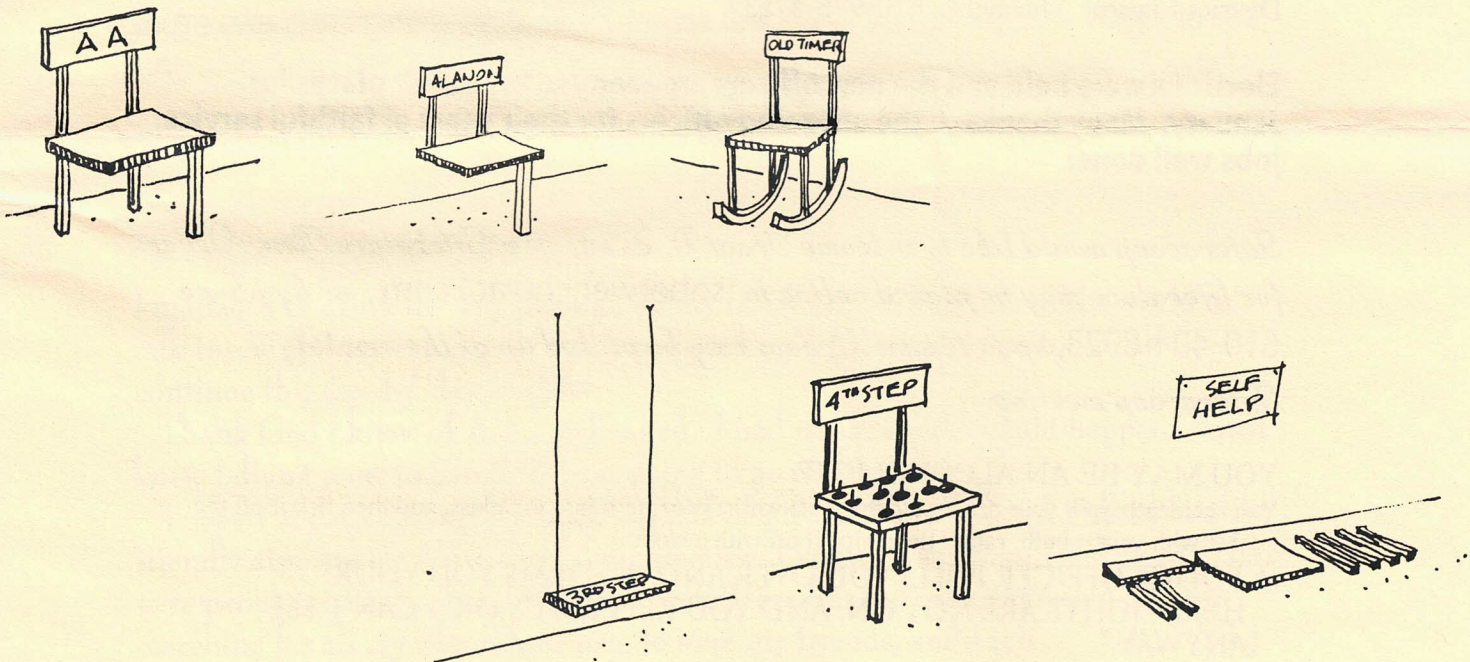
**READING DETOX**  
Thursdays at 8p.m.  
4-Teathyme  
11-Nolde Forest  
18-YASNY  
25-Walnut Street

**CHIT CHAT**  
Thursdays at 8p.m.  
4-District 66  
11-Leesport  
18-Leesport  
25-Walnut Street

Please notify Rick, Stan or anyone at Intergroup if you cannot make your commitment!! If you would like to go to the St. Joe's meeting, contact Melanie at 610-775-1729.(Or call her at the hospital first to see if there are any A.A.'s there: 610-378-2092). If you are interested in particulars about Chit Chat, contact Brian Halstead, Clinical Director for inpatient, at 610-678-2332, Ext. 2497. At the moment, Chit Chat has a separate meeting for the men and women. We also need volunteers to chair the Wernersville 11 a.m. meeting.

---Got any jokes, words of wisdom, favourite passages from AA literature, slogans, etc.?  
Send them to Intergroup(address on front) for *The Alternative*!---

**Seats of Learning**



**SERVICE WORK IS GRATITUDE IN ACTION**

We thank the groups for your contributions, which help keep Intergroup going. With your donations the message is carried to more alcoholics. Readership of *The Alternative* is increasing. To help keep it free, and help defray costs of other operations, please consider a part of your group's donations to be sent to Intergroup. Thanks again for your support.

**MANY THANKS FOR CONTRIBUTIONS RECEIVED FROM THE FOLLOWING GROUPS, for the general fund, DURING THE PAST MONTH:** Muhlenberg Sunday Morning, Walnut Street Recovery Group, Leesport Group, Topton Group, Advent Men's Group, W.I.R.E.S.(Womelsdorf Group), Books & People Group, Millennium Group.

Thank you to the ALPHA Group for their contribution to the Activity Fund.

*ALL MEMBERS ARE WELCOME TO ATTEND INTERGROUP AND DISTRICT MEETINGS.* Intergroup Meetings are held the fourth Tuesday of every month, at 7:30 p.m. at the UGI Building on Route 10, just up the road from the Queen City Diner. See your group's representative for Intergroup meeting minutes. District 67 has their monthly meeting at St. Mark's Church, Birdsboro, at 7:30 p.m. Welcome to our first-timer at Intergroup, Roger-DCM for District 67.

\*\*\*\*\*

|                                           |                                               |
|-------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------|
| Chairperson: Jimmie C. 610-478-7049       | Alternate Chair: Shirl O. 610-406-0441        |
| Secretary: Jay K. 610-                    | Treasurer: Bonnie C. 610-478-7049             |
| Hotline: Shirl O. 610-406-0441            | Schedules: Bob G. 610-372-0840                |
| Alternative: Bonnie C. 610-478-7049,      | Alternative Assistant: Jimmie C. 610-478-7049 |
| Books & Literature: Traci D. 610-404-8923 |                                               |
| Women's Prison: Chris H. 610-371-0102     | Men's Prison: John K. 610-775-7818            |
| Archives: Harry S. 610-562-0924           | Institutions: Stan S. 610-375-1441            |
| Unity: Charlie P. 610-378-5699            | Spanish Liaison: Angel R. 610-372-2438        |
| District Liaison: Michael L. 610-926-4753 |                                               |

**Elections were held and the new officers are ready to take their places for January. Many thanks to the outgoing officers for their years of faithful service, jobs well done!**

*Intergroup would like to welcome Traci D. as our new Literature Rep. Orders for literature may be placed online to: soberwench@aol.com, or by phone 610-404-8923, up to 10p.m. Orders may be picked up at the monthly Intergroup meeting.*

**YOU MAY BE AN ALCOHOLIC IF:**

You accidently spill your drink onto the table whilst pouring it into the glass, and then lick it off the table with your mouth, rather than wipe it off with a cloth.

**A POLICE OFFICER PULLS YOU OVER AND INFORMS YOU YOUR HEADLIGHTS ARE NOT ON, AND YOU REPLY, "IT'S OK, I CAN'T SEE ANYWAY."**

You may be an alcoholic if: Alcoa Aluminum inquires about the mineral rights to the beer cans in your backyard.