

Here's *How*

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Hope

Varieties of Hope

Rick Z.

Before I got sober, my daily hope was to minimize the amount of time I'd have to spend doing necessary things, such as making a living, in order to kick off the day's drinking as early as possible. I did not (usually) begin the day by getting smashed—there was typically a professional errand or two to attend to, on a week day, and perhaps some shopping or a morning stroll on a weekend. Anyway, I was one of those alcoholics who was so full of booze upon awakening that there was rarely a pressing need to pour a stiff one the moment I opened my eyes. I was usually still drunk. By noon, when the high began to fade, my hope was to get through whatever dull dismal necessities were required of me, so that I could pour that first, exquisite tumbler full of Dewar's at the first feasible opportunity.

Once that first gulp of alcohol hit the back of my mouth, my hope for the day was a done deal. I was home free. Ahead of me were three or four wonderful, languorous hours, during which I would immerse myself, for the ten-thousandth time, in the delusional sandbox that my drunkenness, as if by magic, would take me. The playland was full of fantasies made real—the dreams of my youth, unrealized, sky-high ambitions, dashing and romantic personas who answered to my name and lived lives of glorious adventure. I played their serials in my head, as the liquor level in the 1.75 liter bottle dropped below the halfway point and Warren Zevon sang about a porcelain monkey. I was no longer experiencing hope, but rather the fulfillment of every ambition, a life so fantastic and fearful that it was satisfying simply to replay its highlights ad infinitum, each slide in the show revealing an episode of sheer drama

in which yours truly did the impossible—humbly, completely, and with style.

What was there left to hope for, when I could be transported to such places at will? For the price of a jug of spirits (\$27.99, right down the block), I didn't have to bother with any nagging, unrealized hopes—with figuring out how to start making them a reality. Reality was non-essential. Reality was a pain in the ass, a waiting room for the Boozeville Express. Alcohol made my fantasies come to life, transforming them into cinematic masterpieces, with the camera's eye capturing my moments of glory far better than would have been the case, had I actually been my own eyewitness to the preposterous stunts (the tenth-round knockout of the erstwhile champ; the grand slam closing out the 57-game streak) which my projected self performed every night, without fail, until I emptied out the bottle and fell into oblivion.

Satisfying my daily hopes so easily—that is, getting drunk, as quickly as possible, and thus entering my own little Private Idaho for which booze was the passport—I was nevertheless not able to completely disregard the shambles that my everyday life had fallen into. I was a lawyer by trade, whose clientele had begun to resemble the cast from a bizarre version of "The Devil's Rejects." I had been forcibly ejected and banned from every drinking establishment within walking distance of my office—which I was only able to occupy through the generosity of its chief tenant, a lawyer who afforded me rent-free space in exchange for the opportunity to monitor my downward spiral at close range. I had alienated my son, estranged my siblings, and turned my erstwhile chums into strangers. Virtually all I still possessed, in truth, was the delusional paradise of booze, which was still able to get me to Eden on the relative cheap. Yet

I experienced no panic—but rather sunk even deeper into my daily film festivals, where my most childish hopes came winningly alive, springing full-blown like sea-gods from salt-spray.

Pretty pathetic, is it not, this litany of self-deception? In my case, each night's passage was a virtual psychosis, willed into being by the magic of booze and my own, ingrown refusal to come to grips with my failures. I knew that it was alcohol that had opened up my secret garden, that fulfilled my hopes (in a manner of speaking) with such complete abandon. I also knew, during those quasi-sober, in-the-mirror moments that even my far-gone routine could not rule out, that alcohol was killing me by inches. I had grown visibly bloated, pale and puffy-faced, with my hairline receding faster than green beer in the middle of March. I was damn near broke, and deeply in debt. My memory was going. And it was taking more and more liquor to get me to paradise, my daily consumption ramping up to the point where a bottle of spirits, taken neat and quick, would scarcely get me soused. Oblivion, when it came, was short-lived, with sobering-up quick to follow. The road to Magic Land was getting tougher on the undercarriage.

I was able to go on for another couple months, somehow finding a way to pay for the assortment of bottles that I required, each day, to gain admission to the multiplex where dreams came to life. The real world, assuming that it still existed, was an imposition that I tried to ignore. My few professional commitments dwindled. Finally there was just my living room, with its stained carpet and dented, all-a-kilter Venetian blinds, where, exiled from all sleep, I sat splay-legged for hours, drinking, and then leaving to get some more. The film festival kept a tighter schedule; the offerings grew stranger, my absorption more fraught with a nag-

ging sense of despair. Instead of focusing, with a defiant and almost gleeful resolve upon the wishful fantasies, the sagas, the might-have-been scenarios of flubbed opportunities restored, my mind's eye kept honing in on an aging, lonely, rather disreputable fellow, smelling of booze, looking like a veritable wreck, his only prospects for happiness or satisfaction to be gleaned (God willing) from the next annihilation.

And then it all came to an end. Suddenly, I became debarred from the paradise that had been my mailing address for thirty years. In a nutshell, I could no longer get drunk—not really, not to the point of oblivious transport to someplace else. No matter how I tried, I stayed immutably in the here and now, amidst the evident squalor, the old furniture and dirty dishes, the chaos of mounting bills and unmet obligations. Each time I opened my eyes, it was always about five in the morning, with that fallow, pre-dawn light trickling through the blinds and the sparrows beginning to greet the day. Sprawled, legs akimbo, with the lees of a quart of gin promising no escape, I wanted that damn morning to simply recede, to push it back, keep it dark forever. But the light kept coming in, bringing on another stupefying installment of the reality I could no longer escape.

Without recourse, without hope, I found my way to an AA meeting. There was literally nothing else I could think to do. Every few moments, my throat seized up, parched for lack of accustomed sustenance. Fearful of crashing my car, I managed to park in time to follow the tag end of a group into the double door of church basement. My roving camera's eye caught me indelibly en route—a fat and bloated might-have-been, once promising, now gone for good, skulking into a seat amongst tiers of scrubbed, well-dressed attendees. One of them, a short, dapper fellow with a brushed-back pompadour, I remembered seeing in the hallways of the Loop courthouse. His face radiated good fellowship. He seemed full of hope.

It's been some three years since I dragged myself to that meeting, sweat-soaked and haggard, counting the seconds between spasms. During the last thirty-two

months, I have kept from drinking. The multiplex, the Street of Dreams, where I used to hang my hat and kill my time, is no longer home to me. Almost miraculously, my physical health—even my hairline—has been restored to an earlier level. Although never at center stage of any of the meetings I frequent, I have found a place in Alcoholics Anonymous. And my hopes, my all-too-filmable, ever-enduring hopes, have been transformed. Once the birds of a paradise which I sailed to on a sea of booze, my hopes have become something close to those early-morning sparrows, singing to meet the day.

HOPE = Hearts Open, Pain Eradicated.....

Christa B.

The word "hope" does not appear in the 12 Steps. It doesn't have to – the entire program of AA is one of hope. We all walked through these doors hoping to find the key to sobriety. Many of us were hopeless, some even homeless. Many had lost their homes, jobs, family members, cherished friends, and self-respect in their quest to quash their irritability and discontent, which they found – up until this point – only possible through alcohol and drugs. Our obsession of the mind had driven everything else away and our world had become very small.

According to my mini copy of the Webster's NewWorld Dictionary – the one that comes off the shelf because it doesn't weigh 200 pounds (maybe the other one will stop collecting dust once I start to bench press), hope means "a feeling that what is wanted will happen". In our case, we want very little but it looms large: we want sobriety, and a better way of living!

Not asking for much, right? To have hope, one must also have faith, one must believe that something WILL happen. Faith is apparently not prevalent enough in the world at large that my mini dictionary didn't even

list it – I had to lug down the aforementioned monster. Their definition – the one that I like – is "a firm belief in something for which there is no proof"; in AA terminology a 'higher power'. Many in AA would argue with the point of "proof"; we hear stories again and again of miracles being worked by this Higher Power.

"Higher", which meant something entirely different in the past, is but one of the many "H" words used in AA lingo. (Humility, health – spiritual, mental and physical, honesty, even honor, in the sense that we are required to "suit up and show up"). But Hope is where it all begins.

By walking through those doors of AA the first time, we had already worked Step 1 – we had tried and tried but nothing seemed to relieve the pain, so we honestly admitted defeat. For me, step two was a blessing – I would plunge into a tar pit if I believed that would restore me to sanity. Step three stalled me – was I willing to turn my life, my WILL over to someone who I didn't like, let alone trust? My sponsor explained the reference to God also stated the caveat "as we understood him," meaning that our higher power could be one of our own choosing. Be gone you antiquated anomaly of agony. My Higher Power will work through me, not against me. That made surrender more palatable, but I will admit, there were still moments of "fake it til you make it" in my case.

I forged ahead past the 6th to realize, without conscious thought, that the previous steps were already making a mark in my life. I was already a bit more in harmony with the spirit of the universe, as I like to call her/him/it. I had opened my heart and a brand new world began to beckon. One in which I wanted to participate; one in which I wanted to make a difference. One in which I wanted to live!

On a recent enlightening and enjoyable spiritual retreat to Joshua Tree, California, I heard these words in a lead from Cindy C. - The program of AA is simplicity itself. We are all a part of God. If we surrender, if we simply see the world through his eyes, listen for his guidance and do his bidding, we will grow spiritually.

After a year plus of sobriety I have managed

to shut out the congressional assembly in my head at least once long enough to hear a voice that wasn't mine. What it said doesn't really matter; it would seem non-sensical to others. But it made sense to me and gave me a long-lost sense of direction - and purpose. What I find hard to believe is that a woman who once bristled at the mere mention of the word "God" now communicates with one of her choosing. I hope that's considered spiritual growth (I'll check with my sponsor).

With spiritual growth comes serenity. (Just occurred to me AA also has a lot of "S" words – spirituality, surrender, service, sobriety, searching, sanity, support, the ever-infamous self). But Serenity is my favorite. It is what I truly hope for in the future.

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CASO Corner

By Laura Gonzalez, CASO Manager

Soon many of you will receive our annual Thanksgiving appeal. This is the time of the year to express your gratitude for AA, your sobriety. November is Gratitude month; help me and many others express our gratitude for the gift of sobriety. It is so easy for me to forget to say thank you to those that came before us and struggled to get AA going in our area.

I have wonderful news to share; our very own Geoff Cochran, your Group, Fellowship and Service Coordinator is a first time father. His significant other gave birth to a beautiful baby boy on Monday October 1st, 2006.

Please stop by your Central Service Office. While you're here, browse the bookstore, see the new books we carry such as Emotional Sobriety, by the AA Grapevine and after many requests we now carry A New Pair of Glasses By Chuck C. While you are here, have a cup of coffee and stay for a meeting. We have them Monday through Friday at 12:10pm with additional meetings Tuesday and Thursday at 2:30pm.

As a reminder, we are moving this year; our new address is 180 N Wabash Ave, Ste 305 (Lake St & Wabash Ave). We will be moving right around the corner from our current location. Currently we are starting to pack up the office to ensure for a smooth transition. Our main goal is to move without negatively impacting the services we provide. These are some exciting times. We will be at the new location by December 1st; our phone number will be the same (312) 346-1475. Please tell everyone you know; we need you to help us get the word out on our new location.

As the year-end slowly approaches, inventory and our audit will take place. On top of the move, there will be some closures to the office in addition to the holiday closures. We will be closed November 24th for Thanksgiving. We will be open the day after Thanksgiving. If you are off, it would be a great time to be a historical part of one of the final AA meetings in our current location before the move. The follow-

ing week, November 27th to December 2nd the office will be closed for the move. We will reopen for business on December 5th, 2006. The telephone service will not be interrupted; we will do our utmost to ensure the weekday meetings will continue. We will also close December 25th for the holiday and close the rest of the week for our physical inventory in the bookstore.

We need your help! Now more than ever is a good time to help yourself and us by doing some service work at CASO. If you have any questions about volunteering, call Mike M., the Operations Manager, Geoff C., the Group & Fellowship Services Coordinator, or Nellie P., the Receptionist.

Does your Group want to do service work? Groups can now sponsor a Volunteer shift on a weekly or bi-weekly basis. The Group needs to have one person to coordinate with CASO and then to get Volunteers to sign up to cover the telephones. The sobriety requirement to answer the phones is a minimum of one year continuous sobriety. Then the Group needs to contact CASO to arrange for training. The Volunteers can be trained individually or as a group. The Group then takes responsibility for covering the selected shift with trained Volunteers. We have 21 four-hour shifts (9 AM-1 PM, 1-5 PM, and 5-9 PM) to choose from: three a day, seven days a week. Evenings and weekends seem hardest to cover.

Tell us about "what it was like, what happened and what it is like now." In upcoming issues, Here's How will publish your stories about:

We are not a Glum Lot

November – December Issue
Last day for submission – October 31st

Serenity

January – February Issue
Last day for submission – January 31st

Honesty

March – April Issue
Last day for submission – March 31st

Hopebriety: Stronger, More Agile and More Miles Per Gallon.

Nathan L.

What led me into the rooms of AA, more than any physical consequence, was the total lack of any hope for my future. The few years preceding my sobriety date, I had found that my daily life, while not under the influence of alcohol, was unbearable. Being burdened by a constant low-level itch of fear and depression left me feeling constantly uncomfortable. I have come to learn today that this is a symptom of my alcoholism (restless, irritable and discontent). At the time, I was not aware of this, so I sought relief through many different avenues. I tried a combination of doctors, psychiatrists, medications, relationships, jobs and so on. I felt hopeless, utterly hopeless.

Nothing worked, except alcohol. The only thing that was a sure-fire reprieve for these unpleasant thoughts and feelings was drinking; an activity that had caused me to lose control and suffer consequences time and time over. I was stuck between a fate of incurable emotional and spiritual pain or drinking for temporary relief. Unfortunately the latter (while effective) was inevitably followed by many forms of harm to myself and those around me. Basically, I was backed into a corner, and a hopeless existence that I could not see continuing past my twenties. The hopelessness had gotten to a point where I was able to find a window of willingness to enter AA.

Once sober, I found myself hitting a new low of hopelessness that I could not even fathom while drinking. I had gotten sober, realized that I was powerless over alcohol and that drinking no longer worked. Unfortunately, straight out of rehab I fell into a stretch of unsponsored sobriety with no home group, steps or accountability. That old familiar pain of alcoholism came rushing back, stronger than before. Except now, I had nothing. I knew that drinking would not

work, medicine would not work, psychiatry would not work, the girl would not work and I was left terrified of what would happen to me. I was backed into a corner and the only options were to give drinking another shot, or to give the steps a shot. I chose to get a sponsor and a home group. I figured I'd have at it, and if it didn't work, I was no worse off.

What I found is that working the steps and attending meetings not only lifted the desire to drink, but it provided small increments of relief from my crazy head. I started to see that AA was able to accomplish what nothing else had. I was able to feel comfortable in my own skin for brief periods, consequence free. After I talked to another alcoholic, attended a meeting, met with my sponsor or completed step work, I would feel a window of relief and would no longer think about drinking. I started to feel small doses of peace of mind through AA, and started to see a solution to my problem. Just as gradually as it left, hope started to rise back up into my life.

The Power Behind the Higher Power

Mel M.

Here's a perfect example of how God works behind the scenes in our daily lives without us knowing it.

I had been fighting with the Gas Company for several months, trying to resolve a disputed meter reading. The anger and frustration I was going through was not being handled very Christian-like, if you know what I mean. Many phone calls, e-mails and missed appointments, not to mention the very poor attitude of the many customer care reps I had to deal with, made me feel positively satanic. I fantasized about how many ways there were to take a human life. I wanted

blood. Not a very Godly way of handling this, huh?

I prayed for serenity and discernment and for help to reach the right person at Nicor, who could give me some answers. Perseverance paid off when I reached the right person, who assured me "the buck stops here" and a reader would come out tomorrow. I said yes but then found out my wife Dawn had appointments and wouldn't be available to meet with them. I had to burn a vacation day to meet with the reader. Now I'm mad again. I would have to waste eight hours of pay for a 45-second appointment at most, and give them a four-hour window to boot.

Here's the postcard. While I was waiting for the Gas man to come, I was pretty much alone and the evil one caught up with me and started putting ideas in my head about doing things I know I shouldn't. They were getting pretty strong too, until the phone rang.

It was a new AA member, who came to our meeting two weeks ago. He was coming off the mother-of-all-hangovers and was filled to the brim with emotional pain, guilt and remorse. He stayed after the meeting and asked to speak with me on the side. I agreed, and we had a very frank discussion on how to get sober and stay that way. Knowing that even though, with God's grace, I manage to stay sober "one day at a time", I hardly consider myself an expert. So I loaned this newcomer a very special Big Book that was given to me by my Gramma, who has since passed away. "Giving it away to keep it" right? I explained to this man which passages helped me in the beginning and how I used it each day along with my Bible to re-inforce God's will for me. I also asked the man to please return it the next week and I would help him get his own copy. He never showed up, but that was OK, because I felt that if it was used to help him or someone else, it served its purpose.

Needless to say, I was quite shocked when he called. He apologized for

missing the last meeting and he was on his way to return the book. I asked him how things were going and we spent a good hour on the phone discussing his recovery. He had the typical newcomer questions and comments and I felt I helped put him on the right path. I helped him understand some things in the book that confused him and stressed how important it was to trust God as his higher power to see him through. I encouraged him and supported him, I talked to him about boundaries and balance, very important keys to recovery. After agreeing to meet after next week's meeting, we hung up. That's when God spoke to my heart.

I realized that I no longer felt evil trying to invade my soul. The peace and serenity I prayed for a short while ago was granted, and with it came a sense of clarity. Had I not taken the day off to do battle with the gas company, I would have missed this newcomer's phone call. Had the newcomer not called when he did, I might've acted on those evil thoughts I was having earlier, and then would have had to deal with the many negative consequences of my actions.

Then my wife Dawn came home and told me that her eyeglasses she needed were mostly covered under our insurance. We weren't sure they would be and money is very tight right now. About five minutes after Dawn came home, the meter reader arrived. He was very helpful and understanding and assured me the problem would soon be rectified.

Cost of a blown vacation day: \$144.00
 Cost of Dawn's new glasses: 35.31
 Cost of a new Big Book: \$12.00
 COST OF BEING PART OF GOD'S PLAN: PRICELESS

Having God answering your prayer to remove temptation and be part of God's will: EXTREMELY PRICELESS

All in all, not a bad day. Thank you God.

Gratitude, Hope and Miracles

Erling P.

Many years ago, my former wife, a member of Alanon, fooled me into going to an open meeting of AA in Palatine. She did this by taking me to dinner with the idea that we would attend a presentation by an organization afterward. When we arrived, I saw that it was an AA meeting, something I had heard of but had no concept.

The man who opened the meeting introduced a speaker from Chicago. The man's name was Jimmy H. who spoke for almost an hour. During his "presentation", I recognized many similarities in our attitudes regarding our lives and the effects of drinking alcohol. I was inspired, so much so that the following day I did not have a drink of alcohol.

However, the next day I made business calls from home while havinø occasional

drinks. I then went to a fund raising event, drank to the point of blacking out, and ended up under arrest at the local police station from which my parents had to bail me out. The following day I went to the only place I knew of where I could visit AA, which had been announced by the man named Jimmy. It was on Delaware Street in Chicago, former home of the Mustard Seed. To my amazement, when I arrived there around 12:30 pm, the man I had heard on Saturday was leading the meeting. (It seemed this fellow was everywhere.)

After the meeting some people stayed and chatted. I sat with them and one of the men asked how long I had been sober. As I looked at my watch in response he immediately knew the answer. All of the people then offered their greetings to me and offered support, even presenting me with a schedule of Chicago area AA meetings and encouraging me to attend some.

I was confused, to say the least, on how to make arrangements to go to the places listed, since I had no idea what the "rules" were, so the following day I called the downtown office of AA. The young woman who answered was very compassionate, offering encouragement and taking my phone number saying someone from my area would call.

Ten minutes later I received a call from a man in my local area who offered to drive me to a meeting that night. I asked him the location and turned down his offer for the ride because it was in a church less than a block from

LIFE UNMANAGEABLE



where I lived. I met him there and he was very instructive about the meeting and locating others in the area. I found out at once that instruction included that I should not drink anything, anymore, as opposed to my thinking that I would be taught to drink in moderation.

The lead from Jimmy H. continued to vibrate in my mind. Don't drink, go to meetings, trust in a Higher Power, follow the steps of AA, and get a sponsor. Since that time I have not gone without AA resonating in my brain. Not to say that I didn't slip and relapse a number of times, but the belief that this was my answer for a better life had stuck. Since the last drink I had, I have had a very good life. Some problems sure, but not the devastating problems that I had always suffered from as a result of drinking alcohol.

I learned to try to carry the message to others. I too gave leads like Jimmy H. I have volunteered to do all sorts of service work, including answering questions of the terrified at treatment centers. I have talked to another alcoholic every day since my last drink - except when I was in a coma for three and a half weeks less than a year ago.

On October 1st of last year I suffered a crash on a bicycle path in the forest preserve, becoming knocked unconscious with severe bleeding in my head. Another couple on the bicycle trail came upon me and called for paramedics. I was taken to a hospital emergency room and treated; I was incoherent. The following day it was determined that due to the brain damage I would most likely die. A neurologist felt that brain surgery may be life saving; however there were no guarantees and there may be severe loss of mental ability and paralysis.

My daughter and son were called, as well as my ex-wife and significant other who decided to allow the brain surgery to be performed. I remained comatose for three and one-half weeks. I remained hospitalized and in a nursing home for more than two months. Afterwards I was re-educated for reading and writing for two more months.

This story is not told for pity but for gratitude, and the hope others had for my

recovery. All of this time others came to see me and pray. The others included AA members, as well as nonalcoholic family members. (My son and significant other are both AA members.) So many people in AA meetings were told of the injuries that several visited me during the most severe threat of survival.

When I was released from the hospital, I stayed with my son and his family from whose home I was taken to rehabilitation. Two days after my release, my son took me by an AA meeting at my request because I wanted to see the fellow AAs. Upon my arrival, the members were amazed that I could walk, and talk somewhat coherently. They all then expressed their joy and told me that they had been praying for me. This reaction and similar comments continued to happen at every AA meeting and other group I attended for the following months. Some of the people I had never even met but all who had heard about the severity of my injury had said prayers for me.

When I met with the surgeon months later and asked if it had really been that serious, he responded "If it had not been for your family and the friends who had said prayers for you, you would be dead!" The miracle that I survived causes me to express my gratitude daily to too many to count - from the strangers who found me and acted quickly, to the medical team, to support from family and friends, to prayers of hope from fellow AAs.

A member who holds home meetings had his attendees send a card and he lit a candle for me. When I met with Jimmy H. later on and told him of the event he said to talk about it. I attended his weekly meeting and he expressed gratitude to ME for mentioning this story. Can you imagine that? The man who convinced me to attend AA, saving my life so many years before said he was grateful to me for making a comment! A spirit far greater than me exists.

The miracles that happen for AA members are not theory. I am currently living proof of that fact and hope to continue to be as long as I work the program "A day at a time."

My Story

Ray G.

By the age of 47, I had dug myself into such a deep hole that I didn't think there was any way I could escape. I had been committing suicide on the installment plan for close to 30 years. I had partied myself out of a flea bag motel and on to the streets. I was afraid to contact my family because they had had enough. You see, I just spent \$50,000 of my Dad's money in less than six months. I was told "I have no Son!"

As I pondered my predicament, I started to ball like a baby. I looked towards the sky and said GOD please help me. As I continued to cry, I started to feel this little glimmer of hope come over me. I would later realize that shred of hope saved my life. At that point hope was all I had.

I worked up the courage to call my father. Through my tears I told him I needed help, I was ready to stop killing myself, and to my surprise he responded. He and my sister spent all morning looking for a treatment center for me and finally they found one that would take me that day. I remembered seeing people there that were getting better and that gave me hope and I hung on to it as if my life depended on it - and it did.

I am now only four months clean and sober but I feel as if I was pulled from the pits of hell and given yet another chance. I'm now going to school, which had never even entered my mind before. I can see now how that little strand of hope saved me. I still have high hopes for myself and as I see things hoped for come to pass, my hope has turned to faith. So had it not been for that first small piece of hope, I would quite possibly still be out there. Hope saved my life and through hope came faith. May hope and faith find their way into your hearts and when they do hold on for dear life because you're in for a hell-of-a ride.

E V E N T S & A N N O U N C E M E N T S

GSR's Wanted

Chicago AA would like to extend an invitation to willing members to serve as Group Service Representatives (GSR's), an important link between your home group and AA as a whole. Learn more about this important service position at upcoming workshops: Session one – Saturday, February 3, 2007, 9:00am – 12:00pm at St. Catherine St. Lucy's Maguire Hall, 38 North Austin, Oak Park, IL OR Session Two – Thursday, February 8, 2007, 6:00 – 9:00pm at CASO, 180 W. Wabash, Suite 305, Chicago. For more information, please call Gerry R. at (773) 525-4362.

Here's How Would Like to Thank this Month's Volunteers

Abby D	David M	Men's Fireside
Alan R	Dylan H	MtnG
Andy S	Emmitt	Mike Mc
Anna L	Eric S	Meredith W
Angie D	Evelesse M	Mike R
Anna L	Gino N	Nicole P
Barbara U	Greg S	Nina C
Bertha	Gregory M	Nora W
Between The	Holly B	Pat B
Covers	Jack C	Patrick R
Beverly D	Jan C	Pete B
Billy Mc	Janet O	Peter L
Bob H	Jason D	Rita B
Bob K	Jason H	Rob R
Brian C	Jim H	Robert A
Brien J	Joe A	Ron C
Bruce A	Joe H	Ruben G
Carl K	John C	Ryan H
Caroline R	Karen H	Steve J
Chris C	Kathryn M	Sydney A
Chris T	Keith S	Tamara C
Christine C	Kevin B	Tim A
Chuck T	Kim R	Tom Z
Corey J	Lynnell S	Virginia F
Dan D	Matt S	Warren C
David L	Melanie W	Young People's
	Melissa W	MtnG

New Beginners Meeting

"Between the Covers" has begun a second meeting geared toward the beginner. This new Beginner's Meeting of Alcoholics Anonymous is an open meeting that runs every Tuesday night from 5:45 - 6:15pm and focuses on the early tools of sobriety and information on alcoholism. Meeting is at Unity Church, 1935 W. Thome (1/2 block west of Ridge between Devon and Granville, Chicago, IL 60660, and is followed by the BTC Big Book Study closed meeting at 6:30pm.

YOUR CHICAGO AREA SERVICE OFFICE IS MOVING!

Effective December 1, 2006

Our new office address:
180 N Wabash Ave, Suite 305
Chicago IL 60601

Our Phone numbers—Main (312) 346-1475, Fax Number (312) 346-5477 and Bookstore Number (312) 346-8451 Will not change.

We will still hold our regularly scheduled AA meetings Monday and Friday at 12:10 additionally Tuesday & Thursday at 2:30.

We still need volunteers to help us in all positions, contact us for more information.

We invite you all to visit us and discover your new Chicago Area Service Office.

15th ANNUAL
We Are Not Saints
CONVENTION
The Palmer House
17 E. Monroe St., Chicago
January 12th, 13th and 14th, 2007

The 15th Annual "We Are Not Saints" convention takes place at The Palmer House, 17 E. Monroe St., Chicago on January 12th, 13th and 14th, 2007. Beginning Friday at noon, you can expect great guest speakers, weekend workshops, continual meetings, literature and archives, as well as a Saturday night banquet with entertainment. Full Registration is \$52, banquet only is \$42. Registration only is \$20 for the weekend. Please mail all Checks or Money Orders to "We Are Not Saints", 1400 W. Devon, #311, Chicago, IL 60660 or email wansconference@yahoo.com. Call the Palmer House direct at (312) 726-7500 for a special rate of \$112. Pre-registration must be postmarked by January 3, 2007. If you wish to sit together at the banquet, you must register together in tables of 10.

Chicago Area Service Office, NFPC
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