



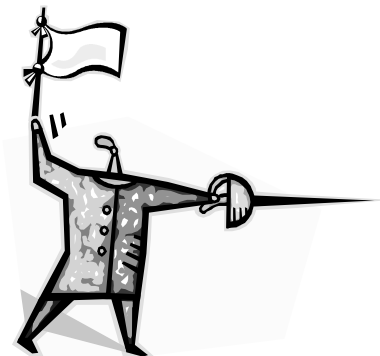
CONNECTIONS

Volume 66

Official Newsletter of the Greater Saint Louis District of Cocaine Anonymous

March, 2013

STOP FIGHTING



By Jenifer W.

“Are you joking?” That was my initial reaction to Step Two. I felt so hopeless at the beginning, yet somehow I had the energy to fight my sponsor, my counselor, my family and a Higher Power I didn’t even believe in. I was not open. I kept saying I was willing to do anything, but that was not honest.

I had boarded myself up when I was young to keep myself safe. Wood, insulation, drywall and several layers of paint were set in place to keep people out and indicate how fine a job I was doing on my own. My soul existed somewhere deep inside. I stopped caring about myself. I used drugs. I stopped caring about others. So when I came to C.A. several years ago, I was a solid mass of a mess.

At first, I was only willing to commit to one meeting a week. Then I began to tag along with another C.A. member when she went to speak at a treatment center for the Hospitals and Institutions Committee. Three things happened as a result: 1) I was participating in a recovery activity outside my meeting; 2) I was spending time with someone in the program; and 3) I began receiving the benefits of service work—primarily gratitude!

I began to realize that I was a small part of a world in which all parts were intertwined and reliant on each other.

At six months of sobriety, I noticed for the first time that I was not craving drugs anymore. I decided to volunteer to chair my weekly home group meeting for six months. That was huge! As I showed up for the meeting each week, I started showing up for myself. I even started listening a little bit. I was able to examine my own behavior more honestly as I realized my choices and feelings were not unique to me. I noticed my selfishness. I noticed my efforts to control everything around me.

I seemed to feel okay when I was outside in nature, sitting in the grass with the trees around me and the warm sun shining on my face. I began to realize that I was a small part of a world in which all parts were intertwined and reliant on each other. I took on the speaking engagement at the treatment center. I started calling my sponsor afterwards to tell her how good I felt every time I went there. What I seemed to be doing was establishing a connection to life again. Slowly, I was able to be vulnerable with people I trusted. I even called my sponsor when I was having a rough day (something I *never* did!), or even just to say hello. I began to accept my feelings rather than fight them. I used to believe my pain would kill me. Now I know I will survive, and eventually it will pass. I can allow myself to be joyful without worrying about the floor giving way underneath me at any second.

My walls are starting to come down slowly. I am finding the “me” buried underneath to be bright, beautiful, and engaging. I am carving a new path, which is exciting. Thankfully, this trail intersects with those of others everyday. I do believe in a Higher Power. It is kind and patient. It provides me with opportunities to grow and to be human. It was waiting for me to reach out, and all I had to do was stop fighting and learn that it is okay to let go.



Nobody Knows How To Have More Fun Than Us!

By Jim L.

Having fun in recovery was the theme at this year's "Holiday Party after the Holidays." The Harris House was the place to be on Saturday, January 12, 2013. The afternoon started off with the regular 1 PM Serenity On Saturday (S.O.S) C.A. meeting, and our chairperson, Kyle P., chose the pamphlet "HAVING FUN IN RECOVERY" for our literature study format. Plenty of good sharing by many of the addicts in attendance followed concerning their personal fun recovery experiences.

Immediately after the meeting, it was time for the *awesome* potluck lunch which included ham, chicken wings, macaroni salad, tossed salad, green beans, corn and lots of delicious desserts!! Thanks to the District and Hospitals & Institutions Committee for providing the ham, and MUCH APPRECIATION to all those who brought a dish to share. I don't believe anyone left there hungry.

Next it was time for the PARTY! As recovering addicts, we know how to party right! We had pick-up sticks and jacks (remember playing those as kids?). Amy E. and Laura N. were cheered on in an exciting game of jacks on the floor. Drop-the-clothes-pin-in-the-milk-bottle challenge resulted in some wicked competition and a tie breaker pin drop between Chris P., Rachel K. and Nancy O. Nancy squeezed out the win to become "Clothes Pin Champion." In another game, contestants donned a blindfold and gloves, after which they had to try to pick up cotton balls with a spoon and toss them into a bowl. Great fun! Everyone thought they had big spoonfuls, but came up empty (at least speaking for myself!). The grand prize winner on this one scooped up 66 cotton balls. Way to go Attilio!

What has become a favorite at our C.A. events, the cup raffle, had some very nice prizes to pick from and raised \$77.00 for the District. Everyone is grateful for Vicky M.'s continued efforts with these cup raffles.

Origami, the ancient art of paper folding, was yet another offering at this smorgasbord of fun. Several brave adventurers were successful in making a shirt out of a dollar bill or a swan. Incredible how creative we can be!

To close out the day, we ended with another meeting using an entirely new format devised just for this occasion. It was "blind-draw, pick-a-topic, pick-the-next-person-to-speak." As usual, our Higher Power showed up to participate, and the topics being pulled out of the hat seemed to directly relate to the person doing the picking. Each participant had three minutes to share on their topic and it was amazing how much was said in that amount of time. Topics included: grace, openness, humor, education, purpose, delight, strength, transformation, harmony, love, beauty, and brotherhood/sisterhood. Everyone seemed to walk away from the meeting with some extra serenity and appreciation of recovery!

If you missed this year's "Holiday Party After The Holidays," don't fret since this has become an annual event. If you keep coming back to your regular C.A. meeting, you will learn about next year's party and lots of other activities between now and then.

Staying Connected

Our local Saint Louis Cocaine Anonymous Hotline (314/361-3500) is answered 24 hours a day by volunteer members of our Fellowship. It's a Fabulous resource for anyone feeling squirrely—pick up the phone—NOT THE DRUG!!!

Staying Connected

The Missouri Area website (www.camissouri.org) has lots of helpful information, including a link to the C.A. World Services pages. Here, you can not only learn many things about C.A. and their upcoming events, but you can also be directed to one of our on-line meetings, accessible anytime, anywhere you have a computer.

Traditions Anyone?



By Vicky M.

For our next FUN event, please plan on attending the upcoming Traditions Workshop. What was that? Did I hear a GROAN out there? Happens a lot when someone brings up talks about the Twelve Traditions. “Booooooring!” is a common reaction. Now just hold on a minute. We all know the Traditions comprise a necessary element in the Twelve Step structure. They are the glue binding us together and ensuring the fellowship perpetuates. But how and why do they work? Did you know you can apply the Traditions principles in your own personal recovery? Join us at the Harris House (8315 South Broadway, Saint Louis 63111) Saturday, May 4, 2013 for an enjoyable, **FREE**, in-depth examination of this topic. Twelve different speakers will give a short, ten minute talk on each of the Twelve Traditions.

Kicking off the program will be our normal Serenity On Saturday 1 PM C.A. meeting, which ends at 2:15. At 2:45, the workshop begins with a welcome and the first four Traditions speakers. After a fifteen minute break, four more speakers will share on Traditions 5-8. Then it's time for a pot luck meal (5 PM). Greater Saint Louis District will be providing the meat and beverages—bring a side dish or dessert to share. At 5:45, the workshop concludes with Traditions 9-12. We expect to be finished by 7 PM at the latest. If you can't make it for the whole afternoon, stop in for whatever portion fits into your schedule!

This event is actually our 2013 Celebrate Around The World unity gathering. **Matt R. is coordinating the program and looking for twelve willing bodies to take on the task of speaking on one Tradition each. If you would like to accept a Tradition speaker spot, please contact Matt at 314/779-6511. Volunteer early for the best choice of traditions! See you on May 4!**

DISTRICT DONATIONS

<i>Meeting Name</i>	<i>November 2012</i>	<i>December 2012</i>	<i>January 2013</i>	<i>February 2013</i>
Come And Get It			\$5.00	
End Of The Line		\$10.00	\$10.00	\$20.00
Fried Pipers & Cocanuts	\$10.00			\$20.00
Men's Meeting	\$50.00	\$.09		
Serenity On Saturday		\$25.00		
The Thursday Night Meeting		\$7.00		
There Is A Solution	\$20.00	\$20.00	\$30.00	\$30.00

H & I DONATIONS

<i>Meeting Name</i>	<i>November 2012</i>	<i>December 2012</i>	<i>January 2013</i>	<i>February 2013</i>
Fried Pipers & Cocanuts	\$39.41	\$31.11	\$23.91	\$21.39
Serenity On Saturday		\$29.41	\$41.15	
The Thursday Night Meeting		\$17.00		

Detailed financial information is available at our monthly business meetings. All C.A. members are welcome and urged to attend if possible.

The Greater Saint Louis District Central Service meeting is held the second Sunday of each month at 4:00 PM at the 212 Club, 204 West Pittman, O'Fallon, Missouri 63366. If the second Sunday falls on a holiday weekend, this meeting is held the first or third Sunday. Confirmed meeting dates are always available on our website www.camissouri.org. Directions—Take I-70 west to Exit 217 Highway K. Go Right on Main Street off the exit ramp. Go .3 mile to left on Pitman. Facility on the left.

The Hospitals & Institutions Committee takes meetings into facilities where addicts cannot get out to attend a meeting on their own. H & I volunteers are constantly needed and should express interest by attending a District Central Service meeting or contacting the H & I Chair, Vicky M. at 314/846-2346.

Connections is a quarterly publication published by the Greater Saint Louis District of Cocaine Anonymous. It is intended solely to provide information for the fellowship of Cocaine Anonymous. We hope to communicate the experience, strength, and hope of C.A. members, reflecting recovery, unity, and service, within the bounds of friendliness and good taste. This Newsletter presents experiences and opinions of Cocaine Anonymous members. Those opinions expressed herein are of the individual contributors and are not to be attributed nor taken as an endorsement by Cocaine Anonymous, Cocaine Anonymous World Service Office, Inc., Greater Saint Louis District of Cocaine Anonymous, or Connections. The editors reserve the right to edit any submissions in adherence to the Twelve Traditions of Cocaine Anonymous. If you would like to know more about Cocaine Anonymous, the Twelve Steps and the Twelve Traditions, please write and ask about C.A. World Service Conference approved literature at CAWSO, 21720 South Wilmington Avenue., Suite 304, Long Beach, CA 90810; e-mail to info@CA.org or fax to (310) 559-2554. Contact C.A. by phone at (310) 559-5833. Also note that the C.A. World Service Office web page is www.ca.org. This publication and all its contents are copyrighted by the Greater Saint Louis District of Cocaine Anonymous. Any unauthorized duplication or publication is prohibited. In the spirit of Tradition Six, "C.A. is not allied with any sect, denomination, politics, organization or institution."



Happy Birthday

Congratulations to each of our members who celebrated a sobriety milestone this issue. Birthdays are generally reported via your group GSR, so if you don't see your meeting/birthday listed, please check with your GSR. Or, you can contact the Editor directly. Birthdays printed are those that have already been celebrated since the last newsletter printing at the time this edition went to press.

End Of The Line

*Sunday 5:30 PM
Blessed Hope Bible Church*

Steven G.	60 Days
Valerie P.	60 Days
Dee D.	1 Year
Joann W.	1 Year
Lisa	1 Year
Varnay T.	1 Year
Joyce K.	3 Years
Mike C.	5 Years
Monique	8 Years
Marissa J.	10 Years
Michele P.	10 Years
Rick M.	10 Years
Michael K.W.	17 Years
Carolyn M.	18 Years
Cynthia C.	20 Years
Yolanda P.	20 Years
Kay K.	21 Years
Joy L.	23 Years
Smitty	24 Years
Deborah J.	26 Years
Louis	30 Years

Fried Pipers & Cocanuts

*Wednesday 7 PM
First Unity Church*

Chris J.	30 Days
Todd R.	60 Days
Bill D.	90 Days
Michelle L.	90 Days
Amy E.	6 Months
Brian T.	6 Months
Jenifer W.	9 Months
Tiffany B.	9 Months
Mary N-H.	18 Months
Jim T.	3 Years
Missy J.	5 Years
Carolyn J.	22 Years
Vicky M.	23 Years

The Thursday Night Meeting

*Thursday 7:30 PM
Saint Mary's Hospital*

Ron	6 Months
Charlotte R.	22 Years

Big Book Study

*Friday 7:30 PM
Provident Health*

Jeannette J.	24 Years
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There Is A Solution

*Friday 7:30 PM
Father Dempsey's*

Bob S.	30 Days
John E.	30 Days
Terrance W.	30 Days
Keith W.	60 Days
Kevin D.	60 Days
Paul S.	60 Days
Rob G.	60 Days
Norris G.	90 Days
Robert W.	90 Days
Wally W.	90 Days
Michael S.	6 Months
Kevin T.	9 Months
Mike S.	9 Months
John T.	1 Year
Richard	7 Years
Sylvester I.	17 Years
Mary D.	32 Years

Serenity On Saturday

*Saturday 1:00 PM
Harris House*

Laura L.	30 Days
Rich M.	30 Days
Max M.	60 Days
Anthony B.	90 Days
Judy S.	90 Days
Steve	90 Days
Terry W.	90 Days
Danny P.	6 Months
Kyle P.	6 Months
Mandy	6 Months
Mary	6 Months
Melissa Q.	6 Months
Mike	6 Months
Damon C.	1 Year
Doug H.	2 Years

Men's Meeting

*Saturday 6 PM
Saint Mary's Hospital*

Aman L.	9 Years
Chris G.	11 Years
Dadisi C.	11 Years
Will W.	14 Years
Gerald R.	15 Years
Carl S.	16 Years
Carl R.	20 Years
Charles L.	26 Years
Ralph G.	26 Years

Come And Get It

*Sunday 6 PM
212 Club*

Doug P.	4 Years
Rachel L.	4 Years
Phil K.	8 Years
Joe L.	23 Years

Upgrading Your Cell Phone?

**Don't Forget To Donate
Your Old Phone To C.A.**

Support Your Fellowship



Call Vicky M.-314/846-2346