



CONNECTIONS

Official Newsletter for the Greater Saint Louis District of Cocaine Anonymous

Volume 33

January 2004

OF GREATER ST. LOUIS

We're Back!

Happy New Year from your **Connections** staff! We are working to bring you the latest and greatest news about CA recovery around the world! Not only will you have up to the minute news on meeting changes, who's holding what position at the district and area levels, service opportunities, your sobriety birthdays, where the **hottest** parties and get-togethers will be, but we're adding a fun new column titled "The Promises," where we will spotlight the *Promises* coming true in the lives of our brothers and sisters in recovery and an informative section titled "The Program" that will highlight three steps, traditions, concepts and the CA structure each quarter. Yes, we have recovered from a seemingly hopeless state of mind and body according to the Big Book, and "Connections" is here as another tool to help keep us *connected* and share good news! So, sit back, relax and let's continue to let God do for us, what we surely are not able to do for ourselves. Perform a miracle! Don't leave before it happens! Peace.

Want to do a Meeting?

New meetings, changes, updates, etc. New meetings, changes, updates, etc. New meetings, changes, updates, etc. New meet New meetings, changes, updates, etc. New meet New meetings, change

Freedom from Bondage (Women's meeting)

Wednesdays, 7 – 8:30 pm

New Beginnings

Union & Natural Bridge

Traditions Workshop

Study the traditions. Bring your 12 & 12

9 – 10:30 am

Last Saturday of the month

New Providence Church

Located at the corner of Chambers and Lewis & Clark Road (367)

A Vision for You - Closed (Friday night meeting)

District News

The **Greater St. Louis District of CA's 2004 slate of officers** are as follows:

Chair, Leonard B
Secretary, Charlotte
DSR, Carl R

Vice Chair,
Treasurer, Donna R

The district also has committee and chairpersons for the following service opportunities: H & I, Telephone Helpline, Unity, Special Events, Fundraising, Newsletter, CPC & Public Information. Please contact one of the above district officers to find out how you can help.

Workers Needed!

The Greater St. Louis district is in need of new ideas, new faces, new hands to do the work and new feet to carry the message! One of the greatest lifelines for a recovering addict/alcoholic is to jump into service work. Making coffee, setting up the meeting, cleaning up after the meeting, really does begin the process of recovery. Start building your service resume by getting involved. Stay for your home group's business meeting after the meeting. Go to a district meeting and find out where you "fit in." Good ideas and hard workers are always in need. Put the cement in your foundation and join a committee!

Service Work...Not again!

If I read one more article on the benefits of service work I don't know what I'll do. I mean, almost every Sunday in my home group someone mentions how service work helped them to keep coming back in the beginning of their sobriety. You know for example, making the coffee, helping to set up the meeting, and my all-time favorite, cleaning up after the meeting! Then, when I attended other groups/meetings, I heard sponsors saying that they suggested service work to all of their sponsees. I asked my sponsor one question about one of the trusted servant duties within my home group and she hauled me off to the next district meeting! If you think that's bad, the next move she pulled was she nominated me for one of the duties. I tell you, she spoon fed me service work just to give me a taste. Next thing I knew, I had been doing service work in some way or another for almost a year! The next thing I realized was...I had been sober for almost a year.

During this time, I got to know a few people up close and personal. Don't get it twisted, some I could not get as close or personal with but somehow, we were always able to get the job done. Yeah, we had to put principles first a lot. So anyway, I'm staying sober, helping the group, the district, even the area to a small degree just by taking care of a responsibility on a regular basis. In the meantime, there were dances, workshops, and conventions to keep me occupied. We always kicked it-had a ball at each gathering; I mean people from Columbia, KC, everywhere!

After some years passed and I had been doing service work for a while, I finally realized a part of what it is all about-service work that is. It's about giving back. I mean, I'm sober; been part of some great CA functions. I have received some lasting relationships. Some relationships have been restored. My life is full. Yeah, I am happy, joyous and free. If I had not made coffee, set up meetings, chaired meetings, cleaned up after the meeting, worked on committees...would I be as happy, as joyous, or as free? Would I have received anything worth giving back? I think not. Thanks for letting me be of service.

Denise A.
10-7-97



CA World Service Convention 2007 will be chaired by St. Louis' own Kay T and hosted in Kansas City, Missouri. Congratulations, Kay! Get ready, 'cause here we come, KC!

Randy S and Jocelyn G were joined in holy matrimony on the beach in Sarasota on November 11, 2003. Congrats to two more of our miracles in recovery!

Are these extravagant promises? We think not. They are being fulfilled among us. Sometimes quickly, sometimes slowly, but they will always materialize. . . . (Back to that work thing again!)

Editors Note: Letters, articles, cartoons, information, etc. related to C.A. for the newsletter and living in recovery are welcomed. Please notify any of the newsletter staff to submit information. Your feedback/input regarding Connections is also welcomed. Connections staff: Donna Y, Jeannette J, Kim C, Yvonne M. You may also submit contributions electronically to jeannettejohnson@sbcglobal.net. In love and service.

Get High on H & I

Being a recovering addict, the most dangerous thing for me is to forget that I am an addict. But, that's exactly what my addiction tries to get me to believe. Whenever I go into a government or private treatment facility meeting, I am always reminded of the simple truth of addiction and its consequences. This helps me to stay sober and to be grateful for my recovery. It was passed through this method to me, and I am blessed to be able to carry on the tradition.

Please be encouraged to come by the Hospitals & Institutions committee meeting on the first Sunday of the month at New Horizons Church, 206 Emerling Road at 3:30 p.m. Come on over and be a part of! Paul U, H & I Committee Chair

Gratitude

And we're going to party like it's your birthday!

End of the Line

1 year – Marissa J 2 Years – Chris G 5 Years – Yvonne M & William W 6 Years - Denise A
8 Years – Michael KW & Marla C 11 Years – Cynthia C & Carl R 12 Years – Kay T 15 Years – Darrell B

Fried Pipers & Cocanuts

30 Days – Montana 6 Months – Dennis S 1 Year – Scott M 2 Years – Dave P 8 Years – Sherrie Z
14 Years – Vicky M

Message of Hope

9 Months – Linda M 1 Year – Sandy P

Men's Meeting

60 Days – Aman L 2 Years – Dadisi C 10 Years – Walter D 16 Years Ralph G

Thursday Night Meeting – St. Mary's

18 Months – Robyn T 5 Years – Jimmy H & Yvonne M 13 Years – Charlotte R 16 Years – Charles J

Reaching Out

7 Years – Dale D



As I woke up this morning and got started with my day, I thought there is something extra special that I am grateful for today. It wasn't that I have a closet full of clothes or a roof over my head, it was the fact that 5yrs ago today I could have been dead. With that in mind I got started on myway, saying to myself it's my sobriety birthday. A new creature in life with so less strife, I went to work thanking GOD for my days and nights. Yes he has blessed me and I'm sure he has blessed you too, forever grateful I am and that is so true. To my special sisters and brothers across the globe and locally too this I would like to share with you, my gratitude, thanking God and you too!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!! Love you, Yvonne

Around Town

February 13 - A Bake Sale to benefit the annual women's luncheon will be held at the Thursday Night meeting on February 13. Please come prepared to buy sweets to help the WIR have a successful event in October. Thank you for your support.

March 6 – Celebrate Around the World. Listen up at meeting announcements for more information!

February 1, March 7 and April 4 – Greater St. Louis District Meeting is held the first Sunday of each month at 5:00 p.m. at

April 13 – 10 year Anniversary celebration for Fried Pipers & Cocanuts. Please join the party after the meeting on Wednesday, April 13 at 6:45 pm. See you there!

August 13, 14 & 15 – Rocketed Into the 4th Dimension, Show Me Recovery 8th Annual Convention in Kansas City, Missouri. Don't miss it!

7th \$\$\$Tradition



*We are fully self supporting through **our own** contributions. At this time we will observe the 7th tradition!*

Group Donations to the District			
	October	November	December
A Vision for You			\$10.00
Came to Believe			
End of the Line	\$63.00		
Fried Pipers & Cocanuts			
In the Light & Morning Medicine		\$75.36	\$35.17
Men's Meeting		\$78.50	
Springfield, IL			
Message of Hope			
The Thursday Night Mtg		\$50.54	
Reaching Out			\$15
Time for A Change			
Total Donations	\$63.00	\$204.40	\$100.08

The Program The Program

Steps 1-2-3 of Cocaine Anonymous

1. WE admitted we were powerless over cocaine and all other mind altering substances – that our lives had become unmanageable.
2. Came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.
3. Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God, as we understood Him.

Traditions 1-2-3 of Cocaine Anonymous

1. Our common welfare should come first, personal recovery depends upon C.A. unity.
2. For our group purpose there is but one ultimate authority – a loving God as He may express Himself in our group conscience. Our leaders are but trusted servants, they do not govern.
3. The only requirement for membership is a desire to stop using cocaine and all other mind-altering substances.

Concepts 1-2-3

1. The final responsibility and the ultimate authority to C.A. World Services should always reside in the collective conscience of our whole Fellowship.
2. The C.A. Groups delegate to the World Service Conference the complete authority for the active maintenance of our world services and thereby make the Conference – excepting for any change in the Twelve Traditions – the actual voice and the effective conscience for our whole Fellowship.
3. As a traditional means of creating and maintaining a clearly defined working relation between the Groups the Conference, the World Service Board of Trustees and its service corporation, staffs and committees, and of thus insuring their effective leadership, it is here suggested that we endow each of these elements of World Service with a traditional “Right of Decision.”

CA Structure

Cocaine Anonymous is not organized in the formal or political sense. There are no governing offices, no rules or regulations, no dues or fees.

However, the need for services to addicts throughout the world is very important to the fellowship. Inquiries from both within and outside the Fellowship have to be answered. Literature has to be written, printed and distributed, and requests for help be followed up.

The main service body of the fellowship is C.A. World Services, which is centered at the World Service Office in Los Angeles, California where employees and service volunteers maintain communications with local Groups and with persons outside the Fellowship who turn to C.A. for information on the program of recovery. C.A. Conference-approved literature and chips are prepared, published and distributed through this office.

The World Service Office is responsible to the World Service Board of Trustees.

The C.A. World Service Conference, consisting of Delegates from C.A. Areas throughout the Fellowship, Trustees of C.A. World Services, and World Service Office Directors and staff members, meet annually and provide a link between the Groups within the Fellowship and the Trustees who serve as custodians of C.A. Traditions and interpreters of policies affecting the Fellowship as a whole.

Formal organization is kept to a minimum at the local Group level. The Group may have a limited number of “officers” whose responsibilities include, but are not limited to arranging meetings, providing refreshments, handling the Group’s budget, and maintaining contact with the local service organization.

The principal of consistent rotation of responsibility is followed by all C.A. service positions. Positions in the local Group are rotated according to a vote of the Group. Representatives to the local service organization are voted on at the Group level according to a schedule defined by each group. Officers of the local service organization are elected based on the group conscience of that organization.

The “Group” Defined

A meeting is when two or more people gather together to share their experience, strength and hope with each other.

A meeting may call itself a C.A. Group when:

1. The only requirement for membership is a desire to stop using cocaine and all other mind-altering substances.
2. It is fully self-supporting.
3. Its primary purpose is to help addicts recover through the Twelve Steps of C.A.
4. It has no outside affiliations.
5. It has no opinion on outside issues.
6. Its public relations policy is based on attraction rather than promotion.

The C.A. Group

The basic unit in C.A. is the local Group, which is autonomous except in matters affecting other Groups or C.A. as a whole. The Group has but one primary purpose, which is to help others to recover through the Twelve suggested Steps. Each Group is self-supporting through its own contributions. As the Twelve Steps are our guide to recovery, the Twelve Traditions are our guide to Group unity, growth and discipline. Its members maintain their personal anonymity at the level of press, radio, television and films.

The importance of the Group, what it constitutes and its functions cannot be stressed enough. Maintenance of our recovery depends on the sharing of our experiences, strength and hope with each other, thus helping us to identify and understand the nature of our disease.

Most addicts in C.A. achieve and sustain their recovery as a result of their participation with the activities of the Group. The Group is the heart of Cocaine Anonymous and it is vital to the new member. It is equally important to those who have achieved recovery as a result of the program. They may continue to participate and receive assistance from the Group. It is our experience that many meetings begin and/or end with some form of prayer. While each C.A. group is autonomous and adopts its own format, CA as such neither endorses, opposes, nor affiliates (expressed or implied) with any sect, denomination, politics, organization or institution.

The Group’s total responsibility is perhaps best expressed by the First Tradition:

“Our common welfare should come first; personal recovery depends upon C.A. unity.”

Most meetings follow a more or less set format, although distinctive variations have developed. It is our experience that many meetings begin and end with some form of prayer. While each C.A. group is autonomous, and adopts its own format, C.A. as such never endorses, opposes or affiliates, expressed or implied, with any sect, denomination, politics, organization or institution. A leader describes the C.A. program briefly for the benefit of the newcomers, and then turns the meeting over to a speaker or to participation. A “Speaker Meeting” involves one or more speakers, who relate their personal histories, and their experience of recovery in Cocaine Anonymous. A “Participation Meeting” involves individual voluntarily sharing their thoughts and feelings.

Some time during the meeting, there is usually a period for C.A. related announcements of interest to the meeting. A collection is taken to cover rent, literature and chips, refreshments, contributions to the District, Area and World Service Office as per the 7th Tradition. Many groups hold a business meeting monthly or at other intervals to discuss such items as: group finances, distribution of 7th Tradition, meeting format, election of trusted servants, etc. It is suggested that records be kept of group business meeting decisions. Each group is autonomous, and the group conscience decides how business meetings may be conducted.

Those attending meetings are reminded that any opinions or interpretations they may hear are solely those of the speaker or participant involved. All members are free to interpret the recovery program in their own terms, but none can speak for the local Group or C.A. as a whole.

Types of Meetings/Groups

Open: Attended by C.A. members, their families, friends and other interested people.
Closed: Attendance is limited to C.A. members only.
Step Study: Study and discuss the Twelve Steps with the Group.
Book Study: Study and discuss with the Group any of these books: Alcoholics Anonymous (the "Big Book), Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions ("12 & 12"), Hope, Faith & Courage- Stories from the Fellowship of Cocaine Anonymous (the "C.A. Storybook").

Group Servants

"For our group purpose there is but one ultimate authority-a loving God as He may express Himself in our group conscience. Our leaders are but trusted servants; they do not govern."

OUR SECOND TRADITION

C.A. groups may create such service positions, as they deem necessary to carry on the group functions with such job duties and sobriety requirements, as they feel appropriate. Such positions by way of illustration might include: Chairperson, Vice Chairperson, Literature, Coffeemaker/Hospitality, Greeter, etc. The suggested business positions of groups are:

Group Service Representative (GSR)

Suggested sober time: One year

Term: One year

The GSR position is probably the most important service position for which a member can be elected. Great care should be taken with this choice; the quality of the District/Area Services and ultimately World Services can only be as good as those choices the individual Groups make. As with the Secretaries, GSR candidates should only accept positions for those Groups that they regularly attend (50% of the time). They are the ones who will carry the information back to the Group as to what is going on in our Fellowship on a District/Area level, as well as the World level.

It should be understood that a GSR does not require Group approval to vote on matters affecting the Group or C.A. as a whole, although it is the GSR's responsibility to vote mindful of the group conscience. (See Concept 3). A good GSR is familiar with the C.A. World Service Manual and the Twelve Concepts of World Services. If the GSR cannot attend, an Alternate should attend. The person elected GSR should be trusted with the Group vote. Before accepting a nomination for GSR, the nominee must consider the level of commitment as well as the sacrifice of time involved.

Duties and Responsibilities:

1. Sees that the Traditions are followed within the Group.
2. Attends all appropriate business meetings.
3. Conducts communication between the Group, the District and Area.
4. Reads/reviews communications from the District, Area and World Service.

Alternate GSR

The purpose and responsibility of the Alternate GSR is to assist the GSR and to assume the responsibilities of the GSR when necessary.

Suggested requirements and qualifications are the same as those for GSR.

Secretary

Suggested sober time: Six months

Term: One year

The secretary is a trusted servant whose responsibility is to provide the Group with the leadership best suited to assist the recovery of the members the utilization of the C.A. Program.

Duties and Responsibilities:

1. See that the Traditions are being followed within the Group.
2. Follow the format in accordance with the group conscience.
3. See that the responsibilities of the other Group servants are met.
4. See that the 7th Tradition contributions of the members are collected and that a record is kept for the Group's income and expenses.
5. See that the Group is represented at the District or Area Service Meeting.
6. See that rent for the meeting space is paid and that the Group's monthly contribution is forwarded to the District, Area and/or World Service Office.
7. Keep an accurate, up-to-date record of changes of the group conscience.
8. Display C.A. literature and schedules.

Group Treasurer:

Suggested sober time: One year

Suggested prior service time: Six months

Term: One year

Duties and Responsibilities:

1. Keeps an accurate bookkeeping system.
2. When applicable, maintains Group bank account(s) with checks requiring two signatures.
3. Gives financial reports to the Group regularly.
4. Pays all Group expenses.
5. Passes on contributions to the District/Area and/or the World Service Office.