

## More About Conventions

By Vicky M.



FLIGHT TO FREEDOM

I spent the entire front page of our last *Connections* issue talking about my love of conventions. In typical addict behavior, once is never enough—so here I find myself devoting another cover story to convention material. With our Greater Missouri Area C.A. Show Me Recovery Convention looming close on the horizon, the topic is timely and deserves to get more press. “Flight To Freedom” has been lovingly crafted by a large, devoted, enthusiastic convention committee comprised of well-seasoned C.A. veterans. The event will take place at the Crowne Plaza Hotel (Lindbergh & I-70) during the weekend of August 8, 9 & 10, 2014. Registration forms outlining all the details should be available at your home group literature table, but you can also download one from our [camissouri.org](http://camissouri.org) website (click on *Events* from the home page).

In case you are thinking to yourself, “Why should I bother to attend this convention?”—allow me to provide a few convincing reasons:

- 1) Opportunity to mingle with loads of recovery friends—some old, some new, many from out of town.
- 2) Great speakers and outstanding workshops to assist your spiritual growth.
- 3) Marathon meetings around the clock. No matter what your schedule may be, you can swing by and find a meeting in process.
- 4) FUN! C.A. Talent Show and live band dance are guaranteed to provide instant entertainment!
- 5) Fabulous prizes. Our cup drawing opportunity is open for everyone—free chance to win with every paid registration.
- 6) Finally, and most importantly, your fellowship needs support! C.A. counts on this event to provide a large portion of the Area operating budget. Remember how much we used to spend on our drugs and splurge some of your hard earned cash at “Flight To Freedom.”

Over Memorial Day weekend, I had the enormous good fortune to attend our 30<sup>th</sup> Annual Cocaine Anonymous World Service International Convention, held this year in Long Beach, California. Since I got sober in Long Beach, this was nothing short of a “coming-home” party for me. Not only did I get to renew old friendships with a lot of pals from early recovery, but I got fired up with renewed enthusiasm for our fellowship. The energy level over the course of the five-day event blew off the charts. People were PUMPED to be there. I could write pages and pages about the countless amazing details that contributed to this phenomenon, but limited space dictates how much I can include, so I’ll give you just the very best story.

One of the many CAWS convention activities to choose from was a field trip to the C.A. World Service Office (CAWSO). This location is the heartbeat of our fellowship. It’s where we house our literature inventory, filling orders from all over the globe. It’s home to our precious archives collection, exhibiting much of C.A.’s history through documents and memorabilia. It’s the place people call to inquire about all aspects of C.A. from how to start a meeting to when is the next issue of the *Newsgram* (our world newsletter) coming out. It’s a conference space for C.A. Board and Trustee business meetings, the spot where a big chunk of our nuts and bolts, day-to-day operations that keep us alive happen.

I’ve talked to the employees at CAWSO lots of times and wanted to meet them and see the office. The convention “field trip” was taking place via carpool. Local members had volunteered their vehicles to transport convention attendees from the hotel to the office. Everyone interested in going was to meet in the hotel lobby at noon on Friday to hook up with a ride.

(continued on next page)

## More About Conventions (continued from front page)

Because I wasn't staying at the hotel, I had rented a car for the weekend and was eager to volunteer my vehicle. When I got to the lobby at noon on Friday, I told the coordinator I could take three people. "Great!" he said, "How about these three?"

"Let's go!" I exclaimed, introducing myself to the three individuals waiting to be assigned to a car.

Now, to be clear, I am a happily married, 59 year old woman with nearly a quarter century of sobriety under my belt. But the three gentlemen who got assigned to my car were, in all honesty, three of the best looking men I had seen at the conference. Just because I'm attached doesn't mean I can't appreciate gazing upon a fine specimen of humanity! Two of the guys were young visitors in their 20's from Europe (Sweden and Switzerland) and the third was closer to my age, in from Park City, Utah. All three of them had 2 years clean and sober, along with an excitement about being at the conference that lit up their faces with joy.

We piled into my economy-sized rental car and set off for the 30 minute ride to the office. As we began to get to know each other, the enthusiasm and energy couldn't be contained. I felt like I had a liter of puppies with me as the questions and answers flew, laughter and joking as can only be experienced by strangers in recovery identifying merrily with one another in spite of our vast geographic diversity. You'd have thought we were headed for the moon by the level of anticipation present, and as the fleet of carpoolers descended upon the CAWSO parking lot, I could see we weren't the only ones charged up to be there. Cameras flashed as excited convention attendees lined up to take shots of themselves in front of the office signage. Controlled bedlam erupted as the four office employees showed us all around, pointing out items of interest and answering the mass of questions being fired at them. A tour of the inventory room gave us all a genuine sense of our international presence by seeing our chips and literature in so many other languages, leaving everyone feeling gratefully humble to "be a part of" this large and wonderful fellowship.

The return road trip was no less enjoyable as we talked non-stop about the things we had seen and learned about C.A. By the time we arrived back at the hotel, solid friendships have been forged. Later on, I shared a leisurely dinner with my new Swiss friend, Terence. He had traveled to the U.S. alone for the convention as our only Switzerland attendee, which I think is extremely brave for someone with only two years sobriety. As we swapped bits and pieces of our respective stories, I felt abundantly blessed for the opportunity to share experience, strength and hope with this delightful young man. Throughout the course of an action-packed, amazing array of weekend convention activities, this segment remained the highlight for me.

The annual CAWS Convention is held over Memorial Day weekend every year. Las Vegas is hosting for 2015, and Chicago in 2016. I hope you get a chance to attend. But in the meantime, I promise you will find the very same atmosphere of joy and celebration at our 2014 Greater Missouri Area Show Me Recovery Convention, themed "Flight To Freedom."

Happening Friday through Sunday, August 8-10, 2014. Be there—don't miss it!!!!



### *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](http://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.

## DISTRICT DONATIONS

<i>Meeting Name</i>	<i>March 2014</i>	<i>April 2014</i>	<i>May 2014</i>	<i>June 2014</i>
Come & Get It		\$10	\$4	
End Of The Line	\$20			
Fried Pipers & Cocanuts	\$20	\$15		\$20
Men's Meeting	\$30			
Serenity On Saturday		\$20		
There Is A Solution		\$40		

## H & I DONATIONS

<i>Meeting Name</i>	<i>March 2014</i>	<i>April 2014</i>	<i>May 2014</i>	<i>June 2014</i>
Fried Pipers & Cocanuts	\$17.64	\$25.21		\$23.54
Serenity On Saturday	\$23	\$22.13		\$23.60

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](http://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 Pittman. 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.

\*\*\*\*\*



# Throwback BBQ Satisfies Everyone!



Darryl J. had a vision. He wanted a C.A. barbecue fundraiser like the “old times.” When Darryl sets his mind to something, it gets done! On Saturday, June 21 at Schafer Park in Saint Ann, addicts converged to play. Food, music, games and prizes created just the “Throwback” event Darryl foresaw. The picnic motto was “Do it ‘til you’re satisfied!” and the party delivered just that.

Mountains of delicious ribs, chicken, pork steaks, hot dogs, spaghetti, cole slaw, potato salad and watermelon were devoured by hungry addicts. In spite of extra warm temperatures, people turned out. It was just a bit too hot for the softball game planned, but some lively horseshoes were pitched, card games flourished and domino matches entertained participants. People brought their families, so children frolicked in the sun. A couple of canine guests even enjoyed free handouts of meat scraps. Over 30 cup raffle prizes found new homes with winners galore. The rain the weatherman had predicted held off until it was over. God just took care of everything for us!

The nicest part? Connecting with friends we haven’t seen in a while. When all was finished, over \$500 was raised to support the upcoming August convention. Thanks everyone for showing their C.A. spirit.

*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](mailto: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](http://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.

## Come & Get It

Sunday 6 PM  
212 Club

Alissa B. 6 Months  
Laura N. 13 Years

## Men's Meeting

Saturday 6 PM  
Saint Mary's Hospital

Darryl J. 15 Years



## Open Meeting

Saturday 6 PM  
Baden Facility

Dwanna R. 22 Years

## Fried Pipers & Cocanuts

Wednesday 7 PM  
First Unity Church

Jackie J. 30 Days  
Steve R. 90 Days  
Kelly C. 9 Months  
Amy E. 1 Year  
Jenifer W. 2 Years  
Tiffany D. 2 Years  
Angie F. 7 Years  
Dennis S. 11 Years  
June S. 17 Years  
Donna T. 18 Years  
Fried Pipers & Cocanuts 20 Years



## There Is A Solution

Friday 7:30 PM  
Father Dempsey's

Mike S. 30 Days  
Emmitt 6 Months  
Dave D. 9 Months  
Ron B. 1 Year  
Eric 18 Months  
Paul S. 18 Months

## Serenity On Saturday (S.O.S)

Saturday 1:00 PM  
Harris House

Candice K. 30 Days  
Harry Y. 90 Days  
Kawana A. 90 Days  
Angie C. 9 Months  
Tim M. 18 Months  
Nancy O. 2 Years

## Support Your 2014

Show Me Recovery  
Greater Missouri  
Area Convention  
"Flight To Freedom"

By Purchasing A

**\$1.00**

**Opportunity  
Drawing  
Ticket**

All Proceeds Benefit  
This Year's Convention  
Winner Will Be Announced  
Saturday Night  
August 9, 2014  
at the Convention

Contact Darryl J.  
314/482-5395 to

**GET YOURS TODAY!**

## Quotable Quotes

A man of word and not of deeds,  
Is like a garden full of weeds.

- English Proverb

If you really do put a small value  
upon yourself, rest assured that the  
world will not raise your price.

- Anonymous