

SOBRIETY IN STUMPTOWN

www.pdxaa.com
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Portland Area Intergroup
1212 SE Division, Portland, OR
503-223-8569

November, 2008
Volume 1 Number 11

Monthly Business
Meetings

Less is More

Portland Area Intergroup: 2nd Monday, 7:00 PM, 1212 SE Division St, Portland
PAI CPC: 1st Saturday, 11 AM, 1212 SE Division, Portland
PAI Public Information: 1st Saturday, 11 AM, 1212 SE Division, Portland
PAI Treatment Facilities: 1st Friday, 6 PM, 1212 SE Division, Portland
PAI Bridging the Gap: ?
PAI Corrections: ?
PAI Outreach: ?
PAC: 1st Saturday, 6:00 PM, 1111 SW Country Club, L O
Dist 9: 1st Wednesday, 6:30 PM, 24th and Kearney, Portland
Dist 10: last Monday, 7:00 PM, 5th and Hall, Beaverton
Dist 11: last Thursday, 6:00 PM, 186th and Division, Portland
Dist 12: 1st Tuesday, 6:30 PM, 235 SE 80th, Portland
Dist 15: 1st Wednesday, 6:45 PM, 710 6th St, Oregon City
Dist 18: 1st Saturday, 9:30 AM, 215 N 6th St, St. Helens
Dist 23: 1st Tuesday, 6:00 PM, Lake Grove Fire House
Dist 24: 1st Thursday, 6:00 PM, SE 16th and Division, Portland
Dist 26: 2nd Thursday, 7:00 PM, 8926-A N Lombard, Portland
Dist 27: 1st Monday, 6:30 PM, 1212 SE Division St, Portland
Dist 31: 2nd Tuesday, 7:00 PM, 937 NE Jackson School Rd, Hillsboro
Dist 34: 3rd Saturday, 5:00 PM, 485 Portland Ave, Gladstone
Dist 35: 2nd and 4th Saturday, 7:00 PM, 18926 SW Shaw St, Suite A, Beaverton
Dist 36: 2nd Thursday, 6:00 PM, 2025 SW Vermont St, Portland
Dist 37: 2nd Tuesday, 29775 SW Town Center Loop East, Wilsonville
DCM Portland Area: 3rd Monday, 6:30 PM, 1212 SE Division St, Portland

I have been sober for over nine years, and involved in general service for almost five. I got involved because my service sponsor has what I want; he's a good-natured, sober alcoholic, who seems to like himself, and he's enthusiastic about general service. His enthusiasm, and my unwillingness to admit defeat, have kept me coming back. At my first district meeting, I suggested that each of us should be required to have an Al-Anon home group; an idea which was not met with enthusiasm. I have also been known to refer to general service as "Dr. Bob's Nightmare" – noting the description in *AA Comes of Age* of Dr. Bob's famous injunction to Bill at their last meeting (which, by the way, was where Bill got Dr. Bob's consent for the General Service Conference): "Remember, Bill, let's not louse this thing up. Let's keep it simple!" After several months of this, I finally asked my service sponsor to elbow me if it looked like I was going to say something, since I seemed to embarrass myself almost every time I opened my mouth. He may have been the first one who reminded me that a closed mouth gathers no feet!

In spite of my continuing cynicism and negativity, at our last area assembly, one of our district officers told me how much she appreciated my participation and hoped I would stick with general service! Go figure.

So far, my experience with general

service has been pretty much the same as my early service experience in AA; the "organization" leaves a lot to be desired, but I really like the people! I am also beginning to see that I get out of it about as much as I put in. A spiritual awakening? Watching consensus emerge from three hundred to four hundred alcoholics at an area assembly arguing over a particularly contentious issue (money, for example) is something to behold. At a recent assembly, money was again the topic *du jour*, but after several people had traded caustic comments about the area's accounting practices, an elder statesperson reminded us that the group contributions were being put in the bank, the bills were being paid, and nobody was stealing. That's the kind of loving reality check I need, and we get them with some regularity in general service.

I remain troubled, however, by the fact that many AAs cannot participate in general service, apparently because we have strayed from Dr. Bob's reminder to "keep it simple." Mike S. wrote an excellent article in the January 2001 Grapevine entitled *Keep Service Simple*, which should be required reading for all of us. It makes the point better than I can. I have one thing to add to Mike's observations. I have noticed that our trusted servants in general service tend to be

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Less is More, cont.

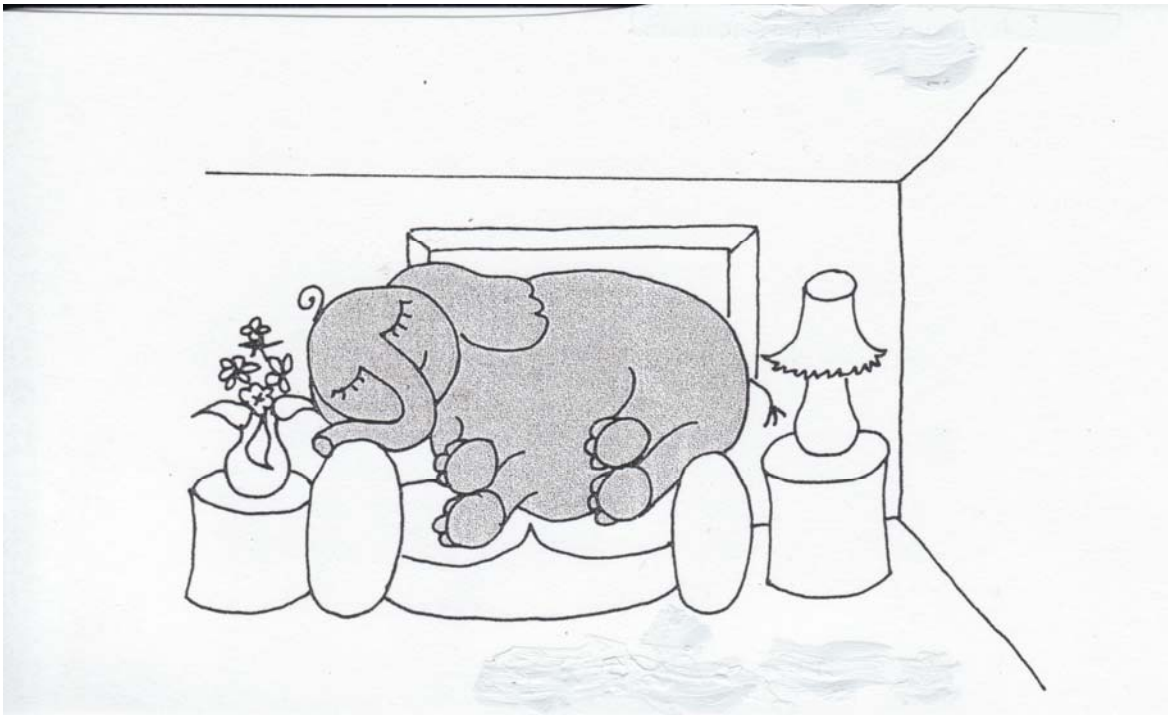
overtaxed with travel and meeting duties, which makes us even less open to change than alcoholics ordinarily are. We hang on to the familiar for dear life! But by doing more of the same, aren't we practicing the same kind of insanity (doing the same thing, expecting different results) that led us to the bottom when we were drinking? My friend Bob M., who has been sober for over forty years, says that when he is confronted with a problem, he sleeps on it, and then if it is still there in the morning, he does as little as possible. Maybe we in general service should make an effort to do less, and see what happens.

I am also reminded that our Twelfth Concept ends with "like the Society of Alcoholics Anonymous which it serves, the Conference itself will always remain democratic in thought and action," and that an effective democracy requires the highest possible degree of inclusiveness. If it is to survive, it also requires that power be diffused, in order to prevent any one group from getting too much. These concepts are in some respects antithetical to the complex "efficiency" we seem to be perpetuating in general service. So, I second Mike's conclusion on page 41 of the January 2001 Grapevine: "It is time to reconsider quietly and objectively just what our needs are with an eye to simplifying the process, not complicating it further."

Kris W.,

Kensington, California

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Meeting Updates:

To find information about new meetings or meetings that have changed since the last meeting schedule was printed, click on [Updates](#) on the Intergroup website, www.pdxaa.com.

Coming Events:

To find information about coming events, click on [Events](#) on the Intergroup website.

Rebuilding Our Prudent Reserve

As of the end of the October, we are 18.1% of the way toward rebuilding our prudent reserve with \$5,427.61 toward the goal of \$30,000.

Committee News

Intergroup committees carry the message of recovery to the still suffering alcoholic. Please help with this Twelfth Step work. Sign up by clicking on [Service](#) on the Intergroup website.

Hotline: openings for Hotline shifts and for 12th Step volunteers. 12th Step Volunteers talk to newcomers who have questions.

Cooperating with the Professional Community and Public Information: The two committees are working together to put the message of recovery to the public and to the professional community—health care, clergy, legal, educators, social workers and others.

Bridging the Gap: BTG is a one-time temporary contact for people transitioning from a treatment center to meetings.

Treatment Facilities: The Treatment Committee is now fulfilling weekly commitments in nearly as many facilities as we were monthly at the printing of last month's Sobriety in Stumptown. We feel like we are heading the right direction but we need support from everyone to continue to grow. Please sign up to volunteer on the website and please come to our next meeting on October 10th at the Intergroup office at 7:00 pm to find personal opportunities to carry the message. In addition to directly carrying the message there is a desperate need for meeting schedules and literature. If you have used books or literature that you can donate to the treatment committee please bring them to the intergroup offices. If you or your group can afford to purchase these items to support us, please do. Garry at the office has set aside an area to store these items for us. For more information, email tf@pdxaa.com

Corrections: Currently our focus is to carry the AA message to youths in the Multnomah County Detention Center (JDH). We need many volunteers to help bring AA meetings to the facility on a regular basis. Call the intergroup office.

Portland Access Committee

The Portland Access Committee meets on the first Saturday of every month at the United Church of Christ, 1111 SW Country Club Road, Lake Oswego, OR 97034. The meeting starts at 6 pm (ish) and usually lasts 1.5 hours. We welcome people just interested in finding out more about what we do. You don't need to know sign language to help. Email us at pdxaccess@gmail.com with questions.

October 2008 Financial Summary

Beginning Cash on Hand: \$721.92

Income: \$25,885.16

Expenses: \$23,480.12

Ending Cash on Hand: (\$721.92)

Become a Published Writer

Deadline for articles in Stumptown Sobriety is the 20th of each month.
Portland Area Intergroup, 1212 SE Division, is open Monday through Friday, 9 to 5.