

The Wagon Wheel

Idaho Area 18's Newsletter

Editor, Karen F.

August 2006

DISTRICT DONATIONS TO AREA

Year to date

District 1	\$1,538.45
District 2	1,334.42
District 3	524.65
District 4	1,688.70
District 5	1,042.95
District 6	727.58
District 7	596.60
District 8	2,800.13
District 9	899.78
District 10	405.00
District 11	266.50

EDITOR'S NOTE

It is that time again; another newsletter is complete. I want to thank all those who have taken the time to write and share their stories with us. It makes the newsletter very personal. Thank you for your service. I am very much interested in obtaining many more stories from all of you out there, especially those from the eastern Idaho area. Please submit your story via mail or through the website. You just need to share as if you

would in a meeting on your experience, strength and hope – how you got sober and how you are staying sober. In addition, you could share your experience with doing service work.

To submit your story and articles please send to:

Idaho Area 18 Newsletter
10007 W. Lancelot Ave.
Boise, ID 83704

Or

www.Idahoarea18aa.org

There is a link to the newsletter where you can see all the newsletters published to date. Thanks in advance for taking the time to share a part of you. Thanks again for my sobriety.

Yours in Service,

Karen F.

OBTAINING THE NON-PROFIT STATUS, INCORPORATING IDAHO AREA 18, AND FILING OUR FEDERAL INCOME TAXES

Hi, Everyone:

I hope the summer has been good to you so far. Earlier this summer I sent an e-mail to all the members of the Area Committee and all DCM's, informing them of where we were in obtaining our non-profit status and federal income tax filing. Since that time, I have been to a few district meetings and have answered a few individual questions about this process that we are going through. My goal was to pass along information about this process and keep everyone informed. So far, the opinions about this have been consistent as far as understanding the purpose and why this was being done. Once individuals have understood the reason for obtaining the non-profit status, incorporating Idaho Area 18, and filing our federal income taxes, the anxiety over incorporating Idaho Area 18 has dropped.

At the 2005 Fall Assembly, everyone was informed that Idaho Area 18 had reached the point in contributions obtained to

where we would have to file federal and state income taxes. The limit on the contributions (income) that can be received is \$25,000. After consulting with the CPA and searching through the Secretary of State records, it turned out that we had some work ahead of us to make Idaho Area 18 legal. We needed a new SS4 or Tax ID Number as our old one was bogus; we needed to apply for a Non-Profit Status Certificate (501C3); and we had to incorporate Idaho Area 18. When all of this is done, Idaho Area 18 will have to file federal income taxes, but with the non-profit certificate, will not have to pay income taxes – this is the major reason it is worth the time, effort, and money to obtain incorporation.

I have heard concerns from some individuals regarding having to incorporate Idaho Area 18. In the Articles of Incorporation, there will be some verbiage that will be hard for some of us to understand. Whenever a business or organization is incorporated, there are certain things that need to be listed in the Articles of Incorporation. One of the articles requires a purpose of the organization – the Preamble that is read at most AA meetings will be used with the name Idaho

Area 18 instead of Alcoholics Anonymous. In a corporation, a board of directors has to be listed in the Articles of Incorporation. The members of the Area Committee that are voted in every two years by a full-body assembly will be our board of directors – that would be Delegate, Alternate Delegate, Area Chair, Area Secretary, and Area Treasurer. A physical address also must be listed in the Articles of Incorporation. A post office box is not acceptable. Instead of using the address of an area committee member that would change every two years, I went to the Board of Trustees at Treasure Valley Intergroup Central Office (TVICO) and asked permission to use the TVICO address. The board agreed to forward any mail received. The address is 1516 Vista Ave., Boise ID 83702. Whenever an entity incorporates, by-laws are needed to explain who the Board of Directors will be, their qualifications, and duties. By-laws also have to explain how the money is taken care of and who is responsible for this. The lawyer will use the Idaho Area 18 Guidelines for this. One problem here is that other areas use the term by-laws instead of guidelines. The attorney was hesitant about using our guidelines, saying that the term bylaws

have more legal authority than the term guidelines. He will look into this and let me know if we have to change the name of the area guidelines to by-laws.

To put all of this into effect and to possibly change the term guidelines to by-laws, we may not be able to get full-body approval until after this has been set up and our 2005 taxes filed. The deadline for filing is October 15. This is one of the biggest reasons I have spent so much time talking about this to people in the fellowship. I am a firm believer in-group conscience, and I am trying to the best of my ability to keep you informed of what is going on. I choose to look at all of this on a positive note. Ever since I have been sober, I have been a part of Idaho Area 18. It is a good thing to see us finally grow to this level. The lawyer made a comment about Idaho Area 18. He was looking at our roster, and having heard an explanation of what all of us are doing in this organization, he said that we have a fully up and running organization that is performing work and carrying out a purpose. Financially we are at the point where we have to take this action to be legal. That is okay as I like being legal today.

When I was at the Forum, I was standing in line to get coffee with Greg Muth, the General Manager of G.S.O. I asked him why I was getting feedback from some individuals who did not like the fact that we were incorporating Idaho Area 18. I got the feeling that I was on the wrong path or trying to harm the Area. He said that maybe people are confusing this with the Tradition that AA ought never to be organized and that we were not trying to organize AA but to set up the business side of Idaho Area 18. I do not know if he hit the nail on the head or not, but I rather think so. One more time, I want to thank you all for the opportunity to serve. Who would ever think that someone who once lived in a bottle would have an opportunity to do something like this? If you have any questions, please call me.

**Yours in Service,
Janice McCauley
Idaho Area 18
Chairperson**

WHAT SHOULD I DO?

This is about my first total surrender, and I was not aware I was being surrendered. The date is April 1966. I am in court in Van Nuys, California. I am standing in front of The

Honorable Judge Charles Hughes. I am facing 7 1/2 to 15 years. I have been found guilty and now is the sentencing part of the trial. In the meantime, the city of Glendale, California has a hold on me, which means after Van Nuys is finished with me, I have to appear in Glendale for sentencing. I have my safety razor, toothpaste and toothbrush with me as per my lawyer's advice. He is sure that I will get the max, and if I am lucky, Glendale will go easy on me.

Judge Hughes gives me the prescribed time – 7 1/2 to 15 in the state prison in California – or 24 meetings of Alcoholics Anonymous, three meetings a week with a gift card to be signed at each meeting. I looked over at my lawyer and said, “Do I have to attend those meetings?” With a look of total amazement, he shakes his head and says, “NO, ASSHOLE, YOU CAN GO TO JAIL!!!” and walks out of the courtroom leaving me to promptly say, “Thank you, Your Honor, I think I’ll try that A and A.” That afternoon I met my lawyer in court in Glendale and faced His Honor Judge White. My lawyer explained that Van Nuys sentenced me to AA and two years probation and I was to make some payments to the court to pay back certain

businesses. Much to my and my lawyer's surprise, Judge White said that sounded good to him and said if I completed that sentence, all charges would be dropped.

I went to my first meeting in April 1966 and I have never looked back. I got a sponsor after my fourth meeting; Eddie C. was my sponsor for 32 years. My new sponsor is Harry H. in Oceanside, California and on July 7, he will celebrate 50 years clean and sober. AA has taught me that rarely have we seen a person in jail who has thoroughly followed our path. I was told that I could not say no to any AA requests and I had to get involved in service if I wanted to keep the gift that God gave me. One of the gifts at six years sober was that I met William Holden and he turned me on to motorcycles. I have been riding ever since and I have been involved in two sober MC clubs since the dark ages. My belief is that sober MC clubs play an important part in the community. What a wonderful God I have in my life to allow me a chance to pay back and ride in a sober group of men and women that are on the same page in life that I am. I have been blessed with all the tools I need to maintain this way of life – 12 steps, 12 traditions, 12 concepts, 2 loving sponsors, a

wonderful marriage to a beautiful woman in Alcoholics Anonymous to share life and program together. In addition, as a bonus she loves to ride motorcycles with me and loves clean and sober events, groups, and activities.

I start my day by saying "Please," and end my day saying "Thank you, Father." What a gift! – Over 39 years of sober living and loving one day at a time. Today I realize that in April 1966 I was sentenced to a way of life that I never dreamed existed. Thanks be to God.

**Your humble servant,
Ed Lynch AKA
LYNCH**

IT'S ALL ABOUT SERVICE

Any of you who have heard me speak much have heard the line "Service has been my salvation." I use that line because it is true. If service ever occurred to me while I was "out there," it was to brag self-righteously about all the boards I served on. I have also been known to say that I was trying to save the world and it never occurred to me that I needed to save myself first.

When I began to come to in AA, I was serving on at least six community boards – Red Cross, YWCA, a day care center, the homeless

shelter, and so on. On June 10, 1985, the fiftieth anniversary of Alcoholics Anonymous (the fiftieth anniversary of Dr. Bob's last drink), I was sitting in a meeting of the Pocatello YWCA board of directors at which I was elected president of the board. Boy, did that give me a rush – I could not wait to get to my after-care group the next afternoon to announce the big news. I will never forget the look on my counselor's face – the proverbial fall. Instead of congratulating me, she asked if I was sure that I wanted to devote my time to that dubious service. Well, for someone else it was not dubious, but for me it was. That was the night that I went home thinking about priorities and finally put mine in the right order with sobriety at the top.

I was president of the Pocatello YWCA for maybe 36 hours, submitting my resignation the morning of June 12. I quit all the other boards and submitted a rather public resignation as editor of a newsletter for yet another group I "served" (this was a statewide organization – boy, was I important!).

I threw myself into AA service from the beginning. I helped clean up the meeting hall the first Saturday of each month, and I was making coffee and washing ashtrays – even if I

did not smoke. At five months sober, I was elected treasurer of Pocatello Group II at which time I became a group member. Until then I had celebrated sobriety with Pocatello Group I. At that time, I probably approached AA service much as I approached that community service. It was a way to remain apart from the fellowship while insisting I was a part of.

Shortly after my last drunk in June 1985, I was laid off from my job. There was a recession in those days and I could not find work in my field, even out of town or out of state. I was eligible for unemployment but had to prove that I was a job seeker to continue to receive it. Right-to-work had just been legislated and no one cared how much education or experience I had so I found myself pounding the streets and answering classified ads for part-time temporary jobs. And accepting such work with a smile and an attitude of gratitude. I accepted food stamps and commodities – after all, I had two sons to feed and clothe and bills to pay to keep a roof over our heads. Talk about learning humility!

I began to have health problems, those little things that are masked by alcohol and that we ignore because we are spending our time and money having fun and

cannot be bothered to take care of ourselves. I found myself facing major surgery with no funds, and then my accident-prone son had a major upset and needed knee surgery. I made just a few too many dollars to be eligible for Medicaid and I found myself one afternoon in the office of the county medical services – aid to the indigent.

Through one of those coincidences, I now call miracles; the woman who worked in the county office was a relative of someone I attended church with. She had to turn me down for medical assistance and when I dissolved in tears, she handed me a tissue and said something I remember to this day: “You belong to a caring fellowship. Sometimes the most service we can be to someone else is to ask them to be of service to us.”

This was a concept that had never occurred to me. This woman had no clue that the caring fellowship that came to my mind was not my church (although the church also proved to be of immense assistance) but the fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous. The assistance I would get from AA would never be in dollars but in support that is in many ways so much more valuable.

This was a lesson once again in what happens when I reach out, whether to ask

for help or to answer the call. To ask others to be of service was a powerful lesson in true humility. For the same reason, I hope that the life I lead is one of service. I know I’ll never be a Bill Wilson, a Dr. Bob, or a Mother Teresa but through the years since 1985 I have tried to be a productive member of society, to help those who need help in whatever way I can, whether within the fellowship or the greater community, and to ask for help when I need it.

Those of you who know my situation know I am performing a service that will never quite repay the many years of abuse and heartbreak I caused. It is a living amends. I do not always do it with the best attitude, and occasionally I do it grudgingly. I have spent literally years in service to AA – the hours add up. That obligation will never be repaid. It is an honor and a privilege to give back to the program and fellowship that saved my life.

One last word – when I found myself in Boise and realized I was going to be here a while, I looked around to see what I could do. My most rewarding service through the years has been to inmates in jails and prisons. Although I received a clearance to go into Ada County, I was side

tracked by the opportunity to take meetings into the women’s correctional center, so every Wednesday night that is where I am. Anyone who wants to do this work can contact me or Lisa S. to start the paperwork.

My latest service position was on the committee for the First Annual Gem State Roundup. By all accounts, it was a resounding success. Let us do it again next year! If you would like to serve on the planning committee, contact me at parrjo@isu.edu.

**In peace and service,
Jo P.
Boise**

MY LAST DUI SENT ME TO PRISON

My parents did not drink and I never heard about alcoholism. Boy did that change over the years! I was born with a joint deterioration disease that stunted my growth and I was in chronic pain. I was not very happy, but I did learn to joke and my sense of humor has been a great help.

A friend told me if I took a drink, it would ease my pain. I was 15, and almost immediately, my life changed. I liked the taste and the effects. At first, it was fun. Soon I was drinking more and the

insanity started – tickets, car wrecks, and family and friends were very upset.

I went into the insurance business, found out I was a natural, did very well, and soon my drinking was interfering with my job. I was fired and rehired three times. I thought that is it – I will quit for 20 years. I did and I was so selfish and arrogant.

I started drinking again after 21 years, and believe me, it got much worse. A friend suggested AA but I was much too smart and selfish; I could do it on my own. In 1994, I started drinking heavily, quit my job, and spent half my money, which was a lot. After many DUIs, I was sent to prison in 2000. I heard the door slam, and I was in shock. I was doing well on parole but only four months later, another DUI and possible life in prison, and back I came.

I am thankful for AA today and living one day at a time. I know if I am rigorously honest in AA, I can gain sobriety. I am doing this for me and I know this is my last chance. My mind and health have suffered, along with my family and friends. I will win this battle and when the time comes, I will leave here with my head held high, living life on life's terms.

Dwayne G.

Boise

SWEET WILLIAM FROM IDAHO

On March 19, 1969, I got a call from Don, my boss. I lived in Idaho Falls and worked in Pocatello. Don told me to come down and pick up my check. I drove down and asked what the problem was. Don told me I had not been to work for three days. It was 8:00 a.m. and he told me my check would not be ready until 10:00 a.m. I went to Caccia's, a bar and store, and drank. I went back to work at 10:00 at Boise Cascade, and Don told me, "If you could have gone two hours without a drink, I would have told you to pick up your tools and go to work." I went back to a couple of bars for the rest of the day, got home around 5:00 p.m., and crawled into the house. Beth kicked me in the ass, called me a drunken dramatic SOB, and told me to go to bed. I told her I needed help and asked her to call AA. She said she would dial the number but she would not talk to anyone. Jack's wife, Claire, answered the phone and told me the meeting was at Tautphaus Park upstairs in the old Log Building, and it was a closed meeting. I drove out with Beth; she stayed in the car "and it was

cold" and I went up to the meeting. It has a small bar with stools and I was told they were making bets that I couldn't ride the stool. I met a friend, Earl C. that I drank with and had not seen for six months. After the meeting, he made me promise I would come and see him the next day. I was sick and had a real bad night so I called Earl and told him I could not come down "four blocks." Earl said it would just take a minute so I went down. I knocked on the door and when he answered, I told him how sick I was and Earl's response was "Good, you little bastard, that's just the way I want you." Earl became my sponsor, was active in AA and personal service at A.R.A., and got me involved. I was on the Board at A.R.A. for 10 years and was director twice. The manager passed away and the board asked if I would consider being the manager. I had my own dry wall business at the time. I took the job and gave my business to a father and son who worked for me. I was there five years and it was AA oriented. The board changed and the state got involved and drifted away from AA, and I resigned. I was 58 years old and unemployed. A friend I sponsored was a detective on the police force and told me the sheriff's office was

looking for help. I talked to the lieutenant, who was not impressed with treatment people. He took me to the captain, who took me to the sheriff. The sheriff said, "Hi, Bill, what are you doing here?" I told him I wanted a job, and he told the captain to hire me. I had been detoxing his drunks for years. So I was a deputy sheriff for eight years. The sheriff let me start AA in Bonneville County and talked to sheriffs in Bannock and Bingham Counties to start AA in their jails. I also got AA started at C.W.C. in St. Anthony years ago. This is my work history and now my AA service history, again thanks to Earl, my AA sponsor. When I came in, there were six meetings a week from Ashton to Malad. Three were in Idaho Falls, two Group #1 meetings and one Lincoln Group on Friday. Group #1 was Wednesday and Saturday. Now Idaho Falls has 46 meetings a week. Earl took Beth and me to the Rigby meeting on Tuesday. I was broke, unemployed, and we had a total of 50 cents. We looked at each other and put it in the kitty, and we have not been broke since. I was sober a couple of months, and Earl took Beth and me to our first assembly in Malad. I used Tautphaus Park for working the 12 steps and 12 traditions –

there were 12 steps up to the landing and 12 steps up to the meeting room, and that is where Earl gave me my first AA job – "coffee maker". From there I started all my two-year positions – group secretary, GSR and Intergroup rep, and then I started my area positions – secretary, treasurer, chairperson, and Delegate Area 18 Panel 32. I figured after my Delegate job, I would just go to meetings. I did not go to the first intergroup meeting and I got a call that I had been elected chairperson of Intergroup for two more years. One of the greatest gifts in AA was being Delegate, going to Stepping Stones, and seeing the history of AA. Bill was gone but Lois met me and called me Sweet William from Idaho. I was a speaker at the conference and had the privilege of escorting Lois to the podium. When I got dressed for the conference there was a note pinned inside my jacket from Beth. It was printed in the conference report 1983. Thank you, AA, for all your gifts.

**Sweet William (Bill D.)
Idaho Falls**

THE IMPORTANCE OF PARTICIPATING IN AA

Wake up! Wake up and participate in the fellowship,

get a sponsor and do your step work. Get involved, hang out after the meetings, do service work and listen for the gift your fellows are trying to give you. For it is not just a fellowship you are involved in but also the foundation on which we will build the rest of our lives.

No matter what we do, each and every day we have to wake up with ourselves. I do not know about anybody else, but I am getting real tired of waking up with myself. Here in front of me is my wake-up call, here is my chance to get away from the window, and get a seat at the front of the class.

How important it is participating in the AA program.

How important are the rest of our lives.

**Dan A.
Boise**

THREE-TIME LOSER

My apprehension entering a TC was very high; however, I was willing to try anything to get out of prison. I am a three-time loser entering prison. The first two times I was released from incarceration, I left with hate and discontent for the system. My thinking told me the system wronged me and I did not have to play by their rules. I told myself I could do whatever I wanted and I was not going to listen to

anyone. It did not take long before my alcohol addiction was making all my life decisions. Believe me, they were not very healthy. I was on the fast road of complete destruction when I was arrested for my seventh DUI. This violated my parole and returned me to prison for the third time. As I mentioned in the first sentence I was scared as hell to attempt a TC, mostly from all the bad rumors I had heard while on the compound. The nine months spent in the TC did not take away my alcohol addiction, but introduced me to a way of life that I could live without alcohol. Today, six months upon completion of the TEAM program, I am still an alcoholic but I do not have to drink. I attend four or five meetings a week, have a great home group, and work with a sponsor. Why? Because I enjoy my new life and freedom and have discovered a life without alcohol as the main attraction. Today I cherish each day and try to be honest and fair in the game of life. Life will always throw obstacles, but I am a firm believer that it is a lot easier to stay sober than to get sober. The TC taught me to honestly look at myself and find the man I want to be, not the man I once was.

**Craig E. C.
Boise**

THERE'S NO PLACE LIKE HOME

Today, I can use the words of Dorothy in the Wizard of Oz as she kept saying repeatedly, "There's no place like home, and there's no place like home". That is how I feel about the rooms of Alcoholics Anonymous.

I never did feel quite at home before. Even as a youngster, I never really felt like I belonged. I felt a part from, not a part of. Oh, I searched. Boy, did I search. I tried everything to be loved and accepted although at times, when I thought just maybe, maybe this time – I knew, I knew what you could never know, never understand, that somehow I was different, I was separate from other people. I could not make it in this world. I could not face this life, if you only knew – whom I really was inside.

I married young, at the age of 18. However, that was not my first encounter with the elixir that made life okay. That elixir was booze and at 17 when my best friend had said her "I do's", well, I drank, just like the adults. I was not one, but boy, I could drink like one, even then. In addition, that first drink was my first drunk.

From then on, at every opportunity, I drank, and on

every occasion, I was drunk. Most of the people around me could not understand. "What's wrong with her?" That is what their eyes were saying. Yet I could not have told them had they asked.

My first marriage ended after 6 1/2 years with an innocent baby in the mix. Funny how I could tolerate the black eyes and bruises and the midnight brawls – until that little one entered our lives. We could have gone on that way, but not this precious baby boy. I did for him what I could not do for myself and made the necessary plans to end the marriage.

Was I a hopeless, hopeless victim? Absolutely not. I volunteered for it all. Somehow, in the deepest part of me, I knew, I knew the truth. I was living the life that only someone like me could live. Maybe even enjoy – oh boy, who's kidding?

I left that marriage and jumped right into another relationship, and this time of course, it was my turn to control, my turn to abuse, and my turn to have it "my way". After two years and my divorce had become final, we married and had a baby a few months later. In addition, this time – it was going to be okay. We had the perfect family. A beautiful blond-haired son and a baby daughter. We were married. He was

working and going to school for his degree. I was a stay-at-home mother and this time – it was going to be right.

I seemed to have it all. However, why did I run to the liquor store three, maybe four times a day? Why was I passed out on the floor with my children crying in the background? Why couldn't I remember what I had done? In addition, where did all these damn bruises come from?

After smashing, the car drunk, with the entire family inside of it, getting my husband fired from a government job, getting busted for shoplifting, and having a complete mental breakdown with severe depression, I was getting suspicious – what the hell is wrong with me???

On January 17, 1985, I walked into my first meeting of Alcoholics Anonymous. It was everything I still find in the rooms of AA today – acceptance, love, support, and experience, strength, and hope –, which I find in every meeting. I knew I was home, and for six wonderful years, we knew a new happiness, a new freedom, and our family thrived.

However, my story with alcohol and drugs does not end there. No, I thought I had outgrown the need for AA. After all, I was a regular church attendee and

I had everything in life I had ever wanted – a family, friends, a loving husband, and I was clean and sober.

Therefore, my Big Book went on the bookshelf and stayed there for 14 years. I remained clean and did not drink for another seven years, but. I became crazy, I was lonely, I was resentful, I was depressed, I was empty, I was frustrated, and I was hopeless. Therefore, I went on the Ricky Lake Show. That was in the spring of 1998.

After our second invitation to be guests on the show, they surprised me with tickets to a Broadway play. In addition, I was going to ride in style. Me, in style!!!

In the back of a shiny white limo with sparkling crystal glasses, there it was. My elixir, the great elixir of life. Now doesn't Black Velvet whiskey sound just dandy while cruising through the streets of NYC and Times Square?

And it happened. The glass came into my hand. I lifted it to my lips and the deed was done. After 13 1/2 years of being drug and alcohol free, I had picked up that first drink.

Seven long years passed. I entered my teens again. Oh, the parties had not changed much. Nevertheless, boy, I sure had. I was doing about any drug that came my way,

while bathing my throat in that great elixir of life again. There was a lot of laughter for the first four, maybe five drinks. Then the laughter faded. The talk became more serious. The emotions became more critical. More threatening. And the door of Hell swung wide open and instead of me swallowing it, it swallowed me with everything I had.

On July 3, 2005, I was paid a visit by Boise's finest. About eight of them in all. Another phone call to the police by a disturbed neighbor. The cops came in, and there I stood. There I stood in all my shame, drunkenness, and demoralization.

After seven years with King Alcohol, my marriage was destroyed, my family was broken, my freedom was threatened, and I had finally met my match. The fight was over.

On July 4, 2005, I returned to my first meeting of Alcoholics Anonymous, and there they were – The 12 Steps and The 12 Traditions – hanging up, right there on the wall. In addition, those Slogans had always provided me direction for each new day. Moreover, there He was – God, the Living Elixir of Life, bringing me back to my family, each and every one of you, who were waiting to receive me, with open arms and gentle

smiles. You had the solution. And as I heard "How It Works" read, the tears streaming down my face, I knew – deep down in my soul, there is no place like home, no place like home.

♥ **Trish
Boise**

IS ALCOHOL A PROBLEM IN YOUR HOME?

Many people are affected by the excessive drinking of somebody in their lives. Alcoholism is a disease, but too few realize it is a "family disease" that affects everyone. Alcoholism is a thief – it robs us of our loved ones, it destroys our happiness, it frightens and hurts our children, and tears our families apart.

Before I found Al-Anon, I was completely confused and distraught. My existence revolved around "alcohol". The harder I tried to stop the drinker from drinking, the more I found nothing worked. I was angry and tired of a losing battle. I tried to appear calm and sweet in public, but I was inwardly consumed with fear, resentment, guilt, and hate. In my dilemma, I did not know where to turn nor to whom. I felt that God had deserted me. But no, He was guiding me all the way, right to the door of Al-

Anon! I stood at that door afraid to enter, feeling disloyal and unwilling to expose to others what was going on in my home. I decided to knock and go in. And what did I find there? I found people who welcomed me, who understood why I had come through that door, people seeking help just as I was doing. I knew I was in the right place, and my whole life was transformed by what I learned there. Their smiles, their loving ways, their words gave me HOPE.

I learned that the alcoholic in my home was a very sick person (not the moral weakling I had thought). I was told that I had not caused the problem, could not cure the problem, nor could I control the problem. I found I had been doing all the wrong things and been making things worse instead of better.

I was introduced to the program of Al-Anon, which is a spiritual way of life based on the 12 Steps of Alcoholics Anonymous. I was encouraged to look for a power greater than myself to help and guide me. I had to begin with myself and change my attitudes and my actions in the light of the facts.

Al-Anon saved my sanity, my marriage, and gives me a second chance of living and loving. In due course, the wonderful gift of

sobriety came into our home.

Al-Anon's whole purpose is to help the families and close friends of alcoholics by replacing despair with hope, improving the family atmosphere, and rebuilding self-esteem, and confidence. This is what Al-Anon and Alateen has been doing for the last 54 years.

**Elsa M.
District 4 Al-Anon
Twin Falls**

DOOMED FROM THE BEGINNING

As I look back on everything now, I realize I had an addictive personality from the beginning. I was very dependent on family and relationships. Comfortable in a safe groove, scared of change. My first drink came when I was 10 or 11. I snuck a couple of shots of 151 from my parent's cupboard (still unknown why). Boy, oh boy, I bounced off the walls. I did this periodically for the next couple of years, always replacing what I took out of the random bottles with water. Soon I was in junior high. Going to parties and drinking became a regular routine. A social stimulant if you will. A way to accept and be accepted. The things we did were crazy, but only the beginning of the chaos.

High school came along and the splitting of my parents. Neither bothered me. High school was a way to meet girls and fellow partiers. My parent split was a chance to do what I wanted without any questions. I was 15 years old. This is when my partying took first priority in my life. Soon other stimulants found their way into the mix but one constant thing was alcohol. All this time I thought nothing was wrong with this; after all, all kids were doing it. But they were not! I ended up dropping out six or seven months into my first year at high school. I moved out of my mom's house and came back several times over the next couple of years, mainly to slow the chaos that my life was in. Going from couch to couch at homes of people I never really knew. Going on beer runs (the illegal kind). And stealing from people who were close and cared for me. I would only be home for about a week. Long enough to sleep, eat, and steal money and things to further my addictions. I would drink and drug to cover the guilt of my actions, only to justify it later in my buzz, as "they deserved it." Not my fault, theirs. By this time, I was 17 and this would continue for another three years. Then one day I received a call from my mom. She was in

Idaho Falls. My grandma, someone I never knew, was on her deathbed. I was to go ASAP. This was the first time I saw death. I could not take it. I had to change. I had done nothing with myself and wanted to change. I stayed there in Idaho Falls. Quit drinking and drugging. I found God. This worked for almost three years. Then after I thought I had it under control, I decided to take a drink. I mean, why not? I am on my own two feet, have my own place, working steadily. I was a productive member of society. "So I deserve it", right? Well, within three months I was drinking, drugging, and lost it all. But I really did not care. Right back where I started. However, hundreds of miles away from home. For the next seven to eight years, this is what I did. I used every day. Had hundreds of jobs, some of them good ones, some bad! I lost a house (my second one), many cars, many material things. All I wanted was drinking and drugging. Right back to lying, cheating, and hurting everyone around me. Countless relationships destroyed. I was homeless for some of the time. My using consumed my life, every day, all day. I did what I had to do to assure this. When I had a place, I

stole to pay all my bills and for my use. Soon this landed me in jail for burglary and I was now labeled a felon. Over the next couple of years, I would go back to using, many violations, and a while behind bars! Now I am at the end of my rope. My actions have put me in a corner. I have to change or go to prison or die. I have to change! I am a green card holder forced through the doors of AA. Now after seven months I am no longer forced. I want to be here. I want to be in the rooms of Alcoholics Anonymous I have made many mistakes in my life. Most not in these paragraphs.

However, looking back now, it was supposed to happen this way. God's will. I had to be at the very bottom several times to realize. The chaos in my life was a blessing. Jail was a blessing, probation was a blessing. Bottom line is I could not stop on my own. For a very long time I wanted to but could not do it. I have an addictive personality, was born that way. I could not save myself from myself. I am far from being cured and realize I will never be cured. But I know something now, which I never did before. There is a solution to chaos. A fellowship where more than one will drop anything to lend a hand. There is a

book that describes me and helps me to live one day at a time. There are 12 steps to help change my thinking and me. Over 2 million people are proof this program works. But most important, I found a God who loves me and does not want to punish me for my actions, and my choices. He is forgiving. I am a newcomer and have been sober for 60 days. That is not long compared to some but for me it is an accomplishment.

I appreciate these rooms, my sponsor, the people I meet, and the fact I can just be me. As my sponsor says, "Baby steps!" It has taken many years to get here and it will take many years to get back.

**Brad S.
Boise**

A MESSAGE FROM PAST DELEGATE JIM MCDONALD

Hey, everyone, how is the summer going? It seems the older I get, the faster it goes; it is almost Christmas time in my book.

I am writing this note to remind you that Janice has asked me as the Past

Delegate to head an ad-hoc committee and focus on an Area Inventory. If you will remember right, it was noted at the last Area Business Meeting that there apparently was an interest in doing one. I am asking everyone to bring it to their GSR's to take back to the groups that we are in need of some questions that are on people's minds in regard to an Area Inventory. Please ask them, or you, to get back with me so I can personalize the information I already have.

I also will be asking a few of you to be part of this committee. I asked Janice to secure a room at the Fall Assembly for a roundtable discussion Friday night. It will most likely be after this roundtable that we really approach this but I would like to report at the Business Meeting what our our plans are to proceed. I do not feel this is something we should rush into if we want to have a meaningful inventory.

I plan to send the DCM's the compiled questions to discuss at district business meetings and to give GSR's for home group meetings. This way, the entire area membership will be part of,

not just those on the Area Committee.

Until we meet again –

**In Love and Service,
Jim Mc.
Salmon**

NEWSLETTER POSITION FOR SLIPPERY WHEN WET

At the end of 2006, I will be retiring as Editor of the "Slippery When Wet" after completing 35 months of service.

I have enjoyed the challenge of putting together your articles, stuff from the *Grapevine* archives, and notices of coming events and meeting changes into a readable format, supporting the copying and distribution activities. This takes away much of the burden. TVICO contact at 344-6116 e-mail at tvico@qwest.net "SLIPPERY WHEN WET" NEWSLETTER

POSITIONS AVAILABLE
ON NEWSLETTER STAFF

Please announce to your groups

**In Love and Service,
Rick P
Contact at 288-4352
E-mail at
rickput@cableone.net**

Unity Day Picnic

Saturday August 26th 2006

Lakeview Park Nampa – 10 a.m. til Dark!

Burgers, Dogs, Buns, and Condiments will be provided.

Sodas and Water will be available for sale.

Please bring

- Side Dishes
- Salads
- Desserts

Also bring

- Frisbees
- Squirt Guns
- Water Balloons
- And Any Other Fun Toys You Can Think Of

Speakers will be:

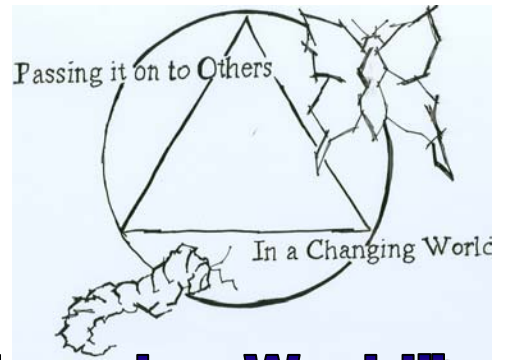
Kimm S. – 10 yrs.

Second Speaker To Be Announced

Let's Have FUN!

To volunteer or for questions call Swede S. at 602-3728.

Idaho Area 18 2006 Fall Assembly October 6th- 8th 2006



“Passing it on to Others in a Changing World”

Hosted by District 8

Doubletree Hotel Boise-Riverside

2900 Chinden Blvd, Boise, ID
(Lodging information on back)

Friday October 6th 2006

- **11:00 am-** Golf Scramble, Quail Hollow Golf Club, Boise (Details on Reverse)
- **12:00 noon-** Registration (until 7:00 pm)
- **1:00 pm, 2:00 pm & 3:00 pm** Early Bird Panels
- **6:30 pm-** AI-Anon (Open Meeting)
- **7:30 pm-** Kick-off Meeting; AA Speaker: Madeleine P., from Pocatello, ID, Pacific Region Trustee
- **9:00 pm** - Alkathon
- **9:30 pm-** AA Roundtable (GSR, DCM, H&I, CPC/PI, Grapevine, Archives, Treasurers, Secretaries)

Saturday October 7th 2006

- **7:00 am-** Registration (until 6:00 pm)
- **9:00 am-** AA and AI-Anon Area Business Meetings
- **9:00 am, 10:00 am, 1:00 pm, 2:00 pm & 3:00 pm** - Panels
- **11:30 am-** AI-Anon Luncheon; AI-Anon Speaker: Judy D. From Sheridan, Wyoming (NW Trustee)
- **6:30 pm-** AA Banquet; AA Speaker: Michael E.; from Evans, Georgia
- **9:30 pm-** Dance; Live Band: Past Tense
- **ALL DAY-** Alkathon (except during, Banquet)


Sunday October 8th 2006

- **9:00 am-** Spiritual Breakfast; AA Speaker: Ed L., from Meridian, ID

For more information, call Rodney N. (208) 850-3074 or Cindy H. (208) 342-2848

We are fully self-supporting through our own contributions. Please consider making donations of snack foods for the Hospitality Room, which will be open throughout the assembly.

***Detach form and mail with check or money order:
Fall 2006 Assembly, PO Box 50058 Boise, ID 83705***

 **For Registration information call: Lisa or Ken at (208) 385-7437** Forms are also available at www.idahoarea18aa.org

 Please check if you are: AA Member Al-Anon Member Friend of AA Send this portion 

Name: _____
 Address: _____
 City, State, Zip: _____
 Phone: _____
 Email: _____

GSR/GR Information: R (AA) R (Al-Anon)
 GSR/GR: _____
 District Number: _____
 DCM/DR: _____
 Area 18 Committee Member _____
 Delegate or Past Delegate: _____

Early Bird Registration (Before September 1, 2006)

General Registration \$13.00 _____
 Al-Anon Luncheon \$13.50 _____
 Saturday Night Banquet \$20.00 _____
 Sunday Spiritual Breakfast \$10.00 _____
 Coffee Mug \$ 5.00 _____
 Dance \$4.00/person/\$7.00/couple _____

Regular Registration (After September 1, 2006)

General Registration \$18.00 _____
 Al-Anon Luncheon \$14.50 _____
 Saturday Night Banquet \$22.00 _____
 Sunday Spiritual Breakfast \$12.00 _____
 Coffee Mug \$ 5.00 _____
 Dance \$6.00/person/\$10.00/couple _____

Doubletree Hotel Boise-Riverside

2900 Chinden Blvd., Boise, ID 83714
 Phone: (208) 343-1871

Toll Free: 1-800-222-TREE

\$93.00 per night per room

Register by September 1st, 2006 to receive this rate

Directions: Interstate 84, exit 49 to Interstate 184 East, exit 3 to Fairview Ave. First left onto Garden St., continue through stop light, hotel on right hand side.

ALTERNATE HOTELS:

Econo Lodge (1/4 mile away)

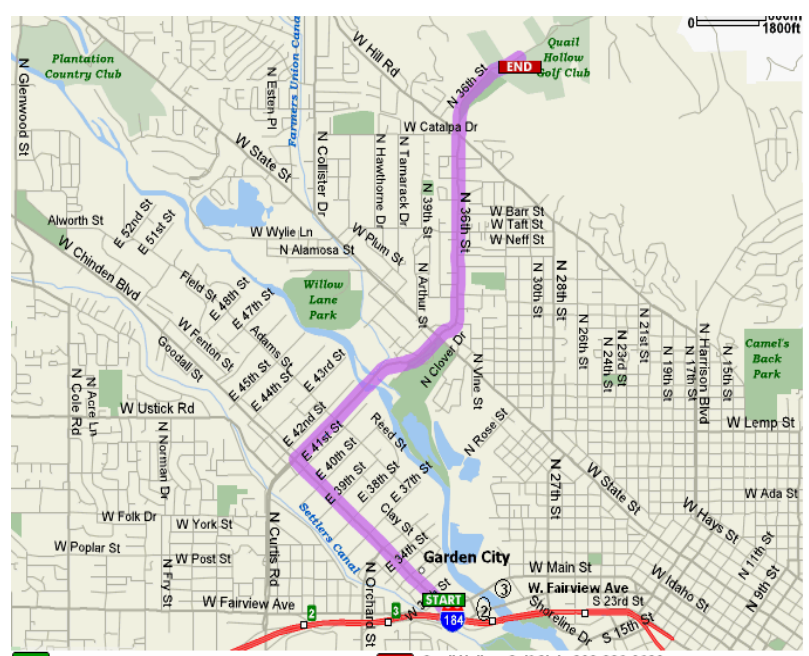
4060 W. Fairview Ave.
 Boise, ID 83714
 Phone: (208) 344-4030

1-Person Room: \$45.00 plus room tax
 2-Person, 2-Bed: \$52.00 plus room tax

Shilo Inn's & Resorts (1/3 mile away)

3031 W. Main St.
 Boise, ID 83714
 Phone: (208) 344-3521

2-Person Room: \$62.95 plus room tax



START Doubletree Hotel-Riverside Boise
 2900 W Chinden Blvd, Boise, ID 83714

END Quail Hollow Golf Club: 208-336-0620
 4520 N 36th St, Boise, ID 83703

② Econo Lodge
 4060 W. Fairview Ave. Boise, ID 83714

③ Shilo Inn's & Resorts
 3031 W. Main St. Boise, ID 83714

District 3 Campout Sawtooth Lodge in Grandjean

Saturday night potluck and campfire meeting.

Tent camping in the Meadow is \$6 per night per person,
payable to the lodge.

Cabins and RV space available with reservation.

Well behaved pets allowed on leash only

August 25th and 26th