

LITTLE WHITE HOUSE NEWSLETTER

MARCH 2013

Dakota Alano Society

3920 Rahn Road Eagan, MN 55122
651-452-2921 (during meeting times)
www.dasinc.org



24 Hour a day:

MPLS Intergroup Hotline: 952-922-0880
St. Paul Intergroup Hotline: 651-227-5502

UPCOMING MEETINGS

Sunday, March 10th, 6:00 p.m.

Take a meeting to Hastings Detox
Meet in the parking lot at 6:00 p.m.
to car pool to Hastings

Sunday, March 17th, 6:00 p.m.

March Board of Directors Meeting
Main room at the White House
Squad leaders are encouraged to attend
All members are welcome to attend

UPCOMING EVENTS

34th Annual Winter Rap Up

Friday, Mar 15th - Sunday Mar 17th

9:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

Theme: Live and Let Live

Coates Plaza Hotel, Virginia MN

info: www.aastpaul.org - Upcoming Events

26th Annual Aim for Ames Round Up

Friday, Mar 22nd - Sunday Mar 24th

Theme: Following the Path

Quality Inn & Suites, Ames IA

info: www.aimforames.org

Southern MN Area Assembly

Saturday, March 23rd

9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

Holiday Inn, Owatonna MN

info: www.area36.org - The Area Calendar



30th Annual Minneapolis Gratitude Night

Saturday, April 6th

6:30 p.m. - 12:00 a.m.

Minneapolis Convention Center

info: www.aaminneapolis.org

St. Paul Intergroup TGIS

Thank God It's Spring; Thank God I'm Sober

Saturday, April 20th

5:30 - 11:30 p.m.

The Recovery Church. St Paul, MN

info: www.aastpaul.org - Upcoming Events

40th Annual Gopher State Round Up

Friday, May 24 - Sunday May 26th

Doubletree Hotel. Bloomington MN

info: www.gopherstateroundup.org

☼ ☼ **Get Involved in Gopher State!** ☼ ☼

The Dakota Alano Society will host a Hospitality Suite at Gopher State again this year. Watch for more details on how to get involved.

STEP THREE

Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God as we understood him.

Practicing Step Three is like the opening of a door which to all appearances is still closed and locked. All we need is a key, and the decision to swing the door open. There is only one key, and it is called willingness. Once unlocked by willingness, the door opens almost of itself, and looking through it, we shall see a pathway beside which is an inscription. It reads: "This is the way to a faith that works". In the first two Steps we were engaged in reflection. We saw that we were powerless over alcohol, but we also perceived that faith of some kind, if only in A.A. itself, is possible to anyone. These conclusions did not require action; they required only acceptance.

Like all the remaining Steps, Step Three calls for affirmative action, for it is only by action that we can cut away the self-will which has always blocked the entry of God - or, if you like, a Higher Power - into our lives. Faith, to be sure is necessary, but faith alone can avail nothing. We can have faith, yet keep God out of our lives. Therefore our problem now becomes just how and by what specific means shall we be able let Him in. Step Three represents our first attempt to do this. In fact, the effectiveness of the whole A.A. program will rest upon how well and earnestly we have tried to come to "a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God as we understood Him."

To every worldly and practical-minded beginner, this Step looks hard, even impossible. No matter how much one wishes to try, exactly how *can* he turn his own will and his own life over to the care of whatever God he thinks there is? Fortunately, we who have tried it, and with equal misgivings, can testify that anyone, anyone at all, can begin to do it. We can further add that a beginning, even the smallest is all that is needed. Once we have placed the key of willingness in the lock and have the door ever so slightly open, we find that we can always open it some more. Though self-will may slam it shut again, as it frequently does, it will always respond the moment we again pick up the key of willingness.

From Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions, pgs 34-35.

TRADITION THREE

The only requirement for membership is a desire to stop drinking.

Tradition Three - The Long Form: Our membership ought to include all who suffer from alcoholism. Hence we may refuse none who wish to recover. Nor ought A.A. membership ever depend upon money or conformity. Any two or three alcoholics gathered together for sobriety may call themselves an A.A. group, provided that, as a group, they have no other affiliation.

"Tradition Three defines the personal liberty of the AA member. It says, in effect, that any alcoholic can be an AA member the moment he says so. Neither can any of us deprive him of that membership, no matter what his behavior. Perhaps no other society has ever staked out such a broad expanse of liberty for the individual as this. Every AA newcomer feels at once that he is wanted and trusted and loved. How well we understand his needs; certainly we have had them ourselves. Seldom has any alcoholic taken unfair advantage of that unlimited charter for freedom. We took this direction for individual freedom years ago. We are glad that we did; there has never been any cause for regret." *Bill W., from The Language of the Heart, p. 317*

CONCEPT THREE

As a traditional means of creating and maintaining a clearly defined working relation between the groups, the Conference, the A.A. General Service Board and its several service corporations, staffs, committees and executives, 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."

The "Right of Decision" means that we choose Delegates, Group Service Representatives and other Trusted Servants whom we trust to make good decisions in the meetings where they represent us. Of course, whenever possible they will want to inform and consult with us whom they represent before decisions are made. Also, we should expect thorough reporting on actions taken, and make an effort to understand these. *Summarized from The A.A. Service Manual, and the pamphlet, The Twelve Concepts for World Service, Illustrated.*

STEP THREE

Being 18 months sober I still feel like a newbie to AA, but this step is key to my daily recovery and I find that I have to practice it everyday to maintain that daily reprieve that the Big Book talks about. It's also an ACTION step. I try to begin each day on my knees saying the Third Step Prayer while visualizing a door opening in my heart:

"God I offer myself to you to build with me and do with me as you will. Relieve me of the bondage of self that I may better do your will. Take away my difficulties, that victory over them may bear witness to those I would help of thy power, thy love and thy way of life. May I do thy will always."

This prayer begins my day with the acknowledgement that I can't do it alone and that I don't have to do it alone – in fact, my self-sufficiency was and still is my main liability. Truth is, I really don't have a clue how to navigate Life. I have lots of past experiences and broken relationships that shore up that reality should I ever find myself conveniently forgetting. So I place my thoughts and actions each day under God's direction and guidance, and I trust (an action word) that my prayer is heard and that I will be guided and directed this day. To me Step Three is all about suiting up and showing up in my life each day as an active participant instead of a passive observer.

As the day progresses, so do I, attempting to fit myself into the day and not struggling to fit the day into my expectations. I'm coming to believe that God's way is much easier than my way and certainly the results are far superior. During the day I can pause when I feel overwhelmed, anxious, afraid, or when I find I'm gritting my teeth, and say the Serenity Prayer. I remind myself that the day is unfolding according to God's plan, not mine and I'll have everything I need. Then I focus my gaze and my thoughts to what's right in front of me that minute. Baby steps are the ticket here – Easy Does It, First Things First, Let Go and Let God! On a good day, I use every recovery tool I can lavishly and unabashedly until I'm on track again.

As I participate in my life this way, I begin to notice that God is very creative in how guidance and direction come to me. Sometimes it's through other people at meetings, on the phone, or just seeing my grandson's smile when he comes through the door to share his day with me. Sometimes it's a billboard that announces, "You can get better", a fortune cookie that says "you do not have to worry about your future", a book that falls open at just the "right" page with a message I need to read, or simply the sun breaking through the clouds at the right moment. I could go on but you know what I'm saying. We can all find these small nudges in our lives if we slow down long enough to really be aware of what's right in front of our noses.

Why, even the opportunity to write these thoughts on Step Three is an unexpected gift in my life today and helps me put into perspective the richness of my life. I am grateful for twenty-four hours, grateful for this lifesaving and live-giving step, and grateful to God for the opportunity to share my thoughts with all of you. One more thing: When we let this step melt into our daily life, we become messengers and carriers of experience, strength and hope to each other. I am here today because of everyone who suited up and showed up in their daily lives by practicing Step 3 and were able to reach out a hand to me when I needed it. Let's hear it for 24 hours!

Thanks to Maya R., Office volunteer for this contribution!

This piece was first published in the March 2009 issue of the St. Paul Intergroup AA Lifeline by volunteer Maya R.

CLEANING HOUSE

Did you know that each meeting group is responsible for a thorough cleaning of the White House during one month of the year?

Upcoming Cleaning Schedule

March	Friday	6:00 p.m. AA
	Friday	8:00 p.m. AA
April	Wednesday	7:00 a.m. AA
	Saturday	11:00 a.m. AA
May	Board of Directors	

The suggested time for monthly cleaning is before or after your regular group meeting time. Allow adequate time to complete the tasks listed below.

Cleaning supplies are kept under the sinks in the kitchen and both bathrooms. The House has two vacuum cleaners, and there is additional cleaning equipment in the front entry closet. If you know your group is going to clean and supplies are needed, please call Brad C (612-270-8238).

Monthly House Cleaning consists of:

- Vacuum all carpets:
upstairs, downstairs, and stairway
- Vacuum and/or shake out mats in kitchen, hallway and bathroom
- Vacuum & damp mop linoleum floor (with Swiffer mop in front entry closet)
- Clean both bathrooms
- Clean kitchen sink and counter tops
- Wash all coffee pots
- Wipe down all tabletops in all rooms

The Board and all members of the Dakota Alano Society appreciate each group's efforts to keep the White House clean. Thank You !!

REGARDING HOUSE SECURITY

- Keys to the Alano House are the responsibility of the Squad Leader.
- **Do not give or lend your key to any other member.** Contact a Board member in advance of your meeting if you need someone to open or lock the House for you.
- Open the House no more than one hour prior to the start of your meeting.
- Lock the House up no later than one hour after the close of your meeting.
- **Check all 3 doors when leaving the house.**
- The following Board members have volunteered to open the House if a Squad Leader is unable to:

Dan C 651-238-7824

Julie O 651-497-1264

SERVICE OPPORTUNITIES

The Saturday 6:00 p.m. Beginner's Meeting is always looking for speakers.

If you would be willing to share a short version of your story please sign up on the sheet posted on the door to the kitchen, or attend the meeting and talk to the Trusted Servant.
(You can do it, it's easy! No podium, no microphone, you don't even have to stand up in front)

The Board of Directors is looking for a new Webmaster to help keep the DAS website up to date.

If you are interested or would like more information, please put a note in the board mailbox in the kitchen at the White House, or contact: Ellen J. (emjusten@yahoo.com)

www.dasinc.org

Pledging to the Dakota Alano

Every year in February and March the Dakota Alano Society holds its annual Pledge Drive. Which is a simple way of saying that Board members visit meetings to encourage those members who wish to do so to make a financial contribution to the DAS - beyond what they put in the basket at meetings. Just like with the dollar one tosses into the basket as it goes around, pledging is ENTIRELY voluntary. This process of conducting a Pledge Drive always raises some interesting questions.

“Why would I make a “pledge” when I already put money in the basket several times a week at meetings?”

Good Question. Money donated by meetings from the basket is a contribution from the individual AA meeting to the House. Those funds contribute to that meeting's portion of rent, utilities and supplies. A Pledge is a contribution from an individual member to the Dakota Alano Society. An individual would only make a Pledge donation to the house if he or she wishes to donate above and beyond what they put in the basket each week. Pledging members receive a receipt for their contributions so those funds may be counted as charitable contribution on the member's taxes. For some members this is important.

“Why does the Dakota Alano need to collect money beyond what is contributed from the basket?”

Another excellent question. Donations made by meetings vary each month depending on meeting attendance, how much is collected in the basket and how often meeting treasures turn in contributions. Pledge donations can be a more reliable source of contributions and cash flow. As stated above, meeting donations are used for basic operating expenses for the House. Pledge donations may be used for larger expenditures like repairs, improvements or maintenance issues that arise.

“How do I know that my contribution is being spent responsibly and according to the principles of AA?”

Easy, attend the next Board meeting. A monthly treasurer's report is provided at each Board meeting. That report is also posted on the bulletin board in the kitchen. All of the Dakota Alano's income and expenses are documented. Every penny. Any expenditure beyond monthly bills and ordinary operating expenses, must be approved by a Board vote at a Board meeting. The Dakota Alano Society is an incorporated non-profit organization - commonly referred to as “an AA Club” - that provides, manages and maintains meeting space for multiple AA, Alanon and ACOA groups. In addition to being guided by the 12 Traditions of AA, we are governed by our Articles of Incorporation, By Laws and the laws of MN regarding non-profit organizations. In addition, the GSO provides guidelines regarding the relationship between AA and Clubs.

No member of the Board of Directors is authorized to speak on behalf of the entire Board about any specific financial or business matter. If you have a general question about pledging feel free to contact me or our Treasurer, Julie O. If you have additional questions about the finances or operations of the House, please feel free to attend the next Board meeting and become informed. Any person who attends meetings at the White House is encouraged to attend Board meetings and ask whatever questions he or she has. Upcoming Board meeting dates are posted in the kitchen.

Yours in Service, Susan H - current board president