

Mill Creek A.A. Group

Since 1944

At The Oregon State Penitentiary

Newsletter for November/December 2017

Edition 74 No.6



Run of the Mill - 1944 and Beyond

A Publication of the Mill Creek Group of Alcoholics Anonymous

Edition 74 No. 6

November/December 2017



MISSION STATEMENT

The Mill Creek AA Group has but one purpose:
“To carry the message of Alcoholics Anonymous to the alcoholics who still suffer, through recovery meetings, workshops, seminars, publications and sponsorship, all the while, individually and as a group, practicing the principles of AA in all our affairs.”

Responsibility Declaration

I am responsible.

When anyone, anywhere, reaches out for help, I want the hand of AA to always be there. And for that,

I am responsible.

Alcoholics Anonymous Preamble

Alcoholics Anonymous is a fellowship of men and women who share their experiences, strength and hope with each other that they may solve their common problem and help others to recover from alcoholism.

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

The Serenity Prayer

“God grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change, courage to change the things I can, and wisdom to know the difference.”

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TREASURER REPORT

STARTING BALANCE:	\$ 1255.00
Admin. Interest	\$ 1.31
Refreshment Purchase	\$ -126.00
September/October Donations	\$ 68.00
ENDING BALANCE:	\$ 1198.31

Trusted Servants

Tim T.	Secretary/ Office Facilitator
Open	Asst. Secretary
Open	GSR
Scott R.	OGSR
Rick M.	Assistant OGSR
Open	Treasurer
Bryan K.	Librarian
David Fi.	Newsletter Editor
Ray T.	Meeting Facilitator

Wednesday Night Book Study

Chairman: Ray T.

Thursday Night Meeting

Secretary: Tim T. Chairman: Ray T.

Saturday General Meeting

Chairman: Ray T.

Apreniendo A Vivir Wednesday Night Group

Secretary: Jose G. Chairman: Roger G.

Apreniendo A Vivir Saturday Group

Secretary: Roger G. Chairman: Jose G.

Anyone from the outside wishing to become involved in service or attend a Mill Creek AA meeting at OSP may do so by contacting:

Mr. Steven Finster

Staff Advisor for The Mill Creek A.A. Group of OSP
2605 State Street

Salem, OR 97310

Phone: 503-378-2289 FAX: 503-373-1008

Or email our OGSR Scott R. at:

E-mail: millcreek1944@gmail.com

We would love to have you join us!

DISCLAIMER

The purpose of the Mill Creek A.A. Group Newsletter is to increase unity and to carry the message of recovery to other alcoholics.

The opinions expressed here do not necessarily reflect the views of either Alcoholics Anonymous as a whole or The Mill Creek AA Group of OSP.

No endorsement of or affiliation with any groups or with any organization is at any time intended or implied.

Reprint rights are granted to all service boards, groups and committees of A.A. Submissions from members are eagerly welcomed, but the newsletter editor reserves the right to edit all submissions at his discretion.

The Mill Creek A.A. Group at the Oregon State Penitentiary does not endorse any outside enterprise or lend its name, or the A.A. name to any state agencies, treatment or counseling services whatsoever.

The Mill Creek AA Newsletter is produced solely by the inmates at OSP and is intended to simply reach out, and share the good message of recovery.

Congratulations!

We celebrate everyone who has worked so hard in doing what needs to be done in staying sober,

“One day at a time”

Happy November Birthdays to:

June Outside	11/08/91	26 Years!
Larry M.	11/07/92	25 Years!
Kevin P.	11/12/92	25 Years!
Charles H.	11/01/98	19 Years!
Robert C.	11/02/13	4 Years!
Paul S.	11/07/14	3 Years!
Anthony W.	11/21/14	3 Years!
Jeffery G.	11/08/16	1 Year!
Jason B.	11/10/16	1 Year!

Happy December Birthdays to:

Larry B.	12/31/89	28 Years!
Thomas W.	12/01/97	20 Years!
Richard M.	12/26/97	20 Years!
Jose G.	12/20/02	15 Years!
Gary H.	12/24/02	15 Years!
Kenneth P.	12/26/02	15 Years!
Adam H.	12/01/15	2 Years!
Jeremy C.	12/23/16	1 Year!

If your sobriety date is coming up, or we've missed adding you to our list and you'd like the group to help celebrate with you, please send a communication form to let us know.

Also, if you would like a sobriety coin, or if you would like an official sobriety certificate please let us know.

From the Editor

David F.

Well once again the year is almost over, and we find ourselves thinking on the holidays to come. But one thing we need to remember is not of the holidays and what we may receive but be thankful for the things that we already have. Here in the prison a lot of us live frugal lifestyles and may not have a lot. But remember that no matter what we may or may not have, we have the chance to change our lives, to achieve sobriety, to reach out and help others do the same. I don't know about the rest of you but that sounds like a situation I am grateful to be apart of each and every day. Especially when those moments are spent with the wonderful men and women of Alcoholics Anonymous! Thank you all, and Happy Holidays to each and every one of you.

“A.A. Responsibility Declaration”

I am responsible.

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From the President

Tim T. Mill Creek A.A. President

What exactly is a “spiritual awakening?” and do we experience such a thing “as the result of” the twelve steps of Alcoholics Anonymous? Perhaps it is the final state of mind of a sober mind. Perhaps such an awakening eventually occurs when we have properly dealt with the past, began to truly focus on the present and can finally, once and for all, look forward towards the future. Perhaps this epiphany happens when we can honestly state to ourselves and those around us that, “Yes, I’m ready to be a sober minded person,” and in that sobriety comes a type of responsibility, a duty to share that awareness of self, to pass on the good news that sobriety is possible and even preferable to constantly being inebriated, out of touch, not who we really are. We all have our reasons why we over indulge in alcohol. Mine was to escape the pain of my reality, and yes it came with a lot of self-pity, but I also don’t want to belittle or undervalue that pain. It was real. It hurt, it still does, a lot. Family, loss, heartbreak, all valid reasons to want to forget, if even just for a little while, however, “When I was a child, I acted as a child, but when I became a man,” became aware of the negative consequences that come with destroying my life and the lives of those around me with my over drinking, I woke up and realized I was actually doing real damage. Is that who I want to be? A man who is damaging those around me? Those people I dearly love? Of course not! None of us do. So, guess what? I decided to stop doing those things.

“Doctor, doctor, it hurts when I do this,” the patient said. The doctor replied. “Well, don’t do that.” Is it that simple? Yeah, it actually is. I finally saw myself, and my life when I allowed myself to drink and it was bad. I then decided to not do those things that made my life bad. Sounds too simple? Maybe not, AA is a tool in a toolbox. I needed the right tool to help me to quit drinking. As I tell others so often, AA is not a magic pill, not a cure all. It’s a tool, a tool that can be used to get the job done. So, what’s the job? It’s to reclaim my life, become the sober man I want to be. But it starts with the will to do such a thing. When I was younger, I was always very competitive. Maybe I still am to a degree, but I always thought that if I wanted to do something bad enough, I could become efficient at it. All I had to do was just watch someone who was already good at it and simply do what they did. It worked. Then after I learned the skill, I put my own twist on it, made it fit even better for me. Doing the work of AA is not that much different. Millions have come before us, hacking a trail through the deadly forest that is alcoholism. All we have to do is follow the trail, literally follow the steps to get where we need to be, but it starts with one thing, one all-important starting point. The **will** to do so, the payoff is guaranteed. A better life, the rewards, just waiting to be earned, to be claimed. We can do it. And then, when we do, we pass on the good news.

I like Step Twelve, because in truth, it’s just the beginning.

POEMS & STORIES

The Mill Creek AA wants to thank everyone who has submitted poems and stories to be published in our monthly newsletter. There have been many insightful, humorous, touching, uplifting and well-written submissions and we look forward to publishing even more in the future. Some articles or poems may be submissions from the official AA Grapevine Magazine.

Writers' personal opinions expressed in

“Poems and Stories” do not necessarily represent the views of The Mill Creek AA Group.

If you have a comment on something you read, please let us know.

A.A.'s Meaning

By Robert C.

AA is something that I look at as a preventive measure. I've learned only in my time in prison that I do not have a desire to drink anymore. But even that realization was 4 years in the making.

I never really started drinking until my early 20's. Of course there was high school parties in which I would binge drink with my friends. You know, typical for someone that age. It was always liquor though. I hated the taste of beer.

Until a hot summer day on the golf course when my dad bought me a beer off the beer cart, Coors Light of all things. It was the most refreshing, best tasting, most crisp beverage I have ever tasted. At that very moment I was hooked.

From that point on, at the age of 22, I would drink no less than a six-pack a day. Most of the time, I would end up at bars closing them down, then waking up and going to work at 5:30 in the morning.

So, I was a functioning alcoholic. Never would admit that alcohol was a problem, because it didn't affect my life in any way. Outside of a decent sized beer gut.

In fact, alcohol was beginning to become a very important part of my life. In the few years leading up to my arrest, and because of the craft brew boom, I had become a bit of a beer connoisseur. I also realized what I wanted to do with my life. Learn to brew my own beer, and open my very own brewpub.

I fell in love with brewing beer. It was 3 hours of getting lost in the world that I love. I was starting to get really good at it. It was a true passion of mine. I was brewing right up until the night of my arrest. In fact, I even had a batch fermenting when I was arrested.

I was given a sentence of 25 years to life on a murder. I have full confidence that I will get out one day. Knowing that I could achieve this, I have always done my time accordingly. I also am constantly planning for life after prison.

That life included getting right back into the art of brewing and opening a brewpub. I intended to drink with my friends and family members, and to enjoy life to the fullest.

Even knowing that my family and friends have told me they are afraid of my drinking. This was also something that baffled me. How could anyone be afraid of my drinking when I've never been violent toward them or even threatened them? How could they be afraid of my drinking when I have caused no harm? Because of my words, I suppose I have the ability to break people down emotionally. I'm very good at it. I suppose it became difficult to control when I drank. And I'll admit, I've been blackout drunk more than a few times in which I've been humbled next morning after hearing about some of the things I've said to loved ones, and the apologizing sheepishly.

The people that know me really well know how sudden and unexpected my crime was. Most everybody though is surprised to hear that alcohol was not a factor that night. I was completely sober when the events occurred. Because of this and because of everything I know about myself, alcohol was never a problem until about 3 months ago.

I have not had a drop of alcohol since I've been in prison. Closing in on 4 years, never went through withdrawals, never had the desire to drink since my arrest.

What I do notice though, is how healthy I am without alcohol. I have a good workout program, and a good mind-strengthening program. I feel the best mentally and physically than I have since I was probably 25 years old, 11 and a half years ago. When I try to piece together why that could be, I look at alcohol (and the amount I was drinking) as being the only factor. The absence of alcohol must be it, because alcohol intake is the only thing that has changed drastically.

So I decided to attend AA meetings. Not so I could keep myself from drinking in prison. That won't be a problem. But I don't want to get out someday, and start being unhealthy again. I will be close to 60 if I get out on time, and I don't want to spend the rest of my life living in a cloud of blurriness. I'm sure that this difference will be noticed among my family and friends as well. It certainly has helped rebuild some relationships since I have been in prison.

AA to me is a support system. A preventive measure, if you will. If I attend meetings, and surround myself by those who are in the same place as me, or maybe even a little worse off, I'm sure I will have all the tools I need to stay away from alcohol on the outside. I can't think of any better way to prepare myself.

I may not be one of the ones who speak frequently in the meetings. I might not even be “Robert and I'm and alcoholic” but I am “Robert, and I have the desire to quit drinking.”

Step Eleven

By Evan W.

“Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God as we understood Him, praying for knowledge of His will for us and the power to carry that out”

The hardest part of knowing and carrying out God's will is getting myself out of the way; I'm pretty selfish, and if I don't keep in conscious contact with Him while making choices, my desires and ideas will establish their foothold, and I'm walking down that old path once again (it's an easy road to follow, but it leads right off a cliff). Clearly, my way needs some improvement, I wasn't sitting around hoping to be taken away from my wife, kids, and career so I could spend some quality time in a prison cell and reflect on life – yet here I am, and that's what I ended up taking to get myself squared away. Bourbon, cocaine, running fast and hard, choppers, rock 'n' roll – those had become my priority, and I didn't even see it until someone reached over and hit the brakes for me.

Conscious contact for me is a personally felt, undulled, mutual connection – one that requires an effort on my part to establish and maintain. When I'm dulled by any of my addictions, I'm not putting effort into anything but myself. Being imprisoned [at OSP] has freed me – through prayer and meditation, I realized that the bottle was my warden, telling me when, where, and how to do life while I was missing the entire point of it. Behind bars, I am missing some of my kid's most important moments, things that will forever define them – but on the streets, I was choosing to miss them, only interested in how many pints I could get down between drop-off and pick-up.

Step 11 is powerful, as long as you get out of the way and listen. God doesn't pull any punches when he reveals his will, but if we keep bobbing and weaving to avoid him, because we know the truth is going to hurt when it connects, all we're doing is delaying the inevitable – and that's exhausting to our soul. So – I'm seeking to improve my conscious contact with God through prayer and meditation, and my prayer is to not only know his will for... but have the POWER to carry out that will – regardless of how uncomfortable, inconvenient, or long that journey may be – but it only works if you work for it!

Step Twelve

By David F.

“Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these steps, we tried to carry this message to alcoholics, and to practice these principles in all our affairs”

“Freely received, freely given” is one of the ways we express our gratitude for the gifts of recovery. The goal is to then help others come out of the hitting bottom phase that we all know only too well, and then help them find sobriety through the steps.

By learning about Recovery through fellow members, I feel it only proper to pass along the knowledge to those willing to accept it. Throughout my recovery process, I have heard and experienced more “life” than when I was using alcohol.

My faith and understanding became more direct towards wanting to help another and then to truly not expect anything in return, only then to discover that there is reward sometimes without me even being aware it.

That's one of the great bonuses of AA. But first, you have to choose to take that first step.

A.A. News, Medical and Special Interest Articles

The purpose of these articles is to offer information that may further readers understanding of the medical, legal and social aspects of alcoholism; the severity and international scope of the illness; and the worldwide efforts being made to combat it.

Publication here does not imply endorsement or affiliation.

AA does not conduct or participate in research, nor does it hold any opinion on research conducted by others.

The Power of Prayer

The American Journal of Drug and Alcohol Abuse

In the first study to explore brain Physiology in AA members, researchers from the New York University Langone Medical Center found that members who recited AA prayers after viewing drinking related images reported less craving for alcohol after praying than after just reading a newspaper.

The recent study measured the impact of prayer on 20 AA members using functional magnetic resonance imaging of differential neural response to alcohol craving inducing images obtained in response to three conditions: after reading of AA prayers, after reading irrelevant news, and with passive viewing.

Compared to the other two conditions, the prayer condition was associated with a relative reduction in self-reported craving and with engagement of neural mechanisms that reflect control of attention and emotion.

“This finding suggests that there appears to be an emotional response to alcohol triggers, but that its experienced and understood differently when someone has the protection of the AA experience,” says senior author Marc Galanter, MD, Professor of Psychiatry at NYU Langone.

In Galanter’s decade long research into the role of spirituality in long term AA members, he and his colleagues have found that members undergo a transition from initially craving alcohol to a new status where they reported little or no craving. This reduction in craving, according to Dr.Galanter, is associated with the amount of time that passed following a “spiritual awakening” in AA, which marks a transition to a different attitude toward drinking.

“Our current findings open up a new field of inquiry into physiologic changes that may accompany spiritual awakening and perspective changes in AA members and others,” says Galanter. He says the study results also support the validity of a long term AA experience in terms of physiologic changes in the brain.

Alcohol and Cancer

Addiction

A new review of epidemiological evidence by the American Institute for Cancer Research and other agencies supports a casual association between alcohol consumption and cancers in the orophagus, liver, colon, rectum and female breast. This is a stronger statement than the long recognized association between alcohol and cancer. An association means there is a relationship of some kind between the two variables. A casual association means there is evidence that alcohol consumption directly causes cancer.

The review cites evidence that alcohol caused approximately half a million deaths from 2012. The highest risks are associated with the heaviest drinking, but a considerable burden is experienced by drinkers with low to moderate consumption

On a Lighter Note

Ruff Day

Dad was suffering from a huge hangover when little Cindy arrived home from school and started practicing her saxophone. The family dog joined in and began to howl along with every song Cindy played. Finally Dad grumbled, "Hey! Can't you play something the dog doesn't know?!"

It's The Truth

Everyone in the office was startled when Robert clutched his chest and fell over. He was rushed to the hospital. The paramedics in the ambulance began getting him ready for the emergency room. "Do you smoke?" a medic asked him. Robert: "No, I stopped three years ago." Medic: "Do you drink alcohol?" Robert: "No, I don't drink anymore." Medic: "When did you stop drinking?" Robert: "Around 7:30 this morning."

Monkey Business

A man was playing piano in a bar one night with a pet monkey running around on top of his piano. A drunk walked up and sat his beer on the piano. Suddenly the monkey dragged his tail through the mans beer. The old drunk looked at the piano player and said, "Hey! Do you know your monkey dragged his tail through my beer?" The piano player looked at him and said, "No, but if you hum a few bars maybe I can play it."

Wise Guy

Knock Knock
Who's there?
Meeting chairperson
Meeting chair ...
NO CROSSTALK!

Low Tech

Before I got to AA, I didn't have a PC or a cell phone. All I Had was the DT's in a jail cell.

Help From The Outside

Corrections Correspondence Service

If you will be incarcerated for at least six more months, and are interested in corresponding with an outside AA member with whom you can share your experience as it relates to your problems with alcohol, please write to AA's General Service Office to request a correspondence form. This is a random match with men writing to men, and women writing to women.

Prerelease Contact

If you write to G.S.O. within three to six months of your release date and give us your destination (city and state), we can also try to arrange for someone to write to you just prior to your release. This would give you a chance to have an AA contact in your home community to help with your transition from AA on the "inside" to AA on the "outside".

We look forward to hearing from you!

Prerelease Contact

**1900 NE 3rd St. STE 106-500
Bend, Oregon 97701**

Big Book and 12 x 12 For Your Own

If you would like a Big Book and a 12 x 12 and you don't have the funds to buy them on your own, just write to the Mill Creek A.A. Group of OSP and let us know. Just give us your name, address, if you're an inmate, your SID Number, and then explain your situation and state what materials you would like to receive. It's that easy and it's **FREE**.

HOW TO GET THE MILL CREEK AA GROUP NEWSLETTER

The Mill Creek AA Group Newsletter is **FREE** to all A.A. members, **friends and family**, inside **and** outside the walls. We will gladly e-mail a digital copy or mail the hard copy edition to your home or business, or any Institution including; EOICI, OSCI, TRCI, SRCI, WCCF and CCCF upon written request.

The Mill Creek Newsletter Needs You!

We encourage **anyone** to contribute to future issues. The stories, experiences and thoughts of those within the group and from our outside members are what make this group so very special. The feelings and situations that you're going through right now may be the exact words someone else needs to hear. We are always looking for recovery-oriented material such as articles, stories, poems, jokes and artwork to share with our readers.

Thanks for sharing!

Here are some other ways you can help

- ❖ Keep us apprised of address changes.
- ❖ Pass the newsletter on once you've read it.
- ❖ Notify us if you know someone else who would like to receive our **free** newsletter. Get their approval and just send us a letter with their e-mail address for a digital copy, or their name and home address for a hard copy subscription. It's that easy!

Write us at:

The Mill Creek A.A Group of OSP
Activities Department
2605 State St.
Salem, OR 97310
E-mail: millcreek1944@gmail.com

If you have something you would like to share or have an idea or suggestion for the Newsletter, please send them to us.

The Grapevine Is the official A.A. **International** magazine. It contains stories, articles, and interviews about A.A., its members, its history and the process.

Subscriptions may be **purchased** from:

AA GRAPEVINE
Po Box 1980
Marion, Ohio 43306

Mill Creek AA Meetings

WEDNESDAY EVENING BOOKSTUDY

We invite you to join us for our book-study group that meets at 6:00pm on the education floor every 1st and 3rd Wednesday of the month. These meetings will help establish positive behavior as well as tips for living the program by understanding how our actions affect others and ourselves. It will also help to break down the defective thinking patterns that motivate some to cause harm to others and ones self, plus it will help teach one how to replace defective thoughts with ethical rules and how to automatically engage these ethics by simply putting them into practice. See you there! Hablamos español también.

THURSDAY EVENING MEETINGS

Our Thursday meeting is our "club" meeting. Remember, our Thursday meetings are held once per month on the first Thursday and you must be level 2 or higher to attend this meeting. Our staff advisor monitors the club meeting attendance. If you miss two meetings in a row without an excuse, you are automatically dropped and it's six months before you can get back on.

SATURDAY MORNING MEETINGS

The Saturday morning meetings are a great way to spend a morning in fellowship and recovery. These meetings are held twice a month (the 1st & 3rd Saturday) and they are truly a big part of our A.A. program here at OSP. We continue to have outside supporters come in to join us. Meetings with outside members and guests are always much more vibrant. **Thank you very much to our outside guests for attending!** Outside members that have a DOC Volunteer ID are asked to simply call ahead. If you don't have an ID, call or e-mail our OGSR or OSP Staff Advisor a week in advance with your name and birth date for approval to attend a meeting.

**If you would like to attend
any of these meetings,
please send a kite to let us know.
We hope you do!**

For Our Hispanic Brothers

Para Nuestros Hermanos Que Hablan Español

EL GRUPO "APRENDIENDO A VIVIR" DE LOS ALCOHÓLICOS ANÓNIMOS LE EXTIENDE UNA INVITACIÓN PARA QUE NOS ACOMPAÑEN A NUESTRAS REUNIONES EN LOS SIGUIENTES DÍAS.

- **PRIMER Y TERCER MIÉRCOLES DE CADA MES A LAS 6:00 PM. EN EL PISO DE EDUCACIÓN.**
- **PRIMER Y TERCER SÁBADO DE CADA MES A LAS 7:45 AM. EN LA SECCIÓN DE ACTIVIDADES. TODOS CALIFICAN.**
- **PRIMER JUEVES DE CADA MES A LAS 6:00 PM. EN LA SECCIÓN DE ACTIVIDADES. EL REQUISITO ES TENER EL NIVEL 2.**

ENVIÉ UN KYTE A:
Activities C/O A.A. en español

Announcements

Hey guys don't forget on December 9th we are having banana splits at 7:45 in the morning, a breakfast of champions!

Also, we have elections for Vice President, GSR, and Treasurer coming up. Nominations will be at our January Club meeting and then in February we will have our elections to fill those positions.

**Anonymity
is the spiritual
foundation of all
our Traditions.
Please respect
this and treat in
confidence who
you see and what
you hear.**

Mill Creek AA 2017 Meeting Schedule

*Schedule Subject to change

AA WEDNESDAY	11-1-17	6:00-8:00pm
AA MONTHLY	11-2-17	6:00-8:00pm
AA SATURDAY	11-4-17	7:45-10:00am
AA BANQUET	11-2-16	6:00-8:00pm
AA STEP WORKSHOP	11-6-17	7:45-10:00am
AA WEDNESDAY	11-15-17	6:00-8:00pm
NA SATURDAY	11-18-17	7:45-10:00am
AA SATURDAY	12-2-17	7:45-10:00am
AA STEP WORKSHOP	12-4-17	7:45-10:00am
AA WEDNESDAY	12-6-17	6:00-8:00pm
AA Holiday Celebration	12-9-17	7:45-10:00am
NA SATURDAY	12-16-17	7:45-10:00am

PRACTICAL
EXPERIENCE
SHOWS THAT
NOTHING WILL
SO MUCH INSURE
IMMUNITY FROM
DRINKING AS
INTENSIVE WORK
WITH OTHER
ALCOHOLICS.



NOTICE:

There will be times when meetings will not be posted in the blocks. We will try to post the notices at the bottom of the stairs, but please watch the schedule and plan on attending, even when you haven't spotted a flyer.