



Quinte West Messenger

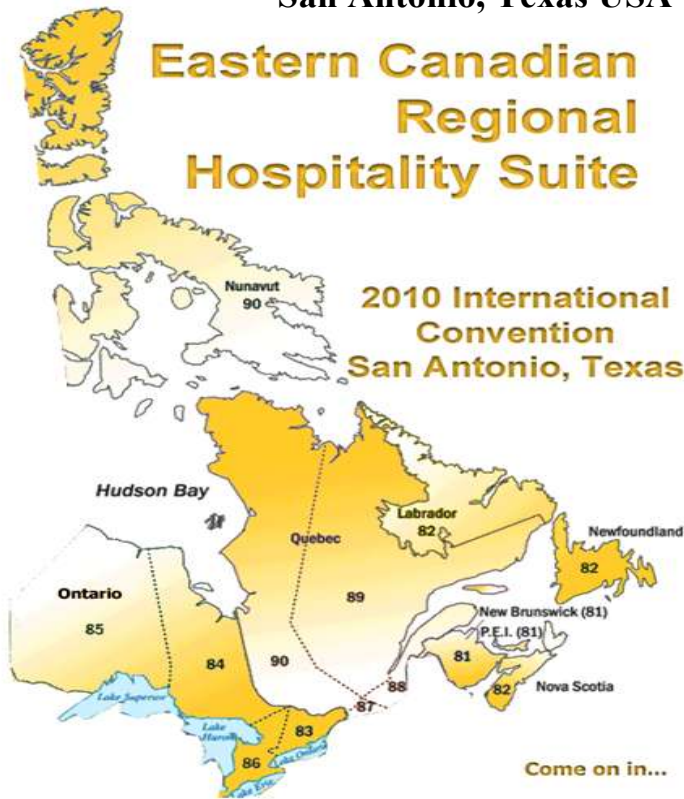
January 2010 Newsletter

HAPPY NEW YEAR!

*12 Months of happiness,
52 weeks of gratitude,
365 Days laughter, 8760 hrs of friendship,
525600 Minutes joy, 31536000 sober seconds,
Wishing you a Happy New Year.*

**International Convention 2010 July 1 - 4,
2010
San Antonio, Texas USA**

**Eastern Canadian
Regional
Hospitality Suite**



I have received confirmation of the room for our Hospitality Suite at the 2010 International Convention in San Antonio. I have updated the Volunteer website and we're ready to sign up volunteers!

Please pass this information on to all the GSR's in your Districts so that they, in turn, can inform the membership at large.

The website address is

<http://www.easterncanada2010.org>

Looking forward to seeing you all sign up for a shift!

Yours in Love and Service,
Robb W.
Alternate Delegate



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Quinte West

Page 2
Jan /10

Messenger

A New Twist on First Things First!

Early in my sobriety, the old timers taught me that working the A.A. program means never resting on my laurels and always searching for ways to grow in the program. One of the tools they impressed upon me was a unique use of the calendar. In January, the first month of the year, I was to focus on the First Step. Similarly, in February, the Second Step, and so forth.

Later, I became involved in a step study group that set aside one meeting per month to focus on a tradition. These, too, corresponded with the month of the year, so in January we discussed Tradition One, in February Tradition 2, and so on throughout the year.

When I got deeply involved in service, my Service Sponsor never failed to remind me that the A.A. Concepts also require constant work. So this being January and I being the District Committee Member, I would like to discuss the First Concept this month.

The First Concept of Service states, *"Final responsibility and ultimate authority for A.A. world services should always reside in the collective conscience of our whole Fellowship."*

As my father used to say, "What does this mean in real English?" Maybe I can answer in a few words. It means that the direction that A.A. moves in world services is directed by the membership at large. As Bill W. said in 1955, "The A.A. groups are to be the final authority, their leaders are to be entrusted with delegated responsibilities only."

This makes A.A. unique in the world - an organization run from the bottom up - which is sometimes referred to as an inverted pyramid. Bill W. called it "a spiritualized society characterized by enough enlightenment, enough responsibility, and enough love of man and of God to insure that our democracy of world service will work..." (Concept One of the "Twelve Concepts for World Service").

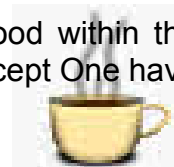
How does A.A. do this? Each A.A. group elects a General Service Representative (GSR) through group conscience. The GSR represents the A.A. group in two ways. At the District Table, the GSR raises the concerns of its group within the A.A. District. These concerns vary and may involve such things as the operation of a telephone answering service, the publication of a newsletter, the printing of meeting lists or the running of a district web site, for example. All concerns are to be raised, discussed and agreed upon within the collective conscience of the fellowship of the district.

The second way in which a group's concerns are represented by its GSR is at the Area Assembly. At the Area Assembly, the business of all the AA Districts within that area is brought forward and discussed. Thus the decisions made at the Area Assembly represent the collective conscience of the entire fellowship of the area; that is, all of the AA Districts within the area and all of the AA groups within each district.

Additionally, every two years the Area Assembly selects an Area Delegate to represent all the districts (and therefore all the groups within each district) at the General Service Conference (GSC) in New York. The elected Area Delegates come together at the GSC to discuss at length and make decisions about all the business and work of A.A. Thus, the decisions made by these delegates represent the collective conscience of the entire fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous. In truth, in AA, there are no leaders, only trusted servants.

Since the "Twelve Concepts for World Service" are often not as clearly understood within the fellowship as the Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions, I do hope that my thoughts on Concept One have helped clarify the first of the "Twelve Concepts for World Service."

Yours in Love and Service,
Tom JC





"Faith"

When I was driven to my knees by
alcohol,
I was made ready to ask for the gift of
faith.
And all was changed.
Never again, my pains and problems
notwithstanding,
would I experience my former desolation.
I saw the universe to be lighted by
God's love;
I was alone no more.
Bill W., Letter, 1966
c. 1967AAWS, As Bill Sees It, p. 51

Thought to Consider . . .
Sorrow looks back, worry looks around,
and faith looks up.



Your Daily Smile....

Service Work in AA is like a football game: 20,000 spectators - who might benefit from a little exercise - are watching 22 players badly in need of rest (Joe S., Kerrville, Texas, March 2007)

What's the last thing a drunk says before he's hospitalized? Watch this! (T.B., Jacksonville, Florida, October 2005)

Have you heard about alcoholic Alzheimer's disease? You forget everything but the resentments (Anonymous, Spokane, Washington, June 1999)

It's the first drink that gets you drunk. It's the last one that gets you sober (John R., Bronxville, New York, August 1959)

An alcoholic is a person who, from a single tree, creates a great forest in which he immediately gets lost (Will K., LaFarge, Wisconsin, August 1997)

A sponsor is somebody who sees through you and still sees you through (Robert E., Blacksburg, Virginia, March 1990)

Save on booze by drinking cold tea instead of whiskey. The following morning you can create the effects of a hangover by drinking a thimbleful of dishwashing liquid and banging your head repeatedly on the wall (Robbin S., July 1999)

They say that alcoholics have three kinds of memory loss: short-term, long-term and convenient (August 2000)



Tradition One

Consider the full version of Tradition One from the back of the Big Book:

Each member of Alcoholics Anonymous is but a small part of a great whole. AA must continue to live or most of us will surely die. Hence our common welfare comes first. But individual welfare follows close afterwards.

Tradition One tells us why we have Traditions at all – because we want to protect AA. Its summary on the scroll defines it as the goal of all the Traditions: AA unity. Without AA most of us will die. The most important thing in AA, therefore, is not the newcomer; it is the group. The newcomer is important, but not as important as the group. We will ensure the existence of the AA group by putting aside our personal desires and putting the group first in some key areas. It is the other Traditions that define for us what those key areas are and how that unity is to be achieved. It is worth noting that they do so based upon the assumption that AA members are full of greed, pride, arrogance, self-centeredness and all the rest of the defects of character. The Traditions are intended to contain those tendencies. If they required us first to become uniformly good, pleasant, selfless individuals in order to be effective they would be doomed to failure. (Although we hope that some of us will gradually become better people through practice of the Steps). As mentioned, most of the examples of where the primacy of the group is enforced occur through the practice of the other Traditions. But here is an example related to Tradition One alone: it can be the case that when a group exceeds the stated capacity of the hall that it rents, it is breaking the insurance stipulations (and so the law). Therefore, in the past, groups have had to shut their doors when they reach the limit, and stop anyone else coming in, including newcomers. If they did not, the group would be breaking the law and ultimately, could be closed down. Groups faced with this dilemma usually have either to split into two (through a number of people leaving and setting up a new one), or move to a bigger hall. Similarly we cannot let one individual bring down the whole group. This is why we must throw the disruptive drunk out of the meeting. The Twelve Traditions Illustrated states in connection with Tradition 1: “Our brother the noisy drunk affords the simplest illustration of this Tradition. If he insists on disrupting the meeting, we ‘invite’ him to leave, and we bring him back when he’s in better shape to hear the message. We are putting our ‘common welfare’ first. But it is his welfare too; if he’s ever going to get sober, the group must go on functioning, ready for him.” - from <http://www.miseryisoptional.info> - website



The *Messenger* is published monthly by District 30 to provide members with information about events and happenings in our area. Member submissions are encouraged and may be submitted to:

district30@quintewestaa.org.

Current and past issues are available online at our website:

www.quintewestaa.org

Articles by members appearing in “The Messenger” are personal opinion and not necessarily the opinion of this newsletter, our groups, District 30, or AA as a whole. Personal opinion is our right as AA members and will be honoured and protected by this newsletter providing it is not detrimental to another member, group, or AA as a whole. As with any publication you may find articles you disagree with and we suggest you simply skip over them or if you feel inclined, submit your own views on the subject.

John S. - Newsletter Editor