

THE VIEW

NEWSLETTER OF THE RIDGEVIEW ALUMNI ASSOCIATION
STEERING COMMITTEE

YOU GOT SERVED

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Live to Serve, Serve to Live

We call it "service work". The possibilities are endless.

Work. Webster's has 19 definitions for the word, but definition one tells us "activity directed toward making or doing something." In the case of the recovering alcoholic/addict, a more concise definition would be "doing something for others."

Service work can be as simple as setting up our home group meeting, or we can become Trusted Servants of that group. The most rewarding aspect to most recovering alcoholics/addicts is sponsorship. Regardless of the simplicity or complexity, service work is vital to our own recovery.

As people in recovery,

we are walking miracles. We have been given a gift and promise of a new, whole life. For all that we are given through the love and promises of the Big Book of Alcoholics Anonymous and our fellows in recovery, only one demand is made over and over. Page 77 reads: "Our real purpose is to
(Continued on pg 14)

**THE RIDGEVIEW
ALUMNI
ASSOCIATION
3995 SOUTH
COBB DRIVE
SMYRNA GA
30080**

Up Coming Events

1st Friday Speaker Meetings – 7:45pm @ Day Hospital Auditorium

October 1, 2010

November 5, 2010

December 3, 2010

January 7, 2011

February 4, 2011

March 4, 2011

April 1, 2011

May 6, 2011

<p>Halloween Dance 8:00pm Saturday, October 23, 2010</p>		<p>Bowl – A – Thon 10:00am Saturday, November 6, 2010</p>	
<p>Gratitude Dinner & Meeting 5:00pm Sunday, November 21, 2010</p>	<p>New Years Eve Dance 8pm Friday, December 31, 2010</p>	<p>Super Bowl Party 4pm Sunday, February 6, 2011</p>	

This issue, as well as archival copies, is available on our website at www.ridgeviewalumni.com. The Newsletter will be in an Adobe PDF format, our website will link to download the FREE Adobe Reader, allowing you to read and print the Newsletter at your leisure.

If you would like to be notified by e-mail when a new Newsletter is placed on the site, E-mail us at steering@bellsouth.net or contact us thru the Website. Please put "newsletter" in the subject line.

**Thank you to those who submitted articles for this edition of the Newsletter,
if we have learned anything in recovery it is that**

We cannot keep what we have if we do not give it away!

**If you would like to submit an article for the next Newsletter, please email it to Dawn L at
steering@bellsouth.net or dbliistro@bellsouth.net.**

Editor: Dawn L.
Design & Layout: Nancy G.
Proofreaders: Barbara W., Kelly L. & Marcus W.

Road to Serenity: Service Work

Submitted By: Rusty G.

In the Big Book of Alcoholics Anonymous it says, "What ever our protestations, are not most of us concerned with ourselves, our resentments, or our-self-pity?" **Selfishness----self-centeredness!** That we think, is the root of our troubles. Above everything, we alcoholics must be rid of this selfishness. **We must or it kills us.** It goes on to say that God makes that possible. He does and will, but if you are like me, you realize that he will open the door, but unless I get out of the chair, I can't walk through that open door there has to be action.

Service work for me has meant three things, not excluding keeping me sober and saving my life; the ability to get out of my head (a dangerous place to be) and out of self-pity, being in God's will, and a Spiritual Connection.

Guess what? The world is not just about me or about my way. There are others who hurt worse and have worse problems. Ridgeview sent me to a long term treatment program out in the middle of no where on a farm. It turned out to be the greatest experience of my life. However, the first few days were tough and I was coming off medications, I had totally devastated my life and everyone else around me. I went crying to the staff how horrible my life was, and I didn't get the reaction I expected. The staff member looked at me and said to quit whining and go help someone who is hurting worse than you. Somebody else just came in and they have less days than you. Go talk to them and tell them how you made it another day. It is not always about you.

We hear people all the time pondering, "What is God's will?". God's will is to go out and help others. It is helping another alcoholic and addict, helping the homeless, the sick, those less fortunate than you. The paradox is that I get better and stay sober. I find serenity where I least expect it. I get that phone call from someone hurting and suddenly I am not hurting as bad anymore. Bill's Story states, "Many times I have gone to my old hospital in despair. On talking to a man there, I would be amazingly lifted up and set on my feet". Gee, there is a concept, another answer in the Big Book.

My experience with the 12-Steps and getting sober has been about getting rid of my ego and gaining humility. That has been my journey to God and serenity. When I have serenity, using alcohol and other drugs never comes into my mind. I stay off of the emotional and mental roller coaster. But until I begin to work the Steps and live this program, which means service work, it continued to be a struggle. Until I got me, self-centeredness and selfishness out of the way, life didn't seem worth living.

Service work can mean different things for different people, but for me it started with being willing. Not saying no when asked to do something in the program. Doing little things like making coffee, cleaning up, taking out the trash, or going to pick someone up

and bringing them to a meeting. Doing something without expectations of what am I going to get out of it. The thing is, when I do these things, the rewards of what I have gotten have been phenomenal and I stay sober. Outside of the program, the limits of helping others is limitless, if I am willing.

Lastly, as a recovering person working in the recovery field, I had to learn the hard way that my employment is not my service work, it is work. I get paid for it and even though I share my experience, strength, and hope on a daily basis it is not

the same. When I share this, I am expecting something in return and the lines get blurred. Work is not my meeting, it is not my recovery, my boss is not my sponsor, it is a job. So for me, the service work has to be totally without expectations. The Big Book also states, "The higher my expectations, the lower my serenity". Today, I am not willing to compromise my serenity.

"My experience with the 12-Steps and getting sober has been about getting rid of my ego and gaining humility."

*...to keep it, you
have to give it
away....*

"I'm Just Going Out for a Cigarette. What Do You Mean the Door is Locked?"

Submitted by: E. Howard S

As far as I am aware, there is not another recovery center that offers an Alumni or Aftercare Program like the one at Ridgeview, and as a part of that program we are all offered a unique opportunity for service. Following the Thursday evening Aftercare meeting, members of the Alumni are invited to hold an A.A. meeting in Cottage C for the current patients. I have found this a tremendously rewarding experience, perhaps in part because it was not so long ago that I was sitting exactly where the current patients were sitting. If you are a member of the over 55 set, you have a similar opportunity at 6:30 on Wednesday evenings to attend the Cottage B Alumni meeting. No matter how early in recovery you are or how many Blue Chips you have collected, you have something important to offer.

For most of the people in Cottage C, those first few days are confusing to say the least. The doors have been locked behind them. They have been separated from familiar surroundings, people, and possessions and suddenly thrust into an alien environment with a bewildering new set of rules. Their brains and bodies in most cases are still undergoing the process of detoxification with all the physical and mental discomfort that implies. Those experiencing emotional problems, may be struggling to adjust to new medications or changes in dosage. Many will have had difficulty sleeping as a result of all of the above, and the nightly rounds conducted by friendly staffers with flashlights have likely compounded

that particular problem. Some of them may be angry at finding themselves in a locked ward; some will be frightened; and some, for whom this is "not their first rodeo" ("been there"), will be feeling cynicism and a nagging doubt about whether it is even worth the effort. Some will be at Ridgeview primarily for legal reasons. They will have been advised by their attorney that undergoing treatment is the best way to mitigate the consequences of their previous actions. Any of these feelings sound familiar to you?

What can you offer them?

The answer is, "Experience, strength, and hope." Especially *hope*. Even if it has only been a short time since you sat exactly where they are, you have come through the process and survived. It is important for them to see that it does happen. Hearing it from the Ridgeview nurses and staff is just not the same. Also, it is important for them to hear what comes next, that treatment beyond Cottage C is not going to be merely a continuation of what they are currently experiencing. In some cases, they need to be assured that the professionals who are charged with their care have the patients' best interests at heart first and foremost, and that it is not all just about dollars and cents. Your presence and your willingness to share may be the spark they need to see that some-

thing else, something ultimately more important, can be accomplished as well. Needless to say, it is important that they hear this from individuals who have no vested interest.

Many patients will be attending their first 12 Step meeting while in Cottage C. They may know nothing about A.A., and they may never have even heard of Narcotics, Cocaine, or Emotions Anonymous. They need to be assured that in this and every other 12 Step meeting they attend that they will be accepted, perhaps in a way they have never experienced before in their lives, and that they can share whatever is in their hearts and on their minds without fear of judgment or rejection. It is quite a surprise for most of us when we first realize that whatever we have done, felt, said, or thought, we are not "terminally unique." Someone else in the room has likely had the same experience and will be willing to talk about it. In a recent Cottage C meeting I attended, a newcomer whose grizzled face showed many years of trying to find life's answers at the bottom of a bottle asked the Alumni, "How do you do it? How do you stop?" A few weeks earlier, I had heard a younger patient ask, "How do you keep your car from automatically turning in at the next bar or liquor store you pass?" Many of them will not articulate their questions. Perhaps they are too shy or just too shell-shocked to get the words out. Your

"Consider picking up that Chip at a Cottage B or C meeting so that they know that they too can do this.."

Out of Service

Submitted by: Steven F.

Out of Service. Man, That certainly explains the majority of my life. I wasn't much service to anyone for a long, long time.

The word "service" is used in quite a few different ways: Military service, service engine soon, providing services, service station, etc. What I missed altogether was being of service to others. See, I wanted to be served. Give me this, give me that. Unfortunately my wish came true. I was served divorce papers, court summons's and sentenced to countless hours of community service. Does this sound familiar to any of you, or is it just me?

My alcoholism taught me how

to reach these all time lows. Selfishness and self-centeredness remained at the top of my list. Never did it cross my mind that being "of service" to others was a good idea.

Today, my life is different. I have been transformed. Doing service work for God and others is something I do on a daily basis. I actually look forward to it.

I looked up the word "service" in the dictionary and one of the definitions was, "Acts of Devotion to God". Man, how cool is that? It's my belief that God wants me to live sober and share my experience, strength and hope with others so that they too can live a meaningful life. That is what I

call "Service". You know, it says in the Big Book of Alcoholics Anonymous that "Practical experience shows that nothing will so much insure immunity from drinking as intensive work with other alcoholics." Not only do we provide a service to the alcoholics, but to ourselves and God as well.

Simply a suggestion, but the next time the idiot light in your brain starts flashing, "service engine soon", step out of yourself, call a friend, chair a meeting, do something kind and unselfish or simply pray. These are all forms of service that will "serve" you well.

"I'm Just Going Out for a Cigarette. What Do You Mean the Door is Locked?" (Cont.)

Submitted by: E. Howard S

very presence may be all the testimony they need. Picking up a Chip is powerful evidence that recovery works. For most of them in these first days of enforced sobriety, thirty days without a drink or a drug may seem like impossibility and an eternity, never mind a year. Consider picking up that Chip at a Cottage B or C meeting so that they know that they too can do this. And it doesn't hurt to "Keep coming back" to pick up the Chips that follow too.

What do we, the Alumni, get from attending these meetings? We gain the satisfaction of giving back and the opportunity to

"The answer is, 'Experience, strength, and hope.' Especially hope. "

serve others who desperately need hope and encouragement. Working with newly arrived patients is a vivid reminder of where we all once were and of how easily we could be back there. In a word, we have the chance to reinforce our own emotional sobriety. Also, we get the chance to meet some wonderful people in the first steps of their own recovery. With hope, work, and God's grace, we will see them again either in the later stages of the recovery program, in alumni/aftercare meeting, and/or in meetings in the community.

"The joy of living is the theme of A.A.'s Twelfth Step, and action is its key word. Here we turn out-

ward toward our fellow alcoholics who are still in distress. Here we experience the kind of giving that asks no rewards. When the Twelfth Step is seen in its full implication, it is really talking about the kind of love that has no price tag on it" (W., Bill 106).

Gary, the *eminence grise*, (in more ways than one!), and *Roget's Thesaurus of Aftercare*, has attended every one of the Cottage C meetings I have attended. Ask him whether it is worthwhile.

[Bibliography for the Quote](#)
W., Bill. [Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions](#). New York: Alcoholics Anonymous Word Services, Inc., 2007.

You Got Served

The Good, the Bad, and the Amazing

Submitted by: Don P.

When I heard that the topic for **The View** was "You Got Served," I felt compelled to write about how I have been served by the Ridgeview Alumni since I was released from the Day Hospital in August 2006. I have certainly received direct, active support and care from the Alumni, but I have also received the indirect, less active support and care that we give to and receive from each other as fellow members. This is the ability to be a part of a group who are transitioning from the lowest points of their lives and who will love and care for each other despite each other's faults and flaws.

The GOOD: I wandered into the 6:30 pm Aftercare meeting on a Thursday evening back in August 2006, upon the urging from a friend recovering from Alcoholism. As everyone began to "check in," it became apparent to me that I was the only non-Addict in the room. (It was a little..., no, it was intimidating! I almost decided to "check in" as an Alcoholic.) However, I checked in as a Depressed person, and, to my surprise, I was warmly welcomed. I continued to return each Thursday evening, and slowly I began to feel the energy, fun, support, care, and compassion from this group. It gave me a place of support, caring, and compassion as I dealt with the early stages of my recovery with people who had "been there." Also, this group was a source of strength, watching and hearing others deal with their recovery, as I unexpectedly prepared to hit another bottom. I got served

indirectly, as we all are, by being a part of, and with others who were present and cared for each other. We are all serving and being served by each other as we interact with each other in the Ridgeview Alumni meetings. We don't always have to be active in the Alumni to serve others. Often, it is enough to just let others know that we care.

The BAD: In January 2008, I was served with an arrest warrant and the shame and humiliation that went along with it. I served the time of 18 months, equaling 540 days, in a North Carolina prison. I had some really encouraging talks with Sam (Anders) before I left Atlanta. I received further encouragement and advice from other Ridgeview Alumni who had also served time in prison. As the fateful period approached, I was being served by the Ridgeview Alumni.

And the AMAZING: Make no mistake about it, but the 18 months I spent in prison were a very bad time for me. But, it also showed how amazing and remarkable people can be. Along with my family and friends in North Carolina, fellow members of the Ridgeview Alumni showed a service of support, care, and love that was truly remarkable. These service trios made something that at first seemed unbearable become tolerable and acceptable. (The word *acceptance* is one of the most powerful words within the recovery program).

One of the greatest obstacles to surviving in prison that I experienced was dealing with the loneliness

and feeling that I no longer existed, as I once had in my former life. Receiving letters, cards, and pictures were a great way to combat that loneliness, which I was certainly served by the Ridgeview Alumni in that respect. Mail call was the most important time in each day, and rarely did I miss a day without receiving either a card or letter from North Carolina or Atlanta. I developed a correspondence with two people I had never met previously at the Alumni meetings. I received artwork from a member which I hung in my locker (over Miss November!). I even received a phone calling card which I was disallowed from using, but I loved the thought. I received money for a pair of sneakers. (Consequently, I went through three pairs as I walked over 2,000 miles—over 10,000 times around the prison buildings!). Often, I received letters from two members of my Ridgeview Therapy group, keeping me abreast on news around Ridgeview and just lifting my spirits when things seemed to be at their lowest.

Moreover, I received cards that made me laugh; cards that made me think; cards that made me cry; and even cards that showed y'all cared. I received pictures which made me think how great it would be when I was released and could see y'all again. The various cards I received were signed by many, some of whom I knew, and others I did not know but I knew I wanted to meet. I would read and re-read each card and imagine that I was present at Ridgeview talking with all. Later, I would read each card again *(continued on pg 7)*

I Got Served

Submitted by: Michelle L.

This past year for me has been interesting and a huge blessing. I picked up a year on September 2, 2010; my first time ever. I contribute a lot of that success to my sponsor, to God, Ridgeview Alumni, Sam, and to all my wonderful friends in the program.

People reaching out to me has been one of my biggest motivators because now I want to be able to give back to other people. I have learned that helping other people releases feel good chemicals and endorphins and it helps to keep me clean and sober.

As a member of the Steering Committee I am able to give back to others by working in the Access Center; one particular time a woman came from North Carolina to Ridgeview to be accessed and she was lost and at the end of her rope. I took time to speak to her and answered her questions.

She had been waiting there a long time with her family. Her family also had many questions. Well the next day I ran into her and she told me that she just wanted me to know that I had really helped her the day before. That made me feel SO good.

Also, when I picked up my year chip at a meeting I gave it to a young lady who wanted to go back out and use. She said I gave her hope and helped to keep her clean that day.

Moreover, members of the Ridgeview Alumni Steering Committee gave me a baby shower and I have EVERYTHING I need for this baby; I am forever grateful. It makes me feel

so good to know that people care.

Service to me is also directed towards my daughter Olivia; staying clean, sober and healthy is a huge service to her and her health and well being. I love my alumni crew, my

meetings and my friends in the program. As soon as I finish my steps I want to sponsor people; I want to experience the rewards of helping others through those steps. So yes

I got served in a good way.

"People reaching out to me has been one of my biggest motivators because now I want to be able to give back to other people."

You Got Served (Continued)

The Good, the Bad, and the Amazing

Submitted by: Don P.

and just relive those imagined moments or see if I had missed something from the first reverie. Further, I received visits from some Alumni and those were times of talking, great laughter, serenity, crying, and experiencing some of the most intense times of living in the moment.

Then, there was the "Don Moment" each Thursday night. I will never be able to express to all you Alumni how great it felt to be sitting in that TV room in the Randolph County, North Carolina prison at 6:50 pm on a

Thursday night, yet mentally be in the Sam Anders Auditorium in Pro North with people who support, care, and love one another. I am very grateful to be a part of the Ridgeview Alumni.

Amazing is not a strong enough word to describe all the wonderful ways in which I have been served by the Ridgeview Alumni. Know that I am truly grateful and that the best way I know how to try and repay y'all is for me to try and strengthen my own resolve to be of service to others.

One of the great spiritual lessons of recovery is the happiness and serenity we receive from servicing others. Helping others and graciously receiving the help of others allows us to show our love and support for each other. It is when we are at our best. There is a line in the musical **Les Misérables** that goes, "To love another person is to see the face of God." I can say that I have truly seen the face of God in so many people connected with the Ridgeview Alumni who have served me so well.

Service

Submitted by: Kelly L.

"The fruit of silence is prayer, the fruit of prayer is faith, the fruit of faith is love, the fruit of love is service, the fruit of service is peace." – Mother Theresa

I've always thought that doing service work was very noble. From a pretty young age, I can remember wanting to make a difference in the lives of others. I would daydream about traveling to poverty-stricken countries to feed the hungry and clothe the poor. I wanted to be a philanthropist who made enough money to give it all away to charity.

As I got older, the daydreams got a bit closer to home. I dreamt of becoming a successful lawyer who only accepted pro bono work, or of running a non-profit organization, with my weekends dedicated to volunteering.

However, these plans were interrupted by the daily grind of work and relationships, and eventually drinking. The opportunities that did come up to be of service were quickly dismissed with another excuse. Signing up to do service work meant having to do two things I was afraid of: making a commitment and interacting with people.

Thanks to Ridgeview and my sponsor, my ideas of service are quite

a bit different now. I recently spent an entire Saturday helping out with various things. In the morning, I got a great workout helping clean up the serenity garden. And in the afternoon, I went to my daughter's school to help them prepare for returning students.

Later that evening, I got to help serve dinner to women in a recovery residence. The fellowship was

so much fun, and the experiences very rewarding.

To summarize, these days I accept responsibility for the commitments that I make and follow them through. I am engaged with the people around me. I believe that service to others gives meaning to life. No matter how small the act, it is not insignificant. Contributing to something greater than myself allows me to get out of my head, and performing random acts of kindness lifts my spirit. I'm grateful for the opportunities I have to be of service to others, whether it's in the rooms of AA, with the alumni association, or outside the umbrella of recov-

ery.

From a pretty young age, I had maintained that I wanted to work for a non-profit organization, and that I would make enough money to give it all away. I would day dream about becoming a lawyer that would only

accept pro bono cases or travel to countries to help feed the hungry and clothe the poor. When the day dream was over, I'm come back down from the clouds and mentally make a note to get involved.

Could, would, should. The days came and went. The opportunities I had to volunteer were easily dismissed with another excuse. Signing up to do service work required two things that scared me: making a commitment and interacting with people.

How things have changed in the last few months.

My views of what service are have changed. I believe that while donating money to causes is admirable, there is a human element that money cannot buy. Sincerity, integrity, compassion – these can only be conveyed person to person.

"I wanted to be a philanthropist who made enough money to give it all away to charity."

The Hospice Visit

Submitted by: Edith R.

Lew and Haley

Lew was 96, a tiny Jewish man, with immense eyes a striking cascade blue.

He kept the blank stare of end stage dementia.

His mind, only paltry threads remaining from a museum tapestry.

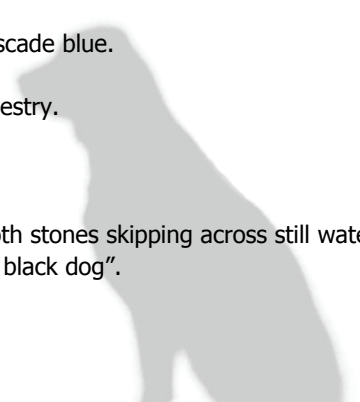
Suddenly a wave of cognition lights his face.

Seeing my dog, Haley a black chow mix.

She would sit calmly, at his feet.

Cognition gave way to glee and finally his laughter, and applause filled the room like smooth stones skipping across still water.

He'd stroke her mink like coat; repeating lucid words; "good dog, black dog".



Got Served— SUDOKU

Submitted By: Allison J.

			S	E		T		R
V		R		G		O	E	
					V	G	D	E
E		V	G		R			
		O				D		
			T		E	E		O
S	V	T	E					
	R	E		T		S		D
D		E		S	G			

The 12 Principles—Word Search

Submitted by: John S.

Y A H X J S Z N M Q C A H U Z
 S O J Z J P B Y R V E C T I M
 S G B A E I I O T V J U I N L
 E C H C C R N H B I D Z A V Y
 N O H S N I T K S R L E F T A
 G U P C A T E V L W D I S F N
 N R G J R U G N M G O E M Z N
 I A U J E A R Q M Q N L E U X
 L G J U V L I X A O N E L W H
 L E X S R I T X H Y Q P W E S
 I D G T E T Y H O P E B P H F
 W Q O I S Y L S E R V I C E O
 S R D C R J L I T V J P K I O
 Z X G E E I I F K Q S E B X K
 I H C E P M B D C J K F D I G

- HOPE
- FAITH
- COURAGE
- INTEGRITY
- WILLINGNESS
- HUMILITY
- JUSTICE
- PERSERVERANCE
- SPIRITUALITY
- SERVICE
- BILL
- DRBOB
- FELLOWSHIP
- GOD

Spring Fling Donations

PERSON / PLACE OF BUSINESS

DONATED ITEM

PERSON / PLACE OF BUSINESS	DONATED ITEM
Allison J.	<i>Quik Trip Gift Card - \$20</i>
Anna B.	<i>Bath & Body Works Gift Set</i>
Anonymous	<i>Target Gift Card - \$100</i>
Anonymous	<i>The Honeybee - Jeweled Cross Tank Top - \$62</i>
Anonymous	<i>Publix - Cumberland Parkway Location - Movie Night Gift Basket - \$45</i>
Anonymous	<i>Chick-fil-A - Akers Mill - (2) Nugget Platters - \$40</i>
Anonymous	<i>Gift N' Green LLC - various items - total value \$576</i>
Anonymous	<i>St. Angelo's Pizza - Family Feast for Four - \$40</i>
Anonymous	<i>Love Street Stores - Vera Bradley Bag - \$84</i>
Bill & Denise H.	<i>Tickles the Clown</i>
Carol S.	<i>Cheesecake Factory Gift Card - \$50</i>
Cindy H.	<i>Starbucks Gift Card - \$20</i>
Delores D.	<i>Olive Garden Gift Card</i>
Don N.	Framed Artwork
Don T.	Hand Made Adirondack Chair
Donna R.	Aquarium & <i>Petco Gift Card</i>
Dorothy S.	<i>Publix Gift Card - \$35</i>
Drew H.	Wood Carving
Eddie & Susie C.	<i>Woodstock Antiques Gift Certificate - \$50 & Home Depot Gift Card - \$50</i>
Elizabeth & John Keely D.	Fondue Pot & Cookbook
JC's Creations	Inspirational Frames
Kim T.	Keurig Coffee Maker
Linda C.	<i>Monteray Gift Card - \$25, Renew Skin Care Facial - \$60, Video Game - \$50</i>
Linda C.	<i>Enzo's Pizza Gift Card - \$30, Jill Utulish Highlight & Style - \$100 value</i>
Linda C.	<i>Brookwood Grill Gift Card - \$50, (2) Little Azio's Gift Card - \$25</i>
Mary Beth I.	Water Slide, Water Toys & MP3 Player
Mike & Terry C.	<i>(3) Mellow Mushroom Gift Cards & Chico's Gift Card</i>
Nancy	<i>Jim & Nicks - Dinner for 12</i>
Paul & Dawn L.	<i>Regal Cinemas Gift Card - \$25</i>
Paul & Dawn L.	DVD Set of Two (My Name is Bill & The Lois Wilson Story)
Randy W.	Toys
Rick W.	(6) Men's Designer Watches
Ridgeview Administration	(3) Boxes of Golf Balls
RVI Older Adult Unit	<i>Quik Trip Gift Card - \$25</i>
Sean C.	DVR Player
Sharon L.	<i>Atlanta Bread Company Gift Card - \$20</i>
Sharon L.	<i>Bath & Body Works Gift Set</i>
Ted M.	<i>(2) Taco Mac Gift Card - \$25</i>
Ted M.	Set of Golf Clubs & 2 - 2 Player Rounds of Golf at <i>CY Golf Course</i>
Tom Scott Interior Contractors	<i>Fusion Hair Cuts - \$60 & \$40 Gifts</i>
Warren C.	<i>Publix Gift Card - \$25</i>
Warren T.	<i>Vittles - Dinner for Two</i>

The Twelve Principles of The Twelve Steps

Submitted by: John S.

Across

- 3. Look forward to
- 9. Fearlessness
- 12. Lacking power
- 13. Orator
- 15. First AA
- 17. Soundness of moral character
- 19. Stepper helper
- 20. Spiritual tendency

Down

- 1. steady course of action
- 2. _____ love
- 4. giving back
- 5. Group of Drunks
- 6. Community
- 7. modest opinion of self
- 8. truthfulness
- 10. Moral conduct
- 11. proofless belief
- 14. Cheerfully consenting
- 16. AA # 2
- 18. Friend of Bill

Service

Submitted by: Anonymous

I actually cleaned ash trays and coffee cups at AA meetings as my first service work. When we went to Styrofoam cups and non-smoking meetings I just knew that was the end of Alcoholics Anonymous. What will the new comers do to get out of themselves and do something for someone else? It did not take long to see the diversity of Service work available to us

in many parts of our lives not just in AA.

As suggested we should "practice these principles in ALL our affairs" which opens the door from inside the meeting outside the meetings. Sometimes just a simple smile or a "thank you" helps another person having a bad day. Listening to some-

one in need of talking, buying cookies for your meeting, putting in an extra buck or two in the basket when you have it, calling a sick person you know just to say "Hi"; the list can go on and on. The best part of all service work is that it is done anonymously without the glory and glitter. I do it because it needs to be done, because it keeps me sober.

It Won't Be Easy

Submitted by: Dan B.

As you read the words to this song think of the Eagles music to "Take It Easy".

Well I've been stumblin' down the road tryin' to loosen my load I've got 12 steps on my mind, one got me committed, addiction I admitted, 12 I'm prayin' to find, won't be easy, not not easy my Higher Power will save me

from going crazy.

I'm A-standing on a corner at Ridgeview, out in Georgia such a fine place to be, when I'm ready Lord, take out your sword, remove the defects in me. I ask you daily Lord with Humility and I know that your sweet love is gonna save me. Pen a list and make amends, to those I did offend share all of my

regrets, it won't be easy.

Well I'm A-runnin' down the road, no longer the load 10th step keeps me in line, admit, accept, patiently correct, when I'm wrong make it right. Now I'm praying, meditating his will shall lead the life that I am living.

My awakening, truly amazing, I know his sweet love is gonna save me.

Got Service? Beats Selfishness.

Submitted by: Susan D.

As I sit here at the car repair feeling sorry for myself, I think "what better to do than write about service work". It has been one of those mornings when nothing is going the way I want it to. Get that; the way I want it to. The Big Book tells us that the program of AA helps us become fit to be of maximum service to others. When I *really* read that a couple of months ago, it kind of scared me. What exactly does that mean? Do I have to live like a monk? Take trips to China? No, nothing that extreme. It simply means that when I am feeling

selfish and self centered, helping another person, alcoholic or not, will get me out of the morass of self pity and will make me feel better. For me it means giving away the program of AA as it was taught to me. God continues to give me situations and circumstances with which to practice service.

The most rewarding service work that I do is having sponsees that teach me more every day about living life, practicing patience, love and tolerance towards all others. Some days it is harder to do it than others but when

I do it, I feel better and tend to stop thinking about myself. Before I got sober, I never thought about others, just what I could get for me. I didn't do things for others without some ulterior motive that would benefit me or make me look good. Service work today is about doing for others without expecting anything in return. I don't achieve that goal every day but at least today I try.

There are different kinds of service work and each of us can find the one that suits us best. Some people enjoy the business side of AA.

(Continued on Pg 14)

Working with Others is like Looking in the Mirror

Submitted by: George M.

Working with others is like looking in the mirror and not liking what I see, but having to face myself and accept all the imperfections that I don't like. That's just my opinion. A while back, I had this here epiphany (and, being Easter-time, it's good to have an epiphany once in a while): *God has placed me in the work he wants me to do.* This is the work He has for me. If faith is believing in what I cannot see, and seeing what I believe, then working with others is putting my faith into action. It's also about there not being chapters in the Big Book on "Into Thinking" or "Working Alone." Who would have thought that in order to experience joy, harmony, and serenity, that it would be necessary to experience the presence of God? Certainly not me.

In working with others, I am brought face to face with my character defects. I thought that I could not do THAT! You might say working with others is my biggest FEAR. Because then you might see me, you might know me for who I am, and you might not like me. In other words, I am blind and cannot see what you see. It is an appalling thing to see myself in others, to look at myself in the mirror. That's a lot like surrendering to the moment. About accepting the reality, letting the thoughts and feelings wash over me, and releasing them. Letting go of them. It's not forever, it's just the present, the moment, the NOW.

My sponsor told me "Don't drink, pray often, go to meetings, apply the steps to my life and watch it change." That means clean house, work with others

and trust God to keep me sober. Simple. How do I know this? Because my sponsor showed me. He also told me that HIS sponsor showed him where every meeting within 50 miles was, and then said "now, you know where the alcoholics are, so you can go there by yourself, if you have to." Simple.

So I go to meetings, because that's where the alcoholics and addicts are. Places like Cottage C. Everyone KNOWS about Cottage C. "Oh, I hated Cottage C, and I can't ever go back there again!" FEAR never kept me from drinking. Why should it keep me from going where I feel "uncomfortable?" Maybe that's where the alcoholics and addicts are, and I am not REALLY an alcoholic and an addict. Then, there's the Halfway House meeting. That's where John W. taught me "I CAN'T, HE CAN, I'LL LET HIM." (That's the first three Steps explained so I can understand them.) Simple.

And, if I was not real careful, one of the inmates would ask me to be a temporary sponsor. And, THEN, I have to LISTEN to another person tell ME about what it is like, what happened, and what it is like now. But the best part about Cottage C is that THEY are locked in, and I can leave. What I really have is a safe attitude to be in, from where I can venture forth, to rescue and support another person. And I need to remember this, on a daily basis I only have a 24-hour reprieve based upon my spiritual condition. If only I had known that God goes direct to my heart. That I am responsible whenever anyone anywhere reaches out, to make

sure my hand of recovery is there. I am responsible for what I do not see. When one door is closed, I open the door for another person to step through to recovery from addiction, to the present from the past. I don't have to be afraid anymore of the past. I can let my memory have its way. And God turns the "might have been" into a wonderful culture for the future.

How does this happen? Recovery begins when one addict, me, shares his experience, strength, and hope with another, by both listening and by telling my story. We both look for similarities rather than differences. Instead of the fear-based approach to the world, which the ego uses, we choose the love-based approach, and our fears vanish, as our minds are joined in God. The ego uses the past to judge, to control the surroundings, to analyze all situations, to attack when threatened, and to dominate the environment. Love says to listen gently, to accept others in the moment, to respect all life, to forgive, to focus on the present, and to do everything a little more gently than I have to, because our hearts are the same.

The chapter in the Big Book, "Working with Others," offers suggestions which have proven to be successful. Outlining the program of action, engaging in general conversation, speaking of alcoholism as an illness, making a self-appraisal, helps to focus on our personal experiences. Knowing how and when to give my time to pass this recovery on to another is vital for my own recovery. Detractions from recovery, such as focusing on a spouse (continued on pg 14)

Working with Others is like Looking in the Mirror (Continued)

Submitted by: George M.

or employer, often make the difference between failure and success. We simply do not stop drinking or using so long as we place dependence upon other people ahead of God. Placing ourselves in God's hands is better than

anything we could have planned.

The work that God has given me today is to be at the place in my recovery where I may be of maximum helpfulness to others. I never have to hesitate to go anywhere I can be help-

ful and to carry this message. God protects me from harm while I am staying on the firing line with these motives. And, it is giving this program to others that allows me to keep my sobriety, one day at a time.

Live to Serve, Serve to Live (Continued)

Submitted by Chuck T.

fit ourselves to be of maximum service to God and the people about us." This tells us that we must "live to serve".

It seems that we sometimes forget how we benefit and strengthen our own recovery through serving

others. The first two sentences in the chapter "Working With Others" tells us that "practical experience shows that nothing will so much insure immunity from drinking as intensive work with other alcoholics. It works when other activities fail." This lets us know that

we must "serve to live".

The idea that we can gain so much from such simple actions should appeal to every person who strives for recovery. Help someone today to help you.

Got service? Beats selfishness. (Continued)

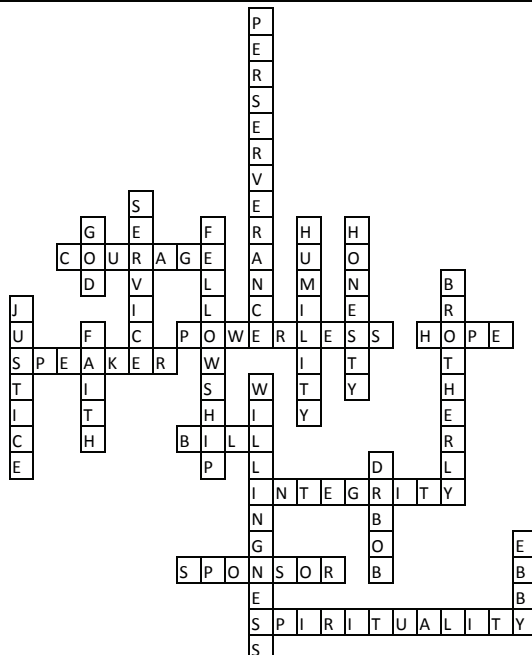
Submitted by: Susan D.

Being a GSR or intergroup rep can be very fulfilling. Chairing meetings, making coffee, being a greeter, these are all good ways to be of service. I have tried a lot of different ways of being of service and my favorite is being a sponsor. Seeing women

come into the program and embrace the steps and principles and want to be sober is a miracle for me. Even the women that I have sponsored that don't stay sober teach me about life and remind me what waits for me "out there" if I don't choose service in re-

covery on a daily basis.

Puzzle Answers



The 12 Principles															
Y	A	H	X	J	S	Z	N	M	Q	C	A	H	U	Z	HONESTY
S	O	J	Z	J	P	B	V	R	V	E	C	T	I	M	HOPE
S	G	B	A	E	I	T	O	T	V	J	U	I	N	L	FAITH
E	C	H	C	C	R	N	H	B	T	D	Z	A	V	Y	COURAGE
N	O	H	S	N	I	T	K	S	R	L	E	F	T	A	INTEGRITY
G	U	P	C	A	T	E	V	L	W	D	T	S	F	N	WILLINGNESS
N	R	G	J	R	U	G	N	M	G	O	E	M	Z	N	HUMILITY
I	A	U	J	E	A	R	Q	M	Q	N	L	E	U	X	JUSTICE
L	G	J	U	V	L	I	X	A	O	N	E	L	W	H	PERSISTENCE
L	E	X	S	R	I	T	X	H	Y	Q	P	W	E	S	SPIRITUALITY
I	D	G	T	E	T	Y	H	O	P	E	B	P	H	F	SERVICE
W	Q	O	I	S	Y	L	S	E	R	V	I	C	E	O	BILL
S	R	D	C	R	J	L	I	T	V	J	P	K	I	O	DRBOB
Z	X	G	E	E	I	I	F	K	Q	S	E	B	X	K	FELLOWSHIP
I	H	C	E	P	M	B	D	C	J	K	F	D	I	G	GOD

Remember hitting your bottom? Do you remember that moment when you first began to feel some hope? Looking back, can you remember those angels who appeared at that precise moment when you needed help the most? I can.

I can also remember the abject fear of, "How am I going to pay for this?" No insurance, no real savings, no trust fund, no golden benefactor. Scared, having hit my bottom, finally able to ask for help. I was in a safe place. The rest would just have to take care of itself.

Treatment costs money, real money. Programs, therapies, prescriptions, food, housing and all the while life continues to go on outside with-out us. As active members of the Ridgeview Alumni Association our fund raising goal is an endowment fund that will one day be able to help financially that person currently in treatment. Whether it's more time in treatment, another couple of days in a halfway house, medications, daycare so the patient can make it to the program that week, the needs can be overwhelming at times. We all know how powerful a helping hand at that critical moment can make or break a spirit.

Our goal for the Endowment Fund has to be set high if we are to be able to generate any kind of meaningful income. To date we have raised \$60,000. towards our first \$500,000. Every single dollar raised goes into an asset management account over which the Alumni Steering Committee has sole control.

When the day comes, and it will, that we are in a financial position to begin offering grants to patients, a review committee will be established. This group will be comprised of active Steering Committee members who have demonstrated a record of service, and a representative from the hospital. The committee will review the requests and make grants based on need, the patient's participation in their own recovery, and the patient's treatment team's input.

Obviously we are a ways down the road from making any grants. The next several years are about increasing awareness of our project, raising and investing the donations that come our way. Today, you can make a difference in the life of that person who is still out there.

Won't you make a commitment to be someone's angel, just for today? We have.

Ridgeview Alumni Association Endowment Fund Campaign

YES, I want to contribute to the Alumni Endowment Fund. I've been in Recovery _____ years and would like to give back \$ _____.

YES, I am not an Alumni; however, I wish to contribute to the Endowment Fund. As a family member, friend, business owner or corporate representative/sponsor. Here is my donation of \$ _____.

Name _____ Phone (____) _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

The Ridgeview Alumni Association is a non-profit organization and all contributions are tax deductible.

Make checks payable to: Ridgeview Alumni Association Endowment Fund

Mail to: Ridgeview Alumni Steering Committee, 3995 South Cobb Drive, Smyrna, GA 30080-6397

Serenity Garden—Memorial Brick Order Form

Name _____ Phone (____) _____

Message to be engraved on brick: (2 Lines/14 characters per line) Cost \$30.00

(Line 1) _____

(Line 2) _____

* Please fill out name and contact number, even if you wish this to be an anonymous contribution, so we may contact you in case any questions arise about the inscription.

The Ridgeview Alumni Association is a non-profit organization and all contributions are tax deductible.

Make checks payable to: Ridgeview Alumni Association Endowment Fund

Mail to: Ridgeview Alumni Steering Committee, 3995 South Cobb Drive, Smyrna, GA 30080-6397

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ALUMNI GOLF TOURNAMENT HUGE SUCCESS

The first Ridgeview Alumni Association "Serenity Scramble" golf tournament was held at Dogwood Golf Club in Austell on May 17, 2010. About \$3400 was raised to fund various Alumni projects. 13 teams competed for trophies and prizes were awarded for longest drive and closest to pin. The tournament was a huge success, and was met with great support throughout the Ridgeview Alumni network.

The tournament committee thanks Stan Dixon, Bill Damron, Eddie Chinal and Steven Finley for their contributions to the tournament's success. The committee also recognizes and thanks Philly Connection for their corporate sponsorship of the event.

The Second Annual Ridgeview Alumni Association "Serenity Scramble" will again be

held in conjunction with our annual Spring Fling event next May. The specific date and time will be announced later.

Given the huge success of the Serenity Scramble, the first Ridgeview Alumni Association Bowl-A-Thon is planned for Saturday, November 6, 2010, at the Brunswick Zone in Marietta. Proceeds will be used to fund work in the RVAA Serenity Garden for the 2011 year. Registration is open for 5-person teams and is open to all Ridgeview alumni and their families. Children are welcome to participate in the event. Those who would like to form a team or have questions concerning the event should call Chuck Tucker at 678-447-2946.