

VOLUME XXIV

# THE VIEW

NEWSLETTER OF THE RIDGEVIEW ALUMNI  
ASSOCIATION STEERING COMMITTEE

## IT WORKS— IF YOU WORK IT

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### ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS—12 STEPS

- 1) WE ADMITTED WE WERE POWERLESS OVER ALCOHOL—THAT OUR LIVES HAD BECOME UNMANAGEABLE.
- 2) CAME TO BELIEVE THAT A POWER GREATER THAN OURSELVES COULD RESTORE US TO SANITY.
- 3) MADE A DECISION TO TURN OUR WILL AND OUR LIVES OVER TO THE CARE OF GOD AS WE UNDERSTOOD HIM.
- 4) MADE A SEARCHING AND FEARLESS MORAL INVENTORY OF OURSELVES.
- 5) ADMITTED TO GOD, TO OURSELVES, AND TO ANOTHER HUMAN BEING THE EXACT NATURE OF OUR WRONGS.
- 6) WERE ENTIRELY READY TO HAVE GOD REMOVE ALL THESE DEFECTS OF CHARACTER.
- 7) HUMBLY ASKED HIM TO REMOVE OUR SHORTCOMINGS.
- 8) MADE A LIST OF ALL PERSONS WE HAD HARMED, AND BECAME WILLING TO MAKE AMENDS TO THEM ALL.
- 9) MADE DIRECT AMENDS TO SUCH PEOPLE WHEREVER POSSIBLE, EXCEPT WHEN TO DO SO WOULD INJURE THEM OR OTHERS.
- 10) CONTINUED TO TAKE PERSONAL INVENTORY AND WHEN WE WERE WRONG PROMPTLY ADMITTED IT.
- 11) SOUGHT THROUGH PRAYER AND MEDITATION TO IMPROVE OUR CONSCIOUS CONTACT WITH GOD AS WE UNDERSTOOD HIM, PRAYING ONLY FOR KNOWLEDGE OF HIS WILL FOR US AND THE POWER TO CARRY THAT OUT.
- 12) HAVE 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.

THE  
RIDGEVIEW  
ALUMNI  
ASSOCIATION  
3995 SOUTH  
COBB DRIVE  
SMYRNA GA  
30080

## UPCOMING EVENTS

1st Friday Speaker Meeting	7:45pm	October 3, 2014	Day Hospital
Women's Workshop		Friday, October 3, 2014	Rock Eagle
Georgia Pre-Paid		Thurs, October 16, 2014	Jekyll Island
Men's Workshop		Friday, October 10, 2014	Rock Eagle
1st Friday Speaker Meeting	7:45pm	November 7, 2014	Day Hospital
Bowl-A-Thon	10:00am	Sat. November 8, 2014	Brunswick Zone—Austell Road
Gratitude Dinner	3:00pm 5:00pm 6:30pm	Sun, November 23, 2014	Set-up - Ridgeview Gym Dinner—Ridgeview Gym Meeting—Ridgeview Gym
1st Friday Speaker Meeting	7:45pm	December 5, 2014	Day Hospital
Scottish Rite Santa	7:00am	Thurs, December 25, 2014	Scottish Rite Children's Hospital
New Year's Eve Dance	10:00am 8:00pm	Wed, December 31, 2014	Set-up—Ridgeview Gym Dance—Ridgeview Gym
1st Friday Speaker Meeting	7:45pm	January 2, 2015	Day Hospital
1st Friday Speaker Meeting	7:45pm	February 6, 2015	Day Hospital
1st Friday Speaker Meeting	7:45pm	March 6, 2015	Day Hospital
1st Friday Speaker Meeting	7:45pm	April 3, 2015	Day Hospital
1st Friday Speaker Meeting	7:45pm	May 1, 2015	Day Hospital
Spring Fling Weekend Al-anon Speaker Meeting	6:30pm	May 15, 2015	Day Hospital
Spring Fling Weekend AA Speaker Meeting	8:00pm	May 15, 2015	Day Hospital
Spring Fling Weekend Cookout Event	12:00noon	May 17, 2015	Pool & Tennis Courts
Spring Fling Weekend Sam Anders Golf Tournament	8:00am	May 18, 2015	Towne Lake Hills Golf Club

This issue, as well as archival copies, are available on our website at [www.ridgeviewalumni.com](http://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.

**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

Warren T., at [wbt4326@gmail.com](mailto:wbt4326@gmail.com), Dawn L. at [dbliistro@bellsouth.net](mailto:dbliistro@bellsouth.net) or Sean C., at [bostonsean99@gmail.com](mailto:bostonsean99@gmail.com) using "Newsletter" in the subject line.

Warren Taylor: *Communications Chair*

Dawn B. Liistro: *Chair Emeritus, Newsletter Formatter, & Proofreader*

John Wallace: *Proofreader*

Sean Cleary: *Co-chair, Minutes*

Delores DeFreitas and Dorothy Seiden: *Bulletin Boards*

Barbara Wheeler: *Endowment Fund & Communication*

## IT WORKS IF YOU WORK IT

SUBMITTED BY: DON W.

When I came to Ridgeview I was so beaten down by alcoholism that I was grasping at straws. I seriously doubted I could achieve long-term sobriety through the recovery program at the institute. Neither did I believe AA would work for me because I had "tried it twice before," without success. But I knew I couldn't continue on as I was going. I felt helpless, hopeless and desperate.

Upon completion of my assessment I was told I would be assigned to Cottage B. I thought "Wow, this is cool. I will be in a cottage where I can relax and rest up as I detox. I wonder if I will be sharing the cottage with anyone else." Then I was led over to Cottage B and as I walked in with the counselor, he turned back to the door and I heard the awful clanking of that door lock. This was not exactly what I had in mind. But that is when I got my first ray of hope. I will never forget his words of encouragement as he told me I never had to drink again. He told me I could lead a productive and happy sober life if I was willing to do a few simple things. He also told me it would not be easy but that I didn't have to do it alone. I will be forever grateful for that man, who gave me so much hope during the ensuing five days at the cottage.

***I will never forget his words of encouragement as he told me I never had to drink again.***

Upon release from Cottage B, I entered the intensive outpatient program (IOP). During the next twenty eight days, those words, "if you are willing to do a few simple things," repeatedly echoed in my head. I made the decision I would try my best to do everything I was told to do by anyone with more than thirty days of sobriety. I completed all assignments given me during IOP. I committed to ninety meetings in ninety days, and I immediately asked a member of the alumni with just over two years sobriety to sponsor me. After completion of IOP, I became active in the alumni steering committee. I began attending two after-care meetings per week in addition to my daily AA meetings.

My sponsor immediately began walking with me through the Big Book and leading me through the steps, constantly giving me words of encouragement. He would hug me and tell me he loved me and that I was not making this journey alone. I was so afraid of failure, based upon my track record, that I continued try to do exactly as I was told. With his guidance, I had worked through all twelve steps after about seven months. I came to know God and developed a wonderful relationship with Him. I began sponsoring my first person at about nine months sober,

and I was terrified. My sponsor insisted that I also begin other kinds of service work including making coffee, sweeping floors, chairing meetings, and sharing my experience, strength and hope with newcomers. He also taught me that service work goes beyond the realm of AA, that serving humanity is service.

Eight years later, I am still sober and I have a life that is wonderful beyond my wildest dreams. I continue to attend aftercare, remain active in the alumni, go to meetings, and do a lot of service work including sponsoring several people. I have remained on the temporary sponsor list at Ridgeview, and I am on the twelve step call list at the Atlanta Central Office. I serve as trusted servant for my home group as well as serving at Zone 10E level. I continue to ask God to show me the way each day. Today, I try to live by the principles set forth in the twelve steps. I find strength in trusting that He will take care of my every need as long as I continue to serve Him and seek out His will for me.

It would be impossible to identify the specific work that has kept me sober and happy. Perhaps I could narrow it by eliminating some activities, one at a time, but I am unwilling to tamper with it. Besides, I believe it is a combination of all the work and that each activity makes its contribution.

## DEAR ALCOHOL

SUBMITTED BY: ALISA R.

Dear Alcohol,

How could you betray me like this??? I thought you were my friend!?!

We have been through so much together. You were there for me when nobody else was, I could always count on you. You made me feel different than anyone or anything else ever had. We shared so many awesome times – the laughs, the parties, the bars, the clubs, the sex – the escape from reality.

Our relationship started out so simple – ‘innocent fun’ – and it continued in that way for many years.

I trusted you, “Alcohol,” but then you turned on me! What had been ‘fun’ for a long time turned into something really bad... a necessity... a sick and powerless addition!!

***you have almost taken everything that I have: ...***

Because I couldn't seem to let you go or even distance myself from you, you have almost taken everything that I have: my sanity, my health, my family, my trust from others, my job, my car, my values, my heart, my soul, my God, my life!!! And I want to stress the word ALMOST!!!

This has to be the end. I want you out of my life... I need you out of my life forever! You are sick, pure destruction!!

It has taken me so long to understand how badly you have destroyed me, little by little. I want my life back and, in order for this to happen, I need you out of it. So I am begging you PLEASE leave me alone!!

Although I know this is going to be the worst fight of my life and that you will always be in the back of my mind, I have to get over you.

What you have done to me has made me who I am, a stronger person, so for that, I want to thank you. I will bear no resentment, because my God tells me to look at this as a gift... A new life... A new beginning...

So this is goodbye alcohol.....

FOREVER

## IT WORKS IF YOU WORK IT!

SUBMITTED BY: TINA T.

It works if you work it. I had never heard those six words until July 15. My first day here was July 14. I remember being in the Access Center for hours, crying and asking God “Why am I here?” “Please help me!” That first night was a blur of medications; I fell asleep about 9:30 that night. The next morning I awoke in Cottage C-2 to a friendly face named Tracey. She showed me around that first day and I asked myself, “How did I get here?” I went to my first AA meeting the night of July 15 and took a white chip to “surrender” to my demon alcohol. It was at that meet-

ing that I first heard “it works if you work it.”

Flash back 55 years ago to May 2, 1959. I was raised in New Jersey in a Polish-American household. When I was about 10, I tried wine for the first time. We were allowed to have a small amount with Sunday dinner. My family felt that my sister and I could drink alcohol so that we would not be so curious as we got older.

After my Grandmother passed away, we moved to Florida I was 15. It was legal to drink at age

18 so I would go out with my sister and her friends to local bars to dance and drink. We were careful not to drink much, as we did not want to get a DUI.

It wasn't until I was in my early 20's that I got drunk for the first time. Having graduated Nursing school I had moved to a condo in Daytona Beach and struck out on my own. There were a few times that I remember driving home drunk and quickly realized that it was not the smart thing to do.

I met and married my hus-



## THE BENEFITS OF HARD WORK

SUBMITTED BY: JOHN W.

Cartography, or map making, has always interested me. From a young age, I was fascinated with historical maps of countries and how these renderings changed over time due to changing perspective, evolving borders, and advancing technology. I especially loved the earliest maps where the cartographers noted that “here be dragons” for the regions that lay beyond their reckoning.

I put map reading into practice one summer, when I embarked on a National Outdoor Leadership School (“NOLS”) wilderness course. Over 30 days and 150 miles in remote Wyoming wilderness, my group of 20 students learned how to navigate solely through the use of U.S. geological survey contour maps. Our instructors taught us how to use these maps to plan the easiest, safest, and most direct hiking routes. Eschewing compasses, we oriented ourselves by linking observations of the terrain around us to our paper maps. The maps we used were highly accurate. Our ability to link our surroundings to the maps, however, was suspect.

We were broken into small groups to complete daily hikes from one camp to another over the course of the journey. One day, a small hiking group got hopelessly lost because they mis-oriented their map during that day’s hike. Misinterpreting their surroundings, they unwittingly made one bad choice after another. A search party dispatched the next day discovered them five miles off course

and hiking the wrong way. The group was so disoriented that they believed they were on the right track, but just hadn’t gotten to their destination yet! They easily found their way to the intended destination once informed of where they actually were and how to orient their map.

***Unfortunately, my “life map,” roughly 50 years in the making, was entirely wrong.***

The above story illustrates the perils inherent in misinterpreting a highly accurate map. How lost can you become, then, if your map itself is inaccurate? God’s grace led me to Ridgeview, where I learned the extent to which I was lost. I was also taught how to make better life choices. However, I further learned that my reliance on alcohol was only a small part of my problem. It turns out that everyone develops a “map” that they use to navigate their way through life. Unfortunately, my “life map,” roughly 50 years in the making, was entirely wrong. I had no grounding in spiritual principles, and my ability to relate emotionally to others was nonexistent. These shortcomings combined with a flawed set of goals, unrealistic expectations, and a few perceived failures became a recipe for disaster. No wonder I was unhappy and turned to alcohol as my primary coping mechanism.

Facing the knowledge of the flaws in my life map, I had a choice: ignore this insight or fix my map. I’ve chosen to undertake the hard work

of redrawing my map. Why is the reinvention of an inaccurate life map so hard? It’s painful, for one thing. To begin, we have to undergo the pain of letting go of our old conceptions and adhering to a path of complete honesty in order to develop a new map. To ensure complete honesty, we must open ourselves up to the forensic scrutiny of others skilled in truth seeking. We will frequently have to deal, then, with learning where our perspectives are flawed or flat out wrong. Inevitably, our new findings will require that we change how we do things, which is always an easy undertaking... Finally, the work never ends. Our life map needs constant revision to address ever-changing life conditions and perspective.

***To ensure complete honesty, we must open ourselves up to the forensic scrutiny of others skilled in truth seeking.***

Why did I sign up for this choice? Am I just a glutton for punishment? Maybe I am. However, I am now able to make choices in how I live my life based on spiritual principles. Not all of these choices are easy, but I have found that I’m much happier due to the action that I’m taking in my program of recovery. Today, the song “Amazing Grace” carries special meaning to me. This former lost and blind wretch, for one, is finally enjoying life’s journey.

John W.

August 2014

## SO JUST "WORK IT" ALREADY!

SUBMITTED BY: TERRI L'H.

It Works If You Work It. No truer words have ever been said, and I have seen exactly how it DOESN'T work when people in recovery DON'T "work it." Thanks to God and the program, I also know exactly what happens when you DO "work it."

I have been blessed with so many sponsees over the years, and these relationships are where this little gem of a slogan truly comes into play. As I meet with each sponsee, I ask that they call me, go to a daily meeting, and meet with me weekly for step work. I take time to explain the pain and heartache that addiction and alcoholism has brought to me and my family, and then I excitedly talk about the solution. I know that my excitement must be shining through as I talk about the relief "working the steps" has provided for me and yet, my enthusiasm doesn't rub off on everyone.

One by one, I see sponsees come to me seeming to want what I have but not following through with the few suggestions I have laid out above. What do you think happens to these people? They relapse, of course! Then they call me to say they don't know why on earth they relapsed! I am actually always thrilled about that call, though, because it means they made it back to the program.

I do have a few wonderful exceptions as well, and those sponsees are continuing to carry the

message as we are required to do if we are to keep what we have.

But guess what people?! I have absolutely no right to judge anyone because I have tried it both ways myself and, let me tell you, not "working it" is no longer an option for me. Years ago when I had about nine months of recovery, I thought I could slack off on my meetings a little. I felt that I had plenty of recovery under my belt to carry me through. My sponsor relapsed and I didn't bother running out to get another and when I did finally get another, I didn't bother to jump back into my healthier AA habits very quickly. I started sleeping a little later and skipping my morning routine of meditation and prayer. I went to bed later and stopped thanking God for my recovery each night. I started feeling restless, irritable, and discontent, and I was walking around

wondering why?! Of course, I eventually relapsed, but I knew good and well why it happened, and I ran back to the program of Alcoholics Anonymous as fast as my legs could carry me because the one thing I definitely retained was where to go for help.

Alcoholism and addiction is serious business folks. It is an illness that requires constant treatment in order to keep it at bay. In other words, it requires a little work. I think about it the same way I do for a person who might have diabetes.

Someone with diabetes might have to stay away from sugar and continue to take their medication in order to stay well. Those with alcoholism and addiction have to stay away from alcohol and drugs and go to meetings, work steps, and talk with their sponsors in order to stay well. It truly is that simple and it really does work if you work it!

***I take time to explain the pain and heartache that addiction and alcoholism has brought to me and my family, and then I excitedly talk about the solution.***

### 12 Steps Solution

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

## IT WORKS IF YOU WORK IT

SUBMITTED BY: SEAN C.

My sponsor used to tell me (in his profound wisdom, which I'm sure he stole from someone else) "God will provide the canoe but we have to do the rowing." In other words, I wouldn't see any results unless I did something to manufacture them. My Higher Power would direct me to fit HIS plan.

Personally, my attitude when I first started attending Alcoholics Anonymous meetings was that I could become sober by osmosis. If I just went to enough meetings, I would "catch sobriety". I could get the gist of this thing and

figure out the rest on my own. I also assumed that the people who were calling their sponsor, doing service commitments or working the steps were really into this AA thing and probably didn't have a life.

As a result, I became a "30 day wonder." I would stay sober for about a month and then go back out. This scenario was repeated over and over for years and years. One time I wore a Colorado Rockies baseball hat to a meeting. If you're unfamiliar, the Rockies' logo is a C and an R. One of the oldtimers asked me if that stood for "Chronic Relapser?" I still have that cap in my office to remind me what it used to be like before I started doing some work.

Ah, the work. How do you start and what do you have to do?

What is Step One all about and how do I get it to stick? And if I commit myself to this endeavor, how much is it going to be unbearable? I remember thinking that I had never been sober before and would the sacrifice be worth it? However, there were no other alternatives left for me. I was out of schemes, so I gave up. I asked a "good 'ol boy" from south Georgia if he would be my sponsor and could he help me?

***If I just went to enough meetings, I would "catch sobriety".***

The first thing my sponsor told me to do was to clean the ashtrays. I told him that I didn't smoke. He said to me "That doesn't matter. Action is what got

me sober and it will get you sober too." So I started cleaning the ashtrays and taking out the trash. Wes (my sponsor) told me that he didn't care what I thought. He was more concerned with what I was doing. In his nice southern way, he would tell me "If you're sitting on your duff, then you're just fixin' to. And if you're just fixin' to then you're going to get drunk." I didn't understand that. He said that if you're thinking about doing something but not doing it, then you're not doing what is necessary to stay sober.

That brings us to Step work. Wes had a unique way of getting my

attention. He asked me if I had ever done the Steps before. I told him "a little bit." He then asked me if I knew anything about the Georgia Bulldogs football team. I told him "a little bit." He promised to take me through the Steps and teach me all about the Bulldogs because they were both spiritual in nature. He showed me how to laugh even though I wasn't in the mood.

Seriously, I started working with my sponsor as he explained to me what was in the Big Book of Alcoholics Anonymous. When we came to an instruction, we did what it said to do. I really had no clue as to what I was doing but I was doing something.

***He promised to take me through the Steps and teach me all about the Bulldogs because they were both spiritual in nature.***

What happened was the farthest thing from my imagination. I started to feel happy. It was an uncomfortable feeling at first, but I couldn't shake it. The hole in my soul was shrinking. My inner being was starting to feel comfortable.

If I want to keep my sobriety, I have to work at it every day. It's like taking medicine. It's not bad medicine either. It's mixed with service, some prayer and meditation, meetings and lots of laughter. When I sponsor someone, I tell them not to sweat it. We don't have to figure anything out. Just keep moving. Keep doing the things that are necessary to stay so-

Continued on Back Cover

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## FARM SEASON

SUBMITTED BY: ANONYMOUS

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Growing up on a farm, getting up early was a normal part of my upbringing. There was lots of work to be completed on the farm both to start and to end each day. Dad planted many acres so that we would have food for our family, and it was hard work.

The typical farm season started off with breaking open and plowing the land so it would be ready for the seeds and seedlings we would plant. We followed that with fertilizers and land treatments to ready the soil. When the weather became right, we planted. The new plant starts had to be hoed to keep out the weeds that would overtake and choke out the new growth. We had to irrigate the plots in time of low

rain. Depending on the crop, we would have to stake and wire the vines so that they could gain ground.

When the time came to harvest, long afternoons were spent getting in the corn, peas, melons, tomatoes, okra, pole beans, potatoes, and other crops. We would freeze, pickle, can, and dry them out so that during the coming season we would have food to eat. Often I would go into the fields and eat something right from the plant. There is nothing quite like a warm ripe tomato fresh off the vine with its juice running down your chin after you take a bite. Eating the fruits of all the hard work throughout the year gave me a sense of pride even though as a kid I complained often about how hard the work was. It was

a simple process really; what we put into the farm blessed our family on the other side of the hard work. It made the hard work worth it.

Recovery from substance abuse and mental health issues has many similarities. I had to break open me and start from the raw. I needed to plant new ideas that required the nourishment of the fellowship and meetings. I had to listen to those who had done this before so that I would know how to "hoe the row". I'm learning that following the Steps will lead to many promises, like crops, that will flow into my life. I am discovering that the process will need to be repeated often so that more fruits of my hard work will come for many years to come.

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## IT WORKS IF YOU WORK IT

SUBMITTED BY: TOM S.

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I looked in several AA books but could not find the slogan "It works if you work it." I do remember hearing it for the first time as a patient at Ridgeview, and it went with me to the outside AA meetings, where I hear it a lot today. After being in recovery for a while, the slogan started to bother me because it was

not "AA approved." I talked to a friend who helped guide my thinking back to the fact that I had not had a drink in a long time, so what did it matter? Whatever 'It' was, 'it' was working; let 'it' be.

Today when I hear everyone chant the slogan at the end of a meeting I just think of the last sen-

tence of the Promises, "They will always materialize if we work for them." That works for me!

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## PUZZLING—THE STEPS

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

Answers on Page 6

ADMITTED  
AMENDS  
BELIEVE  
CONTINUED  
DEFECTS  
HARMED  
INSANITY

KNOWLEDGE  
MEDITATION  
PRACTICE  
REMOVE  
UNMANAGEABLE  
WRONGS  
AFFAIRS

AWAKENING  
CHARACTER  
DECISION  
FEARLESS  
HUMBLY  
INVENTORY  
LIST

POWERLESS  
PRINCIPLES  
SHORTCOMINGS  
WILL



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## A SPECIAL THANK YOUR DONATIONS!

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Philly Connection

Rachel Isons

Robin L.

Sam A.

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Sunny N.

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30313

Thomas R. Dix DMD, PC; 5591 Mableton Park-  
way Suite 109; Mableton, GA 30126

Treva

Warren

World of Coca Cola; 121 Baker Street NW; At-  
lanta, GA 30313

Yolyz Salon of Vinings; 3689 Atlanta Road;  
Smyrna, GA 30080

Zoo Atlanta; 800 Cherokee Avenue; Atlanta,  
GA 30315



## "DON'T DRINK, GO TO MEETINGS, & YOU'LL BE CONTACTED"

SUBMITTED BY: GEORGE M.

Have you ever met someone severely handicapped, physically, emotionally, mentally, and spiritually? That was me. With medical and legal help, five years "after-care," I "get to go to work" instead of receiving a liver transplant. No longer having cirrhosis, I can write my name and this essay.

AA attracted me because members were happy being sober. In AA, the longer people stayed sober, the happier they got. AA surveys suggest 90% of the members who are sober five years or more will remain sober and active in the fellowship another year. I heard that "It works if you work it. So work it, you're worth it." This is solid advice that can be applied to just about any positive behavior, right? If I eat right and stick with it, I'll reap health benefits. If I practice centering prayer, my heart opens, my mind is cleansed, and my soul is soothed. If I notice and act on intuitive guidance repeatedly, I'll reap whole-life benefits. Notice a theme here? "Don't drink, go to meetings, and you'll be contacted."

Positive changes typically start with a decision and progress into a mindset, but the real magic is in the work. Positive thinking will only

get me so far. In order to see real results, I have to do the work. Solutions to my problems involved pretty significant changes in mindset and behavior. It's so easy to get discouraged when facing a big behavioral change, like developing self-love, making decisions, or learning to express who I am rather than who I think others expect me to be.

Saying these words at the end of a meeting, most join hands in fellowship and say the words like they are the last words they will ever say. My belief in these words gave me strength to live each day

and face the challenges of, "living life on life's terms." These words are so simple, that I tried to pay attention to them: "God, grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change, The Courage to change the things I can, and the wisdom to know the difference. Keep coming back. It works if you work it. So work it, you're worth it!"

Have you ever tried to abstain from negative thinking for seven days straight? No negative-speak for an entire week, in your brain or mental plane? I'm talking about derailing trains of thought like these: resent-

ment, frustration, worry, dread, regret, jealousy, disapproval, criticism, fear, anger, pessimism, limitation... and the emotional frontiers, victimhood, anger and resentments. What is left?

***Practicing forgiveness every day is a matter of course. I have to be rid of resentments, for if my daily reprieve runs out I'll drink and die.***

What's left are thoughts that induce love, joy, appreciation, curiosity, peacefulness, acceptance, and satisfaction. The idea is to devote one week solely to the task of building a new habit of positive thought, and let everything else in life be unimportant as compared with that.

This is the prescription. For seven days I must not allow myself to dwell for a single moment on any kind of negative thought. I must watch myself for a whole week, as a cat watches a mouse, and I must not, under any pretense, allow my mind to dwell on any thought that is not positive, optimistic, constructive or kind. A week of this diet automatically creates some extraordinary changes for the better in my life. To develop a healthy mental diet takes focus and determination, resisting old habits of criticism of myself or others, jealousy or whatever trips me up, and keeps me in unhealthy mental habits. And, just like a healthy eating diet, as I persevere and resist the temptation,

***AA surveys suggest 90% of the members who are sober five years or more will remain sober and active in the fellowship another year.***

## TEMPEST WITHIN US

SUBMITTED BY: JOHN W.

*I looked down upon the mighty  
ocean  
A churning cauldron of constant  
motion  
Incessantly pounding the rocky  
shore  
Bringing on a thunderous roar.*

*A ship of sails hove into view  
Zigzagging a path through the  
murky stew.  
Bobbing rudderless like a cork  
Hitherandthithering back and  
forth.*

*Perilous sea driving a meander-  
ing flow  
Where lays the land to which yon  
ship must go?*

*The port of calm tops the bay  
But the serenity it offers cannot be  
found today.*

*The trees behind me shake and sway  
As the inlanders fervently pray.  
Hard rain pelting pane and shingle  
Neck hair beginning a nervous tingle.*

*We are surrounded it seems by dark  
uncertainty  
Like the evil motive hunting of a mo-  
tiveless malignity.  
Answers fleeting as if in mere pass-  
ing thought  
Stripped away by all that the wind  
wrought.*

*Of constant companions there  
are but few.  
Many a passing soul who I briefly  
knew  
Made their indelible mark upon  
my heart,  
Though their impermanence re-  
mains remarkably stark.*

*I have come to learn that I must  
surrender  
And in so releasing become ena-  
bled to remember  
The innate source of my congeni-  
tal affinity  
The One who was the first, will be  
the last, the infinity.*

## IT WORKS IF YOU WORK IT! (CONT'D FROM PAGE 4)

SUBMITTED BY: TINAT.

band in 1985. Since my husband was in the service we moved often - from North Carolina to Florida and then settling in South Carolina in 1993; over the next 30 years I drank socially and not in excess.

At the age of 46 came the adultery and I drank to excess for the first time. Out came the endless bottles of wine, beer and hard liquor with excessive smoking. I continued to drink heavily over the next few months until I realized it was affecting my concentration at work. The heavy drinking ceased and I returned to "normal drinking," a drink or two a few nights a week.

A few years later came the divorce on February 14, 2012. I did-

n't turn to the bottle then, during my time of sorrow. A few glasses of wine on my nights off were enough to relax me.

Fast forward to the beginning of 2014. I bought a house after four years of saving and was so proud. The drinking began to increase to 3-4 glasses of wine a day to sleep. Then came the liquor vodka, rum, etc., anything to help me "sleep".

I hit rock bottom on July 10 of this year. After drinking heavily for four days, I knew I was in trouble. I could not drink enough to go to sleep and my anxiety level was at an emotional peak. It was at this point that I called my best friend of 30 years and told her I was having trouble with alcohol. "I never knew," she replied, but later told me she had

suspected I was drinking heavily.

When I arrived at her house, she took care of me and kept me sane and safe. I kept drinking as to not detox while I was at her house for four days until another nurse friend brought me to Ridgeview.

"How had I come this far?" "What do I do now?" That was over four weeks ago and today I have been sober for 37 days. Now I know what the significance of "it works if you work it" means.

My name is Tina T. and I am an alcoholic.

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## DON'T DRINK... (CONT'D FROM PAGE 11)

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I am happier and healthier before I know it.

In another daily exercise, I work to have love-consciousness and spiritual development. Love will heal me. Love will comfort me. Love will guide me. My efforts and energies are directed to the cleansing and purifying of all that is not Love. Moment by moment, day by day, and week by week, I root from my own heart, every condemnation, resentment for any unkindness or injustice that has ever been shown to me, particle of jealousy of others however cleverly disguised, and smallest thought or feeling which is not an expression of Divine Love. My own

heart is to be my workshop, my laboratory, my great enterprise and contribution to humanity. (E. Fox's "Yoga of Love.")

To be free of resentments, this works for me: Asking in prayer for everything I want for myself to be given to whom I resent. Doing it for two weeks removes the bondage of hatred and replaces it with Love. Finally, I don't have to like everyone, but I do have to love everyone. Practicing forgiveness every day is a matter of course. I have to be rid of resentments, for if my daily reprieve runs out I'll drink and die. I make the decision to change, but in order to achieve success I have to show up every day and do the work.

What do I do when faced with a challenging situation that might compromise my ideals or create conflict? I believe what works is doing this again and again, every time that type of situation arises. It's hard! But, it works if you work it. Positive changes are the direct result of consistent behavior.

What changes do you want to make in your life? What work can you do on a daily basis to make those changes happen for you? Check in with your own intuition and spiritual condition. You'll be contacted.

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## 2015 International Convention of Alcoholics Anonymous



The 2015 International Convention of Alcoholics Anonymous will be held July 2 - 5, 2015 in Atlanta, Georgia with the theme "80 Years – Happy, Joyous and Free." A.A. members and guests from around the world will celebrate A.A.'s 80th year with Big Meetings held Friday night, Saturday night and Sunday morning in the Georgia Dome. Other meetings, scheduled or informal, will take place throughout the weekend in the Georgia World Congress Center and local hotels.

Information about registering for the 2015 International Convention can be accessed at

[http://www.aa.org/pages/en\\_US/2015-international-convention-of-alcoholics-anonymous](http://www.aa.org/pages/en_US/2015-international-convention-of-alcoholics-anonymous)



## UPCOMING RECOVERY EVENTS

*Ridgeview Alumni Association  
Steering Committee*

*the 4th Annual*

## Bowl-A-Thon



**Date:** November 8, 2014

**Time:** 10:00 a.m.

**Contact person:** Chuck Tucker  
**Further Info:** 678.447.2946

**Brunswick Zone—Austell**  
**2750 Austell Road SW**

Open to 10 five-person teams, donors may make a flat donation or donate on a per pin basis (ex: donor pledges five cents per pin the bowler knocks down; if total pins over the three games bowled are equal to 200 pins—total donation is \$10.00). All donations are tax deductible.

Team captains please see Chuck Tucker or call 678.447.2946 for further information. Children are welcomed and encouraged to participate. The outing provides two hours of bowling and shoes. Per pin donations will be calculated over the three games. *Suggested donation per team is \$500.*



*Ridgeview Alumni Association  
Steering Committee*

**COME CELEBRATE**

## Annual New Year's Eve Party

**Date:** December 31, 2014 **Time:** 8:00p.m.

**Location:** Ridgeview Gym

*Pictures will be  
taken to commemo-  
rate the event.*

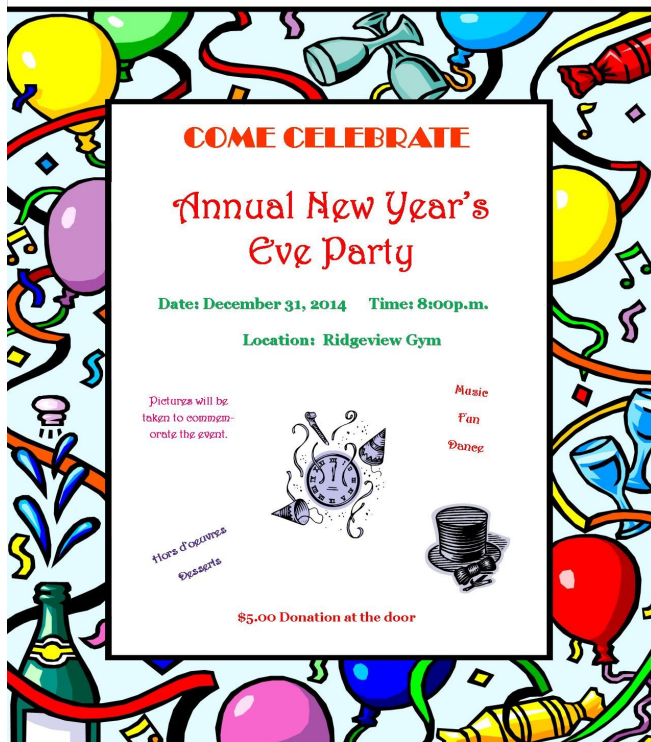
*More drawings  
Deserts*



*Masie  
Fan  
Dance*



**\$5.00 Donation at the door**



*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 without 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 over \$86,650. 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

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**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.

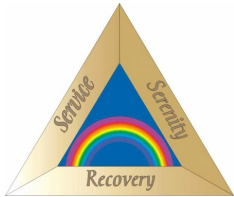
**Make checks payable to:** Ridgeview Alumni Association Endowment Fund

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

# THE VIEW

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SMYRNA, GA 30080

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## IT WORKS IF YOU WORK IT (CONT'D. FROM PAGE 7)

SEAN C.

ber and you will have a happy and contented life.

Before I end, I have to mention page 85 of the Big Book which states: "It is easy to let up on the spiritual program of action and rest on our laurels." Laurels are past accomplishments. Once I started feeling better and like my old self again, I would tend to coast. It is easy to forget that what I have received is the wonderful gift of sobriety. It was so hard to get here and to stay sober

that I don't want to gamble it away by not doing the things that are necessary to maintain my sobriety. The idea of going back out terrifies me because I have no idea what will happen; other than it won't be good. When I do the work, I feel safe. The oldtimers have been saying this for over 70 years: "It works if you work it." And it does!

**Keep  
Coming  
Back!**