

VOLUME XXXI

# THE VIEW

NEWSLETTER OF THE RIDGEVIEW ALUMNI  
ASSOCIATION STEERING COMMITTEE

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THE  
RIDGEVIEW  
ALUMNI  
ASSOCIATION  
3995 SOUTH  
COBB DRIVE  
SMYRNA GA  
30080



## UPCOMING EVENTS

EVENT	TIME	DATE	LOCATION
1st Friday	7:45 PM	Friday, May 5, 2017	Ridgeview—Day Hospital Auditorium
Mother's Day	-	Sunday, May 14, 2017	n/a
GSSA	-	Friday, May 19, 2017	Macon, GA
1st Friday	7:45 PM	Friday, June 2, 2017	Ridgeview—Day Hospital Auditorium
Spring Fling	12:00 AM	Sunday, June 3, 2017	Gym and Tennis Courts
Golf Tournament	9:00 AM	Wednesday, June 7, 2017	Ridgeview—Day Hospital
Father's Day	-	Sunday, June 18, 2017	n/a
First Friday	7:45 PM	Friday, July 7, 2017	Ridgeview—Day Hospital Auditorium
Atlanta Round-Up	7:00 PM	Thursday, August 3, 2017	Westin Perimeter North
First Friday	7:45 PM	Friday, August 4, 2017	Ridgeview—Day Hospital Auditorium
Altoona Round-Up	8:00 PM	Friday, August 10, 2017	Hilton Garden Inn—Cartersville
First Friday	7:45 PM	Friday, September 8, 2017	Ridgeview—Day Hospital Auditorium
GSSA	-	Friday, September 16, 2017	Macon
First Friday	7:45 PM	Friday, October 6, 2017	Ridgeview—Day Hospital Auditorium

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. 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](mailto: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 Alex H. at [alexhuntebrinker@yahoo.com](mailto:alexhuntebrinker@yahoo.com) using "Newsletter" in the subject line.

Alex Huntebrinker, *Communications Chair, Newsletter Design & Layout*

Ray W. & Dawn Liistro, *Editor*

Lisa Roberts, *Steering Committee Minutes*

Paul S. Liistro, Jr., *Alumni Website*

Janet Ticconi & Sandy C., *Bulletin Boards*

Barbara Wheeler, *Endowment Fund & Communications*

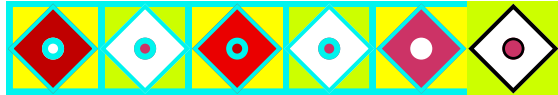
# 2017 Spring Fling

SUNDAY, JUNE 4, 2017 AT 12 PM



## SPEAKER MEETING

Spring Fling Speaker Meeting  
FRIDAY, JUNE 2, 2017  
8:00 PM



**HOT DOGS**

**HAMBURGERS**

**RAFFLE PRIZES**

**ARTS AND CRAFT VENDORS**

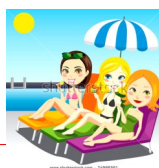


*VENDORS NEEDED*  
*CALL MEREDITH: 678-650-1621*

**RAFFLE DONATIONS**  
**CALL JOSIE: 412-889-6006**

**SWIMMING POOL**

**CHILDREN PLAY AREA**



## RECOVERY MEETING

**Pool Side Meeting**

Sunday, June 4, 2017

5:00 PM

## THE SECRET IS TO SHARE SECRETS

SUBMITTED BY: ELISE H.

"Self-pity becomes a stumbling block when we get so narrowly focused upon our problems. We forget we are a part of a whole throng of fellow pilgrims on this path. It helps to notice others beside ourselves who are seeking courage to live their lives." *Hazelden Publishing, 1986, p. 3.*

"We make a living by what we get, we make a life by what we give." *Sir Winston Churchill.*

"The more I shared secrets that I thought were so awful, the more people were drawn to me and I to them. I found some serenity when I got out of the driver's seat; I found God working in my life." *Author Unknown.*

"Self-pity becomes a stumbling block when we get so narrowly focused upon our problems. We forget we

***"The more I shared secrets that I thought were so awful, the more people were drawn to me and I to***

are a part of a whole throng of fellow pilgrims on this path. It helps to notice others beside ourselves who are seeking courage to live their lives." *Hazelden Publishing, 1986, p. 3.*

"Nothing impacts a still-suffering alcoholic more than hearing the language of the heart from another al-

coholic in recovery." *51st Annual Meeting of the General Service Conference of Alcoholics Anonymous, 2001.*

"When we give to others, we get out of our own way enough to get a different perspective on our lives." *Living Clean: The Journey Continues, p. 67.*



## I'M ALL IN

SUBMITTED BY: STEVEN F.

I remember playing Little League Baseball as a kid – a bunch of youngsters having fun. Looking around the dugout, I realized that we were all in this together. It sure felt good to be a part of all that. I was all in. Heaven only knows I couldn't beat the other teams by myself.

I remember being in the Navy as a young adult – a bunch of men sharing a common purpose, serving our country as one great big unit. It sure felt good to be a part of all that. I was all in. Heaven only knows I couldn't defeat the other countries all by myself.

I remember drinking in the bars as a grown man – getting buzzed, laughing, dancing and having a great time.

It sure felt good to be a part of all that. I was all in. Heaven only knows I couldn't have that much fun all by myself.

I remember getting arrested for DUI sitting in jail, wondering if I was going to lose my job or not. It was horrible being a part of all that. Unfortunately, I was all in. Heaven only knows I couldn't find my way out all by myself.

I remember going to prison for my actions while being drunk – looking at all the steel and concrete that would become my home for years to come. It was devastating being a part of all that. I was all in. Heaven only knows that I had created it all by myself.

I remember going to rehab at

Ridgeview Institute – meeting people who understood just how I felt. They had something I wanted. It was comforting being a part of all that. I was all in. Heaven only knows that I couldn't do it all by myself.

I know now what a joy life can be. I truly know what sober living feels like. I can't adequately explain how wonderful I feel today. It's a miracle to be a part of all this. I'm all in. Heaven only knows how blessed I am with all of you.

Life will take on new meaning. It's your choice. We are all in this together. Are you all in???



# HANGING IN THERE...TOGETHER

SUBMITTED BY: RAY W.

We're all in this together. How very *natural* that is, applying as it does to nearly every facet of healthy human life: to marriage and family, neighborhood, religious groups, friendships, sports teams, work crews, military

units, clubs, guilds and unions, to fellowships of all kinds. Togetherness is essential to our humanity, to our spiritual well-being, even if we

have to struggle with it (and with ourselves) at times. And most of us have had to, bumping into it as we walked through the doors of a Twelve Step meeting for the first time. We then began, often uncomfortably for a time, to hear the challenge....

"We can do what I cannot." Yes, I know, it's another one of those AA-isms that would surely have worn out after all these years, if it weren't for the fact it is so very true. And some of us may be tempted to roll our eyes when reminded, yet again, that the very first word in the Steps is not "I" but "we". But then, after all, it is rather difficult to see much of *reality* when we've focused our eyeballs on the ceiling – another one of those gestures that signals a turn, or the beginning of a turn, toward that me-place, that cell of solitary confinement, back to the "I-just-don't-fit-in" dungeon of isolation.

Been there, done that. Yes, but we can learn from what happened, so as to avoid repeating it as well as to use our experience to help others. Therefore we should not seek to shut the door on our past – those

days when many of us, after the ship of our lives had begun to sink, found ourselves alone in a "lifeboat" of our own concoction, riddled with leaks.

Then someone threw us a lifeline, a rope of hope to which we laid hold and then found ourselves linked to others, on a vessel called *Recovery*, where we, over time, began to "resolutely turn our thoughts to someone we can help." Our onboard code became "love and tolerance of others...."

But the stakes are high. That leaky "lifeboat" sometimes appears again on the distant horizon as a

viable option, beckoning us to another solitary adventure with something like Simon and Garfunkel's ironic lyrics humming in our head: "I've built walls / A fortress deep and mighty / That none may penetrate / I have no need of friendship, friendship causes pain / It's laughter and it's loving I disdain / I am a rock / I am an island." Madness!

Ah yes, the stakes are indeed high, something after the manner expressed in Benjamin Franklin's warning to his fellows as they decided to declare the independence of the American colonies from Great Britain: "We must, indeed, all hang together or, most assuredly, we shall all hang separately." So it is with us and all the more so. For unlike the Redcoats, our enemy (alcohol & drugs) will not agree to our independence and become an ally. Rather, it is an enemy unrelenting. But we hang together not to fight this adversary; rather, we band together to learn to live, really live, without it.

***Togetherness is essential to our humanity, to our spiritual wellbeing, even if we have to struggle with it (and with ourselves) at times.***





## THE THIEF

SUBMITTED BY: SANDY C.

There's a thief that robs me with a distinctive voice.

It's been around so long I never felt I had a choice.

It is a deep felt disappointment with everything I had.

It can be a strong feeling but not necessarily sad,

It made me think I was just inherently bad.

It can slither right through me when you'd think things are great.

It then passes in a flash, or stays way too late.

It sometimes lays wait when I feel most content

And I'm reminded it's there as it jabs me so I get the hint,

"You're not welcome here, in the land of content,

You can't have it no matter how I'm hell-bent."

I feel it in my core,

Like by a vacuum I'm sucked in, then it demands more.

He creeps into my consciousness sometimes I don't even see,

Especially just when I think I feel happy. Then Whap! in the gut he let's all the air out of me.

There are those who call this a "god sized hole" That can be filled with God's love.

I have a hard time believing if I'm a good girl,

It will get filled from above.

I've been in love a few times that didn't fill it,

It doesn't leave me when I've tried my best to will it.

Work more steps more times.

Maybe I'm not praying enough or saying the right lines.

I tried to pray on my knees tried and true,

I tried yoga and Buddha, even converted to a Jew.

I thought "material stuff" could keep it at bay,

And sometimes for a little while it felt this was the way.

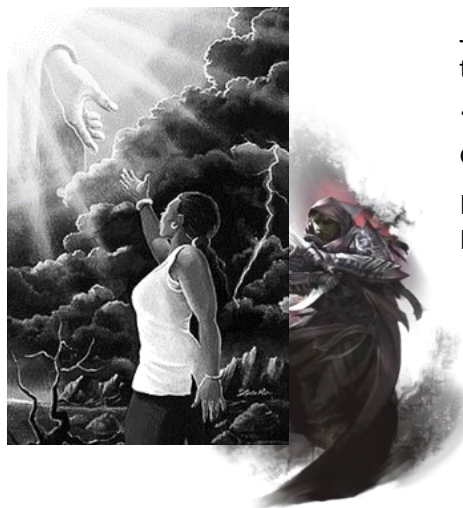
*There are those who call this a "god sized hole"*

*That can be filled with God's love.*

Ah, but it was just a ruse,

Though I still get a good buzz with a new pair of shoes.

The drink brings good relief but only when it puts me completely to sleep. And it's always right where I left it when I'm back on my feet.



Sometimes it's like darkness or impending doom, a gustatory emptiness that I can't fill with favorite food.

It hides sometimes, and it gives me a little glint.

He robs me of joy, just when I think there's a glimmer of fulfillment.

Sometimes I cope by saying "no matter what, I'll get by."

He then loves to say, "that is pointless, don't even try."

I wonder if this bandit just wants to make sure I won't forget,

"Whatever I think I want, I'm not going to get."

Or, "don't you dare believe what people may say,

You can't have lasting happiness and peace.

You're just not made that way."

I think this thief convinces me that life is just too rough.

Then I'll try harder or just give up, as it tells me I'll never be enough.

Then he chants, "ha ha, I told you so, You think you're so tough."

Just when I think he might be through, he says -

"Don't go thinking that good things can come to you,

Because no matter where you are, I'll always be there too."

**THE RIDGEVIEW ALUMNI ASSOCIATION  
PRESENTS**

**The 8<sup>th</sup> Annual “Sam Anders Serenity Scramble” Golf Tournament**

**June 7, 2017**

**Bentwater Golf Club, Acworth, GA**

**Registration fees are \$360 per team or \$90 per person (tax-deductible).**

Includes round, cart, range balls, light breakfast, snacks, soft drinks and water, & Philly Connection lunch.

Prizes awarded to top three teams, closest to pin and long drive. Hole-in-one prizes.

*Corporate packages available. Call for details.*

To register or if you have questions call: **Chuck Tucker 678-447-2946**

**SPONSORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES**

**GOLD - \$1000 (LIMITED TO FIVE)**

The Gold sponsor receives tournament entry for a four-person team, a hole sponsorship and four Super tickets. The Super tickets include four mulligans, a free hybrid club or wedge, a chance to win a three-day vacation and entry into a drawing for the chance to win a \$25,000 shootout following the tournament. The sponsor also receives their company logo on all flyers and tournament documents and recognition in the RVAA quarterly publication “The View”. That publication reaches about 5,000 addresses across the USA. The Gold sponsor may also hang a company banner on the clubhouse, and will receive verbal recognition during pre-tournament announcements.

**SILVER- \$700**

The Silver sponsor receives entry for a four-person team, a hole sponsorship, banner for clubhouse and verbal recognition.

**BRONZE- \$350**

The Bronze sponsor receives a hole sponsorship, banner for clubhouse and verbal recognition.

**INDIVIDUAL HOLE SPONSORSHIP- \$250**      Advertise your company!

Company name and logo will appear on a sign at one of the 18 tee boxes.

**Please contact Chuck Tucker at 678-447-2946 with questions or for more information.**

**THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT!**

# BASKING IN THE SUNLIGHT OF THE FELLOWSHIP

SUBMITTED BY: ROBIN L.

Most of my life I believed that self-sufficiency was imperative to survival and that knowing how to manage things in life geared an individual toward success. I was intro-

duced to the fellowship in AA long before I recognized how much I needed

***I have more success in life by letting others in and participating in these relationships.***

support in my life. It took numerous bottoms with drugs and alcohol to reach the desperation point of letting others in the program of recovery into my life. I hope it doesn't take as long for anyone reading this as it did for me. I have more success in life by letting others in and participating in these relationships. The truth of things is I reached a point where I didn't want to continue life the way it was.

I was lonely, sad, and hopeless regarding my condition. I believed I would never be able to stop using drugs and alcohol and all the other lies which addiction provides us.

I had attempts at sobriety working with sponsors but never at opening up with the fellowship as a whole. With this last attempt at recovery, it was driven into me to share at meetings, work with a sponsor, and develop deep roots in service work. I say "last" because I don't believe I had another recovery in me, for I had reached a dark place in my addiction by not being able to live with it or without it. The meetings, alumni organization, and the fellowship I entered into provided me the support I needed to dig slowly out of that dark, lonely place. Since then I've enjoyed being a part of something

bigger than myself, where I'm learning to be of service to others. And that helps with the removal of self-centeredness and so keeps me active in the solution to the problem.

Allowing other recovering people into my life to love me till I could love myself was one of the cornerstones to healing for my recovery.





# WE ARE ALL IN THIS TOGETHER

SUBMITTED BY: SEAN C.

It's a funny thing that the topic of the newsletter is "We Are All In This Together." As I begin to write my article, I am on Flight 289 going from Atlanta to Boston. There is a gentleman in the seat in front of us who is friendly and cordial. To the right of my wife and me is a woman from Quincy, MA, which is 10 miles from where I grew up. She's a wonderful conversationalist. Since we're flying to Boston, most of the passengers on the plane have Massachusetts ties in common. Everyone seems to be getting along very well. We all have one goal in common with each other: to land at Logan Airport.

The ironic thing is that when we land in 50 minutes, all the passengers will march to the baggage claim. We may recognize some of the people from our flight and give a nod of acknowledgement. Once we procure our luggage, we'll go on our separate ways. We won't see each other again, nor will we have a reason to.

I thank God it isn't that way in Alcoholics Anonymous. After my first meeting, the members of AA told me to keep coming back. I'm still coming back, seventeen plus years later. I have a great fear of not going to meetings.

I heard a speaker once ask: "When is the last time you went to a strange meeting out of town? Think about it. Where else can you go, meet a bunch of people you have never met before, who come from diverse backgrounds, have different stories and you start reminiscing with each other?"

We alcoholics suffer from a disease, which only a spiritual experience can remedy. In order for me to acquire this spiritual transformation, I had to

learn about the steps with a sponsor and complete the actions that were required with each step. After having a spiritual awakening, I then applied the principles of the steps into my life, which I still try to do to this very day. I say "try" because sometimes my ego and selfishness get in the way.

This is precisely the reason why we're all in this together. Members of Alcoholics Anonymous are on a spiritual journey every day. Our roles in life may be different, but our path is the same: sobriety. The passage into a

contented, sober life includes finding a Higher Power, which will help solve the problem. One of the side effects, though, is laughter. Can you imagine suffering from a deadly illness and the doctor tells you in order to put this in remission, you will have to meet up with a bunch of your closest friends and laugh? (You'll also go to a lot of Mexican restaurants). That's why I can identify with others in the halls of AA. I've met countless others who had suffered from alcohol the way I did and found a solution to the very thing that was killing me.

The other aspect of this idea of being in the same boat with each other is the loneliness and isolation we suffered from before we got here. I chose to be lonely because it allowed me to drink the way I wanted to. However, there was always a cloud hovering over me, which made me feel worthless. I missed not be-

ing able to go out with my friends to enjoy a movie or play baseball on the weekends. Those privileges had been destroyed a long time ago.

The good news is: I haven't been alone since I left Ridgeview and started attending AA meetings. I developed close friendships that are very important to me today. There are my friends at Ridgeview, my friends in Gwinnett County, Cobb, Hall, Triangle, NABA, Florida friends (Port Orange). You get the picture. What we have in common is that we were all suffering from addiction, and together we found a way out.

Over the years I have attended many AA roundups and conferences. The International Convention two years ago in Atlanta hosted 56,000 people from all over the world who were all in this together. It was a powerful endorsement of the miracle that is Alcoholics Anonymous. AA was started on the idea of one alcoholic talking to another.

I am just a small part of a great whole. Our unity is essential in order for all of us to recover. The common goal is to stay sober and help others to achieve sobriety. (Where have I heard that before?)

Oh, by the way, it's a week later and not one person from Flight 289 has called to see how my wife and I are doing. Imagine that.

*I haven't been alone since I left Ridgeview and started attending AA meetings. I developed close friendships that are very important to me today*



## TOGETHER WE CAN DO THIS

SUBMITTED BY: DON W.

Since the founding of Alcoholics Anonymous and throughout its history, the concept of one person helping another has been the cornerstone of the foundation upon which the fellowship was built. Service and unity are two of the three tenants of the triangle that identify the organization. The first example of this was of Bill W. working with Dr. Bob and helping him to successfully overcome his addiction. They discovered that, not only was it critical in overcoming Dr. Bob's dilemma, but it ensured Bill's continued sobriety as well.

***I have a wonderful life that is far beyond any I could have ever dreamed of. Almost all my activities are centered around people in recovery.***

That concept has not changed in the almost 82 years of AA's existence. When I reached my bottom, I was filled with fear. I was faced with the knowledge I couldn't continue to drink, and I was certain I couldn't achieve long-term sobriety on my own. I had tried time and again. For the first time in my entire life, I had to admit total defeat and reach out for help. I was overwhelmed by the number of recovered addicts and alcoholics who so unselfishly came immediately to my aid. I was told by so many of them,

"this is a we program," or "we are all in this together." At that point, I was taken under the wings of so many who had successfully recovered. They encouraged me, led me through the steps, answered my questions, and most importantly, called me out when my ego and ignorance allowed me to stray. My sponsor emphasized to me how I should not try to do this alone: "Just relax and let us help you get through this," he said. He will never know just how comforting those words were to me.

I soon became an active member of my home group. I became involved in service work in which there was a lot of interaction with others who were in recovery. At the urging of my sponsor after working through the steps for the first time, I began sponsoring others. I became an active member in the Ridgeview Alumni Association Steering Committee where I became friends with other service-oriented people who were serious about sobriety. I have attended aftercare sessions for more than ten years where I feel

free to discuss anything that bothers me or to get opinions from those who have trodden my path before me. Today, I have a wonderful life that is far beyond any I could have ever dreamed of. Almost all my activities are centered around people in recovery. I have no desire to engage in those activities I had been involved in for so many years. I owe this all to those who gave me a design for living that resulted in a trusting relationship with God. He has truly blessed me with a life I once believed could never be. And I have never felt the love and acceptance of any group the way I do with my friends in recovery.

**We're all on this together.**



*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 half-way 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 \$105,000 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

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

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

# THE VIEW

WE ARE ALL IN THIS TOGETHER

3995 SOUTH COBB DRIVE  
SMYRNA, GA 30080

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## Announcement:

If you would like to continue to receive this newsletter in printed form, please send an email to [sysadmin@ridgeviewalumni.com](mailto:sysadmin@ridgeviewalumni.com) with your name and address. Please put Newsletter in the subject line.

We thank you for taking the time to update us.

Love & Service,  
Communications Committee

Alumni Steering  
Committee

