



CONNECTIONS

Official Newsletter for the Greater Saint Louis District of Cocaine Anonymous

Volume 37

January 2005

A Tribute to one of our own Brian C.

Most of us are probably aware that during the last weekend in November 2004, the Fellowship lost a good friend, Brian C. Brian was well known around our 12-Step tables as a soft-spoken, mild-mannered and caring man who reached out and touched the lives of many of us. I am honored that I was asked to share some words about Brian, as I know he played an important role in so many of our recoveries.

I first met Brian by coming through the doors of Cocaine Anonymous in the winter of 1991 – disconnected, disillusioned and lacking the ability to trust another human being. Brian was the first program person that I reached out to ‘in a moment of desperation’ and who was somehow able to gain my trust. Brian had a special way about him, and there is nothing I could say that could truly pay him justice. Anyone who knew Brian will know what I am talking about.

From what I understand, *Brian was involved in the starting of CA in the St. Louis area.* He was also very connected to the AA program. He gave freely to those in need with his ability to listen quietly and gently share his experience, strength and hope. Brian spent a great deal of his time at the West County Club, which held a memorial service in his passing. Several of his family members and many friends in the fellowship attended. It was a beautiful tribute to his life.

Some of the things I heard shared about Brian were that he never was known to say an unkind word about anyone and that he was a good example to the rest of us in the way he practiced the principles of our Steps and Traditions. He always reached out a willing hand to the newcomer as well as the many of us struggling in our recoveries. In his passing, I am reminded how important it is to value the experience of my own recovery and continue to make an effort to pass it freely on to others.

Brian will be truly missed and always remembered.

Kevin M.

Editors Note: Letters, articles, cartoons, information, prayer requests, etc. related to C.A. for the newsletter and living in recovery are welcomed. Please notify any of the newsletter staff to submit information. Your feedback/input regarding Connections is also welcomed. Connections staff: Donna Y, Jeannette J, Kim C, Yvonne M. You may also submit contributions by calling 314 830-3047 or electronically to jeannettejohnson@sbcglobal.net. In love and service.

Picture altered per
Traditions 11 & 12



District News

Our 2005 elected District officers are: Leonard B, chair; Michael W, vice chair; Donna R, treasurer; and Dennis S, secretary! Please get involved! District meetings are held the first Sunday of each month. Have you served on a district committee?

Area News

Annual Unity Workshop, January 15-16 at Holiday Inn Select in downtown Columbia, MO. Please come and join us. We need service workers! Here is one of the perfect opportunities to give back what has been so freely given us! Call 1 573.445.8531 to make your room reservation today! The agenda:

Saturday

12 – 2 pm Service Information Panel
2 – 3 pm Service Breakout Session
3 – 4 pm Wrapup
4 – 5 pm Service Speakers
5 – 7:30 pm Dinner Break
7:30 pm Unity Speaker Meeting
8:30 pm CAWS 07 Meeting
Fun and games until midnight after the speaker

Sunday

8 – 9 am Buffet Breakfast
9 am – 1 pm Area Business Meeting
Elections!



Our new website is online!
We did it!!

Welcome to
Greater Missouri Area
Cocaine Anonymous
We're Here and We're Free

Go to www.camissouri.org and visit our fine new website. Your input is welcomed. Please let us know what you would like to add, take away or see different. We want to make it a friendly place to visit. Thank you!

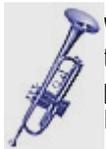
Regional News

The Ohio Area will be hosting the 2005 Assembly for the Midwest this year. The date is Saturday, March 12, 2005 and will be held at the Holiday Inn in Hudson, Ohio. The room rate is \$59.00 plus tax with a cut off date of February 18, 2005. The phone number for reservations is 330-653-9191 and is under the CA Midwest Regional Assembly. There are rooms available for Friday and Saturday night both depending on what your plans are.

World News

The Atlantic South Region is honored to host The **21st Annual World Service Convention of Cocaine Anonymous**.

The purpose of the World Service Convention is to promote enthusiasm and unity within the fellowship of Cocaine Anonymous, and to work toward the continued growth of Cocaine Anonymous throughout the world through financially supporting World Services' effort to carry the message of recovery to the addict who still suffers.



We will be celebrating our 21st Annual World Convention in Memphis, Tennessee. We would like to extend an invitation to all those with a "desire" to join us May 26th through the 30th. Visit our website at <http://www.cawsconvention.org/> or phone WSO at 310-559-5833. Contact the C.A. World Services Office by phone 9:00 am to 5:00 pm, Monday through Friday (U.S. Pacific Time; GMT -0800) for more information.



Our Foundation

... The Program!

Steps 1-2-3 of Cocaine Anonymous

1. WE admitted we were powerless over cocaine and all other mind altering substances – 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.

Traditions 1-2-3 of Cocaine Anonymous

1. Our common welfare should come first, personal recovery depends upon C.A. unity.
2. For our group purpose there is but one ultimate authority – a loving God as He may express Himself in our group conscience. Our leaders are but trusted servants, they do not govern.
3. The only requirement for membership is a desire to stop using cocaine and all other mind-altering substances.

Concepts 1-2-3

1. The final responsibility and the ultimate authority to C.A. World Services should always reside in the collective conscience of our whole Fellowship.
2. The C.A. Groups delegate to the World Service Conference the complete authority for the active maintenance of our world services and thereby make the Conference – excepting for any change in the Twelve Traditions – the actual voice and the effective conscience for our whole Fellowship.
3. As a traditional means of creating and maintaining a clearly defined working relation between the Groups the Conference, the World Service Board of Trustees and its service corporation, staffs and committees, and of thus insuring their effective leadership, it is here suggested that we endow each of these elements of World Service with a traditional "Right of Decision."

CA Structure

Cocaine Anonymous is not organized in the formal or political sense. There are no governing offices, no rules or regulations, no dues or fees. However, the need for services to addicts throughout the world is very important to the fellowship. Inquiries from both within and outside the Fellowship have to be answered. Literature has to be written, printed and distributed, and requests for help be followed-up. The main service body of the fellowship is C.A. World Services, which is centered at the World Service Office in Los Angeles, California where employees and service volunteers maintain communications with local Groups and with persons outside the Fellowship who turn to C.A. for information on the program of recovery. C.A. Conference-approved literature and chips are prepared, published and distributed through this office. The World Service Office is responsible to the World Service Board of Trustees. The C.A. World Service Conference, consisting of Delegates from C.A. Areas throughout the Fellowship, Trustees of C.A. World Services, and World Service Office Directors and staff members, meet annually and provide a link between the Groups within the Fellowship and the Trustees who serve as custodians of C.A. Traditions and interpreters of policies affecting the Fellowship as a whole.

Formal organization is kept to a minimum at the local Group level. The Group may have a limited number of "officers" whose responsibilities include, but are not limited to arranging meetings, providing refreshments, handling the Group's budget, and maintaining contact with the local service organization. The principal of consistent rotation of responsibility is followed by all C.A. service positions. Positions in the local Group are rotated according to a vote of the Group. Representatives to the local service organization are voted on at the Group level according to a schedule defined by each group. Officers of the local service organization are elected based on the group conscience of that organization.

The “Group” Defined

A meeting is when two or more people gather together to share their experience, strength and hope with each other.

A meeting may call itself a C.A. Group when:

1. The only requirement for membership is a desire to stop using cocaine and all other mind-altering substances.
2. It is fully self-supporting.
3. Its primary purpose is to help addicts recover through the Twelve Steps of C.A.
4. It has no outside affiliations.
5. It has no opinion on outside issues.
6. Its public relations policy is based on attraction rather than promotion.

The C.A. Group

The basic unit in C.A. is the local Group, which is autonomous except in matters affecting other Groups or C.A. as a whole. The Group has but one primary purpose, which is to help others to recover through the Twelve suggested Steps. Each Group is self-supporting through its own contributions. As the Twelve Steps are our guide to recovery, the Twelve Traditions are our guide to Group unity, growth and discipline. Its members maintain their personal anonymity at the level of press, radio, television and films.

The importance of the Group, what it constitutes and its functions cannot be stressed enough. Maintenance of our recovery depends on the sharing of our experiences, strength and hope with each other, thus helping us to identify and understand the nature of our disease.

Most addicts in C.A. achieve and sustain their recovery as a result of their participation with the activities of the Group. The Group is the heart of Cocaine Anonymous and it is vital to the new member. It is equally important to those who have achieved recovery as a result of the program. They may continue to participate and receive assistance from the Group. It is our experience that many meetings begin and/or end with some form of prayer. While each C.A. group is autonomous and adopts its own format, CA as such neither endorses, opposes, nor affiliates (expressed or implied) with any sect, denomination, politics, organization or institution.

The Group’s total responsibility is perhaps best expressed by the First Tradition:

“Our common welfare should come first; personal recovery depends upon C.A. unity.”

Most meetings follow a more or less set format, although distinctive variations have developed. It is our experience that many meetings begin and end with some form of prayer. While each C.A. group is autonomous, and adopts its own format, C.A. as such never endorses, opposes or affiliates, expressed or implied, with any sect, denomination, politics, organization or institution. A leader describes the C.A. program briefly for the benefit of the newcomers, and then turns the meeting over to a speaker or to participation. A “Speaker Meeting” involves one or more speakers, who relate their personal histories, and their experience of recovery in Cocaine Anonymous. A “Participation Meeting” involves individual voluntarily sharing their thoughts and feelings.

Some time during the meeting, there is usually a period for C.A. related announcements of interest to the meeting. A collection is taken to cover rent, literature and chips, refreshments, contributions to the District, Area and World Service Office as per the 7th Tradition. Many groups hold a business meeting monthly or at other intervals to discuss such items as: group finances, distribution of 7th Tradition, meeting format, election of trusted servants, etc. It is suggested that records be kept of group business meeting decisions. Each group is autonomous, and the group conscience decides how business meetings may be conducted.

Those attending meetings are reminded that any opinions or interpretations they may hear are solely those of the speaker or participant involved. All members are free to interpret the recovery program in their own terms, but none can speak for the local Group or C.A. as a whole.

Types of Meetings/Groups

- Open: Attended by C.A. members, their families, friends and other interested people.
Closed: Attendance is limited to C.A. members only.
Step Study: Study and discuss the Twelve Steps with the Group.
Book Study: Study and discuss with the Group any of these books: Alcoholics Anonymous (the “Big Book”), Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions (“12 & 12”), Hope, Faith & Courage- Stories from the Fellowship of Cocaine Anonymous (the “C.A. Storybook”).

Group Servants

“For our group purpose there is but one ultimate authority—a loving God as He may express Himself in our group conscience. Our leaders are but trusted servants; they do not govern.”

OUR SECOND TRADITION

C.A. groups may create such service positions, as they deem necessary to carry on the group functions with such job duties and sobriety requirements, as they feel appropriate. Such positions by way of illustration might include: Chairperson, Vice Chairperson, Literature, Coffeemaker/Hospitality, Greeter, etc. The suggested business positions of groups are:

Group Service Representative (GSR)

Suggested sober time: One year

Term: One year

The GSR position is probably the most important service position for which a member can be elected. Great care should be taken with this choice; the quality of the District/Area Services and ultimately World Services can only be as good as those choices the individual Groups make. As with the Secretaries, GSR candidates should only accept positions for those Groups that they regularly attend (50% of the time). They are the ones who will carry the information back to the Group as to what is going on in our Fellowship on a District/Area level, as well as the World level.

It should be understood that a GSR does not require Group approval to vote on matters affecting the Group or C.A. as a whole, although it is the GSR’s responsibility to vote mindful of the group conscience. (See Concept 3). A good GSR is familiar with the C.A. World Service Manual and the Twelve Concepts of World Services. If the GSR cannot attend, an Alternate should attend. The person elected GSR should be trusted with the Group vote. Before accepting a nomination for GSR, the nominee must consider the level of commitment as well as the sacrifice of time involved.

Duties and Responsibilities:

1. Sees that the Traditions are followed within the Group.
2. Attends all appropriate business meetings.
3. Conducts communication between the Group, the District and Area.
4. Reads/reviews communications from the District, Area and World Service.

Alternate GSR

The purpose and responsibility of the Alternate GSR is to assist the GSR and to assume the responsibilities of the GSR when necessary.

Suggested requirements and qualifications are the same as those for GSR.

Secretary

Suggested sober time: Six months

Term: One year

The secretary is a trusted servant whose responsibility is to provide the Group with the leadership best suited to assist the recovery of the members the utilization of the C.A. Program.

Duties and Responsibilities:

1. See that the Traditions are being followed within the Group.
2. Follow the format in accordance with the group conscience.
3. See that the responsibilities of the other Group servants are met.
4. See that the 7th Tradition contributions of the members are collected and that a record is kept for the Group's income and expenses.
5. See that the Group is represented at the District or Area Service Meeting.
6. See that rent for the meeting space is paid and that the Group's monthly contribution is forwarded to the District, Area and/or World Service Office.
7. Keep an accurate, up-to-date record of changes of the group conscience.
8. Display C.A. literature and schedules.

Group Treasurer

Suggested sober time: One year

Suggested prior service time: Six months

Term: One year

Duties and Responsibilities:

1. Keeps an accurate bookkeeping system.
2. When applicable, maintains Group bank account(s) with checks requiring two signatures.
3. Gives financial reports to the Group regularly.
4. Pays all Group expenses.
5. Passes on contributions to the District/Area and/or the World Service Office.

From the World Service Manual



*We celebrate your life! A very special tribute to Dick B who lost his life this past December 2004. Dick was a faithful member of the Monday night C&A meeting in St. Charles and will be sadly missed. We love you,
C.L.L.*

Happy Birthday to You!

End of the Line	
Marissa	2 yrs
Denise A	7 yrs
Michael KW	9 yrs
Cynthia C.	12 yrs
Darnell (Big D)	16 yrs
Aman L.	1 Yr
Chris G	3 yrs
Carl R.	12 yrs
Will W.	6 yrs
Yvonne M	6 yrs
Kev T	12 yrs



Thursday Night Meeting	
Jimmie	6 yrs
Charlotte R.	14 yrs

Bridging the Gap	
Susan S	30 days

Fried Pipers and Cocanuts	
Lori L	9 months

Men's Meeting	
Sydney	6 months

... It's your birthday, it's your birthday, it's your birthday!

7th Tradition

WE are fully self-supporting through our own contributions!



	Sep	Oct	Nov
End of the Line	\$35		
Fried Pipers		\$5	\$5
In the Light/Morning		\$28	\$20
Tuesday Nite			
Wed Nite			
Living Recvy	\$20	\$20	\$20
Men's Mtg	\$37.20	\$25	\$42
Springfield			
Message of Hope	\$5		\$5
Thurs Nite	\$9.75	\$30	\$33
Reaching Out		\$5	
Time Change			
Tues Late Nite Mtg			

Check out the article, ***I ain't gona put no money in that basket*** handout from Vol. 36 of *Connections* on the tables at your home group and proceed to heed!

Thank you very much.

A Word from our members

I remember Brian C. at my first CA meeting. He spoke of the reality of being clean and sober. He was not a person to use clichés. He told it like it was. That problems would still be there, heartache and pain would still be around. But instead of taking a drug to deal with those things we would have to rely on each other and our higher power.

He told me a long time ago "If you put God first in everything you do no matter what happens, good times or hard times he will always be with you and provide you with what you need, even though it may not always be what you want or think you want.

He truly was a force in the program and I always looked forward to the CA meetings on Friday at St. Anthony's Hospital where he would be there to give a good dose of truth and humor to myself and many others who would attend. I spoke with a friend who used to go those meetings today and he said something very profound. "Brian was a connector. Many people in the program would have never met and had the lasting friendships had they not have gone through Brian first."

Brian also believed that if a person helped others they were helping themselves. Even the most hopeless of cases he did not discriminate with his generosity. If someone needed a place to recover from withdrawals or just need emotional support he would let them stay at his home for a few days or so until they were ready to move on again. He helped me when he became my sponsor and actively helped me work the steps.

He told me a long time ago "If you put God first in everything you do no matter what happens, good times or hard times he will always be with you and provide you with what you need even though it may not always be what you want or think you want. Once in a while instead of yes or no, God says "Maybe" When you seek god he will more than meet you halfway if you truly look for him."

It's hard to sum up a man's life in a few paragraphs when they pass on. Even though he had little money, I know that he died wealthy man. He had so many friends in the program who's lives he had touched to see him off at his memorial.

We will always love you Brian.

Dave N.

Procrastinator???

Sorry but this article was removed before posting per Traditions 5 & 10.