

On The Rogue Again

JACKSON COUNTY CENTRAL OFFICE NEWSLETTER

Jackson County A.A. Central Office
110 East 6th Street Suite A
Medford OR (541) 732-1850

Editors Note -October 2013

This Newsletter is dedicated to the Roving Reporter. Next month I will attempt to write a long article but for now my forever thanks to a wonderful friend who did so much for so many. My thanks to all who wrote articles and let's all remember the "Window of Opportunity". For now I'll say so long to my friend Mary Ann. The meeting up there just got better. On another subject, my love and thanks to Fifi for all she does for the newsletter. I couldn't do it without her.

~Virginia

We publish for your enjoyment and information. Any mistakes you find are there for a purpose. We publish something for everyone, and some people are always looking for mistakes.

On the Rogue Again, is a monthly Newsletter of the Jackson County Central Office. It is about by, and for the members of Alcoholic Anonymous Fellowship. Opinions expressed herein aren't to be attributed to Alcoholic Anonymous as a whole, nor does publication of any article imply any endorsement by either Alcoholic Anonymous Jackson County Central Office, or "On the Rogue Again". (Exceptions: Quotations from the A. A. books or pamphlets and the 12 Steps and/or 12 Traditions are reprinted with permission of A. A. World Services, Inc) On the Rogue Again reserves the right to edit submissions for clarity, proper language,

length, contents that violate A. A. Traditions, etc.

Have a good day unless you have made other plans.

Read pages 86-87-88 in your Big Book of Alcoholics Anonymous everyday.

Central Office News

Greetings from the Board of Jackson County AA Central Office. We thank all of the groups and individuals for their generous support. A great way to get involved is to volunteer for a four hour shift once a week. Please contact Dewey at Central Office to learn more about this. You can always come to the business meeting the first Saturday of the month to volunteer.

Remember, Central Office now has a web site. There you can find information about upcoming events and the meeting schedule as well the current issue of "On the Rogue Again." You can find it by pointing your browser to either www.jacksoncountyyaa.org or www.aa.jacksoncountycentraloffice.org.

Board Members

Chair	-	Terry K.
Co-Chair	-	Wayne T.
Office Manager	-	Al Z.
Volunteer Coordinator	-	Dewey H.
Secretary	-	Beth H.
Literature	-	Tom M.
Treasurer	-	Judi R..
Co-Treasurer	-	Bill S.
Special Events Coordinator	-	Barb R.
District Liaison	-	Wayne T.
Newsletter Editor	-	Virginia H.
Web Coordinator	-	Wayne T.

Donations for September 2013

Valley of the Rogue	92.10
No Name Group	80.00
AA Chippers	120.00
Open Book Study	30.00
Ashland Tuesday Noon	90.00
Dog On The Roof	200.00
Thursday Parkside	100.00
Ashland Siskiyou	240.00

BIRTHDAYS

Denise M.	33.00
Darcy	3.00

NEWSLETTER

Tana	10.00
Darcy	10.00
Donna F.	10.00
Mari G.	10.00
Roni B.	10.00
Lorri H.	10.00
Mary E.	20.00

How about donating a dollar for each year on your sobriety birthday?!

Where is my Pal? I look around and she is gone. Oh! That's right, she's with God now.

Thirty years ago, I walked into The Serenity Club in Corona, California. There she was...Mary Ann. It wasn't love at first sight, but somehow we both knew that we had both met a lifelong friend, and so it was. Love sprang from our friendship and a wonderful relationship grew over the years. I only hope everyone, at some point in their lives, finds what Mary Ann and I found. Mary Ann made the world a better place. Her laughter and the joy that she brought to us will never be forgotten.

~Otto W.

I believe we are fortunate to live in what Clancy calls a "pocket of enthusiasm", where people are not a "glum lot", but happy and excited about

their sobriety. I think an important part of these "pockets" are the individuals who devote themselves tirelessly to contribute to a lively, active and fun community of recovery. Mary Ann was one such person.

She could always be found in our meetings, hand extended, smiling and greeting new comers and curmudgeons alike with her warm "How are you, honey? Or in my case her "How is the other Mrs. W?" She sponsored countless women, changing lives as she wisely and often candidly guided women through the 12 steps of our program. She had a special talent for teaching meditation, which will live on in the lives of those with whom she shared this gift.

Watching her, I saw how service could transform fear and trepidation into friendships, fellowship and a sense of belonging; giving me hope and direction.

She had the ability to see a need in our community, formulate a plan and then actually implement it in quick fashion!! Because of this, she leaves us the annual "Women in Recovery Brunch", where the candle stays lit for the women who follow in her footsteps.

Mary Ann was an incredible storyteller, both in our meetings and with her family. I remember the first time I heard her say she didn't have a lot of "great drunk stories" because she did most of her drinking in her brown chair, which I could see so vividly in my mind. I could feel the desperation and despair as she described being consumed by alcohol; I could see Patricia ("the giant") and the women who helped opened her window of opportunity. In sharing this, she gave me hope that I didn't have to go back out there to add anything to my own milk toast drunkalog; that I and others could come through that magical window and find a new and wonderful life.

Adlai Stevenson said "Some people come into our lives and go quickly. Some stay for a while, leave footprints on our heart, and we are never ever the same." And so it is with Mary Ann. You are loved and you are missed.

~Debbie W.

How would you describe a Lady like Mary Ann without her famous thought of "a window of opportunity"?

I remember arriving to speak at the Brookings Roundup years ago. I had checked in and gotten unpacked when there was a loud knock on the motel door. "It's Mary Ann, you are coming to dinner with Otto and me in 15 minutes." God we will all miss her but I bet Heaven is a little more organized with her there.

~Peter S.

From the day I met Mary Ann until the day her physical body left this world, she has exemplified service work within our community. She not only gave of her time and talents, but she gave of her heart. It didn't matter how many people were standing in a room, if she was talking with you, she made you feel like the most important person in the room. Mary Ann lived her life according to the principles in Alcoholics Anonymous. She did this because she valued her recovery above everything else. If we want to keep what we have, we must give it away. She went above and beyond giving of herself and what this program has to offer. One of the many things which endeared me to Mary Ann was if she loved you, she loved your entire family.

MaryAnn sponsored many women, helped with the hotline, was on the speaker circuit, led guided meditations and Big Book studies, organized countless potlucks, and made tamales on Christmas Eve to spread some Christmas cheer. She and Otto did this every year, in spite of the fact that Christmas was her least favorite Holiday. She would "suit up and show up" regardless of her "feelings".

I feel her presence in my life today as if she never left. Perhaps it's because she hasn't left. I believe if you had a connection with Mary Ann

in the physical world, it will not be lost with her passing. Her devotion to her AA family was unmatched by anyone I know. It's people like MaryAnn and Otto who are the backbone of this program. Those of us who have adopted the example she set are the ones who will carry on her legacy and continue to bless our strong community of recovery.

~Amy L.

MY RESOLVE IS STRONG..... I HAVE BEEN GIVEN A WONDERFUL AND RARE OFFERING, FROM AN EQUALLY WONDERFUL AND RARE WOMAN. THE NOTION OF A WINDOW OPENING, TO OFFER ANY SOUL TO MOVE TOWARDS A BETTER LIFE, HAS BEEN MADE VERY REAL FOR ME. THANK YOU MARYANN... IT IS DIFFICULT FOR ME TO OWN THE IDEA THAT I WILL NOT BE SEEING HER AGAIN. SHE, AS WITH MANY OTHER BEAUTIFUL OLD TIMERS, WITH BE WITH ME EACH DAY. I KNOW THERE ARE GOING TO BE MANY TIMES TO FEEL HER ABSENCE, BUT I AM CONVINCED THAT THE POWER OF HOW SHE TOUCHED SO MANY WILL KEEP HER SPIRIT WITH US FOR A VERY LONG TIME TO COME. MARYANN, I THANK YOU FOR SHARING THIS LIFE OF LOVE AND HAPPINESS WITH ME... ~RAY WILLETT

Remembering Mary Ann

When I learned that this newsletter would be devoted to Mary Ann W, I knew there were a few things I had to say based on personal experience.

First and foremost, Mary Ann always treated me like I was a prince, even when, on rare occasion, I acted like a varlet. I never quite knew why this was but I sure enjoyed it. It made meeting up with her an event.

I referred to her as my secret sponsor. I did so because several times she gave me advice on AA problems when I was fumbling around

looking for solutions. She had a real feel for what AA could and couldn't do within the Steps and Traditions.

Mary Ann wasn't afraid to call a spade a spade when needed. We've probably all experienced meetings where the Traditions were being abused or service positions were going unfilled. A lot of us, myself included are reluctant to address such matters. Mary Ann wasn't.

To me, her most remarkable traits were her energy and talent in getting things done. When she was involved, she was INVOLVED! When you saw her in action, you had to be inspired (or feel guilty). She seemed tireless.

It's hard not to be motivated by her example to more fully participate in AA service and activities and to offer uncritical love to AA members. Mary Ann will be remembered and missed.

~Tom M.

Becoming

Imagining just got better,
and your new journey has begun.
My dear your change is **Becoming**,
your work here and purpose are done.

I wonder how you are finding,
the garden where awaits your next quest.
The expression of love, and knowing, and
peace,
and having a chance to rest.

A heart that so is filled with love,
you've given so much of your time.
Your message to us will linger,
your love and your light will shine.

You're **Becoming** will surely lead us,
to be loving and honest and brave.

Holding all that you've told us,
and cherishing all that you gave.

Now whenever I see a pumpkin,
I'll smile and remember your tale.
Of a garden and a brave soul named Hiram,
who's liberty was passing the veil.

My heart right now is so heavy,
the hole in our world is so big.
The light we can't see yet will show us,
In **Becoming** your spirit will live.

For Mary Ann Williman

By Christine Mason, September 10, 2013

PINK HALOS AND TAP SHOES

Mary Ann

We spoke of angels that summer afternoon. Sitting in my garden in the shade of the redwood tree, we sipped tea -- very strong tea -- and munched on scones. We unveiled our dreams, shared our fears and talked about grace, life's mysteries and our love affair with AA. We were both dedicated to service, sponsorship and tried to put a positive spin on things when we spoke at meetings. The intimacy of the August warmth contained us. It offered welcome relief from the ennui of authors who are driven to give a voice to their Muses. Two assignments came to light during our discussion about our creative dis-ease. Hers was to take up tap dancing. Mine was to stop circling my desk, plop my derriere in my chair and finish my damn book. We welcomed this guidance from sources beyond the confines of our physical being. Mary Ann took to her dancing like a soaring eagle. I finished my book.

Just months before she was struck with illness, we sat side by side on the sofa reading excerpts from our latest manuscripts and critiquing each other. I encouraged her to publish, and with zeal we began planning an

anthology of her short stories. Whether or not her words ever appear between hard covers is irrelevant. Her work is a manifestation of who she was: a woman of faith, imagination and abundant good humor -- true blue and authentic, or perhaps in her case, true pink.

Our last bone fide conversation was at the Friday morning meeting. We kissed, clasped hands and stared into each other's eyes. I asked how she was doing. "I am dying," she whispered. She assured me there was nothing she wanted but quiet. "Have you cried yet?" I asked, my own tears welling up. Our hands gripped more tightly. She shook her head and together we agreed: "That was truly F****d!" We laughed and hugged. Humor triumphed to the end.

It is hard to think of Mary Ann outside the context of Otto. They flowed together like coffee and cream or hugs and kisses. Through the years, I always knew I could call on them for anything. Before my heart surgery, she comforted me while I blubbered in the front row of the Hole in the Wall. It was stationed at Tinseltown in those days. Post surgery, she and Otto collected me and took me to meetings until I could drive myself. This invincible team never said no to an AA request.

We ache with her departure. Our grief is a beast. Let us picture her in the heavens and listen for the soul-songs she sends to cushion us from the blows of daily life and enhance every rich and precious breath of delight. Time is priceless. Vanity and pride are luxuries we can no longer afford. Her passing is a reminder to cherish every sentient being. Thank you dear friend for opening the floodgates of our hearts.

Her first book was about angels. I believe she is *our* guardian angel. Next Thursday at Pacific Positive, I propose that we shout out the Happy Birthday refrain à la Mary Ann with fervor and enthusiasm. (It has been pretty pathetic since she left us.)

In her honor, may we bask in the glow of her pink halo, here, now and beyond.

~Mari G.

When someone I love and admire passes on, I tend to focus on my fondest memories of that special friend. With Mary Ann it's hats... .yes, hats!! There is just something special about a woman in a hat... for when she puts on a hat, a transformation takes place. Self-confidence and self-respect show in her face. She accents her femininity; she stands tall with shoulders back even in jeans and slacks. Women who wear hats know who they are. Mary Ann didn't favor one hat over another. Sometimes a tam, other times a rolled brim or even a colorful cap, but always her hat gave me insight into what she was experiencing. White was confidence; red was emotional; green was creative. Once she showed up at a meeting in a wig. I asked what that was about. She answered, "Bad hair day!"

One of Mary Ann's greatest gifts to us "valley girls" was to present the idea that we should set aside one day a year when we could all wear hats and celebrate our recovery... to acknowledge each other's growth and share our gifts. It's in effect saying "Go Ahead and Bloom".

There is one other hat Mary Ann put on just for me from time to time. It's called a sponsor's hat. A sponsor's hat isn't of any particular design, nor does it come in any particular color. It comes from the language of the heart, understands as nothing else can and allows the miracle of recovery to take place.

So to my very special friend, I say, "'til we meet again, Mary Ann. Hats off!!"

~Pat M.

In Her Own Words...

When Mary Ann died I ordered all of the CD's available from T-Mar Tapes. There were fourteen, but I am sure there are many more in other parts of the country. Today, three weeks after her death, I sat

down to listen. My heart soared just to hear her voice again.

For this article I decided not to invent anything to say about this woman who commanded so much respect from so many. Mary Ann herself, in her own words, is whom we need to hear. For 33 years she thanked every woman she met on the program for her own sobriety. Once Mary Ann heard a Catholic priest share, "There is no greater love than to lay down one's life for one's friends." She never forgot it. Here are her words:

- "At my very first meeting, I remember six women surrounding me. While I was sitting with them the window of opportunity closed behind me. I was safe."
- "The women opened themselves up to me. They didn't know me from Adam's house cat. The beauty of this program is that we give of ourselves to a complete stranger."
- "The women sat there and sang to me, the love song of Alcoholics Anonymous."

She is invisible now. We cannot see her, but she is still here because she is a part of us.

~Susan H.

Mary Ann, to me, was the woman I "wanted to be"!

She gently reminded me I was "to be" the woman I was.

~Ann T

I found a dime in September. It was resting on my heated rollers. When I first discovered it I guessed that it was just a coincidence. I had heard of others finding their dimes and they didn't doubt their finds. I've been around here a lot less time than those other dime-finders and I didn't honestly feel significant enough to find one of my own. I left it there, to heat up every time I plugged in my rollers. Then the other day I realized that I had felt this way before. About 3 1/2 years ago I was in a meeting and Mary Ann was speaking. Every so often, during her story, she would start a sentence with "Newcomer...", like she was imploring me to get the message. A few minutes into her share I was convinced that my new name was "Newcomer". She was talking to me. And I mattered to her. So I listened. I learned that although our lives can crumble around us, beauty, love and miracles can emerge from the rubble. I learned that fears and dreams can interact and intersect. And during the last 3 1/2 years I learned that when Mary Ann started a sentence with the word "Newcomer", the words that followed could change my life if I let them.

I want to tell her all of this; how she changed me, how she gave me hope, how she helped me out of the rabbit hole and into Wonderland.

So...I took the dime off the heated rollers and I set it on my window sill. Because that's where it belongs.

~Fifi



On The Rogue Again

110 E. 6th Street, Medford, OR 97501
(541) 732-1850