



# The View

Newsletter of the Ridgeview Alumni Association

Volume X, No. 2

October, 1997

Smyrna, GA

## Ridgeview staff and alums to be featured on national television special to air in March

**R**idgeview Institute and several of its staff and alumni will be major focal points of a five-part documentary on addiction that will be aired over three nights on Public Affairs Television, March 29-31.

Acclaimed journalist Bill Moyers, who is producing the series, sent a crew to Ridgeview last March to do interviews with staff and alumni. Moyers accompanied the crew on a return trip to Ridgeview for the Alumni Association's annual "Spring Fling Weekend" when he personally conducted more interviews.

In August, Karen O'Brien of Moyers' Public Affairs Television

made a third trip to Atlanta to shoot additional background footage. She took time to attend an alumni steering committee meeting and thanked the group for its cooperation and contributions to the year-long project.

"We got some beautiful footage while we've been here. It was a real privilege to be with you. Your

*Continued on page 11*

## Programs relocated to make room for Alzheimer assisted living service

A number of changes in the location of various offices and programs at Ridgeview Institute have been made in recent months in order to make room for a new assisted living program for Alzheimer's patients and to better utilize space, according to Chief Operating Officer Jack Gronewald.

"We want to assure everyone that all of Ridgeview's existing clinical programs have remained separate and intact," explained Gronewald, "but the addition of the Woodland Ridge assisted living program for Alzheimer's patients necessitated that we make major

shifts in where several of our other programs and services are located. Moves were also made to make better, more economical use of our space."

Earlier this year, Ridgeview contracted with ServiceMaster Senior Living Services to develop an assisted living facility on Cottage E. The new service offers a full range of living and support services to persons with Alzheimer's disease and other forms of dementia. Ridgeview provides some therapeutic services, such as nursing, activities therapy, and family therapy.

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## Alumni gearing up for their busiest time of the year

With a highly successful Spring Fling behind them, members of the Ridgeview Alumni Association are gearing up for their busiest time of the year as they make plans to sponsor the group's annual Halloween Dance, Thanksgiving Gratitude Dinner, Mac Frampton Concert, New Year's Eve Dance, and Super Bowl Party.

"Excluding the Spring Fling Weekend which is held in May, all of the Alumni Association's major events are held during the three-month period between Halloween and mid-January," explained Alumni Advisor Sam Anders.

"Scores of alumni put in untold man-hours in planning and setting up these events, and they all come back-to-back," Anders noted, "Yes, it's a very busy time, but these activities are much anticipated and enjoyed by hundreds of people each year. They're worth all the effort."

A list of dates for upcoming activities is on page 3.

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# Ridgeview Calendar

## Family Learning Series - Meetings - Socials

All activities are in the Ridgeview Conference Center unless otherwise noted. Check monitor in foyer for room locations.

### OCTOBER

**Thursday, 16th-** Special Series on Marriage- "Getting Beyond Anger: Conflict Resolution," Janette B. Gilbert, LCSW; 7:30 p.m.

**Sunday 19th-** Sunday Night Speaker Meeting, 8 p.m.

**Thursday, 23rd-** Special Series on Marriage- "The Empty Nest: Getting Back to Two," Helen H. Graham, LCSW; 7:30 p.m.

**Saturday, 25th-** Halloween Dance, 8 p.m.-midnight, \$5

**Sunday, 26th-** Sunday Night Speaker Meeting, 8 p.m.

**Thursday, 30th-** Special Series on Marriage- "The Secrets of Happily Married Couples," Douglas N. McKee, Psy.D.; 7:30 p.m.

### NOVEMBER

**Sunday, 2nd-** Sunday Night Speaker Meeting, 8 p.m.

**Thursday, 6th-** Special Series on Marriage Ends "Building Your Mate's Self-Esteem," Norma K. Cloe, LMFT; 7:30 p.m.

**Friday, 7th-** First Friday Speaker Meeting, 8 p.m.

**Sunday, 9th-** Sunday Night Speaker Meeting, 8 p.m.

**Monday-Thursday, 10th-13th-** Family Workshop, 9 a.m. - 4 p.m.

**Thursday, 13th-** Family Learning Series- "Over & Over: Understanding Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder," Lisa R. Terry, LPC; 7:30 p.m.

**Sunday, 16th-** Sunday Night Speaker Meeting, 8 p.m.

**Thursday, 20th-** Family Learning Series- "Alzheimer's Disease & the Issues Families Face," Ginny Helms, The Alzheimer's Association

**Sunday, 23rd-** Annual Gratitude Dinner & Meeting, 5:30 p.m., Conference Center; Sunday Night Speaker Meeting, 8 p.m.

### DECEMBER

**Friday, 5th-** First Friday Speaker Meeting, 8 p.m.

**Sunday, 7th-** Sunday Night Speaker Meeting, 8 p.m.

**Monday-Thursday, 8th-11th-** Family Workshop, 9 a.m. - 4 p.m.

**Saturday 14th-** Mac Frampton Concert, 8 p.m.

**Sunday, 21st-** Sunday Night Speaker Meeting, 8 p.m.

**Sunday, 28th-** Sunday Night Speaker Meeting, 8 p.m.

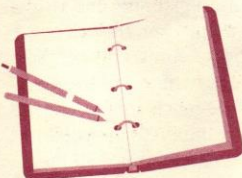
**Wednesday, 31st-** Annual New Year's Eve Dance, 8 p.m. - 1 a.m., \$5

### JANUARY

**Sundays, 4th, 11th, 18th-** Sunday Night Speaker Meetings, 8 p.m.

**Monday-Thursday, 12th-15th-** Family Workshop, 9 a.m. - 4 p.m.

**Sunday, 25th-** Annual Super Bowl Party, time TBA; Sunday Night Speaker Meeting, 8 p.m., Cottage B



## Ridgeview Notebook

### Alumni Steering Committee meets Thursdays

The Ridgeview Alumni Association Steering Committee meets weekly on Thursdays from 5:45 to 6:15 p.m. in rooms 1 & 2 of the Conference Center. All alumni of Ridgeview Institute are invited to attend and take part in the planning of the various service and social activities sponsored by the group.

### Sunday Night Speaker Meeting held in Conference Center

The weekly Sunday Night Speaker Meeting, which has been sponsored by the Ridgeview Alumni Association for the past several years each Sunday night on Cottage B, has been moved to the Conference Center, according to Alumni

Advisor Sam Anders. The growing attendance and making the meetings more accessible to the public are the primary reasons for the change, said Anders.

### National Depression Screening Day

A free program and screening as part of National Depression Screening Day will be held October 9 from 2 to 4 p.m. and 6 to 8 p.m. on the Ridgeview campus. To reserve a space (first names only) or for more information, call (770) 434-4568, ext. 3004.

### Interfaith Service held each Sunday

An interfaith spiritual service is held each Sunday morning at 10 a.m. in the Ridgeview Conference Center. The service is open to the public.

### Family Workshop Open to Alums

The Family Workshop, held the second week of each month, is open free of charge to any Ridgeview alumnus and family members. For additional information, call Family Services Coordinator Beth Fisher at 770-434-4567. See the Ridgeview Calendar for dates.



# Holiday Happenings



## HALLOWEEN DANCE

*Saturday, October 25th - 8 p.m. to midnight - Conference Center*

Costumes are encouraged, but not required for the Fifth Annual Halloween Dance. Prizes will be awarded for the best costume in adult and child categories. Yes, children are welcome. Lots of great food and wicked decorations. A DJ will spin the best dance songs of the 60's, 70's, 80's and 90's. *Admission is \$5.*

## GRATITUDE & EATIN' MEETING

*Sunday, November 23th - 5:30 p.m. - Conference Center*

A tradition since 1989, the annual Gratitude & Eatin' Meeting attracts alumni, patients, staff and families to this sumptuous Thanksgiving buffet. The Ridgeview cafeteria supplies the turkey, ham, and stuffing, while the alumni are asked to bring a seasonal side dish or dessert. Following the feast will be the annual 12-Step Gratitude Meeting at approximately 7 p.m. All are invited to attend and share, and grateful people stay and help clean up afterwards. *No admission charge.*



## CHRISTMAS CONCERT WITH MAC FRAMPTON

*Sunday, December 14 - 8 p.m. - Conference Center*

Alumni, patients, staff and their families attend this annual event that originated as a Christmas party on Cottage B at Ridgeview in 1989 when alumni patients, and led a Christmas carol sing-along. Mac Frampton agreed to play the untuned, spellbound by this talented musician. A generously agreed to give a benefit concert be secured. A concert grand was rented, and Center. *Admission is free, but closed to the public.*



brought desserts and snacks, talked with along. In 1991 renowned concert pianist beat up piano on the cottage, and all were new tradition began a year later when Mac at Christmas time if a decent piano could the party was moved to the Conference

## NEW YEAR'S EVE PARTY AND DANCE

*Wednesday, December 31 - 8 p.m. to 1 a.m. - Conference Center*

This annual event has gained a widespread reputation as the best sober celebration anywhere in or around Metro Atlanta on New Year's Eve. Glittering, lavish decorations and a delicious, generous buffet are complemented with music by DJ Dave. Started as a catered party given for alumni by Ridgeview, the alumni got involved in the production, and it has evolved to its present magnitude. It's a grand finale and elegant adieu to another year in recovery. This will be the eighth New Year's Eve Dance at Ridgeview. *Admission is \$5.*



## SUPER BOWL PARTY

*SUNDAY, JANUARY 25 - 5 p.m. - Conference Center*

Watch the 1998 Super Bowl on the giant screens in the Ridgeview Conference Center with your fellow members of the recovery community while munching on hot dogs, chili, and other football fare.

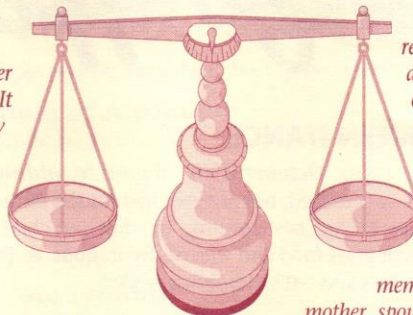




## Alumni Focus: The second stage of recovery —finding and maintaining balance in our life ...

While active in our addictions, the totality of our life was centered around one thought and action: feeding that ever burning need for drink, drugs, or both. It was an unquenchable thirst that slowly and insidiously over a period of time became the focal point of our existence. Every other thought and activity - family, job, social pursuits, spiritual enrichment - took a back seat or was shut out entirely. There was simply no balance in our life.

Now in recovery, either as a newcomer or as a veteran, we need to know and always remember that this thing called "balance in our lives" is a vital and essential followup and support in maintaining the First Stage in Recovery: Working the Steps, Attending Meetings, and Calling Your Sponsor.



Sometimes, especially early in recovery, we find ourselves so totally devoting ourselves to one singular area of our life, positive as it may be, that we either ignore or short-change other equally important facets of our life. The key is maintaining balance in your life by setting aside time for all areas which deserve your attention: as an active and contributing member of The Program; as a father/mother, spouse, or employee; and as a self-aware being who sometimes needs moments of privacy and peace to reflect, to ponder, and just to be.

Maintaining balance in our life - it's tough, it's essential, and it can be achieved. It's the Second Stage of Recovery.

The following personal stories offer thoughts on how some of us strive to maintain balance in our lives.

***My first year of recovery was devoted to doing whatever it took to stay sober.*** After many attempts at sobriety including treatment centers and self-will schemes I was miserable enough to try anything. I was extremely fortunate to get into Ridgeview's 28 day treatment program which gave me the foundation I needed to go back into the real world and try to work a successful program. There was a revolutionary difference from previous treatment centers in the continuing support that Ridgeview offered after treatment in the form of aftercare and the Alumni Association. I didn't feel like I was dumped right back in the same circumstances I came out of and expected to be all better.

I went to AA meetings every day, some with people I knew from treatment, and I started to feel comfortable after a while. This continuity helped me feel safe enough to "keep coming back". I kept going back, and still do. Meetings are the core of recovery and the source from which we learn how to live and stay sober. An AA meeting is an AA meeting, though, and guidelines and set procedures are mandatory for the survival and effectiveness of the group as a whole. Some things which are important to us in our lives and recovery are not appropriate topics for discussion in a meeting. Neither is socializing the focus of AA meetings.



A holistic approach to recovery was ingrained in me and this time it made sense. All aspects of my life were affected by my alcoholism: emotional, intellectual, spiritual, physical and social. The needs I had in each of these areas were either unfulfilled or done to excess, but were being addressed by going to family and individual therapy, going to meetings, working the steps and prayer and meditation. The only issue lacking was the social one.

There were occasions when I was invited or expected to attend a function that was totally out of recovery's realm. We've lived in a very friendly and social subdivision for 10 years and know just about everyone. There are pool parties, weddings, tennis parties, holiday parties, and just because it's Saturday parties. There are also parties given by my husband's company. Guess what they do there? I was petrified at the thought of attending because socializing at parties had been my primary relapse trigger in the past. After much counseling from sponsor and AA friends, I had to make the decision to decline if I felt I would be in danger. Thanks also to good advice, I didn't feel compelled to expose my soul in explanation of my absence. My recovery was much more important than the social opinion of a neighbor. My husband sometimes went (with my blessings) without me. Sometimes he didn't want to either. We still socialized with our friends in non-drinking activities but focused more on family oriented things which included

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## Alumni Focus: The second stage of recovery —finding and maintaining balance in our life ...

our two children. It was necessary and good for our family that we spent more time together. This disease had almost alienated me from them. I isolated very well, and even when physically present, I had no spiritual or emotional presence to offer. My mind was somewhere else.

The longer I was in recovery, the less I had in common with those who weren't. It became a task to interact on a superficial level with "earth people". It was becoming increasingly satisfying to communicate with people who really knew where you were coming from, and you with them. There was "something" missing though. I continued to go to aftercare, joined the Alumni Steering committee and started going to the Saturday night Couples Meeting at the conference center. I was comfortable with just being me with these people and was starting to actually like myself! I could deal with the issues inappropriate to AA meetings in aftercare. Trust and fellowship developed here as well.

Recovery also involves doing service work and I was balking at the idea of this. It was something I definitely would not have done independently. I realized (was told) right then that I'd started to "customize" the program by excluding it. Through the steering committee I got involved with doing meetings on the cottages and planning activities with and for others in recovery. This really struck a chord. The "something missing" was revealed to me as social interactivity, being productive, useful and creative.

The process of working the steps never ends. I learn something new each time. In the process, what you need to know is revealed and changes are sometimes made without your direct intent. "God does for us what we cannot do for ourselves". Things I've learned through recovery about me, my disease and the world have helped me to be more in harmony with the universe rather than fighting against it. Everything I've been given in my new life in recovery has come through interaction with other people: The changes, experiences, knowledge, spiritual awareness, the ability to laugh, be light of heart and have fun have added balance and happiness to my existence. The importance of being able to socialize with others is a vital part of recovery. We can learn and grow through bad examples and experiences as well, so the risks are worth taking. "God works through other people".

Human beings are social animals by nature. The tendency to withdraw and isolate is invoked by our disease. We need to care for and be cared for by others in order to grow and be healthy. I don't want to be a self-centered and introverted blight on society anymore. I have to get out of myself and get involved with others to keep from reverting. I never thought it possible, but I actually like people now, since I quit trying to win their approval. I lost my fear and resentment of them when I gave up dependence upon their good opinion of me.

It concerns me that some people disdain social activities in recovery as unimportant, boring or frivolous when there's serious stuff to do. People new to recovery might believe them and end up as miserable as they are. This contempt before investigation and judgment smacks of a dry drunk or an insecure one who has not reached the point in recovery where they can deal with the issue of balance in their lives. I never heard anyone say that "seriousness is the best medicine". Just read page 132 of the big book if you want corroboration.

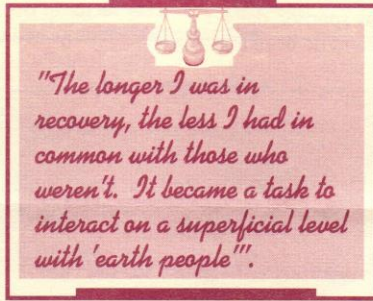
I can and do go to weddings and parties (outside recovery) sometimes now, and sometimes I just don't want to be around people who drink. I never like to be around someone who's

drunk, and don't have a problem leaving if I'm bothered. But I most often socialize with people in recovery. I have more friends now than I ever imagined. I go more places, do more things, have more fun, including parties without alcohol. (I used to think that a contradiction in terms). I haven't danced since I got sober, but I'm not done yet. You don't HAVE to dance to have fun and party. I really like the fact that I can remember the fun I had, and glad it's somebody else asking "what happened after...".

The big book talks about being "happy, joyous and free" as our goal. It's necessary to our recovery to work toward being able to socialize and do recreational things with others. It's the balancing aspect to work, meetings, family, spirituality and therapy. It's something that doesn't have to be feared. Without directly addressing the issues, they worked out by doing the next right thing. I can socialize and party without fear of relapse now because I do so with recovering people. At last, what I need is what I want and it's what I get! That's progress.

Kelli W.

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## *Alumni Focus:* The second stage of recovery —finding and maintaining balance in our life ...

***Having recently celebrated my first birthday in recovery, the subject of "balance in my life" now moves to the forefront as a critical issue that must be dealt with.***

The task of finding a happy medium between my recovery, service work, family, recreation, employment, church, etc. for anyone afflicted with the disease of addiction is not an easy one. However, after reflecting on the previous year's experience and what brought me this far along the path of recovery, several clues on meeting this challenge of "balance in my life" became evident.

For me, first and foremost in the equation of balance are the basics: a morning contact with my sponsor, daily meeting(s), Big Book reading, step work, and no drinking and drugging. Starting the day on my knees with Steps 1, 2, and 3, gratitude for awakening to another day of life in recovery and a statement of willingness to accept whatever God's will for me is that day in whatever fashion it is placed on my plate, are essential habits that must continue.

Second on the balance scale is continued improvement in the relationship that I've established with my Higher Power, whom I choose to call God, including: expressions of gratitude, my desire to do His will, and requesting His continuing guidance on the recovery trail, especially when confusion, discouragement, frustration or thoughts of being overwhelmed are present. Remembering always that "God can do for me what I cannot do for myself" goes a long way toward maintaining the balance.

One of the most important factors in achieving and maintaining balance is my ability to know when and how to say NO! Failure to say no can easily lead me to being overwhelmed by having more on my plate than I am ready, willing, or able to deal with. This can lead to depressing thoughts and guilty feelings when the times come that I don't follow through on a commitment, which in itself, is some of my old behavior. Far worse can be simple burnout. Possibly even thoughts of calling a halt temporarily to some or all portions of my program "for a few days" might evolve. Not saying "NO" can be

extremely dangerous to me in this phase of the program. All of us must develop some insight and foresight to keep from being overwhelmed with commitments and dealing with life on its real terms. Knowing how to politely decline is very critical, in my view.

For me, what has helped to prevent being overwhelmed is as simple as planning a daily, flexible schedule. Think about it! Prior to coming into treatment, my days had no form or shape of scheduling or planning. Each day's purpose was to use and abuse; nothing else mattered. Not family, not work, not so-called friends. Nothing else. If I ever did make plans, they were overridden when the opportunity and the funds to use became available.

Early in my halfway house days, I recognized that the key factor in the staff's patient program was a rigid daily schedule geared towards re-establishing structure in our lives. Initially, like most addicts/alcoholics, I objected.

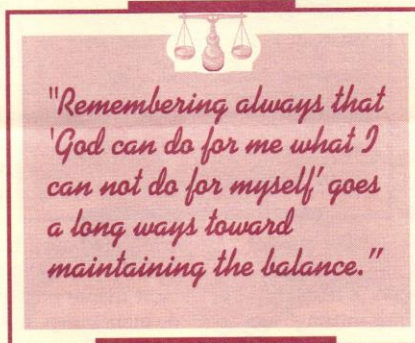
Within a short time though, I came to welcome and accept that daily structure and, upon departure from the halfway house, I drafted a similar schedule for implementation in my daily life. The schedule has incorporated all aspects of my daily life, including family, work, recovery, service work, and church. Hello! It has worked for me, and each day has gotten better.

The final cog in the balancing equation for me is not forgetting quality time with my personal

family and my recovery family. Neither is to be neglected and both are necessary for sharing experiences, love, and support.

Keeping balance in my life can best be likened to Momma Byrd's recipe for your daily dinner plate. She would always say, "You can't overload your plate with just things that you like. Put a little of each dish on your plate. Be flexible and open to trying everything, including things you've never tried. If you eat all that you put on your plate and want more, go and get what you can handle."

*Byrd, III*





## Alumni Focus:

## The second stage of recovery —finding and maintaining balance in our life ...

*There's a lot of satisfaction in a sure thing. Like alcohol. And the bubble it put me in.*

When I was inside that bubble, I didn't want to hear about meetings or check-ins, or recovery. And least of all, balance. The bubble seemed balanced enough for me- most of the time. I listened to my Sinatra CD's, kept the door open to my 8'x10' garden, and thought I'd found peace.

After 18 weeks of rehab, meetings, and listening, my idea of peace has changed. I can now find it standing in line after I realize my dinner reservations aren't worth the powder to blow them to hell. I can look in the phone book instead of always calling 411. I have time—time to be on a steering committee and consider future possibilities. Now I have a future, and I am close enough to see the edges of it.

Little things have become big. I actually see the flowers in my garden and can separate the petunias from the lettuce. I don't have to have Sinatra for background noise. I have found the clarity to think about what is important. Friends, for one thing. In fact, I have a new set of friends and enough of the old ones. It's a warm feeling. Before I kept my mouth shut when things were going badly. And, believe me, they were. Now, people I once called stiff or Puritans have turned out to share the whole picture with me, dismal or not; and I'm happy to return the favor. Words overlap and who's to say what part is friendship and what part honesty. I don't lay awake nights thinking about those words or any others. I can sleep more and wake up in time for breakfast.

Vincent P.

*For many of us, achieving balance in any aspect of our life can be equated to the prospect of maintaining a marble on a pinhead.*

Invariably the weight of our life's commitments tend to gravitate off center and pull us in one direction or another. That same pinhead could maintain a center of balance if the weight was on an equal plane, dispersed cilinclirically, perhaps. For example, a wooden plate would rest comfortably on a point with the weight radiating out in a circle.

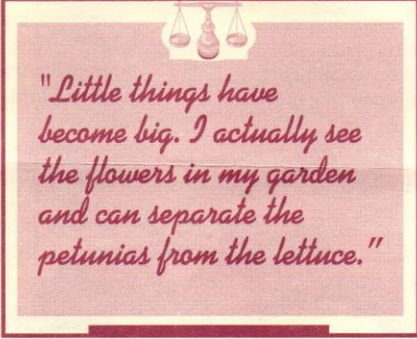
Family and our job are generally our biggest commitments, after recovery, which encompasses all

aspects of our own daily existence. Many times we do not allow ourselves the necessary R & R to recuperate and regenerate. I recall an article that I read in the late '70's that predicted more leisure time and 3-4 day work weeks in the latter part of the century. I think the author of that article could use a 12-Step call. Obviously, Nostrodamus he ain't. Somehow we must reorder our priorities to have "play time."

For my own recreation, endeavoring "to play" has been a world of discovery. Not too many months ago, my recreation consisted of maintaining a constant "state of stupor." I have been able to transfer those expenditures to my "fun account." I now play golf one day a week and tennis three times per week. Walking along the Chattahoochee is a refreshing interlude from the daily grind. Exercising 2-3 times per week keeps me fit and relieves stress. All these things are accomplished while working 50 hours a week and going to at least six meetings.

The bottom line is that I must make the effort to add recreation to my life. It is as essential as oxygen. If necessary, it may be helpful to read something on time management. We have 168 hours each week. Use them to your advantage .

Jim M



*"Little things have become big. I actually see the flowers in my garden and can separate the petunias from the lettuce."*



## Surviving the Consequences:

**EDITOR'S NOTE:** This personal story was originally submitted to appear as part of this issue's focus on "Finding Balance in Our Lives: The Second Stage of Recovery." It was written by a Ridgeview alumnus from a local detention center. However, the editors decided that it was such a powerful, poignant story that it could serve as the basis for what is hoped will be a periodic feature in *The View*. "Surviving the Consequences" will include personal stories shared by members of the recovery community who have experienced traumatic consequences as a result of their active addiction. No matter how dedicated and strong we are in our recovery, there are often consequences which must be paid. But yet, through faith, by working The Program, and through the support and love of others we are able to survive and are able to go on with our lives. We grow in recovery by sharing our experiences, strength, and hope.

### Walking the Incarceration Tightrope

One of the ways we are challenged to make balance in our lives in recovery is the acceptance and experience of extremely difficult situations and feelings, and to do this without alcohol or drugs while being gentle on ourselves through these places. Of course, we all know this basic fact, but I would like to write about my ordeal which has been a part of my going to any length to remain sober and work a program of life the AA way.

When I came into the Cobb County Adult Detention Facility, my confidence was high and my support system enormous. However, within a few hours I had decided that "they," the penal workers, had broken me emotionally and spiritually and that my dear old Higher Power must be punishing me severely. After I had heard the story of Ray D. at the August 1st Speaker Meeting, I cherished his words of gratitude, especially the reflection upon being thankful for simply having a pillow under his head during a difficult night in his life. Well, now I didn't even have a pillow, and I was sleeping on a hard, cold slap of cement- a jailroom floor.

The initial shock was the harsh treatment that I, as well as other inmates, received. When I am spoken to, the tone is authoritative and demanding without a doubt.

What an opposite end of the spectrum I have encountered here. I had been accustomed to nothing but unconditional love, support, and honesty from both my biological and recovering families! So I was totally not ready for what I endured during my first 36 hours at

the detention center. I almost actually gave up. I almost stopped caring about myself. I almost stopped communication with the outside. I almost wanted to stay glued to my mattress. And I almost refused to see visitors. You know the routine: isolation! All I did was cry.

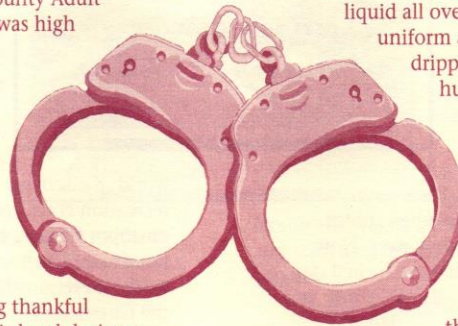
They took my Big Book and my pen and paper. I stood at the turning point, the intake clerk's desk, for 45 minutes while she received neck and shoulder rubs from another employee and talked on the phone to her bank about a closing on a house she was purchasing. I was stripped, searched, and had to reach for the sky in a cold shower while they sprayed gasoline-smelling white liquid all over my body. I dressed in a paper-thin uniform and sent back to the holding tank, dripping wet, freezing cold, and very hungry.

During my first hours here my file was lost, so I had to do the photographing and fingerprinting again. These paperwork mishaps continued on a regular basis. Since I am a professional secretary, you can see why the administration at the jail, or lack thereof, was beyond belief, as well as a big cause of my resentment. I know, let go and let God.

I was sent to the infirmary for a couple of hours for a visit with the nurse. Feeling at home in shackles now, I was led at long last to my mattress on the floor and was given a sweatshirt and a blanket. I encountered warmth! This is when I remembered to be grateful and to use gratitude more in my hourly prayers.

The very next day, a little more than 24 hours since I had turned myself in to begin my sentence, I received a card with a beautiful nature picture and the Serenity

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## Surviving the Consequences:

Prayer from a new friend I had made who has some time in the program. I cried and cried. She wrote such a loving note, and I knew that even though I was in the most horrible place I had ever been that "this too shall pass," and I will soon get back to my recovery family.

I started thinking about my Higher Power and knowing in my heart that He could restore me to sanity through anything that I was enduring. I made some phone calls and was encouraged to hang on to my butt, if that's what it takes.

After talking at length with so many other inmates, I continue to get huge doses of gratitude every day. Cards and letters come in, and I know that I am not alone. I have no worries about my children, my house, or my job, because all are in tender-loving care.

I am able to carry the message "inside those 'inside' rooms," particularly to one hurting, yet caring woman. Once again, I have hope.

I am on my fifth day as of this writing, and I believe I am going to make it from here with a good attitude. It's one long minute at a time in here, but

today I am able to laugh and even dance. Thank you for letting me share, and thank you for sticking by me in my darkest hour.

The treatment from "them" remains the same inside my temporary residence. However, the love, gratitude, and hope I feel is by far great enough for me to keep my balance. And, my Higher Power willing, will be enough to resolve any resentments that arise so I may remain clean and sober when I return to my balancing act on the outside. I have a great life! I've never been able to say that before now. Thank you.

March F.

*(Editor's Note: March is now back home with her children, back in her job, and back at Ridgeview on Thursdays for the Ridgeview Alumni Association Steering Committee meetings. She continues to hope. She continues to serve. She continues to find balance in her life. The Program works, if you work The Program.)*

*"I knew that even though I was in the most horrible place I had ever been that 'this too shall pass,' and I will soon get back to my recovery family."*

### The Twelve Steps of Pre-Program

Some of us have difficulty when it comes to working the "simple" steps outlined in recovery programs. The following steps of "pre-program" may help to give some insight:

1. We admitted we were powerless over nothing- that we could manage our lives perfectly and those of anyone else who would allow us.
2. Came to believe that there was no power greater than ourselves and the rest of the world was insane.
3. Made a decision to have our loved ones and friends turn their wills and lives over to our care, even though they couldn't understand us at all.
4. Made a searching and fearless moral and immoral inventory of everyone we knew.
5. Admitted to the whole world at large the exact nature of everyone else's wrongs.
6. Were entirely ready to make others straighten up and do right.
7. Demanded others to either shape up or ship out.
8. Made a list of all persons who had harmed us and became willing to go to any lengths to get even with them all.
9. Got direct revenge on such people wherever possible, except when to do so would cost us our own lives or, at the very least, a jail sentence.
10. Continued to take the inventory of others and when they were wrong promptly and repeatedly told them about it.
11. Sought through bitching and nagging to improve our relations with others as we couldn't understand them at all, asking only that they knuckle under and do things our way.
12. Having had a complete physical, emotional, and spiritual breakdown as a result of these steps, we tried to blame it on others and to get sympathy and pity in all our affairs.



## Ridgeview Meetings from A to S

*All meetings are open to public and in Ridgeview Conference Center unless otherwise noted.*

### **Adult Children of Alcoholics**

Mondays, 6:30 p.m.

### **AlAnon**

Mondays, 8 p.m.

### **AlaTeen**

Mondays, 8 p.m.

### **Alcoholics Anonymous**

Sundays, 11:15 a.m.

Sunday Night Speaker Meeting, 8 p.m.

Mondays, 8 p.m.

Mondays & Thursdays, Men's AA, 6 p.m.

First Friday of the Month Speaker Meeting, 8 p.m.

Saturdays, 11 a.m. - Women's AA & Men's AA

### **A.N.A.D. (Anorexia/Eating Disorders)**

Saturdays, 10 a.m.

### **Cocaine Anonymous**

Mondays, 8 p.m.

Wednesdays, 8 p.m., Big Book, Pro North Building

Sundays, 8 p.m.

### **Codependents Anonymous**

Thursdays, 6:30 p.m.

### **Depression/Manic-Depression Association (DMDA)**

Bi-monthly (2nd & 4th Wednesdays), 8 p.m.

### **Emotions Anonymous**

Thursdays, 7 p.m., Pro Building North

### **Friday Night Freedoms-Narcotics Anonymous**

Fridays, 8 p.m.

### **Nar-Anon**

Thursdays, 8 p.m.

### **12-Steps Closer - Narcotics Anonymous**

Sundays, 8 p.m.

### **Relationships in Recovery (Couples-Singles)**

Saturdays, 8 p.m.

### **Sex & Love Addicts Anonymous**

Tuesdays, 8 p.m.

### **Step-by-Step (Christ-Centered 12-Step Group)**

Fridays, 8 p.m.



## RIDGEVIEW, ALUMS TO BE FEATURED

*Continued from page 1*

honesty and openness shattered the myth that addiction is only a problem among celebrities and street people," O'Brien said to the steering committee members.

"We believe that this series will be very special and will help so many people get a sense of the struggles, hopes, and joys of being in recovery."

O'Brien noted that there is a possibility that the documentary could be screened on the Ridgeview campus before it is aired nationally in March.

According to O'Brien, the series will debut on March 29. The tentative schedule calls for the first evening to include two segments. Part One will be entitled "Portrait of Addiction," which will feature the stories of eight individuals who are in recovery. Part Two, "The Science of Addiction," will follow and will focus on what science tells us about addiction and the role that it plays in recovery.

On March 30, "Treatment and Recovery" will air. This segment will feature Ridgeview Institute and Project Safe, a publicly funded project in Illinois for addicted mothers.

The series will conclude on March 31 with two segments, "Prevention of Addiction" and "Public Policy." The prevention feature will emphasize early intervention, especially in kids, while the concluding segment on public policy will focus on the public's attitudes towards addiction and the impact that recovering people have on society.

"We hope to follow up the series with videos and outreach to schools and the workplace," O'Brien noted.

On behalf of Moyers and the entire production team, O'Brien thanked the members of the Ridgeview Alumni Association for their many contributions. "We really didn't see all the possibilities of what this series could be until our visits here."

### *The View*

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## PROGRAMS RELOCATED TO MAKE ROOM

*Continued from page 1*

"This is a service that fits in with our mission here at Ridgeview," said President Robert M. Fink. "Although we are seeing a lot of assisted living facilities opening up, there are not enough facilities designed specifically to meet the needs of persons with Alzheimer's."

The treatment of Alzheimer's is a service that is growing at a tremendous rate because of the aging of the American population. The U.S. Special Committee on Aging reports that 47 percent of the current 85 and older population displays symptoms of Alzheimer's or a related form of dementia. This age group is projected to increase 42 percent in this decade and 32 percent between 2000 and 2010.

Moving the Woodland Ridge program into Cottage E brought about the move of Ridgeview's Adult Partial Programs to the first floor of Professional Building North and the Recovery Residences to Cottage B.

Also, the Adult Addiction Services inpatient program is now sharing Cottage C with Adult Psychiatric Services, although the programs remain clinically intact and physically separate from each other.

New Life's outpatient program has moved to the lower level of Professional Building South.

Among upcoming changes slated to be completed by mid-January is the move of the Women's and Child & Adolescent programs from Cottage D to Cottage A and the AB Connector. Cottage D is to be converted to a continuum care facility for the new Woodland Ridge assisted living program which opened in Cottage E this summer.

So that reconstruction could begin on Cottage D-North, the Ridgeview Women's Center moved to D-South in September where it will share a nursing station with Child & Adolescent Services. However, the programs will retain separate entrances. Child & Adolescent Services will continue to enter through the Cottage D lobby, and the Women's Center will use the canopied walkway on the east side of the building.

According to Gronewald, the lease of Cottage A to Cobb-Douglas Mental Health, which has operated a crisis stabilization program on the Ridgeview campus in recent years, will not be renewed at the end of the year so that the facility can be used by the Women's Center and Adolescent & Child Services programs.