

WINTER 2008

NEWSLETTER

A Message from Serenity Lane's Portland Alumni Liaison

Happy Holiday Everyone! By now, I have had the pleasure of visiting most of our 19 Recovery Support Groups at our Barbur, East, and West offices-about 200 patients, and had the privilege of meeting many of you. My position as Alumni Liaison is new to Serenity Lane, but not unfamiliar to some of you. My job is basically, to give you (Alumni), continual opportunities to practice enjoying yourselves and having fun without the use of addictive substances. To many, this may be out of your comfort zone; to be invited to loosen up and play a group game, watch a movie together munching on popcorn, creating something with your hands, giving yourself permission to laugh out loud, or just casually visit and connect with one another without an addictive crutch.

In recovery, it's important to make the decision to be open and do what needs to be done; these social activities are no different. New social skills are learned by practicing with a positive and open attitude.

Every three months as I visit, you will be given an opportunity to practice and experience a part of life that is necessary for healthy balance-fun, recreation, creativity, and socializing. This round of Group Activities will have a slight time adjustment: the 5:30 p.m. and 7:00 p.m. groups will combine for a 6:00-8:00 p.m. session in order to give adequate time for the activity. The other groups will be extended for 30 minutes. Thank you so much for being flexible. You will be getting a reminder from your counselors about two week prior to your date. Remember this is still counted as a Recovery Group session and your attendance is expected. I will do my best to make it worth your while.

Another part of my job description is to organize our Annual Picnic in the summer and our Holiday/Christmas party in December. Many of you came to our first picnic and from the feedback, it seems we all had a great time. We had plenty of food, prizes, games, and entertainment from our DJ and picnic clown. I couldn't have pulled it off alone. So many of you helped on the committees to set up, flip hamburgers, helped with the games, clean up and even got brave and sang karaoke with us. We had a good time!

Another responsibility will be to assist in developing our own Alumni Chapter this coming year. This will be an exciting and great blessing to our recovery community. More information in the next few months. Thank you all and blessings to you all!

Elizabeth Call, Portland Alumni Liaison

Holiday Party

**Saturday,
December 20th
7:00 p.m. to
9:00 p.m. at the
Multnomah Arts
Center, 7688 SW Capitol Hwy.
Portland.**



This is for all Portland Serenity Lane Alumni, Patients, and Families.

You won't want to miss this fun evening of music, delicious holiday desserts, family fun and activities, door prizes, and... Santa may be stopping by! We will also participate in a local service project to help feed the hungry. Directions & map will be on the fliers. If you have extra Christmas decorations or wish to donate a Door Prize, let us know.

If you would like to help by serving on a Committee; check with your counselor for the sign-up sheets or contact Elizabeth Call, Alumni Liaison at 503-244-4500.

QUICK CARAMEL CORN

- 2 C brown sugar
- 1/2 C (stick) butter
- 1/2 C light corn syrup
- 5 Quarts popped corn.

Combine sugar, butter & corn syrup in heavy saucepan. Cook & stir over med. heat until sugar dissolves & mixture boils. Simmer for 5 min. Remove from heat. Pour over popped corn. Stir until all corn is coated. Spread out on waxed paper, cool, break in pieces.

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SEASON EVENTS & IDEAS

THE PORTLAND AREA HAS SO...

many opportunities to enjoy the season; some cost money some don't. Here are a few ideas:

Go to www.about.com and type in "portland holiday events" or something similar. Some of the events are; the Christmas Ships, the Grotto, City Lighting of Trees and celebrations, and local concerts to name a few.

Do a **SNOWTRIP** on the mountain; just above Government Camp is a huge parking lot on the right side of the road by the entrance to Trillium Lake.

Suggestion: take your plastic tubs, a picnic, hot cocoa, and spend hours playing in the snow. You can also walk or snow shoe down to the lake which is a few miles away.

Visit **SILVER CREEK FALLS** when it has crystalized! Don't forget your camera and snacks- there may be a snack bar open. Wear warm clothes, sensible shoes and watch your step. It is a crystal paradise!

Try **BAZAARS** this season instead of the malls for great one-of-a-kind treasures.

Take **TIME OUTDOORS** to just enjoy the serenity and beauty like a winter hike, walk, and/or picnic.

Be a **SECRET SANTA** for someone or be delightfully sneaky and do the 12 Days of Christmas for someone who could use a bit of care.

Make the Holiday dinners **POTLUCK**. Make it even easier by having pizza, lounging around and enjoy spending time with your loved ones and not in the kitchen.

SIMPLIFY/CUT/DEJUNK/DONATE. Do with less. Express love and appreciation more.

STOP AND BREATHE IN the wonders of the season and allow Peace and Joy to be part of who you are.

Create **NEW TRADITIONS** and include new people into your circle.

Invite your buddies and/or family over and plan a **MOVIE MARATHON** of your favorite holiday movies. Have each bring their favorite munchies. Make the *Quick Caramel Corn* recipe for something tasty and natural and use real butter!

Do a **CHRISTMAS COOKIE EXCHANGE**. Each person or family makes up a number of cookie and exchanges for the same number. This saves a lot of baking and it's fun!

STAY HEALTHY; WASH YOUR HANDS! Simply wash your hands in warm, soapy water for about 20 seconds when you come home. Religiously wash after bathroom visits and keep a hand sanitizer with you and use it. Keeping your fingers out of your nose, eyes, mouth, and yes, ears, will GREATLY cut down your chances of getting ill this winter! Bacteria can live up to 3 days.

GIVE SERVICE; anything as small and simple as helping someone open a door, smiling at an older person until you get a grin back, a response of gratitude, assisting a mother with a crying child, being polite, showing gratitude...you know...the true spirit of the season, of Christmas.

Calendar

Saturday, December 20th

Serenity Lane's Portland

Alumni Holiday/Christmas Party

7:00 PM to 9:00 Pm @ the Multnomah Art's Center 7688 SW Capitol Hwy. Portland

Friday, December 26

All Family Barbur Groups this week

will meet @ 6:00 p.m. Friday- Guest Speaker

Friday Evenings

Alumni AA Meetings 6:00 p.m. - Jim O'Rourke

HOLIDAY RELAPSE PREVENTION PLAN

What's happening in your very own Home Groups for the holiday? There are "ALCATHONS" during the holidays, they can go from 4-24 hours, depending on who puts them on. It's a great way for people to stay sober and get to lots of recovery meetings. Often food is served- check in advance. Sober New Year's dances are all over the state too!

Know your Warning Signs.

Physical signs (sweaty palms, tight muscles,..) and Emotional signs that bring up old feelings (irritation, anger, loneliness, sadness, fear..)

Who are you willing to contact during the holiday if you feel any of the above?

Write down a commitment to yourself: a slogan, poem, prayer that will support your willingness to remain sober.

Develop a written escape plan if you get into a situation that might put you at risk.

How will you make this Holiday different from when your were using/ drinking? Have a conversation with those that support your sobriety around these plans.

Remember, sobriety is a gift; enjoy it one day at a time. Happy Holidays Everyone!