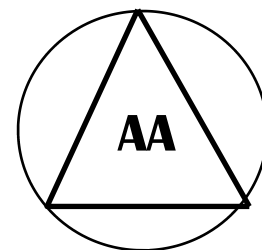


# ArenA

## The newsletter of Continental European Region

CER is one of the 16 Regions in the Service Structure of Great Britain

Winter ,07



### Inside this edition

We support each other	1
AA Money (Part II)	1
We're Leaving!	2
Brussels Group	3
Thoughts for today	3
First Light	4
Future Events	4

### Next Region Meeting

- When: Mar. 1st – 2nd
- Where: Saalbau Bornheim, Arnburgerstrasse 24, 60385 Frankfurt am Main, Germany (unless otherwise decided)
- For further details contact the region secretary via Email [aa-secretary@aa-europe.net](mailto:aa-secretary@aa-europe.net)  
or your Region Rep.
- All observers welcome

### WE SUPPORT EACH OTHER

Ever want the feeling of being a 'newcomer' again? Remember how mysterious and confusing the first AA meeting appeared - that little bit of fear and not fitting in? Yet that first meeting was also mixed with a feeling of relief and 'coming home', among people with a certain positive view in their manner of relating to each other. In our Continental Europe Region, it's possible to have that newcomer experience over and over again. Simply try attending a meeting where the English language is not the mother tongue.

In Europe, it is also very common to meet other English-speakers at these meetings - not only tourists, but adventuresome AAs seeking to carry the AA message to the suffering alcoholic. It is a fact that the Fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous has a great body of experience and literature in English. Although much has been translated, the English-speaking experience is best transferred to international AA's by the means of 'one drunk talking to another'. We understand each other, no matter the language.

On the first weekend of October, the General Service Office of Slovenia held its 14th annual convention on the first weekend of October in a Carpathian mountain hotel tucked away in an alpine valley. Looking at a map of Europe, Slovenia is one of the 'new' countries to arise from the break-up of communist Yugoslavia. AA came to Slovenia, according to personal stories related at the convention, around 1989 - brought by a member of the German Fellowship who had a Slovenian wife. The Big Book has been translated into the Slovenian language, but there is

much translation activity ongoing to make the full body of conference approved literature available to the Slovenian Fellowship.

Two of us from the English-speaking 'Serenity Seekers' Group in Stuttgart, Germany, decided to convention. On the [www.aa-europe.net](http://www.aa-europe.net) website we found a flyer giving all the specifications about time, location, reservations... and reservation *deadlines* which we had missed already. Luckily a phone number to an English speaking **(Fwd to Page 3)**

### AA Money (Part II)

2nd Except about the Treasurers Workshop at Leusden in August 2007.

The discussion on Accounting Practice offered an example of a Group Conscience planning tool which helps guide the actions of the Group Treasurer. Using this tool, a Group can determine specific percentages of the Pot to be applied to pre-defined purposes - such as fixed costs (rent) and other accounting expense categories. The generally accepted accounting principles imply the practice of rigorous honesty, therefore the determination of accounting categories is a matter of Group conscience and the experience of the Treasurer. A list of general AA 'carrying the message' Expense Category Examples were provided, along with the concept of "Set Aside" funds. These set aside amounts are meant to assist the Group with planning the Fellowship activities which are a normal part of a healthy Group; activities that require money such as a Loan to an Event Committee, 'Chips' & Gifts, Speaker Reimbursement, and Printing & Office supplies.

An important function of an Intergroup (IG) treasurer is passing along service experience to members accepting positions as Group



## We Support (contd)

member of Slovenian AA was also provided. We gave him a call, and he said there wouldn't be a problem with late registration. So we made room and board reservations by e-mail, and a few days later we hit the road.

There were around 150 attendees at the convention, including visitors from Italy, Croatia, and Great Britain. It is estimated that there are about 400 active members in the Slovenian Fellowship, and a service structure of groups and Inter-groups (although Slovenia is a relatively small country). The theme of the convention was '**The Promises of the AA Program**' - with meeting topics including *Our Experience Avails Others, Past is the Basis of the Future, & Feelings of Uselessness and Self-Pity Disappeared*. The event was held in the Slovenian language, but there was a gracious accommodation for meetings among the handful of strictly English speakers.

The sobriety countdown was most interesting. The total of 414 years among the Fellowship present reflected a range of Sobriety from 27 years to a few weeks, with an the most attendees standing for the 5-7 year group. And best of all, cake was served!!

The beautiful weather in the mountains offset the long drive to the meeting location. What a pleasure to be in the adventurous spirit and out meeting people outside the Home Group!

It is a wonderful feeling to come to a foreign country and immediately feel at home in the AA community. Perhaps some more people would find the idea of

'international convention hopping' appealing if they tried it. It is a great way to get to know AA and, simultaneously, beautiful cities and areas throughout Europe.

## New Contact details

Dear AA friends,

We are pleased to inform you that the English-speaking group "Pass it on" in Brussels (near Place Madou), now has its own phone number, providing all the necessary information about our meetings as well as direct contact numbers.

May we ask you to update your directory information.

Monday and Thursday at 07:00pm

Closed, English-speaking, Non-smoking meetings

Rue Amédée Lynen 8  
1210 Brussels (Saint-Josse)

From metro Madou: Walk down the Chaussée de Louvain, take the second street on the left.

Tel: +32 (0)479 384 888

## Thoughts for today!

Let go of the past. It's over. If I had gotten in the past what I wanted at the time, I wouldn't have the better things I have now. Have no regrets. We have what we need today. Focus on today's tasks of serving those we care about -- partner, family, friends, clients, students, people I encounter during the day. I always am a better trainer when I focus on what my clients need in order to reach their dreams.

Now that we are sober and practice all the principles of the program in all of our daily affairs, listen to the dreams our HP sends us today as unexpected intuitions, letting them lift us. Before I crash-landed in the program over three decades ago, following my dreams got me into more and more trouble. With momentum in the program, I began to

trust my intuitions and dreams more and more, always waiting for time to give them some perspective before acting on them. Pray for what we want. When I do, if I don't get what I want, I usually have received something better. The deeper the request, the greater the result, in my experience, but not on my time schedule.

Rest serene in the care of HP today. That's the source of our real happiness, not any of this life's temporary glittery stuff that movies and advertising promote. I have been in both and seen the other side. I prefer reality, as difficult as it may seem at times. A trust in HP, when I practice it, has always carried me successfully forward. Faith is not something I have. I can only act with it, not hold it.

## GSO

P.O. Box 1,  
10 Toft Green,  
York YO1 7NJ.  
England

Tel: +44 (0)1904 644026

Fax: +44 (0)1904 629091

Email: [lemongsoyork@btconnect.com](mailto:lemongsoyork@btconnect.com)  
<http://www.alcoholics-anonymous.org.uk/>

**Don't forget to update your Group's meeting data with GSO at least annually . Otherwise your group will be dropped from the listing. You can do this online**

## Upcoming Vacancies

**The following CER service positions will shortly become vacant:-**

**Region Secretary – March 2008**

**Four Delegate positions – June 08**

Anyone interested in, and qualified to, take on these jobs are invited to attend the relevant Region meeting where the elections will take place or to send in a written service CV to the Chair

## Dates of Region Meetings in 2008

**March 1st + 2nd  
Sept 6th + 7th**

**May 31st + June 1st  
Dec 6th + 7th**

Venues to be announced

**Useful Facts:** The Region Bank Account in Bitburg has been closed as of 31.10.07. Please do not make any more transfers to this account. The new bank account details will be provided as soon as available.

Newsletter Contributions: [arenaguys@gmx.de](mailto:arenaguys@gmx.de)

## Future Events (full details on Website)

Nov 30th – Dec 3rd **"Courage to Change"**  
[2007 Costa del Sol Convention, Fuengirola, Malaga, Spain](#)

Feb 1st – 3rd **"Happy, Joyous & Free"**  
[19th Triborders IG Convention, Ostend Belgium](#)

Jul 11th-13th **XIVth National Convention, Szolnok, Hungary**  
Contact: [aa\\_peter@freemail.hu](mailto:aa_peter@freemail.hu)

**Watch out for new events by checking the website regularly.**

My grateful thanks to all the contributors. You make Arena for the rest of us.

Steve R.  
Editor

## First Light

The first light of a new day,  
is like the first hope for a new life.  
In the beginnig it is only darkness,  
then the black turns to blue.  
The pain of the blues  
is the ticket price to the new life.

The pain is not optional.

Blue turns to green  
and like the vibrant green of my garden  
which springs forth  
after the humility and total death of  
cold winter,  
I stand before you today, humble but  
arisin.

The humility is not optional.

Then a broad band of lighter blue ap-  
pears on the horizon, like a braod road;  
the road of recovery, laid out before us.  
We just have to be willing to go there.

Willingness is not optional.

Now it is light enough to make out the  
lone tree,  
clinging to the steep rocks of a barren  
island in the sea;  
That is like one person alone fighting  
for survival,  
working their daily program.

Survival is no longer optional.

Then comes the first orange light, bring-  
ing with it the memory of bright oran-  
ge,  
brilliant yellow and gold.  
The feelings of being joyous, happy and  
free flood me  
because I am still sober, just for today.

Sobriety is not optional.

Then comes the deep red sun over the  
horizon,  
at first dark through the haze then blin-  
dingly white,  
over the morning ocean.  
I am grateful to be alive.

Gratefulness is not optional.

SVR