

Brown Baggers Group History

North Solano Intergroup Archives

The Brown Baggers AA Meeting originated in 1981 and was held in the Triple S Club in Fairfield. The Brown Baggers started at the same time the Triple S Club was established. Originally, the location was in a warehouse off Union Street (an area behind the new jail in downtown Fairfield). The Triple S Club name stood for Serenity, Sobriety and Service. The name of Brown Baggers came from its being the first lunchtime meeting in Fairfield when many brought their lunch in a "brown bag."

The original members of Brown Baggers were also on the board of the Triple S Club and included; Dan and Liz Leslie, Glen and Pam S., Judy T., Fred V., and "Mac". Some of these members have moved, are no longer actively attending the Brown Bagger meetings, or have passed on to the big meeting in the sky.

The original location in the warehouse was pretty "ratty" according to one old-timer. Mac and Fred did most of the carpentry work to fix the place up. The meeting was small at first with only 4 to 6 tables. In the winter they stoked the wood stove with spare wood scraps. With no ventilation or exhaust fans, it got so smoky in the winter that you couldn't see. In the summer, it was hot in there.

After about 2 years, they lost their permit to hold meetings in the warehouse.

There was not enough parking for both the customers of nearby businesses and the club and AA members. Some of the townspeople resented having a bunch of drunks in the area, so the Triple S Club and the Brown Baggers meetings moved over to old Suisun into another warehouse in an area across the street from the old Social Security office. In this location, the membership of the club and the attendance at AA meetings grew. In the beginning they used only half of the warehouse, but eventually rented both halves. They were then able to have a separate AA meeting room, a room to play pool which also had a kitchen, and a third area with a TV set and couches where a lot of members used to sit and work with newcomers and sponsees.

A lot of people were helped there in those days. The club used to have spaghetti feeds, hamburger fry nights, Friday poker nights and other events. Early members remembered good social times there. A touch of humor in the decor of the club was provided by a porcelain toilet that was labeled "The Pity Pot." Judy and Fred painted it with gold paint and the seat was covered with "ermine." If assigned the "Pity Pot" you had to sit on it carefully because it was on a platform with rollers.

By this time, Brown Baggers had a meeting every day of the week at noon. Other AA groups moved into the Triple S as well. In addition to the aforementioned members who helped found the group, Brown Baggers was attended by Marie C., John S., Vivian H., Annie P., Ed J., John C., Smoky and Big Dawn, Gomer R., Carolyn J. and Bill G.

Trouble began when secretaries left the meeting collection in some wooden lockers in the club. There was a break in and the money was stolen. Additional problems developed when the club didn't want people to stay there after a meeting unless they were members of the Triple S Club. It was \$6.00 a month to be a member of the club. When they began to have so many AA meetings every day, they stopped having as many social events and people began to question why they even needed to belong to the club and pay dues. At this point, a large group of members left the Triple S and formed the Into-Action Fellowship in Suisun, which is still going today.

When the Triple S Club folded because they could no longer pay the rent, Brown Baggers moved to their present location, Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Catholic Church on Dover Avenue in Fairfield (" sometimes referred to as the "Big Gold Golf Ball. ") The arrangement with the church was made in which a meeting could be held in a room on the second floor, everyday at noon with the obvious exception of Sunday.

Brown Baggers continues to be a thriving group and reaches out to alcoholics who need a midday meeting in Fairfield.

The group information was put together from interviews with Gomer R., Art H., Carolyn J., Bill G., Jim J., and Marie C. I would especially like to thank Gomer for his contribution.

--Jeannette T.