



Save the Date!

Annual Conference 2016

AATH 29th Annual Humor Conference & Humor Academy, April 7-10, 2016 at the Hilton Phoenix | Mesa.



Winning the fight against cancer, every day.

CTCA is the home of integrative and compassionate cancer care. They never stop searching for and providing powerful and innovative therapies to heal the whole person, improve quality of life and

This complimentary Humor Connection newsletter is one of the many ways that AATH fulfills our mission to study, practice and promote healthy humor. You can join our efforts by joining AATH at [www.aath.org](http://www.aath.org)

Letter From the President

Carol Burnett is credited with the quote: "Comedy is tragedy plus time". Many of you who attended the Philly conference know that my mother's "Doily Lama's" crochet work was my personal tribute to her as well as a fundraiser for AATH. Mom just passed away this past month from Alzheimer's disease. I am grateful to all of you who conveyed condolences, expressed your enjoyment of her needlework art and shared stories of survival during times of grief. Your comforting words and shared laughter were greatly appreciated. Thank you!

Humor is indeed needed in times of tragedy. We can begin to heal from even the most challenging circumstances when we practice laughter in our lives. Whether you are suffering from personal illness, have experienced tragedy or are trying to cope with life's frustrations (like trying to remember your phone password), know that AATH supports your efforts to experience humor and find laughter.

With humerger, Mary Kay Morrison AATH President

Planning for the Future! Fall AATH Board of Directors Retreat



The balloon-popping contest, dinner at the amazing Organ Pizza place and best of all, some incredible teamwork were part of October 2-4th weekend spent in Phoenix, AZ. The AATH board gathered at the beautiful Mesa/Phoenix

Member News

A Sketchy Business

Artist Kyle Edgell was recently profiled in the November 2015 issue of Valley Business Front magazine in Virginia – mostly she talked about her involvement with AATH and her personal goals which include "to teach health professionals how to see what is funny, not necessarily to be funny."

If you've attended any of the festivals or nonprofit events in the Virginia area over the years,

restore hope.  
1-877-219-7471  
[Visit CTCA](#)

### **St. Edmund's Severed Arm: Odd Tourist Attractions**

Last month, we brought you a tombstone that looks like a giant clothespin (in Vermont) found on [www.roadsideamerica.com](http://www.roadsideamerica.com).

This month, I'm heading to my home state of Connecticut to see St. Edmund's severed arm. That's right...a severed arm. The arm belonged to a 13th century archbishop and is on display near Mystic, CT at a small religious retreat at Enders Island. I can't believe I grew up here and never about this – great field trip idea!

It's under glass, so unfortunately, visitors can't shake St. Edmund's hand. Read about it [here](#).

Got an odd tourist attraction in your neck of the woods? Let us know about it and we'll feature it in our next newsletter.

Send them to Ann Zuccardy at [zuccardy@gmail.com](mailto:zuccardy@gmail.com) to be included in upcoming issues of Humor Connection.



Hilton Hotel, which is the site of our April 7-10, 2016 conference. We were delighted with the picturesque venue for our 29th annual conference and thrilled to hear from 2016 co-chair Jae Pierce Baba about the plans for our upcoming "Rev'ing Up Your Humor" conference.

The focus this year's annual retreat was on member recognition and the financial well being of AATH. Weekend accomplishments included the:

- Continuation of the AATH action plan to monitor board progress and board development.
- Review of policy and AATH by-laws.
- Restructure of membership designations and membership recruitment and retention initiatives'.
- Discussion about our website updates and outreach.
- Development of sponsorship materials and outreach.
- Plans for 2017 conference with Sporty King as Conference Chair.
- Celebration and future features of the new AATH Humor Voice newsletter publication.
- Celebration of first AATH Local Event in San Diego and a process for replicating this successful event in international locations.
- Celebration of our on-line AATH store as an opportunity for our members to purchase fun items while supporting AATH.

Feel free to contact any of our board members with your ideas and suggestions. All board contact information can be found on our website [membership directory](#). Your feedback is vital to our continued growth!

### **Get Your Kicks on Route 66!**

Rev'ing Up Your Humor at the

chances are you've encountered Kyle, along with her hat and sketchpad. Meet her again, in this magazine article:

Kyle Edgell [article](#).

### **In Memory**



Lenny Dave recently reached out to us with this info: The other day, I received a letter from Debra Hyatt Handley, the daughter of our beloved **Esther Hyatt**, recipient of the 2011 Spirit of AATH Award. The letter read...

"I wanted to let you know that our Mom, Esther Hyatt, passed away peacefully on October 6 at 5:00am. I know she cared about you very much... and her 'Comedy Gang,' too. In lieu of flowers, please consider donating to the Alzheimer's Association. Thank you."

To that, all I can add is that we know AATH brought many smiles to Esther's face, laughter to her lungs, and much happiness to her heart. For that, we can all find something positive in this otherwise very sad news.

For more information on the "Jack & Esther Hyatt Alzheimer's Research Fund," click [here](#).

AATH Conference this  
April 7-10, 2016

We are going to have nonstop fun and education. Keynote speakers that wow you, make you think, laugh, and learn. There will be CE credits available and plenty of sessions. We have humor samplers along with choices of break outs...something for everyone. Pack up your western gear and head out to Arizona for a great conference. Registration has begun! You know you're going to come anyway, so register early and get a free new AATH t-shirt. I checked out the hotel and it's comfy and waiting for us to fill the place with laughter. Sign up today! Brenda, and Jae and Beth, conference co-chairs.

### **How to Treat a Veteran** *by Judy Oliverio*

As Veteran's Day is approaching, please review and make a plan to help a Veteran. For many, every day is a battle.

As an USAF Veteran and member of AATH, I want to share easy steps on how to interact with Veterans in your community. As an American, you can serve your country by supporting them and acknowledging their sacrifice. Go on your own mission today to find them at your work, church, school, business, or local events.

1. Thank them for their service.
2. Ask them about their mission.
3. Ask to sit and talk/listen to them.
4. Acknowledge their struggle with physical or mental challenges.
5. Make them laugh and smile.

Number 5 may be the most important, many Veterans find tears, but far less find laughter in their hearts. Their rucksacks are heavy, take time out to lighten their mood and their burdens. Please share this post to increase

Contributions may be acknowledged to:  
Debra Hyatt Handley  
141 Canaly Ln.  
Louden, TN 37774.

Debra's email is:  
curealzaz@aol.com

**SEND YOUR MEMBER NEWS:**  
info@aath.org

## **Book Review**

Thank you, *DIANE ROOSTH*, for the Book Reviews every month!!

**The Gift of Cancer, A Life Changing Book: Turn Your Tragedy into a Treasure...A Treasure Map to Happiness**  
*by Wendy Treynor, PhD*

"An inspiring, uplifting and joyful read!" according to Karyn Buxman, RN, MSN, this book offers a deeper look into the power of positive thinking and the benefits of Social Psychology in helping us understand resilience. Challenged by rejection, depression, loss of money and career, our young author shows tremendous wisdom and insight as she becomes a cancer survivor. Dr. Treynor identifies the importance of self-love and gratitude as important to healing and meaning in life after a major illness. She speaks of the power of the mind over the body, reminiscent of Dr. Bernie Siegel's Exceptional Cancer Patients first identified in his 1990 book Love, Medicine and Miracles.

Dr. Treynor talks about her "sudden insight" with her Lymphoma cancer diagnosis into understanding "why

awareness of Americans on the importance of laughter in recovery for our brave Veterans with PTSD and other illnesses. Please keep posting until we educate 10,000 Americans. Salute your Veterans, Service Members, and their families today.

*Judy is a former captain at the US Air Force and works in a VA hospital in California. She has graduated from AATH Humor Academy Level II.*

### **"Simply Smiling" as Therapy** *by Florence Ditlow*

I'm not a stranger to smiling; it comes naturally. I'm not worried about the appearance of my smile; though I check for flecks of spinach between front teeth. Mom called my smile "charming."

Now, in retirement though, I've taken on a few challenges, helping an elderly relative who is quite a difficult person as well as an often unwelcome guest. Years of stressful encounters and half-way solutions have yielded finally to something that works to reduce this ongoing stress: smiling.

The scene is right out of a sitcom, with grandpa poking his head into the room, then knocking afterwards. Today he seeks doctor appointments, from me as he says he can't hear on the phone. This is always a high priority, a MUST! I can drop whatever I'm busy with because, if I don't he will barge in every hour on the hour. I call, I breathe, then I remember, as the recorded music plays, to smile. Sure enough, all is in order, and I write down the appointment for him.

I discovered that smiling works backwards on my stress; after the appointment scheduling, I smile as I write. Then, when Mr. Impatient

some people are happy making others unhappy" and then uses this "understanding to heal herself and others." She shares how because of her journey seeking medical treatment and uplifting mind body spirit connections, she triumphed and is very much alive today.

Our author speaks of the importance of social support, including family visiting a patient in the hospital, and the challenges of the costs of health care to the patient and their families. She identifies Socialization Theory which suggests that "to stake our self-worth on the standards of any social group is misguided, and to regard it as a true indicator of our inherent value is delusion." She talks about how her life journeys, like driving through San Francisco, reminds her that "joy exists" and that freedom is "a state of mind" dependent on personal thoughts not those of others.

Life lessons she shares include: "Find the Humor in Your Fate"; "Cultivate Joy", "Anything is Possible", "What You Feel Is Real", "Appreciation is Happiness", "Having What You Love is Freedom." Wise and insightful she shares a metaphor: "A life lived and the meaning and richness of a life lived cannot be fit into a box." She states that our lives are lives "unfinished", our work is work "unfinished", and that now "is the time for you to finish your life's work" and to "share it".

Kudos to Dr. Treyner for this book filled with inspiring moments, gratitude, and one woman's journey of self-discovery.

returns, he takes the slip, booming  
“Thank you,” never noticing I’d  
interrupted the laundry routine to pacify  
him, pacification which is akin to putting  
out a fire.

Then, in his absence, I smile and  
breathe, smile and b r e a t h e.

There is another use for smiling,  
associated with recreation. I went  
snorkeling with a new face mask that  
was somewhat uncomfortable. I tried a  
few adjustments unsuccessfully, then  
as a fish stared into my mask,  
triggering laughter, I remembered to  
smile. I relaxed more, my neck eased  
and the mask adjusted to my cheeks!  
The smile bent my brain toward play,  
and playfulness comes easier.

Florence Ditlow RN is a member of The  
American Association for Applied and  
Therapeutic Humor. She wrote “Long in  
the Tooth: surviving chronic illness with  
a sense of humor.”

*Members who would like their book  
to be considered for an upcoming  
Humor Connection book review,  
contact [info@aath.org](mailto:info@aath.org). Please use  
“Book Review Submission” in the  
subject line.*

**DONATIONS TO AATH ARE TAX  
DEDUCTIBLE:** *Thank you for your  
continued support of AATH!*

You can write a check to AATH and  
send to the office or you can:

1. **AATH 2015 CONFERENCE  
SPONSORSHIP:** There are many  
ways that you can be a sponsor for  
our AATH conference for as little as  
\$50.

2. **AMAZON SMILE:** Did you know  
that every time you order from  
Amazon a percentage of your order  
can be allocated to AATH? The  
reminder will come up  
automatically once you sign up! So  
easy!

3. **SCHOLARSHIP DONATION:**  
You can designate your gift to the  
Patty Wooten or Ed Dunkelblau  
scholarship fund.

To make a tax-deductible gift to  
AATH, you may send check  
donations to the AATH office at:  
*220 East State St., Floor G  
Rockford, IL 61104*

**MEMBER ASSISTANCE:** If you  
need help with renewing your  
membership, or if you forget your  
member website log-in information,  
reach out to Michele St. Clair and  
her team at **815-708-6587**.

---

**REMINDER: AATH is officially recognized as a 501c3 and has been vetted by UNITED WAY. If you or anyone you know makes donations through United Way, please consider designating a portion of your generous gift to AATH and please let others know of this opportunity.**