



## **Step Five: Admitted to God, to ourselves and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs.**

### **Fifth Step Jitters**

Does anyone know an A.A.er who just couldn't wait to do their first Fifth Step? I have heard others witness that they waited months, or even years before making their confessions. We alcoholics love to keep secrets. Besides, we dread telling anybody about the terrible things we have done under the influence of our addiction. What would our kind and loving sponsor with years of sobriety think of us? Our past sins were beyond redemption.

In 2010 my family "suggested" I get treatment for my alcohol abuse. In treatment we worked Steps One through Four. At the end, the suggestion was that we get out, find a sponsor and continue to work the steps starting with Step Five, of course.

I, however, had been cured of my alcoholism and there was no real hurry to do any of this. I was fortunate enough to leave treatment just before Christmas. I spent the holidays with my family and survived New Year's Eve without any problem. Life was good. Little did I know that the worst years of my addiction lay ahead.

Within six weeks, I picked up right where I had left off and continued the downward spiral. Like many, I lost just about everything in those years. I was living alone in my office where the rent was way overdue, sleeping on an air mattress and buying jugs of alcohol with the little money I had remaining.

The second time through treatment when it became time to get a sponsor I decided to try to find someone I could relate to. I "picked up" again, but was going to several meetings a week. Thank God for Tradition Three! My only personal criterion for a sponsor was to find someone older than me. How scientific! But I lucked out and stumbled onto a great sponsor, who through love and great tolerance brought me to the day when the miracle happened.

The first Step Five we did was not what one would wish for. I held back, keeping secrets. Luckily, my sponsor did not judge. He also shared enough of his story to help me understand I was not alone, not the worst person in the world.

Holding back secrets left me feeling uneasy. I knew that I needed to do a second Step Five and really dig deep. When we sat down, he told me to let out the secrets I was hoping to take to the grave with me. Whatever thoughts I may have had of holding back evaporated, and I knew what many of those transgressions were.

At the end of our meeting I felt a great relief because I had let go of those secrets. Like a great sponsor would do, he did not judge, gave me a hug and reassured me that I was no different than any other AA when it came to having a "past."

What would have happened, if I had found a sponsor and worked a Step Five right after that first treatment? I'll never know, but a great deal of pain and demoralization might have been avoided.

- Ken S., No Time Like The Present, Roseville, MN.

**Tradition Five: Each group has but one primary purpose -- to carry its message to the alcoholic who still suffers.**

There is a Fifth Tradition Group within our group. We think it helps examine our group conscience every once in a while, especially that part of our conscience which could tell us whether or not we are properly performing our primary purpose.

You remember that Tradition Five reads: "Each group has but one primary purpose—to carry its message to the alcoholic who still suffers." That seems to place a responsibility on a group, over and beyond the responsibility of the individual who might meet with or sponsor a suffering alcoholic. There have been at least a few occasions when one of us after visiting with a prospect once or twice will decide the fellow is "not ready" or "too far gone" or "not want help to stop;" and then proceeds to forget him, despite the fact that the suffering alcoholic had approached the group for help.

Our little Fifth Tradition Group (made up of four or five new and old members) tries to keep track of such prospects and according to their judgment, may suggest that another member—closer perhaps because of neighborhood, vocation, or age group—give this still-suffering alcoholic an occasional phone call or suggest a pick-up for a meeting that might have some special mutual interest. Sometimes it works. . .at least it makes us feel that we are giving the fellow or girl another chance, perhaps in recognition of the multitude of "another chances" given each of us.

We ask our members to keep this "group-within-the-group" informed of all prospects that come to us, through Intergroup, local phone exchange, clergy, doctors, or when they might just come to our open meetings, seeking information for themselves. We don't hound or chase after those who don't want us, but there probably are some who need just a little more encouragement.

Also, this group extends its interests to those who are new in AA and those who seem to have difficulty in stopping and even to those around for awhile who haven't picked up any group activity or made any firm friendships. Oft times this group will suggest that one of us become a "friend" to such a person. We don't appoint sponsors for the newcomer because we believe that each one has the personal privilege of selecting their sponsor, but many times this "friend" can make the newcomer feel more welcome, and him/her better understand what is going on. We don't spy or pry or try to find out when the fellow or girl had his last drink. . .we just want to be sure they know we are interested and eager to help when asked.

Our Fifth Tradition group meets occasionally to review the group membership to remind others that someone has been around for a few months and may be ready to talk at an open meeting or lead a closed meeting. They often suggest a member might be helped if he/she were encouraged to get into a new group activity, or someone else is getting close to an anniversary and should be given a chance to decide whether he or she wants to celebrate at an open meeting. They also greet our guest speakers at open meetings and see to it that we appreciate their visit. They keep their eyes open for any new faces which might indicate that another suffering alcoholic is seeking help; and try to neglect no one.

- Anonymous

(reprinted from *Groupline*, Sioux Falls Intergroup, May 2012, with permission)

***The Lifeline: Purpose Statement***

*The Lifeline* is the monthly newsletter of the St. Paul and Suburban Area Intergroup, Incorporated. It is about, by, and for groups and members of the A.A. Fellowship. Opinions expressed herein are not to be attributed to A.A. as a whole, nor does publication of any article imply endorsement by either A.A. or Intergroup. We welcome articles on a Step, Tradition, or Concept, in addition to descriptions of personal experience. We also welcome cartoons and drawings expressing the wry side of our A.A. experience.

Please email your article to [lifeline@aastpaul.org](mailto:lifeline@aastpaul.org), or send it by regular mail to Lifeline Editor, St. Paul Intergroup, 608 Seventh Street West, St. Paul MN 55102. Materials or articles mailed to us cannot be returned unless accompanied by a self-addressed stamped envelope. Intergroup reserves the right to edit submissions for clarity, language, length, and content that might violate A.A.'s Traditions, etc.

## Notes from Your Board

My name is Vance, and I am an alcoholic. I have been serving on the Saint Paul Intergroup board as a member at large for the last year. What I can tell you about this position is that it gets me out of the battleground that is my brain. When I first sobered up the idea of doing acts for other people was completely alien to me. My sponsor's first task for me that included service was raking leaves for a local church; it was then that I knew I was being re-built as a man who actually had something to offer. That's what service has done for me in sobriety.

After a few days of sobriety I still have to get out of myself and help the still suffering alcoholic. I was approached by two friends of mine that attend my home group; they came up with the idea for me to be on the intergroup board. At first I was apprehensive but this is a 'yes' program and agreed to put my name in the proverbial hat. A year later I still have no idea what I'm doing on this board but I am grateful to be a part of something bigger than me!

Vance O., 2019 Member at Large

## District 8 Report

Greetings from District 8!

After having our February district meeting cancelled, it felt good to get back on track with our March meeting where Dennis B. shared with us the structure of our upside-down triangle. Nancy T., who is our Area 36 alternate chair, will have given a presentation at our April meeting on how to conduct a workshop.

Our committees are busy. Our Accessibilities chair continues to work with our ad hoc committee on getting some Karen translations done. The committee has contacted a few other areas that are also working on this project. He also has purchased a set of Braille literature which can be borrowed if someone has a use for it. Contact [dist8@area36.org](mailto:dist8@area36.org) if you are interested.

Our Public Information chair has arranged to have an AA information booth at the Ramsey County Fair. The fair will be held July 10 through July 14, 2019. We will be looking for people to staff the booth. You can come to the district meeting or let your GSR pass on the information.

Our Corrections chair is currently looking for people to serve on his committee. He plans to gather a list of groups who are currently doing corrections commitments and finding places which could use AA literature or would like a meeting brought to them. If you are interested, contact [dist8@area36.org](mailto:dist8@area36.org)

District 8 is also co-sponsoring a workshop with District 13 called "Taking Inventory" which will include a panel discussion on both personal and group inventory, followed by a question and answer period. The workshop will be held on Saturday, May 18, 2019 from 12:00 to 2:00 pm. Did I mention we will start with lunch? (First things first). It will be held at the Coon Rapids United Methodist Church, 10506 Hanson Blvd. NW, Coon Rapids, MN.

This is a short summary of some of the things District 8 is working on. If you would like to be a part of that, please come to our district meeting and get involved. The district meeting is the third Wednesday of the month at 7:30 pm, held in Room 108 of the Fairview Community Center on County Road B between Cleveland and Fairview Avenues. Everyone is welcome, you do not need to be a GSR (General Service Representative) to attend.

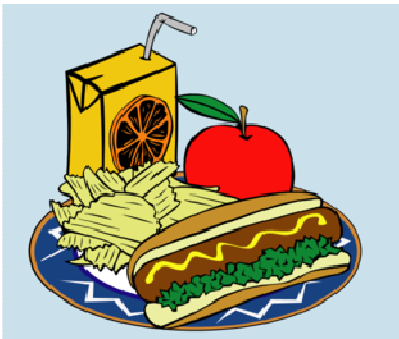
Thank you for letting me be of service,

Sue M., District 8 DCM

St. Paul Intergroup  
~ 52nd Anniversary ~

# Open House

Date: Saturday, June 22nd  
11:00 AM to 3:00 PM



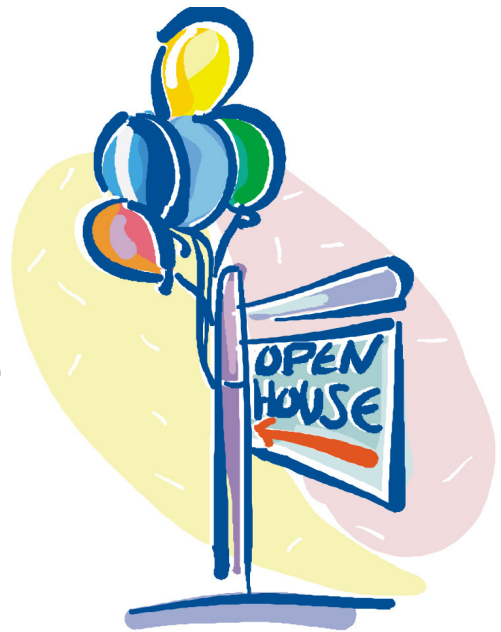
Join us for fellowship,  
food and fun!!

**608 7th Street West**  
**St. Paul, MN 55102**

(SE Corner of Michigan & West 7th)

For More Info Call Us:

**651-227-5502**



# Announcements & Updates

## HOOTS!

### WANTED: One New Night Owl Committee volunteer

The Night Owl Committee members take turns carrying the back-up Phone for one week at a time. We help out if a volunteer has a problem and we also make the reminder calls.

Requirements:

- >1 year sobriety
- >Answer the back-up phone during your rotation
- >Experience with Night Owl
- >2 year commitment

Frank N.  
Night Owl Committee chair

Night Owl Tidbit: Do you have an interesting Night Owl story you want to share? Send an e-mail to [nightowl@aastpaul.org](mailto:nightowl@aastpaul.org)!

## Volunteers Needed!

**Gopher State Roundup XLV** will be held over Memorial Day weekend (May 24-26) at the Double Tree Bloomington. It takes an incredible amount of work to make it the exciting spiritual weekend that it is. If you would like to become part of making it all happen, Sign-up electronically at [gopherstateroundup.org](http://gopherstateroundup.org).

Service opportunities include: Greeters, Ushers, Tickets, Registration, Chair "Room to Grow," Staff the Information Booth, Security, and AI-Anon.

## Group and Area News

**New Meeting:** *Safe Haven Too* is now hosting a Sunday 11:00AM meeting at Jerry's Foods (2nd Floor), 7760 Hargis Parkway, Woodbury 55129. The meeting is Open, Women only, All-Ages, 12 & 12, and Accessible.

**New Meeting:** The *112: Read This Book* group is now meeting Wednesdays 10:00AM at the Highland Park Messiah Episcopal Church, 1631 Ford Parkway, St. Paul 55116. The meeting is Closed, Mixed, Seniors (50+), Big Book Topic Study, and Accessible.

**New Meeting:** The *Bright Promise Women's Group* is now meeting Saturdays 9:30AM in the Graffiti Room at the First Covenant Church, 1280 Arcade Ave, St. Paul 55106. The meeting is Closed, All-ages, 12 & 12. Enter from East Parking lot.

**New Meeting:** The *Saint Croix Alano* added a Thursday 6:30PM meeting to their roster. The Meeting is Open, Mixed, All-Ages, and reads from Dr. Bob and the Good Oldtimers. Focus is on AA History.

**Please Let us know about any meeting changes, new meetings, or any meetings that are no longer. Please email: [lifeline@aastpaul.org](mailto:lifeline@aastpaul.org)**



**Looking for a Service Opportunity?  
Become a St. Paul Intergroup Night Owl!**

Upcoming Night Owl Orientations:  
**Saturday, May 18th, Jun 15th, July 20th**

**Every Third Saturday from 10:00 -11:00 AM**

St. Paul Intergroup Office

608 Seventh Street West - St. Paul, MN 55102

**To RSVP please call: 651-227-5502**



**St. Paul Area Intergroup Representatives' Meeting Minutes, March 19th 7:30pm**

1. Opened with the Serenity Prayer, introductions, and the reading of the Primary Purpose of Intergroup.
2. Minutes from last month were reviewed, Tom motioned and Mary seconded, motion approved.
3. Treasurer's Report, –To note – Total contributions are down. See Treasurer's Report for full financial details.  
Contact Justin at treasurer@aastpaul.org.
4. Office Report, Dennis B. – The Office – We have a new Anonymity Placard, New book General Service Talks From Bill. The God Word Pamphlet is in again. Due to increase in credit card transactions going up we have raised our prices. Email lifeline@aastpaul.org.
5. Night Owl Report, Frank N. – All shifts were covered this month. See additional info in the hoots. Contact Frank at NightOwl@aastpaul.org or leave a message at the intergroup office.
6. Website Report, Sergey gave the report. We are up 5 Meetings and the security has been changed on all three sites. The maps have been fixed they now match the zip codes. Contact Jonathan or Sergey at webservant@aastpaul.org.
7. Outreach Program – Volunteers are still needed for visiting meetings. Refer to the Outreach Info Sheet for full instructions. Contact Jimmy D. at outreach@aastpaul.org.
8. Update from the Board, Rob C. gave report. , Gave overview of what we do on the Board and the committees and reported that we extended our lease for 1 more year. The building was bought and we have new owners.
9. Liaison Reports: District 8 Mike C, Last month's meeting was canceled due to weather.; District 15 Jennifer gave report – Workshop March 30th, Starts at 11:30, Area Archivist and a District 15 member will share. Corn Beef and Cabbage will be served; District 19 No Report.
10. Upcoming Intergroup Events: Spring Fling – April 27th, 4:30 start time, Carnival activities, dinner and Speaker at 7:00 PM
11. Old Business:
12. New Business:
13. Group AA Announcements:  
 OMD Potluck & Sobriety Recognition First Friday at 7pm.  
 Main Idea Pot Luck and Sobriety Recognition, 2nd Friday at 7:30  
 Happy, Joyous and Free Pot Luck – April 7th at 6:00  
 Pocket Our Pride – New Time = 10:30  
 West End 4th Friday – 8:00 Speaker  
 >See website for more details
14. Suggestions for next month's agenda: Gopher State Round Up
15. Grapevine Report, Andrew; Volunteer for April, Derrick R.
16. Concept 11 review, John; Volunteer for Concept 12 for April, Derrick C.
17. Mock Rep Report, C J; Volunteer for December, Todd
18. Closed with the Responsibility Statement

**Meetings Represented:** District 8: District 15; Basic Text, St. Paul; Como Park Big Book, Roseville; Defogged Mens Group, St. Paul; Forest Lake Alano Groups, Forest Lake; HAPPY, Joyous & Free, Mahtomedi; Hole In The Doughnut, Roseville; Lakeview AA, Maplewood; Main Idea, St. Paul; Maplewood Alano Groups, Maplewood; New Brighton Big Book, New Brighton; One More Was Added..., St. Paul; Outright Mental Defects, St. Paul; Pocketing Our Pride, St. Paul; Roll of Nickels, Hudson; Rule 62 Step & Tradition, St. Paul; Summit Hill, St. Paul; Third Edition, St. Paul; Uptown, St. Paul; We Can, St. Paul; West End, St. Paul, Women's Basic Text, St. Paul.

<b><u>2019 Steering Board:</u></b>		<b><u>Office Calls/Visitors—March 2019</u></b>	
Chair:	Rob C.	Meeting information	79
Alternate Chair:	Linsey D.	Inventory/hours/location	29
Secretary:	Rachel P.	12th Step calls	3
Treasurer:	Justin D.	Temporary sponsor	15
Alternate Treasurer:	Mark J.	Speaker request	35
Members-at-Large 2019:	C.J. M. & Vance O.	Staff & Other Calls	127
Members-at-Large 2020:	Mike C.	Total Calls	288
Advisor to the Board:	Lesli D.	<b>Average Calls/Day</b>	<b>13.7</b>
Manager	Dennis B.	Total Visitors	234

**MAY 2019 REPS' MEETING: Tuesday, May 21st @ 7:30 PM**  
 SAINT STANISLAUS CHURCH (Church Basement)  
 398 West Superior Street; St. Paul, MN 55102

**7th Tradition  
Suggestions for Groups**

“Every A.A. group ought to be fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions.”

The Conference-approved pamphlet: “Self-Support: Where Money and Spirituality Mix” offers the following suggestions for the distribution of group funds after group expenses have been paid:

**50% St. Paul Intergroup**

608 Seventh Street West  
St. Paul, MN 55102

**30% General Service Office**

P.O. Box 459  
Grand Central Station  
New York, NY 10163

**10% Southern MN Area 36**

Area Assembly  
P.O. Box 2812  
Mpls., MN 55402

**10% District Committee**

Ramsey County:  
District 8, P.O. Box 131523  
St. Paul, MN 55113

Dakota County:  
District 19, P.O. Box 1466  
Burnsville, MN 55337

Washington County:  
District 15, P.O. Box 181  
Lake Elmo, MN 55042

SE Ramsey County:  
District 26, P.O. Box 75980  
St. Paul, MN 55175

**MARCH CONTRIBUTIONS**

Number of Group Contributors	20
Total Group Contributions:	\$3449
Number of Faithful Fivers:	27
Total from Faithful Fivers:	\$465



**District Meetings**

**District 8 (Ramsey Co.)**

Fairview Community Center  
1910 Co. Rd B, Rm 108  
Roseville  
3rd Wed., 7:30 PM

**District 15 (Wash. Co.)**

Christ Lutheran Church  
11194 N. 36th St.  
Lake Elmo  
4th Mon., 7:00 PM

**District 19 (Dakota Co.)**

Rosemount Community Center  
13885 South Robert Trail  
Rosemount  
2nd Wed., 7:00 PM

**District 26 (SE Ramsey Co.)**

Grace Lutheran Church  
1730 Old Hudson Rd.  
St. Paul  
2nd Sun., 7:00PM  
[www.district26-area36.org](http://www.district26-area36.org)



**Thanks to all the Groups  
that contributed in March**

- A New Light
- Apple Valley Daily Reflections
- Cottage Grove Groups
- Dakota Alano THUR 730PM Mens
- Fellowship Club AA
- Firing Line
- Forest Lake Alano
- Gloria Dei AA
- Grovers Thursday Night
- Highland Park Groups
- Maplewood Groups
- Maria Drunk Squad
- Oakdale Woodbury Sun Group  
@Canvas Heath
- River Falls Monday 6;30
- Rosemount Groups
- Stillwater Rivertown Group Sun PM
- Third Tradition Northfield
- Uptown Club
- White Bear Lake AA - Monday  
Night
- White Bear SAT AM Women's  
Group

**Thanks to all of the FANTASTIC Office Volunteers who helped in May:**

- Brian L., Caleb A., Carrie W., Chris H.,  
Dallas, Dan K., David D.,  
Debbie L., Erik H-L.,  
Frank D., Jimmy D., Jodie H., Josh V.,  
Kelley N., Linnea H., Pam M.,  
Spencer S., Steve R.,

**Thanks to our AWESOME Night Owls too!**



## **Ad Hoc Committees – Short and Sweet**

As a new trustee three years ago, I wasn't aware of the regular use of ad hoc committees within the three corporate boards. Indeed, I had a bit of an awakening simply in regard to the standing (permanent) committees and the service involved, much less ad hoc committees. Before I even showed up for my first General Service Board (GSB) meeting, I was assigned to three standing committees and two ad hoc committees. This started a new journey for me into the use of the committee process more intricate than I had ever experienced in or outside of AA.

Twenty of the twenty-one trustees are distributed/assigned so that each serve on three of the twelve standing committees. The chairperson of the GSB is an ex-officio member, or a member of all committees. These committee assignments are reset every year after the General Service Conference. In my first year one of my committees was Public Information (PI). The committee had an extensive agenda. With hopes of accomplishing all of the work on that agenda, most of it being items that the General Service Conference had created, the chair of the committee created ad hoc committees to do the preliminary work on certain items via ad hoc committees. That reduced the workload of everyone having to participate in the groundwork on a topic, which typically means reading and writing followed by conference calls to review and move the issue forward.

While this reduced the workload for some committees, there was an unintended consequence. Staff members, who serve as secretaries for all standing and ad hoc committees, had an intensified workload managing the information, conference calls, minutes, etc. Characteristic of a bunch of alcoholics, there were so many ad hoc committees formed that year that the Chairman of the Board had to have a discussion with the whole board about the proliferation of ad hoc committees and the workload created. Suffice to say, a lesson was learned that there is a time and place to form an ad hoc committee. Also, to use alternative resources to perform the work that may not require an ad hoc committee (e.g., staff member) and instead accomplish the task in a more direct fashion. At the end of this first year, all the PI ad hoc committees were dissolved, and I also rotated off PI.

In my second year I was asked to serve on the Alcoholics Anonymous World Services, Inc. (AAWS). In customary fashion, I was appointed to three standing committees and chair of one of them. But, yes, the ad hoc committee list also began. In this case there were various rationales for the use, each appropriate in their own way. For example, when the issue of evaluating price, discounts, shipping charges and other literature pricing policies came up, an ad hoc committee (the "DELTA Committee", reported on in a prior issue of Lifeline) was the mechanism that allowed a small group of AAWS Directors plus staff members to collect, analyze and report back to the AAWS Board on the results and recommendations. Next, AAWS had begun a year prior an ad hoc self-support committee to look into details on how to inform the fellowship on this critical issue. In this case, the ad hoc committee was formulated in the prior year, re-formulated with new members in 2017 and yet again for 2018-2019. Each time the issues addressed were a bit different, and the committee composition changed a bit based on the focus of the ad hoc committee. Will it become a standard or standing committee in the future? That remains to be seen, considering the current practice is to reformulate it each year. Since it is a subcommittee of the AAWS Finance Committee, it is probable that its temporary-but-reoccurring nature may continue.

Finally, the General Service Board itself (not its standing committees) makes use of ad hoc committees to address major matters of concern. These tend to be policy matters, such as items categorized in one of the five policy issues addressed by Concept VIII (policy, finance, group relations, public relations and leadership). For example, the Chair of the GSB, Michele Grinberg, created an ad hoc leadership committee. As the name implies, the goal is to assess our current leadership processes and take corrective action. As any other AA member or AA group would do, the first step upon formation was to take an inventory. It was the ad hoc



### Ad Hoc Committees – Short and Sweet (Con't)

committee's responsibility to develop a process that fit into the GSB's robust schedule which was focused on the leadership requirements a trustee has: issues such as the bylaws, the Traditions and Concepts, as well as fiduciary responsibilities spelled out in New York Not-for-Profit law.

This ad hoc committee continues to work between GSB quarterly meetings, preparing the next steps. This small committee, composed of several trustee types (A, B, GST, regional) does the heavy lifting before the meeting and analyzes the information after the meeting. Additionally, because the process requires data compilation, staff or subcontractors organize it. When completed with its work, the committee will be dissolved.

The GSB also utilizes ad hoc committees on a project basis, such as a project underway to determine the feasibility of transferring the pension plan assets to an outside firm that specializes in pension asset management. In this case, rather than a diverse mix of members for the ad hoc committee, trustees with financial skills have been tasked to do the work of the committee and report to the GSB.

Alcoholics Anonymous has been committee driven at a Board and Conference level since the inception of the General Service Conference in 1951. Committees have been added and changed, but the committee system Bill Wilson describes in Concept Eleven still largely addresses AA service very effectively over a half-century later. While the practices sometimes get modified, the policies involved continue to serve the fellowship in a very effective fashion. Ad hoc committees regularly fill in the gaps or help to spread the workload to insure fellowship issues are promptly and properly addressed. Commonly operating for short durations, their effects are often long-lasting.

*Yours in Service,*

Tom A.  
 WCR Trustee, AAWS Director  
 General Service Board Secretary

**1ST ANNUAL**



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 YOUNG PEOPLE  
 IN ALCOHOLICS  
 ANONYMOUS**

JULY 19, 20, 21, 2019

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SHARE YOUR LOVE...

# BECOME A GRAPEVINE REP!

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- Talk about the magazine's content – the stories make great topics for discussion
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- Spread the word about Grapevine's new services and products

**HOW TO GET STARTED:**

- Offer to be of service - let your home group know that you are interested.
- Sign up on our website at [www.aagrapevine.org/GVR](http://www.aagrapevine.org/GVR)
- You will receive a complete information kit from the Grapevine office.

**IT'S A GREAT WAY TO CARRY THE MESSAGE OF AA AND TO STAY SOBER!**



## **It's Conference Time!**

An interesting way of looking at the week-long General Service Conference (GSC) (May 18-25<sup>th</sup>) is the "owners" of AA – the AA Groups – are sending their servants to a week-long meeting to discuss matters affecting AA as a whole and though a committee process ultimately all come together and make decisions with Tradition 1 & 2 in mind.

Last month I shared the process we use to prepare our delegates to become informed and hence, able to be effective at the GSC using spiritual principles to resolve a myriad of issues facing AA. Additionally, they may also initiate necessary actions to insure the health and spiritual prosperity of Alcoholics Anonymous.

These delegates collectively represent all the AA groups in the U.S. and Canada, and are the active voice and effective conscience of Alcoholics Anonymous. Each delegate, fully cognizant of how their area sees as the best approach to all the matters being addressed by this, the 69<sup>th</sup> General Service Conference, nonetheless also factors into their deliberations the other 134 members of the General Service Conference to arrive at the best decision – again, for the good of AA as a whole.

Every person that has attended a GSC will testify that the week-long conference is laden with a wide spectrum of business meetings likely busier than anything they have ever experienced. Everyone arrives during the day on Saturday. A meet-and-greet of sorts takes place during the afternoon. Then there is the 1728 AA meeting to talk about Steps, Traditions and Concepts (12\*12\*12=1728). Next, like a bunch of typical drunks, there's another meeting. For those interested, a meeting on Remote Communities takes place after the 1728 meeting. To end the day, the delegates have their first of two Delegate-Only meetings. The meeting tends to be more of a session for the prior year panel to welcome the new, first-year delegates. Here's where you meet the folks that become another family of sorts for many people, long after rotation takes place.

When I was delegate, we started Sunday afternoon. Now, the conference body gathers Sunday morning for roll call and orientation. The region gathers together for lunch for a more intimate discussion of how the week plays out. And starting that afternoon, we're off and running, full steam ahead!

With every delegate assigned to a particular committee and each committee responsible for their items, the "committee system" kicks into high gear. Yes, every delegate is coming to the GSC after the wide ranging discussions on all of the agenda items in the process described in last month's Lifeline article, but to have enough time to fully consider the merits of any given GSC Agenda item, this committee system is necessary. In fact, some background is only given to the respective committee so not everyone even has access to all the information.

To get a full briefing on a new item and information on items that were carried forward from the prior year which were getting worked on by trustees and staff, each Conference Committee meets with their Trustee Committee counterpart. After the joint meeting, all the Conference Committees (w/o the trustees) begin their deliberations. On their prerogative, the committee may call back the chair or others from the Trustee Committee to clarify information. Other than that, the delegates bear the responsibility to make decisions and recommendations on their agenda items. Indeed, when the entire conference body convenes on Wednesday, each committee brings forth items formally called "Recommendations" for everyone to consider.

...and then there's the things that the committee doesn't want to recommend. In cases such as this, they may "take no action". They may not all fully agree in the committee, but there is a strong sentiment that the idea has merit to be considered in some additional way. Those items bear the label "Additional Considerations". It should also be noted that many agenda items are works in pro-

*(Continued Page 3)*

## It's Conference Time! (Con't).

-gress and are simply reviewed and direction is given to the trustees and GSO staff on how to proceed, and this is reported to the Conference when the committee reports later in the week.

With so much business to discuss, the committee system is a necessity. But the committee isn't the group conscience necessary to insure Tradition One and Two is applied to items affecting AA as a whole. That is why the committee recommendations are brought forth before the entire GSC body, which is a representative body of AA as a whole, and as stated earlier in Concept Two, to be the "active voice and the effective conscience of our whole Society". The GSC deliberates each recommendation and if the body thinks it should be implemented, it becomes an Advisory Action.

Also, the committee does not have the final say on items that did not become Recommendations. If someone that is part of the voting body of the GSC thinks an item not brought forward should become an Advisory Action, they can make a motion called a Floor Action for the GSC to consider before it adjourns at the end of the week.

While this committee process that many times starts at the AA group, becomes an agenda item and then is discussed throughout the fellowship before being formally actioned as described above, that is by no means all that takes place during the Conference week. There is a myriad of reports, starting with first-year delegates that share for two minutes on highlights in their area. Trustees report on each of the three corporations (AAWS, AAGV and GSB, described in earlier Lifeline articles), delegates make presentations and discussions take place on those topics, there is a series of workshops based on topics designated from the prior year's conference, and there are also Sharing Sessions that are open to whatever folks would like to discuss (other than current-year agenda items).

In true AA fashion, anyone can attend an AA meeting every morning before the formal agenda begins. Days normally start at 9 AM, and while there's an attempt to close around 9 PM each night, by Thursday everyone can see how much business is left and it is not uncommon to go later Thursday and sometimes Friday nights go long into the evening. While some things do get tabled, for the most part everyone tends to practice persistence and endurance until everything that needs to be discussed, is discussed. With only one week a year available to transact business, the Conference demonstrates the finest love of AA service in the application of the principles encapsulated in our Traditions and Concepts.

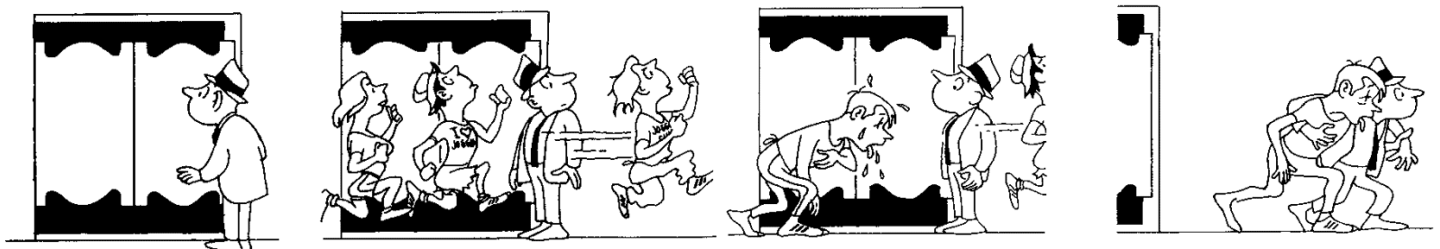
Saturday is the last day, limited to a brunch that also has all the rotating trustees sharing a bit of their experience, strength and hope. With its completion, the delegates head home, Board members retreat for one more round of meetings to complete the formal actions required of them for a quarterly meeting, and AA begins the conference cycle once again.

*Yours In Service,*

Tom A.

*WCR Trustee, AAWS Director*

*General Service Board Secretary*

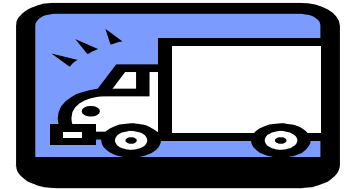


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Your Intergroup strives to be self-supporting, and with your personal support we can continue to carry our vital message of Hope and Recovery to all who need and want it. Your contribution entitles you to a one-year subscription to *The Lifeline*. Contributions may be made annually, bi-annually, quarterly or monthly. Please consider becoming one of our *Faithful Fivers* (\$5.00/month), *Terrific Tenners* (\$10.00/month), or *Fantastic Fifteeners* (\$15.00/month).

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