

Intergroup District 17
Marion County, Florida

The Voice

Volume 27, Number 13

January 2015

Intergroup District 17

3666-A N.E. 25th St.
Ocala, Florida 34470
Phone: (352) 867-0660
aaocalaintergroup@gmail.com

Hours of operation

Mon.- Fri. 10 am to 5 pm
Saturday 10 am to 2 pm

Website

www.aaocalamarion.org

24-Hour Hotline

352-867-0660

Intergroup District 17 Meetings You're invited!

Anyone interested is urged to attend and learn more about all the great opportunities for service work within our local AA community.

Next Meeting

Sun., Jan. 11th, 4:30 pm
Intergroup Office
3666A NE 25th St., Ocala

Intergroup Reps., please send your contact info to:
aaocalaintergroup@gmail.com
or call 352-867-0660.

A quote for January

"If you want to stop drinking AA doesn't care whether you are a Christian, a Buddhist, a Jew, a Mohammedan, an atheist, an agnostic, or whatever. The door to AA is wide. Come right in."

From Spiritual Awakenings

Stumbling Into The Fourth Dimension

Sobriety brings a drunk to his knees

I became accustomed to chaos and violence early in my life. My twin sister and I were the youngest children in a violent, alcoholic household. Weekends of drunken behavior and verbal abuse from my father made me pretty tough-skinned. I never said anything about it at school--I thought that everyone's family was like mine.

As I grew up, hiding my past became a priority. Instead of taking the same alcoholic path as an older brother--he died of the disease as an adult--I chose a different way to get away from the booze and violence that surrounded me.

I aimed for an impossible perfection that included fancy cars, nice clothes, straight-A grades, and a good college. Sheer determination and youth got me most of these things, and I created a lifestyle that was in stark contrast to that of my childhood.

Still, something was missing. That "feel good" flicker that some people

get inside when they help others was not in me. I looked at my success, material belongings, and career and wondered why I still felt empty.

The answer did not come, probably because I sought it in a vodka bottle. I started drinking when I was about twenty-eight years old. By then, I had the nice car, the great job, and my own house, but I still felt soulless.

As youth faded and alcoholism took over, I spent my evenings after work sipping screwdrivers or Cape Cods and channel surfing. Years passed. I managed to hold onto one old friend--most likely out of pity--and to make one new friend whose drinking was worse than mine. I needed someone I could point to and say, "I'm not an alcoholic. He's the alcoholic." Now I know that people probably saw two alcoholics and then just went about their business. I started going to AA and spent three years trying to get one year of continuous sobriety. After I received my... *Continued next page*

Tradition One

Our common welfare should come first; personal recovery depends upon A.A. unity.

These questions were originally published in the AA Grapevine in conjunction with a series on the Twelve Traditions that began in November 1969 and ran through September 1971. While they were originally intended primarily for individual use, many AA groups have since used them as a basis for wider discussion.

- Am I in my group a healing, mending, integrating person, or am I divisive? What about gossip and taking other members' inventories?

- Am I a peacemaker? Or do I, with pious preludes such as "just for the sake of discussion," plunge into argument?
- Am I gentle with those who rub me the wrong way, or am I abrasive?
- Do I make competitive AA remarks, such as comparing one group with another or contrasting AA in one place with AA in another?
- Do I put down some AA activities as if I were superior for not participating in this or that aspect of AA?

Congratulations January Birthdays!

This issue we celebrate anniversaries of our local AA family members that add up to a collective 644 years. That's 235,060 days of sobriety one day at a time!

Birthday Club: Ruth T., Happy, Joyous, and Free group 28 years!

Cindy M.	1 year	Richie M.	11 years
Dane J.	1 year	David K.	14 years
Marc B.	1 year	Ron K.	15 years
Ronnie G.	1 year	Dianne M.	15 years
Rene R.	1 year	Marty C.	15 years
Vicki R.	1 year	Bob L.	16 years
Ashley B.	1 year	Dan A.	17 years
Alex H.	2 years	Larry B.	18 years
Megan R.	2 years	Charles J.	18 years
Ron H.	3 years	Diane L.	19 years
Bill W.	3 years	Nick N.	20 years
Sisco L.	3 years	Cheryl J.	20 years
Misty H.	3 years	John D.	21 years
Dawn R.	3 years	Lew G.	22 years
Troy H.	4 years	Charlie T.	23 years
Jim S.	5 years	Wes H.	25 years
Sue P.	5 years	Judy L.	33 years
Bruce H.	5 years	Joureene P.	34 years
Glenna	5 years	Bill L.	35 years
Patti B.	6 years	Madonna	35 years
Lenore D.	6 years	Bernie	35 years
Alonzo K.	8 years	Vicki	36 years
Ebbo K.	9 years	Barbara T.	39 years
Tony C.	9 years		
Richie M.	10 years		
Lee F.	10 years		

Deadline for birthdays is Feb. 25th.
Send to: aaocalaintergroup@gmail.com

Join the Birthday Club

The Birthday Club is a tangible way to celebrate an AA anniversary—yours or another member's. To join, complete the form below and enclose a donation—suggested is \$1 for each year of sobriety. The money is used to help Intergroup 17 carry the message to other alcoholics in Ocala and Marion County.

Your name: _____

Celebrant name (if other than you): _____

Sobriety date: _____

Number of years: _____

Donation amount: _____

Make checks payable and mail with this form to:

Intergroup District 17
3666-A N.E. 25th Street
Ocala, Florida 34470

Stumbling into the fourth dimension, continued from page 1
first white chip,

I stayed sober for eleven months. But my lengths of sobriety got shorter and shorter after each successive white chip. Seeing other newcomers arrive and stay sober while I went in and out of recovery only frustrated me more. Why couldn't I get the message? Why wasn't "it" working for me?

My first sponsor had a good suspicion. "You need to work on your prayers and connection with your Higher Power," he said. That was ridiculous, I thought. I ran all over town going to meetings, showed up early to make coffee, clean, and enjoy the fellowship--perhaps too much--so how could the secret of my staying sober rest in prayer and the God thing?

"Why can't I be a nonbeliever and get sober?" I asked him.

"Because I know you, Tim, and I think you need God to stay sober."

His answer didn't please me. The "God thing" had me baffled. I showed respect by bowing my head with the others and saying the Serenity Prayer. I went to church at Easter and Christmas. I followed the religious rituals, but that's all they were to me--rituals.

I wanted a miracle from any god, and the bar I set for recognizing that miracle was far too high. I told myself I wanted a "burning bush" kind of miracle--nothing less--before I would believe.

Demotions at work, bankruptcy, and becoming a thread away from foreclosure allowed me my own special rock bottom. I was bankrupt in more ways than one. I felt

spent, lost, lonely, tired, and ready to admit powerlessness. After I made that admission at a weekday meeting, my life slowly began to get better.

Steps One and Two were a package deal for me. I had to take Step One with one hundred percent certainty, and I did. My powerlessness was obvious to all, including me. I had no manageability in any part of my life, including my body and emotions. I was a wreck.

Admitting that to my home group and picking up yet another white chip took on new meaning once I truly understood and accepted my powerlessness. I realized I had entered a spiritual family, a loving and caring family who understood where I was and could help me along my path. I never had a close-knit *Continued next page*

January by the Books

STEP ONE

“We admitted we were powerless over alcohol—that our lives had become unmanageable.”

“When we encountered A.A., the fallacy of our defiance was revealed. At no time had we asked what God’s will was for us; instead we had been telling Him what it ought to be. No man, we saw, could believe in God and defy Him, too. Belief meant reliance, not; defiance. In A.A, we saw the fruits of this belief: men and women spared from alcohol’s final catastrophe. We saw them meet and transcend their other pains and trials. We saw them calmly accept impossible situations, seeking neither to run nor to recriminate. This was not only faith; it was faith that worked under all conditions. We soon concluded that whatever price in humility we must pay, we would pay.” 12&12 pg. 31

TRADITION ONE

“Our common welfare should come first; personal recovery depends upon A.A. unity.”

Countless times, in as many cities and hamlets, we reenacted the story of Eddie Rickenbacker and his courageous company when their plane crashed in the Pacific. Like us, they had suddenly found themselves saved from death, but still floating upon a perilous sea. How well they saw that their common welfare came first. None might become selfish of water or bread. Each needed to consider the others, and in abiding faith they knew they must find their real strength. And this they did find, in measure to transcend all the defects of their frail craft, every test of uncertainty, pain, fear, and despair, and even the death of one.

12 & 12 pg. 131

CONCEPT ONE

Final responsibility and ultimate authority for A.A. world services should always reside in the collective conscience of our whole Fellowship.

- Does our group have a general service representative (G.S.R.)? Do we feel that our home group is part of A.A. as a whole and do our group’s decisions and actions reflect that?
- Do we hold regular group conscience meetings encouraging everyone to participate? Do we pass that conscience on to the district, area, or the local intergroup meetings?
- Is the “collective conscience” of Alcoholics Anonymous at work in my home group? In my area?
- Where do we fit in the upside-down triangle of A.A.?
- Are we willing to do what it takes to insure that our democracy of world service will work under all conditions?

Concepts Checklist F-91 Service Material from the General Service Office

Continued from previous page

family, so this eased my fear some. I still don't know what I can offer back.

I got a new sponsor and started the Steps (again) from the beginning, just to ensure I took them to the best of my ability. I'm still on Step Three, but I have a quality of sobriety like never before.

I have resolved my issues concerning God. Once I understood my powerlessness over alcohol, I saw miracles that had already occurred in my life to help land me in AA. I felt ashamed about the life I had led, but now I feel blessed that my Higher Power chose to save me. He must have a purpose for me. I believe he wants me to listen and learn at meetings so that I can help another struggling, spiritually lost

alcoholic. It wasn't until I got sober that I realized how dead I was.



Long form of Tradition One

Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions

Each member of Alcoholics Anonymous is but a small part of a great whole. AA must continue to live or most of us will surely die. Hence our common welfare comes first. But individual welfare follows close afterward.

Tradition One continued from page 1

- Am I informed about AA as a whole?
- Do I support, in every way I can, AA as a whole, or just the parts I understand and approve of?
- Am I as considerate of AA members as I want them to be of me?
- Do I spout platitudes about love while indulging in and secretly justifying behavior that bristles with hostility?
- Do I go to enough AA meetings or read enough AA literature to really keep in touch?
- Do I share with AA all of me, the bad and the good, accepting as well as giving the help of fellowship?

IN MEMORIAM

WE HAVE HAD SEVEN PEOPLE PASS OVER SOBER IN THE PAST MONTH IN CONTRAST TO THE THOUSANDS THAT DIE DRUNK. WE ARE BLESSED.

Carol Kull of the Breakfast Club passed on Oct. 26, 2014. A memorial service will be held at 11:00am on Jan. 10, 2015 at the Bella Cucina Restaurant (Oak Run) , 8682 SW 110th St., Ocala 34481.

George Clift a long time member of the Happy, Joyous, and Free group passed away on Dec. 17, 2014. He was born Dec. 19, 1942 and was as a Vietnam veteran serving our country as a member of the United States Air Force. He had 21 years of continuous sobriety. A celebration of his life will be held from 7:00-9:00pm, Jan. 23, 2015 at St. Matthews Lutheran, 3453 E. Silver Springs Blvd., Ocala 34470. Covered dishes and desserts are welcome.

Carol Spirko of the Weir Crazy group passed away on Dec. 25, 2015. She was born Dec. 22, 1948. The path of sobriety for her began in the 1970's. When arriving in Ocala she attended the Serenity Group. A memorial service will be held Jan. 24, 2015 at the Church of Christ, 2750 SE Maricamp Rd., Ocala 34471

Al D'Aurio of the New Attitudes group passed on Dec. 30, 2014. Born Aug. 5, 1948 in Miami, FL. He has three (3) children. His sobriety date was Oct. 17, 2007. He served as a General Service Representative and sat on the board of directors at the Lost & Found Club. Loved motorcycles and helping others. A memorial service memorial will be held at the Lost and Found Club, 2315 NE 29th Terr. , Ocala 34470 on Jan., 18, 2015 at 2:00pm.at.

Rebecca (Becky) Bryant of the New Attitudes group passed on Jan. 1, 2015. She was born Mar. 21, 1963 and has twin daughters. She was a very active AA member, especially in service since she began the journey of sobriety. She held positions of General Service Representative, Treasurer, Secretary, Intergroup Representative, chaired meetings, worked at the Lost & Found club and much more. A memorial service will be held on Wednesday, January 7, 2015 at 10:00am at Heirs-Baxley Funeral Home, 910 SE Silver Springs Blvd. Ocala, FL 34470. Burial service will follow at Good Sheppard Cemetery.

Casey Allen Kearns passed on Jan. 4, 2015. There will be a wake at 6 pm Thursday, Jan. 8, 2015. The memorial Mass is 8:30 am, Friday, Jan. 9, 2015 at Queen of Peace Catholic Church, 6455 SW State Rd. 200, Ocala 34476

Kelli Taroli of the All You Need group passed on Jan. 5, 2015. She worked at Intergroup on Thursday mornings and will be dearly missed. Call Intergroup (352) 867-0660 for more information.

Service opportunities. Help Wanted. Yours.

Hotline, 12th Step call volunteers needed!
Intergroup has a critical need for volunteers to help staff our 24-hours hotline after business hours from their own homes and to help respond to 12th step calls. One year of sobriety required. Call Intergroup District 17 to volunteer: (352)867-0660.

Desk Volunteers needed, too!
Time slots available are Mon. and Thurs. 10am-2pm. One year of sobriety required.

**Help take meetings to
Local Correctional Institutions.**
Volunteers are needed to help take AA meetings to local correctional institutions on Monday and Wednesday evenings. Applications available at Intergroup office.

**District 17
Service opportunities abound
Committee Chairs and Service Positions**

Don't wait to be asked. District 17 has immediate openings for service. Contact Rick D., DCM through Intergroup. Call (352) 867-0660, or just show up at the next District 17 meeting, Thursday, January 29, 6:45 pm, St. Mark's United Methodist Church, 1839 NE 8th Ave., Ocala, FL.

Publicize your service opportunities here. Send to aaocalaintergroup@gmail.com or call 352-867-0660.

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How Groups and Individuals Support the Work of AA

Group contributions are the major funding source for the work of Intergroup 17 and other areas of AA. Many groups follow the 50-30-10-10 plan of support after they meet their own financial needs:

- 50 % to Intergroup District 17
- 30 % to AA General Service Office
- 10 % to North Florida Area Assembly
- 10 % to District 17

Send group contributions to:
 Intergroup District 17
 3666A NE 25th St.
 Ocala, FL 34470

A.A. General Service Office
 P.O. Box 459
 6035 E. Tudor St.
 New York, N.Y. 10164

New Address for 2015
 North Florida Area Conference
 P.O. Box 291634
 Port Orange, FL 32129

District 17
 P.O. Box 3081
 Ocala, FL 34474

Some individual members choose to provide financial support Intergroup 17 in various ways.

Faithful Fivers: \$5 each month
Double Nickel: \$10 each month to Intergroup
Birthday Club Members: \$1 or more per year of sobriety on their AA "birthday."

All contributions large and small make a difference. Send to:
 Intergroup District 17
 3666A NE 25th St.
 Ocala, FL 34470

*I am responsible. Whenever anyone anywhere reaches out for help,
 I want the hand of AA to be there. For that I am responsible.*

Intergroup Contributions	Nov.	Y/T/D	Intergroup Contributions	Nov.	Y/T/D
11th Step Group		50.00	Keep it Simple		
164 Pages		40.05	Last Call	.74	183.97
4th Dimension Group of Ocala		.28	Life is Good Sober		
A Light in Citra			Living Sober	.07	84.64
All You Need	6.09	101.57	Lunch Bunch		.41
Alive and Well			McIntosh	50.00	50.00
Anonymity Group	.42	3.44	New Attitudes	19.14	21.14
Belleview Group		.85	No Name Group		
Belleview Eye Opener		30.00	Now What Group	1.69	1.69
Belleview Noon			Ocala Group	185.97	852.61
Blichton Road	90.00	90.76	Ocala Men's Group		
Breakfast Club	329.00	1,201.00	One Day at a Time	155.00	433.70
By the Book		.06	Phoenix House		5.81
Cabin in the Woods		150.00	Primary Purpose		45.87
Came to Believe		34.00	Program of Action 4th Dimension		
Carry this Message 4th Dimension		2.08	Quit Whining & Sober Up		107.00
Conscious Contact		48.00	Rise Above		
Day by Day			Serenity at the Vines		
Emotional Balance			Shores of Sobriety		100.00
Eureka Group	3.35	3.35	Sober Yankees	156.79	223.29
Experiance, Strength, & Hope		2.41	Sobriety Will Travel		
Forest Men's	2.41	2.41	Spiritually Fit		
Forest Group			Start a New Life		
Fort McCoy	4.41	7.04	Stop Whining & Sober Up		
Fountain of Gratitude		.64	Strength in Numbers		
Freedom Within			Sundae Social Hour Group		
Free to Be	28.00	121.00	The Refuge Group	2.59	2.59
Fresh Start			TLC	.64	6.91
God's Way		50.00	Thursday Night Step		50.00
Grace Group	.23	42.06	Unity Place		3.62
Grateful Gals	103.00	107.19	We Give Up		45.46
Grupo Mano Abierta			Weir Crazy	158.84	288.44
Happy, Joyous, & Free	340.77	2,079.53	Women's Heavy Hitters		1.52
Headstart	49.00	900.77	Young People's Group		
Healing Group		50.00	District 17		502.00
Heavy Hitters		351.00	Treatment		1.05
Into Action		.62	District 27		20.00
Into Action 4th Dimension			Birthday Club	37.00	
It's in the Book		.39	Individual Members	16.13	244.46
It's Not Them			Total	1,741.28	8,596.68

Calendar of events and meetings of interest

Special Events

January 9th—11th, Fri.—Sun.
2015 North Florida Area Conference Assembly

Paramont Plaza
2900 S. W. 13th Street
Gainesville, FL 32608
877-992-9229

www.aanorthflorida.org

Not Just for General Service Representatives, Come One Come All; Corrections Workshop, Treatment Workshop, Public Info Workshop, Intergroup Workshop, Archives Workshop, Concepts Workshop, Cooperation with Professional Community Workshop

Jan. 10th, Sat. 1pm-4pm
Sandy Beach Memorial Service

Bring a dish to share for a pot luck meal. Hyde Park Methodist Church 500 W. Platt Street Tampa, FL 33606

Jan. 21st, Wed., 9:30am 2:30pm
A.A. Day of Reflection with Fr. Patrick O'D.

“Let Go & Let God – Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God....” **sponsored by the Stop Whining and Sober Up group** at Queen of Peace Parish Hall 6455 SW State Road 200, Ocala 34476 For more information and to register contact Intergroup at (352) 867-0660.

Jan. 24th, 2015 from 9:00am to 5:00 pm Old Time AA History Workshop

Hyde Park United Methodist Church, 500 West Platt St., Tampa, FL 33606 Breakfast and Lunch will be served. Speakers: Tommy D., Fort Lauderdale, Gail L., Akron, OH/The Villages,

Tommy M., St. Petersburg, FL
 Registration is \$20 in advance (Jan. 4) and \$25 at the door. Seating is limited to 300. Proceeds to benefit Dr. Bobs Home.

Feb. 15, 2015, Sun. – Twelve Step Workshop Learn to ‘practice the spiritual principles as a way of life’, experience them on a personal level and build ‘An unshakable foundation for life’. Prerequisites: 1-40 years sober, have a face-to-face sponsor and your own bound copy of the Big Book and 12 & 12. Meets every Sunday from 5:30-6:30pm. Workshop is a 28 week program. Call Intergroup for more information. (352) 867-0660 or contact Cree to register. Group limited to 15 people.

March 13 – 15 – Spring Annual Housecleaning Spiritual Retreat for A.A. and Al-Anon

Lake Yale Conference Center
 39034 County Road 452
 Leesburg, FL 34788
 352-483-9800
<http://retreatforaa-alanon.com>

New Meetings

Beginner's Group

Thurs. 6:00pm
 Unity Place, 525 NE Sanchez Ave., Ocala 34470
 Format: Open Beginners

Closed Meetings

Unity, Service, & Recovery
 7:30pm Friday
 Ritz Historic Inn
 1205 E. Silver Springs Blvd.

DCM Corner

This is my last article for The Voice as the District 17 DCM. It has been a great joy and privilege to serve. There were tough times when I had to let go of situations I could not change (sound familiar?) and more important, times of service and laughter. Through it all I learned that no matter where I am in this recovery process it is important to ask for help and guidance in dealing with life and its problems.

Never had I been involved in Gratitude Dinner planning. I bought my ticket, went to dinner with no thought about the effort it took to put together the event. I certainly learned differently the past two years. It takes a lot of work by many for the Gratitude Dinner to be a success. I had a lot of fun and I enjoyed seeing how everyone came together to get the job done both years. It is Tradition Nine in action.

Attending North Florida Area Conference was a tremendous experience. Seeing the AA structure (the upside down triangle) at work for the good of the groups and individuals is, well, awesome. NFAC will be in Gainesville the next two years. If you have never attended, try to get to one or more. There are many service opportunities available at your home group, District and NFAC. Come join us. Your life will never be the same.

Lastly, my heartfelt thank you to the officers and GSRs who attended the monthly meetings. No task was too big or too small for these people to take on. It is to these people that I feel a debt of gratitude. Being DCM is nothing without the support of the people who step up from their groups to serve District 17. Thank you again officers and GSRs for your support.

Carson F.
 DCM 2013-2014

