



The Message

A MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

TRUSTED SERVANTS

INTERGROUP 5, INC AUGUST 2008 TALLAHASSEE, FL

Intergroup

Chairman—Craig F—Living Sober
 Co-chairman—Mike F—New Hope
 Secretary—Carol H—New Hope
 Treasurer—Matt C—Nite Owl
 Literature—Greg S—Home
 Website—Andy E—Men's Faith
 Activities—Laura A—Central
 Membership—Adam G—Central
 Newsletter—Sandy M & Julie W—
 Mustard Seed
 12 Step--Jeff D--Central

District 5

DCM—Joe D—Downtown
 Alternate DCM—Susan E—Central
 Secretary—Craig F.—Living Sober
 Treasurer—Matt N—Central

Standing Committees

Public Info—AC—Happy Hour
 CPC—Steve H—Central
 Treatment—Kevin T—Happy Hour
 Corrections—David G—End of the
 Road
 Grapevine—Vern D—Northside
 Accessibilities—Janis T—Willing
 Archives—Rebecca—Central
 Bridging the Gap—Danny P—Central

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District 5

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NFACAA—Area 14

Area Treasurer
 Marilyn B.
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One of A.A.'s First and Best

She was the daughter of a prominent Chicago department store executive and educated in girls' schools here and abroad. When she returned from her education in Europe, she became a successful writer and was appointed research director for the American Society of Composers, Authors and Publishers (ASCAP). At this time America was in the midst of Prohibition, and not realizing alcohol was physically dangerous to her, she fell into the fashionable habit of visiting speakeasies. From the debutante world of champagne and caviar, to flamboyant parties in Greenwich Village, her life began to go out of control. From drinks before breakfast, to memory blackouts, she proceeded through all the horrors of alcoholism. Finally one day she was found on the pavement below her window, her jaw and leg broken. Upon recovery she began going to a series of psychiatrists for help. At that time no hospital would accept for treatment an acutely sick alcoholic; there were few if any out-patient clinics, no special alcoholism units in state hospitals, and no halfway or recovery houses for alcoholics.

Finally in 1939 she entered the Blythewood Sanitarium in Connecticut where Dr. Harry Tiebout, a pioneer in the field of alcohol treatment and a friend of Bill W., brought her an advanced copy of a book titled Alcoholics Anonymous which had been sent to him for review. At first she refused to read it; she finally consented, scanning it with skepticism, "I can't stand all those capital G's," she said. "I don't believe in God. I don't want to read a book that is all about God." A.A. people had hypnotized themselves, she informed Dr. Tiebout defiantly; they were fanatics. But because Dr. Tiebout kept pressuring her, she kept reading, until one day she found herself in a crisis, a crisis of personal resentment and fury. In her rage, she said, she literally saw everything in red - including the pages of the Big Book lying open on her bed. "But," she remembered, "in the middle of the page there was a line . . . in jet black. And it read, "We cannot live with anger." And that did it. As she said later - I was on my knees, felt something in the room with me, and the main feeling was, "I'm free! I'm free!"

Dr. Tiebout took her to her first A.A. meeting and she met Bill W. Going to the meeting was an ordeal, she later wrote, but as soon as she entered and listened she felt she had - come home, found salvation, and wasn't alone anymore. She was so energized by her recovery that she not only began to rebuild her career, but also sought out a way to help other alcoholics. After attending Yale (now Rutgers) School of Alcohol Studies, and discussing courses of action with Dr. E.M. Jellinek, author of The Disease Concept of Alcoholism, she had an inspiration. It awoke her at 3 a.m. on a cold February morning. She got out of bed, went to her typewriter, and outlined a plan of action which was to become the National Council on Alcoholism.

Jellinek & Yale offered to support the plan and adopted a credo of: 1) Alcoholism is a disease and the alcoholic is a sick person; 2) The alcoholic can be helped and is worth helping; and 3) Alcoholism is a public health problem and therefore a public responsibility.

When she began work on the plan the biggest battle was to get message heard. In 1944, many newspapers refused to even print the word "alcoholic." Public opinion and attitudes ranged from ignorance to indifference to prejudice and open hostility. It was not until 1956 that the American Medical Association officially recognized alcoholism as a disease.

Experience, Strength and Hope

Step Eight

Made a list of all persons we had harmed, and became willing to make amends to them all.

When I finished my 7th step, my sponsor told me there were two things I needed to know about step 8. He said, "It's not about you, and it's not about you." If the 7th step was about becoming humble before God ("We humbly asked Him to remove our shortcomings"), then the 8th step is about becoming humble before my fellow humans. Of course, in comparison it may seem easy to make the humble admission before God. After all, if He sees all and knows all, he already knew anyway! And besides, nobody else (except maybe our sponsor) sees us make that admission. The 8th and 9th steps, however, are about going out into the world and confessing—and making restitution for—our shortcomings. That felt, to me, intimidating.

Fortunately, my sponsor reminded me that in step 8, we only have to do two things: make a list and become willing. We don't have to make amends until step 9. He told me that if I changed my mind, I didn't have to go through with anything. I was free to do what I wanted, but if I failed to enlarge my spiritual life—in other words, if I didn't follow through with the action part of the program—I was risking my sobriety.

I knew I could make the list. That part was easy. I had already made a 4th step list and that hadn't killed me. Becoming willing was a bit scarier, but we saw it through together. The 12 x 12 was encouraging as it acknowledged that (to many AAs) the "reopening of emotional wounds...will at first look like a purposeless and pointless piece of surgery." I was glad to know that I was not alone in my fears!

I said earlier that my sponsor said the 8th step was not about me, but about other people. This might seem odd since I am going to ask them to forgive me. But before I can do that, the book says I first have to forgive THEM. I had a bad habit of justifying my wrongs by holding on to the wrongs that others had done me. Before I could ask for their forgiveness, I had to set aside any resentment that I held against them. The inventory was mine, not theirs. As I thought about my amends, I was to consider what I had done TO THEM, not what anyone else had done to (or in response to) me.

One of the most important things in the 12 x 12 is the definition it offers of what it means to "harm" others: "we might call it the result of instincts in collision, which cause physical, mental, emotional, or spiritual damage to people." I learned from this that when I had stolen, threatened, lied, or otherwise created havoc in the lives of others, I had also deprived them of their emotional security. My sponsor said that it was not enough to pay back what I owed in a material sense, but that I should keep in mind that I was, if I chose to make amends, going to address the unseen damage I had caused.

It has been many years now since I wrote out my 8th step list. The process was not as scary as I imagined, and all but one of the people I contacted were glad to hear from me. In fact, the admission of my faults did more for their spirits than any financial reparations I made, for it seems that my admission to some extent helped restore their faith in the goodness of mankind. And that faith was what I had harmed the most. Oddly enough, at the end of the process, I found

that my faith in man and God was also restored. The process of making my amends was, as the 12 x 12 says, "The beginning of the end of isolation from our fellows and from God."
anonymous

Tradition Eight

Alcoholics Anonymous should remain nonprofessional, but our service centers may employ special workers.

I find two parts to this step:

One: Nonprofessional - For our purpose, we have discovered that from the point of professionalism—money and spirituality do not mix. Every time we have tried our singleness of purpose was defeated. For face to face treatment of drunks, we need a desire to help and be helped, not money.

Freely you have received, freely give.

Two: Special Workers - The jobs that need to be done, that members will not volunteer to do or can't do. For example, janitor at a club house, paid intergroup secretaries, and workers in the New York General Service Office. A large club or central usually means one or more paid workers are needed. This is not "A.A." therapy just a lot of work that needs to be done. So let's pay them what they are worth. **Bob H.**

**God grant me the serenity
to accept the things I cannot change;
courage to change the things I can;
and wisdom to know the difference.**

The serenity prayer usually is attributed to Reinhold Niebuhr, a twentieth century theologian, who in turn credited it to an Eighteen century theologian, Friedrich Detinger. This prayer and variations of it has been traced back to 500 AD to the Roman Philosopher Anicius Boethius. Whatever its origins, the prayer may have never graced as many tongues as it has in this century when it was adopted by Alcoholics Anonymous and other self help groups whose members are recovering from addiction.

Saying the serenity prayer is one of many ways recovering alcoholics remind themselves that they haven't gotten this far alone. This prayer helps me to remember the Twelve steps of AA that brought sobriety to many sick alcoholics and especially the eleventh step that introduced me to a way of living that is the best approximation of serenity I can imagine. As a recovering alcoholic, I have come to use the serenity prayer in my life daily and to pay attention to what each sentence asks me to do. What it says is a tremendous part of living.
Diz T.

(cont from page 1)

However, she persisted in bringing hope to alcoholics around the world by giving over 200 lectures every year and acting as consultant to state alcohol programs, state and city health departments, and the US Public Health Service. She was an excellent speaker, had a good sense of humor and "Told it like it was!"

Marty Mann is the author of New Primer on Alcoholism, Marty Mann Answers Your Questions About Drinking and Alcoholism, and numerous articles in both professional and public journals. She is counted as A.A.'s first successful female alcoholic. Bill W. said to her at her first A.A. meeting, "You know this is Tuesday night. And you know, Marty, you can't do it all by Thursday." Which agrees with A.A.'s slogans - Easy Does It and One Day At A Time. (From THE KENTUCKIANA NEWS, March 1990; ref. Pass It On, Alcoholism/Spring 1984, Mann's cited books, et. al.)

Intergroup 5 News

Intergroup 5 Meeting Minutes **Date: July 2008**

Groups Represented: Central, Downtown, Happy Hour, Home, Lake Jackson, Lloyd New Hope, Men's Faith, Mustard Seed, and Open Door. Seven IG5 representatives were present. 13 people attended.

Secretary's Report: Approved and accepted.

Treasurer's Report: Approved and accepted.

Office Report: Volunteers are still needed! Please call the office. The report is reflected in *The Message*. (Also on the web site under "News") Please send meeting updates to Rob K., the Office Coordinator.

Literature Report: Books and pamphlets are available for sale to all groups.

Activities Report: Leftover condiments from the picnic were donated to CASA.

Web Committee Report: All is well. Please view the IG5 web site (www.intergroup5.org) and send comments or constructive suggestions and meeting errors such as times, locations, etc. to the Web Master, Debbie C.

District Report: Susan E. confirmed that the Jackson Lodge was reserved for the Steps Extravaganza on Aug. 24th. Service Extravaganza's theme is Italian, as in Pizzeria.

Old Business: 1. Jeff D has printed the 12 Step List and it will be printed with copies at the IG5 Office. It will also be posted on the web site.
2. There has been a positive response to the "open Book store" idea. Remember that it will be volunteer staffed.

New Business: 1. There are still problems with the answering service messages not being posted in a timely manner.
2. Rob K. is checking on the price of fewer allowed calls with the answering service. We want to change the current number of calls we pay for to 250. Motion made and approved.

3. David G. (Dist. Corrections Chair) asked for IG5 to post a link on our web site and create an email address so that Bridging the Gap can facilitate easier communication for transitioning parolees who are returning to the area. Motion made and approved.

4. Andy E. will be moving back to Louisiana. Debbie C. will be the interim Web Committee Chair. The position is open.

5. Matt C. reported that there is a \$185.00 early termination cancellation fee at *nettally.com*. He is checking out alternate answering services.

Submitted in Grateful Service,
Carol H.

July 2008 Treasurer's report

General Fund

Checking:	
Beginning Balance 4/30/08	<u>\$1,802.68</u>
Contributions:	
Anonymous	19.00
Apachicola Bay	15.00
Bradfordville	100.00
Carrabelle	100.00
Central	200.00
Faithful Fivers	25.00
Havana Sunday Nite	48.11
Lake Jackson	50.00
Mustard Seed	37.21
Mite Owl	167.95
Southside	80.00
Total Contributions	<u>842.27</u>

Less:

Disbursements:	
Answering service	195.50
Office Coordinator Travel/Rel. Exp	147.62
Internet monthly charge	56.96
Printing Newsletter/ W&W	109.75
Rent	257.01
Telephone	49.52

Total Expense Disbursements: **816.36**

Ending Balance 7/31/08 **1828.59**

Prudent Reserve Savings:

Beginning 6/30/08 balance	955.76
Interest earned	0.11
Ending Balance 7/31/08	<u>955.87</u>

Literature Fund

Beginning 7/31/08 Balance **1,037.54**

Literature sales	
508.90	
Sales Tax collected	39.80
Total Receipts	548.70

Less: Literature Purchases 0.00

Total Expenditures **0.00**

Ending Balance 7/31/08 **1,586.24**

Thanks for the opportunity to serve.

EVENTS AND HAPPENINGS

INTERGROUP 5 NEWS

Web stats: 5783 pages were sent from Intergroup5.org - the 3rd highest month this year. Activity is up 4% over last month and 7% over the previous month.

Before I relay the phone stats, would like to illustrate the difference one person can make A friend took it upon herself to announce the phone volunteer shortage in the meetings she attended. This simple act of carrying the message of service to local AA's resulted in more people training and 6 additional phone volunteers. Another friend recruited 2 more from her meetings. Among these new volunteers, a soft spoken gentleman with over 2 decades of sobriety and time to lend has put in innumerable hours this month at Intergroup resulting in an incredible leap in the number of calls answered. And now the numbers

Phone Stats: The phone volunteers at the Intergroup 5 office answered hot line calls of the following types and quantities:

12step - 4
 Al-Anon - 3
 AA info - 13
 Misc. - 11
 Agency info - 1 (and drum roll)
 Meeting info - 70 !!!!!
 For a Total of : 102 !!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

I have not reviewed the messages from years past but if that isn't a record, it is darn close. See what a difference one person can make when they carry the message of recovery, service and helping others? What a nice feeling to know [at least for an office coordinator] that callers got to speak to a human being 102 times this month ... one of "our type" of human beings.

So if each of us goes forth and makes a difference, those actions will add up to who knows? ... [imagining a full hot line volunteer schedule ... :)] ... the very least making a difference can do is keep us on the beam of right living and the very most making a difference can do is help another suffering alcoholic out of the misery of drunkenness and into the freedom of living sober.

Volunteer now - call Rob K @ 850.545.3833, the Intergroup 5 office @ 850.224.1818 or email office-coordinator@intergroup5.org **Rob K.**

***The "Havana Sunday Night" Group is still going strong but could use additional support from those interested in a smallish, non-smoking open discussion format. It meets every Sunday night, 7pm to 8 pm in the Recreation room behind the fire station.

***Also, the Westside group is nearly 2 years old (October) and still needs support from all people wanting an open discussion, non-smoking meeting. The Westside group meets every Tuesday night 7:30 to 8:30 at Bethel Methodist church in the fellowship hall between the church and the parsonage. **Matt C.**

CURRENT EVENTS

Area Assembly: October 3, 4 & 5, 2008
 Paramount Resort & Conference Center, 2900 SW 13th St. Gainesville, FL 32608. (352) 377- 4000 or 877-992-9229
 When making reservations, be sure to say you want a room in the "North Florida Area block."

52nd Florida State Convention: August 13-17, 2008
 Harbor Beach Marriott
 Ft. Lauderdale, FL

Steps Extravaganza: Sunday, August 24, 2008, 2:00-5:00
 Jackson Lodge, 2818 Apalachee Parkway
 Steps 4, 7, 9, 10 still available
 Call: Janis - 980-1793 or Susan - 264-6962
 Pizza, drinks and fellowship!

Happy A.A. July Anniversary

Bradfordville: Tony C.-1, Greg B.-14, Gerry M.-16, Nancy P-27
Casa: Kelli I.-1, Jenni-1, Keith G.-1, Jim D.-7, Frank V.-14, Ed V.-15
Central: Adam W.-1, Daniel W.-1, Clay D.-1, Jordan B.-1, Olivia-2, Paul-2, Jackie L.-5, Brian S.-8, Keith Ann-8, Matt N.-9, Mike B. - 11, Max - 19, Russell P. - 21
Home Group: Don B.-6
Lake Jackson: Clair B.-19
Monticello Serenity: Bubba W., Cary H.-14
Mustard Seed: Jim O.-29
Nite Owl: Matt C.-4



IMPORTANT AUGUST DATES IN A.A. HISTORY

Aug 1934 - Rowland H and Cebra persuade court to parole Ebby T. to them.
 Aug 1939 - Dr. Bob wrote & may have signed article for Faith magazine.
 Aug 1981 - Distribution of Alcoholics Anonymous passes 3 million.
 Aug 1, 1943 - Washington Times-Herald (DC) reports on AA clubhouse, to protect anonymity withholds address.
 Aug 3, 1954 - Brinkley S. gets sober at Towns Hosp after 50th detox.
 Aug 8, 1879 - Dr. Bob born in St. Johnsbury, VT.
 Aug 11, 1938 - Akron & NY members begin writing stories for BB.
 Aug 15, 1890 - E M Jellinek is born, author of "The Disease Concept of Alcoholism" and the "Jellinek Curve".
 Aug 16, 1939 - Dr Bob and Sister Ignatia admit 1st alcoholic to St Thomas Hospital, Akron, Ohio.
 Aug 18, 1988 - 1st Canadian National AA Convention in Halifax, Nova Scotia.
 Aug 19, 1941 - 1st AA Meeting in Colorado is held in Denver.
 Aug 25, 1943 - AA group donates Big Book to public library in Quincy, MA.
 Aug 26, 1941 - Bill writes Dr Bob to tell him Works Publishing has been incorporated
 Aug 28, 1954 - "24 Hours a Day" is published by Richmond W.

Diz T.