



# The Message

## A MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

### TRUSTED SERVANTS

#### **Intergroup**

Chairman—Mike L—New Hope

Co-chairman—Craig F—  
Living Sober

Secretary—Carol M—New Hope

Treasurer—Matt—Lake Jackson

Literature—Greg S—Home

Website—Andy E—Men's Faith

Activities—Laura A—Central

Membership—Vacant

Newsletter—Alice R—Central & Phanie H.—Living Sober

#### **District 5**

DCM—Joe D—Downtown

Alternate DCM—Susan E—Central

Secretary—vacant

Treasurer—Matt N—Central

#### **Standing Committees**

Public Info—Jeff D—Central

CPC—Steve H—Central

Treatment—Kevin T—Happy Hour

Corrections—Mike L—Lloyd

Grapevine—Vern D—Northside

Accessibilities—Janis T—Willing

Archives—Rebecca R.—Central

Bridging the Gap—Gail H—  
Bradfordville

#### **Intergroup 5, Inc.**

1106-H Thomasville Road  
Tallahassee, FL 32303  
(850) 224-1818

Website: [www.intergroup5.org](http://www.intergroup5.org)

Newsletter: Send info to  
[message@intergroup5.org](mailto:message@intergroup5.org)

#### **District 5**

P.O. Box 12352  
Tallahassee, FL 32317-2352

#### **NFACAA—Area 14**

Area Treasurer  
Marilyn B.  
6035 Tudor St.  
Inverness, FL 34452

INTERGROUP 5, INC. September 2007 TALLAHASSEE, FL

My life is made up of a million pieces in motion; people, places and things constantly shift, rotate and dissolve. My life happens around me and in spite of me but mostly *because* of me. Each day that I am given the amazing gift of life, I am also given the choice of what to do with it.

Over the course of my sobriety, there have been many facets of my life that rarely change. The stability often brings me comfort, but every once in a while, I am able to squeeze and choke out crippling amounts of discomfort. I bathe in misery. The insufferable tragedy that is my life is nearly too much for me to bear. In a fit of dramatics, I speak my truth, out loud, for all to hear, to witness and to understand. They hear me; my people hear me. And, in due course, I hear me. Almost immediately, I realize that my tale of woes is a farce and that I am ridiculous. I realize that my misery is my own invention and that self-will is the fuel feeding the fire that keeps the cranks and pulleys running the machine. I see, I understand and I know that I must change if I am to live the life that keeps me coming back to the rooms of AA.

By reading the Big Book, I learned that I have the disease of alcoholism. It is a disease of mind and body. My body overcomes the disease when I stop putting the drink in it. But my mind, that is a different story. I tell myself that I am okay, that I can handle this problem fine on my own. I become convinced that a life run on self-will can *only* be a success. Through the rooms of AA, I have learned that there are others like me. Quite often, the others do not seem to be as miserable as I am. A series of logical deductions reveals that it is likely that I am the source of my discomfort. I learn the power of choice.

Choice is one of the most integral ideas of this program. I came to the rooms a broken person. I chose my own conception of a higher power. I made a decision to turn my will and my life over to my higher power. I worked the remainder of the steps and I had a spiritual experience as the result. I have recovered from that seemingly hopeless state of mind and body.

Today, I choose to continue seeking the will of my higher power in all of my affairs. I regularly attend meetings of Alcoholics Anonymous. I take actions that help to peel away the layers, not add to them. I humbly attempt to give away what has been so freely given to me. Each piece is necessary if I am to maintain the quality of sobriety to which I have grown accustomed.

My life, as it is in this moment, makes me happy. I wake up every morning with an understanding that life will be lived on its own terms. Traffic may be heavy, parking may be difficult, my boss may be unkind, customers may yell at me and on and on. I already have the knowledge. The gift is in the choice. I can choose to walk through the certain trials and low spots of life with dignity and grace – or not. Each day I spend engulfed in self-pity is one more day of my life which has fallen prey to the disease of alcoholism. I have made a choice today that I have given enough of my life to the disease and not enough to the recovery. By the grace of a power greater than myself, I have been given life and it is the responsibility of this alcoholic to make the most of every minute.

- Alice R.

# Experience, Strength and Hope

## Step 9

*“Made direct amends to such people wherever possible except when to do so would injure them or others”*

When I first looked at this step, it was scary, just as scary as the Fifth Step when I had to admit my part. I talked it over with my sponsor and I read the Step as outlined in the 12 and 12. It gives some simple steps on starting this, courage, prudence, good judgment and most important timing. On my list, there were some people to whom I knew I could make amends right away, others to whom I would have to defer making amends until later, others to whom I would only be able to make partial amends, and still others to whom it would be impossible or impracticable to even contact.

Having already taken Step 8, I knew that I had to check my motives and ensure that I had a sincere desire to accept responsibility and make reparations for the harm I had caused others. My list contained not only people I loved and liked, but also some that I disliked. The AA book said to focus on cleaning my side of the street.

There were some people on my list that it would do more harm than good to make amends to them. Primarily, these are people who were never actually hurt by my actions because they were never aware of them. Making amends to these people would cause pain because they would not otherwise know about the wrong that I had done.

When I made my first amend to a family member, I followed the book's suggestion and, during an in-person conversation, explained what AA is and why I was making amends. I directly admitted my wrongdoing in a general way without ripping open old wounds but without sugar coating it. I offered to do anything possible to repair the harm done. The response was friendly as if it were water over the dam and the relationship has grown stronger since then.

Now, about timing. Because my first amends went so well, and it gave me a strong desire to do more. I did not want to procrastinate or rest on my laurels so I quickly made another amends. This one was a little harder and it took courage to do it, but in retrospect, I may have rushed it. I now believe that I should have spoken to my sponsor before making that amends to determine if it was the right time and how to go about doing it.

Step 9 is one of the hardest steps, but like many difficult things in life, it is the most rewarding.

Anonymous

## Tradition Nine:

**AA, as such, ought never be organized; but we may create service boards or committees directly responsible to those they serve.**

This tradition is the favorite tradition of many of us in AA today. It suggests the spiritual principle justifying what we have always been: disorganized. There have been times when I felt there ought to be a picture of me in the Twelve & Twelve with the caption “This is what Disorganized looks like!” But I'm much better now.

The least possible organization is the ideal toward which we aspire. How this simple ideal is realized is where opinions vary, and in many cases vary wildly. Some feel any organization to be a threat to AA in general and the individual in particular. Many stick with groups having no secretary, no InterGroup representative, no contact with the General Service structure, no treasurer, and a few without even a coffee person. Then there are those who proclaim that organization is necessary to effectively carry the message, and that they are just the ones to do the organizing. The result of this controversy, of course, is that we take the safe and firm middle course between the two extremes.

Organization at some level is obviously necessary. The rent doesn't pay itself, the literature doesn't publish itself, and the coffee doesn't start percolating until someone turns it on. In working with outside entities, such as when carrying the message to prisons or treatment centers, some coordination helps avoid confusion and duplicated efforts. AA literature, published by the General Service Office in New York City, requires just as much business organization as publication of any other collection of books, pamphlets and flyers. In short, to insure that AA is there to extend a helping hand when needed, anywhere, anytime, there has to be a phone number with someone on the receiving end and a meeting for the newcomer to attend, and that takes organization.

Some of my favorite AA groups are indifferent to this organizational enthusiasm. They meet at the same time every day, at the same place, with no coffee, a minimum of literature, and with no outside commitments at all. And they carry the message just fine! These small groups, independent of the larger organization, I feel are a safety net for AA. If the organizational aspect of AA, such as InterGroup and General Service, goes off the deep end someday (and a co-founder of AA did take some decidedly weird turns later in life) these simple groups will still be there, carrying the simple message of recovery through spiritual awakening and service to others.

Tradition Nine does not say that we will have no leaders in Alcoholics Anonymous. We do have leaders; in fact, I feel we all better be leaders when it comes to carrying the message to the alcoholic who still suffers. It does indicate, however, that we do not derive any authority, honor, or prestige from our leadership. Anyone who expects high standing in the AA community from being selected secretary, chairman, or other office, should listen to what a past delegate once told me. “There ain't no honor in being elected Head Sick!” If you seek respect or admiration for your role in AA, perhaps you should get a Tee shirt printed up which reads “King of the Sickos!” Then maybe you'd get the respect you deserve. No, the reward for being on a service board or committee is much greater than any honors or awards: we get another day sober.

Ed V.

Drop the question what tomorrow may bring, and count as profit every day that fate allows you. -Horace

# Intergroup 5/District 5 News

## Looking for some Service Work?

There are positions open for Bridging the Gap Chair and Corrections Committee Chair. Each position has a 2 year sobriety requirement and involves a 2 year commitment. Anyone interested in these service opportunities please come to the District 5 meeting, held on the third Wednesday of every month at The Faith Presbyterian Church on the corner of John Knox and Meridian Rd.

Be a part of history and work with the archive collection of District 5. Several projects are now underway including: taking photographs of old AA meeting places (digital preferred); listening to and/or cataloging old AA audiocassettes; creating a power point presentation for the Service Extravaganza; creating a photo album of old AA meeting places and pamphlets, and making nameplates for the books in our new display cases. Interested contact Rebecca R. @ 850-385-2670 or email @ rlr6906@gmail.com.

Seeking women with a desire to spread the AA message to women in residential treatment center. This is a great service opportunity and an opportunity to get to know some amazing women. Meetings are held every Sunday. Call Alice at (850) 320-5182 if you are interested in attending this meeting.

## TREATMENT FACILITIES COMMITTEE

The primary purpose of the treatment facilities committee is to carry the A.A. message to the alcoholic who still suffers. There is probably no better place to find a suffering alcoholic than in a treatment facility. It is estimated that about 1/3 of our membership came from treatment facilities (myself included). Carrying the message to alcoholics in treatment is basic Twelfth Step work-- sharing experience, strength and hope-- giving it away in order to keep it. To quote the Big Book; "Practical experience shows that nothing will so much insure immunity from drinking as intensive work with other alcoholics. It works when other activities fail... carry this message to other alcoholics! You can help when no one else can. You can secure their confidence when others fail."

Bill W. himself was the product of a treatment facility--Towns Hospital in New York City. After he finally put together several months of sobriety, Bill returned to Towns to try to work with other alcoholics. This was the beginning of Twelfth Step work in hospitals.

The Treatment Facilities Committee meets in conjunction with the Corrections Committee and Bridging the Gap Committee on the second Sunday of the month at 3pm at 909 Gadsden. We are always in need of volunteers. You may contact me at 879-8271 if you have any questions or need additional information.

In Service,  
Kevin T.  
Treatment Facilities Chairman

## 2007 Treasurer Reports by Month

General Fund Activity	August	Year to date
Alligator Point		
Apalachicola Bay Serenity	20.00	
Bradfordville	322.00	
Came to Believe		
Capital City		
Carrabelle		
Central	200.00	
Detox (Grateful)		
DownTown		
Havana Sunday Night		
Happy Hour		
Home group		
Lake Jackson		
Lloyd New Hope		
Living Sober		
Men's Faith		
Miracle Sunday nite		
Mustard Seed	58.30	
Nite Owl		
Northside		
Open Door		
Powder no Puff		
Quincy		
Singleness of Purpose		
Southside		
Willing		
Contribution totals	600.30	5484.22
Anonymous Bequest/Donations	119.19	299.19
Picnic Receipts	184.00	
Flint River Roundup	100.00	
Transfer from prudent reserve	750.00	
All fund sources totals	719.49	6817.41
Due from Lit. Fund		
<u>Expenses:</u>		
Rent	248.36	1986.88
Answering service	268.50	2120.75
Telephone	47.50	377.39
Internet install and monthly charge	51.96	285.76
Office coordinator travel	147.62	1458.43
Adjustment to above	(220.00)	
Printing where/when	109.75	704.50
Supplies/Paper/Printing	10.67	
Picnic/Holiday dinner expense	125.00	462.33
State corp. fee	61.25	
Office Insurance	419.63	
Expense totals	998.69	7667.59
Literature fund activity:		
Literature Sales	476.05	4861.08
Sales tax collected	39.80	363.12
Literature Purchases	1568.32	5580.22
2006 Sales Tax remission		
Due to general fund		
Interest earned		

## Keep Coming Back Without a Drink!

# Events and Happenings

## Current Events

### Meetings

#### Intergroup 5 Business Meeting

September 5, 2007, 7:00 p.m.  
Faith Presbyterian Church  
Tallahassee, FL

#### BTG/Corrections/TF Committee Meeting

September 9, 2007, 3:00 p.m.  
909 Gadsden St.  
Tallahassee, FL

#### District 5 Business Meeting

September 19, 2007, 7:00 p.m.  
Faith Presbyterian Church  
Tallahassee, FL

### Workshops

#### Big Book Study

Thursdays, 7:00 p.m.  
Advent Episcopal Church, Assembly Room  
815 W. Piedmont Dr.  
Tallahassee, FL

#### Big Book Workshop

Mondays, 7:00 p.m.  
Room 201  
Tallahassee Heights United Methodist Church  
3004 Mahan Dr.  
Tallahassee, FL



## Service Extravaganza!



### It's coming...

Enrich your AA experience with service to other alcoholics. This event will acquaint you with a variety of service opportunities at the District level to enhance your personal program of recovery. Enjoy the carnival atmosphere. Learn about service. Discover new and fulfilling ways to serve.

**When:** Saturday, September 22, 2007 from 11am to 5pm

**Where:** Jackson Masonic Lodge, 2818 Apalachee Parkway, Tallahassee, Florida 32301

**Why:** to inform and excite people about service opportunities at the District level

**Food:** Hamburgers, Hot Dogs, Chips, Sodas, Popcorn, Boiled Peanuts, Ice Cream, etc.

**Carnival Theme Featuring:** Dunk the Officers; Stump the Oldtimers; Fortune Teller; Jailhouse; Clowns, and lots more.

### Featuring:

- AA is Anonymous not Invisible
  - Delegates Report
- New York Traveling Archives

If you would like to help with this year's event, please call (850) 980-1793.

## March Phone Report

(56 Calls Received by Volunteers)



1—12th Step

1—Al-anon

9—AA Info

32—Meeting Information

3—Agency

10—Miscellaneous

We need more Volunteers!

Please call Larry H 567-8407

569 calls taken by the answering service during July

*Without change I am just a non-drinking drunk!!!  
Serenity isn't freedom from the storm; it is peace within the storm!!!*

*A first edition of the Big Book is now a part of District % archives. Many thanks to Rowena D. and her husband for their generous contribution.*

## Happy A.A. Anniversary

**Central Group**— David S.— 10; Charlie B.— 7; Laura— 3; Anna— 3; James M— 21; Larry H.— 23; Will D.— 2; Tag A.— 1; Steve B.—4; Charlie— 22; Jim G.— 24

**Happy Hour/Living Sober**—

**Lloyd New Hope**—Charles— 47;

**Monticello**

**Serenity**—

Rowena D.—30; Tony M— 7

**Lake Jackson**— Jeanne B.—27

# Celebrate Your Success!