



TRUSTED SERVANTS

The Message

A MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

INTERGROUP 5, INC. August 2007 TALLAHASSEE, FL

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—

The Fellowship

Sometimes I get to thinking (usually a dangerous thing for a hopeless drunk like me): Just what is it about Alcoholics Anonymous that makes it so special, so effective in helping the suffering alcoholic? Is it the fellowship? But you can get fellowship at a barber shop or around the water cooler at work, or even at a bar, for that matter. Is it the spirituality? But there are churches, synagogues, temples, sweat lodges, ashrams, and so on, all over the planet that specializes in spiritual matters and they have a pretty poor record for sobering up drunks. Is it the Twelve Steps? But the principles behind the steps; trusting God, cleaning house, and working with others; these are not original with us. Maybe we can take credit for the way the Twelve are actually written, but the concepts behind them have been around as long as recorded history, and probably longer. We received them directly from other groups. We cannot claim them as original with AA.

The one thing that is special about AA, the thing that has made us unique in the history of the world, is our singleness of purpose, of one drunk working with another. One drunk, sharing a program of action bringing about a spiritual awakening sufficient to help us recover from a seemingly hopeless state of mind and body, has been AA's claim to fame from our very beginning. And where are you likely to find drunks of our type who wish to change? Not in the bars, not in the gutters, and not in the shelters. These days, a drunk who wants to change knows about the rooms of Alcoholics Anonymous, and eventually finds his way there. Sometimes we have to go fetch 'em, but that's all part of the process.

Not everybody in the fellowship comes here for the same reason. Some come looking for women (or men.) Some come looking for a handout, a free meal or a roof over their heads. Some come looking for a loan, figuring that a shortage of cash is the root of all their problems. And some come just looking for friendship. The way I figure it, if you're looking for women, go to the mall; that's where they are. If you're looking for a handout, try the Salvation Army or one of the other charitable organizations. If cash is your problem, get a job, or try the banks or loan sharks for a quick fix. If you're looking for a friend, get a dog. If you're looking to get sober, and stay sober, you're in the right place; that's what we do.

We are all links in the chain of AA. Newcomers who find the fellowship need to relate to others with the same problem, even if only as a squirrel relates to the squirrel on the next branch. The fellowship of AA started with one drunk talking to another, and the chain has continued unbroken to this very day, in our own home group, when we shake hands and welcome the newcomer who needs to feel like they belong. When we make them feel welcome, when we help them identify, we are continuing the chain started when Bill W. called on Dr. Bob.

This is the one thing that makes AA unique on the planet. By being a part of the fellowship, by helping others, we help ourselves, and the generations of sufferers who will come after. The 9th step directions tell us "Our real purpose is to fit ourselves to be of maximum service to God and the people about us." The fellowship of AA didn't start because the drunk approached the recovering alcoholic but because the alcoholic approached the drunk.

A wise man once said, "If you want to get to know God, get to know His children." I know of no better way to do this than by approaching the alcoholic who is still suffering. I can think of no better place to do this than in the fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous.

Ed V.

CONTACT INFORMATION

Intergroup 5, Inc.

1106-H Thomasville Road

Tallahassee, FL 32303

(850) 224-1818

Website: www.intergroup5.org

Newsletter: Send info to
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

To see things in the seed, that is genius. -Lao-tzu

Experience, Strength and Hope

Tradition Eight

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

In the long form, Tradition Eight reads, "Alcoholics Anonymous should remain forever nonprofessional. We define professionalism as the occupation of counseling alcoholics for fees or hire. But we may employ alcoholics where they are going to perform those services for which we might otherwise have to engage nonalcoholic's. Such special services may be well recompensed. But our usual A.A. "12 Step" work is never to be paid for."

For me, the immediate question is, "What is usual 12 step work?" The literature tells me that acts ranging from making coffee to picking up paper to sponsoring newcomers qualify as 12 step work. Holding service positions, driving members to and from meetings, answering the hotline phone, these are all examples of 12 step work. These are also tasks that I would not expect a non-alcoholic to perform, with or without compensation. These are duties I perform so that I may stay sober and I pray that I will always have the opportunity to do so. The 12 step work I perform is for me, to ensure my own immunity against my next drink. I serve this program so that I may maintain the level of sobriety and comfort that makes my life worth living today. And, because of the rewards I reap from such acts, I expect no monetary compensation for them. Believe me, I do it all for ME and if I was not getting something out of it, I would not be doing it.

This tradition tells me that I am not to console another drunk, call it therapy and send a bill. I am not to set up an "AA" treatment center in my home and charge for rooms, care and meetings. I am not to offer rides to meetings for a fee. I cannot write up a bill for listening to a 5th step. For me, these things violate Tradition Eight. That alcoholic is helping me more than I am helping them. Anything I share is my own experience and if it is not, then it is my opinion (which is definitely not worth anything.) Still, I have never had a drink while reading Bill's Story or working through a 4th step so it must serve some purpose.

On the other hand, I do not think it inappropriate to ask for compensation for more detailed or time consuming tasks. For example, keeping the books, managing an office or maintaining a facility (beyond picking up trash and cleaning ashtrays) for AA might be a daunting task. Suppose that I have the knowledge to perform the task but the on take of the task would cause me to lose wages at work or would take significant time away from my home life or AA life. Willingness is certainly essential, but I also like to eat, use electricity and hot water. Jobs such as this could be considered work that a non-AA could perform, for a fee. Why then should I not accept the same? Am I in violation of Tradition Eight? The literature says that I am not.

Is it more desirable to have a member of the fellowship perform these tasks? Maybe so, but that requires a member who is willing to commit to the position. Sometimes, that person does not exist. This is when our literature tells us that it is appropriate to dip into the "outside world" and hire. Perhaps it just happens that the person best qualified for the job is a drunk.

Alice R.

Step Eight

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

It is often said that the principle behind this step is Brotherly Love. According to Bill W., this step is "the beginning of the end of isolation from our fellows and from GOD."

By the end of my drinking career, I had erected an emotional wall which prevented me from developing true relationships with others. I refused to open my heart and emotions out of fear of being hurt. However, by the time I completed step eight, I had become willing to remove this obstacle.

There are two-parts to step eight. First, we make a list of persons we had harmed. For me, making this list was quite simple. I referred to the inventory I had completed in step four and extracted the names of people I had harmed. People upon whom I had inflicted either physical, mental, emotional, or spiritual harm. I then added any names I had forgotten when I did my fourth step.

But before I could move on to making amends in step nine, I had to finish step eight; I had to become willing. This is the hard part because I didn't like to think about some of the things I had done to hurt others, much less confront them directly, admit my faults, and make reparations for harm done. I was afraid of what I would say and how they would react. Reading the 12 & 12 was encouraging because it says that "alcoholics are not the only ones bedeviled with sick emotions." I realized that my feelings were not wrong, but if I did not get over this, my amends would be mere empty gestures or casual apologies rather than sincere efforts to repair the harm I caused. I could not "fake it until I made it." I had to make a deep and honest search of my motives and actions. I prayed for courage, humility, and the desire make amends. Then I realized that if I wanted to be forgiven for the things I had done to others, I needed to forgive myself for the things that I had done. This gave me the perspective that I should make my amends out of love and without any expectations. Then, I was ready for step nine.

-Tommy H.

Spotlight On:

AA Grapevine

I started thinking about the tools that I have learned to use to live a sober life. I have a conscious contact with my Higher Power, I read portions of three books each morning; I pray and meditate; I have the "Big Book" and the 12 & 12; I have my home group. These are just a few of those tools. Another tool that I use is the AA Grapevine.

The Statement of Purpose on page 2 of each edition describes it as a "meeting in print". There are times when I really need a meeting and can't get to one. It provides me with that connection. Often, there are articles that really get me thinking about my life as a sober alcoholic. I read differing opinions about many topics from AAs all over the world in "PO Box 1980." Those opinions remind me that everyone doesn't think the way I do, which is a good thing... The personal stories usually touch my heart. I laugh, cry and many times wonder how those AAs survived... (Actually, I know how they survived. They surrendered. Eventually, I did just that too...after nearly 20 years if trying to "do it MY way". I finally listened to those who had a program for a successful and happy sober life. They told me about the tools they used.)

The Grapevine also reminds me that all the contributions between the covers each month have been shared with me by AAs. That sharing is their contribution to my continuing sobriety. It can be a contribution to yours, too. It can be one of your recovery "tools".

Carol M.

Intergroup 5/District 5 News

Intergroup 5 Meeting Minutes

Date: 07/11/07

Groups Represented: New Hope, Living Sober, Lake Jackson, Home, Path Finders, Central, Open Door and Downtown. 12 people attended, representing 8 groups.

Secretary's Report: Approved and accepted.

Treasurer's Report: Approved and accepted.

Office Report: See Message. Volunteers needed. Please call the office. A higher number of calls were received June, possibly due to the new DSL in use now at the IG5 office. FSU School of Film requested the name of a group they could film. The policy is anonymity was explained to them. (Tradition Eleven) Jeff (Chef Jeff) is now making presentations about "What AA Is and What We Do" to outside agencies (i.e. schools, universities, civic groups, churches).

Literature Report: See Message. "The Traditional Intergroup 5 Newcomer Packet" is now available at the IG5 office. The cost is \$1.05 per packet w/o postage or envelope.

Activities Report: No report.

District Report: No report.

Web Committee Report: No report.

Old Business: See Secretary's report for June 2007. **1.** 7 groups reported back that they are in favor of setting up a new committee (12 Step Committee) to be added to the Constitution and By-laws of Intergroup 5, Inc. **2.** The response from Men's Faith Group (unofficial) concerning resuming contributions to IG5 was positive. Matt C. will attend the regular MF group meeting 07/12/07 to answer questions from the group and will report back to IG5 at the August 1, 2007 meeting.

New Business: **1.** Motion made to amend By-laws to include a new standing committee to Article VIII, Section 1, letter "e" to be named **12 Step**. Motion seconded. (Vote- All in favor. None opposed.) **2.** A new committee chair (facilitator) will be needed to gather names for the "12 Step List" and to coordinate training for volunteers. The chair must have at least one year of sobriety. **3.** Next IG5 meeting will be August 1.

Submitted in Grateful Service,
Carol McG.

District Contributions by group - July 07

Apalachicola Bay Serenity	\$ 120.00
Alligator Point	\$ 5.73
Men's Faith Group	\$ 81.72
Anonymous	\$ 50.50
Central Group	\$ 240.00
Lake Jackson Group	\$ 50.00
Diversity of the Spirit	\$ 12.00
Home Group	\$ 20.00
Night Owl	\$ 30.00
Mustard Seed Group	\$ 153.56
Bradfordville Group	\$ 83.00
Open Door Speaker Meeting	\$ 26.40
Northside	\$ 75.93
Estate of Barbara Thomasy	\$ 182.00
Happy Hour Group	\$ 40.00
Powder no Puff	\$ 75.88
Capital City Group	\$ 77.00
Downtown	\$ 73.83

Pink Can Contributions by group - July 07

Lloyd New Hope	\$ 538.00
Central Group	\$ 120.00
CASA	\$ 120.65
Pathfinders	\$ 7.89
Crawfordville	\$ 22.00
Willing Group	\$ 23.60
Open Door	\$ 20.51
East Point Group	\$ 12.00
Anonymous	\$ 2.81

**KEEP COMING BACK
IT WORKS IF YOU WORK IT!!!**

IG5 July 2007 Treasurer's report

General Fund

Checking:

Beginning 6/30/2007 balance \$ 182.67

Contributions:

Apalachicola Bay Serenity	20.00
Capitol City	128.00
Central	200.00
Downtown	73.83
Havana Sunday Night	40.00
Lake Jackson	50.00
Lloyd New Hope	50.00
Mustard Seed	58.36
Nite Owl	215.00
Northside	153.56
Total Contributions	988.75
Less Disbursements:	
Answering service	246.00
Office Coordinator Travel & related ex.	147.62
Internet monthly charge	51.96

Printing News letter/ When and where	109.75
Rent	248.36
Telephone	49.26
Report balance correction (feb/mar end bal)	(118.69)
Total Expense Disbursements	734.26
Ending Balance 7/31/2007	437.16
Prudent Reserve Savings:	
Beginning 6/30/2007 balance	1254.55
Interest earned	0.49
Ending Balance 7/31/2007	\$ 1,255.04
Literature Fund	
Beginning 6/30/2007 Balance	\$ 1,417.94
Literature sales	835.40
Sales Tax collected	62.49
Total receipts	897.89
less:	
Purchases	528.00
Total Purchases	528.00
Ending Balance 7/31/2007	\$ 1,787.83

August 2007

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER INTERGROUP 5, INC.

Events and Happenings

Current Events

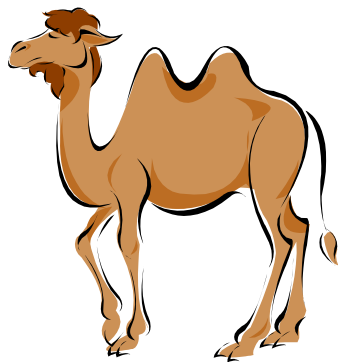
51st Florida State Convention
August 8-12, 2007
Orlando, Florida
Convention Web Site: www.flstateconvention.com

SUMMER SERENITY AT THE BEACH
August 16th-19th, 2007
Destin, Florida
More Info: <http://www.destin-ssatb.org>

Big Book Weekend
September 21st-23, 2007
Sarasota, Florida
More Info: e-mail Dick L. @ scmsrl@comcast.net or write to:
Big Book Weekend
PO Box 17712
Sarasota, Florida 34276

NEWSLETTER

Please submit articles, anniversary notices or announcements for "The Message" to the Intergroup office or send email to message@intergroup5.org by the last Wednesday of each month. If you have questions, please call Alice R. @ 320-5162 or Phanie H @ 222-9544. Thank you...



*The camel each day goes twice to his knees.
He picks up his load with the greatest of ease.
He walks through the day with his head held high.
And stays for that day, completely dry.*

July Phone Report

(69 Calls Received by Volunteers)



2—12th Step
1—AI-anon
12—AA Info
40—Meeting Information
7—Agency
8—Miscellaneous

We need more Volunteers!
Please call Larry H 567-8407

Promises of Step Eight

Big Book page #78:

- *If our manner is calm, frank, and open, we will be gratified with the result.*
- *Rarely do we fail to make satisfactory*

Happy A.A. Anniversary

Central Group— Anastasia-1; Jin D.-2; Kira-1; Olga-1; Olivia-1; Paul W.-1; Earnest-2; Murray-2; Terri H.-2; Jackie-4; Keith Ann-7; Matt N.- 8; Mike B.-10; Ed V.-14; Max-18; Ann D.-24; Heather H.-1; George-7; Russell P.-20

Happy Hour/Living Sober-
Debbie-1

Lloyd New Hope

Phanie H.-1

Downtown—

Bruce H.-20

Lake Jackson—

Matt C.-3; Judith-20 (June); Clair B-18

Men's Faith—

Scott Mc.-3; Don B.-5

Mustard Seed—

Cary E.-1



***Celebrate
Your
Success!***