



# The Message

A MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

## TRUSTED SERVANTS

INTERGROUP 5, INC JUNE 2009 TALLAHASSEE, FL

### Intergroup

Chairman—Craig F.—*Living Sober*  
 Vice Chairman—Mike F.—*New Hope*  
 Secretary—Christy T.—*Happy Hour*  
 Treasurer—Carol H.—*New Hope*  
*Literature—Heather D.*  
*Website—Debbie C.—Open Door*  
*Activities—Tracy G.—Happy Hour*  
*Office Coordinator—Pete S.*  
*Membership—Vacant*  
*Newsletter—Sandy M & Emily B -Mustard Seed*  
*12 Step—Jeff D.—Central*

### District 5

DCM—Holly H.—*Bradfordville*  
 Alt. DCM—Donna W.—*Happy Hour*  
 Secretary—Matt N.—*Central*  
 Treasurer—Tracy I.—*Bradfordville*

### Standing Committees

Public Info—*Vacant*  
 CPC—Maggi W.—*Central*  
 Treatment—Kris C.—*Central*  
 Corrections—David G.—*Happy Hour*  
 Grapevine—*Vacant*  
 Accessibilities—Steve B.—*CASA Men's*  
 Archives—*Vacant*  
 Bridging the Gap—*Vacant*

## CONTACT INFORMATION

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### District 5

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P. O. Box 567  
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I can remember my 1st drink so well, it feels like it was yesterday. I was 18, watching FSU play Wake Forest. My roommates and I were in our dorm room, and one of them offered me a shot. 3 shots of 100 proof Smirnoff later, and I knew what had been missing in my life! I finally felt like I fit in with everyone else. I remembered the date: October 25<sup>th</sup>, 2003. If that didn't make me an alcoholic from the start, I don't know what would!

I proceeded to drink at every opportunity. Growing up with 3 alcoholic grandparent, I only knew alcohol as something evil that I should stay away from. But at some point, I knew all my peers were drinking, and I decided that in order to fit in, I would have to drink too. After my 1st drink, I knew I had to get more. I continued to work hard during the week and party on weekends. I didn't see any problem with that.

When I was 20, I got into nursing school. My parents bragged about me to their friends. They thought I was the perfect daughter. I was genuinely excited about my career choice. But I was more excited about drinking. I did well in school in the beginning. I can pinpoint the exact time where everything changed. I had gotten a job in an industry where alcohol use is extremely prevalent. One night, I decided to go out after work with my coworkers for some drinks. I proceeded to get so drunk I blacked out. That was a little concerning to me, because that was probably only the 2nd time during my drinking career. I humiliated myself to the point that I didn't want to go to work the next day, and it took me 3 days to get over the hangover. Amazingly enough, people at work accepted me better than ever, and I was finally in their little crowd. I had FINALLY found people who drank like I did, and I made it my mission to drink with them any time I could.

Pretty soon, my grades started to slide. I would have every intention of studying or going to class, but I'd stop at the bar, "just for a couple," and end up sleeping all day, then waking up swearing I'd never do it again. This continued to get worse and worse. In November of 2006, I got my first DUI. I swore to everyone that it was a one time mistake, and just to be safe, I'd quit drinking. As soon as I'd gotten a replacement ID (they confiscated my license when I got arrested), I was at the bar and off to the races again. I felt physically sick all the time. I looked terrible. My friends and family were extremely concerned. I was too. I didn't drink for 2 months once, just to prove I wasn't alcoholic. But pretty soon I was back to drinking, and it was a lot worse this time.

I got a job as a nurse, and it was exhausting just to get to work. It didn't turn my life around the way I thought it would. I swore I'd never drink if I had to go into work the next day. But of course, pretty soon I was just going to have 1, and then I'd find myself calling in at 3 in the morning. After one of those nights, I woke up depressed and suicidal. I spent some time at the Psych hospital, and decided to get sober. I didn't need AA though, I figured I could do it on my own. I did it on my own for 2 weeks, then went out for my birthday, got drunk, and ended up getting my second DUI in 8 months.

Waking up in jail, I had finally hit my bottom. I didn't want to live anymore. Then I Had what I now know was my first spiritual experience. I had this clear thought that if I hadn't died doing all the crazy things I did drinking, maybe I was actually here for some purpose. I didn't know how, but I knew I had to quit drinking. That was July 7<sup>th</sup>, 2007, and I haven't had to take a drink since!  
*(cont. on page 2)*

# Experience, Strength and Hope

## Step Six

*Were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character.*

"This is the step that separates the men from the boys". (12 Steps and 12 Traditions, 63). Bill suggests this is an important step. Yet, only 4 sentences are written in the book, Alcoholics Anonymous, about step 6. What is meant by, "*Were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character*"?

Assuming we've completed thorough 4th and 5th steps, we should have a list of our defects of character. It is these which I must become entirely ready to have God remove. But what is meant by "entirely ready" and why would I have any problem with being entirely ready?

In my opinion, Bill is most specific about these issues in the 12 and 12. There it is explained that most of my defects of character are not as grossly damaging or as obviously harmful to me and others as is necessary for me to let go of them immediately. Bill compares the severity of these other defects with the central defect that brought all of us together, excessive drinking. Drinking had done such serious harm that, after a sufficient bottom, we immediately became "*entirely ready*" to let go of it. But other defects haven't done that much damage, yet. For this reason, I hold on tighter and longer to some of these other defects, or at least I do so until these other defects cause me similar pain.

But the step still calls for me to be entirely ready, so what's the solution? In the Big Book Bill suggests that we "ask God to help us be willing" (Alcoholics Anonymous, 76). In the 12 and 12 Bill suggests we are to "try as best we know how to make progress in the building of character" and that "Step Six ...is A.A.'s way of stating the best possible attitude one can take" (Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions, 65).

A past sponsor of mine, Robert F. from Cape Girardeau, MO, explained it similarly. He said that if I'm unwilling to let go of these defects, the next best thing I can do is to try to be willing. This is demonstrated by my continued daily prayer, which should include a request that I be given the willingness to become willing. I've found that as time has passed I've become less comfortable in defects I was previously comfortable in.

**Matt N.**

## Tradition Six

*An A.A. group ought never endorse, finance or lend the A.A. name to any related facility or outside enterprise, lest problems of money, property and prestige divert us from our primary purpose.*

I read in The Grapevine: The traditions protect the fellowship from the membership. I did not understand what this meant at the time.

Nite-Owl is a favorite A.A. group for me. It has met at 11 pm. Friday & Saturday nights for more than 2 decades. When I was actively drinking, this time of the weekend was what I refer to as my "witching hour" also known as blacking out. Finding this group in our meeting schedule was a gift from my Higher Power.

Nite-Owl became an essential meeting for me in early sobriety and still is. Eventually I got a coffee making job, the key to the building and became the self-appointed janitor of the group. Nite-Owl met at the drop-in center on Tennessee Street. We had decent attendance almost every weekend. Nite-Owl paid its rent with chairs we bought with group money for the facility to use. Then came the conflict. The proprietors of the drop-in center informed the group that we were no longer allowed to meet at their building. I was upset at how unappreciated we were and how inconsiderate they were. Then I started to worry about where we would meet and if the attendees would follow wherever we moved. The small group conscience decided to meet at a park gazebo, then at a church that already had a recovery fellowship meeting. A.A. members followed but attendance waned because confusion over location.

Just 2 months later a downtown church agreed to let the Nite-Owl group meet in their church annex. We currently meet there at Trinity United Methodist church at the corner of Park and Duval. Attendance is back to pre-move numbers. We pay rent to the church with money the group collects. Because Nite-Owl had no ulterior motive at the drop-in center other than to carry the message, we didn't lose the inner drive that animates an A.A. group when we lost the location. We didn't receive any money from that corporation so we didn't miss their money when we left. Having no ties to their money or building, our primary purpose remained because our spiritual motive was untainted.

Remember I had resentment and embarrassment over losing the building and fear over not keeping the good attendance. Yet tradition 6 was in place for that group decades before I showed up resentful and full of fear. Thus Nite-Owl had and has spiritual freedom to move and grow, wherever it exists; whoever calls it their home group. I'm glad tradition 6 protects my home group from me. "God will constantly disclose more to you and to us".

**Matt C.**

I went to my first AA meeting a couple days later. I went kicking and screaming, but I went. I don't remember what was said, but I do remember that I felt like this group of people understood me. They told me to "keep coming back," and I did. I got a sponsor, worked the steps, and my life got better! I had a lot of wreckage from my past to clear up, I even had to go to jail in the first 90 days, and I didn't drink. I lost my drivers license, almost lost my job, got denied for my nursing license for over a year, and I still didn't drink! I turned those situations over to God, and they worked out better than I could have possibly imagined.

I am so grateful to my God, and to the people in the rooms of Alcoholics Anonymous. My life has so much more meaning and purpose than it ever had, even before I drank. As long as I work to stay in fit spiritual condition, I can go anywhere and do anything I want! Almost 2 years into my journey, I have all my "stuff" back and more. But the most important thing is my relationship with God. It gets deeper every day. All I have to do is trust God, clean house, and help others. And most importantly, I don't take that first drink.

**Jordan B.**

# Intergroup 5 News

## INTERGROUP 5 MEETING MINUTES MAY 2009

**Groups Represented:** Happy Hour, Lloyd New Hope, Central, Home Group, Bradfordville, Open Door, Mustard Seed, Lake Jackson and Downtown Young People's Group. 15 people attended; 8 IG5 representatives were present.

**Secretary's Report:** Approved and accepted.

**Treasurer's Report:** Reserve set aside for Founder's Day Picnic and our savings account earned a whopping .21 cents in interest. Approved and accepted

**Office Report:** The phone system is still not up to par and has a delay on the time stamp. Pete S. has volunteered to take over the phone saga and find a reliable system.

**Literature Report:** Rep. absent

**Activities Report:** Tracy has attended several groups' business meetings and asked for monetary donations for the picnic. She has had good luck with this strategy. Any money collected and not used will be set aside for the Holiday Dinner in December. Jeff D. has offered to bring approx. 100 burgers. She is making poster's to hang for decorations and we still need volunteers for set up and clean up. Great service work opportunity folks!

**Web Committee Report:** Debbie has put the By-Laws on the web. New meetings were noticed in *The Message* and she will list them on the website.

**\*Reminder\*** All new meetings must have continual attendance for 6 months before they are listed in the *Where & When*.

**District Report:** Previously asked at a District Meeting "Do home groups file taxes?" This is still being researched.

**12 Step News:** Phone volunteers are not using the updated phone list. Jeff D. is willing to take over the phone service to find an acceptable system.

**Old Business:** None

**New Business:** Pete S. and Jeff D. will take on the phone system and find one that is comparable to our needs.

Happy, Joyous & Free,  
Christy T.

## NEW MEETINGS

### CANDLELIGHT AT CASA

2410 Monday Road  
Tallahassee, Florida  
Wednesdays @ 8:00 p.m.

### HAVANA SOBRIETY GROUP

7th Avenue—Community Center across from the police station  
Havana, Florida  
Sundays @ 7:00 p.m.

### THE 705 MEETING

Waukeelah United Methodist Church  
81 Methodist Church Road, Hwy. 27 & 259  
Waukeelah, Florida  
Mondays @ 7:05 p.m.

### WESTSIDE GROUP—BIG BOOK STUDY

Bethel Methodist Church Fellowship Hall  
Hwy. 90 West, then left on Bethel Church Road  
Tallahassee, Florida  
Tuesdays @ 7:30 p.m.

## Happy A.A. May Anniversary

**Central :** Earnest C.—1, Fred V.—1, Ken—1, Cameron F.—2, Kris C.—2, Anne—3, Pat—3, Eric—4, Joel A.—4, Susie—4, Thomas D.—4, Brett—6, Jimmie—8, Jason—10, Diana—11, Kevin—11, Floyd—14, Trey M. —15, Elizabeth—22, Alan—24, Carol S.—27, Clark—27, Dave A.—37

**Living Sober, Happy Hour & Conscious Contact:** Paul B.—1, Tammy B.—1, Gary M.—5, James R.—5, Audrey W.—16, Judy M.—22

**Mustard Seed:** Diz T.—28, Betty B.—22

**Nite Owl:** Heather D.—3

**Pathfinders:** Judy P.—25



# EVENTS AND HAPPENINGS

## IMPORTANT JUNE DATES IN A.A HISTORY

June 1: 1949 - Anne Smith, Dr. Bob's wife, died.  
 June 4: 2002- Caroline Knapp, author of "Drinking: A Love Story" died sober of lung cancer.  
 June 5:1940 - Ebby Thatcher took a job at the NY Worlds Fair.  
 June 6:1940 - The first AA Group in Richmond, VA, was formed.  
 June 1979 - AA gave the two-millionth copy of the Big Book to Joseph Califano, then Secretary of Health, Education, and Welfare. It was presented by Lois Wilson, Bill's wife, in New York.  
 June 10:1935 - The date that is celebrated as Dr. Bob's last drink and the official founding date of AA. There is some evidence that the founders, in trying to reconstruct the history, got the date wrong and it was actually June 17.  
 June 11: 1945 - Twenty-five hundred attend AA's 10th Anniversary in Cleveland, Ohio.  
 June 1969 - Dr. Bob's granddaughter, Bonna, daughter of Sue Smith and Ernie Galbraith (The Seven Month Slip in the First Edition) killed herself after first killing her six-year-old child.  
 June 1971 - Ernie Galbraith died.  
 June 13: 1945 - Morgan R. gave a radio appearance for AA with large audience. He was kept under surveillance to make sure he didn't drink.  
 June 16: 1938 - Jim Burwell, "The Vicious Cycle" in Big Book, had his last drink.  
 June 18: 1940 - One hundred attended the first meeting in the first AA clubhouse at 334-1/2 West 24th St., NYC.  
 June 19: 1942 - Columnist Earl Wilson reported that NYC Police Chief Valentine sent six policemen to AA and they sobered up. "There are fewer suicides in my files," he commented.  
 June 21: 1944 - The first Issue of the AA Grapevine was published.  
 June 24: 1938 - Two Rockefeller associates told the press about the Big Book "Not to bear any author's name but to be by 'Alcoholics Anonymous.'"  
 June 25: 1939 - The New York Times reviewer wrote that the Big Book is "more soundly based psychologically than any other treatment I have ever come upon."  
 June 26: 1935 - Bill Dotson. (AA #3) entered Akron's City Hospital for his last detox and his first day of sobriety.  
 June 30: 1941 - Ruth Hock showed Bill Wilson the Serenity Prayer and it was adopted readily by AA.

DIZ T.

## CONFERENCES & OTHER EVENTS

### Founder's Day Florida Style

June 5-7, 2009  
 Residence Inn Marriot  
 600 W. Gaines Street  
 Tallahassee, FL

### 2009 Founder's Day Picnic

June 20, 2009  
 10:00 a.m.-Fellowship  
 11:00 a.m.-Speaker  
 12:30 p.m.-Lunch (bring a covered dish)  
 Tom Brown Park  
 Pavilion 13  
 Tallahassee, FL

### 53rd Florida State Convention

July 29-August 2, 2009  
 Hyatt Regency Jacksonville  
 225 East Coastline Drive  
 Jacksonville, FL 32202  
[www.53.flstateconvention.com](http://www.53.flstateconvention.com)

### 46th Women's International Conference

February 11-14, 2010  
 Doubletree Hotel  
 5780 Major Boulevard  
 Orlando, FL 32819



Upon arriving home, a husband was met at the door by his sobbing wife. Tearfully she explained, "It's the druggist. He insulted me terribly this morning on the phone. I had to call multiple times before he would even answer the phone."

Immediately, the husband drove downtown to confront the druggist and demand an apology. Before he could say more than a word or two, the druggist told him:

"Now, just a minute, listen to my side of it. This morning the alarm failed to go off, so I was late getting up. I went without breakfast and hurried out to the car, just to realize that I'd locked the house with both house and car keys inside and had to break a window to get my keys. "Then, driving a little too fast, I got a speeding ticket. Later, when I was about three blocks from the store, I had a flat tire." "When I finally got to the store a bunch of people were waiting for me to open up. I got the store opened and started waiting on these people, all the time the darn phone was ringing off the hook."

He continued, "Then I had to break a roll of nickels against the cash register drawer to make change, and they spilled all over the floor. I had to get down on my hands and knees to pick up the nickels and the phone was still ringing. "When I came up I cracked my head on the open cash drawer, which made me stagger back against a showcase with a bunch of perfume bottles on it. Half of them hit the floor and broke. "Meanwhile, the phone is still ringing with no let up, and I finally got back to answer it. It was your wife. She wanted to know how to use a rectal thermometer."

"And believe me mister, as God is my witness, all I did was tell her."