



The Message

A MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

TRUSTED SERVANTS

INTERGROUP 5, INC MAY 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

Through adolescence, I didn't have a lot of opportunity to drink, but I did whenever I could. When I turned 16, I got a driver's license and a Volkswagen Beetle. I was off to the races. Beer was my favorite, and hard stuff on special occasions. I drank through the last two years of high school, through the navy, and through college (FSU and La Sorbonne). It was a lot of fun, and there weren't a lot of penalties, though in hindsight I can see that there was a clear progression... drinking more, more often.

During college, drugs other than alcohol entered the picture. I tried a wide variety of ways to get intoxicated, and became fond of several of them, but alcohol was so much more convenient. While for a time, drugs played a part in my story, the bottom line continued to be alcohol. It was for sale at the minute market and wasn't illegal. If opiates and psychedelics had been for sale at the store, I probably would have done a lot more of them, and perhaps less alcohol. But they weren't, and I didn't - it was a matter of convenience.

Toward the end of college, I met my first wife. She was a natural born Al-Anon. She took up with me the week after her mother finished drinking herself to death. We were made for each other. We moved to California for a year (wine was cheap there and good), then back to Florida - this time Fort Myers. All the time, my drinking was progressing, and after a few years my wife finally found her way into Al-Anon and threw me out. This began a period of geographic cures. Scotland, Tampa, the woods of Gadsden County, Switzerland, Winter Haven again? Maybe things will be better in Belgium... all the time, the drinking (and occasional drugging) were getting more frequent and intense, and the consequences were also getting worse. I could hold jobs for shorter and shorter periods... girlfriends were sticking around for shorter and shorter periods... more and more trouble with the law, and visits to the crossbar hotel for longer and longer periods... During this period, I started to try to do something about my drinking. The geographical cures weren't working. I tried several churches, saw a psychiatrist, went to Appalachian Mental Health for counseling. I even went to AA and picked up a white chip. I woke up the next morning with a hangover and a white chip in my pocket.

It went on and on, and it got worse... and worse. At one point I remember seeing a white chip somebody had dropped on the floor of the drunk tank of the Hillsborough County jail, and I knew what it was. It came to a head when I was back in Tallahassee, living in the student slums just off the Tennessee Street strip, and I had gotten in deep doo -doo with the law. My friend who bailed me out suggested AA. I was looking at 20 years in prison (my fevered mind went immediately to the worst case scenario). I tried suicide, and found out I was not only a drunk, but a chicken too. The next day my lawyer told me it wasn't all that bad and he could probably get me off on probation... but I HAD TO quit drinking. He suggested AA. I called Appalachian Mental Health instead and the counselor there, Ruth Rudd, suggested AA.

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

NFAC Area 14

P. O. Box 567
 Melbourne, FL 32902

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Experience, Strength and Hope



Step Five

Admitted to God, to ourselves, and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs.

I started to hear murmurings about the Fifth Step when I got a sponsor and started working the steps (about three months sober). The murmurings haunted me. At night I would brainstorm ways to get around doing it. It was a second jumping off place for me. I believed I could not stay sober without completing it thoroughly and honestly, but I could not imagine telling another person what I had done. The resentment list was easy; the fears, well I didn't have any; and I thought the sex inventory involved trying to list them all. But that italicized word 'all' paralyzed me. I shared my fear in a meeting and afterward someone came up to me and shared something from her 'take it to the grave' list. Her secret was bad! She assured me that her sponsor had heard even worse. When a tiny portion of my fear subsided, I was able to take this vital step. The promises didn't come at once, but they came. I no longer felt alone; the 'terrified loneliness' was replaced with a new connectedness to God and my fellows. I no longer felt unforgivable and I found that I could now forgive others. I was no longer plagued by feelings of superiority or inferiority; I was now my right size. I don't know when I realized these promises in my life, but they are now a part of me as long as I continue working the program. With a new perspective on God and others, I was able to move on to Steps Six, Seven, Eight, and Nine. These require the humility that results from the Fifth Step's ego deflation. If any AAs reading this are experiencing the same paralyzing fear and cannot move forward with this life and death errand, come find me. I'd be honored to share mine.

Thanks for walking this journey with me and thanks for letting me share, Rachel S.

Tradition Five

Each group has but one primary purpose—to carry its message to the alcoholic who still suffers.

The period of time between May 1935 when Bill and Dr Bob first met and the publication of the AA Traditions in 1946 was a period of difficulties, uncertainties and unsure steps by many of the early leaders. But they got through the bedevils of personality, ego, intellect and geography so that by 1946 when the 12 Traditions were published, the early passions were cooled enough to set a sound course for managing AA affairs. Most basic issues were settled. AA had learned as Bill wrote: *Honesty with ourselves and others gets us sober, but it's tolerance that keeps us that way.*

Our founders always maintained that there were two primary reasons behind the Fifth Tradition. First they had come to believe that *it is better to do one thing extremely well than many badly...Around (this focused effort) our society gathers in unity and humility. The very life of our fellowship requires preservation of this principle.*

The second major codifying experience was the lessons of the early days when many early AA's envisioned a great crusade to save all drunks, complete with hospitals, sanitariums, educational programs, travel lecturers and all sorts of evangelizing furor as part and parcel of AA works and daily activities. Bill describes this period as our "long history of conflict". He stated that it became *clear that AA needed to find a way to protect the group from itself and others.* The primary need established in Tradition One, Group Unity, had to be protected if AA Groups were to survive and individual AA members would have a setting to practice the Twelve Steps, and thus stay sober and help others to get sober. So today we recognize that all AA members are free to participate in all types of efforts to help people get and stay sober and even earn a living doing this work, but they do this work as individuals not as AA members or as representatives of an AA Group. AA's Fifth Tradition protects us and our groups from ourselves and others while ensuring we stay focused on the Twelve Steps as the means of obtaining and maintaining our precious sobriety.

Richard S.

(cont. from page 1)

The third time was the charm. I went to a meeting of the young people's group that night. I don't remember much except that they seemed to know about drinking and drugging, and were laughing and smiling about it, whereas I was shaking and crying about it. I wanted what they had a lot more than what I had.

This is getting waaaay long. I'll jump to the solution: I had had a lot of problems with the concept of a spiritual solution to all my problems. How can spiritual concepts help with my legal problems? That doesn't make sense! That's silly! When I gave up and said to myself, "I'll try even that", I overcame my spiritual malady which my resistance to any and all spiritual concepts as a solution to my problems. When I gave up that resistance, everything else began to fall into place. I had a fairly unremarkable recovery experience. I went to a 28 day treatment center where they pushed me quick and dirty through the first five steps. I came home, and continued the work the steps (in **spite** of sponsorship - I had some strange sponsors). At 2 years, the 13th step got me a second wife, and in due course she got me a son and a daughter. The marriage didn't last, but the kids did, and they're great kids.

Bob I.

Intergroup 5 News

INTERGROUP 5 MEETING MINUTES APRIL 2009

Groups Represented: Happy Hour, Lloyd New Hope, Central, Home Group, Bradfordville, Open Door, Mustard Seed, Woodville, North side.

15 people attended; 8 IG5 representatives were present.

Co-Chair presided over meeting.

Secretary's Report: Approved and accepted.

Treasurer's Report: Had not spoken with Literature Rep. to get updated balance; therefore, the beginning balance shows \$0. Approved and accepted.

Office Report: The submitted schedule for the new phones was too much for the system to handle. System would crash when all the volunteers were entered. It allowed 8 (names/numbers) maximum at a time requiring an office rep. to log on to the system via internet and change shifts in the system twice a week. The phone system rep. would be back in the office the 2nd week in April to help with this matter. If the phone system is not online and working satisfactorily by the next IG meeting we will not continue this endeavor any further and will get our money reimbursed.

Literature Report: No report.

Activities Report: Times changed for the Founder's Day Picnic: 10:00 fellowship, 11:00 speaker, 12:30 lunch. Tracy came up with "Passing it On" as a theme. It was suggested she contact Laura A. (previous Activities Rep) concerning "picnic protocol" prior to our next meeting, as most of the IG positions are being held by new volunteers and we were unable to answer her questions. \$120 was agreed for the budget.

Web Committee Report: IG Secretary to send the Bylaws to Debbie to put on the website. *Gathering of the Eagles* flyer given to put on the website.

District Report: Asked at the District Meeting "do home groups file taxes?" That answer was not known so this is being looked into.

12 Step News: No report.

Old Business: The continuing phone system saga.

New Business:

1) Question asked, "How does the 12 step list work with the new phone system?" No one knew for sure and representative was absent.

Attitude of Gratitude, Christy T.

MEETING ANNOUNCEMENTS

****THE CURE ALL GROUP****—Open Meeting
Bayside Deli
1349 Coastal Hwy.
Panacea, Florida
Mondays @ 7:00 p.m.

****THE HOPE REVIVAL GROUP****
Big Bend Homeless Coalition
West Pensacola & Municipal Way
Tallahassee, Florida
Mondays @ 1:30 p.m.

****MUSTARD SEED GROUP HAS MOVED****
Timberlane Church of Christ
3569 Timberlane School Road
Tallahassee, Florida
Mondays @ 6:00 p.m., Tuesdays & Thursdays @ 12:30 p.m.

BTG/Corrections/TF Committee Meeting
May 10, 2009, 3:00 p.m.
909 Gadsden Street
Tallahassee, FL

District 5 Business Meeting
May 20, 2009, 7:00 p.m.
Faith Presbyterian Church
Tallahassee, FL

Happy A.A. April Anniversary

Bradfordville: April: Mark D.—1, Nancy B.—2, Alan—3, Kathy S.—20 **March:** Stacy G.—1, Tracy I.—8, Dana B.—20

Central : Leelah—1, Salar—2, Daluon—3, Mark C.—4, Jim C.—17, Melvin—19, Ron T.—23, Megan S.—25

Lake Jackson: Chuck S.—15

Monticello Serenity: David L.—1, John L.—11





EVENTS AND HAPPENINGS



INTERGROUP 5 NEWS

CONFERENCES & OTHER EVENTS

Web stats: 6,282 pages were sent from the Intergroup 5 website. The following 27 calls were answered by volunteers:

12step - 2, Al-Anon - 0, AA info - 4, Meeting info - 19, Misc-2

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

IMPORTANT MAY DATES IN A.A HISTORY

May 1919 - Bill returns home from service.
May 1950 - Nell Wing became Bill W's secretary.
May 1951 - Al-Anon is founded by Lois W. and Anne B.
May 1, 1939 - Bank forecloses on 182 Clinton Street.
May 1, 1940 - Rollie H, Cleveland Indians, first anonymity break on national level.
May 3, 1941 - Democrat Chronicle in Rochester reported 1st annual AA dinner at Seneca hotel with 60 attending.
May 6, 1939 - Clarence S of Cleveland told Dr. Bob, his sponsor, he would not be back to Oxford Group meetings in Akron and would start an "AA" meeting in Cleveland.
May 6, 1946 - The long form of the "Twelve Traditions" was published in the AA Grapevine.
May 8, 1943 - Akron AA Group celebrates 8th anniversary with 500 present and sober.
May 8, 1971 - Bill W buried in private ceremony, East Dorset, Vermont.
May 10, 1939 - Clarence S announced to the Akron Oxford Group that the Cleveland members were starting a meeting in Cleveland and calling it Alcoholics Anonymous.
May 11, 1935 - Bill W made calls from the Mayflower Hotel and was referred to Dr. Bob.
May 11, 1939 - first group to officially call itself Alcoholics Anonymous met at Abby G.'s house in Cleveland
May 12, 1935 @ 5 pm - Bill W met Doctor Bob at the home of Henrietta Seiberling.
May 15, 1961 - Bill W's mother, Dr Emily Strobell, died.
May 16, 1941 - Ruth Hock finds that Joe W. (or V.), credited with coming up with the name Alcoholics Anonymous, has a "wet brain".
May 17, 1942 - The Dayton Journal Herald published pictures of AA members wearing masks to protect their anonymity.
May 17, 1942 - New Haven, Conn paper has article on AA. Picture shows faces of members sitting in a circle.
May 18, 1950 - Dr. Bob tells Bill "I reckon we ought to be buried like other folks" after hearing that local AA's want a huge memorial.
May 19, 2000 - Dr. Paul O., Big Book story "Doctor, Alcoholic, Addict" (renamed "Acceptance Was the Answer" in the 4th edition) died at the age of 83.
May 28, 1974 - The first World Service Meeting of AA outside North America was held in London.
May 29, 1980 - "Dr. Bob and the Good Oldtimers" was published.

53rd Florida State Convention

July 29-August 2, 2009
Hyatt Regency Jacksonville
225 East Coastline Drive
Jacksonville, FL 32202
www.53.flstateconvention.com

46th Women's International Conference

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



It seems that when Bubba attended a recent nearby revival meeting, the preacher stated that if anyone needed a prayer they should get in line at the front. Bubba got in line and when it was his turn, the preacher asked: 'Bubba, what do you want me to pray about for you?' Bubba replied: 'Preacher, I need you to pray for my hearing.' The preacher put one finger in Bubba's ear, and he places the other hand on top of Bubba's head and prayed and prayed. After a few minutes, the preacher removed his hands, stood back and asked: 'Bubba how is your hearing now?' Bubba replied, 'I don't know, Reverend, it ain't until next Wednesday.'

Diz T.