

# The Voice

Volume 28, Number 4

April 2011



### One member's voice

## What's Elvis got to do with it?

### A story of experience, strength, and hope

*Step Four: Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.*

Early in my recovery I put off doing Step Four as long as possible, not taking my inventory until I was about three years sober. I remember old timers reminding me that a garbage can will hold only so much trash, and then it starts spilling over making everybody around it miserable.

The old timers told me to start writing, and when I argued, they assured me that it didn't matter how well I could write. "Step Four isn't a novel," they told me, and added that there's no one special way to write it as long as it gets done.

The old timers said the *Big Book* way of doing an inventory didn't really apply to me because I wasn't married, and I didn't have a house. For what it's worth, they told me to draw a line down the middle of a page. On

one side, write: "Elvis is a liar." On the opposite side, write: "Elvis is a pretty nice guy."

I won't go into a lengthy discussion of what all that meant, only to say that's exactly what happened to me, and eventually it worked. If what happened to me doesn't make sense to you, don't take it personally. This is how I worked Step Four, and I don't wish to argue with gurus or disagree with any other ways of working this step.

I also don't like to grapple with sentimental interpretations of words. Bill Wilson said that we all can work the steps in the way we interpret them. I believe that doing the steps whatever way works is much better than doing nothing. Like they say, a farm won't generally go to ruin just because the crops aren't planted in a perfectly straight row.

The way I did Step Four may not be typical, but I did have one common denominator

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**Intergroup 17  
Spring Picnic**  
Sunday, May 22  
Carney Island Park  
See page 7



### A quote for April

*"Rule #62:  
Don't take  
yourself too  
damn seriously."*

*Twelve Steps & Twelve Traditions, page 149*

### Tradition Four

## What does your "conscience" say?

*"Each group should be autonomous except in matters affecting other groups or AA as a whole."*

As a member of this wonderful program of Alcoholics Anonymous for almost forty years, I am still amazed and in awe at how this program is structured and how by using the twelve steps, twelve traditions, and the principles we have a program that has helped millions of individuals become sober and stay sober and change their lives and the lives of their families forever. The twelve traditions were first published in 1946.

As an individual what does Tradition Four mean to me? It means that all groups have a right to conduct their

meetings as decided by group conscience decision (not individual decision), and that as long as decisions made by our group conscience do not affect other neighboring groups or AA as a whole in a negative way, we can choose how our group will function.

This means it is important to me as an individual to attend my group conscience meeting so that I have a voice in decisions made by the group.

### How does this tradition affect us at a group level?

Each individual group decides how to conduct its meetings by group conscience

decision. It can have one-hour meetings or longer. It can have special meetings, (e.g., men's meetings, women's meetings, step meetings, *Big Book* meetings, speaker meetings.)

Each group may decide which readings to include in its meetings, (e.g., "How It Works," "The Promises," "A Vision for You," "More about Alcoholism," or *Daily Reflections*.)

Each group decides how to disperse its funds. There are suggested guidelines, but each group can make decisions based on group

*Continued page 6*

## Congratulations April Birthdays!

This issue we celebrate anniversaries that add up to a collective **526 years**. That's more than 192,000 **days of sobriety**. One day at a time!

Beverly H	29 years	Marie B	6 years	<b>MARCH</b>	
Jimmy G	29 years	Fred C	5 years		
Gil G	27 years	Rick E	3 years	John B	37 years
Sherry R	22 years	Rick F	3 years	John J	31 years
Tim B	19 years	Rick L	3 years	Mary D	28 years
Anne S	16 years	Ronnie S	3 years	Bernadette C	19 years
Darlene C	16 years	Barbara B	2 years	Shelley O	15 years
Liza W	16 years	Caroline M	2 years	Sue	11 years
Geno F	14 years	Donna R	2 years	Rich B	10 years
Charley M	13 years	Jeff B	2 years	Michelle H	10 years
Rex C	12 years	Kate M	2 years	Craig G	7 years
Buddy S	11 years	Mark K	2 years	Max F	7 years
Sallie C	9 years	Pat W	2 years	Greg B	5 years
Trish D	9 years	Scot S	2 years	Lisa L	5 years
Will E	8 years	Seth R	2 years	Diane A	2 years
Cree gM	7 years	Beth M	1 year	Lisa V	2 years
Rex W	7 years	Kim M	1 year	Kathy K	1 year
Caroline L	6 years	Mark S	1 year		
Jim J	6 years	Roger B	1 year		

Please share your AA birthday with all. Deadline for May birthdays is April 20.

Email: [thevoice@aaocalamarion.org](mailto:thevoice@aaocalamarion.org)

### Join the Birthday Club

Celebrate an AA anniversary—yours or another member's—with a contribution to help Intergroup 17 carry the message.

To join, send name, sobriety date, years of sobriety, and a donation—suggested is \$1, \$5, or \$10 for each year of sobriety to:

Intergroup 17  
3666A N.E. 25th Street  
Ocala, Florida 34470

## What's Elvis Got to Do with It?

*Continued from page 1*

with many, if not most, other AAs. It's called fear. This, the old timers said, was the motivator of my actions, adding that all human actions are motivated at their deepest level by either love or fear.

There are no other choices.

Step Four is an attempt to identify the flaws in my character. Among my major character defects, I found that I was an extremist: I either did everything or I did nothing.

I was also judgmental. Most of the pain I was experiencing was a direct result of a prior judgment I had made about a situation or a thing. My sponsor suggested we examine these things very closely. I found if I removed the judgment, the pain was removed.

Lust is another of my defects. Page 69 of *Alcoholics Anonymous* says, "AA does not wish to be the arbiter of anyone's sex conduct." Suffice it to say that the word lust comes from the Latin word, "luxuria," which means self-indulgent desire. I think of it as a "luxury," meaning something I neither need nor can afford.

My fourth step showed me that in addition to character defects, I also had some assets. The old timers told me that I was not a bad person trying to get good, but that I was a sick person trying to get well. I am an alcoholic because my

body does not metabolize alcohol normally. My alcoholism has nothing to do with my external circumstances.

Many years after my first fourth step, I focused on the phrase from the *Big Book*, "Selfishness and self-centeredness; that we think is the root of our troubles, driven by a hundred forms of fear, self-delusion, self-seeking, and self-pity we step on the toes of others and they retaliate."

What a remarkable statement! I have come to believe that it doesn't matter what happened to any alcoholic; alcoholism is not caused by external events. It doesn't matter if one is diagnosed as bipolar, is the victim of childhood abuse, or trauma; we have to drop the word blame from our vocabulary.

The old timers said my alcoholism was a physical, mental, and spiritual disorder, a three-fold disease. I believe the greatest result of my fourth step was an awakening of the God in my life and the lifting of an amazing mental weight.

Anonymous local member  
April 2011  
Ocala, Florida

*The thoughts, expressions, and opinions expressed by the author are not necessarily the thoughts, expressions, and opinions of AA as a whole or Intergroup 17 Inc.*

## The Next Write Thing "AA and the Armed Services" Call for Stories

To update the pamphlet, "AA and the Armed Services," World Services wants to include stories that reflect recent experiences of AA members on active duty as well as those of veterans.

### Guidelines for submission

Manuscripts should be 500-800 words, double spaced. Please attach your name and address on a separate piece of paper. The anonymity of all authors will be observed, whether or not their story is selected for publication.

### Deadline extended to July 15

Please send your manuscript by July 15, 2011, to:

Literature Coordinator  
General Service Office  
Box 459, Grand Central Station  
New York, NY 10163  
Or e-mail to: [literature@aa.org](mailto:literature@aa.org)

### Need Help?

If you'd like help preparing your submission, please contact Max R, District 17 Literature Service Chair by email at [thevoice@aaocalamarion.org](mailto:thevoice@aaocalamarion.org) or through Intergroup 17 at 352-867-0660.

# April by the Books

## STEP FOUR

*Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.*

Perhaps there is a better way—we think so. For we are now on a different basis; the basis of trusting and relying upon God. We trust infinite God rather than our finite selves. We are in the world to play the role He assigns. Just to the extent that we do as we think He would have us, and humbly rely on Him, does He enable us to match calamity with serenity.

We reviewed our own conduct over the years past. Where had we been selfish, dishonest, or inconsiderate? Whom had we hurt? Did we unjustifiably arouse jealousy, suspicion or bitterness? Where were we at fault, what should we have done instead? We got this all down on paper and looked at it.

If we have been thorough about our personal inventory, we have written down a lot. We have listed and analyzed our resentments. We have begun to comprehend their futility and their fatality. We have commenced to see their terrible destructiveness. We have begun to learn tolerance, patience and good will toward all men, even our enemies, for we look on them as sick people. We have listed the people we have hurt by our conduct, and are willing to straighten out the past if we can.

In this book you read again and again that faith did for us what we could not do for ourselves. We hope you are convinced now that God can remove whatever self-will has blocked you off from Him. If you have already made a decision, and an inventory of your grosser handicaps, you have made a good beginning. That being so you have swallowed and digested some big chunks of truth about yourself.

*Alcoholics Anonymous, pages 64-71*

Excerpts from *The Big Book, Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions*, and other AA publications are reprinted with permission of AA World Services, Inc. and *The AA Grapevine*.

## TRADITION FOUR

*"Each group should be autonomous except in matters affecting other groups or AA as a whole."*

With respect to its own affairs, each AA group should be responsible to no other authority than its own conscience. But when its plans concern the welfare of neighboring groups also, those groups ought to be consulted. And no group, regional committee, or individual should ever take any action that might greatly affect AA as a whole without conferring with the trustees of The Alcoholic Foundation. On such issues our common welfare is paramount.

The first sentence of Tradition Four guarantees each AA group local autonomy. With respect to its own affairs, the group may make any decisions, adopt any attitudes that it likes. No over-all or intergroup authority should challenge this primary privilege. We feel this ought to be so, even though the group might sometimes act with complete indifference to our tradition . . .

An AA group need not be coerced by any human government over and above its own members. Their own experience, plus AA opinion in surrounding groups, plus God's prompting in their group conscience would be sufficient. Much travail has already taught us this. Hence we may confidently say to each group, "You should be responsible to no other authority than your own conscience."

. . . Therefore, we AAs have universally adopted the principle of consultation. This means that if a single AA group wishes to take any action which might affect surrounding groups, it consults them. Or, if there be one, it confers with the intergroup committee for the area. Likewise, if a group or regional committee wishes to take any action that might affect AA as a whole, it consults the trustees of The Alcoholic Foundation, who are, in effect, our over-all General Service Committee . . .

This idea is clearly summarized in the last sentence of Tradition Four, which observes, "On such issues our common welfare is paramount."

Bill W, *The AA Grapevine*, March 1948

## CONCEPT FOUR

*Throughout our Conference structure, we ought to maintain at all responsible levels a traditional "Right of Participation" taking care that each classification or group of our world servants shall be allowed a voting representation in reasonable proportion to the responsibility that each must discharge.*

The principle of "Participation" has been carefully built into our Conference structure. The Conference Charter specifically provides that the Trustees, the Director of our service corporations, (AA World Services, Inc. and the Grapevine, Inc.) together with their respective executive staffs, shall be voting members of the General Service Conference itself.

Exactly the same concept is borne in mind when our General Service Board elects the Directors of its wholly-owned active service corporations, AA World Services, Inc. and The AA Grapevine, Inc. If it wished, the General Service Board could elect none but its own Trustees to these corporate directorships. But a powerful tradition has grown up to the effect that this never ought to be done.

The "Right of Participation" is therefore a corrective of ultimate authority because it mitigates its harshness or misuse. It also encourages us who serve AA to accept the necessary disciplines that our several tasks require. We can do this when we are sure that we belong, when the fact of our "participation" assures us that we are truly the "trusted servants" described in AA's Tradition Two.

*AA Service Manual, pages 17-21*



**Want to live  
by the books?  
Then buy the books!**

Find a complete selection of AA conference approved literature available now at Intergroup 17 office, Visit us at: 3666A, NE 25th Street, Ocala, FL 34470. Phone: 352.867.0660. Cash or check sales only.

# District 17 Corner

## AA works because we all work together!

This month, your Group GSR will be bringing to you the agenda items for the 2011 General Service Conference to hear what you have to say and to get your vote.

These are possible changes that could happen in AA. It is up to you as a Group to voice your opinion so that the GSR can bring your vote back to the District. As a member of AA, you have the final say on changes being made. Your GSR will report your group's decisions back to me, and I will take your votes to the April North Florida Area Conference and tell our delegate how you feel about the changes.

If your Group does not have a GSR, take a group conscience, elect a GSR, and e-mail the name and contact information to [district17@aaocalamarion.org](mailto:district17@aaocalamarion.org) before April 7, 2011.

All parts of our Fellowship—group meetings, committees, offices, conferences, and group service positions—have one joint purpose: to help that one newcomer who has a drinking problem.

But for AA to run itself, we have to have a system for finding out how AA as a whole feels about what's happening in the fellowship, and how it wants to operate.

We need constant, honest communications from one part of AA to every other, furnishing a wide cross section of AA experience. The General Service Conference makes that possible.

You and I may not need a General Service Conference today to ensure our own recovery, but what about the millions of sick alcoholics still stumbling out there in the dark? When they come trying to find us, we want each of them to get the same loving help we all had.

The Conference—and the whole General Service organization—has that responsibility to keep AA alive and well for those yet to come.

Rick D.  
District 17 DCM

Taken in part from AA Conference approved literature.

### District 17 Officers & Service Chairs

DCM: Rick D  
Alternate DCM: Melissa B  
Secretary: Alison C  
Treasurer: Ashley C  
Accessibilities: Ricky B  
Archives: Vacant  
Bridging the Gap: Vacant  
CPC/PI: Michelle Y  
Corrections, Women: Sherry R  
Corrections, Men: Bob L  
Grapevine: Lydia N  
Intergroup: John P  
Literature: Max R  
Treatment: William J

### Group GSRs

164 Pages Group: Barbara B  
All You Need: Ken W  
Anthony: Lisa E  
Breakfast Club: Barbara K  
Cabin in the Woods: Shelly O  
Came to Believe: John D  
Conscious Contact: Jim B  
Forest Group: Petra H  
Free to Be: Brian L  
Happy, Joyous & Free: Rick F  
Head Start: Patti B  
Keep It Simple: Tina T  
Last Call: Seth R  
Living Sober: Diane I  
Mano Abierto: Benjamin O  
Men's Group: Bob L  
New Attitudes: Coral M  
No Name Group: Lisa E  
Ocala Group: Ricky B  
Shores of Sobriety: Rafael Q  
Sober Yankees: Ginger H  
Sobriety in Marion Oaks: John S  
Summerfield Group: Peter P  
We Give Up: Carol W  
Weir Crazy: Jennifer M  
Young People's Group: Billy C

To contact a District 17 officer, service chair, or GSR, call 352.867.0660 or email: [district17@aaocalamarion.org](mailto:district17@aaocalamarion.org)

**GSRs. Plan to Attend,  
North Florida Area Assembly  
April 9-10, St. Augustine  
See page 6**

**District 17 is self-supporting through  
group contributions.  
P.O. Box 3081, Ocala, FL 34478**

**Service & Sobriety  
District 17. Get Involved.  
Next Meeting. All Welcome.**

Thursday, April 28, 6:00 pm  
St. Mark's United Methodist  
1839 NE 8th Avenue, Ocala, FL

### Monthly Meeting Highlights February 24, 2011

**DCM:** Rick D presided.

**Secretary's report:** Approved.

**Treasurer's report:** Approved. Available for review upon request.

**Accessibilities:** Have nine volunteers; working on a bi-weekly meeting.

**Corrections.** Two new women volunteers. Processed ten men's apps.

**Intergroup:** Spring Picnic, May 22.

**Grapevine:** Four subscriptions purchased.

**Literature:** Resource list for newcomer literature distributed.

**Treatment:** Need volunteers to chair meetings at treatment centers.

**Workshops:** Funshop on 12th Step-ping the Wet Drunk set for May 7, Unity Place. Lunch provided.

**Old business:** Service chair expenses for Area Assembly capped at \$75.

**New business:** Service fair tentative for early June. Need chair persons for archives, CPC/PI. Bridging the Gap. Young people's videos distributed. 2011 GSO agenda items discussed.

### For Group Consideration 2011 GSO Agenda Items

Your group's input is vital. Ask your GSR about these and more upcoming votes. Make sure your voice is heard.

- Alternative suggestions on revising the pamphlet "Self Support: Where Money and Spirituality Mix."
- Changes to Guidelines on Finance and the AA Group Treasurer pamphlets.
- Changes to "Understanding Anonymity" to add digital media.
- Consider putting the AA Preamble in the front section of the *Big Book*.
- Consider conducting an AA membership survey in 2011.
- Consider producing new TV PSAs.
- Consider permitting the AA *Grapevine* to utilize digital modes.
- Consider permitting the AA *Grapevine* to accept contributions limited to the General Service contribution policy.

These issues should be discussed by your group prior to April 10 so your GSR can represent your opinions at the North Florida Area Assembly.

## Group Contributions to Intergroup 17 February 2011

**Intergroup 17's fiscal year runs June 2010-May 2011.  
Contributions below are from June 1, 2010 through February 28, 2011 only.  
Please report any errors or discrepancies to Intergroup 17.**

GROUP NAME	\$ Feb '11 Contri- butions	Contri- butions 6/1/10- 02/28/11	GROUP NAME	\$ Feb '11 Contri- butions	Contri- butions 6/1/10- 02/28/11
164 Pages Group	\$ 32.00	\$272.10	Living Sober Group		87.00
Acceptance		50.00	Lunch Bunch Group		159.05
Alive and Well	35.00	75.00	Marion Oaks		
All You Need Group		120.00	McIntosh Group		
As Bill Sees It		424.51	Men's Group Ocala		81.00
Belleview Eye Opener		27.86	New Attitudes Group	13.25	76.83
Belleview God's Way		19.51	New Beginnings Group		
Belleview Group		150.20	New Life Group		
Bonfire Group			No Name Group	38.25	123.75
Breakfast Club	0.62	1,720.84	Ocala Group	65.82	1,189.25
Cabin in the Woods	50.00	100.00	One Page at a Time		
Came To Believe		25.25	Primary Purpose Group		58.00
Citra Group		2.51	Resentment Too Group		
Come As You Are	30.00	30.00	Second Step Group		
Conscious Contact		99.37	Shores of Sobriety		30.00
Day by Day			Serenity Group	1.01	1.01
Eleventh Step			Sisters of Serenity		
Experience, Strength, & Hope			Sober Yankees	100.00	265.05
First Impressions			Start A New Life		125.15
Forest Group	40.00	101.79	Steps and Promises		
Forest Men's Group	30.00	100.00	Stop Whining & Sober Up		
Fountain of Gratitude		262.10	Strength In Numbers		19.00
Free To Be		71.08	Summerfield Group		6.36
Ft. McCoy Group			Summerfield New Green		
Grace Group		10.44	Sm'field Living in Today		
Grateful Gals	21.00	21.00	Sundae Social Group		1.00
Green Group			TLC Group, The Centers		.35
Grupo Mano Abierta		25.00	Thursday Night Step Gp.		
Grupo Nueva Vida			We Give Thanks		
Happy Hour Group		90.00	We Give Up		127.40
Happy, Joyous & Free	490.69	3,467.97	Weir Crazy		143.00
Headstart Group	43.62	265.39	Westside Recovery		
Healing Group		80.00	Williston Winners		
In the Woods		25.00	Won Rebos Group		
It's In The Book		60.00	Young People's Group		69.83
Keep It Green	10.00	10.00	Zion-Blichton Group		51.64
Keep It Simple		161.03	Archives		
Last Call Group	3.89	5.75	District 17		343.85
Last House on the Block			Birthday Club (personal)	50.00	195.00
Life is Good Sober Group			Double Nickel (personal)		
Lifesaver Group	150.00	650.00	Faithful 5-ers (personal)	5.00	60.00
			Individuals (other)	4.29	517.76
			<b>Total</b>	<b>\$1,214.44</b>	<b>\$12,254.98</b>

## How Groups and Individuals Support the Work of AA

Group contributions fund the work of Intergroup 17 and other areas of AA General Services. Many groups choose to follow the 50-30-10-10 plan of support after they meet their own financial needs:

- 50 percent to Intergroup 17
- 30 percent to AA General Service Office
- 10 percent to North Florida Area Conference
- 10 percent to District 17

### Group contributions

**Intergroup 17**  
3666A NE 25th Street  
Ocala, FL 34470

**The General Service Office**  
P.O. Box 459  
6035 E. Tudor St.  
New York, NY 10164

**Note change of address**  
**NFAC**  
P.O. Box 8983  
Jacksonville, FL 32239-8983

**District 17**  
P.O. Box 3081  
Ocala, FL 34478

## Intergroup 17 Financial Statements

Monthly financial statements for Intergroup 17 are available for review at the Intergroup 17 office during regular office hours. Please telephone in advance to make an appointment. 352-867-0660.

## Intergroup 17 Call Center February 2011

Meeting info requests	91
Twelfth Step Calls	4
Office transactions	52
Visitors	39
Al-Anon*	10
Miscellaneous	30

\*Calls requesting information relating to Al-Anon Family Groups are promptly and respectfully referred to the appropriate local resources.

## 55th Florida State Convention July 20-24, 2011 Orlando, Florida

**THE DOUBLETREE HOTEL**  
At the entrance to Universal Studios Orlando

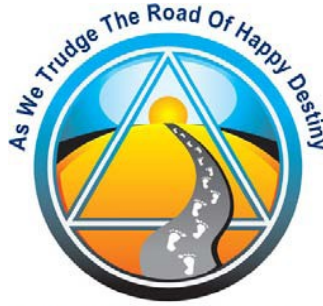
**Information & registration**  
[www.55.flstateconvention.com](http://www.55.flstateconvention.com)

### Inspiring speakers

- Rose E, Spring Hill, FL
- Matt M, Long Beach, CA
- Chris C, Coshocton, OH
- Adam T, Los Angeles
- Carla M, Tujunga, CA
- Doug R, Tujunga, CA
- Line G, Carlsbad, CA
- Ron W, Los Angeles, CA
- Sandy B, Tampa, FL
- Fr Tom W, Oakland, CA
- Ajit S, Irvine, CA

### Meetings & workshops

- Spanish Speaking
- Marathon
- Meditation
- Long Timers
- Young People
- GLBT
- Intergroup/Grapevine
- Al-Anon & Ala-Teen



55th Florida State Convention

### Tons of fun

- Friday / Saturday Dinner
- Ice Cream Socials
- Entertainment
- AA's Got Talent (see below)
- Golf Tournament
- 5K Walk / Run
- Much, much more



**Area 14**  
**North Florida Area Assembly**  
**April 9-10, 2011**  
**Renaissance Resort**  
**St. Augustine**

**Last chance to speak up**  
**on GSO Agenda Items.**  
**GSRs plan now to attend.**  
**All members welcome.**

**Friday April 8, 2011**  
6:00 pm - 8:00 pm Registration  
8:00 pm - 9:00 pm Discussion Meeting

**Saturday April 9, 2011**  
8:00 am - 5:30 pm Registration  
9:00 am - 4:15 pm Workshops  
5:30 pm - 7:30 pm Dinner  
7:30 pm - 9:30 pm Agenda items meeting

**Sunday April 10, 2011**  
8:00 am - 9:00 am Registration  
9:00 am - 12:00 pm Business Meeting

**Full Agenda Online**  
[www.aanorthflorida.org/assembly\\_agenda](http://www.aanorthflorida.org/assembly_agenda)

**Hotel Location and Reservations**  
The Renaissance Resort,  
500 South Legacy Trail,  
St. Augustine, Florida 320921  
Tel: 904-940-8000  
Link to online booking at:  
[www.aanorthflorida.org/assembly\\_agenda](http://www.aanorthflorida.org/assembly_agenda)

**Share your special gift at**  
**The 55th Florida State Convention**  
**AA's Got Talent**  
**Bring your talent! Bring your vote!**

Entry fee: \$5 (to purchase awards)  
Entry deadline: July 15, 2011  
Online registration at  
[www.55.flstateconvention.com](http://www.55.flstateconvention.com)

**Questions?**  
Request more information by email:  
[AAAGotTalent@gmail.com](mailto:AAAGotTalent@gmail.com)

### Mark Your Calendar

See details elsewhere in this issue or call or log-on for more information.  
**4/9-10, 2011** North Florida Area Assembly, St Augustine, FL, [www.aanorthflorida.org](http://www.aanorthflorida.org)  
**5/1, 2011** Living Sober Spring Fling Picnic. Details page 9.  
**5/5-8, 2011** Woodstock of AA, Cocoa Beach. Details page 9.  
**5/7, 2011** 12th Stepping the Wet Drunk, District 17 Funshop. Details page 9  
**5/11, 2011** Weir Crazy Group, Miracles in May Celebration. Details page 9.  
**5/22, 2011** Intergroup 17 Spring Picnic. Details page 7  
**7/20-24, 2011** Florida State Convention, Orlando. [www.55.flstateconvention.com](http://www.55.flstateconvention.com)

## Tradition Four

*Continued from page 1*

conscience discussion and agreement as to how it wishes to use monies donated by the group members.

### How do local groups make decisions that affect other groups?

Here is an example. My home group, Happy, Joyous and Free wanted to expand its 5:30 pm meeting to include Saturdays and Sundays, but on Sundays, there was a possible conflict.

Another local group holds 8:00 pm meetings, so our group consulted with the other group to ensure they had no concerns about the addition of the 5:30 pm Sunday meeting to our schedule. As they didn't, Happy, Joyous and Free expanded its 5:30 pm meeting to seven nights a week.

### More guidance from our literature

*Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions*, beginning on page 189, provides an example of how group decisions could affect AA as a whole. The book, *Alcoholics Anonymous Comes of Age*, page 103, lends even more insight.

At the beginning of *Alcoholics Anonymous*, Bill W thought it would be best if all groups were managed by the New York Office. But communication from group members to New York said, "We like what you are doing. Sometimes your suggestions and advice are good. But whether to take you or leave you alone is going to be our decision. We are going to run our own show. We are not going to have a personal government in New York or anywhere else. Services yes. But government, no."

Hence, AA's Tradition of group autonomy. It did not take long to formulate that one. They told us just what they wanted and that included the right to be wrong.

All of us who are members and groups of Alcoholics Anonymous need to remember that we represent the face of Alcoholics Anonymous to the public and any audiences we deal with. We need to always remember that our common welfare comes first and individual recovery depends on AA unity.

*Prepared by Diane R. The views, expressions, and opinions presented here are those of the author and not necessarily those of AA or Intergroup 17 Inc.*

# Intergroup 17 ANNUAL SPRING PICNIC

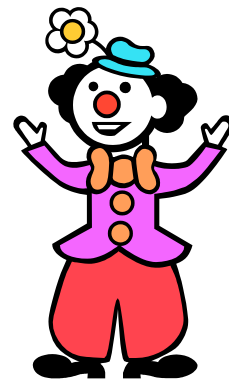
Sunday, May 22, 2011  
Carney Island Park, Lake Weir  
Ocklawaha

Fun starts: 10:00am      Lunch: 12:00 noon



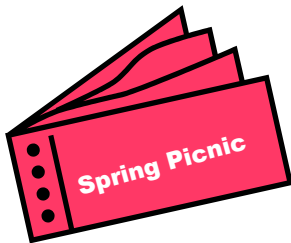
## Fabulous Food

Chicken on the grill  
Sides and beverages.  
Lunch served at 12 noon



## Fun & games

Intergroopie the Clown.  
Face painting. Tunes.  
Lawn games, swimming, volleyball and  
more for children of all ages.



## Tickets

Tickets must be purchased in advance.  
Adults: \$6    Children: \$4  
Available from the Intergroup office. Or ask your Intergroup rep.  
Advance purchase only. No on-site ticket sales.

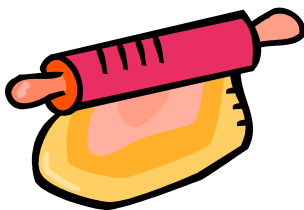
## Directions

Carney Island Park, 13275 SE 115th Ave., Ocklawaha  
Park is off SR 25 between Belleview and Ocklawaha, just south of  
Silver Springs Shores. Follow the signs into the park from SR 25.  
Free parking. More information? Call Intergroup 352-867-0660



## Baked Goods Auction

Donate your favorite sweet treat to be auctioned to the highest bidder.  
Package all items for transport. No refrigeration provided.  
The following items are suggested.



- Layer or sheet cakes.
- Bundt or loaf cakes.
- Pies, tarts
- Muffins (min 1 dozen).
- Cookies (min. 3 dozen)
- Cupcakes (min. 1 dozen.).
- Brownies/bars (min. 2 dozen)

All proceeds benefit Intergroup 17. Call for more info. 352 867-0660.

## Group Meetings News, and More

### Looking for a local meeting?

Choose from more than 140 meetings a week.

**When and Where online!**  
[www.aocalamarion.org](http://www.aocalamarion.org)

Print copies available through home groups or at Intergroup 17 office.

**Here's just a sampling. Find scores more online.**

### Beginners Meetings

Tuesdays

**Living Sober Group**

**Your support requested!**

Living Sober beginners meeting  
7:30 pm every Tuesday  
Congregational Church  
7171 SW State Rd 200, Ocala

### Meditation

Wednesdays

**Conscious Contact**

7:00 pm every Wednesday  
St. Matthew's Lutheran Church  
3452 NE Silver Springs Blvd., Ocala

### Spanish Speaking

Wednesdays

**Grupo Nueva Vida**

7:00 pm every Wednesday  
150-A SW 23rd Ave. (1/2 block South of Ft. King), Ocala

Fridays and Saturdays

**Grupo Mano Abierta**

7:00 pm every Friday  
2082 Walnut Street, Dunnellon

### Eat 'n Speak

**Keep It Simple Group**

Last Thursday of the month  
Eat: 7:00 pm Speaker: 8:00 pm  
Small fee for meal  
Ascension Lutheran Church  
5730 SE 28th Street, Ocala

### Ocala Group

Last Saturday of the month  
Eat: 7:00 pm Speaker: 8:00 pm  
Small fee for meal. All welcome.  
St. Mark's United Methodist  
1839 NE 8th Avenue, Ocala

### New & Newer Meetings

#### New Group

**Sobriety in Marion Oaks**

Open discussion, Mondays, 7:00 pm  
Community Congregation UCC  
15056 SW 29th Terrace Road  
Ocala, FL

#### New Grapevine meeting.

**Sober Yankees**

Second Tuesday, 7:00 pm  
Our Redeemer Lutheran Church  
5200 SW SR200, Ocala. FL

#### New speaker meeting.

**Ocala Group**

Fridays, 8:00 pm  
St. Mark's United Methodist  
1839 NE 8th Avenue, Ocala, FL  
Desserts welcome!

#### New Step Meeting/12&12

**Headstart Group**

Mondays, 7:30 am  
Lost & Found Club  
339 NE Sanchez Avenue  
Ocala, FL

#### One Day at a Time

Monday through Friday, noon  
5884 SW 60th Avenue  
Ocala, FL

#### Loose Horse Group

Fridays, 7:00 pm  
Friendship Baptist Church  
15115 Gainesville Road  
Reddick, FL

#### Westside Recovery Group

Wednesdays & Thursdays, 5:30 pm  
Open Discussion  
Ocala Family Resource Center  
215 NW Martin Luther King Jr. Ave  
Ocala, FL

#### 164 Pages Group

Women's Meeting, Mondays 6:00 pm  
Ocklawaha United Methodist  
13333 East Hwy 25, Ocklawaha, FL

#### A Vision For You

Mondays, 7:00 pm, Open Discussion  
Florida Highlands Baptist Church  
10891 SW 155th St, Dunnellon, FL

#### Needs Your Support

**Keep It Green, Summerfield**

Fridays 8:00 pm  
Sunset Harbor Baptist Church  
9200 SE Sunset Harbor Rd.  
Summerfield, FL

## Group News and Meeting Changes

#### Time change. Format change.

**Experience, Strength, and Hope Group**

Fridays, 7:00 pm, *Big Book* study  
Church of Christ, 2750 SE Maricamp Road, Ocala, FL

#### New Meeting Location

**Bellevue Eye Opener. Effective March 30, 2011**

St Paul's Parish PMCC, corner of Rte. 441 & SE 53 Court, Bellevue 34420 as of March 30. Behind the Kangaroo gas station on 441.

#### Summerfield Group

Monday (Beginners) & Thursday (Step), 7:30 pm, Mulberry Grove Recreational Center, 8445 SE 165th Mulberry Lane, The Villages, FL

#### Lifesaver Group

Monday-Friday, noon, 7365 SW 38th St, Suite 206, Ocala, FL

#### Discontinued

**Resentment Too Group.**

Tuesdays, 7:00 pm, Unity Place. Meetings discontinued.

# Special Events, Celebrations, Notices

## New for You at Intergroup



### The 12 'n 12 Dictionary

More than 2,200 words and phrases explained.  
Soft cover. \$4.80 each .

Check out our full line of AA and recovery literature. 3666A, NE 25th Street, Ocala.

## Eat 'n Speak Meetings

### Keep It Simple

Thursday, April 28

Dinner 7:00 pm Speaker 8:00 pm

Ascension Lutheran Church  
5730 SE 28th Street, Ocala

### Ocala Group

Saturday, April 30

Dinner 7:00 pm Speaker 8:00 pm

\$2 if you bring a dish, \$4 without  
St. Mark's United Methodist Church  
1839 NE 8th Avenue, Ocala

## Speaker Meetings

### Living Sober Group

Sunday, April 10, 7:30 pm

Speaker: Fran P

Congregational Church, 7171 SW State Rd 200  
Ocala, Florida

### Ocala Group

Every Friday, 8:00 pm

Desserts welcome

St. Mark's United Methodist Church  
1839 NE 8th Avenue, Ocala, Florida

## All Members Welcome

Get involved in service.

### Intergroup 17 Monthly Meeting

Sunday, April 10, 5:15 pm

St. Mark's United Methodist Church  
1839 NE 8th Avenue, Ocala

### District 17 Monthly Meeting

Thursday, April 28, 6:00 pm

St. Mark's United Methodist Church  
1839 NE 8th Avenue, Ocala

## DISCLAIMER

The Voice newsletter is published by Intergroup 17 Ocala-Marion County, Florida, and is created by alcoholics for alcoholics. Articles in the newsletter written by individual members of Alcoholics Anonymous are expressions of their own experiences and opinions and not necessarily those of Intergroup 17 or AA as a whole. The Voice editorial committee reserves the right to accept, edit, or decline information submitted by members or others for publication.

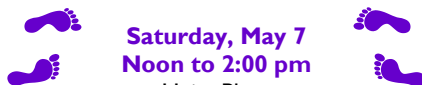
## District 17 Funshop

### 12th Stepping the Wet Drunk



### Are you prepared?

Learn what and what not to do when a fellow alcoholic is in need of immediate—perhaps even life-saving— help or professional care.



### Saturday, May 7

Noon to 2:00 pm

Unity Place

525 NE Sanchez Avenue

Free to all. Lunch provided.

Desserts to share welcomed.

More info: 352-867-0660

## The Weir Crazy Group

presents

### 7th Annual

## "Miracles in May" Celebration

on beautiful Lake Weir

## Wednesday, May 11th



Celebrating the 76-year anniversary of the Meeting of Bill W and Dr Bob

6:00 pm Cookout

7:00 pm Speaker

Randie P, Clermont, FL

Hamburgers, hotdogs, soft drinks

& coffee provided.

Please bring your favorite side dish or dessert to share.

### St Johns Church

10495 Sunset Harbor Rd

Summerfield/Weirsdale 34491

"The age of miracles is still with us, Our own recovery proves that. "

Alcoholics Anonymous, page 153

## Living Sober Spring Fling Picnic Sunday May 1



6:00 pm Food & Fellowship

7:00 pm Speaker, Pam V

50/50 Raffle

Donations accepted

Bring a side dish or dessert to share

First Congregational Church

7171 SW State Rd 200, Ocala

## What's a Pink Can?



### Where can you get one?

Groups collect "Pink Can" donations for the Corrections Committee to purchase AA literature for alcoholics in local prisons and jails. Get one free at Intergroup 17 office. 3666A, NE 25th Street, Ocala. This is the Committee's only means of support.

## Plan Ahead.

### Upcoming Area Events

#### District 17 Workshops

Twelfth Stepping the Wet Drunk, May 7

See this page for more details.

#### Living Sober

Spring Fling Picnic., May 1

See this page for more details.

#### Weir Crazy

7th Annual Miracles in May, May 11

See this page for more details.

#### Intergroup 17 Picnic

May 22. Carney Island Park. Ocklawaha

See page 7 for more details.

#### North Florida Area Assembly

April 9-10, 2011, St. Augustine.

For more information and hotel reservations:

[www.aanorthflorida.org/activities](http://www.aanorthflorida.org/activities)

#### Country Round-UP

April 29th, 30th & May 1st 2011, Chipley, FL

For more information and registration form call 334-372-7979; 850-326-1465; 334-792-9590

#### Woodstock of AA

21st Spring Conference

May 5-8, 2011, Cocoa Beach, Florida Registration fee.

Call 877-902-5975 or email: [leescds@gmail.com](mailto:leescds@gmail.com).

#### Founders' Day

June 3 - 5, 2011, Tallahassee, 32303. Info and register at:

<http://www.foundersdayflorida.org> .

#### 55th Florida State Convention

July 20-24, 2011, Orlando, Florida

[www.55flstateconvention.com](http://www.55flstateconvention.com)

#### 16th Annual SE Region

Woman to Woman Seminar

August 26-28, 2011, Naples, Fl., PO Box 11351,



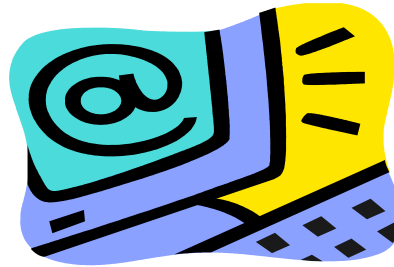
## Intergroup 17 Meetings Everyone invited!

Open to all. Learn more about AA, Intergroup, and the great opportunities for service work.

### Next Meeting

**Sunday, April 10, 5:15 pm**  
St. Mark's UMC  
1839 NE 8th Avenue, Ocala

## Free Subscription. The Voice by e-mail.



### Subscribe for free.

Send an e-mail  
with "Free Voice" in  
the subject line to:

[thevoice@aaocalamarion.org](mailto:thevoice@aaocalamarion.org)

The Voice by e-mail is sent anonymously in PDF format. No one else can see your email address. Requires Adobe Reader software. Free download available at [www.adobe.com](http://www.adobe.com). Printed copies available at Intergroup office.

## Intergroup 17 Ocala-Marion County Florida

3666A, NE 25th Street  
Ocala, FL 34470  
Phone: 352.867.0660.

[www.aaocalamarion.org](http://www.aaocalamarion.org)

### Office Hours

Monday-Friday 10 am to 5 pm  
Saturday 10 am to 2 pm

**24-hour Hotline**  
**365 days a year**  
**352-867-0660**

## Service. The Third Legacy.

### Life is a picnic. Help celebrate it May 22.

Volunteers of all sorts are needed to help make the next Intergroup 17 picnic on May 22 another wonderful event for the fellowship. Contact Picnic Chairperson Kathy B or Priscilla at Intergroup for details on how you can help. 352 867-0660. See page 7 for more picnic details.

### District 17 seeks service committee chairs and more.

Positions open for Archives, Bridging the Gap, Gratitude Dinner, and more. (Page 4)

### Intergroup 17. Volunteers needed now!

Intergroup needs immediate help in staffing the office. Please volunteer. Also seeking candidates for the position of Intergroup Treasurer. Call for more information. 352 867-0660. Ask for Priscilla or leave name and number.

### "Corresponding" sponsors needed! Women only.

Learn how you can serve as a "corresponding" sponsors to other women alcoholics currently serving time. Sponsorship can be done with

complete anonymity. Contact Deb L or Sherry R through Intergroup 17 at 352-867-0660.

### Help take meetings to treatment centers and special needs community.

District 17 Treatment Committee and Accessibility Committee seeks volunteers for meeting support. Attend District 17 February meeting. (Page 4)

### Take the message to local correctional institutions.

Meet a critical need. Applications for men's and women's prison meetings available at Intergroup 17 office. Call 352-867-0660. Or attend the next District 17 meeting. (Page 4)

### County Jail Women's Meetings Need Your Support

Help take meetings to women in Marion County Jail. Learn more about how you can help. Contact Nancy I through Intergroup or email: [nihasz@hotmail.com](mailto:nihasz@hotmail.com)

Publicize your group's service opportunities in The Voice. Call 352 867-0660 or email to [thevoice@aaocalamarion.org](mailto:thevoice@aaocalamarion.org)

## Attitude of GrAAttitude

A tremendous thank you to the 16 groups that contributed \$1 or more to Intergroup 17 in February, including:

- 164 Pages Group
- All Is Well
- Cabin in the Woods
- Come as You Are
- Forest Group
- Forest Men's Group
- Grateful Gals
- Happy, Joyous & Free
- Headstart Group
- Keep It Green Group
- Last Call Group
- Lifesaver Group
- New Attitudes
- No Name Group
- Ocala Group
- Serenity Group
- Sober Yankees

All who have helped support Intergroup 17 with financial contributions this year are gratefully acknowledged on page 5.

Intergroup 17 thanks all who volunteer to make our service possible: **Alison C, Arlene H, Bill J, Connie C, Diane M, Ed G, Jack, James N, Jeff D, Kathy B, Lew, Mike G, Peggy N, Ricky B, Rafael Q, Bosch R, John P, Max R, Sandy A, Toni Marie C.**

If we've left anyone out, we sincerely apologize. All are appreciated greatly.

*Priscilla P, Intergroup 17 Office Manager*