

Intergroup District 17
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Open: Mon.—Fri. 10am to 5pm
Saturday 10am to 2pm

Intergroup District 17
Ocala, Marion County, Florida

The Voice

The Hand of AA
24-Hour Hotline
365 Days a Year

352-867-0660

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www.aocalamarion.org

March 2014

The Chairman . . . discusses the Third Step. . . *MADE a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God, as we understood him.*

The Chairman of the Mid-Week closed Group laid his pipe down and continued: "This Third Step is one of the basic Steps of the whole AA Program. Yet many, many newcomers--and Old-Timers, too, have trouble with it. I've known men to give up the Program in despair because they couldn't get it. And I've seen others who had no end of trouble because they tried to ignore it. . . Pete, as an ex-agnostic, how did you get around this phase of the AA Program?"

Pete stretched his six feet three inches from a lounging position to a sitting posture: "I'll tell you, Doc, what got me was that phrase, 'God as we understood him.' For my book that leaves the thing wide open, providing that the newcomer keeps an open mind. You know I had to make a hell of a spiritual adjustment when I came into AA, but from my observations I'd suggest keeping an open mind on the Third Step, while we work our way through the rest of the Steps. In fact, many of our personality faults will come to light if we honestly practice the rest of the Program. In getting over these hurdles we will soon discover that we are now ready to accept Step Three. And as I said, the phrase--'God as *we* understood him' was the thought that made it possible for me to latch onto the spiritual

phase of the Program."

"Well, Pete, at least you eventually became willing to admit that there *was* a Power greater than yourself that helped keep you sober," added the Chairman. "You see the first three steps in our Program actually point up the three fold disease known as alcoholism. The First Step points out the ravages of liquor upon our physical being, the Second Step what occurred to our mental capacities and the Third Step shows how our spiritual happiness had been affected. Our recovery is dependent upon realizing the extent of the injury we have suffered because of our compulsion for alcohol. It is important that we understand the treatment of our physical and mental illness, but in my opinion complete and happy recovery is never attained until our spiritual sickness is cleared up. . . Yes, Mary, what's on your mind?"

"My experience with the Spiritual side of the Program proved to be one in which I developed slowly, over a long period of time. In fact many of my friends noticed a change in me long before I was aware that I had ever had a spiritual awakening. But when I realized the change, I knew that I could never, never have done it alone. Then I realized that I had tapped some other source, which I now identify as my Power greater than myself. Had I not been able to keep an open mind, as Pete suggested, I am certain that I would still be *Continued page 2-->*

Tradition Three: An Anchor Of AA Embracing the spirit of the Tradition

I often hear discussions among members that address the question: "Is AA different today from what it used to be?" Of course, the answer is, "In some ways, yes, and in other ways, no."

I came to AA in 1959 and have watched the evolution of our Fellowship over four decades. The basis of our program remains the same. The details are in the Big Book, the "Twelve and Twelve," and *AA Comes of Age*. But yes, there have been subtle changes in members' attitudes and commitment and in the application of established and proven approaches.

I believe this is most evident in the practice and application of the Traditions. In the past, members sought to determine the spirit of each Tradition; today, I frequently encounter members and groups seeking to debate the "legal" interpretation of a Tradition, and arriving at an interpretation that is usually slanted in a way that supports their particular point of view.

Members stay away from Tradition meetings in droves and attend discussion meetings in hordes. This says to me, "I do not care to know what the spirit of AA is all about; all I want to do is vent my feelings." I would remind these folks of a chapter in the Big Book entitled "Into Action." There is no chapter entitled "Into Feelings." It is this I-want-it-to-be-my-way approach to the Traditions that may someday destroy our Fellowship from within.

For those not familiar with the spirit of the Traditions, I would certainly advise reading both the long and short form of the first three Traditions printed in the back of the Big Book,

and the first three Traditions in the "Twelve and Twelve." These Traditions form the spiritual approach required to keep AA vibrant and alive--the spirit of AA, so to speak.

Tradition One says: Hey, buddy, you aren't the most important thing here, the group is. Whatever you do or say should be in the best interests of the membership of AA as a whole, not you. "Selfishness, self-centeredness, that, we think, is the root of our problem." Tradition One deals with the root of our problem.

Tradition Two says: Hey, buddy, you aren't in charge here, God is. Understanding God's will requires time for prayer and meditation before a major decision is made. In a group, any and all decisions can be major. Tradition Two deals with the development of trust in God, and patience.

Tradition Three says: Hey, buddy, if you agree with points one and two and are willing to embrace the spirit of these Traditions, you can be a member if you have a desire to stop drinking. Tradition Three deals with our need to serve others in a meaningful way to acquire and maintain long-term sobriety. It should be noted that the member comes third after the group and after God.

The May 2004 edition of the Grapevine is dedicated to the topic "Singleness of Purpose." Sit very quietly and think of all the AA groups throughout the world, about God's will for AA, about our historical roots, and about how you are less important than your group or God. If you do, you should have no difficulty understanding the cofounders' intentions regarding the spirit and meaning of "singleness of purpose."

Ed T., Winnipeg, Manitoba

struggling futilely with my own stubborn will."

"I remember your approach to the Third Step, Mary. You really practiced 'Easy does it.'. . .on the other hand Snuffy over there," said the Chairman pointing to a bright-eyed little chap, "became hooked up almost immediately. How do you account for that, Snuffy?"

"I guess 'I'm what you guys calls a miracle. An' I guess I really had a spiritual awakening that punched it right home to me. It was this way, if you don't mind my tellin' it again"-the little fellow paused.

"Go right ahead, Snuffy. Some of us haven't heard it, and it won't hurt those of us who have to hear it again." said the Chairman.

"For over three years I'd been on the Bowery. On one of my many trips to Bellevue hospital, the Docs discovered that one half of my brain had been paralyzed from a fall I got when I was a youngster. The other half of my brain was affected by alcohol.

"I'd never learned to read or write. Had been an elevator operator most of my life. One night I even bummed a cop for four bits--some of 'em are pretty good that way--an' after I'd spent it for some kind of booze, something told me to go to Twelfth Step House an' get a flop. I'd heard about AA an' that the guys over there would help a guy who really wanted to quit drinkin'.

"Well, to make my story short, I stopped drinkin' that night. I worked around Twelfth Step House, doin' odd jobs. Then one night a couple of nicely dressed guys picked me up an' said we was goin' to Staten Island to talk to a group. I was scared stiff. Me talk? 'Bout what? I hadn't done anything for no one. But on the way over on the Staten Island Ferry we talked about things. Kind of exchanged experiences. They'd had some pretty tough times too. It was cloudy and dark goin' over, but when we came back the moon was out and I never seen so many stars in the sky. As we passed the Statue of Liberty, I shouted--'Lookit! Ain't that beautiful?' The two gents laughed. 'Haven't you ever seen Her before?'

"I shook my head. Nope. Lived here most of my life--anyway I never thought She was so beautiful. Looks like I imagined an angel might look.' Then do you know what one of my friends said?

" 'Snuffy, you gave your first AA talk tonight. It lasted about two and a half minutes. But you said a mouthful. Especially when you wound up saying, 'If I can do it, *you* can. . .When you sat down you were a different man from the scared little guy who stood up to talk. I don't know if you ever pray, but out there in the harbor, shining for all She's worth, is a symbol of your Greater Power. Think of Her, pray to Her. Believe that she can help you stay sober. It's your one chance for happiness."

"When he finished I wiped my eyes an' told them how much they had helped me. An' I said I sure wish I could help them some day. .You know what they said? They both patted me on the back and said, 'Snuffy, you'll never know what you've given us tonight'. . . It took me some time to figure that out. But now, I guess I know. Anyway, folks my Greater Power is out in the middle of the New York harbor. And She shines every night for ole Snuffy, an' his sobriety."

The Chairman put his pipe on the table. "See what we mean by 'God as *we* understand him' and how it simplifies our acceptance of the all-important Third Step?"

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Archives Corner

If you are interested in the history of Alcoholics Anonymous and would like to participate an ongoing Service project contact Kim Mc. via Intergroup. We are forming an Archives committee to organize, inventory, our history here in our area.

A.A. History in March

March 1, 1939 -- Readers Digest declined to write article on AA.

1941 - Jack Alexander's Saturday Evening Post article was published and membership jumped from 2,000 to 8,000 by year's end.

March 3, 1947 -- Nell Wing started work at Alcoholic Foundation, 415 Lexington Avenue, NYC.

March 4, 1891 -- Lois W. was born. 1947 -- Nell Wing met Bill W. for the first time.

March 5, 1945 -- Time Magazine reported first of a series of Detroit radio broadcasts by AA members.

March 7, 1940 -- Bill and Lois W. visited Philadelphia AA group. 1941 -- Boston newspaper reported that any drunk who wanted to get well was more than welcome at the AA meeting at 115 Newbury St., at 8 PM Wednesdays.

March 9, 1941 -- Wichita Beacon reported on an AA member from NY who wanted to form a group in Wichita, KS.

March 10, 1944 -- New York Intergroup was established.

March 11, 1949 -- The Calix Society, an association of Roman Catholic alcoholics who are maintaining their sobriety through participation in Alcoholics Anonymous, was formed in Minneapolis by five Catholic AA members.

March 14, South Orange, NJ, AA group held an anniversary dinner with Bill W. as guest speaker.

March 15, 1941 -- First AA group in New Haven, CN, was formed.

March 16, 1940 -- Alcoholic Foundation and Works Publishing moved from Newark to 30 Vesey St. in lower Manhattan.

March 21, 1881 -- Dr. Bob's wife, Anne, was born. 1966 -- Ebby T., whom Bill W. called his sponsor, died sober.

March 22, 1951 -- William Duncan Silkworth, MD, died at Towns Hospital. He helped more than 40,000 alcoholics during his lifetime. 1984 -- Clarence S., "Home Brewmeister," died at 81.

March 23, 1936 -- Bill & Lois W. visited Fitz M., "Our Southern Friend," in Maryland. 1940 -- Lois W. paid her first visit to the office on Vesey Street in NYC.

March 25, 1898 -- Jim B. ("The Vicious Cycle") was born.

March 29, 1943 -- The Charleston Mail, WV, reported on Bill W.'s talk at St. John's Parish House.

March 31, 1947 -- 1st AA group formed in London, England.

Other March happenings with no specific date:

1936 - AA had 10 members staying sober. At end of 1936 AA had 15 members.

1940 - Mort J. arrived in LA from Denver and helped faltering group; started custom of reading Chapter 5 Big Book at Cecil group.

1941 - 1st Prison AA Group was formed at San Quentin. Second printing of Big Book appeared.

1946 - The March of Time film on AA was produced.

1949 - Dr. Bob considers idea of AA conference premature.

1951 - American Weekly publishes memorial article for Dr.

Bob.

Thanks to Billy C. and Nancy O. for this list, used by permission.

Congratulations March Birthdays!

This issue we celebrate a collective 207 years
more than 75,554 days of sobriety **One day at a time!**

164 Pages

Ellen H. 4

Headstart

Alex 1

Rocky 3

Mick H. 6

Happy, Joyous & Free

Danny B. 1

Jennifer F. 1

Dave B. 2

Patti S. 2

Diane W. 4

Katie C. 5

Lydia N. 7

Renee V. 9

Dennis A. 10

Bill J. 13

Michelle H. 13

Mary D. 31

Living Sober

Rick D. 3

Tony F. 4

Mary M. 10

New Attitudes

Sharon R. 2

One Day at a Time

Todd 1

Gail 1

Andy 27

Mike 3

Sober Yankees

Craig M. 16

Judy Q. 28

Deadline for
submitting birthdays is the
20th of the preceding
month. Call 352.867.0660 or
Email: thevoice@aaocalamarion.org

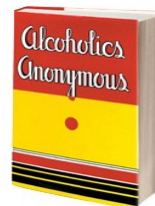
February

Jason B. 4

Brenda P. 17

John H. 21

Tracy 24

**Announcing the 75th Anniversary Edition of the Big Book**

A.A. World Services, Inc. announces the publication of the first edition of *Alcoholics Anonymous*. This new edition will be a faithful replica of the original, with the famous "circus cover" dust jacket and bulky paper (which is why it was initially called the Big Book), and is published in the original English language text only.

lish language text only.

To commemorate the 75th anniversary of the historic publication of *Alcoholics Anonymous* in April 1939, the 2013 General Service Conference approved the creation of this facsimile edition of the first printing of the first edition.

Contact Intergroup at (352) 867-0060 or stop by to prepay for your copy now. A shipment of 45 have been pre-paid and will arrive in April. Hurry! Orders are filling up fast. Cost is \$13.80 plus tax.

Mark Your Calendar

- **29th Annual Suwannee Big Book Weekend, Mar. 7-8** The Conference and Retreat Center, Dowling Park, FL, Contact: David H. at suwanneebigbook@yahoo.com
- **Intergroup Rep Meeting Mar. 9th** 3666A NE 25th St., Ocala 34470 Steering Committee & Picnic Meetings follow
- **3rd Annual Central Florida Women's Workshop, Mar. 14-16** Life Enrichment Center, 4991 Picciola Rd., Fruitland Park, FL 34731 <http://www.cfwomensworkshop.com/>
- **SOBERSTOCK 2014, Mar. 14-16** Camp Brorrein, 16901 Boy Scout Rd., Odessa, FL 33556 Live music, camping, speakers, fun <http://www.soberstock.com/>
- **Annual Housecleaning Spiritual Retreat for A.A. & Al-Anon, Mar. 21-23** Lake Yale Conference Center, FL <http://www.retreatforaa-alanon.com/>
- **19th Annual Country Round-Up "Thy Power, Thy Love, and Thy Way of Life" Apr. 25-27** Ag Center, 1424 Jackson Ave. (Hwy 90) Chipley, FL 32428 Contact: chipleycountryroundup@hotmail.com
- **24th Spring Conference—The Woodstock of A.A. May 2-4** -Holiday Inn-Orlando International Airport 5750 T.G. Lee Blvd., Orlando, FL 32822 (407) 851-6400 Contact: gyeldell@cfl.rr.com Celebrating the day Bill W. and Dr. Bob first met Proceeds go to the maintenance and support of Dr. Bob's Home, Inc.
- **4th Annual Sunshine Convention "Three Pertinent ideas a. b. c.", May 16-18** Community Center, 1446 Commerce Dr., Crestview, FL 32536 <http://www.sunshineconvention.org/>
- **Sobriety Variety Showcase May. 18th** 12:30pm—6:30pm Free Admission Unity Place 525 NE Sanchez Ave. Ocala, 34470

Intergroup Announcements

- Volunteers needed for the Intergroup District 17 Spring Picnic.
 - A desk volunteer needed for Monday and Wednesday, 2 to 5pm. One year of continuous sobriety is required.
 - Sign up for the softball league!
- Call Intergroup for more info.*
- The Spring picnic planning meeting Sun., March 9, 5:00pm at Intergroup office.

New Groups**Program of Action 4D**

7:30pm, Wednesday, Open Big Book, Phoenix House 15681 US 301 Citra 32113

It's in the Book 6:00pm

Monday, Open Big Book Ocklawaha United Methodist 13333 E Hwy. 25, 32179

Intergroup 17 Call Center**February 2014**

Meeting information 120
Office transactions 83
Twelfth Step Calls 3
Miscellaneous 87
Al-Anon Visitors 41

Join the Birthday Plan

In grateful celebration of their sobriety birthdays, many A.A. members contribute \$1.00 or more for each year of sobriety to any or all of our four service entities; the local Intergroup, District, Area Assembly, and General Service Office. Every A.A. service is designed to help carry the A.A. message to the alcoholic who still suffers. Your Birthday Plan contributions help make our vital services possible. Some members attribute their birthday contribution to their home group. If you make note of your home group's name along with your Birthday contribution, Intergroup District 17 will list your group in this monthly newsletter.

**Plug into
Intergroup 17
online**



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| GROUP NAME | Jan. | YTD |
|-------------------------|-------------|--------------|
| I 64 Pages | \$ 20.00 | \$ 110.76 |
| Alive & Well | \$ 30.00 | \$ 30.00 |
| All You Need | \$ 45.00 | \$ 137.31 |
| Anonymity | | \$ 1.15 |
| Belleview Eye Opener | \$ 30.00 | \$ 30.00 |
| Belleview God's Way | | \$ 100.00 |
| Blichton Station | | \$ 60.00 |
| Breakfast Club | | \$ 1,391.55 |
| Cabin in the Woods | \$ 200.00 | \$ 350.63 |
| Conscious Contact | \$ 57.00 | \$ 57.00 |
| Eureka Group | \$ 5.00 | \$ 55.00 |
| Forest Men's Group | \$ 40.00 | \$ 80.00 |
| Fort McCoy Group | \$ 10.01 | \$ 95.79 |
| Fountain of Gratitude | | \$ 30.00 |
| Free To Be | \$ 83.50 | \$ 288.50 |
| Grateful Gals | | \$ 15.50 |
| Grupo Mano Abierta | | \$ 20.00 |
| Happy Hour | | \$ 50.00 |
| Happy, Joyous & Free | \$ 85.14 | \$ 2,260.50 |
| Headstart | \$ 119.78 | \$ 627.01 |
| The Healing Group | | \$ 130.00 |
| Heavy Hitters Men | | \$ 110.00 |
| Joy of Living | | \$ 120.00 |
| Living Sober | \$ 150.00 | \$ 385.00 |
| New Attitudes | \$ 42.65 | \$ 105.89 |
| Ocala Group | \$ 92.11 | \$ 390.21 |
| Ocala Men's | | \$ 399.36 |
| One Day at a Time | \$ 275.00 | \$ 825.00 |
| Primary Purpose | | \$ 99.00 |
| Serenity Group | | \$ 46.80 |
| Sober Yankees | \$ 107.45 | \$ 183.32 |
| Stop Whining & Sober Up | | \$ 333.00 |
| Strength in Numbers | | \$ 43.27 |
| We Give Up | | \$ 27.40 |
| We Give Thanks | | \$ 25.00 |
| Weir Crazy | \$ 20.00 | \$ 321.00 |
| Young People's Group | | \$ 295.00 |
| District #17 | \$ 4.67 | \$ 848.89 |
| Birthday Club | | \$ 402.00 |
| Individual Members | \$ 31.11 | \$ 214.42 |
| Total | \$ 1,448.42 | \$ 11,095.26 |

The Voice by email for free.



Send an e-mail with "Free Voice" in the subject line to:
thevoice@aaocalamarion.org

How Groups and Individuals Support the Work of AA

Below is the example of allocation of group contributions provided by AA World Services in the information pamphlet:*

"SELF-SUPPORT: WHERE MONEY & SPIRITUALITY MIX"

50% Intergroup District 17 Inc.

3666A NE 25th Street
 Ocala, FL 34470

30% AA General Service Office

P.O. Box 459
 6035 E. Tudor St.
 New York, NY 10164

10% North Florida Area Conference

P.O. Box 360831
 Melbourne, FL 32936-0831

10% District 17

P.O. Box 3081

District Corner From the District 17 DCM

It has been a quiet month in District 17. Our next big event will be the upcoming workshop presented by Area 14, Panel 63 Delegate, Marilyn B. The workshop will be in Holder on March 30th. Marilyn will be reviewing the agenda items to be voted on at the General Services Conference in April.

It is at the annual GSC that matters/issues important to us will be discussed and voted on. I encourage all GSRs, Alt. GSRs and all interested people plan to attend. If we want our vote to be heard, we need to let Marilyn know how we feel. If you are interested, those of us going will meet at St. Mark's for the trip to Holder. The flyer with all the information is included with The Voice.

Carson F.
 District 17 DCM

Looking for a local meeting?

Choose from more than 160

When and Where online!
www.aaocalamarion.org

Service. The Third Legacy.

Put yourself out front! As an Intergroup 17 Office Volunteer.

Get some more life into your life. Volunteer to staff the Intergroup office. Help needed especially on Mondays and Wednesdays 2 pm to 5 pm, but other times are available. One year of sobriety required. To learn more, call 352 867-0660.

Hotline & 12th Step calls.

Intergroup has a critical need for volunteers to answer our 24-Hour Hotline "after business hours" from their own home or cell phones. Others needed to help respond to 12th Step calls. One year of sobriety required. Call Intergroup 17 to volunteer: 352-867-0660.

District 17 . Committee chairs and other service positions. Volunteers needed.

We need several volunteers to serve in Committee Chair and other service positions. To learn more attend the next District meeting, 6:45 pm, Thursday, March 27, 2014, St. Marks UMC, 1839 NE 8th Avenue, Ocala 34470

Through The Grapevine!

Many of our brothers and sisters in area corrections facilities enjoy reading *The AA Grapevine*. Drop off your old copies at the Intergroup Office, or coordinate a group effort through your GSR.

Take the message to local correctional institutions.

Participation requires prior approval. Applications available at Intergroup 17 office.

Women's Meetings

There is a critical need to carry the message to women in prison (women only). To learn more, call 352 867-0660.

Men's Meetings

To learn more, call 352 867-0660.