

The Voice

Volume 27, Number 2

February 2010



One member's voice

Living in God's universe

A story of experience, strength, and hope

"Came to believe that a power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity."

Somewhere in the mid 1990s some subtle red flags arose in my life suggesting to me that I had better take a more serious look at my drinking. These included the loss of a marriage, the loss of a career, and the pending loss of my freedom, since I was facing multiple felony charges. I decided it was time to "take the plunge" and stop drinking.

Again.
This time for real.

The only problem was that I had tried to convert to a sober life on many previous occasions only to repeatedly fail despite very earnest intentions and even a little effort on

my part. When my life finally collapsed, I found myself hiding out from the law in a treatment center and there I was introduced to AA.

Since my previous strategy of jumping all at once into sobriety had proven unsuccessful, I found it interesting that AA's approach seemed incremental—12 steps to sobriety instead of one headlong leap. Still, after I read superficially through the steps, they seemed to confirm what I always thought: AA was a thinly veiled religious cult whose primary purpose was to suck the pleasure out of the lives anyone so unfortunate as to be taken in. At the time I couldn't begin to realize that the steps, and

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A quote for February

*I am responsible.
Whenever anyone,
anywhere
reaches out for help,
I want the hand of
AA to be there.
For that I am responsible.*

AA Responsibility Statement

Unity. Recovery. Service.

A look at why Intergroup 17 exists— and why we all should care.

Unity: Intergroup serves as a critical link among all groups in Ocala and Marion County.

Recovery: Intergroup 17's primary mission is to help the alcoholic achieve sobriety

Service: Intergroup 17 also exists to serve the needs of groups and members in achieving their purposes.

Service from the start

Intergroup 17 began in 1983 as a collaborative effort among local groups and members to serve as a focal point for responding to calls from alcoholics and their families in need of help and for purchasing literature in bulk from AA World Ser-

vices. At the beginning, the "office" operated out of members' home and cars, phones calls were routed through an answering service.

Today, Intergroup has a physical "office," and volunteers, all recovering alcoholics, staff the front desk and answer the telephones during regular "business" hours. During all other hours, they take "hotline" calls routed to their personal phones from the office, all in the true spirit of the fellowship—one alcoholic working with another

Serving as a direct link and providing individualized service to those in need—including a network of volunteers who stand ready 24/7 to respond to 12th Step

calls—is arguably the most critical role that Intergroup 17 plays. But there's much more.

Intergroup 17 today

Intergroup serves groups and individuals in Ocala and Marion County as a central source for information, assistance, literature, and reference materials about recovery from alcoholism. Intergroup volunteers help new groups to get started and assist others with whatever they may need to function efficiently.

The Intergroup office is open and staffed from 10 am to 5 pm weekdays and 10 am to 2 pm Saturdays to respond to telephone calls,

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Congratulations February Birthdays!

This issue we celebrate anniversaries of our local AA family members that add up to a collective 234 years. That's more than 85,410 days of sobriety. One day at a time!

Pete L	37 years	Walter K	3 years
Tom I	28 years	Alice-Marie W	2 years
Joe H	25 years	Buddy B	2 years
Diane B	22 years	Jerry M	2 years
Bob L	12 years	Dannie C	1 year
Brenda P	12 years	Debbie S	1 year
Tom C	6 years		
Barry C	5 years	January	
Maria W	5 years	Maria	27 years
Marvin P	5 years	Bob L	11 years
Valerie O	5 years	Preston	3 years
Jeff B	4 years	Josh G	1 year
Alex R	3 years		
Brent K	3 years	Please share your AA birthday with all.	
Paul M	3 years	Deadline for March birthdays is February 20. E-mail to:	
Rich B	3 years	thevoice@aaocalamarion.org	
Phil M	3 years		

Join the Birthday Club



Celebrate an AA anniversary—yours or another member's—with a contribution to help Intergroup 17 carry the message to other alcoholics in Ocala and Marion County.

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

Make checks payable to and send with celebrant's information to:
Intergroup 17
3666-A N.E. 25th Street

February by the Books

STEP TWO

"Came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity."

You have convinced us that we are alcoholics and that our lives are unmanageable.

Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions, page 25

The minute I stopped arguing, I could begin to see and feel. Right there, Step Two gently and very gradually began to infiltrate my life. To acquire it, I had only to stop fighting and practice the rest of A. A. 's program as enthusiastically as I could. You can, if you wish, make A.A. itself your 'higher power.' Here's a very large group of people who have solved their alcohol problem. In this respect they are certainly a power greater than you, who have not even come close to a solution.

Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions, page 27

TRADITION TWO

"For our group purpose there is but one ultimate authority---a loving God as He may express Himself in our group conscience. Our leaders are but trusted servants; they do not govern."

They dubiously ask an experienced A .A. member if this really works. The member, sane to all appearances, immediately answers, "Yes! It definitely does." The friends mutter that this looks vague, nebulous, pretty naïve to them. Then they commence to watch us with speculative eyes, pick up a fragment of A.A. history, and soon have the solid facts.

Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions, page 132

CONCEPT TWO

The General Service Conference of A.A. has become, for nearly every practical purpose, the active voice and the effective conscience of our whole Society in its world affairs.

Alcoholics Anonymous, The Twelve Concepts (Short Form) page 574

They formed a trusteeship and delegated to it the responsibility for finances, the *Big Book* and other literature, public information, the service office and the *A.A. Grapevine*.

Twelve Concepts for World Services illustrated, page 4

Plug into Intergroup 17 online

Explore our new website features: www.aaocalamarion.org
Subscribe to The Voice by email: thevoice@aaocalamarion.org



Anonymity and Social Networking Sites

Sound guidance from the AA General Service Office

A.A. members are accessing the Internet in ever-growing numbers and in ways that couldn't have been imagined even ten years ago. With the breadth and scope of the Internet have come challenges, and protecting A.A.'s Traditions online is an important subject to many in the Fellowship.

As with many topics of concern throughout A.A., G.S.O. has developed a set of A.A. Guidelines on the Internet (MG-18) based on the shared experience of A.A. members, groups and committees, covering many of the questions this new technology gives rise to. One such area of concern is the question of anonymity online, particularly as it relates to social networking Web sites, a question which has prompted a more careful look at A.A.'s existing literature and how A.A.'s Traditions can best apply to this popular medium.

What is the purpose of anonymity?

Why is it often referred to as the greatest single protection the Fellowship has to assure its continued existence and growth?

These questions lie at the heart of any discussion about A.A.'s Tradition of Anonymity, whether the discussion centers on a newspaper article or an Internet Web site featuring full names or full-face pictures of A.A. members.

At the personal level, anonymity provides protection for all members from identification as alcoholics, a safeguard often of special importance to newcomers.

At the level of press, radio, TV, films and new technologies such as the Internet, anonymity stresses media the equality in the Fellowship of all members by putting the brake on those who might otherwise exploit their A.A. affiliation to achieve recognition, power, or personal gain.

Regarding the specific question, "What about anonymity online?" the A.A. Guidelines on the Internet state: "An A.A. Web site is a public medium, which has the potential for reaching the broadest possible audience and, therefore, requires the same safeguards that we use at the level of press, radio, and film."

Why the concern?

G.S.O. has received numerous communications from concerned A.A. members regarding anonymity breaks online, inappropriate use of the A.A. name, and copyrighted/trademarked materials being improperly used on social networking sites such as Facebook, MySpace, Twitter and others.

These Web sites offer individuals the chance to post a great deal of personal information about themselves (and others), and these Web sites often allow users to create social networking "groups" and "events" for like-minded individuals. Some members do not post anything that is reflective of A.A. in their personal profiles or "status updates," while others feel it is alright to do so, so long as A.A. is not specifically mentioned.

Says one A.A. member, however, "I typed 'Alcoholics Anonymous' in one of the social networking sites and a group came up with over 6,600 members. It assured 'a safe place to discuss' so I thought it was okay. Then I clicked to see who the members were and the page opened to show me first and last names, many with photos." From there, depending on people's privacy settings, one could easily see personal information about these people, their families and friends. "I was taught the importance of our Traditions," the concerned A.A. member relates, "and about keeping this Fellowship the way we found it.... This page is not what A.A. is about, in my opinion."

Some A.A. members feel that social networking sites are a private venue; other members strongly disagree and view them as a public setting. G.S.O.'s A.A. Guidelines on the Internet, state that social networking Web sites "are public in nature."

After being alerted to an anonymity break G.S.O. normally forwards the matter to the delegate in the area where the member resides, for the delegate to handle as he or she sees fit. (The area delegate usually sends a loving reminder to the member about the importance of our Eleventh Tradition.)

Regarding the Internet, the current method of handling anonymity breaks

at the public level doesn't apply well on social networking Web sites.

Given the popularity achieved by the Internet and the vast numbers of people involved, the question of anonymity has become more and more relevant, and as shared experience within the Fellowship accrues on this rapidly evolving medium of communication, greater focus is being brought to what Bill W. described as "the spiritual foundation of all our Traditions."

What is the solution?

As with most matters in A.A., regardless of how the Internet and new technology have opened up the kinds of connections one A.A. member and another can share, there is great benefit to be found in careful thought and prudent evaluation of a situation that causes concern for so many.

Speaking to A.A. sponsors and friends about how to apply A.A.'s Traditions online hopefully will provide individual members who are utilizing this technology with a greater understanding of how we present ourselves as A.A. members to anyone—be they A.A. member or non-A.A. member—who may "walk" unannounced into the rooms of the Internet's many social networking sites.

As presented in the pamphlet "Understanding Anonymity," regarding anonymity online, the collective conscience of the A.A. Fellowship, as expressed through its Conference-approved literature, suggests that "Publicly accessible aspects of the Internet such as Web sites featuring text, graphics, audio and video ought to be considered another form of 'public media.' Thus, they need to be treated in the same manner as press, radio, TV and films. This means that full names and faces should not be used. However, the level of anonymity in e-mail, online meetings and chat rooms would be a personal decision."

Excerpted from *Box 459, News and Notes from the General Service Office*, AA World Services. Reprinted by permission. To download the guidelines: http://aa.org/lang/en/en_pdfs/mg-18_internet.pdf

Unity. Recovery. Service.

Continued from page one

to welcome visitors, and to help them with their needs, including the sale (often at discounted prices) of in-stock literature and supplies, such as chips, medallions, pamphlets, books, greeting cards, and other recovery related materials. Intergroup places special orders on behalf of groups and individuals for recovery related publications and resources not regularly stocked and often serves as a contact point and direct link through which groups may obtain information from and about the General Service Office (GSO).

Communication central

If you had to describe in one word what Intergroup 17 does, it's communication about recovery with all who have a sincere need for help or interest in information about alcoholism. The list is long: alcoholics in need, members in recovery, AA groups, families, religious organizations, local leaders, government and law enforcement, treatment facilities, and the general public. On any given day, Intergroup either responds to their needs or directs them to another more appropriate resource.

Members and others from the area, as well as those visiting from out of town, are encouraged to drop in to experience the "heartbeat of AA in action." Intergroup also provides, to the best of its ability, information and assistance to groups outside of this service district when called upon to do so.

Intergroup 17 in print and online

Intergroup 17 publishes and maintains critical information in both print and online. These efforts include:

When and Where meeting schedule

One of the most useful publications is the Intergroup 17 *When and Where*, a comprehensive list of all AA group meetings in the area including times, locations, meeting type, and geographic area. Available free of charge, most groups keep a supply on hand and provide them to newcomers as part of the welcoming hand of AA.

Website: www.aacalamarion.org

Linked directly from AA World Services global website, the Intergroup 17 website serves as a 24/7/365 source of infor-

mation, guidance, and hope to alcoholics in need, members, families, visitors to the area, and the general public.

Whether they go to the site seeking immediate help, information on local meetings, details about local events, or just a better understanding of alcoholism and the pathway to recovery, visitors to the website will easy access to information they can use immediately.

The Voice newsletter

Published primarily for the membership, *The Voice* provides a forum for members to share their experiences, reports news including AA birthdays, provides an up-to-date schedule of group, regional, and state events, and much more. *The Voice* is a free publication, available in print from the Intergroup office, online at the website, and by email. You can request a free email subscription by emailing your request to thevoice@aacalamarion.org

Lift your voice through your group representative.

Intergroup is "governed" by the group conscience of the Intergroup Representatives that are sent by AA groups to the monthly business meeting. At these monthly meetings, issues affecting the groups and AA are considered, discussed, and voted on, and decisions made. Groups that send a representative to Intergroup have a voice and a hand in the future.

It is important to note that even if a group sends no representative or does not contribute to Intergroup, it is still served by the Intergroup office in every way possible. This includes provision of supplies, communication of group activities, meeting information, anniversaries, and announcements in our newsletter as well as a listing of all of the meetings in the *When & Where*.

The concept and roles of a "central office" or "intergroup" is carefully described by AA's General Service Office in a publication titled "AA Guidelines, Central or Intergroup Offices." You can download a copy from the AA World Services website (http://aa.org/en_pdfs/mg-02_centralorinter.pdf). The guidelines address issues such as intergroup office functions, staffing, financing, and relationships with local groups, and responsibilities of local groups to support the work of their intergroup office, staff, and volunteers.

Intergroup 17 Call Center December 2009

Meeting info requests	67
Twelfth Step Calls	7
Office transactions	30
Visitors	36
Al-Anon*	10
Miscellaneous	27

*Calls requesting information on or needing assistance from Al-Anon are respectfully referred to the appropriate local resources.

Intergroup 17 Financial Statement

Monthly financial statement for Intergroup 17 are available for review at the Intergroup 17 office during regular office hours. See back page for address.

Intergroup 17 Ocala-Marion County Florida

3666-A N.E. 25th Street

Ocala, Florida 34470

Phone: 352-867-0660

Email: info@aacalamarion.org

Website: aacalamarion.org

Hours of operation

Monday-Friday 10 am to 5 pm

Saturday 10 am to 2 pm

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

First Contact

"Is this AA? Well, um . . .
I might have a drinking problem . . .
Can you help me?"

**Can YOU?
Yes YOU can!
Will YOU?**

Just say "Yes" to
answering 12th Step calls,
We'll show you the rest.
Call Intergroup to learn more.
352 867-0660

Group Contributions to Intergroup 17 Fiscal Year June 2009-May 2010.

Figures below reflect total contributions for FY2009-10.
June 1 through December 31, 2009 only.

GROUP NAME	\$ Dec '09	\$ YTD	GROUP NAME	\$ Dec '09	\$ YTD
164 Pages Group	\$ 0.24	\$ 69.19	Living Sober Group	57.31	487.22
17th Street Group			Lunch Bunch Group		149.11
Acceptance			Marion Oaks Group		
Alive and Well		100.00	McIntosh Group		
All You Need		50.00	Men's Group Ocala		302.00
Anonymity Group			New Attitudes Group		92.09
As Bill Sees It			New Beginnings Group		
Belleview Eye Opener			New Life Group		
Belleview God's Way		15.77	No Name Group	38.25	83.25
Belleview Group		100.14	Ocala Group	160.54	1,583.88
Birthday Club			Ocklawaha AM Group		
Bonfire Group			One Page At A Time		
Breakfast Club	448.00	1,790.79	Primary Purpose Group		45.00
Came To Believe	20.00	20.00	Resentment Too Group		
Charity Group			Second Step Group		
Citra Group	6.69	6.69	Shores of Sobriety	50.00	110.00
Come As You Are	25.00	25.00	Sisters of Serenity		
Conscious Contact		84.41	Start A New Life		200.00
Day by Day			Steps and Promises		
Dunnellon Group			Stop Whining & Sober Up		
Dunnellon Rainbow			Strength In Numbers		0.70
Experience, Strength & Hope			Summerfield Group		32.00
First Impressions			Sundae Social Group		
Forest Group		120.00	TLC Group, The Centers		8.70
Fountain of Gratitude	50.00	167.00	We Give Thanks	40.00	40.00
Free To Be		90.00	We Give Up		42.50
Ft. McCoy Group		40.00*	Weir Crazy		340.00
Grace Group			Williston Winners		
Grateful Gals			Won Rebos Group		
Green Group			Weir Crazy Group	100.00	440.00
Grupo Mano Abierta			Young People's Group		81.98
Grupo Nueva Vida					
Happy Highlanders					
Happy Hour Group		50.00	Birthday Club (personal)		
Happy, Joyous & Free	311.33	1,183.58	Double Nickel (personal)		10.00
Headstart Group		203.76	Faithful Fivers (personal)		32.00
Individuals			Individuals (other)	154.90	266.91
It's In The Book					
Keep It Simple			Total	\$1,462.26	\$8,784.89
Last Call Group		50.00			
Last House on the Block					
Life is Good Sober Group					
Life Saver Group		100.15			

How Groups and Individuals Support the Work of AA

Group contributions are the major funding source for the work of Intergroup 17 and other areas of AA. Many groups 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 Worldwide General Services Office
- 10 percent to North Florida Area Assembly
- 10 percent to District 17

Group contributions

Intergroup 17
P.O. Box 1192
Ocala, FL 34478

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

NFAC
P.O. Box 567
Melbourne, FL 32902

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

Member contributions

Individual members can provide financial support to Intergroup 17 in various ways.

- *Faithful Fivers*: \$5 each month
- *Double Nickel*: \$10 each month
- *Birthday Club Members*: \$1 or more per year of sobriety, on their AA "birthday"

All contributions count

In the spirit of participation, no contribution toward carrying the message can be too small. Bill W spoke of our "collective obligation" to support AA services. If everyone waited until they had a "sizeable" amount, it's more than likely that AA's bills would go unpaid.

Please contribute what you can when you can. Thanks.

*November contribution, previously not acknowledged, but greatly appreciated.

Living in God's universe

Continued from page 1

particularly Step Two, would be the catalyst to a new and fulfilling life.

I originally read the second step with such unbending prejudice about what I thought it said that the actual words of the step were lost on me. This was partly due to the fact that I had heard some mention of God in my first AA meetings. This discouraged me and reinforced my notion that AA was a religious sect. Only on closer inspection and with the guidance of others did I realize the step was not about a quick spiritual fix. It was not demanding that I be "born again" to become sane and sober. In fact it only encouraged me to begin a process of spiritual evolution.

For me, this process began when I heard the second step asking me to consider that there are powers greater than myself. Since I was in a locked ward at the time, it was relatively easy to concede that some things were more powerful than me. After this initial concession it soon became clearer that, in truth, I had very little power.

While drinking I would have ranted for hours about how independent I was. But the reality I conveniently ignored was that I was utterly dependent on others to produce the food, fuel, shelter, and even the booze I needed to survive. Before long I also came to realize that I didn't make the air I breathed, either. Nor could I recall making all the stars in the sky. Some other power was ultimately responsible, even if I couldn't define what that power was.

Just like I could not abruptly transform from the fear driven illusions I had known as life into a sober, authentic existence, I also could not suddenly convert into a spiritually comfortable being. Yet, without this conversion, I don't believe I could have achieved a comfortable sobriety in which I don't struggle with alcohol.

Had I not transformed my relationship with reality and its maker who I now, on most days, refer to as "God," I would still be dominated by the fears that only seemed quieted when I drank. This relationship with reality certainly did not change all at once. It took time and, in fact, it continues to change today.

But these changes began for me with Step Two. It seems to me that my experience with this step has been a lot more about abandoning the idea that I was God, rather than following a precisely mapped-out journey toward acceptance of any specific image of God. The second step launched me on a spiritual quest to "de-deify" myself.

If this seems to suggest I am uncertain about the nature of God, that is because I am uncertain. But I have found, for me, the power in the second step comes from relieving me of the burdens that come with impersonating God as well as the realization that something else, greater than myself, provides the context for life. Recognizing this power has provided me the hope that is the underlying principal of this step.

Step Two promised me my sanity would return if I begin to move away from the idea I was all powerful. Because it did not compel me to move toward any one spiritual belief, I was willing to take a few baby steps to begin a spiritual journey. And, for me, this has led to a psychic change into a guy who is sufficiently at peace to have not needed to drink in quite a while.

I'm very grateful the second step is so precisely worded. Because it allows me to timidly inch toward a spiritual awakening rather than dogmatically telling me what I must believe, I have come to believe that I truly live in God's universe. And so long as I do what is necessary to remain a denizen of this reality, I can gratefully stay sober one day at a time.

Don C
Ocala, Florida
February 2010

The thoughts, expressions, and opinions expressed on these pages are those of the authors and not necessarily those of Alcoholics Anonymous or Intergroup 17, Ocala-Marion County, Florida.

Tradition Two Checklist



For our group purpose there is but one ultimate authority—a loving God as He may express Himself in our group conscience. Our leaders are but trusted servants; they do not govern.

- Do I criticize or do I trust and support my group officers, AA committees, and office workers? Newcomers? Old-timers?
- Am I absolutely trustworthy, even in secret, with AA Twelfth Step jobs or other AA responsibility?
- Do I look for credit in my AA jobs? Praise for my AA ideas?
- Do I have to save face in group discussion, or can I yield in good spirit to the group conscience and work cheerfully along with it?
- Although I have been sober a few years, am I still willing to serve my turn at AA chores?
- In group discussions, do I sound off about matters on which I have no experience and little knowledge?

From AA Grapevine, reprinted by permission of AA World Services.

Service. The Third Legacy.

The AA founders and their fellow old-timers gave us the Three Legacies: Recovery. Unity. Service. Here are some ways to complete the triangle. Service opportunities abound with Intergroup 17 and District 17. If nothing here appeals to your sense of service, just call Intergroup at 352 867-0660. There's plenty more to do!

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 Saturdays 10 am to 2 pm, but other times are available. One year of sobriety required. To learn more, call 352 867-0660.

Hotline and 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 pm, Thursday, February 25, 2010, St. Marks UMC, 1839 NE 8th Avenue, Ocala

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.

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.

Publicize your group's service opportunities in The Voice. Call 352 867-0660 or email to thevoice@aaocalamarion.org

A Faithful Fiver Speaks

I started this year with pledging five dollars a month, as AA has given me a life beyond my wildest dreams, and I am so very grateful . I would like Intergroup to be here to help the alcoholic who still suffers.. We need your support!!!

Arlene H.

JOIN THE FAITHFUL FIVERS

"When we meet and defeat the temptation to take large gifts we are only being prudent. But when we are generous with the hat, we give a token that we are grateful for our blessing and evidence that we are eager to share what we have found with all those who still suffer."

Bill W, Language of the Heart

Faithful Fivers are AA members who, in gratitude, pledge to contribute at least \$5 each month toward the support of Intergroup 17 in its task of helping groups and members in carrying the message to the alcoholic who still suffers. If you are able to join in our quest please fill out the pledge **form** below and send it along with your first donation to Intergroup 17, 3666A N.E. 25th St Ocala, Fl. 34470

District 17 Corner

Highlights of January meeting:

- Volunteers needed to take meetings to men and women at Phoenix House. More info: 352-867-0660
- Accessibilities chair Monte B reported on variety of AA "literature" available in Braille and on tape/CD.
- Archives committee chair Kathy P seeks historic information on all Ocala/Marion Country Groups
- CPC/PI chair Michelle Y reported success in placing AA information with local middle and high schools.

**Next Meeting: Thursday, Feb. 25
6 pm, St. Marks UMC, Ocala
All Welcome**

Faithful Fivers Pledge Form

Monthly Pledge: \$ _____

Name (last name optional): _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Street: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Make checks payable to: Intergroup 17 Inc. Mail to: Intergroup 17, 3666A N.E. 25th St Ocala, Fl. 34470

Upcoming Events and Meetings of Interest

Ocala/Marion County

There are more than 140 AA meetings per week in Ocala/Marion county visit. Check out the Where & When online: www.aocalamarion.org

Monday

Beginners Meeting

17th Street Group
6:00pm every Monday
Church of Christ
2730 SE Maricamp Rd., Ocala

Wednesday

Meditation

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

Spanish Speaking

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

Thursday

Eat 'n Speak

Keep It Simple Group
Last Thursday of the month
Eat: 7:00pm Speaker: 8:00pm
Small fee for meal
ALL INVITED!
Ascension Lutheran Church
5730 SE 28th Street, Ocala

District 17 Monthly Meeting

6:00 pm last Thursday of the month
All GSRs. Everyone welcome.
St. Mark's United Methodist
1839 NE 8th Avenue, Ocala

Friday

Speaker Meeting

Experience, Strength and Hope
8:00pm every Friday
Druid Hills Methodist Church
1712 SE Lake Weir Blvd., Ocala

Spanish Speaking

Grupo Mano Abierta
7:00pm every Friday
2082 Walnut Street, Dunnellon

Saturday

Eat 'n Speak

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

Spanish Speaking

Grupo Mano Abierta
7:00pm every Saturday
2082 Walnut Street, Dunnellon

Sunday

Intergroup 17 Monthly

5:15 pm second Sunday of month
Intergroup Reps. All welcome.
St. Mark's United Methodist
1839 NE 8th Avenue, Ocala

Share your special needs story with the fellowship.

The General Service Office of AA World Services is soliciting stories for a recovery pamphlet for A.A. members with special needs—such as deaf or hearing impaired, blind, wheelchair bound, learning disabilities, or other special needs.

Your stories might include barriers you have overcome in order to hear the A.A. message. Also, any literature, other tools, or efforts by A.A. members that you found helpful.

Manuscripts should be 500-800 words, double spaced. 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.

Please send your sharing to: Special Needs Coordinator, General Service Office, Box 459, General Central Station, New York, NY 10163.

Added New Meeting

Last Call Group
Tuesdays, 10 pm
Starting in February



Open Discussion, Accessible
Tuesdays, 10 pm at Cats
730 SE Osceola Avenue, Ocala

Newer Meetings

NEW LOCATION

Heavy Hitters of Ocala (men's group)

Closed Big Book Discussion
Saturdays, 5:00-6:30 pm
Unity Place
525 NE Sanchez, Bldg 300, Ocala

The Come As You Are Women's Group

Big Book, first Tuesday of month
Speaker, last Tuesday of month
1138 NE 8th Avenue, Ocala

Thursday Night Step Group

Closed Step Meeting
Thursdays, 8 pm
South Ocala Baptist Church
2907 SE 52nd St, Ocala, FL

Carry the Message

Open Discussion, 7PM
Monday
Zion United Methodist Church
1605 Blichton Road
(Corner ML King Blvd & Blichton, north of the railroad crossing)

164 Pages Group

Big Book and 12&12 Study
Wednesdays, 6 pm
Ocklawaha Methodist Church
13333 East Highway 25
Ocklawaha

Special Events, Celebrations, Notices

Mark Your Calendar

See details elsewhere in this issue or link to more information.

2/11-14, 2010 46th International Women's conference, Orlando.

www.internationalwomensconference.org

2/26-28, 2010 Annual Housecleaning Spiritual Retreat, AA & Al-Anon, Lake Yale Conference Center, Florida.

www.retreatforaa-alanon.com

3/19-21, 2010 6th Annual Soberstock 2010, Tampa, www.soberstock.com

4/9-11, 2010 North Florida Area Assembly, Gainesville.

www.aanorthflorida.org

7/1-4, 2010 International Convention, A Vision for You. San Antonio, TX. Register now. www.aa.org

8/11-15, 2010 54th Florida State Convention, Miami. <http://54.flstateconvention.com>

9/24-26, 2010 Escape Disaster Together!, Florida Conference of Young People in AA, Lake Buena Vista, Florida.

www.fcypaa.org

Anniversary Celebration

Grupo Mano Abierta



**Saturday, February 27
Open Meeting 7:00 pm
Dinner immediately following**

**ALL WELCOME
Come Celebrate with us!**

Dinner provided by group.
No charge.

Grupo Mano Abierta
St. John's United Methodist Church
12390 West Highway 328
Ocala, Florida

Intergroup 17 needs you.

Put yourself on the front line of service work.

Intergroup 17 needs folks who would like to work the front desk.

Duties include:

- Sale of literature and other merchandise
- Writing sales tickets and collecting sales money.
- Answering the phone
- Providing meeting information or other assistance

The Greatest Rewards

You may be asked all kinds of questions regarding AA and related issues. Some calls will just need a listening ear and a caring heart. Some calls could be similar to a 12-Step call. This part of the job is most rewarding.

Training provided. One year of sobriety needed.

Hours/Shifts

Monday thru Friday 10-2, or 2-5
Saturday 10-2.

Volunteer today!

For more information, contact Intergroup 17 office. 352 867-0660.

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 edit anything submitted prior to its publication.

GSO Seeks Group's Input District 17 GSR's to help.

Ask your group's General Service Representative about how your group can respond to the General Service Conferences' request for input from the fellowship on two separate questions regarding the use of literature profits to partially fund services of the GSO in New York.

The request was made through North Florida Area Assembly and District 17. If your group does not send a GSR to District 17 meetings or North Florida Area Assembly, please attend the next District 17 meeting to learn more. February 25, 6 pm, St. Mark's UMC, Ocala.

Information about North Florida Area Assembly can be found at: www.aanorthflorida.org

February at the Lost and Found Club

339 NE Sanchez Avenue
(NE 4th St. & Tuscaquilla Park)
352-351-4688

- Saturday, 2/6: Dance, 9 pm
- Friday, 2/12: Music Night, 9 pm
- Saturday, 2/13: Pool Tournament, 1:30 -5 pm; Bingo, 9 pm
- Tuesday, 2/16: Activities meeting, 7 pm
- Friday, 2/19: Music Night, 9 pm
- Saturday, 2/20: Pool Tournament, 1:30 -5 pm; Bingo, 9 pm
- Friday, 2/26: Music Night, 9 pm
- Saturday, 2/27: Bake sale 9-11 am; Bingo, 9 pm

The Lost and Found Club is not affiliated with Alcoholics Anonymous World Services or Intergroup



Intergroup 17 Meetings Everyone invited!

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

Sunday, February 14, 5:15 pm
St Mark's United Methodist
1839 NE 8th Avenue, Ocala

Free Subscription. The Voice by e-mail.



For your free monthly subscription, send an e-mail with "Free Voice" in the subject line to: thevoice@aaocalamarion.org

The Voice by e-mail is in PDF format. Requires Adobe Reader software. Free download available at www.adobe.com. Printed copies available at Intergroup office.

Intergroup 17 Ocala-Marion County Florida

3666-A N.E. 25th Street
Ocala, Florida 34470
Phone: 352-867-0660
Email: info@aaocalamarion.org
Website: aaocalamarion.org

Hours of operation

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

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

Your support is critical to the future of Intergroup 17 now!

Intergroup is self-supporting through the contributions of the groups and individuals we serve. We accept no outside contributions and generate a minimal additional income from the sale of literature and supplies. Intergroup is absolutely reliant upon group contributions to continue to provide our services

Today, Intergroup 17 faces critical financial challenges. The average monthly operating expenses run between \$2500 and \$2800. Unfortunately, group contributions have dropped sharply in the past year creating Intergroup 17 in serious financial difficulty.

Only about 20 percent of area groups make financial contributions, regularly. Support is much needed and gratefully acknowledged. If your group does not contribute regularly, please consider doing so. If you as an individual can make a direct personal contribution, your gift will be gratefully welcomed.

Page 5 provides information on how groups and individuals can contribute to Intergroup 17 and other levels of the AA World Services organization. Your generosity will be greatly appreciated.

Attitude of GrAAttitude

Intergroup 17 can't thank you *enough*—but we can thank you enthusiastically. Thanks to all the groups below that contributed to Intergroup 17 in December.

- 164 Pages Group
- Breakfast Club Group
- Came to Believe Group
- Fountain of Gratitude Group
- Happy, Joyous, & Free
- Living Sober Group
- No Name Group
- Ocala Group
- Shores of Sobriety Group
- We Give Thanks Group
- Weir Crazy Group

Thanks to all groups and individuals who have contributed. They are all gratefully acknowledged on page 5.

Intergroup 17 is especially blessed by and grateful to all of our Trusted Servants who volunteer to staff the office and hotline: Rafael, Peggy, James N, James M., Michelle Y, Connie & Toni Marie C, Phil H., Gordana U, Dave G, Kelly, Diane, Arlene H, & Keith H. Thanks to Alison C for her work in designing and maintaining the website and to Max R for producing *The Voice*.

If we've left anyone out, it's purely unintentional. Please let us know, and we'll make amends next issue.

Priscilla P, Intergroup 17 Office Manager

Questions? Concerns? Need Information? Visit aaocalamarion.org

- Where & When online
- The Voice, current and past issues
- Service opportunities
- How to get help
- Upcoming local and regional events
- Links to the Big Book, 12&12, and more

New 18-month medallions. AA literature. Great gifts

By request, Intergroup 17 now carries 18-month medallions along with our large selection of other recovery related chips., medallions, gifts, and literature. We're clearing the shelves of non-AA titles at cost—usually a 30 to 45% savings. Supply limited to current stock. Purchase at Intergroup Office. Call for more information 352-867-0660.