

Vancouver Area Intergroup of
Alcoholics Anonymous

December/January 2018/2019
Volume 12

2203 Fairmount Avenue, Ste. A
Vancouver, WA
98661

Vancouveraa.org
vancaa@vanintgrp.com
(360) 694-3870



Primary Purpose

Intergroup Gratitude Potluck Dinner Great Success!

A special “Thank you” is in order to all the members and groups that came to support the Intergroup at this wonderful event! We had delicious food and fellowship as well as an abundance of raffle prizes to hand out. The special guest speaker, Rona Y.R. was also a huge hit. The turn out of people who attended was excellent, and there were many tickets donated for newcomers that were then able to get in for free. Stay tuned for the financial report for the event which will be reflected on next month’s edition of the Newsletter on the financial page. A preliminary look at how we did financially for the event shows that we reached our goal successfully.

There were a few planning hiccups and obstacles along the way leading up to the event, which is why it landed on a Friday evening instead of the usual date, but even so, everyone pulled together demonstrating our tremendous spirit of Unity. If you happen to see our Gratitude Dinner Chair people out there, i.e. Laurie or Darcy, feel free to give them a big hug for their dedication and hard work. To everyone that participated, from groups and individuals that donated funds and prizes, to Jeff and the kitchen volunteers, to those out there selling tickets, and (don’t forget) to those that stayed to help clean up until midnight that night, goes our deepest gratitude. Thank you all!

**LET GO
&
LET GOD**



Inside this issue

| | |
|---|-------|
| Intergroup Gratitude Potluck Dinner Great Success!..... | 1 |
| History of A.A. in Vancouver— | 2-4 |
| Bookstore News ————— | 2 |
| Experience, Strength, and Hope. | 5,6 |
| Congrats..... | 4 |
| Financial Report | 7 |
| S.C. Committee Mtg. Minutes | 8,9 |
| Intergroup Rep. Mtg. Minutes..... | 9,10 |
| AA Grapevine Excerpt..... | 11,12 |
| Upcoming Events..... | 13 |

Monthly Business Mtgs.

- ◆ Steering Comm. Mtg. -1/14 @6:00 PM
- ◆ Intergroup Mtg. -1/21 @6:30 PM
- ◆ District 37 GSR Mtg. -1/22 @7:00 PM
- ◆ District 7 GSR Mtg. - 1/24@7:00 PM

(All monthly business mtgs. are held at the Intergroup Office).

History of Alcoholics Anonymous in Vancouver, WA

1946-1958

Jerry Mc found himself without work after the closing of the shipyards in Vancouver, Washington in 1945. He was living in a war housing unit on Mcloughlin Heights. His drinking problem was escalating, which caused concern for his family and himself. In late 1945 Jerry went to his first Alcoholics Anonymous meeting at the 10th Street Group in Portland, the only A.A. Group in the Portland area. He attended meetings whenever he could afford bus fare.

Jerry began visiting the local jails and there he met Billy C. He told Billy of A.A. and what it had done for him. Billy started going to the Portland meeting also, and the two became friends.

Jerry decided that Vancouver needed A.A. He called on the editor of the Columbian and outlined the A.A. Program. The newspaper agreed to run an advertisement, without charge. Two men, Jim F. and Howard M. responded to the ad. The first meeting was held June 6, 1946 in Howard M.'s living room on East 13th Street, with those two, Billy C., and Jerry Mc in attendance.

Continued on next page...

Bookstore News

A big **thank you** to everyone who has signed up for service work at the Intergroup office! We are currently organizing a list of things to do as well as a schedule, so you may be receiving a phone call from us in the next few weeks to plan your future assistance. If you are interested in doing this, and have not yet signed up, please call the office at (360) 694-3870 or stop in and sign up!

Stop in and check out which books are currently on sale!



History of A.A. in Vancouver, WA continued...

Jerry often expressed sorrow that Billy C. did not find sobriety before his death in the early 50's. After three years with the group Jim F. moved to New York. Howard M. had mixed success for seven or eight years. At his death he had been sober and happy for seven years.

In early 1949 a second group was formed but merged with the Vancouver Group later that year. By 1949 A.A. had grown to 11 members —Jerry Mc., Si N., Gene B., George L., Heavy C., Dave C., Harold L., Doctor B., Frank G., Ed B., and Tony B. When Tony B. came to A.A. most members felt that at age 29 he was too young, as everyone else was over 50. Within a short time much younger people were finding sobriety in the group.

Ed B. never drank again after his first meeting and in 1958 became the first person to reach 10 years of sobriety in the Vancouver Group. He was a tireless worker for many years and much admired and respected by those who knew him. After some years of ill health he died in the 70's.

In the late 40's meetings were held in members' homes, most often in Gene B.'s basement. After a while, to be fair, they were moved from home to home. When a meeting in George L.'s home drew 21 members it was agreed that it was time to find an official place to meet. In 1949 the group moved to the Gold Room of the Evergreen Hotel. It was charged three dollars for the room, which was less than the standard rate. Whenever the hotel could rent it for the full amount the meeting was moved to a hotel bedroom. It was held with members sitting on the bed, steam radiator, a few chairs, and the floor.

In early 1950 the Group was startled by a letter from a woman, Mildred S. asking to attend A.A. meetings. One entire Friday night meeting was spent discussing the pros and cons of allowing women into the Group. Some members felt that others would become more preoccupied with women than sobriety and that vocabulary might have to be watched and changed. Others were suspicious of the woman's motives in coming to the Group. After much debate it was decided to let her come for a probationary period. After Mildred attended a short time she was accepted as another alcoholic seeking relief. Later she moved to Portland, Oregon and served as New York Delegate.

The Group next moved to the Memorial Building, a Parks Department facility on the site now occupied by the Vancouver City Hall. The Group moved again, this time to the location of the current parking lot of McLoughlen Junior High School. The first New Year's Eve party was held there. The Group's next move was to the Red Cross Building on Officer's Row at Fort Vancouver.

The first group formed at Barnes Hospital was sponsored by a Portland Group in 1950. In the latter part of that year the sponsorship was taken over by A. A. in Vancouver.

In 1956, led by Ed B. and Woody W., a group was sponsored at Larch Mountain Honor Camp.

Continued on next page...

History of A.A. in Vancouver, WA continued...

The first Alanon Group was formed in 1957. One of the founders, Hal T. was a woman who was also an A.A. member. Marlene M. was the first secretary and the other members were Pauline P., Lois J., Peggy B., Nina R., and La Velle G. La Velle G. was New York delegate.

Early in 1958 the Vancouver Group of A.A. moved to 112 E. 6th Street and changed it's name to "Central Group". Woody W., Hal T., Indian Johnny, Les H., Irene R., Frances S., Jim G., and Jerry Mc were instrumental in making the move. The move caused a rift, however, as some felt that the group could not afford the \$50/month for rent. A payment was never missed, although sometimes the hat was passed to make up the shortage. Because they were opposed to the move, Ed B. and others remained at the Red Cross Building and formed a new group. That same year all groups, except the Central Group, merged and registered with the General Service Office.

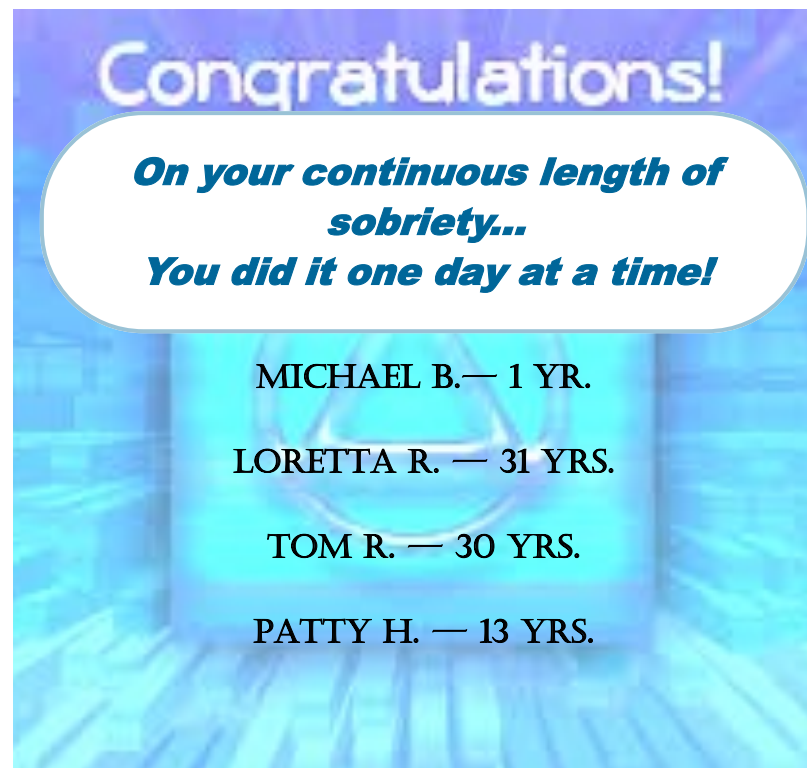
Gene S., a well known artist from New York came to Vancouver after hitting Skid Road in other cities. During a period of sobriety he cast the letters "A.A." in bronze and mounted them on a plaque. For a number of years the plaques sat on the chairman's table. Today it hangs over the door at Central Group. Gene S. returned to his alcoholic pattern and ended his own life on Vancouver's Skid Road.

Jerry Mc, the last of the original four members of Vancouver A.A. died May 30, 1981. In the 35 years he spent as a sober A.A. member he never failed to answer a call for help, to give advice or counsel. He remained active in local, district, and

state activities, always as a recovering alcoholic and never as a founding father. Jerry showed humility and always had compassion and love for those who were seeking recovery. In return he was respected and admired by many members. Jerry's advice was "to practice and live by what you learn at meetings." At the 1979 State Assembly Jerry recorded his story on tapes. They are now in the Washington Archives.

From 1958 to 1982 A.A. in the Vancouver area has grown from one group to 29 groups holding 67 meetings/week to fill the needs of the suffering alcoholic.

—Submitted by Tony B.



If you would like to acknowledge someone celebrating a monthly or annual birthday, please call, email, or let us know when you come in to purchase their coin so we can add them to the next newsletter!

Experience, Strength, and Hope

My name is Patty, I'm an Alcoholic.

I grew up in California. I was a part of a big Irish Catholic family. 10 sisters as matter of fact. Drinking was always a part of what the adults did in our family. It was always there. My mom was a very secretive drinker and my dad was very much in charge. He was the disciplinarian and you did not want to cross him. Which I did often.

I had my first drink at the age of 10. Just some beer my sister and I found in the garage refrigerator. I think we shared one. She was unimpressed but I remember thinking we found a gold mine, right here in the garage. I didn't touch it again until 7th grade. A friend's mom thought it was funny to give me a shot of something on top of the fridge. 180 proof. I thought I would die. But I needed to be cool, right. I also began smoking a little weed at that time. Little did I know that I had planted the seed of my alcoholism and it would slowly begin to take hold of my life.

Ninth grade I cut school with a new girl. She was really cool. We went to my house and drank up a lot of booze. I remember she called over some boys and they brought friends. I'm not sure what happened that day but I came-to in the girls bathroom at school after puking all over myself. I remember leaving in a wheel chair with my dad and two sisters as escorts. We went straight to the doctor so I could be examined. My dad wanted to see if I had been "violated". You'd think that would be enough to never drink again. It was for about a week.

I chased that alcohol all through my teens. Many times not returning home for weeks or months at a time. I quit going to school after being kicked out of several. In and out of juvenile hall. Nothing serious just "uncontrollable". By nineteen I was lost. Rarely did I go home at that point. I was always at the "party". I hung out with mostly bikers. The scary kind. By this time I was an IV drug user and my life was no longer my own, King Alcohol owned me.

At 22 I was married briefly. He was kind of a momma's boy. I had met him at a party one night and followed him home. Seemed safe. He would keep me on the straight and narrow. My disease progressed, and of course I could not stay out of Grandpa's 10high whiskery. Soon I was leaving that place for weeks or a month at a time. Always to return with promises to be better. I just needed someone to take care of me better. So, I married him.

After a drug over dose of PCP and alcohol while I was out on a road trip with a biker friend, I found myself in my first of many treatment centers. I will never forget my first meeting of A.A. I knew I was home. Here were men and women that talked like me, felt like me, and they found a way out. I divorced my husband and stayed sober for 5 years.

Mind you, I did the best I could. I kind of did the steps, but I knew what I needed. I needed a good husband. A sober one. So, I got married in A.A. He was perfect. He had a credit card and a condo. What could go wrong? 5 years and 2 babies later things were not working. I could not wait to get out of this relationship, so I could have a drink. And I did. Boy meets girl on A.A. Campus. Sound familiar?

Continued on next page...

Experience, Strength, and Hope (cont. from Pg. 5)...

The next 15 years were a steady spiral down. I knew I had the wrong guy. Right? So I married again. Someone I met in my home group. He really wanted to save me, so he was perfect. One more baby one more divorce. She stood at the turning point. A decision had to be made. Accept spiritual help or go on to the bitter end blotting out forever. Blah blah blah..... I chose option two. This A.A. life was way too hard after all. This is when I decided to turn my will and my life over to the care of alcohol. Life became crazy. I left my children in the care of their fathers after countless vain attempts to prove I could drink normally.

Many, many treatment centers, overdoses, assaults. Bad breaks and misunderstandings.

At the end of my drinking I was a mess. I lived on the streets and I was probably no farther than 6 miles from my children or my family. Once in a while I would show up to A.A. when things got really desperate. Usually to bum money or a place to sleep. The last time I drank I was 43 years old. I was very sick. I was yellow and underweight.

I was staying in a crack house at the time. You know the house with no electricity. No food for sure. No running water. I remember we were stealing power from the neighbor's house. The last night I got loaded I was sitting outside on the dirty ole couch in a small shanty that was built up on the side of the house. All the low lives that weren't allowed in the house anymore hung out there. I was there alone on this night. I was happy to have a blanket. I was playing on what was probably a stolen cell phone. And I had a moment of clarity. Awareness of my intolerable situation ran through me to my core. Thoughts of my children and the life I could have had ran through my head. I was struck with such grief I could not breath. I drank the rest of my booze but could not get drunk. God help me! The next day I went to A.A.

Don't get me wrong it was not virtue that brought me. I needed to hustle 20 bucks. I needed a bottle and a pack of smokes. I arrived late and I remember being annoyed that I'd have to wait for the meeting to get over before I bummed some money. Suddenly I leaned in to the guy next to me and said, "Maybe I should turn myself in," I had plenty of felonies by then, "And really try to be sober." He said, "Want a ride?" I was shocked and I wanted to tell him I didn't mean right now. I meant tomorrow or something. But I said, "Yes."

Off we went. I turned myself in one more time. By this time, I had been to jail many times. I knew the drill. I would be released to treatment, put in a halfway house, and life would start anew. I had done this many times and yet this time was different. When I called to tell my dad I was told he was deathly ill. He was headed for hospice. I promised him I would be out soon and come see him. I had people from A.A. show up to support me in court. The judge considered what to do with me, treatment or prison? My father asked the judge to send me to prison and save my life. Tuesday came, and I was put on the prison bus. Three days later I took the most sincere 3rd step I had ever taken and I turned my will and my life over to the care of a God I did not understand. I knew I had nothing left. I promised to do what he would have me do. I remembered the promises. The one that said no matter how far down the scale we have gone we will find our experience will help others. I realized I had lot of experience. Mostly bad but it was something. Suddenly I had value. I promised God that I would put my focus on the women in A.A., that any good that came to me I would tell everyone it came from him. That is when my story became his story. And my life began to change.

I stayed in prison only 10 months, but it was enough. I remember when I paroled, I gave the address of my home group as my address because I did not have a home. I got a sponsor right away and followed direction for the first time in my life. I remember telling my sponsor I was ready to stay out of a relationship for a year. She loving told me I was on the 3 year plan. Which I did. I learned how to live right thanks to A.A., the steps, and winners in A.A. I went back to school at around 6 years sober and graduated with a degree the same week my first grand child was born. I worked hard and I paid \$43,000 in restitution and eventually received a certificate of rehabilitation from the state and my record was cleared. I have rebuilt the relationships with my children and my family. Two of my sons have joined A.A. and are doing great. My sisters who I've hurt the most are some of my best friends. All the places that were broken in my life have been mended in ways I would have never thought would happen. I have a drivers license, a car, insurance. I pay taxes. I own my own home and am self-supporting through my own contributions. (with a little help from my sisters now and again) I am a great mother today. A better nana. A good sister. A positive member of my home group. I have a sponsor. I am a sponsor and this week I celebrate 13 years of continuous sobriety. Thanks to A.A. and of course God.

—Patty H.

Group Contributions and Financial Statements

| November | Donations | Year to Date |
|----------|-------------------------------|-------------------|
| 300.00 | A New Beginning | 300.00 |
| 480.85 | A New Morning | 3,870.14 |
| | As Bill Sees It | 480.00 |
| | B & P | 2,035.74 |
| 13.46 | Camas Group | 50.82 |
| | Cascade Group | 160.00 |
| | Chapter Nine | 269.45 |
| 38.62 | Cornerstone | 75.89 |
| | District 7 | 1,379.20 |
| | Dry Tribe | 26.00 |
| 118.84 | Early Birds | 118.84 |
| | Early Light | 125.00 |
| | Eastside Brown Baggers | 430.00 |
| | Eastside Women's Book Study | 100.00 |
| | East County Women's Group | 50.00 |
| 31.69 | First Shot | 425.12 |
| 33.00 | Forged from Adversity | 33.00 |
| 112.23 | Fresh Start | 959.14 |
| 5.00 | Friday Night Happy Hour | 5.00 |
| | Gorge Gals | 50.00 |
| | Ground Zero | 0.23 |
| | Hokinson | 312.19 |
| 5.00 | How it Works | 5.00 |
| | La Center Group | 19.90 |
| | Ladies by the Lavender | 100.00 |
| | Lewis River AA | 98.42 |
| 30.00 | Lighthouse | 300.00 |
| | McGuilivray Study Group | 482.00 |
| | Men's Eastside | 500.00 |
| | Men's Fireside | 240.00 |
| | Minnehaha | 127.00 |
| 325.00 | Miracles at Noon | 3,387.28 |
| | OB's Speaker's Meeting | 197.96 |
| | Primary Purpose | 155.75 |
| | Ready and Willing | 47.16 |
| | Reconciled | 241.55 |
| | Renegades | 105.00 |
| 266.41 | Ridgefield AA | 446.41 |
| | Round Table | 460.28 |
| | Russian Pacific Group | 5.00 |
| 200.00 | Saturday Night Big Book Study | 723.00 |
| 20.00 | Sober Uppers | 78.24 |
| | She Who Remembers | 120.00 |
| | Step Sisters | 228.20 |
| | Stevenson AA | 700.00 |
| | Sunday Night Alternatives | 250.00 |
| 468.50 | Sunday Solutions | 1,200.50 |
| 80.75 | There Is A Solution | 286.75 |
| | United Sober Group | 293.84 |
| | Wayfarer's | 223.27 |
| 52.77 | Wednesday Night Recovery | 328.81 |
| | Welcome Home | 141.15 |
| | West Vancouver Group | 49.46 |
| | Women's Fireside | 200.00 |
| 60.00 | Women in Sobriety | 60.00 |
| 2,609.12 | SUBTOTAL | 23,057.69. |
| 205.45 | Miscellaneous/Individual | 2,073.72 |
| 2,814.57 | TOTAL | 25,131.41 |

Financial Statements

| | November (\$) | YTD (\$) |
|--------------------------|---------------|----------------|
| Revenue | | |
| Sales | 3,549 | 46,609 |
| Contributions | 2,815 | 25,132 |
| Fundraising/Picnic | 0 | 1,282 |
| Misc. Income | 129 | 1,650 |
| Total Revenue | 6,492 | 74,674 |
| Expenses | | |
| Cost of goods sold | 1,979 | 27,704 |
| Fundraising Expenses | 0 | 1,098 |
| Merchant Services | 80 | 1,124 |
| Office supplies | 65 | 1,569 |
| Equipment rent | 164 | 2,129 |
| Building rent | 875 | 9,625 |
| Utilities | 307 | 5,739 |
| Net Wages | 1,629 | 20,435 |
| Payroll taxes | 494 | 5,868 |
| Insurance | 0 | 500 |
| Licenses | 0 | 111 |
| Total Expenses | 5,592 | 75,902 |
| Net Income / Loss | 900 | (1,228) |

November, 2018 Cash Balances

| | | |
|---------------------------|-----------|---------------|
| Main Checking | \$ | 6,133 |
| Event Account | \$ | 1,654 |
| Prudent Reserve | \$ | 17,041 |
| Petty Cash | \$ | 136 |
| Total Cash Balance | \$ | 24,963 |

Easy Does It



Steering Committee Meeting Minutes

Vancouver Area Intergroup of Alcoholics Anonymous Steering Committee meeting for November 12. 2018

Attendance:

Ronnie, SC Chair

Marc, SC Vice Chair

Phil, SC Member

Nicole, Recording Secretary

Glenn, SC Member

Chris, SC Member

Cassia, Office Manager+

Darcy, Gratitude Dinner Co-Chair+

The meeting was opened at 6:02pm with the Serenity Prayer. The October Steering Committee meeting minutes were accepted. The October Intergroup Representatives meeting minutes were reviewed.

Hotline: Cassia reported that all positions are filled however volunteers are always welcome. A new committee chair is needed by the end of year. There was discussion as to what are the requirements for this position. Marc will develop a job description. It was also noted that the new chair will be asked to attend the Intergroup Representatives meeting.

Finance: Please see attached report.

Office: Cassia reported that there have been several volunteers assisting her at the office. Cassia reported that there has been interest in opening the office for limited hours on Saturdays staffed by volunteers. This matter is to be taken to the Intergroup Representatives.

Website: Please see attached report. Cassia reported she is working with the webmaster to improve security to prevent hacking, spam, phishing and blacklisting.

Old Business

Gratitude Dinner: Darcy reported that ticket sales are sluggish and asked that the event be announced at meetings. Raffle prizes are needed. Set-up for the event will be the evening before, on Thursday at 5:00pm.

Guidelines: There was a brief discussion that the proposed guidelines are to be voted at the next Intergroup Representatives meeting.

New Business

Finance: Marc will be working with Lauri to develop a 2019 forecast which will be presented to the Intergroup Representatives for approval.

Meeting Guide: Cassia reported that AA World Services owns the rights to a meeting guide app. Groups should review their meeting information to insure accuracy should the Intergroup Representatives approve submitting the schedule information to them.

Continued on next page...

Steering Committee Meeting Minutes Continued/ Intergroup Rep Meeting Minutes

American Express: The office has been approached to accept American Express. The rate/fees are not known so no action was taken.

Costco: The discussion of American Express evolved into asking if the office should have a Costco membership. This will be further looked into to see if it would be cost effective.

Wallet Cards: Ronnie brought in samples of wallet sized cards such as Daily Moral Inventory, Just for Today, etc., and asked if the office should stock these items with the office contact information on them. This is an issue that would need to be approved by the Intergroup Representatives.

Motions at Meetings: Chris presented a guide for moving through motions at meetings. The guide is not in accordance with the current or proposed guidelines and would require approval from the Intergroup Representatives to be adopted.

The meeting was closed at 7:35pm with the Lord's Prayer.

Yours in Service,

Phil B.

VANCOUVER AREA INTEROUP OF ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS INTERGROUP MEETING FOR NOVEMBER 19, 2018

ATTENDANCE:

Mark Q – Reconciled
Dusty G – Corner Stone
Nicole – Rock Bottom Recovery (non voting)
Chris H – MSG
Dee R – Welcome Home
Jess S – Ladies by the Lavender
Richard R – Lighthouse
Rebecca C – Rock Bottom Recovery
Laurie H – Sober Uppers
Gordon M – Camas Big Book

Darcy S – Friday Night Happy Hour
Marc T – Miracles
Phil B – Central Group
Glenn H – Early Birds
Robin M – Fireside
John B – A New Morning
Tom S – Men's Fireside
Richard – SNA
David C – First Shot
Ronnie C – Chair

Meeting was opened at 6:34pm with the Serenity Prayer. Chris H gave a presentation on the 11th Tradition. Minutes from the October Steering Committee meeting were reviewed. Minutes from the October Intergroup Representatives meeting were accepted with corrections.

Continued on next page...

Intergroup Rep Meeting Minutes—Cont. from Pg. 9

Hotline: There will be openings December 2nd for Sunday 6:00pm-9:00pm, Sundays 9:00pm-midnight. The time slots can be combined to one volunteer. There will be an opening January 5th for Saturday 6:00pm-9:00pm. 12-Step volunteers are needed. A committee chair person is needed. Representatives were given a handout of position requirements.

Financial: See attached report

Intergroup: Cassia discussed opening the office on Saturdays from 10:00am – 2:00pm staffed by volunteers. The matter was handed off to the representatives to bring to their groups.

Website: Webmaster Scott is working on integrating new mobile friendly meeting schedule with map of locations.

OLD BUSINESS

Revised Guidelines: They were accepted with the change of “govern” to “assist” and no change in literature sales from the current guidelines.

Gratitude Dinner: Ticket sales are poor and raffle prizes are needed. Volunteers are needed on Thursday at 5:00pm for set up and at the dinner and after the dinner for clean up.

NEW BUSINESS

Wallet Cards: Ronnie wants to sell non-conference approved wallet cards with the intergroup contact information. The opposing argument is that this constitutes endorsement. The matter has been handed off to the representatives to take to their groups.

Financial Forecast: Laurie will be developing a 2019 forecast to present to the groups.

Word Services Meeting Map: Cassia inquired if we should be sharing information with AAWS. More information is needed (frequency of updates) before a decision can be made.

Group News: Sunday Night Alternatives is having a potluck on December 10th followed by their regular meeting.

Steering Committee Elections: Nicole was reelected for the position of recording secretary. Positions that are open are Treasurers. Positions 2, 3 and 4.

The meeting was closed at 8:00pm with the Lord’s Prayer.

Yours in Service,

Nicole W.
Recording Secretary

AA GRAPEVINE

From the March 1946 Magazine After Her “Will Power” Failed

For several months my drinking habits were becoming steadily worse. I would not give up hope that at some future date I would be able to control my drinking. Somewhere in the back of my mind, I had the idea I would trot out the “will-power” others seemed to have and to put it to work when I needed it. Somehow I had been able to shake it out after a night and day of drinking but this time I didn’t seem to be able to face the kitchen stove until I had a drink. Fortunately, there was a little left in the bottle, so while my husband was in the bathroom shaving I took a “quickie.” This steadied me enough to enable me to cook our breakfast, mine consisting of black coffee.

As we all know who have traveled this road, along about 10 o’clock the shakes return. I saw no point in suffering. Another “quickie.” Needless to say, I ran out of whiskey, dressed and went to the liquor store and returned with a fifth.

It now became necessary to take the drinks more often. By nightfall, instead of having a clean house and hot supper when my husband returned from work I was a drunken object piled in the bed. I had hidden the bottle in the bathroom and all during the night I would slip in and take a drink. Of course, morning found me a shaking mass of nerves. My husband again left for work with a warning that I must stay sober and straighten up. I didn’t know how to straighten up, except by taking a few drinks to quiet my screaming nerves. Naturally the second day duplicated the first, and the third and the fourth, until at last it would only mean death if I didn’t get off the stuff. Finally I shook it out with the help of my sister.

This was the first time I had ever been on such a spree. I resolved never to do it again. But I did. Again and again. Each time it became increasingly worse. My hangovers were almost unbearable. There was no happiness when I was drinking. It was simply oblivion. I knew nothing of what transpired for days and then remorse would catch me in its clutches.

At last the voice of my sister penetrated my befogged alcoholic mind. She read to me an article in our local paper—something about an organization called Alcoholics Anonymous. She asked me why I didn’t write them. I paid very little attention to her, but after she left I hunted feverishly through the paper for the article to read it myself. I never found it, so thought she must be “nuts.”

I decided now was the time to use this “willpower” of mine and at the next party we attended I trotted it out. I took only two drinks the first hour, but goodness knows, that “will-power” of mine let me down. After the first two I wound up as usual—drunk again. This spree ended in a sanatorium. There I heard more about A.A.

Thinking that I would contact them, I went home. The humiliation of having to be locked up in a sanatorium to get sober kept me from drinking too much for a month, but Brother Alky caught me again in his trap. It was then I began to believe that I was hopeless.

I at last turned around and faced the woman from whom I was trying to get away. I listened to her say, “You are a doomed woman, you know you can’t stop drinking by yourself. You’ve tried many times but always failed. Your future is black as sin. You will either kill yourself or die in a drunken condition. Your husband is sick of you. Your sister is sick of you; even you are sick of the thing you have become — you must have help.”

I tried to pray, but no words came. I felt I had wandered too far from God for Him to hear me now.

Continued on next page...

AA GRAPEVINE CONT. FROM PG. 11...

Being unable to hold a pen in my shaking hands I asked my niece to write a letter to A.A. for me. This she did with some doubts as to the wisdom of her action. Two nights later, while lying on the couch holding a book before me—wishing I could read and get some sense out of what I read, someone knocked on my door. I now know that knock opened the door to a new world of opportunities. Three women and a man entered, all nice looking people. People who looked like neighbors—but they were different for they were members from A.A. They were alcoholics, they had come in answer to my feeble cry for help.

As I sat there holding my hands to keep them from shaking, listening to them talk, I thought, “They can’t possibly know what I’ve gone through. These people all look happy and healthy, they have not ever been drunks.” They soon dispelled this doubt from my mind. They opened up with both barrels and let me have their stores straight from the shoulder.

They then asked me if I thought I was an alcoholic, if I was unable to control my drinking. I reluctantly admitted I was an alcoholic, but was whole hearted in saying I could not control my drinks. They didn’t tell me how to stay sober but they did leave me with literature and an invitation to attend one of their meetings.

I very eagerly seized the literature and as I read each story in the booklet, I said, “Yes, that is me. That is me!”

Thus began my new life of sobriety — grateful for any crumbs of wisdom that came my way, thankful to be able to attend the meetings.

I went to my first A.A. meeting resembling something someone had dreamed of in a nightmare. My face and eyes were swollen, I had bruises all over me. I always seemed to have trouble staying out of the way of the furniture. On my last binge the tables and chairs, even the radiators jumped out and hit me, or it seemed.

Now in my sixth month of sobriety I can laugh about it, but then I had a hard time forcing myself out to meet people, to expose myself to public view.

Thank goodness, I wanted sobriety enough to go through anything to achieve that happy state, so I went to work on myself, and others. I have emerged from a state of foggy misery, and understand my trouble. I understand that I am afflicted with the disease of alcoholism, that though I can never be cured, I can be an arrested case. With that I am happy. I am free from the desire and need of drinking. My eyes are opened to the need of others. The good and pleasure I receive from helping another is indescribable. I have learned many things through A.A. I am learning something new each day. When the final curtain falls I shall still be learning.

How I have achieved this happy, healthy state, I cannot say. I do know I could not have achieved it without the help of A.A. I do know it is not the mythical “will-power” I once thought I had. It is more than that. It is “God-power.”

Needless to say I am deeply grateful for A.A. For what they have taught me—how to live happily—though sober, a state I once thought impossible.

Every day I thank God for the organization and ask only that I may be able to help other unfortunate persons to find their true place in life as I have.

—M.S.

Memphis, Tennessee

Upcoming Events

January 2019

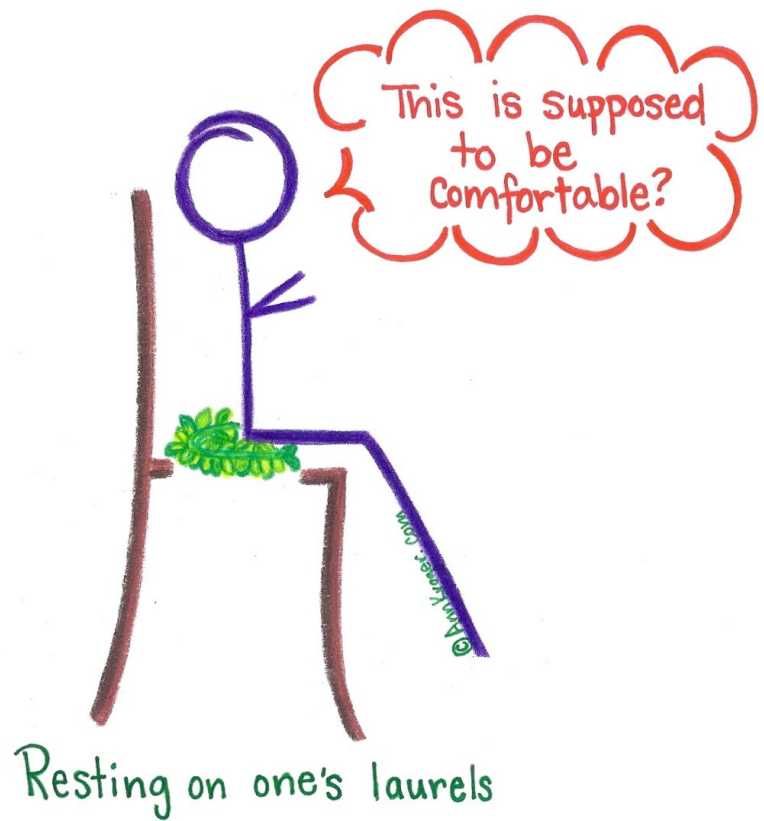
| Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday |
|--|---|------------------------------------|-----------|------------------------------------|--|--|
| | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 Friday Night Happy Hour Speaker Mtg.: 7:30 pm | 5 OB's Speaker Mtg.: 7:30 PM |
| 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 Kleen Street Speaker Mtg.: 7:30 pm | 12 Wayfarer's Speaker Mtg.: 7:00 pm |
| 13 | 14 Steering Committee Mtg.: 6:00 pm | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 Rule 62 Speaker Mtg.: 7 :00 pm |
| 20 | 21 Intergroup Rep. Mtg.:6:30 pm | 22 District 37 Mtg.: 7:00 pm | 23 | 24 District 7 GSR Mtg.: 7 pm | 25 | 26 |
| 27 Carson Potluck: 6:30 pm Speaker: 7:00 pm Hokinson Potluck: 6:00 pm | 28 | 29 | 30 | 31 | 28 Central Group's Birthday Meeting: 8:00 pm | 29 |

For a full description of each of these upcoming events including locations, visit the events page on our website at:

www.vancouveraa.org



The Vancouver Area Intergroup of Alcoholics Anonymous exists to serve local groups of Alcoholics Anonymous within the vicinity of Vancouver, Washington. The Organization serves as a clearing house to distribute literature to local Alcoholics Anonymous groups, to provide contact among these groups, and to maintain an answering service.



*This comic was taken from <https://annkroger.com/drawings-and-cartoons/>

The Vancouver Area Intergroup

2203 Fairmount Ave,
Ste. A
Vancouver, WA
98661

Phone: 360-694-3870
Fax: 360-694-1032
E-mail:
vancaa@vanintgrp.com

