

Vancouver Area Intergroup of
Alcoholics Anonymous

February/March 2019
Volume 14

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Primary Purpose

AA GRAPEVINE

The following is an excerpt
from the June 1944 Magazine
CENTRAL OFFICE NOTES

May 1st was moving day for the Central Office into larger quarters on Lexington Avenue near Grand Central Terminal, a much more accessible spot to out-of-town visitors. (New address —P.O. Box 459, Grand Central Annex, New York 17, N.Y.) We are already national in scope and certain to become world-wide. Hence this seems a most appropriate time to explain what the Central Office has been doing, and how well the Trustees and its staff have managed. Being somewhat responsible for the creation of the Central Office, I feel I have never made enough effort to let everyone know just how much it does.

Actually the Central Office belongs to all Groups everywhere; it is your good-will and financial support which makes it possible; it is one of your main contacts with the general public and it is one of your principal means of carrying the 12th step of the A.A. program to untold thousands of alcoholic sick people who don't yet know they can get well. In matters pertaining to the office, the Trustees are your Service Committee; its Secretary is your National Secretary.

Article continued on next page...



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Monthly Business Mtgs.

- ◆ Steering Comm. Mtg. -3/11 @6:00 PM
- ◆ Intergroup Mtg. -3/18 @6:30 PM
- ◆ District 37 GSR Mtg. -3/26 @7:00 PM
- ◆ District 7 GSR Mtg. - 3/28@7:00 PM

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

CENTRAL OFFICE NOTES (Continued from Pg. 1)...

In the month of March alone, for example, the work turned out by the secretary and her three assistants (including some overtime) was as follows: 1—They wrote 2,695 personal letters. Approximately 2,000 of these were answers to first inquiries of alcoholics and their families averaging 100 words each. About 400 letters were written to the groups, mostly group problems. The balance was miscellaneous. 2—Six hundred telephone and telegraph messages. 3—About 100 out-of-town A.A. members visited the office. 4—Something like 400 bookkeeping entries. 5—Over 5000 A.A. pamphlets and 672 A.A. books, about a ton of material, were wrapped and shipped. 6—A detailed monthly report was made to the Trustees. 7—In addition, the Secretary participated in several conferences on future publicity and spent a week on the road visiting six of the A.A. Groups with which she corresponds.

A small but very willing staff of four turned out this large volume of work. Our Central Office has nearly always been understaffed. Our condition right now is such that a good piece of publicity would throw us weeks behind on those vital first inquiries. We should have more help—perhaps two more typists before long.

About the offer of A.A. pins to the membership—those pins supposedly designed and approved by me! The offer was made by Royal Incentives, a perfectly reputable firm, which was sold a “bill of goods” by an alcoholic who has had a rather hectic A.A. career. Of course I knew nothing whatever of this deal. Royal Incentives, recognizing the mistake, is sending all groups a letter of explanation and apology.

As ever, Bill.

Bookstore News

Your Vancouver Area Intergroup Office is staying in it's current location and updating the space we currently occupy! Stay tuned for exciting changes and thank you all for you patience as we move things about in an effort to use the space in more economical, efficient, and yes (even) fun ways!



A DECLARATION OF UNITY

This we owe to A.A.'s future:

To place our common welfare first;

To keep our fellowship united.

For on A.A. unity depend our lives,

And the lives of those to come.

Congratulations!

***On your continuous length of sobriety...
You did it one day at a time!***

SEAN B.— 7 YRS.

DARCY S. — 10 YRS.

ROY C. — 25 YRS.

NEAL B. — 30 YRS.

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!

We are now accepting personal A.A. stories for our “Experience, Strength, and Hope” section in future Newsletter Editions...if you have a story about how A.A. changed your life, please submit via email to:
vancaa@vanintgrp.com

***Never let what you have
been given become more
important than what
gave it you.***

When anyone, anywhere, reaches out for help....

12th Step List

Hotline phone answerers need 12th Step members to contact to refer to incoming calls from active alcoholics.

When a Twelfth Step call is received, we begin with the assumption that another human being's life is at stake — literally. This means that, without delay, this call is to be answered at once.

There are currently 12 men and 7 women in the Vancouver area available to take or go on a 12th Step call. Many more are needed.

If you have 6 months of sobriety and want to sign up for this vital service work, contact Wendy W at 971-235-5240 wwhite56@comcast.net

-or-

Go to the Vancouver AA website home page, www.vancouveraa.org,
Click on Contacts/Committees, scroll to the Twelve Step Committee (Hotline),
Click on [Volunteer for the 12-Step List](#), and fill out the form.

The life you save may be your own.

■ Intergroup/Central Office: Then and Now

Established and supported by local groups to carry out the functions of a centralized office, intergroups have provided thousands of desperate alcoholics with their first contact with Alcoholics Anonymous, either over the phone, in person, or, increasingly, online. With 469 intergroups/central offices listed with G.S.O. in the U.S./Canada alone (and nearly 700 worldwide), A.A. is so easily “searchable” these days that we often forget that, at one time, it played a little hard to get. Back in the early days, “A.A. wasn’t that easy to find,” wrote one oldtimer. “A carefully selected group of priests, judges, and policemen knew about A.A.; our phone number wasn’t listed, and it could be gotten only by dialing Information.” This was a deliberate attempt to ensure that anyone wanting to get sober was sincere enough to make a real effort. But gauging the level of someone else’s desire to quit drinking was an often subjective judgment that the Third Tradition fortunately did away with.

In the very beginning, there was the Central Committee in Cleveland, Ohio, where by October 1939 a group of seven members convened on a regular basis to coordinate efforts regarding hospitalizations and sponsor-

ship, doing crucial work at a time when the slip of just one member or the dissolution of just one group seemed to threaten the very existence of A.A. itself.

What Bill W. called “A.A.’s first organized service” — the forerunner of today’s intergroup — sprang up in the Chicago suburb of Evanston. Around 1940, an A.A. member named Sylvia used the proceeds of her monthly alimony check to rent an apartment and establish a phone line. In 1941, after publication of the Jack Alexander article about A.A. in the *Saturday Evening Post*, Sylvia’s apartment began to resemble, according to Bill, “a sort of Chicago Grand Central,” with so many phone calls that Sylvia had to enlist the aid of Grace Coultice, a nonalcoholic secretary. Eventually, Sylvia and Grace upgraded to an office in the Loop (only a few blocks from where the current Chicago Area Service Office now has its offices), where they welcomed, Bill wrote, “a stream of applicants for Twelfth Step attention, hospitalization, or other help.”

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Intergroup/Central Office: Then and Now (Continued from Pg. 4...)

Most early intergroup offices were nowhere near as elaborate as this: they were simply phone lines listed as belonging to A.A. but that were in fact connected to members' homes. But Sylvia's office inspired the opening of numerous early intergroup/central offices all over the Midwest, notable ones in Green Bay, Wisconsin, and Minneapolis, Minnesota.

On the East Coast, New York Inter-Group essentially started when the doors of the 24th Street Clubhouse at 334^{1/2} West 24th Street opened in June 1940 and began serving the members of Alcoholics Anonymous in the metropolitan area. By 1942, the Club, as it was called, began to serve as more than a meeting place and to function as a de facto central committee for over 20 A.A. groups, with two paid clubhouse secretaries who answered phones and manned the desk 12 to 14 hours a day. These were some of A.A.'s first "special workers," as articulated in Tradition Eight, who were paid to make A.A. Twelfth Step work possible, as opposed to individual A.A. members who, on a voluntary basis, carry the message as part of their own Twelfth Step efforts. Eventually, in 1946, New York Inter-Group was established, moving away from the clubhouse (it was difficult to carry on the work of intergroup in a social atmosphere that included an endless poker game and, at one point, a restaurant) to a space on West 75th Street.

By the time of the first General Service Conference in April 1951, at least 16 intergroup/central offices were serving local groups. Since they predated the formation of the general service structure and performed a different A.A. function, they were not a part of the A.A. structure (except in Chicago, where the area service office and area committee are essentially one). At times over the years, there has been an overlapping of services, but, for the most part, intergroups and general service have come to work in harmony.

"For the most part, intergroups and general service have come to work in harmony"

Matthew C., office manager of the Ventura County Central Office (VCCO), is the epitome of a contemporary intergroup/central office manager, dealing with all the rewards and challenges that this entails. The image of A.A. volunteers answering phone calls from suffering alcoholics, or A.A. members seeking a meeting or information, is still a relatively accurate one. "We rotate shifts of volunteers — we have at least one in the office at all times, and 60 to 70 willing to have calls forwarded to their homes after hours," Matthew says. They get about 500 to 600 calls a month at VCCO, but this is down from previous years because of the Internet, which has proved, for better or worse, a game-changer for intergroup/central offices. Since so many people are bypassing phone calls and going to the VCCO website, the beta test site that Matthew is rolling out is geared heavily toward newcomers, opening with a banner that reads, "New to A.A.? Have Questions?" and a home page that addresses the most commonly occurring questions.

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Intergroup/Central Office: Then and Now (Continued from Pg. 5...)

Matthew feels that there is a “certain comfort” about being able to explore the answers to questions individuals may have about their drinking without having to speak to someone, but there is also something that may be lost: “that one-on-one connection with another person. So, the website does encourage people to call, 24/7.” When they do call, miracles can occur. Like so many of the intergroup/central office workers, Matthew has war stories. Once, an alcoholic attempting to detox himself called VCCO, certain that he was having a heart attack. “He was in bad shape,” Matthew says, “and after a long conversation we convinced him to call EMS and get to an emergency room.” Several years later, that same alcoholic —sober now —walked into the office and thanked them.

In Chicago, office manager Katie M. describes a very successful web presence for the Chicago Area Service Office (CASO). The website averages over 100,000 visits per month, and, out of these, roughly 26 percent are coming to the site for the first time.

Katie describes CASO as “an anchor” for the greater Chicago area and Cook County. “We have a bookstore, and all of our standing committees — like corrections, H&I, Grapevine, etc. — meet here in the evening, and other districts come down here to participate, so we connect people to the service structure.”

“We connect people to the service structure”

CASO does receive roughly 700 phone calls a month, Katie adds, but she senses that they are somewhat different from the intergroup calls of the past. “The majority of the calls are not necessarily people wanting to go to a first meeting, or to talk about their drinking problems. We get calls from social workers, for instance, who are trying to help alcoholics connect with a meeting, often a bridging-the-gap kind of thing.”

Like many intergroup/central office managers, Katie is concerned about the finances of the office. Like all intergroups, CASO acts as a clearinghouse for information to the groups it serves. In turn, these groups provide volunteers for Twelfth Step work (i.e., answering the phones), supervise office policies and procedures via their intergroup reps, and offer financial support. CASO has a strong prudent reserve, but Katie is always looking for measures to cut costs, particularly since contributions from the groups have been declining. “Only 23 percent of the groups support the office,” Katie says, “and individual contributions [which can be up to \$3,000 annually] make up only 5 to 10 percent.” And e-commerce affects the way they can do business. “People can get the Big Book cheaper and faster from non-A.A. online stores than they can coming down here to the bookstore and purchasing it from us.”

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Group Contributions and Financial Statements

| January | Donations | Year to Date |
|-----------------|-------------------------------|-----------------|
| 489.93 | A New Morning | 489.93 |
| 35.00 | Amboy Renegades | 35.00 |
| 197.75 | As Bill Sees It | 197.75 |
| 50.00 | As We Recovered | 50.00 |
| 118.00 | Chapter Nine | 118.00 |
| 86.06 | First Shot | 86.06 |
| 79.22 | Hokinson | 79.22 |
| 63.96 | Lewis River AA | 63.96 |
| 30.00 | Lighthouse | 30.00 |
| 346.00 | McGuilivray Study Group | 346.00 |
| 100.00 | Men's Fireside | 100.00 |
| 325.00 | Miracles at Noon | 325.00 |
| 100.00 | Reconciled | 100.00 |
| 164.00 | Saturday Night Big Book Study | 164.00 |
| 60.00 | She Who Remembers | 60.00 |
| 108.00 | Step Sisters | 108.00 |
| 150.00 | Stevenson AA | 150.00 |
| 409.25 | Sunday Solutions | 409.25 |
| 15.36 | Wayfarer's | 15.36 |
| 76.75 | Wednesday Night Recovery | 76.75 |
| 62.36 | West Vancouver Group | 62.36 |
| 125.00 | Women in Sobriety | 125.00 |
| 3,191.64 | SUBTOTAL | 3,191.64 |
| 195.00 | Miscellaneous/Individual | 195.00 |
| 3,386.64 | TOTAL | 3,386.64 |

| | January (\$) | YTD (\$) |
|--------------------------|--------------|--------------|
| Revenue | | |
| Sales | 4,476 | 4,476 |
| Group Contributions | 3,192 | 3,193 |
| Fundraising/Picnic | 0 | 0 |
| Misc. Income | 112 | 112 |
| Individual Contributions | 195 | 195 |
| Total Revenue | 7,975 | 7,975 |
| Expenses | | |
| Cost of goods sold | 2,576 | 2,576 |
| Fundraising Expenses | 0 | 0 |
| Merchant Services | 79 | 79 |
| Office supplies | 396 | 396 |
| Equipment rent | 249 | 249 |
| Building rent | 875 | 875 |
| Utilities | 389 | 389 |
| Net Wages | 2,685 | 2,685 |
| Payroll taxes | 588 | 588 |
| Insurance | 0 | 0 |
| Licenses | 0 | 0 |
| Total Expenses | 7,836 | 7,836 |
| Net Income / Loss | 139 | 139 |

| January, 2019 Cash Balances | |
|-----------------------------|------------------|
| Main Checking | \$ 3,224 |
| Event Account | \$ 3,710 |
| Prudent Reserve | \$ 17,043 |
| Petty Cash | \$ 97 |
| Total Cash Balance | \$ 24,073 |

Easy Does It

Intergroup/Central Office: Then and Now (Continued from Pg. 6...)

One answer to this problem is outreach to the groups. Katie M. sends out an appeal letter every November, and intergroup reps discuss the need for financing at every area assembly. Pauline D., office manager of the Northern Virginia Intergroup (NVI), agrees on how crucial outreach is: “We had a terrible year a couple of years ago,” she says. So, we did a major outreach, letting people know just how intergroup works and how it is financed. We asked all of our intergroup reps to bring word back to their groups that intergroup needed their help. We really pushed Birthday Plans in November. And we had the intergroup chair visit each of the 14 districts we serve and talk about our mission. And that seemed to work very well for us.”

“So we did a major outreach, letting people know just how intergroup works and how it is financed.”

...Jennifer R., office manager of Miami-Dade Intergroup — an office with a long history, dating back to the 1940s — has seen the number of groups in the area decline. Phone calls to the hotline average only two or three a day, perhaps as a result of the website or the Meeting Finder app that many people use today. With so many groups closed and others facing increased rent, contributions to Miami-Dade Intergroup are down. Both Jennifer and another employee are part-time; despite this, they are incredibly productive, producing and distributing meeting directories, managing the website, selling A.A. Conference-approved literature, providing service materials, preparing a monthly newsletter, and making sure the phones are answered 24/7 by A.A. volunteers. Jennifer speaks Spanish, and one of her many jobs is cooperation with the Spanish-speaking intergroups, which do not have a separate office, but pass the phone from one group to another, one month at a time.

Young people coming into A.A. need to be educated about intergroup, Jennifer says, and need to learn to volunteer. An A.A. without intergroup would not be A.A., really. “If we are not here, if someone calls for help and there is no one to pick up the phone, then A.A. has failed them.”

Coco T., executive secretary of New York Inter-Group (NYIG), agrees that a thriving intergroup is incredibly important to the A.A. community it serves — in the case of NYIG, a community that includes 1,438 active groups registered with the NYIG office and 3,642 meetings in the meeting book. It’s no wonder that NYIG’s Seventh Avenue offices are open 365 days a year from 9 a.m. to 10 p.m., with phone volunteers available from 9 a.m. to 2 a.m. “We don’t miss any opportunity to share our experience, strength and hope with other alcoholics,” Coco says, especially since the web has changed the intergroup paradigm. Up until August 2016, when their new A.A. meeting finder appeared on the website, NYIG averaged 4,500 to 4,800 calls a month. At that point, the calls were almost immediately reduced to 3,000 to 3,200 per month.

It’s a mixed blessing, of course. More and more people are able to find meetings quickly and efficiently, but, says Coco, the loss of 20 to 30 phone calls a day “is physically very noticeable. When alcoholics actually call on the phone for help, they get the benefit of the A.A. volunteer who may have been taking phone calls for five years and can really connect with another alcoholic. Now we get hundreds of emails asking us to make contact with a person about their drinking. It’s a challenge to answer these, and also removes the value of that one-to-one connection, the immediate Twelfth Step element.”

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Steering Committee Meeting Minutes

Vancouver Area Intergroup of Alcoholics Anonymous Steering Committee Meeting for January 14th, 2019

Attendance:

Ronnie, SC Chair
Cassia, Office Manager
Phil, SC Member
Connie, SC Member
Darcy

Glenn, SC member
Marc, SC vice Chair
Chris, SC Member
Nicole, SC Secretary
Laurie, Treasurer

The Meeting was opened at 6:08pm with the Serenity Prayer. The December Steering Committee meeting minutes were accepted. November Intergroup meeting minutes were reviewed.

Hotline: Wendy, our Hotline Chair, has created a flyer of service-related needs to be circulated at Intergroup Rep meeting. Still need phone volunteers for Sat 6-9:00pm. 12 step call volunteers needed and always welcomed.

Office: Nothing new to report other than what is summarized in this month's New Business under Location & Inventory heading.

Website: Staying consistent. In the future any marked growth or reduction on the site will be made apparent. See attached.

Treasurers Report: Laurie reports that we were in the positive and ahead of forecasted prediction. See attached.

OLD BUSINESS

Nothing to report.

3rd Step Prayer

God, I offer myself to Thee-
to build with me and to do
with me as Thou wilt.

Relieve me of the bondage of
self, that I may better do Thy
will. Take away my difficulties,
that victory over them may
bear witness to those I would
help of Thy power, Thy love,
and Thy Way of life. May I do
Thy will always!

Steering Committee Meeting Minutes

NEW BUSINESS

Inventory: Special thanks to everyone who participated with end of year inventory. Monthly sales report to be generated starting next February.

Speakers: Intergroup would like to generate a list of qualified individuals willing to step up at speaker meetings in our district.

Service Work Outreach Network: Would like to create a working cooperative of current district/multi district service needs at prisons, jails, treatment centers, etc...

Event Account: Closed and reallocated to general funds pending reappointment of an event chair/need.

Holidays: Request for Intergroup Reps to be extra mindful of keeping meeting schedule changes updated at office around these times when call volumes are high and meetings are prone to changes. Thank you.

Activities/fundraiser Committee: We need to form one, who would like to head this committee? Have 4th of July picnic coming up...etc. You would be kind of a big deal, just sayin'.

Steering Committee Meeting Minutes: Motion made by Phil, seconded by Marc, passed by steering committee, to present most current meeting minutes as draft at Intergroup Rep meeting.

The meeting was closed at 7:30pm with the Lord's Prayer,
Your Secretary,
Nicole



Intergroup Rep Meeting Minutes

Vancouver Area Intergroup of Alcoholics Anonymous Intergroup Representatives meeting of January 21, 2019

Attendance:

Ronnie *, ** – Steering Committee Chair
Darcy S – Friday Night Happy Hour
Marc * - Miracles
Connie * – Lighthouse
Dusty G – Cornerstone
Jess V – Ladies by the Lavender
Laura – Women In Action
Jeff C ** - District 7
David C – First Shot
Cassia – Office Manager

David R – Welcome Home
Tom S – Men's Fireside
Richard R ** - Lighthouse
Chris H *, ** - MSG
Wendy W ** - MSG
Robin M – Fireside
Michelle – Dry Tribe
Phil B * - Central Group
Ryan S – MSG

*Steering Committee Member

**Non-Voter

MEETING OPENED and REPORTS

The meeting was opened at 6:30pm with a reading of the purpose of the Vancouver Area Intergroup followed by the Serenity Prayer. Marc did a presentation of the 1st Tradition. Attendees introduced themselves. 13 voting members. Minutes from the 12.10.18 and 1.14.19 Steering Committee meetings were reviewed. Minutes from the 12.17.18 were accepted with corrections.

Hotline: Wendy advised that there is an opening for the Saturday 6:00 – 9:00pm time slot. There is an urgent need for 12-step volunteers especially for women volunteers. Wendy will be looking into holding a workshop in the future and plans to visit groups. Wendy can be contacted at 971.235.5240.

Treasurer's Report: Please see attached financial report. The first quarter finance committee meeting has not yet been scheduled but will be announced when a date/time is scheduled.

Intergroup Report: No new information to report.

Website Report: Please see attached website report. It was requested that contact information to committees such as treatment, hospitals & institutions, etc., be added to the website. It was also requested that contact information to nearby intergroup offices such as Portland and Longview be added. (Note: Looking at the website on 1.26.19 shows these links are on our website).

OLD BUSINESS

Office Relocation: Marc explained the Steering Committees' decision to not relocate the office after the rent was increased. Other properties were looked at where the rent would be approximately the same as what we are currently paying however there would be a decrease in size. An agreement was made with our current landlord to split our area from approximately 1500 sq. ft. to 900 sq. ft. with rent remaining about the same. The agreement also comes with upgrades to lighting and HVAC which is anticipated to be a significant decrease in our electric usage. The office, which is currently on a



Intergroup Rep Meeting Minutes Continued...

month-to-month rental would go onto a lease. Some remodeling would be necessary which should be less than the remodeling and moving costs that would be incurred if the office was to relocate.

Saturday Office Hours: The IG reps authorized Cassia to move forward and begin staffing the office with volunteers to open the office on Saturdays from 10:00am – 2:00pm. The office would be staffed by two volunteers who Cassia would screen to insure they are qualified on matters such as sobriety time and computer use. During this time the phone would still go to the hotline. Group contributions will not be taken by volunteers as there is more complex data entry.

NEW BUSINESS

Darcy made a motion that the website report not be presented during the meeting noting that it appears to be information most are not concerned about and wastes meeting time. The information would still be available to anyone upon request. The matter was tabled. IG reps are to take this to their groups to be voted on in the February meeting.

COMMITTEES, GROUP NEWS and CLOSING

Jeff did a presentation on District 7. The district meets at the Intergroup office on the 4th Thursday of each month at 6:30pm. District 37 meets at the IG office on the 4th Tuesday at 7:00pm.

The meeting was closed with the Lord's Prayer.

Yours in Service,

Phil B.

This is your office. Your participation is wanted and needed. Mark your calendar.

Next Steering Committee meeting is scheduled for 6:00pm on February 11, 2019. You do not need to be a Steering Committee member to attend or to be heard. Meeting is always on the 2nd Monday of each month at 6:00pm.

Next Intergroup meeting is scheduled at 6:30pm on February 18, 2019. You do not need to be an IG rep to attend or to be heard. Meeting is always on the 3rd Monday of each month at 6:30pm.

Intergroup/Central Office: Then and Now (Continued from Pg. 8...)

To provide human connection, Coco helps ensure that the NYIG office is a welcoming place. “There’s a library and an archives area where people can and do come from all over for a cup of coffee and to read a book and look at some historic items. You can check out a book if you want. No one is ever turned away. Even in an electronic age, we are committed to providing hard copies of every flyer we produce — not everyone, particularly homeless people, has access to the Internet.”

And the connection benefits not just the alcoholics reaching out to NYIG, but those 635 to 700 alcoholics with over one year of continuous sobriety who volunteer there. “You can’t stop these volunteers,” Coco says. “Even if there’s six feet of snow outside, they’ll be here.” She tells the story of one 90-year-old volunteer — a physician who knew Bill W., and used to talk about how he had tried, unsuccessfully, to get Bill to stop smoking — who came in once a week, year after year, even as his health failed, showing up dressed in a suit and tie. “He was a man of elegance and grace,” Coco says. “He used to tell his wife, ‘I have to go help people.’ His life’s work was to carry the message.”

The Area 87 Central Service Office in Montreal, Quebec (which is hosting the 2018 Intergroup/Central Office/AAWS/AAGV Seminar), carries the message to both English-and French-speaking alcoholics. According to executive assistant Ginette W., their help line receives roughly 500 to 600 English-language calls monthly, with perhaps three times that many in French. “We are officially bilingual, but we also have a Spanish-speaking presence,” Ginette adds. “There are about 12 Spanish-speaking groups locally that have their own intergroup, but we host them at our office and make literature available in Spanish.”

Like most intergroup/central offices, some of the phone calls the Area 87 Central Service Office receives are from alcoholics who are lonely and simply want to talk, which can be a drain on resources. “We never cut these calls off,” says Ginette, “but we work to direct these people to meetings, where real, face-to-face recovery can begin. We also have a group of volunteers who are willing to talk on the phone from their homes, which frees up our other workers.”

Replenishing the pool of volunteers is a constant concern. “We have to keep reminding groups that things don’t happen by magic in A.A.: there is hard work in carrying the message. Our area’s 27 districts have 550 groups, and we reach out to all of them via our newsletter and through intergroup reps going to meetings. We also make a point of educating groups about why we need money, not how much. We need to pay for literature, for phones, for the website. The A.A. message of recovery is free; for intergroup to pass it on costs money.”

Area 87 Central Service Office has a brand new website that features a special portal dedicated to newcomers. Ginette puts it simply: “We need to be where the people are. And, these days, people are on their computers and smartphones. So that is where intergroup has to go.”

“Things don’t happen by magic in A.A.: there is hard work in carrying the message.”

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Intergroup/Central Office: Then and Now (Continued from Pg. 13...)

Many of those who have never had occasion to call intergroup (or who look up meetings on websites in strange towns without quite thinking of who is maintaining that website) wonder why they should support intergroup/central office with their financial donations. While cooperating closely with G.S.O. and local general service district and area committees, it is not unusual for intergroup/central offices to seem apart from the general service structure. However, as noted in *The A.A. Service Manual* (page S42), “Many areas find that a liaison between the intergroup/central office and the area committee is very helpful in maintaining good relations and communication. In some areas the liaison has a vote at the assembly; in others, a voice but no vote.” And further, the General Service Office publishes Guidelines and other service material that share the accumulated experience of intergroups and central offices in the United States/Canada and worldwide. These define an intergroup as “an A.A. service office that involves partnership among groups in a community — just as A.A. groups themselves are partnerships of individuals. It is established to carry out functions which are best handled by a centralized office...It exists to aid the groups in their common purpose of carrying the Alcoholics Anonymous message to the alcoholic who still suffers.”

According to Coco T., the NYIG office pays \$10,000 a month in rent alone — a relatively modest fee, considering Manhattan real estate prices, but not a stroll in the park either. When asked what the future might hold for intergroups, she replies, “We answer to the Fellowship; we are responsible to the groups. Ultimately, our future depends on them. I owe my life to Alcoholics Anonymous, and I would hope intergroup is always there.”

As Matthew C. at VCCO sees it, the idea of intergroup is the idea of A.A. itself: “a suffering alcoholic talks to someone who is feeling the way they are feeling, who understands and has been through the humiliation they have experienced, who helps them know that they are not alone after all.”

“We answer to the Fellowship; we are responsible to the groups. Ultimately, our future depends on them.”

Stay tuned for future editions as we will be publishing the history of the Vancouver Area Intergroup as remembered by Bill T.!

Upcoming Events

March 2019

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

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

www.vancouveraa.org



February's Featured Literature

A.A. TRADITION HOW IT DEVELOPED BY BILL W.

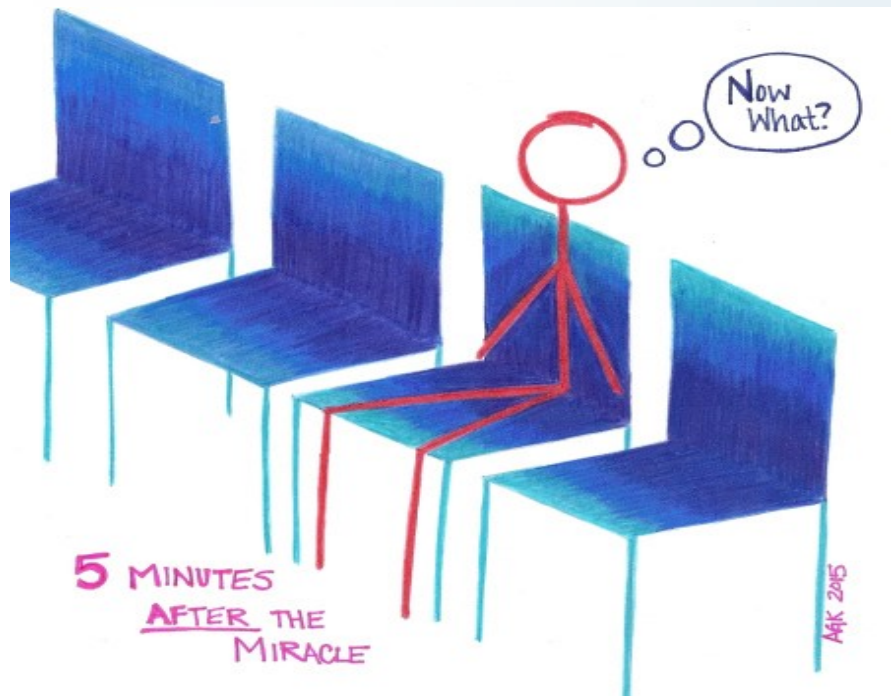
This is A.A. General Service Conference-approved literature.

A TOUR OF THE
HISTORICAL EVENTS
THAT LED TO OUR UNIQUE
TWELVE TRADITIONS

unity

THIS pamphlet tells the story of the emergence and development of the principles believed essential to A.A. unity and survival. Bill W.'s foreword presents in their original form the "Twelve Points to Assure Our Future." In all but the Second Tradition, the original language has been modified or shortened. There are two pieces by Bill W. on the Anonymity Traditions, one written when the Fellowship was eleven years old; the other nine years later. Together they buttress our best known—and perhaps least understood—Traditions, Eleven and Twelve.

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/>

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