



East Tennessee Intergroup

UNITY NEWSLETTER

September 2021

Volume 45; Issue 9

A.A. Oldtimers...On the Ninth Step

A.A. Grapevine, July 1945, Vol. 2 No. 2

*"Made direct amends to such people wherever possible
except when to do so would injure them or others."*

Like others of the Steps, Number Nine is closely related to Number Three –"to turn our will and our lives over to God as we understood Him." If we have accomplished this step to any measurable degree, we have attained at least a small measure of humility and a realization of our dependence on Him.

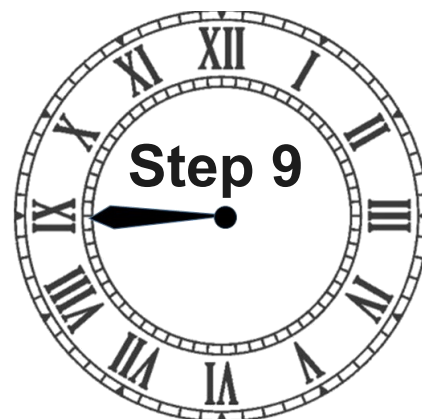
Having prepared a list of all people we have harmed and brought ourselves to the point where we are willing to make amends to them, our Ninth Step is one calling for positive action. There is a world of difference between being willing to do a thing and actually doing it. How many times in the pre-A.A. state have we said "I am sorry, I won't do it again" and felt that that constituted complete amends.

A sincere apology, with a true explanation to the person harmed, of what we believe to be the reason for our past actions can quite frequently readjust personal relations –but the A.A. realizes that this cannot take care of the ones we have really hurt and invariably these are the ones we should and do love most.

Most of us had at least a few years of real pathological drinking behind us when we first learned of the Twelve Steps. Those terrible years are the ones that become repulsive to us as we progress in our new-found life program for order and happiness—years in which our every action was influenced by alcoholic thinking, with all its implications. It naturally follows that whatever our state in life may be, those close to us bore the brunt of our outrageous behaviour. How can one make amends to a dear wife, son or daughter or parent who through no fault of their own truly suffered physically and financially and more important, mentally, the humiliation and embarrassment of going through life with a drunkard? A simple "I am sorry; it won't happen again" is not enough. It is not enough for us and it is not enough for the aggrieved person.

Direct amends, by all means, is a must, in restoring physical property to the rightful owner, paying debts willingly within our ability to do so and retracting the lie that hurt a reputation; but the real amends are made in scrutinizing our day-in and day-out conduct and keeping that conduct "on the beam." The loved ones whom we have hurt don't want their "pound of flesh." Whether they are still in daily contact with us or not, amends are best made to them by restoring the love and confidence and respect they once had for us by the action of right living. With that thought clearly in our minds that "first drink" is an improbability, even an impossibility and the well-rounded, good life we all yearn for becomes readily visible to us.

B. H.
Forest Hills, New York



**"Made direct amends to such
people wherever possible
except when to do so would in-
jure them or others."**

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District 3 picnic will be Sept 19th at Panther Creek state park in Morristown at 1 pm. Family event, meats and drinks provided please bring a dish to pass. Speaker to follow.

Want to do Service Work for Intergroup?

Use the form below, OR sign up online here:

<https://www.etiaa.org/service-work-sign-up/>

East Tennessee Intergroup of Alcoholics Anonymous – Gratitude With Service form

Return to: ETIAA; 9217 Park West Blvd #B3; Knoxville, TN 37923

865-522-9667

Manager@etiaa.org

www.etiaa.org

Date: _____ *First Name _____ Last Name _____

Address _____ *Phone _____

*City _____ *State _____ *ZIP _____ Sex _____

E-mail address _____ Alternative Phone _____

* Required for listing in 12th Step List

ETIAA UNITY Newsletter Subscription / Renewal (Free subscription for email issues; \$12/year for mailed issues)

Volunteer Service Options

Check only those you are willing to commit time to:

12th Step List Volunteer

☐ Weeknights

☐ Weekends

☐ Weekdays

Phones Night & Weekend

☐ Weeknights

☐ Weekends

Committees of Interest

Check only those you are willing to serve on:

- ☐ Public Information / Cooperation with the Professional Community
- ☐ Intergroup Representative
- ☐ Office Worker
- ☐ Archives
- ☐ Outreach
- ☐ Spanish Liaison

Step Nine: “Made direct amends to such people wherever possible except when to do so would injure them or others.”

GOOD judgment, a careful sense of timing, courage, and prudence—these are the qualities we shall need when we take Step Nine.

After we have made the list of people we have harmed, have reflected carefully upon each instance, and have tried to possess ourselves of the right attitude in which to proceed, we will see that the making of direct amends divides those we should approach into several classes. There will be those who ought to be dealt with just as soon as we become reasonably confident that we can maintain our sobriety. There will be those to whom we can make only partial restitution, lest complete disclosures do them or others more harm than good. There will be other cases where action ought to be deferred, and still others in which by the very nature of the situation we shall never be able to make direct personal contact at all.

Ninth Step Prayer

Higher Power, I pray for the right attitude to make my amends, being ever mindful not to harm others in the process. I ask for Your guidance in making indirect amends by staying abstinent, helping others and growing in spiritual progress.



Tradition Nine (long form):

Each A.A. group needs the least possible organization. Rotating leadership is the best. The small group may elect its secretary, the large group its rotating committee, and the groups of a large metropolitan area their central or intergroup committee, which often employs a full-time secretary. The trustees of the General Service Board are, in effect, our A.A. General Service Committee. They are the custodians of our A.A. Tradition and the receivers of voluntary A.A. contributions by which we maintain our A.A. General Service Office in New York. They are authorized by the groups to handle our overall public relations, and they guarantee the integrity of our principal newspaper, the A.A. Grapevine. All such representatives are to be guided in the spirit of service, for true leaders in A.A. are but trusted and experienced servants of the whole. They derive no real authority from their titles; they do not govern. Universal respect is the key to their usefulness.

Tradition Nine Checklist:

1. Do I still try to boss things in AA?
2. Do I resist formal aspects of AA because I fear them as authoritative?
3. Am I mature enough to understand and use all elements of the AA program—even if no one makes me do so—with a sense of personal responsibility?
4. Do I exercise patience and humility in any AA job I take?
5. Am I aware of all those to whom I am responsible in any AA job?
6. Why doesn't every AA group need a constitution and bylaws?
7. Have I learned to step out of an AA job gracefully—and profit thereby—when the time comes?
8. What has rotation to do with anonymity? With humility?



Concept IX and Checklist: Good service leadership at all levels is indispensable for our future functioning and safety. Primary world service leadership, once exercised by the founders, must necessarily be assumed by the trustees.

- Do we discuss how we can best strengthen the composition and leadership of our future trusted servants?
- Do we recognize the need for group officers? What is our criteria for election? Do we sometimes give a position to someone “because it would be good for them”?
- Do I set a positive leadership example?

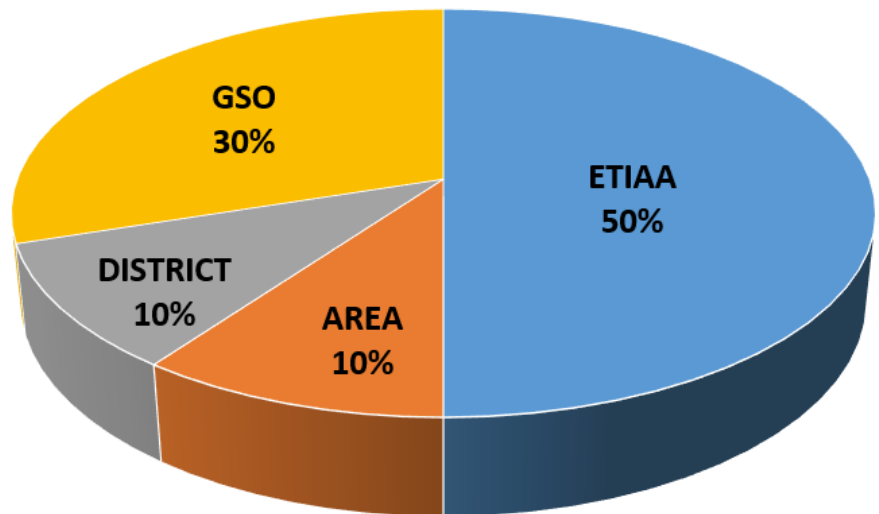
7TH TRADITION SUGGESTED CONTRIBUTIONS

How can groups participate?

To help support AA's essential services, the General Service Conference suggests that individual groups, through an informed group conscience, adopt a specific contribution plan tailored to meet the group's financial situation. Once the basic group expenses have been taken care of (for example, rent, refreshments, AA literature, Grapevine literature, local meeting lists, GSR travel expenses to attend service functions) and a "prudent reserve" has been set aside to cover any emergency contingencies that might arise, the group may decide to further carry the message by sending money to the following AA service entities.

- The local district, which communicates directly with the groups, providing the district group conscience for the area assemblies and serving as a link between the area delegates and the GSRs.
- The area committee, which coordinates vital AA activities over a broad geographic area, sends a delegate to the annual General Service Conference, holds area assemblies to determine the needs of the Fellowship, and provides information at all levels of service.
- The local intergroup or central office, which may provide phone service for Twelfth Step calls and other inquiries, coordination of group activities, AA literature sales, institutions work, public information, and cooperation with the professional community activities.
- AA's General Service Office, which functions as a storehouse of AA information, communicating with members and groups around the world, publishes AA literature, and supplies information and experience to professionals and others interested in AA.

[Self-Support—Where Money and Spirituality Mix. Go to: www.aa.org/assets/en_US/f-3_selfsupport.pdf]



Every AA group ought to be fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions.

Contribution Addresses

**ETIAA East Tennessee
Intergroup of AA**
9217 Park West Blvd #B3
Knoxville, TN 37923
865-522-9667 www.etiaa.org

New ways to contribute:

**Paypal Manager@etiaa.org or
865-320-8649**

**Zelle Manager@etiaa.org or
865-320-8649**

Venmo @ETIAA

General Service Office
Grand Central Station
P.O. Box 459
New York, NY 10163
www.aa.org

The GSO prefers online contributions

Area 64 Assembly
2500 Murfreesboro Pike
Suite 105 Box 235
Nashville, TN 37217
www.area64assembly.org

District 1 Treasurer
Richard Ellis
1302 Chestnut St.
Kingsport, TN 376604

District 2 Treasurer
PO BOX 1872
Johnson City, TN 37605

District 3 Treasurer
John H.
1466 Darbee Dr.
Morristown, TN 37814

District 4 Treasurer
P.O. Box 6642
Maryville, TN 37802

District 6 Treasurer
Richard B.
105 Mariner Point
Clinton, TN 37716

NEW ADDRESSES

AA District 50/51 Treasurer
9217 Park West Blvd
Suite B-3 (ETIAA)
Knoxville, TN 37923

Please mail all District 50/51 contributions to the Intergroup Office. Specify on the check AND on the outside of the envelope that it is for district 50/51.

District 4 Treasurer
P.O. Box 6642
Maryville, TN 37802

Please be sure to include your Group Name and Number.

Intergroup Financial / Contributions Report

East Tennessee Intergroup of AA fiscal year is July 1 -June 30

GROUPS DONATING	Jul 20—	
	Jul 21	Jul 21
1ST THINGS 1ST KNOXVILLE 719412	100.00	100.00
AREA 64 HOST COMMITTEE	30.00	30.00
BACK TO BASICS- OAK RIDGE	3.00	3.00
BREAKFAST CLUB	20.00	20.00
COLONIAL HEIGHTS 99658/120932	35.00	35.00
CONTRIBUTION JAR	7.08	7.08
COOKIE GROUP	120.00	120.00
DISTRICT 50/51	30.00	30.00
FOUNTAIN CITY SERENITY	150.00	150.00
GROUP WITH NO NAME	500.00	500.00
HAPPY HOUR	100.00	100.00
HIGH NOON ROGERSVILLE 713957	64.00	64.00
Individual	27.04	27.04
KEEP LEANING FORWARD	8.00	8.00
LAFOLLETTE-THERE IS HOPE	20.00	20.00
LUNCH BUNCH- GREENEVILLE	125.52	125.52
MORRISTOWN GROUP	200.00	200.00
ONLINE LUNCH BUNCH	90.00	90.00
SEYMOUR SHARING	154.81	154.81
SOBRIETY AND BEYOND	258.25	258.25
TCYPAA	0.70	0.70
TELLICO VILLAGE	60.00	60.00
TOTALS	2,103.40	2,103.40

Mail all District 50/51 contributions to the Intergroup Office. Please make sure you are specifying on the check AND on the outside of the envelope that is for District. 50/51.

District 50/51; C/O. East TN Intergroup; 9217 Park West Boulevard #B3; Knoxville, TN 37923

Make checks out to District5051. This will help the office staff maintain separation between Intergroup and District donations.

Thank you for your support! Also, if you have questions or concerns, the District 50/51 treasurer may be contacted at 865.599.5288. Initially, texting will be the fastest option for contact.

Unity Newsletter

is a monthly publication of East Tennessee Intergroup about, by and for members of Alcoholics Anonymous (AA). Opinions herein are not to be attributed to AA. Except when indicated, this publication does not imply endorsement by either AA or the Newsletter. Delegates to the General Service Conference on April 24, 1972 agreed that the use of full names and addresses could improve communication within the Fellowship. Consequently, we may use full names for AA service members. To ensure anonymity, it is requested that the Newsletter be kept within the Fellowship.

Submissions

Is your group celebrating Birthdays/Anniversaries? Are you? Do you have AA-related questions or myths that Intergroup of East Tennessee Alcoholics Anonymous (ETIAA) can answer for you? Is there an "In Memory" group member to be recognized?

We encourage all appropriate submissions by sending them to: Newsletter Coordinator, managr@etiaa.org

Around East Tennessee

AA Birthdays:

Here & There Group:

Jennifer O. 23 years (8/18/21)

Monday Night Men's Group; Erin Presbyterian Church:

Bill M. 1 year
Bill S. 33 years

Please use the following format: **first full name; last name initial; birthday month; number of years sober.**

Electronic Big Book Study on YouTube.... And FREE!



Entire Back To Basics 12 week, 12 Steps of AA Recovery

<https://app.getresponse.com/click.html?x=a62b&lc=S9qvEA&mc=CK&s=9JD00&u=T5K&z=EQEVCxT&>

****Effective Immediately****

05/15/2021

New Mailing Address for District 4:

District 4 Treasurer

P.O. Box 6642

Maryville, TN 37802

August 2021 Intergroup Meeting Minutes

Open with Serenity Prayer and monthly Tradition at 6:30.

Present via Zoom: - Tami D, Rebekah R., Fawn L., Kellie M., SuZanne A., Jim F., Marian G., Scott S., Jody F., Barbara S., Susi M., Peggy L., Beth C., Heather B., Wesley, Jimmy F., Dave S.

Groups Represented: Happy Destiny II Group, First Things First Group., Memorial Recovery Group, High Nooners Group, So-So Group.

Previous minutes were accepted as is motion Fawn L, seconded by Rebekah R., all in favor.

Manager's Report – Rebekah R.

- Welcome new IGRs – Rebekah welcomed new reps to the meeting.
- Remind – Rebekah again asked for anyone wanting to be added to the Remind App for staying up -to-date with announcements and updates to add their contact information in the Zoom chat box.
- Third Quarter Assembly – has been moved to Zoom due to rise in Covid cases.
- Grasshopper Implementation – Susi M. currently training on how to utilize Grasshopper phone system. Hotline volunteers polled and wanted to have caller ID reinstated to have the caller's phone number for call backs and texts. Rebekah updated app to show callers phone number.
- District 3 Picnic scheduled for 09/19/21 and to be held at Panther Creek State Park. Mobile Intergroup invited and volunteers needed to fulfill request.
- District 4 Picnic scheduled for 09/26/21 to be held at Louisville Point Park. Mobile Intergroup has been invited to attend and volunteers needed to fulfill request.
- ICOAA convention to be held virtually 09/29-10/02/21. Costs is \$25 per person and Rebekah will accommodate any Intergroup volunteers wanting to attend.
- Square/Regions/Quickbooks Integration – Dave is working to integrate the Square and Quickbooks programs with Regions Bank to streamline processes including but not limited to inventory, payroll and bar codes utilization.
- Rebekah on vacation 09/03-09/11/21.
- CPC/PI event being covered by Trey M. since we do not have a CPCI Intergroup chair.
- Rebekah heard from Carole W. there are many meetings with incorrect information in the Meeting Guide App. Rebekah is adding a post to the FaceBook Intergroup page for all groups to confirm the information about their meeting is correct and to submit changes through regular channels.

Treasurer's Report – Fawn L.

- July contributions below average compared to prior years.
- Only 1/3 of area meetings are currently contributing to Intergroup.
- July Profit and Loss -\$2600.92
- YTD Profit and Loss -\$2600.92.
- Motion to accept Treasurer's report by Jim F., seconded by Dave S., all in favor.

Hotline – Susi M.

- Need Hotline Volunteers as some have dropped off. Please spread the word about the need to your groups.

Service Workers – Dave S.

- Picked up two new volunteers however, more are still needed. Please spread the word about the need to your groups.
- Saturday shift 11a-4p has been difficult to fill and volunteers are needed specifically for this spot.

Archives – open

- Fawn L. reported she has started an inventory of cassettes and Grapevines.

Website – Sterling – not present

- Rebekah and Eammon are currently working on an automated PDF format for the Meeting List.

August 2021 Intergroup Meeting Minutes (cont.)

Accessibilities – Carole W. – not present

- Carole W. reported via text to Rebekah R. nothing new to report.

Spanish Liaison – open

CPC/PI – open

Treatment – Beth C.

- Beth reported she and Marian G attended the District 1 meeting last month. There is a new treatment facility opened in Greeneville, TN and a meeting has been started there.

Corrections – Marian G.

- When attending the District 1 meeting, Marian provided attendees with the pamphlet Inmate to Inmate and explained the Pre-Release program for Area 64.
- Marian hasn't booked her flight to Corrections Conference yet as flights are running very high. She continues to monitor for a better price.
- Morgan County Prison meeting met last week and had 5 new attendees.
- Marian will be attending the District 4 meeting October 3rd and will try to attend another District meeting in September.

Outreach - open

Events – SuZanne A.

- She is working with Sterling to ensure area event flyers are posted on the website. Many flyers are currently available.

Mobile Intergroup – open

- Rebekah advised volunteers needed to take the Mobile Intergroup to the District picnics listed in the Manager's Report.

Old Business:

- Office furniture and equipment – Rebekah still working on getting pricing together for needed bookcases and bar code scanner.
- Square Equipment – New Square equipment received and is being used. So far, so good.
- Computer Equipment – New computer for volunteers has been purchased and is going great. The parts needed to upgrade the manager's computer have been purchased and Sterling is working on coming in to upgrade that computer.
- Color Printer – Rebekah stated new printer is up and running and working great.

New Business:

- Rebekah R. proposed she do background checks on all office volunteers. Very little discussion held. Will discuss further next meeting.
- Office Hour Revisions – Dave S. stated there may need to be more office hour revisions, especially concerning the Saturday shift from 11a-4p. That shift is very difficult to fill and there are very few sales in the afternoon hours. Rebekah R to pull reports, then Beth C. and Susi M. are to look at the sales trends vs. the hours open and make any proposed changes at the next Intergroup Meeting.
- Barb S – stated the meeting update requests are increasing again, especially concerning mask requirements. She expects this trend to continue increasing as the Covid amps back up.

Meeting adjourned at 7:37 pm, motion made by Dave S. and seconded by Beth C. All in favor, none opposed.

Next meeting to be held Monday September 20th at 6:30p.

June 7, 2021 District 50/51 Minutes

Attendance:

In-person: Michelle C., David T., Sheldon ?, Trey M., Erica J., Jacque H., Sandy H., Kali W (kali.watson.knox@gmail.com), Randy K. (rakpbusiness@gmail.com)

Virtually: Jamie H. (Spiritual Vibes group. Contact: jamie@soberlivingprovisions.org)

The meeting opened at 6:40 by Jacque with a moment of silence followed by The Serenity Prayer.

Introductions we made around the room.

A motion was made (David T.) to accept the minutes from last month as written. The motion was seconded (Sandy H.) and passed unanimously.

Robin G. District 51 (ABSENT): No report was given.

Jacque H. District 50

- Post conference report info: Preamble will be changed to gender neutral. There will be a post conference report by delegate soon.
- David T. is now Treasurer. He is in process of getting an account.
- Katie C., Secretary will not be here next 2 months.
- District News: Founders Day picnic (Sandy H. read flier) and request for homegroups to make baskets?
- District 51 new DCM is Robin G.

Treasurer's Report-David T.

- He is not on signature card yet. Asked for volunteers to sign document.
- Balance: \$8066.87
- Write check to PI/CPI for \$159.48 to leave balance of \$7907.39
- Trey asked who ordered (Rebecca?) for CP/CPI. David to get with Rebecca concerning order. Discussion about if it is for Treatment.
- (Zoom Technicalities addressed to get audio for attendee)
- David T. inquired about if committee made concrete budgets. Jacque said no because of the COVID modifications.
- Sandy H. asked if Founders Day picnic money came from assembly or district. Jacque informed that money for supplies will come out of district, not assembly.

CPC/PI Report-Trey M.

- Summary of UT Hospital work. Helen Ross McNabb assessments, Trey attends to educate and provide information.

Treatment Report-Robin G.: No report. Robin G. Absent

Corrections Report-Open: Position vacant

- Michelle C. know of person interested. She is referred to Marion @ Tennessee Group or Frankie R.

Grapevine-Open: Position vacant

Noted that it is 1 year sobriety, 12-steps worked. Exception if someone wants to be of service?

Bridging the Gap-David T.: No report

June 7, 2021 District 50/51 Meeting Minutes (cont.)

Events Report-Erica J. and Sandy H.

- Sandy H. Founders Day Picnic June 26th. Asked for emails for GSR's so can share with home-groups. Asked if we have raffle tickets or will need to buy?
- Third week of July tentative Art Auction date.

Archives Report-Open

Position vacant

Group News:

- So-So Picnic 6/12, 11-2(3) @ Norwood Methodist off Merchants Rd. Bring covered dish. OSAT to host movie after picnic.
- So-So has speaker last Sat of the month. It is open meeting.
- Serenity in Fountain City are in person M,W,F at 8:00 p.m.
- Survivors Group volunteers to host Flatiron event 1st Sat of the month.

Old Business:

- Next Assembly Committee meeting will be 6/27 @ 2:00 at intergroup. All volunteers welcomed.

New Business:

- Sandy H. - need paper products, raffle tickets, water for Founders Day Picnic. Motion to reimburse. David T. Seconded. Passed unanimously.
- Jamie H.- Announces need trusted servants and meeting time of Sat., 8-9 p.m.. She makes motion to put Spiritual Vibes group meeting on schedule. Jacque informs that she needs to discuss with Intergroup.
- Sheldon makes motion for donation to Intergroup for use of room, passes unanimously.
- General discussion about encouraging service and workshops since places are re-opening after COVID.

Motion to adjourn (Trey M.), seconded (Sandy H.)

Meeting adjourned at 7:28 p.m.

Closed with the Lord's Prayer.

THE NEXT DISTRICT MEETING WILL BE JULY 12, 2021 at 6:30 AT THE INTERGROUP OFFICE!!!

July 15, 2021 District 50/51 Minutes

Attendance all In Person; no one signed in virtually.

Opened @6:32 with moment of silence followed by the Serenity Prayer

Introductions were made around the room.

Jeff T. made motion at accept minutes from last month. Seconded by David T.

Robin G-Area 51

Assembly:

- Emailed Tierra@Holiday Inn. 115 people Registered, Fri. 53 rooms, Sat 55-60 rooms. Fewer rooms blocked b/c pandemic?
- Contacted Mike T. and was directed to contact Nuevo Esperanza to get fliers to Hispanic community. There is not a translator at this time but reached out to Shannon in Nashville and was told contact Carmen. There is a translator in budget.
- English agenda is printed. In process of getting translated to Spanish.
- Trey inquired about banners. Jimmy at Area 64 should be contacted.

Jacque H-Area 50

- Good Founders Day Picnic turnout. Collected funds.
- Email from Maloneyville Rd corrections. Return to people in jail.

Treasurer (David T.)

- Two deposits = \$160
- Two checks => Rent: \$30 and Treatment: \$159.48.
- BALANCE=\$8037.39

CPC/PI (Trey M.): No report

Treatment (Robin G)

- Committee meetings are Thursday @7 @ Park 40.
- Got assessment literature; hearing impaired book, sign language video of 12 + 12. Also, visually impaired/Braille book.
- David T asked about sign-in sheets. It was suggested to reach out and inform entities we are in person again.

Corrections (Open): No Report

Grapevine (open): No report

July 15, 2021 District 50/51 Meeting Minutes (cont.)

Bridging the Gap (David T)

- One call from Chattanooga-got connection made

Events (Sandy H)

- Founder Day picnic a success
- Some of the Art auction pieces delivered
- Request to do all call for contributions
- Question if handicap accessible?No
- Jeff volunteered cooler of water.
- Copies made and posted online.

Archives (open): No report

Group news

- TN Group- Annual party week of January 3rd
- Family Afterward-Picnic August 7 McFee Rd.Park
- TCYPAA July 23-25 Big Ridge State Park
- New meeting: (No name) Seymore United Methodist Church, 107 Simmons Rd, July 10.
- Free At Last, Halls, Fri @8, debating t9 close. Please attend.
- Pam asks if speaker meeting is still @ Serenity? Yes, starting soon. Last Friday @ 8.

Old Business

- Sandy H paper product purchase reimbursement. She forgot receipts.

New Business

- Robin G needs money off hotel ASAP. Motion (Trey) to pay Host Committee \$1075 to secure contract. Seconded by Jeff J. Passed unanimously.
- Jeff request \$67 for reimbursement of fliers pic . Motion (Trey M) to reimburse. Robin G 2nd. Unanimous vote.
- Jeff suggests "Welcome Home banner idea. Sheldon suggests contacting Davis @Prime Time. David C. Suggests drafting on computer.
- Motion (Trey M) to reserve church for Christmas Party. 2nd by Jeff J. Pam tentatively reserves usual church for December 11 (COVID dependent)
- Rick asks about Sat. Lunch for assembly. Pam raised \$300 with her group. Other group to supple to cost. Jeff estimates 175 for Sat lunch.
- Jacque H. Addresses time for post conference report. Motion (Jeff J)for zoom Sun the 18th prior to Assembly
- Motion (David C) to pay Intergroup \$30 rent. Passed unanimously.

Motion to close (Trey M). Jeff J 2nd.

Close with the Lords Prayer.

Next meeting August 2nd at 6:30 in person (no virtual option) at Intergroup Office.

On the lighter side....



**My Saturday
was going
pretty well
until I
realized it
was Sunday..**

7 tequila shots later...



AA Grapevine: Who's Sitting Next to You?

Grapevine March 1991

By Fran D.

I know who you are. You are “X” who attends the “ABC Meeting” at the “XYZ Club” where AAs meet in Anywhere, U.S.A.

I saw you there the other night at the eight o'clock meeting. I don't know how long you've been sober, but I know you've been coming around for a while because you spoke to a lot of people who knew you.

I wasn't one of them.

You don't know who I am. I wandered into your meeting place alone the other night, a stranger in a strange town. I got a cup of coffee, paid for it, and sat down by myself.

You didn't speak to me.

Oh, you saw me. You glanced my way, but you didn't recognize me, so you quickly averted your eyes and sought out a familiar face.

I sat there through the meeting.

It was okay—a slightly different format but basically the same kind of meeting as I attend at home.

The topic was gratitude. You and your friends spoke about how much AA means to you. You talked about the camaraderie in your meeting place. You said how much the people there had helped you when you first came through the doors—how they extended the hand of friendship to make you feel welcome, and asked you to come back.

And I wondered where they had gone, those nice people who made your entrance so easy and so comfortable.

You talked about how the newcomer is the life's blood of AA. I agree, but I didn't say so. In fact, I didn't share in your meeting. I signed my name in the book that was passed around, but the chairperson didn't refer to it. He only called on those people in the room whom he knew.

So who am I? You don't know, because you didn't bother to find out. Although yours was a closed meeting, you didn't even ask if I belonged there.

(Continued on p. 16)

It might have been my first meeting. I could have been full of fear and distrust, knowing AA wouldn't work any better than anything else I'd tried, and I would have left convinced that I was right.

I might have been suicidal, grasping at one last straw, hoping someone would reach out and pull me from the pit of loathing and self-pity from which, by myself, I could find no escape.

I might have been a student with a tape recorder in my pocket, assigned to write a paper on how AA works—someone who shouldn't have been permitted to sit there at all but could have been directed to an open meeting to learn what I needed to know.

Or I could have been sent by the courts, wanting to know more, but afraid to ask.

It happens that I was none of the above.

I'm just an ordinary drunk with a few years of sober living in AA who was traveling and was in need of a meeting.

My only problem that night was that I'd been alone with my own mind too long. I just needed to touch base with my AA family.

I know from past experience that I could have walked into your meeting place smiling, stuck out my hand to the first person I saw and said, "Hi. My name is —. I'm an alcoholic from —."

If I had felt like doing that, I probably would have been warmly welcomed. You would have asked me if I knew "Old So-and-so" from my state, or you might have shared a part of your drunkalog that occurred in my part of the country.

Why didn't I? HALT. I was hungry, lonely, and tired. (The only thing missing was angry, and three out of four isn't a good place for me to be.)

So I sat silently through your meeting, and when it was over I watched enviously as all of you gathered in small groups, talking to one another the same way we do in my home town.

You and some of your friends were planning a meeting after the meeting at a nearby coffee shop. By this time I had been silent too long to reach out to you. I stopped by the bulletin board to read the notices there, kind of hanging around without being too obvious, hoping you might ask if I wanted to join you, but you didn't.

As I walked slowly across the parking lot to my car with the out-of-state license plates you looked my way again. Our eyes met briefly and I mustered a smile. Again, you looked away.

I buckled my seat belt, started the car, and drove to the motel where I was staying.

As I lay in my bed waiting for sleep to come I made a gratitude list. You were on it, along with your friends at the meeting place. I knew that you were there for me, and that I needed you far more than you needed me. I knew that if I had needed help, and had asked for it, you would have gladly given it. But I wondered. . . what if I hadn't been able to ask?

I know who *you* are.

Do you remember *me*?

Sixteen relapse symptoms to watch out for:

1. Exhaustion - Allowing oneself to become overly tired; usually associated with work addiction as an excuse for not facing personal frustrations.
2. Dishonesty - Begins with pattern of little lies; escalated to self-delusion and making excuses for not doing what's called for.
3. Impatience - I want what I want NOW. Others aren't doing what I think they should or living the way I know is right.
4. Argumentative - No point is too small or insignificant not to be debated to the point of anger and submission.
5. Depression - All unreasonable, unaccountable despair should be exposed and discussed, not repressed: what is the "exact nature" of those feelings?
6. Frustration - Controlled anger/resentment when things don't go according to our plans. Lack of acceptance. See #3.
7. Self-pity - Feeling victimized, put-upon, used, unappreciated: convinced we are being singled out for bad luck.
8. Cockiness - Got it made. Know all there is to know. Can go anywhere, including frequent visits just to hang-out at bars, boozy parties.
9. Complacency - Like #8, no longer sees value of daily program, meetings, contact with other alcoholics, (especially sponsor!), feels healthy, on top of the world, things are going well. Heck may even be cured!
10. Expecting too much of others - Why can't they read my mind? I've changed, what's holding them up? If they just do what I know is best for them? Leads to feeling misunderstood, unappreciated. See #6.
11. Letting up on disciplines - Allowing established habits of recovery - meditations, prayer, spiritual reading, AA contact, daily inventory, meetings - - to slip out of our routines; allowing recovery to get boring and no longer stimulating for growth. Why bother?!
12. Using mood-altering chemicals - May have a valid medical reason, but misused to help avoid the real problems of impending alcoholic relapse.
13. Wanting too much - Setting unrealistic goals: not providing for short-term successes; placing too much value on material success, not enough on value of spiritual growth.
14. Forgetting gratitude - Because of several listed above, may lose sight of the abundant blessings in our everyday lives: too focused on # 13.
15. "It can't happen to me." - Feeling immune; forgetting what we know about the disease of alcoholism and its progressive nature.
16. Omnipotence - A combination of several attitudes listed above; leads to ignoring danger signs, disregarding warnings and advice from fellow members.

It's Back!

Annual District 4 Picnic

At Noon on Sept 26th at Louisville Point Park

Fried Chicken and drinks will be supplied! Please bring
side dishes and desserts!

Speaker TBA at 2:00 PM

Hope to see y'all there!

Bring: Chairs, Games, Swimsuits, Corn Hole, etc.

Please contact Debbie H. or Katie B. 865-313-0967 with questions

Please note: Remaining District 4 meetings for calendar 2021 are:
September 12th (special session for picnic prep), October 3rd, and December 5th.
All meetings are held at Double Winners Club, 325 Whitecrest, Maryville, at 2:00PM eastern time.



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We can't reach our members behind the walls right now, but our message of hope and recovery can. These are some actual quotes from A.A. members in prison who have received a "Carry the message" subscription

“ Thank you to those who care enough to help us in here. We're trying so hard to stay sober ”

“ I'm writing from my prison cell to thank the Grapevine staff and all those members who contribute to the "Carry the Message" project ”

“ So many [stories] have touched my heart and given me hope ... I don't ever want this subscription to end ”

“ Seeing the warm welcoming spaces being used as A.A. sanctuaries for people in recovery is so heartwarming. This, my friend, is what keeps me going and gives me hope ”

2021
CARRY THE
MESSAGE
PROJECT

“ I'm sitting here in prison and I have 75 days sober today. Thank you so much for Grapevine ”

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