

The Lifeline



November 2005

24 Hour Phone: 651-227-5502

Volume 40 Issue 11

St. Paul AA Intergroup Gratitude Night

Saturday, November 19th at 7:30 PM

AA speaker:

Peggy M. of Omaha.

Lutheran Church of the Redeemer

285 North Dale Street



St. Paul Intergroup Elections

St Paul Intergroup will be holding elections on November 15th.

Positions open include:

2 Member-at-Large positions

Each is a two-year position.

Duties include regular attendance at Intergroup meetings and helping with Intergroup Events.

Secretary

A one-year position

Duties include regular attendance at Intergroup meetings and Intergroup Events, taking minutes and creating a monthly Agenda.

Treasurer

A one-year position as Treasurer, one year as advisor to the Treasurer.

Duties include regular attendance at Intergroup meetings and Intergroup Events, oversight of Intergroup's finances, giving financial report to the Intergroup Steering Committee, and attendance at the Financial committee meetings.

Alternate Chair

Alternate Chair makes a three-year commitment: Alt Chair the first year, Chair the second and Advisor to the Board the third year. Duties include regular attendance at Intergroup meetings and Intergroup Events, Chairing meetings when the Chair is not present.

Nominations will be accepted on October 18th and November 15th.

All Intergroup Representatives are encouraged to come and vote!!!

Nominations and elections will take place at the regular Representatives' Meeting. The meetings are held at 1600 University Ave, in a conference room on the first floor. Look for signs in the lobby.

The meetings begin at 7:30 PM.

(If your group does not have one you can elect or appoint someone!)

Web Site = www.aastpaul.org

E-mail = lifeline@aastpaul.org

Fax = 651-290-0209

Office Hours = Monday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday — 9 AM to 1 PM and 2 PM to 5:30 PM

Tuesday = 9 AM to 1 PM and 2 PM to 8 PM

1600 University Avenue W. Suite 407 St. Paul MN 55104

St. Paul AA Central Intergroup Minutes from September 20, 2005 Main Body Meeting

- The meeting was called to order at 7:30 p.m. and opened with the Serenity Prayer.
- In attendance: Mary J., Kristin Y., Roy A., Jon C., Alfred K., Laurie T., Ed J., Jonathan L., Amy N., Starr, Tom S., Jeff T., Marty M., Pat M., Melissa H., Melissa D., Eric H., Suzanne S., Julie M., Harry T., and Renee P.
- The August Minutes were approved with the following corrections: Jeff presented the *Treasurers* report not the Office Report. Under New Business in regards to the AA Interpreter Duane from District Eight came to inquire about facilitating the Intergroup funds. Intergroup voiced that with the suggestion under the advice certified Public Accountant to refrain from this financial commitment.

Treasurer’s Report

Jeff presented the treasurer’s report. Jeff reminded the Main Body the importance of the “Faithful Fivers” which is a monthly committed contribution to help support Intergroup and its service to Alcoholics Anonymous and the still suffering Alcoholic.

Office Report

Melissa presented the office report. All taxes and Attorney General forms appear to be taken care of. Melissa had pre-summer levels of The Lifeline printed for October. Volunteers now have access to the Web from the Office. The office still needs more volunteers to answer the phones and assist with Office duties.

District Reports - No district reports were available.

Upcoming Events

Old Timers Ice Cream Social - (How did it go?) The Old-timers Ice Cream social was a very successful event. Fifteen speakers shared their story of recovery and eight-five people attended. Together the speakers and attendants had over 1000 years of sobriety.

Fall Workshop - This event will be held on October 25. Starr is chairperson and has formed a committee. Speakers are lined up and to begin at 7:30.

Gratitude Night - This event will be held on November 19th at the Lutheran Church of the Redeemer. Marty is the chairperson and has invited Peg M. from Nebraska to be the main speaker. A female speaker with one year of sobriety is still needed. The Board Dinner will begin at 6:00 pm and the speaker and event will begin at 7:30.

Old Business

Outreach Program - Volunteers are needed to help complete a group outreach for 2005. Our goal is to visit every meeting in the directory in 2005 and tell them about St. Paul Intergroup. If you are interested please contact Marty at outreach@aastpaul.org.

Night Owl – Volunteers are needed to assist in answering the phones for Night Owl. If any individuals are interested or if a group is interested in committing to a night please fill out volunteer info online or in the office. If anyone has questions please contact Julie at nightowl@aastpaul.org

New Business

Group Announcement or Concerns

- The AA International Women’s Conference to be held in Minneapolis this year is looking for Volunteers. Please see the office for volunteer forms.
- On October 1st North End Great Reality will have a Speaker and Potluck from 4:00-9:00pm at the Como Park Pavilion.
- Jeff presented Concept VIII
- Dan volunteered to present Concept IX next month.
- Kristin presented the August Mock Rep’s Report.
- Paul volunteered to present the September Mock rep’s Report
- Closed with the Responsibility Statement and the Lords Prayer

Thank you, to all of the groups that contributed to St. Paul Intergroup in the month of September: Big Book Plus, Burnsville Eagan Savage AA, Club 84 AA, Como Park Big Book Study, Cottage Grove AA, Dakota Alano Thursday 11:45 AM, Eastside AA, Eastside Squad 6, Gopher State Roundup, Happy Joyous & Free AA, Hastings AA, Highland Park AA, Hugo AA, Ladder to Serenity AA, Maplewood AA, Midway AA, North Branch Community Groups, North Dale AA, Observing Recovery Victoriously AA, Ridge Runners II AA Group, Sisters of Serenity, St. Joe’s Monday PM, Summit & Lexington AA, Third Tradition Group, Valley Creek AA, Valley Creek Thurs Nite AA, White Bear Lake Area AA
 Number of Groups Contributing: 27
 Total Group Contributions: \$6350.72
 Number of Faithful Fivers Contributing: 21
 Total from Faithful Fivers \$285

2005 Steering Board

- Chair
Renee B.
- Alt. Chair
Marty M.
- Secretary
Melissa H.
- Treasurer
Jeff T.
- Members at Large 2005
Tom S.
Starr M.
- Members at Large 2004
Charlie M.
Pat M.
- Advisor to the Board
Misha Q.
- Office Manager
Melissa D.

September Office Calls

Meeting Information:	292
Inventory/Hours:	19
12th Step Calls:	2
Temporary Sponsors:	6
Speaker Requests:	14
Special Events	1
Outside Issues	54
Administrative	55
Other	29
Total Calls	472
Daily average	24.8
Visitors	98

Call tally is for the calls taken during office hours only and does not include calls taken during Night Owl shifts.

4th Tradition

"Each group should be autonomous except in matters affecting other groups or A.A. as a whole."

7th Tradition

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

Your group can make an informed decision regarding contributions with information from A.A. World Services. The following information is a suggestion taken from the pamphlet: *Self-Support: Where money and spirituality mix.*"

50% St. Paul Intergroup

Spruce Tree Center
1600 University Ave. #407
St. Paul, MN 55104

30 % G S O

P.O. Box 459
Grand Central Station
New York, NY 10163

10% Southern MN

Area Assembly
P.O. Box 2812
Mpls., MN 55402

**10% District Committee**

Ramsey County:
District 8, P.O. Box 2267
St. Paul, MN 55102

Dakota County:
District 19, P.O. Box 1466
Burnsville, MN 55337

Washington County:
District 15, P.O. Box 181
Lake Elmo, MN 55042

SE Ramsey County:
District 26, P.O. Box 75980
St. Paul, MN 55175

District Meetings**District 8 (Ramsey Co.)**

Fairview Community Center
1910 Cty. B, Room 203
Roseville
3rd Wed., 7:30 PM

District 15 (Wash. Co.)

Christ Lutheran Church
11194 N. 36th St., Lake Elmo
4th Mon., 7:00 PM

District 19 (Dakota Co.)

Rosemount Community Center
13885 South Robert Trail
2nd Wed., 7:00 PM

District 26 (SE Ramsey Co.)

1099 Payne Ave. St. Paul
2nd Fri., 6:00 PM
www.district26-area36.org

Unity**"Eleventh Tradition: Brake on Us Power Drivers?"**

Our book *Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions* reminds us of the reason for the origin of Tradition Eleven: to discourage the power-driver, the status-seeker. No one knows this better than I do, having achieved a position of some stature in my part of the country. During my drinking days, my ego combined with alcohol placed me squarely in the middle of skid row. There, thank God, I received some ego-deflation at depth. I saw for myself what "self-will run riot" could do. By the grace of God and the principles in our Twelve Steps, I have been able to rise to a position of dignity and service to my fellowman, both in the Fellowship and outside it. The Tradition of anonymity has safeguarded me from feeling that this AA outfit could not operate without me. Maybe we could call it humility or self-knowledge based on truth.

Anonymity at the public level is our assurance to newcomers that their membership in AA will not be disclosed by others, nor will they ever be required to disclose it themselves. It will be up to them to tell those they think should know, when and if they choose. More importantly, in the long run, the principle of personal anonymity helps discourage drives for power, profit, and prestige, which could divert us from our primary purpose: *staying sober and helping other alcoholics achieve sobriety*. Thus, anonymity at the public level assures us that no individual AA member will be publicly acknowledged as a spokesman or leader. Within our Traditions, members do not use their membership to further their careers, to promote their products or services, or to give weight to their arguments in public controversy.

As our Traditions remind us, anonymity is more than a denial of self-seeking; it is a constant and practical reminder that personal ambition has no place in AA. I feel that-any digression from the original motive for this Tradition cannot be justified on any grounds, least of all that we must keep abreast of changing times. The active alcoholic of today is the same as the poor, suffering alcoholic of yesterday. So I believe we should safeguard a Tradition which has been tried and proven good. It may well be the one principle that can prevent us from becoming wheeler-dealers."

--P. A. G. W. Oakville, Ontario. *The AA Grapevine*, September 1968. Copyright © The AA Grapevine, Inc. Reprinted with permission.

**Traditions Checklist
From the AA Grapevine**

"Our public relations policy is based on attraction rather than promotion; we need always maintain personal anonymity at the level of press, radio, and films.

1. Do I sometimes promote AA so fanatically that I make it seem unattractive?
2. Am I always careful to keep the confidences reposed in me as an AA member?
3. Am I careful about throwing AA names around -- even within the fellowship?
4. Am I ashamed of being a recovered, or recovering, alcoholic?
5. What would AA be like if we were not guided by the ideas in Tradition Eleven? Where would I be?
6. Is my sobriety attractive enough that a sick drunk would want such a quality for himself?"

--Copyright © The AA Grapevine, Inc.
Reprinted with permission.

Upcoming Events**42nd International Alcoholics Anonymous Women's Conference**

February 9th - 12th, 2006
Minneapolis Marriott City Center
Minneapolis Minnesota
For more information:
42nd IAAWC
P.O. Box 4262
St. Paul, MN 55104-0262
iaawc2006@yahoo.com

Founder's Day Weekend

Celebrating 65 years of AA in the Upper Midwest and honoring AA members with one year of sobriety!
November 25, 26, & 27, 2005
Doubletree Park Place Hotel
St. Louis Park MN
Registration: \$15.00
Registration begins Friday
November 25th at 4:00 PM

Concepts Checklist Concept XI

"The trustees should always have the best possible committees, corporate service directors, executives, staff, and consultants. Composition, qualifications, induction procedures, and rights and duties will always be matters of serious concern."

- Do we understand how the roles of non-trustee directors and not-trustee appointed committee members help serve and strengthen the committee system?
- How do we encourage our special paid workers to exercise their traditional 'Right of Participation?'
- Do we practice rotation in all our service positions?"

--Reprinted with permission from AA

World Services Inc.

"The following are 'several principals...which' apply to A.A. World Service, Inc. and the A.A. Grapevine, Inc.:

1. The status of executives

No active service can function well unless it has sustained and competent executive direction. This must always head up in *one person*, supported by such assistants as he needs. That person has to have ample freedom and authority to do his job, and he should not be interfered with so long as his work is done well.

2. Paid workers, how compensated

Each paid executive, staff member or consultant should be recompensed in reasonable relation to the value of his or her similar services or abilities in the commercial world...Cheap help is apt to feel insecure and inefficient. It is very costly in the long run. This is neither good spirituality nor good business. Assuming service money is available, we should therefore compensate workers well.

3. Rotation among paid staff workers

At A.A.'s General Service Office, most staff members assignments are changed every two years. When engaged, each staff member is expected to possess the general ability to do, or learn how to do, any job in the place -- excepting for office management.

4. Full 'Participation' of paid workers is highly important

We have already discussed the necessity of giving key personnel a voting representation on our committees and corporate boards. They should enjoy a status suitable to their responsibility, just as our volunteers do."

--The Twelve Concepts for World Service illustrated. Reprinted with permission from AA World Services Inc.

Service

Become an Intergroup Representative!

Does your group send a Representative to the Intergroup meeting? If not, elect one! Or volunteer to fill the position! It is a very important service opportunity. As an Intergroup Representative, you are responsible for the communication between St. Paul Intergroup and your group. Your job is to attend the Reps' meetings and report back to your group everything that is happening at Intergroup. The time commitment is very small (about an hour every month) but it makes all the difference to St. Paul Intergroup. The Intergroup office cannot function without the efforts of our volunteers.

Every group in the St. Paul and surrounding suburban area has the right to have a Representative attend the meetings to give input and feedback to the board and office staff. So elect an Intergroup Rep to attend the next meeting!

The meetings take place every month, on the third Tuesday at 7:30PM. The meetings are held at the Spruce Tree Centre, on the first floor -- be sure to follow the signs.

You don't have to be an Intergroup member to attend!

The following groups sent a Representative to the September Intergroup Reps' meeting: Como Park BB, Back To Basics BB., Happy Joyous and Free, Third Edition, St. Paul Speaker Meeting, Outright Mental Defectives, Highland Women's Group, West End, Women's Fireside, and Main Idea.

The next Intergroup Reps' meeting will be held on Tuesday, November 15th at 7:30.

AA In Motion

Are you unable to attend AA due to illness, disability, etc.?

We will bring a meeting to you!
Call Dennis W. @ 651-451-0470

Are you looking for a service commitment?

Become an Outreach Volunteer!

Outreach volunteers visit meetings in St. Paul and the surrounding suburbs. We are trying to visit all of the meetings in the area to tell them about Intergroup. There is no sobriety requirement to serve, and it is a fun way to visit new meetings. Come to a committee meeting for more details. You can email the committee chair at outreach@aastpaul.org.

What happens when a still suffering alcoholic reaches out for help? A Night Owl volunteer answers the phone!

A Night Owl shift is a once-a-month commitment to answer phones during the hours that Intergroup is closed. Some shifts can be done in the office; all can be done from home. The commitment can be filled by an individual or a group. Taking on a Night Owl commitment means that when still suffering alcoholics call AA for help, they find another alcoholic at the other end of the line. When you or your group sign up to take a shift, you are trained in how to respond to calls and given all of the materials that are needed. Please call the office or go to our website at www.aastpaul.org if you can help.

Thanks to all the terrific volunteers who helped in the Central Office during September!

Tom S., Tony C., Erik N., Shelley, Lanson, Kevin H., Jack R., Brian M., Chris, Christen C., Red, Ellen J., Robert M., Missy, Frank D., and Gil.

Thanks to all the groups and individuals who took the Night Owl Shifts as well.

12th Step Opportunity

Women's Workhouse AA meeting
Volunteers of America

Dale and Larpenteur, St. Paul
Saturday, 11:00 AM, Tuesday 4 - 5 PM
You will need a background check (paid for). Women only, please.

The Lifeline: Purpose Statement

The Lifeline is a monthly newsletter of the St. Paul and Suburban Area Intergroup Association office of Alcoholics Anonymous. It is about, by, and for members of the A.A. Fellowship. Opinions expressed herein are not to be attributed to A.A. as a whole, nor does publication of any article imply endorsement by either A.A. or Intergroup.

We welcome articles of opinion or descriptions of personal experience (no poetry, please), which should be sent to Lifeline Editor, St. Paul Intergroup, 1600 University Avenue #407, St. Paul MN 55104. Materials or articles cannot be returned unless accompanied by a self-addressed stamped envelope. Intergroup reserves the right to edit submissions for clarity, language, length and contents that may violate A.A.'s Traditions, etc. The deadline is the 2nd of the preceding month.

Recovery

"When it comes to the practice of AA's Step Eleven--"Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God as we understood Him, praying only for knowledge of His will for us and the power to carry that out"--I'm sure I am still very much in the beginner's class; I'm almost a case of arrested development.

Around me I see many people who make a far better job of relating themselves to God than I do. Certainly it mustn't be said I haven't made any progress at all over the years; I simply confess that I haven't made the progress that I might have made, my opportunities being what they have been, and still are.

My twenty-fourth AA anniversary is just ahead; I haven't had a drink in all this time. In fact, I've scarcely been tempted at all. This is some evidence that I must have taken and ever since maintained Step One: "We admitted we were powerless over alcohol, that our lives had become unmanageable." Step One was easy for me.

Then, at the very beginning, I was fortunate enough to receive a tremendous spiritual awakening and was instantly "made conscious of the presence of God" and "restored to sanity"--at least so far as alcohol is concerned. Therefore I've had no difficulty with AA's Step Two because, in my case, its content was an outright gift. Step Four and Step Five, dealing with self-survey and confession of one's defects, have not been overly difficult, either.

Of course, my self-analysis has frequently been faulty. Sometimes I've failed to share my defects with the right people; at other times, I've confessed *their* defects, rather than my own; and at still other times, my confession of defects has been more in the nature of loud complaints about my circumstances and my problems.

Nevertheless, I think I've usually been able to make a fairly thorough and searching job of finding and admitting my personal defects. So far as I know, there isn't at this moment a single defect or current problem of mine which hasn't been discussed with my close advisers. Yet this pretty well-ventilated condition is nothing for self-congratulation. Long ago I was lucky enough to see that I'd have to keep up my self-analysis or else blow my top completely. Though driven by stark necessity, this continuous self-revelation--to myself and to others--was rough medicine to take. But years of repetition has made this job far easier. Step Nine, making restitution for harms done, has fallen into much the same bracket.

In Step Twelve--carrying the AA message to others--I've found little else than great joy. We albies are folks of action and I'm no exception. When action pays off as it does in AA, it's small wonder that Step Twelve is the most popular and, for most of us, the easiest one of all.

This little sketch of my own "pilgrim's progress" is offered to illustrate where I, and maybe lots of other AAs, have still been missing something of top importance. Through lack of disciplined attention and sometimes through lack of the right kind of faith, many of us keep ourselves year after year in the rather easy spiritual kindergarten I've just described. But almost inevitably we become dissatisfied; we have to admit we have hit an uncomfortable and maybe a very painful sticking point.

Twelfth-Stepping, talking at meetings, recitals of drinking histories, confession of our defects and what progress we have made with them no longer provide us with the released and the abundant life. Our lack of growth is often revealed by an unexpected calamity or a big emotional upset. Perhaps we hit the financial jackpot and are surprised that this solves almost nothing; that we are still bored and miserable, notwithstanding.

As we usually don't get drunk on these occasions, our bright-eyed friends tell us how well we are doing.

But inside, we know better. We know we aren't doing well enough. We still can't handle life, as life is. There must be a serious flaw somewhere in our spiritual practice and development.

What then, is it?

The chances are better than even that we shall locate our trouble in our misunderstanding or neglect of AA's Step Eleven--prayer, meditation and the guidance of God. The other Steps can keep most of us sober and somehow functioning. But Step Eleven can keep us growing, if we try hard and work at it continually. If we expend even five percent of the time on Step Eleven that we habitually (and rightly) lavish on Step Twelve, the results can be wonderfully far-reaching. That is an almost uniform experience of those who constantly practice Step Eleven.

In this article, I'd like to develop Step Eleven further--for the benefit of the complete doubter, the unlucky one who can't believe it has any real merit at all.

In lots of instances I think that people find their first great obstacle in the phrase "God as we understand Him." The doubter is apt to say, "On the face of it, nobody can understand God. I half believe that there is a First Cause, a Something, and maybe a Somebody. But I can't get any further than this. I think people are kidding themselves when they say they can. Even if there were a Somebody, why should he bother with little me, when, in making the Cosmos run, he already has plenty to do? As for those folks who claim that God tells them where to drill for oil, or when to brush their teeth--well, they just make me tired."

Our friend is clearly one who believes in some kind of God--"God as he understands Him." But he doesn't believe any bigger concept or better feeling about God to be possible. So he looks upon meditation, prayer and guidance as the means of a self-delusion. Now what can our hard-pressed friend do about this?

Well, he can strenuously try meditation, prayer and guidance, just as an experiment. He can address himself to whatever God he thinks there is.

Or, if he thinks there is none, he can admit--just for experimental purposes--that he might be wrong. This is all-important. As soon as he is able to take this attitude, it means that he has stopped playing God himself; his mind has opened. Like any good scientist in his laboratory, our friend can assume a theory and can make an experiment. He can pray to a "higher power" that *may* exist and *may* be willing to help and guide him. He keeps on experimenting--in this case, praying--for a long time. Again he tries to behave like the scientist, an experimenter who is never supposed to give up so long as there is a vestige of any chance of success.

As he goes along with his process of prayer, he begins to add up the results. If he persists, he will almost surely find more serenity, more tolerance, less fear and less anger. He will acquire a quiet courage, the kind that doesn't strain him. He can look at so-called failure and success for what they really are. Problems and calamity will begin to mean instruction, instead of destruction. He will feel freer and saner. The idea that he may have been hypnotizing himself by auto-suggestion will become laughable. His sense of purpose and of direction will increase. His tensions and anxieties will commence to fade. His physical health is likely to improve. Wonderful and unaccountable things will start to happen. Twisted relations in his family and on the outside will unaccountably improve.

Even if few of these things happen, he will still find himself in possession of great gifts. When he has to deal with hard circumstances he can face them and accept them. He can now accept himself and the world around him. He can do this because he now accepts a God who is All--and who loves all. When he now says, "Our Father who art in Heaven, hallowed be Thy name," our friend deeply and humbly means it. When in good meditation and thus freed from the clamors of the world, he knows that he is in God's hands; that his own destiny is really secure, here and hereafter.

A great theologian once declared, "The chief critics of prayer are those who have never really tried it enough." That's good advice; good advice I'm trying to take ever more seriously for myself. Many AAs have long been striving for a better conscious contact with God and I trust that many more of us will presently join with that wise company.

I've just finished re-reading the chapter on Step Eleven in our book, "Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions." This was written almost five years ago. I was astonished when I realized how little time I had actually been giving to my own elementary advice on meditation, prayer and guidance--practices that I had so earnestly recommended to everybody else!

In this lack of attention I probably have plenty of company. But I do know that this is a neglect that can cause us to miss the finest experiences of life, a neglect that can seriously slacken the growth that God hopes we may achieve right here on earth; here in this great day at school, this very first of our Father's Many Mansions."

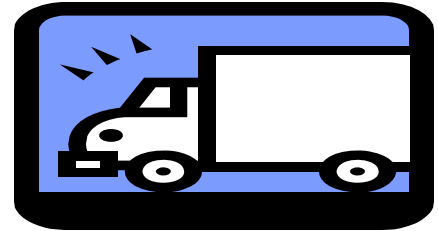
-- Bill W. The AA Grapevine, June 1958. Copyright © The AA Grapevine, Inc. Reprinted with permission.

St. Paul Intergroup
Spruce Tree Center
1600 University Ave. W., Suite #407
St. Paul, MN 55104

Change Service Requested

Non-Profit
Organization
U.S. Postage
Paid
St. Paul, MN
Permit No. 7451

Please let us know if your address changes one month ahead of time. It saves us the cost of return postage and enables you to get each issue of the Lifeline. Our mailing permit does not provide for mail forwarding.
Thank you!



St. Paul Intergroup Faithful Fiver Form

Contribute five dollars to St. Paul Intergroup every month so we can continue to carry our life-saving message of hope. Your contribution entitles you to a one-year subscription to the Lifeline.

Name _____

Street, City, State, Zip _____

Please send this form and a check to:

St. Paul Intergroup - 1600 University Avenue W. #407 St. Paul MN 55104