

# The Lifeline



November, 2010

24 Hour Phone: 651-227-5502

Volume 46, Issue 11

## **Tradition Eleven: 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.**

OVERHEARD at our Intergroup Office, volunteer to newcomer: "There is a good meeting tonight at the B-Group. Xenophon Shrdlu is speaking--you know, the TV comedian."

Telephone call from a program chairman: "Would you speak at our anniversary meeting? I'm supposed to get a celebrity as the main speaker."

I KNOW that some people in AA are impressed and even helped by the fact that even "names" are afflicted with our disease, but statements like the two reported above make me shudder.

I'm not an unbiased observer. My husband's name is quite well known, inside and outside AA. He and I have both been active, sober AAs for years. He's willing to do any AA task that needs doing. But when I'm asked to get him to speak, and the asker says something about getting a "celebrity," I'm sorely tempted to say, "if you want him as an alcoholic, it's for free, naturally. However, if you want him as a celebrity, his fee is \$2500 for doing his act. And he doesn't mention AA in the act!"

I've even seen newspaper stories about AA conventions or banquets with such statements as "The main speaker will be a famous star of stage, TV and movies."

Oh, that follows the *letter* of our Traditions all right. But what about the *spirit*? Within AA, can't a "name" member not be a celebrity, but just another alcoholic who needs our love and understanding in exactly the same principles-first, anonymous way it is given to the rest of us?

Once I heard a fellow say that to him anonymity means we are all nameless, faceless victims of the same illness, no one of any more importance than the other. And, he said, one greatness of AA is its ability to treat, with exactly the same fair degree of kind helpfulness, either the unknown newcomer, or the recognizable celebrity, or the recognized notorious unfortunate.

"We don't care about your past," he said, "or who you are outside of AA. Within the gates of AA you are simply another anonymous sufferer from our illness, and we want to help."

My husband and I feel that way, too.

Once my husband was asked to speak at a special open meeting planned to attract townspeople interested in community health. Just before the meeting began, the program chairman said, "We surely did want a celebrity for this meeting, and I was kind of stumped at first. The last two celebrities we had have been drinking ever since. So I'm sure glad you could come."

My husband went white, and bit his lip. He was crushed to think that his commercial fame was valued more highly by his fellow AAs than his sobriety and his membership in AA. He went through with that one, all right, but I doubt if he ever will again. It's my guess, too, that people in the audience were so curious and enthralled by seeing the celebrity in the flesh that very little of the "alcoholism is a sickness" message got through. I suspect that when they talked about it later, they said, "Guess *who* I heard speak, and did you know that *he* is an alcoholic?" instead of "Guess what I learned about alcoholism and Alcoholics Anonymous the other night?"

(Incidentally, an awfully nice AA gal gave a wonderful talk just before my husband went on. I wonder how she felt when, at the end of her talk, the chairman introduced the next speaker as the "star" of the evening, the one everyone was just waiting to hear?)

I go to an AA meeting, sit on hard chairs in a smoky room to attain and maintain sobriety. I must honestly say that I have heard more good solid AA from people whose names I'll never know than from any celebrity, as such. If I want to see a celebrity I can go to a theater or lecture or concert hall, or turn on TV. I know that my disease is shared by all kinds of people, regardless of occupation or environment, and I want AA to be *anonymous*--inside, as well as out.

Let's let the alcoholic "names" come inside, too, and share the joys of our spiritual anonymity.

— M. B., Manhattan, New York

*Excerpt reprinted from the March, 1962 Grapevine, by permission of the A.A. Grapevine, Inc.*

### **St. Paul Intergroup of Alcoholics Anonymous®**

Web Site: [www.aastpaul.org](http://www.aastpaul.org)

E-mail: [lifeline@aastpaul.org](mailto:lifeline@aastpaul.org)

Fax: 651-290-0209

Office Hours: Monday through Friday — 9 AM to 6 PM; Saturday 9 AM to 1 PM

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

**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.**

It was through the fellowship of AA meetings and listening that I got over my initial fear of this step. The step scared me because of my childhood conception of a "God." Others had told me what God was, and to be fearful. I had thrown out their conception at age 4 or 5; I couldn't believe the fantastical, miraculous stories I heard in church. I rejected the notion that I had to perform certain rituals, pray a certain way and at certain times.

So when I got to AA, and read the steps, I stopped at this one and felt woefully not up to the task. I wouldn't be able to pray "correctly" and I certainly wasn't going to meditate on the "correct" topics, much less achieve nirvana. So why try? Might as well give up, this stuff may work for others, but it won't for me. "God's will for me?"- what the hell could that be? Mostly what I had understood God's will for me as being was unrelenting misery and a sense of inadequacy around people and relationships with them. Throw in a large dose of childhood exposure to hypocrisy about all things "religious" at home, and I felt I had a recipe for certain failure. More doom.

Luckily, the fellowship of AA had a draw for me. Nowhere else in my 32 years on this planet had I found non-judgmental acceptance. In AA, I found the people weren't power-hungry or political, the sole agenda was really sobriety. That meant I had a chance at success; if I had had to measure up somehow, my ingrained sense of inadequacy would have caused me to check out before I got hurt.

Also luckily, there were 10 other steps to focus on before Step 11. The fellowship and meeting discussion taught me that I could leave my childhood conception of God at the door, and develop my own. I could stop making decisions based on a 5 year old's understanding of spirituality. Then, I could admit I didn't know much, adopt some of your sanity as mine, set down my will for a moment and look around at what it was getting me. Taking inventory of what my will achieved for me, I decided I needed another's counsel (as advised) to cast out the negative understandings of self I had accumulated. After this much work, I was really willing to adopt a new lifestyle and ready to ask a god to help me (I still wasn't sure what that was all about, but I found it unnecessary to know). Making a list of my next tasks, and having that checked over, I set about turning things around, and I learned some things about keeping relationships together. I kept looking for ways I was falling short. Lo and behold, I had by this time spent a lot of time praying, and meditating on what "conscious contact" meant. I had a pretty good *understanding of, and with, my God*, and I could sometimes get a glimpse of what his will for me was. The "with" part comes from my dialogue with my God.

Then, and only then, as I continued to practice what I had learned, did the ultimate truth come to me; someone pointed out that page 133 of *Alcoholics Anonymous* states for us exactly what God's will for us is: "to be happy, joyous and free."

— Anonymous Intergroup Volunteer

**CONCEPT ELEVEN: While the trustees hold final responsibility for A.A.'s world service administration, they should always have the assistance of the best possible standing committees, corporate service directors, executives, staffs and consultants. Therefore, the composition of their members, the manner of their induction into service, the systems of their rotation, the way in which they are related to each other, the special rights and duties of our executives, staffs and consultants, together with a proper basis for the financial compensation of these special workers, will always be matters for serious care and concern.**

In this, the second longest of the Concepts, Bill explains in great detail the composition, functions and relationships of the standing committees of the General Service Board, its subsidiary operating boards, the General Service Office and the A.A. Grapevine.

Reprinted from *The Twelve Concepts for World Service Illustrated*, with permission of A.A. World Services, Inc.

**2010 Steering Board**

<b><u>Chair:</u></b>	<b>Julie M.</b>
<b><u>Alt. Chair:</u></b>	<b>John D.</b>
<b><u>Secretary:</u></b>	<b>Don N.</b>
<b><u>Treasurer:</u></b>	<b>Michael K.</b>
<b><u>Alt. Treasurer</u></b>	<b>Darrell B.</b>
<b><u>Members at Large 2010:</u></b>	<b>Chris S. &amp; Julie K.</b>
<b><u>Members at Large 2011:</u></b>	<b>Jes N. &amp; Charlie S.</b>
<b><u>Advisor to the Board:</u></b>	<b>Tom S.</b>
<b><u>Office Manager:</u></b>	<b>Tom N.</b>

**Office Calls in September\***

Meeting information	206
Inventory/hours	37
12th Step calls	15
Temporary sponsor	28
Speaker request	12
Special events	4
Outside issues	33
Info for professionals	4
Administrative	156
Other	66
<b>Total Calls</b>	<b>561</b>
<b>Daily average</b>	<b>25.5</b>
Visitors	240

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

## **St. Paul Area Intergroup Representatives' Meeting Minutes, September 21, 2010**

- I. Opened with Serenity Prayer and Introductions. Camille read the Primary Purpose of Intergroup.
- II. Last month's Minutes approved.
- III. Treasurer's Report – Darrell B. reported the budget is healthy; the written report is available. Questions can be sent to treasurer@aastpaul.org.
- IV. The Office Report – Service opportunities are available; contact the Office for details.
- V. The Website report – Groups are encouraged to contact Jonathan (servant) or the Office for AA-related events so they can be added to the website.
- VI. Outreach Program – Contact the Office or Roxie (chairperson) from West End if interested.
- VII. Night Owl Report – Anyone interested in this important service opportunity should contact Leslie (chairperson) or the Office.
- VIII. Intergroup Events:
  - Fall Step Workshop (Step 8) – October 9<sup>th</sup> @ 2PM – Chris S, chair.
  - Volunteer Appreciation Dinner – October 23rd, Sat, 7PM (Bethlehem Church).
  - Gratitude Night – November 20<sup>th</sup> – John D, chair.
  - Founders Day Hospitality Suite – November 26-27<sup>th</sup> – Michael K/Jes, chairs.
  - New Years Eve – December 31<sup>st</sup> – Julie M, chair.
- IX. Old Business:
  - Julie K. is the new District 8 coordinator for ASL funds; fliers and a green wrap-around are available; checks should be made to "ASL Fund." Contact Julie or the Office with questions.
- X. New Business:
  - A Grapevine report will be added to our monthly agenda; Diane is next month's volunteer.
  - Elections will be held in November for next year's Board openings: alternate chair, alternate treasurer, secretary, two members at large. Nominations and resumes can be submitted next month.
- XI. Concept Review (Concept 9) – Diana.
  - Anyone interested in presenting Concept X next month should contact Julie M. or Tom.
- XII. Mock Report – Frank Volunteer for next month: Jennifer.
  - Volunteer for next month's Grapevine report: Diana.
- XIII. Closed with the Responsibility Statement.

### Attendance:

Diane, Summit Hill	Bruce, Uptown		Joe, S.O.S.	Frank, Third Edition
Trisha, Fireside Women's	Joe, Defogged Men's Group	Camille, Midway	Christine, Firing Line	Adrienne, Maplewood
Craig, Happy Hour 12&12	Jeff, Downtown Alano	Grayson, Como Park BB	Jamie, Students of Life	Jennifer, Back to Basics Burnsville
Doug M, Hole in the Donut	Joe, Happy Joyous & Free	Don N, Secretary	Charlie S, Board at large	Julie M, Chair
Jes N, Board-at-Large	Chris S, Board At-Large	Tom, Office Manager	John D, Alt Chair	Tom S, Board advisor

**7th Tradition  
Suggestions for Groups**  
 "Every group ought to be fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions."  
 The Conference-approved pamphlet: "Self-Support: Where Money and Spirituality Mix" offers the following suggestions for the distribution of group funds after group expenses have been paid:

**50% St. Paul Intergroup**  
 Spruce Tree Center  
 1600 University Ave. #407  
 St. Paul, MN 55104

**30% General Service Office**  
 P.O. Box 459  
 Grand Central Station  
 New York, NY 10163

**10% Southern MN Area 36**  
 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

**BE A NIGHT OWL !!**  
 Night Owls are often the first A.A. contact for the newcomer! A Night Owl shift is a once-a-month commitment to answer Intergroup phones after hours. 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. **If you can help, call the office or go to our website: [www.aastpaul.org](http://www.aastpaul.org)**

**District Meetings**  
**District 8 (Ramsey Co.)**  
 Fairview Community Center  
 1910 Co. Rd B, Rm 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](http://www.district26-area36.org)

**Thanks to all the super volunteers who helped in the Office during September!**  
 Evan, Colin, Burt, Ty, Sherry, Michael G, Jordan, Scott J, Kim, Shawn, Danny, Paul, John H, Derrick, Bill A., Dave T, Frank, Rick B, John, Phil, Bert, Greg, Rachel, Suzanne, Dan V, Mike R, Jules, Bob, Paul, Scott S, Mollie, Kevin, Timothy, Scott F, Mark H, Willie, Andy, Rich, Henry, Maureen, Chris, Doug, Greg C, Scottie, Eric, Tobin, Russ, Danny, Nathan, Julie & Vance!  
*Thanks to all the Night Owl volunteers and groups as well!*



**The Lifeline: Purpose Statement**  
 The Lifeline is the 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. (Exception: Quotations from A.A. books or pamphlets are reprinted with permission from A.A. World Services, Inc.) We welcome articles of opinion or descriptions of personal experience, 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 content that might violate A.A.'s Traditions, etc. The deadline is the 13th of the preceding month (i.e., submit a Tenth Step essay by the ninth month, September).

**SEPTEMBER CONTRIBUTIONS**  
 Number of Group Contributors: 32  
 Total Group Contributions: \$3254  
 Number of Faithful Fivers: 16  
 Total from Faithful Fivers: \$173

***Thanks to the groups that contributed in September!***  
 Amazing Grace Group  
 Book of Hope  
 Burnsville - Back to Basics  
 Cliffhangers I  
 Como Park 12 & 12  
 Coon Rapids - Day by Day  
 Dakota Alano Friday 6 PM  
 Dakota Alano Monday 6 PM BB  
 Dakota Alano Sun 8 PM  
 Dakota Alano Thurs 1145 PM  
 Egan Burnsville Savage Sat Speaker  
 Fellowship Friday Group  
 Forest Lake Alano  
 Fourth Dimension  
 Friday 12X12 By the Book  
 Happy Hour Men's Meeting  
 Happy Joyous and Free  
 Highland Park Groups  
 Inver Grove Heights Club 84  
 Island Lake Group  
 January 6th Group Roseville  
 Jumpstart 12 & 12  
 Maplewood Groups  
 Midway Club  
 New Brighton Alano Sq 14 BB  
 Oakdale Monday Meeting  
 Outright Mental Defectives  
 Rivertown BB Group  
 Shoreview 12 X 12  
 Shoreview Big Book Plus  
 South Suburban Group  
 Stillwater Morning Groups  
 Stillwater Sunday Noon BB  
 Summit Hill  
 Third Edition Group  
 Third Tradition Northfield  
 Uptown Groups  
 Valley Creek Monday  
 Valley Step Group  
 Pathways to Peace Saturday  
 Weekend Jumpstart II  
 White Bear Lake  
 Woodbury Wed Noon Group



# UPCOMING A.A. EVENTS!!

44th Annual

## Las Vegas Roundup

November 25 - 28

Riviera Hotel and Casino

[www.lasvegasroundup.org](http://www.lasvegasroundup.org)

## West Central Regional Forum

("Additional Forum")

November 12 - 14

Rapid City, South Dakota

"Carrying AA's Message to the Native American"

## Founder's Day Weekend

*Celebrating 70 Years of AA in Our Area!*

November 26 - 28

Doubletree Park Place Hotel

St. Louis Park, MN

[www.FoundersDayMN.org](http://wwwFOUNDERSDAYMN.org)

Southern Minnesota - Area 36

## Area 36 Committee Meetings

Best Western, North Mankato, MN

December 4, 2010

30th Annual Area 36

## Recovery, Unity & Service Conference

Best Western, 1111 Range Street

North Mankato, MN

January 21—23

Ninth Annual

## Wild Rice Round-up

January 21 - 23, 2011

Shooting Star Hotel & Casino, Mahnomon, MN

[www.wildriceroundup.com](http://www.wildriceroundup.com)

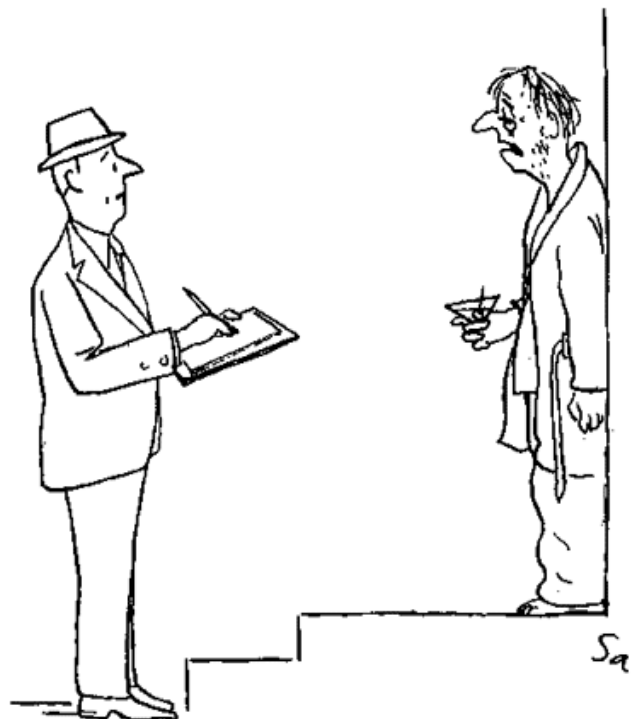
## Dear Bill W,

I want to do everything I can for A.A. — I'm so grateful for my sobriety! I'm well-known in my community, and I have a back-ground in PR and entertainment. Shouldn't I use my reputation and these abilities to get some interviews into the local press, and give people a good feeling about A.A.?

—An Anonymous Drunk

In the beginning, the press could not understand our refusal of all personal publicity. They were genuinely baffled by our insistence upon anonymity. Then they got the point. Here was something rare in the world — a society which said it wished to publicize its principles and its work, but not its individual members. The press was delighted with this attitude. Ever since, these friends have reported A.A. with an enthusiasm which the most ardent members would find hard to match.

Reprinted from *Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions*, p. 182, reprinted by permission of A.A. World Services, Inc.



"There's an election?"

## Is your meeting represented at Intergroup?

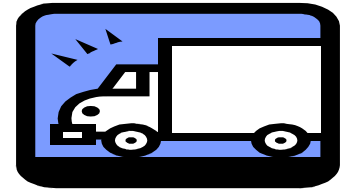
The November Representatives' meeting will be held Tuesday the 16th at 7:30 pm, at the Bethlehem Lutheran Church, 436 Roy St. N, St. Paul, 55104. The church is just south of the Spruce Tree Centre, across the street from the Intergroup office.

St. Paul Intergroup  
Spruce Tree Center  
1600 University Ave. W. Ste. 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

Faithful Fivers contribute \$5.00 to St. Paul Intergroup each month to enable us to continue to carry our life-saving message. Your contribution entitles you to a one-year subscription to *The Lifeline*. You may also contribute annually, quarterly, etc.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Street \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip \_\_\_\_\_

**Please send this form and a check to:**

St. Paul Intergroup, 1600 University Avenue W., Ste. 407, St. Paul, MN 55104

I would like to receive *The Lifeline* every month by email, not postal mail. My email address is:

(please print clearly) \_\_\_\_\_