

St. Paul & Suburban Area Intergroup
33 Wentworth Ave E
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West St. Paul, MN 55118-3431

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The Lifeline



January 2023

24-Hour Phone 651.227.5502

Volume 59 Issue 1

STEP ONE

*We admitted we were powerless
over alcohol—that our lives had
become unmanageable.*

I was the invisible alcoholic. I was a housewife and a mother who was sometimes employable. My husband traveled for work, and I drank at home. I parceled out care of my 4-year-old to my two teenagers and palmed off the grocery shopping and errands to my husband on weekends. I kept a really low profile.

I didn't think I was an alcoholic because of the visible alcoholics I saw and read about. There was this homeless man living in a corner of my neighborhood park. And the old men on Skid Row in my hometown of Chicago, sitting on the curb and drinking out of bottles in brown paper bags. There were others. There was the jerk at the office Christmas party and a visibly drunk mother attending the high school graduation. At least I wasn't noticeably drunk like her, embarrassing her family.

And then something changed. I became the visible alcoholic. No more control. When my husband and I attended a friend's wake, I failed to time my alcohol-saturation point until after the event. Poor Bob, he didn't realize how drunk I was until we got in the lobby of the funeral home. He gripped my arm tightly and said through gritted teeth, "Sit down in that chair and do not move or talk to anyone until I'm through offering my condolences." I sat and smiled and nodded and wondered if everyone knew I was drunk. On another occasion, my husband and I had each driven our own cars to an event at which I made the excuse of needing to drink in order to be sociable. Bob followed me home and didn't know whether to honk or to cut me off

with his car or throw himself in front of me as I barreled the wrong way on a one-way street.

After having been hospitalized "to see what's wrong with me" and getting a diagnosis of pernicious anemia, I now became the visible drunk, going to the doctor's office for B12 shots, obviously intoxicated. I was no longer employable because of absences. It was too tough to get myself to work on the morning after, and besides I had that wonderful pernicious anemia diagnosis, which explained why I weighed less than 100 pounds and wasn't strong enough to put a fitted sheet on a mattress, much less try to go to work.

My last escapade as the visible drunk came upon admittance to yet another hospital. I was still cagey though. I had gone to the ladies' room and emptied all the little aspirin bottles I had filled with vodka in my purse before going to the admitting office. I suffered a seizure there and woke up days later in a locked psych ward.

My doctor strongly suggested I call AA because she knew an alcoholic when she saw one. My fear at that time was that I would never get out of the locked ward if I didn't do as she asked. I started my journey of sobriety by calling the Chicago area Central Office and, as they say, the rest is history.

Two women Twelfth Steppers came to my home. They invited me to their home group, which I joined. Four hometowns and four sponsors later, this great-grandmother of nine is still living with the great-grandchildren's great-grandfather. I enjoy every minute of life and give full credit to God and the Fellowship.

-Carol K., Sarasota, FL

The Lifeline: Purpose Statement

The Lifeline is the monthly newsletter of the St. Paul and Suburban Area Intergroup, Inc. It is about, by, and for groups and 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 St. Paul Intergroup. We welcome articles on a Step, Tradition or Concept, in addition to descriptions of personal experience. We also welcome original cartoons and drawings expressing the wry side of A.A. experience.

Please email your article to Lifeline@aastpaul.org or send it by regular mail to Lifeline Editor, St. Paul Intergroup, 33 Wentworth Ave E, Suite 355, W. St. Paul, MN 55118-3431. Materials or articles mailed to us 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.

St. Paul & Suburban Area Intergroup, Inc.

33 Wentworth Ave E, Suite 355, West St. Paul, MN 55118-3431

Website: www.aastpaul.org e-mail: lifeline@aastpaul.org Fax: 651-290-0209
Office Hours: Monday through Friday – 9:30 AM to 5:30 PM; Closed weekends and holidays

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 Individual Contribution Enrollment Form

Your Intergroup strives to be self-supporting, and with your personal support we can continue to carry our vital message of Hope and Recovery to all who need and want it. Your contribution entitles you to a one-year subscription to the Lifeline. Contributions may be made annually, bi-annually, quarterly, or monthly. Please consider becoming one of our *Faithful Fivers* (\$5.00/month), *Terrific Tanners* (\$10.00/month), or *Fantastic Fifteeners* (\$15.00/month).

1. Contact Information:

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ ZIP: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

3. Choose a Payment Method:

Credit Card/Debit

Visa MasterCard AMEX Discover

Card # _____ / _____ / _____ / _____

Expiration Date: _____ / _____

Name on Card: _____

Signature: _____

**I authorize St. Paul Intergroup to automatically bill my account as specified (monthly, quarterly, etc). I understand that I am free to cancel this authorization at any time by contacting Intergroup.*

Check - Please make payable to:

Saint Paul Intergroup
33 Wentworth Ave E, Suite 355
West St. Paul, MN 55118-3431

2. Amount & Frequency:

Amount \$ _____

Frequency: (check one)

Monthly Quarterly Bi-Annually Annually

Start on: _____ / _____ / _____

Faithful Fiver (\$5.00/month)

Terrific Tenner (\$10.00/month)

Fantastic Fifteener (\$15.00/month)



The Traditions--One Member's Short Form

1. Home groups can be torn apart by gossip, backbiting, and judging of others. (And where would we be without our home groups?)
Rotation gets new people involved so that God can be expressed through all of us.
2. There is a requirement for AA membership--a desire to stop and stay stopped drinking. We need to be sharing our experience on the solution rather than on the problem.
3. Taking care of our own group business and allowing other groups to do the same will ensure we continue to be here for the still-suffering alcoholic.
4. As individuals and as groups our primary purpose is the same, to get and keep one alcoholic talking with another.
5. Our groups carry the life-saving message of AA to alcoholics and let others do the same, with our blessing.
6. In AA we pay our way and are not influenced by others.
7. AA is love and service freely received and freely given. We do need to employ qualified people to keep certain services available and functioning.
8. We need a service structure directly responsible to ourselves.
9. We leave our personal, religious, and political feelings outside AA doors along with our worldly ambitions.
10. Very little attraction will show forth if we are promoting ourselves. Our recovery program is what's important to the public, not us as individuals.
11. Striving for the good of AA and the still-suffering alcoholic, with God's help, is a foundation we can build on. When we stand on our principles, we leave personalities behind us.

John R. - Chatham, Ont.

The Saint Paul Intergroup office is interested in expanding our volunteer base to include people skilled in graphic design and office administration.

For more information or to volunteer your time, please email altchair@aastpaul.org or call the office at 651-227-5502

SELF-SUPPORT SUGGESTIONS FOR GROUPS

“Every A.A. 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

33 Wentworth Ave E.
Suite 355
West St. Paul, MN 55118-3431

30% General Service Office

Post Office Box 2407
new York, NY 10116-2407

10% Southern MN Area 36

Southern Minnesota Area Assembly
P.O. Box 2812
Mpls., MN 55402-0812

10% District Committee

Ramsey County:
District 8, P.O. Box 131523
St. Paul, MN 55113

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

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

**2023 INTERGROUP BOARD OF DIRECTORS
WELCOME NEW BOARD MEMBERS!**

Advisor to the Board (non voting)	Brian M.
Chairperson	Eliot W.
Alternate Chairperson	Renee B.
Secretary	Kelly K.
Treasurer	Bill C.
Alternate Treasurer	Gerry L.
2023 Member-At-Large	Tom W.
2023 Member-At-Large	
2024 Member-At-Large	Camille K.
2024 Member-At-Large	Mary U.
Interim Office Manager	Ken S.
Web Servant (non voting)	Jonathan L.
Web Servant (non voting)	Sergey K.
Night Owl Coordinator (non voting)	Rachel P.



WE WANT TO SAY THANK YOU TO OUR OUTGOING

BOARD MEMBERS:

- Rachel P - Advisor
- Lindsey D - Treasurer
- Jennifer G - Member @ Large
- Elly C - Member @ Large

LOOKING FOR A SERVICE OPPORTUNITY?
Become a St. Paul Intergroup Night Owl
 If you are interested - Contact:
Nightowl@aastpaul.org
 to schedule training.
 St. Paul Intergroup Office
 33 Wentworth Ave E, Suite 355
 West St. Paul, MN 55118-3431
 To RSVP - please call 651-227-5502

2023 A.A. West Central Regional Service Conference

March 3-5, 2023
Hosted by Area 41

A.A.'s Three Legacies – Our Common Solution

Conference Registration

Event Registration - \$25
Price Increases to \$30 on 2/1/23

Register Online: [Bit.ly/WCR23Reg](https://bit.ly/WCR23Reg)
Mail-In Form Below with Check by 2/15/23

Unlimited coffee pass available for \$25 - Buy a pass in advance or pay per cup at the Conference
Check out www.westcentralregion.org for more information!

Hotel Information

DoubleTree Omaha Downtown
1616 Dodge St, Omaha, NE 68102

Hotel Reservation - \$119/night
Online Link: [Bit.ly/WCR23Hotel](https://bit.ly/WCR23Hotel)

Friday | March 3, 2023

Past & Present Delegates Only Meetings
10:00 - 3:00pm Sharing Sessions; Lunch (On Your Own)

Events for All WCRAASC Attendees Begin
2:30pm Registration Opens
3:30pm Early Bird Meeting
5:30pm First Timer Orientation
7:00pm Welcome
7:15 - 8:00pm Presented by Area 40: Our Common Perils and Common Solution
8:00 - 8:30pm Meet the Delegates
8:45 - 10:00pm General Service Conference Agenda Items

11:30 - 1:00pm
1:00 - 2:00pm
2:00 - 2:45pm
3:00 - 3:45pm
4:00 - 5:30pm
5:30 - 7:00pm
7:00 - 8:30pm
8:45-10:00pm

Saturday continued

Lunch (On Your Own)
General Service Conference Agenda Items
Presented by Area 36: Fostering a Thriving Three Legacy Culture
Breakout Sessions
General Service Conference Agenda Items
Dinner (On Your Own)
Open Speaker Meeting - Carolyn W., Surrey, British Columbia
General Service Conference Agenda Items

Sunday | March 5, 2023

7:00am Early Bird Meeting
8:00am Welcome
8:15 - 9:00am Presented by Area 24: Practicing Our Twelve Traditions Across All Group Settings
9:00 - 10:30am Past Trustee Sharing & Ask It Basket
10:30am Conference Closes

Saturday | March 4, 2023

7:00am Early Bird Meeting
8:00am Welcome
8:15 - 10:30am General Service Conference Agenda Items
10:45 - 11:30am Presented by Area 52: Using A.A.'s Literature in Carrying the Message

7:00am
8:00am
8:15 - 9:00am
9:00 - 10:30am
10:30am

Conference Website



Conference Registration



Hotel Reservation



Attend In-Person or Via Zoom
(Zoom link provided after registration)

To register by mail, send this portion with your check made payable to West Central Region.
Mail by 2/15/23 to WCRAASC, PO Box 22145, Lincoln, NE 68542

Name: _____ Area: _____ City: _____ State: _____

Home Group: _____ Service Position: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Do you need ASL or Spanish translation? _____ ASL _____ Spanish Are you purchasing a coffee pass? _____ Yes _____ No

TRADITION ONE

*Our common welfare should come first;
personal recovery depends upon A.A.
unity.*

Field of Love

Our First Tradition states: "Our common welfare should come first; personal recovery depends upon AA unity." For each alcoholic, drinking means dying. AA means survival and life. Clearly, the group must survive or the individual will not.

Every friend who looks at AA for the first time is puzzled. They recognize that AA has an irresistible strength of purpose

and action. "But how," they ask, "can such a crowd of anarchists function at all? How can they possibly place their common welfare first? What, in heaven's name, holds them together?" The answer is that Recovery, Unity and Service are the cornerstones of our

Fellowship. I would like to talk about Unity. Unity is in part achieved through communication. All over the world, we speak the language of the heart. We all need the same sayings and slogans -- "Let Go and Let God," "Live and Let Live," "First Things First," "Easy Does It" -- and the same Serenity Prayer.

I'd like to quote from a talk given by Christina C., of Ireland, at our last European Service Meeting, because I believe her words eloquently express some important ideas:

"It is probable that no other society or organization is as democratic and as comprehensive as AA, or has the same capacity to deal with every eventuality. This unique position is made possible by the fact that AA has group conscience. Article 12 of the Conference Charter, as outlined

in Concept 12, stresses the importance of group conscience being reached by discussion, vote, and wherever possible, by substantial unanimity.

There are guidelines to be followed, principles to be adhered to, which, in time, achieve tolerance, discipline and humility for the members. It is an accepted fact within AA worldwide that only a small minority of members become active in service for AA. This small minority is sufficient to carry the Fellowship. They become aware of the need for an understanding of the group conscience and how it works. They are prepared to make decisions on behalf of the Fellowship without fear, even though some may not turn out so well.

Awareness is a very important word in AA language. Unity is vital and group conscience is the way to achieve it."

I believe and trust that the united group conscience shows us the right direction. Whether we are black, brown, red, white or yellow, within the compass of the Steps, the Traditions, the Concepts, and the Legacies, we are equal. Whether we live in Brussels, Buenos Aires, Sidney, Ottawa, Los Angeles, Petersburg, Reykjavik, Glasgow, Johannesburg, or Rome; whether we are Muslim, Jewish, Christian, Buddhist, or nonbeliever; regardless of social standing or profession, we are equal.

Unity can be illustrated by an AA meeting held in Haifa, attended by a Palestinian man from Jerusalem, a Jewish man from Gaza, a "hippie" girl from San Francisco, a "punk" from Berlin, a new immigrant from Russia, a Shiite from Lebanon, and a pair of tourists, a man and a woman, from Finland. Most of them spoke only a little English. All were happy, because all were standing on their native soil--in the AA Fellowship. AA is an enormous field of love where the anarchy of the spirit and the mind can be transformed into democracy. AA unites nations. Most of all, it unites people.

Unity does not exist unless we work for it. The single alcoholic cannot create it; only the community of members (who know that the common welfare should come first)

THOUGHTS FROM THE BOARD

It's a Brand New Year! I vividly remember in my drinking days how much I wanted to party and ring in the New Year with some sort of grand event, grand revelation or grand accomplishment. Year after year, however, I rang in the New Year in various states of drunken stupor, sometime culminating in a blackout, or worse. What a gift it is to now be part of fellow humanity each New Year and to remember how I spent it. I'm truly grateful for the 12 steps.

The New Year 2023 brings with it many changes and many opportunities at St. Paul Intergroup. First, as many of you know, Dennis B. resigned his position as the Intergroup Office Manager in early October. We want to acknowledge all that Dennis accomplished during his 6 years in service. Thank you, Dennis. The board of directors is engaged in a search for a new Office Manager. The process has been going on for a few months and we hope to have someone in place very soon. Ken S. and Frank N. have been capably filling in while the search goes on. Several board members have also stepped in to keep Intergroup running.

Other changes. Several board members ended their terms in December 2022. We say good-bye to Jennifer G., Elly C., Rachel P., and Lindsey D. Each of you brought individual strengths and perspective to the board. Thank you for your service. We'll miss you! And we welcome new board members Gerry L. (Alt Treasurer), Tom W. (Member at Large), Mary U. (Member at Large), and Camille K. (Member at Large). Here's looking forward to a great board in 2023.

Intergroup's primary purpose is to assist the AA groups of Saint Paul and the Suburban area in carrying the message of Alcoholics Anonymous to those who still suffer.

Intergroup derives its legitimate authority from and is responsible to the member groups which it serves. In all its activities, policies and proceedings, Intergroup observes the practice and spirit of AA's Twelve Traditions and Twelve concepts for World Service, as well as its three legacies of Recovery, Unity and Service. Let us know how we can serve you and your groups.

With each new day we are sober, we can welcome in more change and more opportunities. Each day is a gift to be used in service to others as we trudge the road of happy destiny. All of us on the Intergroup

The 59th International Women's Conference February 16th - 19th, 2023 | Dallas, TX

IWC MISSION STATEMENT

The International Women's Conference is the bridge to a better understanding of the Alcoholics Anonymous philosophy and way of life because of our special needs in sobriety as women. We as women members of Alcoholics Anonymous are survivors. We have found a way to obtain meaning, depth, and responsibility in our lives. This came about out of desire, decision, determination, and spiritual guidance. An elevated sense of belonging that is brought about by the special services and a special need provided by our Women's Conference is our goal.



Register on-line by
JAN 18, 2023 at:
www.internationalwomensconference.org

St. Paul & Suburban Area Intergroup Representatives' Meeting Minutes, December 20th, 2022 7:30 pm

- Opened** with the Serenity Prayer, Introductions, and read the primary purpose of Intergroup
- Approved** prior month's minutes ([motion](#): Tom W, [2nd](#): Elly C). Motion passed to approve minutes with majority vote.
- Financial Report, Lindsey D.** -. If you have questions or for more info, please email treasurer@aastpaul.org. - The budget predicts an estimated loss of \$12,000 for 2023. This on top a likely loss of about \$10,000 this year - unless end of year contributions come in strong! This is an overall deficit of approximately \$25K. We need \$8k a month to break even (if all other budget assumptions are true.) In 2022, we averaged about \$7k a month. If we receive \$11,500/month, we can fully replenish our prudent reserve, hire an accountant, and make improvements to the website! Melana - would like to be sent a copy of the budget. Hard copy sent via mail. Lindsey D. will figure out how to make that happen.
- Office Report, Ken S** - see office report for full details. Books have been ordered from AAWS and the Grapevine to take advantage of current discounts and shipping offers. Fancy medallions have been popular lately. Expected to fill the Office Manager position early in the new year (hopefully January). The office still needs more volunteers and also help with Adobe InDesign to help get up to date with published materials.
- Night Owl Report, Rachel P**- monthly orientation 3rd Saturday @ 10AM; There are 17 open shifts - listed on Intergroup website.
- Outreach Report, Brian M** - Please ask your group members: What would you like Intergroup to do for you and your members in the coming years? What can we do to better serve you?
- Updated from the Board - Eliot W** - most of the focus was on approving the budget. Reports on financials, office, night owl, and outreach. We talked about gratitude night (success) and board orientation (1/7) for new board members. Old business included our personnel committee that's overseeing the hiring process for an Office Manager and part-time employee. Currently 4 people are in the running for the full-time position. Planning on having second interviews in the first week of January. Also voted to table a policy discussion in order to hopefully get more representative involvement in some of the policy construction. Not just our policy in HR construction, but some of our other committees. Committees do not have to be just board members. We would love to have more voices be a part of these committees and learn from the expertise of Intergroup reps and for board members to not be so overloaded. Board voted to remove a board member based on a lack of attendance. Looking for someone to fill this position for one year (second half of commitment).
- Liaison Reports**
 - District 8 - Lindsey D - elections were held last month, all positions filled except one. Still looking for an Alt-DCM (one-year position). If you're interested, contact Lindsey D. at 952-215-4471
 - District 15 & District 19 - no liaison present
- Intergroup Events:** Gratitude night was held on November 19th at Lutheran Church of the Redeemer. The main speaker was Dan G. from Iowa. Many board members pitched in to help out and the event went very well. We ran out of cake and coffee! Approx. \$1K in donations in and around that weekend.
- New Business**
The Intergroup Bylaws say that we can only have two people from each member group. Last year, we had 3 people that attended a group. We just elected 2 people from one group and we have another person already on the board from a specific group. Comment - people go to lots of different groups and this could very easily happen. Nancy T - 3 people out of the 8 board members are from the same meeting? Yes. Not all consider it their home group but they attend the same meeting. No objections raised from the representatives to letting the two newly elected and one existing board member continue their service for the elected terms. Member @ Large - support the board, bring another voice and another vote to the board, help out in transition. No regular reporting duties like the officers. Supporting the St Paul suburban area. It's a great way to get into service.
- Suggestions for next month's agenda:** Please contact Kelly K at secretary@aastpaul.org.
- Grapevine Report** - John C. Volunteer for January: Nancy T.
- Concept Review:** Concept XII Tom W. Volunteer for Concept I January: Lindsey D.
- Mock Rep Report:** Mary U. Volunteer for January: Camille K.
- Angie volunteered to take the Member @Large position - this election will take place next month. If anyone else would like to run, please show up to the January meeting.
- Closed** with the Responsibility Statement

Brian M - Board Chair	Eliot W - Alt Board Chair	Bill C - Alt Treasurer	Rachel P - Advisor, Night Owl
Kelly K - Secretary	Renee B - Member @ Large	Lindsey D - Treasurer	Ken S. - Interim Office Mgr
Chris L - OMD	Paul C - Night Owl Committee	Guy T - Fairmont AA	Ryan B- One More Was Added...
Nancy T. - River Rats	Jon C. - Third Edition	Camille K - A New Light	Mary U- Meeting of the Waters
Tom W - Firing Line	Mark - Summit Hill	Dale - SPOSM	Dina M - Hole in the Donut
Ben J - Basic Text	Gwen M - Womens Fireside BB	Gerry L -	Jim - Oasis Group
Melana M - just visiting	Greg K - Woodbury Wed. Noon	Angie - Elements	Gary B - No Time Like the Present
Alex L - Rule 62	Alex S - Second Sandwich	Mandy - POP	Dave P - Happy, Joyous & Free
Jim -			Henry D - One More was Added

Next Meeting: January 17th 7:30PM

Service

Service Workshop Sponsored by:
Greater Minneapolis Intergroup
of Alcoholics Anonymous

“It is through service that the greatest rewards are found.”

When: Saturday, February 18, 2023

Where: Bethlehem Lutheran Church

16023 Minnetonka Blvd., Minnetonka, Mn 55345

Lunch Provided

Time: 11:15am to 3:00pm

Hear panel of members share first hand experience having served in the following areas:

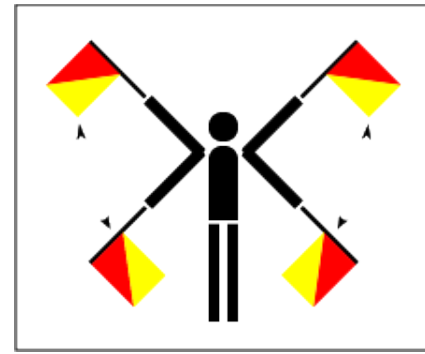
- *Answering Phones
- *Being on the 12th Step List
- *Group Phone Shifts
- *Serving as an Intergroup Rep
- *Area 36 Temp Contact for Corrections
- *Special Event Committees



- *Night Owl Monthly Shift
- *Early Bird Weekly Shift
- *Daytime Office Volunteer
- *Area 36 Temp Contact for Treatment
- *Speaking at non AA Facilities

Q & A Time Following the Panel

Workshop



Attention!!

There is a NEW PO Box for mailing your contributions in to the General Service Office in New York.

General Service Office
Post Office Box 2407
James A Farley Station
New York, NY 10116-2407

Be sure to use this address for ALL **contributions**.
Use the Box 459 address for only for general correspondence.



12th Step Calls

5



Website Visits

8,136



Office Calls

274



Night Owl Calls

235



Meeting Info Calls

79



Speakers Calls

8



Literature Purchased

300 Books

THE FOLLOWING GROUPS, MEMBERS AND FAITHFUL FIVER MEMBERS MADE THE ABOVE SERVICES POSSIBLE:

- A Baffled Lot
- Area 36
- Defiant Brats - West End Club
- Defiant Brats East
- Dresser Group
- Eagan Tuesday Nighters
- East Side Club - East Side Group
- Elements Group
- Firing Line
- Fourth Dimension
- Friday Nite 12x12 By The Book
- Gopher State Roundup
- Happy Joyous and Free - Mahtomedi
- Highland Park Groups
- January 6th Group- Roseville
- Lake City Group
- Mahtomedi Happy Hour 12 & 12
- Lake City Group
- Mahtomedi Happy Hour 12 & 12
- Lake City Group
- Mahtomedi Happy Hour 12 & 12
- Una Luz en el Camino Uptown Group
- Wednesday Night Men's 12 x 12
- Women's Basic Text
- Woodbury Primary Purpose

- 36 A.A. Groups contributed \$ 3,095
- 6 Gratitude Contributions totaled \$ 550
- 25 Faithful Fivers contributed \$ 1,883
- 17 Digital Contributions \$ 849

Thank You So Very Much!

LOOKING BACK

Ten New Years

MY AA anniversary is January first; this year marks a full decade of sobriety. It seemed a good time to look back and take stock. Old Grapevines with articles I wrote provided a springboard for the inventory; I looked through them to see how my thoughts about AA may have changed.

In the January, 1956 issue I found this (“I Have a Song to Sing”): “I am an alcoholic, a grateful, happy drunk. I wouldn’t change my disease for all of the riches of India, not even for incense and myrrh. You see I believe that we members of AA are most miraculously blessed. In order to survive--in order to maintain a safe margin of sanity and bodily health--we must only live the rest of our days trying ‘in all our affairs’ to approach a little nearer to that concept of personal fulfillment each man carries in his secret heart. What other illness demands of its victims nothing but a willing spirit to receive a foolproof remedy?”

January 1, 1957 (“Cherished Malady”): “I have a disease--a fatal disease which cannot be cured. I am an alcoholic, but I am a grateful, happy alcoholic. I am grateful because, as of this day, my implacable illness has been arrested in its progress. I am happy because the inspired therapy which returned me to health and sanity has also given me an opportunity for personal fulfillment in a world of values I never knew existed. Without this therapy, I know that I would now be dead. . .or living self-committed and without hope in some institution. This then is why I cherish my malady . . .”

January 1, 1962 (“The First Meeting”): “My first meeting was, fortunately for me, a beginners meeting. . . I came to it by one of those strange miracles I no longer call coincidence. It was on a New Year’s Eve and

so, symbolically, each New Year’s since has had a very special meaning for me. It marked the start of a beginning more purposeful than any I could have imagined on that cold, snowy night, seven years ago . . .”

These are fragments from the expressions of gratitude I was moved to write in past years as the time of my anniversary approached.

How easy it all seemed in the luminous pink-cloud condition of the first year! By the second year I was somewhat more realistic, and by the seventh I seem to have accepted, at last, that the AA road I had been granted to follow was not ‘a coincidence’ and that it led to purposeful not euphoric life.

This sobering up seems to me the natural and usual development in any AA life. I would no more have missed the high optimism of the early years than I would the growing pains of the latter ones. As far as my disease is concerned, I still feel exactly the same about it now as I did ten years ago. I am still grateful and glad that I am an alcoholic, and for much the same reasons. If anything, I am even more aware of the miraculous aspects of our program. I see myself reflected in every newcomer who enters my group. The affirmation of their miracle is the constant renewal of my own.

It is this affirmation and renewal which has kept me ever quickened to the gift of my own sobriety. I find in it the same light I found at my first meeting ten years ago. It is a steady glow--not at all diminished by the years. As long as I continue to avail myself of its warmth, so long do I believe I will continue to understand the positive nature of gratitude and its imperative in my continuing recovery. For the one thing that I did not know ten years ago--and would not have understood--is that the recovery is continuous and will be so as long as I remain an ‘arrested alcoholic’--for the rest of my life, I hope, believe, and trust.

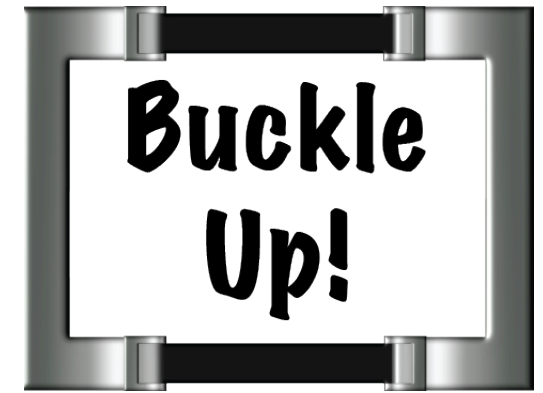
- H.W. - Pleasantville, New York
From the January 1965 Lifeline

DISTRICT SERVICE MEETINGS

District 8 (Ramsey Co.)
Fairview Community Center
1910 Cty. Rd B West, Rm 108
Roseville
3rd Wed., 7:00 PM
Email: dist8@area36.org (for Zoom info)

District 15 (Wash. Co.)
Christ Lutheran Church
11194 N. 36th St.
Lake Elmo
4th Mon., 7:00 PM
Email: dist15@area36.org (for Zoom info)

District 19 (Dakota Co.)
Rosemount Community Center
13885 South Robert Trail
Rosemount
2nd Wed., 7:00 PM
dist19@area36.org
Email: dist19@area36.org (for Zoom info)



From Box 459, January, 1978

*If there was no group. . .
After a recent discussion meeting, in which everyone shared the experience of using the AA principles in all their affairs, what came to my mind was the importance of Tradition One: “Our common welfare should come first; personal recovery depends upon AA unity.”*

Without the group, where would I be today? Would I be sober and happy? What if there had not been a group when my wife was searching for help for me, and for herself? What about the still-suffering alcoholic?

At first, I did not understand Tradition One, but today I can see how important it is to AA as a whole. Thank God for instilling this principle in our early members, and I hope I will always try to practice this Tradition.

R T.
Massen, NY

