



NATURE COAST JOURNAL



ARCHIVES CORNER

Recently the History and Archives Committee of District 28 has been having a period of undeserved success. The North Florida Area 14 Archivist Scott B. came to our District to celebrate the 75th anniversary of the first AA meeting in Florida which was held in Jacksonville in January of 1941. A large crowd enjoyed his presentation at Shepherd of The Hills Church in Lecanto. As if this was not enough the District 28 Archives was given a gift of a first edition of the Big Book of Alcoholics Anonymous. We are very grateful to Char S. who made this gift from the collection of deceased member Ruth M., a well known member of the Keep In Step Group, who had many years of sobriety and who died sober. We are fortunate that we are a part of the big picture of AA which we hope will continue to provide the unity and singleness of purpose so necessary for the future.



District 28 And Nature Coast Intergroup Present:

The Hotline: How We Carry The Message Workshop

**Saturday, February 13, 2016
1:00 PM to 4:00 PM**

**Club Recovery
Anvil Terrace
Hernando, FL 34441**

**Bill A. Jay B. Connie C. John H.
Paige B. Paula D. Steve N. Wendy S.**

How to answer the call, Working with the wet drunk, Detox?, Hospital?, They need a meeting, Their spouse really needs to stop, Role playing, Q&A, Fellowship, Fun, Trivia, Prizes, Refreshments, and more!

I am responsible. When anyone, anywhere, reaches out for help, I want the hand of AA to always be there. And for that, I am responsible.

For more information contact Steve or Paige at floridadistrict28@gmail.com.

Sign in a Pub

*If you are drinking to forget,
please pay in advance.*



One Sunday Afternoon

We can't change the things that happen, we can only change how we respond to them

I found myself newly divorced after a 20-year marriage, unemployed, and living with my mother and yet I kept drinking. When I got my third DUI, I finally had endured enough pain to reach out for help. I found recovery in the rooms of AA.

Early sobriety was a very challenging time for me, as I had made a complete mess of my life.

I had difficulty in every area of my life: work, play, finances, romances—all of it. But I found strength in God and in the Fellowship of AA and slowly, my life returned to how it was perhaps meant to be.

In 1997, I got married to a wonderful woman named Sherri. She didn't suffer from alcoholism, but she had her own demons. Together, we encouraged and supported each other as we both worked through our challenges. Our marriage was as solid as one could imagine. We were happy and looking forward to growing old together.

It was a beautiful Sunday afternoon. We had done as we always did on Sundays: we went to church and then to eat lunch and then home. I had some chores to do and Sherri went off to ride her horse. Three years earlier, Sherri had fallen in love with horses. She became an avid rider and had recently purchased her own horse—a real beauty named Prince. She was with him every opportunity and was preparing to be in her first competition.

I had finished up my chores and sat down to rest. It had been about three hours since Sherri had left so I texted her to see when she might come home. Within minutes, my phone rang and she came up on the caller ID. It was her trainer. He told me that she had fallen from the horse and was being life-flighted to the local trauma center.

My first reaction was annoyance. It wasn't how I wanted to spend my Sunday afternoon. But I found a buddy and we drove over to see the helicopter leaving the ranch.

Not much was said except that she was bleeding from her right ear and the paramedics thought it prudent to get her medical care right away. I returned home and gathered some clothes.

When I got to the hospital a little later, the doctor brought me into a small room. He told me that Sherri has suffered a very severe brain trauma. He said that they didn't expect her to survive the injuries.

He took me to see her. She was lying on a steel gurney—dirty, bloody and motionless. I fell into a nearby chair and began to pray to God. I prayed to the

same God I met in AA. I begged and pleaded him to save her life. I wasn't ready to have her leave me. It was all about me.

Meanwhile, here lay a woman, who was a vibrant mother of four adult children and a business woman who was adored by all her clients. We thoroughly enjoyed our life together. She was my best friend and confidant. We had so many dreams of the days ahead. Now none of that mattered.

After seven days, they induced a coma in order to do some surgery. It was a miracle she had survived to that point. She had been on life support and I think

everyone was waiting for her to pass. I guess God had other ideas.

When she awoke, there was a long road of recovery ahead. She had to learn how to walk again after being paralyzed.

Throughout this time, I went to at least six meetings a week and I practiced the principles as best I could. I continued to do service and sponsor other men. The miracle was that I didn't have any compulsion to drink.

Today, Sherri lives in an assisted care facility. She will never be the same woman I knew before. I still love her with every fiber of my being and continue to serve her as best I can. I still dream that one day, she will come home.

As one can imagine, I have experienced every emotion from desperation to anger to joy. There was a time when Sherri didn't know who I was. There were also many days and nights of manic conversations. Her travels took her from one hospital to another; from one rehab to another; and in November 2014, she came home. For a short while, I was elated. But it became clear that she needed more care than we could provide at home.

She was readmitted to the care facility. She still lives there today. She does therapy three times a week and doctors work to monitor her medication. We are seeing slow improvements.

All throughout this, I have sought knowledge of God's will for me and the strength and power to carry it out. It's not always an easy task as my feelings sometimes get in the way.

Over 24 years ago, I walked into an AA meeting in Salem, Ore., a broken and deflated man. Today, because of the love and compassion of so many men and women in AA, I know that God has and will do for me what I could never do for myself. He continues to lead me to a life of love and caring for others, no matter what the circumstance. I will be forever grateful for the life I have been freely given provided I practice the Twelve Steps.

—Karl K.



AA In Florida Turns 75!

What an event it was! On Saturday, January 16 at Shepherd of the Hills Church we commemorated and celebrated the start of AA in Florida 75 years ago. In Jacksonville, in 1941, when Mr. Junius Cotton and Mr. Tom Sharpe met, they started AA in Florida.

Area 14 Archivist, Scott B., brought a fantastic sampling of the North Florida Area Archives and spoke to a gathering of nearly 100 members on the start of AA in Florida, its founders and what it was like. Most impressive was some of the early "rules" for admission notably, NO women. In the display were incredible items including china with the illustrated perils of drinking from the 1800s and a wood burning stove axe bearing the image of Carrie Nation and a warning to leave whiskey alone.

District 28 Archives were on display as well. Recently, both a first and a second edition of the "Big Book" were donated to the District 28 Archives from the collection of Ruth M. District 28 Literature and Grapevine displays completed the amazing AA turnout.

James N. of Ocala addressed the group after cake and coffee. With eloquence and humor he illustrated what getting sober in Florida was like 30 years ago. Times have changed however, the message, our common solution, remains the same, "Nothing insures immunity from drinking as much as intensive work with other alcoholics." The tremendous love and power of the program of Alcoholics Anonymous was so well communicated.

Many thanks to all who made the event possible particularly, the set-up crew, Wendy S., District 28 Workshop Chair, and both District 28 and The Nature Coast Intergroup for sponsoring the event.

— Paige B.



Enjoy the Nature Coast Journal in living color! Either view it online at ncintergroup.com or have it delivered to you electronically by sending an email to editor@ncintergroup.com

Districts 13, 17 and 28 present:

The 2016 Pre-Conference Agenda Review

With

Glenn W. Area 14 Delegate

Saturday, March 12, 2016
2:00 PM to 5:00PM

The First Assembly of God Church
4201 S. Pleasant Grove Road
Inverness, FL 34452

Preserving our future...by sharing and carrying the message today.

Join us for fellowship, refreshments and fun...Trivia with prizes! "We are not a glum lot!"

Please let us know you plan to attend.

To RSVP or for more information contact us at floridadistrict28@gmail.com.

Nature Coast Intergroup Officers & Chairpersons

Chair.....Rick T.
Vice Chair.....Steve N.
Secretary.....Jen B.
Treasurer.....Paige B.
Events Chair.....Lynn D.
Hotline Chair.....[VACANT]
Journal Editor.....Lynn G.
Website Chair.....Steve N.
Trustees.....Sandy H., Denis S., Janet B., Bill M.

Thank you for your service!

Contribute to the Journal!
news@ncintergroup.com

Anniversaries

Crystal River Group

Jackie.....7
Debbie Lee.....2



Holder Way of Life Group

Beverly C.34

Rainbow Group

Lloyd..... 4

Women's New Beginnings Group

January

Helen G.7
Nancy M.12
Lisa B.16

February

Stacy B.16

Save The Date!

Feb 13.....Hotline Workshop
Feb 28.... NCI and District 28 Monthly Meetings
Mar 12.....Pre-Conference Agenda Review
Mar 13....NCI and District 28 Monthly Meetings
Apr 8, 9, 10.....Area Assembly - Gainesville
Apr 17 - 23.....General Service Conference
Apr 24.....NCI and District 28 Monthly Meetings

Contributions:

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Promises and Principles

After ten years in the program, she decided that AA worked for her too

Since coming into AA in November of 2002, I have weathered many crises and events. I moved to a new city, I found new sponsors, I lived through the death of my mother, and two of my dearest friends, and several pets.

I have been betrayed by people I thought were trustworthy, and I discovered that other people I didn't trust were trustworthy. I have uncovered character defects that led me to other 12-Step programs.

I have been baffled, confused, not "good" at anything. I jumped into a new career at 14 months sober and after failing miserably, and unable to return to my old career, I had to figure out who I was without the label of my job. Finally, I have found a freedom in my daily life that I never had before. I found a new level of joy, an open-mindedness, and a willingness to try new things.

Today, I can be in the moment regardless of what is going on around me, and be OK. Today, I get to decide to be happy and OK right now. That doesn't mean I have to be perfect. I accept my humanness. I can cry in meetings and not be embarrassed. Today, I know how to do service without praise. Today, I determine the quality of my life by my insides, not my outsides. Today, I have the ability to make good decisions based on common sense and the principles of the program, not on my feelings or what others think I should do.

I know that the odds are against me of staying sober, so I work very hard on my recovery. I am willing to take the right actions to be aligned with God's will. I worked this program for years without believing it would work for me. Honestly, I think I was white-knuckling it for my first 8 years, although I was doing the Steps, and service, going to meetings, working with my sponsor and sponsoring others. One day, I realized that I had gone longer without taking a drink than I ever had and it occurred to me that AA worked for me too.

—Lauri S.

One Day At A Time