



NOVEMBER 2016

NATURE COAST JOURNAL



GRATITUDE DINNER SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 6

**Our Lady of Fatima Church
550 US 41 South, Inverness FL 34450**

**Doors open at 4:00 pm
Dinner at 5:00 pm
Speaker at 6:00 pm
\$4.00 contribution per person**

**We ask each group to furnish a
cooked ham or turkey.**

**We ask individuals to bring the item indicated
on the back of your ticket.**

**Tickets available from your
Nature Coast Intergroup
Rep or by email
events@ncintergroup.com**



Principle of Step 11

Spirituality

ARCHIVES CORNER

District 28 took Gainesville by storm recently. We were invited to present our district's history at the North Florida Area Assembly in early October. DCM Steve N. gave a beautiful presentation of AA images from all around the district while ensuring that everyone's anonymity was protected.



Long-timers Dick M. and Gus B. reminisced about times past when there were very few meetings in our district and recalled one that was frequently interrupted by blasting from the Black Diamond Quarry, which is now a fancy golf course.

Archivist Denis S. said that today newcomers and visitors would find Alcoholics Anonymous in full flight here with District 28 committees and the Nature Coast Intergroup working closely together, providing support that is equal to any in the world.

Comments from those who serve at the Area level were very favorable towards our presentation.

We will all proceed one day at a time!

Step 11 — “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.”

The 11th Concept of AA Service — The trustees should always have the best possible committees, corporate service directors, executives, staffs, and consultants. Composition, qualifications, induction procedures, and rights and duties will always be matters of serious concern.”

Save the Date!

Thursday, December 1, 2016

Long-timers Meeting & Bake Sale

Watch for flyers with details to come!



Calendar

Nov 6.....Gratitude Dinner
Nov 12.....NCI and District 28 Monthly Meetings
Dec 1.....Long-timers Meeting & Bake Sale
Dec 2 - 4.....Southeast Regional Forum
Dec 11.....Holiday Open House
Dec 11.....NCI and District 28 Monthly Meetings
Dec 31.....New Year's Eve Event

Come to the Southeast Regional Forum!

December 2 - 4, 2016

Lake Mary Marriott

1501 International Parkway

Lake Mary, FL 32746

Room rate: \$129 + tax Friday and Saturday
NO REGISTRATION FEE!

This is a weekend of sharing and informational sessions designed to help the General Service Board and Staff, AA World Services, Inc., and the Grapevine Corporate Board and Staff stay in touch with AA members, trusted servants and NEWCOMERS to service throughout the AA structure.

Register at www.aa.org. Click "For groups and members" then "Regional Local Forums" then "Online Forum Registration".

To reserve hotel, call 1-800-380-7724 or 1-407-995-1100 and reference group code SERF.

Cut off is November 14, 2016

For more information, email serfnfac2016@gmail.com

Quotable Quotes

"No matter how unreasonable others may seem, I am responsible for not reacting negatively. Regardless of what is happening around me I will always have the prerogative and the responsibility, of choosing what happens within me. I am the creator of my own reality. When I review my day, I know that I must stop judging others. If I judge others, I am probably judging myself. Whoever is upsetting me most is my best teacher. I have much to learn from him or her, and in my heart, I should thank that person."

— Bill W.

Thank you District 28 for sponsoring a wonderful workshop about chairing and sharing a meeting! It was great to see a nice representation from the various groups in our District. Jay B. encouraged the different teams to share their experience, strength and hope on the various aspects of chairing and sharing different types of meetings. Upon reflection of the workshop, the main themes I came away with were: the importance of autonomy of the groups / meetings as they relate to AA as a whole in carrying the message, planning by the groups within the group conscious meetings (business meetings) and to grow from experiences within the group. It's also important for me to continue to have good sponsorship to guide me in knowing the Traditions of AA and how to apply them to be a responsible member of AA.

Thank you again to everyone involved who made this workshop a success and for helping me to grow in sobriety!

In love and service,

Paula D.

First Thought Wrong Group

Next issue of Nature Coast Journal will be December 2016 / January 2017. Please get contributions in covering both months by November 20, please!
news@ncintergroup.com

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Reward is Another Day of Life

(reprinted with permission from the AA Grapevine)

She isn't the perfect spouse, parent, or sponsor, but then again it's not perfect people who stay sober—just those who believe in doing service and living life one day at a time.

I recently celebrated 25 years sober in AA surrounded by my spiritual family, all my friends in recovery. There was cake, flowers, balloons; boy, did I really let my “kid” out to play! But it wasn't just me celebrating. We were celebrating because we did this together.

There truly are miracles happening here. I know I am a miracle because I am not unique. Yes, I came in at 18 years of age and stayed, but that only makes me realize how very blessed (or lucky, if you prefer) I truly am.

In these 25 years, I have seen so many of us alcoholics go out, some of them my closest friends or even sponsors. It has hurt to see them choose to go back to drinking, to the unmanageable life. Some have returned, but most have not. But I keep moving forward in my recovery, hand-in-hand with my God. I have to. There is nowhere else for me to go.

My life is in here, in the rooms of AA. My husband is in AA. My 5-year old daughter has never seen me drunk and I pray to God that she never will. I have enough flaws without putting booze back into the picture. I am not the perfect wife, mother or sponsor. Every day I make mistakes and every day I get to forgive myself for them and try to do better. If there is one thing I have come to understand in the time I have been in AA, it is the concept of “progress, rather than perfection.”

Only God is perfect. All I can do is try to follow God's will every day to the best of my ability, practice loving myself unconditionally (warts and all), and be of service to my fellows.

It is through service that I get to give my love back to God and show my gratitude for all the blessings God has bestowed upon me, whether it be those of the material kind such as my family, my home, my job, my cars, and my health; or blessings of a spiritual nature, such as self-confidence, integrity, compassion, forgiveness, faith, and charity. I keep thinking of the book *Pass It On* and how an AA member told Bill W. how much AA had given him and how grateful he was. Bill W. basically told him that he was preaching to the choir. He needed to “pass it on.”

In other words, if we truly love AA and are grateful for our recovery, we need to share this with the newcomer and be of service. So I try to be of service in and out of the rooms of AA. I try to serve with love and let go of the attachment to the results of my service. Even if no one else sees my “good deeds”, God sees them and my reward is another day of life.

Another day clean and sober.

— Maricelle J., Aurora, OR

Upcoming Anniversaries — November 2016

Crystal River Group

Rick D. 28
Archie B. 22
Chuck A. 20
Winston C. 17
George W. 15
Mark A. 6
John U. 5
Sam L. 4
Amber S. 3
Gina S. 2

Holder Way of Life Group

Joan B. 33
Charlie W. 32
Brad W. 5

Rainbow Group

Bob Sc. 13
Bob Sp. 1
Steve 33

What's The Book Say Group

Gloria P. 1

Women's New Beginnings Group

Gabrielle V. 6

Women's Friendship Group

Gloria P. 1



*Please email December
& January
anniversaries by 11/20*

news@ncintergroup.com

Sobriety Lessons

(reprinted with permission from the AA Grapevine)

From learning to listen to finding the right meeting, a man with twenty-two years in the program provides seven lessons towards a better sobriety.

My name is John and I'm an alcoholic. Through the miracle of my Higher Power whom I choose to call God, I have 22 years of sobriety.

I quit drinking in the early 1970s for one and a half years, and in the late 1980s for almost a year, without attending AA. I slipped at a 1970s happy party and in the 1980s after a sad funeral visitation. Since then, I have learned to guard my sobriety during happy and sad occasions. My wife died in 1992 and drinking took over my life. After two years of almost daily drinking, I knew I had to quit because I was going to kill myself through suicide, sickness, or accident. Considering my grown children had lost their mother to breast cancer, my death by alcoholism would not be fair to them.

On Friday, June 24, 1994 I attended my first AA meeting in a basement under a jewelry store. I was flabbergasted! I was the oldest person there. How could these youngsters have multiple years of sobriety? They must have quit drinking while they were still wearing diapers. When the meeting concluded, I explained to a member this was my first meeting and he suggested I buy two books, one entitled *Alcoholics Anonymous*, the other *Twenty Four Hours a Day*. They suggested I carefully read and study these books.

Lesson learned: Study the Big Book and read the daily literature.

The next evening, a Saturday, I attended another meeting on the campus of a university. I was expecting young college students, but this time the group was middle-aged. Go figure. Each member introduced themselves and told their experiences of the week. After they had spoken everyone looked at me. I introduced myself, saying, "My name is John, and I don't know what I am." I explained about my life, and was offered a white chip of surrender. I selected this group as my home group and a year later received my one year coin. My daughter, may she rest in peace, attended the celebration. With tears streaming down her cheeks she explained how grateful she was that I had been sober for a year. She, too, passed away from breast cancer in 2013.

Lesson learned: Make amends to your family members.

The next morning, a Sunday, I attended church and as the minister was about to offer the Morning Prayer he suggested everyone pray silently for someone. I looked around the sanctuary and thought, "Nobody needs a silent prayer more than me." Was I selfish? Maybe so, I grasped the pew in front of me and prayed, "God, if you will take the craving of booze from me I will try to be a better man." I cannot describe the instant feeling of release I received. A few days later the craving returned and I asked, "God, I thought we made a deal." The craving left and has never returned. I might add God has lived up to his part of the bargain more

than I have. I am so thankful to my Higher Power for removing the addiction of alcohol from me.

Lesson learned: Get in touch with a Higher Power.

I attended lots of meetings over a four year period. However, all good things must end and in the second and third years of my sobriety, attendance at the Thursday evening meeting declined. Some members moved away, while others simply quit coming. Once weekly for two years, I faithfully made the 60 mile round trip to attend that meeting and was more often than not the only person present. I would read the Big Book for about an hour and go home. Several times new people came to inquire about AA, but I was new in sobriety and it was difficult to explain the AA program. I tried my best but they never came back.

Lesson learned: Nobody is perfect, even though I tried my best.

One Thursday evening, I was the only person attending and a man came in and asked for help. He explained he wasn't an alcoholic, rarely drank, but was ticketed for DWI after attending a party. His trial was coming up and he wanted "a real alcoholic" to appear with him to tell the judge how the DWI charge was unfair. I told him he should hire a lawyer. He told me he had a lawyer but didn't like his advice to plead guilty. I told him I wouldn't be a good candidate to ask the judge to dismiss the charge, because I had never had a DWI.

Words cannot describe his facial expression, although "priceless" does a pretty good job. He didn't believe me. I told him to check my records. A few years later and more acquainted in AA, I realized how this man wanted me to trample all over the AA Traditions, specifically Traditions Five, Six, Ten, Eleven and Twelve. He never came back to the meeting either. I wonder why?

Lesson learned: Study the Traditions.

In early January 1998, I conceded the Thursday evening meeting was lost. The door was locked for the third straight time. I began attending meetings in other communities and have since found a great Thursday meeting.

Lesson learned: Find new meetings.

Throughout the years I have heard the following remarks from fellow AA members and I keep them deeply embedded in my mind. "If I don't take the first drink I don't have to worry about the second, third or fourth or the bottom of the fifth that gets me drunk." "Live life on life's terms because God will never put a burden on your shoulders that He and you cannot handle together." "I keep an open mind, but not so open my brains fall out."

Lesson learned: Pay attention to what others say at meetings because I learn more by listening than by speaking.