



# NATURE COAST JOURNAL



*August/September 2018*

*Nature Coast Intergroup presents:*

## *Picnic in the Park*

*Saturday September 15, 2018  
from 11 am to 4 pm*

*Felburn Pavilion at  
Rainbow Springs State Park  
in Dunnellon*

*Fun, food, fellowship, Speaker,  
games, swimming, hiking, 50/50 etc.*

*Bring a friend and come help us  
celebrate the Summer*

*Tickets through the groups.*

## **IT'S ELECTION TIME!**

**District 28 will have nominations for  
Elections at the August Business  
Meeting in the Holder  
Community**

**Center on Sunday August 5<sup>th</sup>. Voting  
will take place at the September  
Meeting on Sunday September 9<sup>th</sup>.**

**Nature Coast Intergroup  
will have**

**nominations at the September  
Meeting on the 9<sup>th</sup> for voting at the  
October Meeting on Sunday October  
7<sup>th</sup>. Please come and participate.**

## **UPCOMING EVENTS**

*The next Area Assembly will be held at the Paramount Hotel in Gainesville on September 28, 29 and 30. This will be an Elections assembly and the next panel will be chosen for a two year period to start on January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2019. This will be the last Assembly in Gainesville as Area 14 will be meeting at the World Golf Village in St. Augustine for 2019 and 2020 Assemblies.*

*62<sup>nd</sup> Florida State Convention-Waves of Serenity. August 15<sup>th</sup> to the 19<sup>th</sup>, Harbor Beach Marriott, Fort Lauderdale. To register go to the website:*

*[floridastateconvention.com](http://floridastateconvention.com) or call Gary at  
954-270-6215*

## History of Medallions: By Dean B

Someone asked me recently about the history of medallions in AA. I didn't know but I searched the Yahoo group and this is what I found.

This is collection of info on Chips, Medallions and Birthdays. Much of it came from The A.A. Grapevine.

The traditions of chips, medallions and birthdays vary in different parts of the country and I thought it would be interesting to look up some of the history on them. Sister Ignatia, the nun who helped Dr. Bob get the hospitalization program started at St. Thomas Hospital in Akron was the first person to use medallions in Alcoholics Anonymous. She gave the drunks who were leaving St. Thomas after a five day dry out a Sacred Heart Medallion and instructed them that the acceptance of the medallion signified a commitment to God, to A.A. and to recovery and that if they were going to drink, they had a responsibility to return the medallion to her before drinking. The sacred heart badges had been used prior to A.A. by the Father Matthew Temperance Movement of the 1840s and the Pioneers an Irish Temperance Movement of the 1890s.

The practice of sobriety chips in A.A. started with a Group in Elmira, N.Y. in 1947 and has grown from there.

The celebration of birthdays came from the Oxford Group where they celebrated the anniversary of their spiritual rebirth. As we have a problem with honesty, A.A. chose the anniversary of the date of our last drink.

Early celebrations of birthdays resulted in people getting drunk and Dr. Harry Tiebout was asked to look at the problem and he commented on this phenomenon in an article titled "When the Big "I" Becomes Nobody", (AAGV, Sept. 65) "Early on in A.A., I was consulted about a serious problem plaguing the local group. The practice of celebrating a year's sobriety with a birthday cake had resulted in a certain number of the members getting drunk within a short period after the celebration. It seemed apparent that some could not stand prosperity. I was asked to settle between birthday cakes or no birthday cakes. Characteristically, I begged off, not from shyness but from ignorance. Some three or four years later, A.A. furnished me the answer. The group no longer had such a problem because, as one member said, "We celebrate still, but a year's sobriety is now a dime a dozen. No one gets much of a kick out of that anymore." he AAGV carried many articles on chips and cakes and the following is a brief summary of some.

Feb. 1948, Why All the Congratulations? "When we start taking bows (even on anniversaries) we bow ourselves right into the cuspidor." July, 1948. Group To Give Oscar for

Anniversaries .The Larchmont Group of Larchmont, N.Y. gives a cast bronze camel mounted on a mahogany base to celebrate 1st., 5th and 10th anniversaries. "The camel is wholly emblematic of the purposes of most sincere A.A.s, i.e., to live for 24 hours without a drink." August 1948. The Artesta, N.Mex. Group awards marbles to all members. If you are caught without your marbles, you are fined 25 cents. This money goes into the Foundation Fund. June 1953, We operate a poker chip club in the Portland Group (Maine). We have poker chips of nine colors of which the white represents the probation period of one month. If he keeps his white chip for one month he is presented with a red chip for one month's sobriety. The chips continue with blue for two months, black for three, green for four, transparent blue for five amber for six, transparent purple for nine months and a transparent clear chip for one year. We have our chips stamped with gold A.A. letters. Also at the end of the year and each year thereafter, we present them with a group birthday card signed by all members present at the meeting. January 1955, Charlotte, N.C. "When a man takes "The Long Walk" at the end of a meeting, to pick up a white chip, he is admitting to his fellow men that he has finally accepted the precepts of A.A. and is beginning his sobriety. At the end of three months he exchanges his white chip for a red one. Later, a handsome, translucent chip of amber indicates that this new member has enjoyed six months of a new way of life. The nine month chip is a clear seagreen and a blue chip is given for the first year of sobriety. In some groups a sponsor will present his friend with an engraved silver chip, at the end of five years clear thinking and clean living. March 1956, The One Ton Poker Chip. Alton, Illinois. Author gave friend a chip on his first day eight years ago (1948) and told him to accept it in the spirit of group membership and that if he wanted to drink to throw the chip away before starting drinking.

October 1956, Bangor Washington. Article about a woman who sits in a bar to drink the bartender sees her white chips and asks what it is. She tells him. He throws her out as he does not want an alcoholic in his bar. She calls friend.

April 1957, Cape Cod, Mass. Group recognizes 1st, 5th and 15th anniversaries. Person celebrating leads meeting. Person is presented with a set of wooden carved plaques with the slogans.

July 1957, New Brunswick, Canada. Birthday Board. Member contributes one dollar for each year of sobriety.

July 1957, Oregon. Person is asked to speak and is introduced by his or her sponsor. The wife, mother, sister or other relative brings up a cake. The Group sings Happy Birthday. The wife gives a two or three minute talk.

April 1959, Patterson, N.J. People are asked to give "three month pin talks."

**And That's A Little Bit Of Info On Chips, Cakes And Medallions.**

**HOTLINE NUMBER**

**352-621-0599**

## ANNIVERSARIES

### Women's Friendship Group

#### AUGUST

Char S	14
Genet R	30
Donna K	2
Linda A	3
Little Feather	34

#### SEPTEMBER

Susan J	37
Barbara C	41
Lina A	24
Betty R	37

### Rainbow Group

August	
Ken	28
John L.	32

### Crystal River Group

#### AUGUST

David P	37
Nancy B	32
Dorene C	19
Sheila	11
Edward C	11
David B	8
Chris G	6
Kayla P	5
Sherry H	3
Marlene	1

#### SEPTEMBER

Richard W	39
Denis S	31
Dan E	24
Sandy S	23
Jim G	22
Wendy S	22
Jen B	15
Ingrid R	15
Joe C	11
Phyllis B	8
Mike B	6
Kristi	5
Steven G	2

### DID YOU KNOW?

- You can go to Nature Coast Intergroup website and click on Audio to listen to the Big Book and/or the 12 & 12 whenever you don't feel like reading it yourself
- You can go the Nature Coast Intergroup, the District 28 or AA.org websites any time of the day or night to find a meeting or someone to talk to. You are not alone.
- It is estimated that there are over 118,000 groups and over 2,000,000 members in approximately 180 countries.
- The ONLY requirement for AA Membership is the desire to stop drinking.

### RESPONSIBILITY STATEMENT

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

As Bill Sees It page 79

### Whose Responsibility?

“An A.A. Group, as such, cannot take on all the personal problems of its members, let alone those of nonalcoholics in the world around us. The A.A. Group is not, for example, a mediator of domestic relations, nor does it furnish personal financial aid to anyone.

“Though a member may sometimes be helped in such matters by his friends in A.A., the primary responsibility for the solutions of all his problems of living and growing rests squarely upon the individual himself. Should an A.A. Group attempt this sort of help, its effectiveness and energies would be hopelessly dissipated.

“This is why sobriety-- freedom from alcohol—through the teaching and practice of A.A.'s Twelve Steps, is the sole purpose of the group. If we do

n't stick to this cardinal principle, we shall almost certainly collapse. And if we collapse we cannot help anyone.”

From the August 2018 magazine.

## Crazy for service

A district Grapevine rep discovers a wonderful world of service, meeting others and carrying the message

Ever since 1989, Grapevine has been an integral part of my sobriety. I can still remember reading it in the California recovery home I was in.

With my short attention span, it was much easier to read than the Big Book. The cartoons were always my favorite, with Victor E. being the first thing I looked for when I opened an issue. "If Walls Could Talk" is another favorite.

My sponsors have all been "service junkies" and I have held many service positions during my sobriety. By far, my favorite position was getting to serve as our district's Grapevine representative (GVR). I must admit that when I received the email from our DCM (who happened to be my sponsor at the time) looking for volunteers for the position, I didn't respond. But then a conversation with my sponsor about me feeling disconnected from my home group and AA brought me back to the position.

In my new role, I carried a large purple suitcase (which I named "the grape"). It was filled with Grapevine books, CDs, cassettes, subscription forms and other materials. My first task was to take an inventory of the contents of my suitcase. That's when I learned about all the different Grapevine publications. I had no idea they published so many books!

Not knowing where to begin, I went to [www.aagrapevine.org](http://www.aagrapevine.org) for ideas and found a wealth of resources for Grapevine reps. I was so excited to find a 16-page handbook for new reps and a 101-page workbook that described the job of GVRs at the group, district and area levels. I was able to download these and make copies. Once I saw the gallery of Grapevine displays, I was off and running.

I had, for a moment, a grandiose idea of a life-sized poster of Victor E. as part of our display. However I quickly abandoned that idea when I discovered how much money the poster would cost. Still, my enthusiasm was undaunted as I found more cost-effective ideas for displays in the workbook.

I started small. I bought a trifold display, the kind commonly used in school science projects. Working with another GVR, we decorated the trifold using fabric that had printed images of grapes. Then we added printouts from the website, back issues of Grapevines, along with "Man on the Bed" and Victor E. printouts. This display did the trick in attracting folks over to our spread of magazines, books, calendars, CDs and posters.

All this provided me a wonderful opportunity to carry the message and share my love of Grapevine. Using the suggestions we found from the workbook, we placed Grapevine subscriptions in our local library, our homeless shelter and in our county's alcohol and drug services building.

I soon discovered that traveling around our district with "the grape" (often with our sponsees and other AA members) helped me to reconnect to the Fellowship and my Higher Power. It opened the door for me to attend new meetings I would not otherwise have gone to. But that's how service works. It takes me to places I wouldn't normally go, and to hang out with people I might not normally mix with. And for that I am really grateful.

-- Vera F.

Bend, OR