



# NATURE COAST JOURNAL

*July/August 2019*



Nature Coast Intergroup Presents:

## **Picnic in the Park**

**Saturday**

**September 14th, 2019**

**Event time 11:00 am to 4:00 pm**

**Food served from Noon to 4:00 pm**

**The Felburn Pavilion**

**At**

## **Rainbow Springs State Park**

**19158 SW 81<sup>st</sup> Place Road**

**Dunnellon, FL 34432**

The Pavilion is located close to the main entrance  
and is handicapped accessible

**\$7.00 Suggested Donation at the gate**  
**(Includes Park Admission)**

**Come join us in fun and fellowship!**

**Desserts and Salads welcome!**

For information or to volunteer, contact us at  
[events@ncintergroup.com](mailto:events@ncintergroup.com)

## **Carrying The Message**

### **Part II**

**By Dean B.**

By the time you arrive at the Twelfth Step, you'll probably have many discussions with your sponsor under your belt about any number of points related to the Steps, the Twelve Traditions, and the Twelve Concepts of Service. But, if you haven't touched on being of service to any great extent, now is certainly the time to ask your sponsor about how you can get involved.

Chances are pretty good that your sponsor will encourage you to become active in service early on. In fact, some long-time fellowship members refer to A.A. as a kind of 36-point program: 12 steps, 12 traditions, and 12 concepts.

There's really no mystery about service work. In fact, your sponsor is doing service work when he takes you under his wing and tries to make you aware of what A.A. is as a whole. Think about the things you and your sponsor talk about. It's very likely that he has made an effort to interest you in ...*[continued on page 3]*

**July 7th & August 4**

**Nature Coast Intergroup at 4:30pm**

**and District Business Meeting at 5:45pm**

**Nature Coast Intergroup and District 28 meet  
at Shepherd of the Hills Episcopal Church, 2540**

**W. Novell Bryant**

**Highway (CR 486), Lecanto**

**HOTLINE 352-621-0599**

### One day at a time

There are two days in every week about which we should not worry - two days that should be kept free from fear and apprehension. One of these days is yesterday, with its mistakes and cares, its faults and blunders, its aches and pains. Yesterday has passed forever beyond our control. All the money in the world cannot bring back yesterday. We cannot undo a single act we performed. We cannot erase a single word we said. Yesterday is gone. The other day we should not worry about is tomorrow. Tomorrow is beyond our immediate control. Tomorrow's sun will rise, whether in splendor or behind a mask of clouds, but it will rise. Until it does, we have no stake in tomorrow. This leaves only one day - today. Anyone can fight the battles of just one day. It is when you and I add burdens of those awful eternities - yesterday and tomorrow - that we break down. Let us, therefore, live but one day at a time.

-Anonymous

### CONTRIBUTIONS

#### District 28

P.O. Box 640914  
Beverly Hills, FL 34464

#### Nature Coast Intergroup

P.O. Box 2634  
Crystal River, FL 34423

#### North Florida Area Conference

(Please write District 28 and your group number on the check)

Make checks payable to NFAC and send to:

P.O. Box 10094  
Jacksonville FL 32247

#### General Service Office

P.O. Box 459  
Grand Central Station  
New York, NY 10163

*\*Online contributions may be made by visiting AA.org. Credit card or E-check accepted.*

# PARTY



# SOBER

AA Groups are fundamentally little bands of people who are friends, who can help each other stay sober. Each group therefore reflects the needs of its own members. The way a group is managed is the way its members want it to be managed for their common benefit.

As a result we have large groups, small groups, groups which have refreshments, groups which like long meetings, groups which like short meetings, social groups, working groups, men's groups, women's groups, groups that play cards, groups which specialize in young people and as many other varieties as there are kinds of people. Each group has its own customs, its own financial problems and its own method of operation.

As long as it follows as a group the same principles AA recommends for individuals on unselfishness, honesty, decency and tolerance it is above criticism.

AA in Cleveland - 1946

.... [continued from page 1]... service work beyond the group.

### *Read the Literature*

Want to start out as soon as possible? Other long-time A.A. members, sponsors, and those involved in service work advise that you read the Big Book and A.A. Comes of Age. Not only will you “find yourself,” but you’ll also think of many ways that you can start being of service.

There’s also The A.A. Service Manual Combined with Twelve Concepts for World Service, also by Bill W. The manual begins with a history of A.A. services and then goes on to explain the Conference structure and the importance of its year-round work. There’s also the Conference Charter and General Service Board By-Laws, if you want to get in-depth into that. But most important is the section on The Concepts, as set forth by Bill W. These are the principles of service that have grown out of A.A.’s accomplishments – and its mistakes – from the beginning. If nothing else, reading this publication will prove eye-opening – and inspiring.

### *Be Active to Stay Sober*

There certainly is no requirement that you have to go into service. But many in recovery relate that they felt they were only able to remain sober because they became active in service to others.

How can this be? The truth is that being abstinent takes hard work. You can’t just sit back and say to yourself that you’re doing okay so far, maybe you can skip meetings and still get by. You know where that gets you – a quick slip or major relapse can’t be far off. You know you have to actively work the 12 steps, and you can’t take sobriety for granted. When you do, something will happen that will rock your stability and you’ll be ill-prepared to handle the challenge.

You may have heard the stories yourself, or read about them in the A.A. literature. One member says that he doubted he’d have been able to stay sober for 26 years without being in service. Another proclaims that service is a part of who he is.

### *Good Intentions are a Good Start*

Start off by just trying to help – the aforementioned greeting newcomers with a smile, being of assistance wherever and whenever you can.

While some may question whether it’s because they want to be liked, need recognition and approval from others, or just because they like A.A. and being in the group, as long as your intention and motivation is good, you will be okay. In other words, don’t rack your brain looking or waiting for a pure motive. Just get going and start doing.

### *General Service May Not Be For Everyone*

For many in recovery, general service is perhaps going a bit too far. General service may not be for everyone. You don’t need to feel forced or pressured into working on committees or going into intergroup and area institutions – and no one in A.A. will try to push such an agenda on you if you’re not interested or ready. Sure, they may suggest it, even encourage it. You’d expect that, since Dr. Bob himself once said that if we fail to acquire a spirit of service, we will have missed out on the greatest gift A.A. has to offer – the ability to give our sobriety away and so keep it.

Service is actually the Third Legacy of A. A. – following behind Recovery, the First Legacy, and Unity, the Second Legacy. As the pamphlet states: “Service to others and to the Fellowship reminds us that we owe our sobriety to the work of earlier members, and that our continued sobriety may depend on the hundreds of thousands who still need to learn of A.A.”

That’s it. Simple and uncomplicated, giving of yourself and being of service to others in recovery is one of the best ways to strengthen your own recovery. In essence, you give and you receive.

Twice blessed.

## **Go with the flow.**

Let go of fear and your need to control. Relinquish anxiety. Let it slip away, as you dive into the river of the present moment, the river of your life, your place in the universe.

Stop trying to force the direction. Try not to swim against the current, unless it is necessary for your survival. If you've been clinging to a branch at the riverside, let go.

Let yourself move forward. Let yourself be moved forward.

Avoid the rapids when possible. If you can't, stay relaxed. Staying relaxed can take you safely through fierce currents. If you go under for a moment, allow yourself to surface naturally. You will.

Appreciate the beauty of the scenery, as it is. See things with freshness, with newness. You shall never pass by today's scenery again!

Don't think too hard about things. The flow is meant to be experienced. Within it, care for yourself. You are part of the flow, an important part. Work with the flow. Work within the flow. Thrashing about isn't necessary. Let the flow help you care for yourself. Let it help you set boundaries, make decisions, and get you where you need to be when it is time.

You can trust the flow, and your part in it.

*Today, I will go with the flow.*

*The Language of Letting Go by Melody Beattie*

## **FOR YOUR INFORMATION**

The What Does the Book Say Group (8pm on Wednesdays) will be meeting at the Inverness Community Center at 1082 N. Paul Drive in Inverness. The move is only for the months of July and August while the Holder Building is under renovation.

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Because of these renovations, Holder Way of Life group will not be meeting at all in July and August.

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And the Women's Friendship Group, which meets on Mondays at 10am, will be held at Central Ridge Community Center at 77 Civic Circle in Beverly Hills.

**“What it was like, What happened, and What it is like now”**

**Your story could appear in an upcoming issue.**

**Send your stories, poems, articles, and anniversary lists to [News@Ncintergroup.com](mailto:News@Ncintergroup.com)**

## Steps | Traditions | Concepts

**Step 7:** Humbly asked Him to remove our shortcomings.

**Tradition 7:** Every AA group ought to be fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions.

1. Honestly now, do I do all I can to help AA (my group my central office, my GSO) remain self-supporting?
2. Should the Grapevine sell advertising space to book publishers and drug companies, so it could make a big profit and become a bigger magazine, in full color, at a cheaper price per copy?
3. GSO runs short of funds some year; wouldn't it be okay to let the government subsidize AA groups in hospitals and prisons?

**Concept 7:** The Charter and Bylaws of the General Service Board are legal instruments, empowering the trustees to manage and conduct world service affairs. The Conference Charter is not a legal document; it relies upon tradition and the AA purse for final effectiveness.

1. Do we act responsibly regarding the "power of the purse"?
2. Do we realize that the practical and spiritual power of the Conference will nearly always be superior to the legal power of the GSB?

**Step 8:** Made a list of all persons we had harmed, and became willing to make amends to them all.

**Tradition 8:** Alcoholics Anonymous should remain forever nonprofessional but our service centers may employ special workers.

1. Is my own behavior accurately described by the Traditions? If not, what needs changing?
2. When I chafe about any particular Tradition, do I realize how it affects others?
3. Do I sometimes try to get some reward - even if not money - for my personal efforts?
4. Do I try to sound in AA like an expert on alcoholism? On recovery? On medicine? On sociology? On AA itself? On psychology? On spiritual matters? Or, heaven help me, even on humility?

**Concept 8:** The trustees are the principal planners and administrators of the overall policy and finance. They have custodial oversight of the separately incorporated and constantly active services, exercising this through their ability to elect all the directors of these entities.

1. Do we understand the relationship between the two corporate service entities (AA World Services, Inc. and AA Grapevine, Inc.) and the General Service Board?

## Balancing the Books

### **Step Eight - Made a list of all persons we had harmed, and became willing to make amends to them all.**

My first experience of freedom came while I was locked up in the state penitentiary. I had been carefully guided through the first seven Steps and had begun to awaken spiritually. I trusted the AA process and was beginning to trust God.

But my sponsors and I were faced with a logistical problem. No matter how willing we were to make direct amends, the state would not let us out to do so. One of my sponsors had committed murder, and for him to directly contact the victim's family would cause much undue harm.

As we discussed these issues, it became clear that the key to the Eighth Step was willingness; if this God were truly loving and merciful as it appeared, we would not be kept in bondage simply because we could not reach those to whom we owed restitution. Freedom would come, it seemed, when I stood entirely ready to make amends wherever possible.

My sponsor gave me an exercise to do. I was to make a list of all the people I had harmed. This list would start with the names from my inventory. It was suggested that there were many others I had harmed that also must go on the list, even though there was no resentment or fear connected with them. I was to be as clear as possible as to the harm I had done. But--my sponsor pointed out--even though I knew what I had done to each person, I was so insensitive that I probably did not know the consequences of my actions. He gave me the key to freedom; I was to close my eyes and picture each person separately in front of me. I was to look each straight in the eye and see if I could feel a willingness to say: "I have been wrong and have caused you harm. Will you please tell me what I must do so that we can get the books to balance?" As I sat in the cell that night going over my list, I had the experience I had been looking for all my life: I was lifted and set free.

In my blindness I had always believed that a spiritual awakening was the end of the road. Now, having had one, I knew it was but the beginning. Finally, at thirty-four years of age, I could truly begin to live.

-Don P., Aurora, CO (Grapevine, August 1989)

### **I'm Your Addiction**

Allow me to introduce myself

I am the disease of addiction.

Cunning, baffling, powerful –

That's me and I'm here for your affliction.

I wish you pain and suffering while I rob you of your health,

I'll pretend to be your friend if you give me all your wealth.

I will listen to your struggles

I'll pretend to dry your eyes.

I'll corrupt your mind with ease as I fill your head with lies.

I hate your Higher Power,

why don't you call on me instead?

I'll be there to hold your hand when you put the gun to your head.

I am such a hated disease!

Yet I don't come invited.

When you decide to end your life that gets me excited!

I hate your twelve step program more than you'll ever know.

Now I must lie here dormant you don't see me yet I grow.

I will never leave your side.

I'll come visit you in jail.

I will gladly hold your hand, as I lead you straight to hell!

- by Glenda J.

### **Humility**

Noun (hu-mil-i-ty): hyü-'mi-lə-tē

Definition: freedom from pride or arrogance; the quality or state of being humble.

## IN REMEMBRANCE OF "EBBY"

by Bill W.

In his seventieth year, and on the twenty-first of March, my friend and sponsor "Ebby" passed beyond our sight and hearing.

On a chill November afternoon in 1934 it was Ebby who had brought me the message that saved my life. Still more importantly, he was the bearer of the Grace and of the principles that shortly afterward led to my spiritual awakening. This was truly a call to new life in the Spirit. It was the kid of rebirth that has since become the most precious possession of each and all of us.

As I looked upon him where he lay in perfect repose, I was stirred by poignant memories of all the years I had known and loved him.

There were recollections of those joyous days in a Vermont boarding school. After the war years we were sometimes together, then drinking of course. Alcohol, we thought, was the solvent for all difficulties, a veritable elixir for good living.

Then there was that absurd episode of 1929. Ebby and I were on an all-night spree in Albany. Suddenly we remembered that a new airfield had been constructed in Vermont, on a pasture near my own home town. The opening day was close at hand. Then came the intoxicating thought: If only we could hire a plane we'd beat the opening by several days, thus making aviation history ourselves! Forthwith, Ebby routed a pilot friend out of bed, and for a stiff price we engaged him and his small craft. We sent the town fathers a wire announcing the time of our arrival. In midmorning, we took to the air, greatly elated -- and very tight.



Somehow our rather tipsy pilot set us down on the field. A large crowd, including the village band and a welcoming committee, lustily cheered his feat. The pilot then deplaned. But nothing else happened, nothing at all. The onlookers stood in puzzled silence. Where were Ebby and Bill? Then the horrible discovery was made -- we were both slumped in the rear cockpit of the plane, completely passed out! Kind friends lifted us down and stood us upon the ground. Whereupon we history-makers fell flat on our faces. Ignominiously, we had to be carted away. The fiasco could not have been more appalling. We spent the next day shakily writing apologies.

Over the following five years, I seldom saw Ebby. But of course our drinking went on and on. In late 1934 I got a terrific jolt when I learned that Ebby was about to be locked up, this time in a state mental hospital.

Following a series of mad sprees, he had run his father's new Packard off the road and into the side of a dwelling, smashing right into its kitchen, and just missing a terrified housewife. Thinking to ease this rather awkward situation, Ebby summoned his brightest smile and said, "Well, my dear, how about a cup of coffee?"

Of course Ebby's lighthearted humor was quite lost on everyone concerned. Their patience worn thin, the town fathers yanked him into court. To all appearances, Ebby's final destination was the insane asylum. To me, this marked the end of the line for us both. Only a short time before, my physician, Dr. Silkworth, had felt obliged to tell Lois there was no hope of my recovery; that I, too would have to be confined, else risk insanity or death.

But providence would have it otherwise. It was presently learned that Ebby had been paroled into the custody of friends who (for the time being) had achieved their sobriety in the Oxford Groups. They brought Ebby to New York where he fell under the benign influence of AA's great friend-to-be, Dr. Sam Shoemaker, the rector of Calvary Episcopal Church. Much affected by Sam and the "Oxford Group" Ebby promptly sobered up. Hearing of my serious condition, he had straight-way come to our house in Brooklyn.

As I continued to recollect, the vision of Ebby looking at me across our kitchen table became wonderfully vivid. As most AAs know, he spoke to me of the release from hopelessness that had come to him (through the Oxford Groups) as the result of self-survey, restitution, outgoing helpfulness to others, and prayer. In short, he was proposing the attitudes and principles that I used later in developing AA's Twelve Steps to recovery.

It had happened. One alcoholic had effectively carried the message to another. Ebby had been enabled to bring me the gift of Grace because he could reach me at depth through the language of the heart. He had pushed ajar that great gate through which all in AA have since passed to find their freedom under God.

## Upcoming Anniversaries

### July & August 2019

#### CRYSTAL RIVER GROUP

##### **JULY**

Vella K	46
Jim N	42
Gloria T	39
Curlie A	37
Marcia M	36
Pete W	31
Rick B	20
George B	19
Tom M	11
Joanne M	9
Michael C	7
Ricky O	7
Lanell R	7
Lynn D	6
Ray O	5
Chris L	5
Joe M	3

##### **AUGUST**

David P	38
Nancy B	33
Dorene C	20
Sheila	12
Edward C	12
Pam B	11
David B	9
Chris G	7
Kayla P	6
Sherry H	4
Marlene	2
Cathy A	1
Renee S	1

#### HOLDER WAY OF LIFE

##### **JULY**

Patricia H.	33
Mike W.	13

##### **AUGUST**

Walter R	14
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#### WOMEN'S FRIENDSHIP GROUP

##### **JULY**

Carol K.	44
Kathy D.	12

##### **AUGUST**

Little Feather	35
Genet	31
Dawn	16
Char	14
Linda A.	4

#### SOBER SAND GNATS

##### **JULY**

John P.	24
Sue P.	14
Deb O.	1

##### **AUGUST**

Sheila S	29
Cery L.	26

#### REAL HAPPY HOUR

##### **JULY**

Gloria	37
Dave B.	4

##### **AUGUST**

Kahla C.	1
Ben C.	1

#### RAINBOW GROUP

##### **JULY**

Jack B.	30
Gene M.	29

