



# NATURE COAST JOURNAL

JULY 2022



## YOUR STORY IS NEEDED IN THE NEW EDITION OF THE BIG BOOK

A new edition of the Big Book of Alcoholics Anonymous is in the works. The guidelines on how to send in your story follow. The **Deadline is October 31, 2022.**

We suggest you send your story through the [Story Submission](https://www.aa.org/submit-bigbook-english-5th) page on the A.A. website. Here is the link: <https://www.aa.org/submit-bigbook-english-5th>

NOTE: You must attach a signed copy of the Copyright document form and send it with your submission. This is an important step; please make sure you return the completed form.

If you prefer to send your story by regular postal mail, here are the instructions: Postal Mail: Attn: Literature Assignment, 5<sup>th</sup> Edition BB, General Service Office, Box 459, Grand Central Station, New York, NY 10163

The words "5th Edition BB" should be written on the envelope and at the top of the first page of the manuscript.

Please be assured that your anonymity will be maintained if your story is selected for publication.

## AA GRAPEVINE

The International Journal of Alcoholics Anonymous

**"CARRY THE MESSAGE" WITH A GRAPEVINE SUBSCRIPTION (SEE PAGE 4)**

### INSIDE THIS ISSUE

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### Miracle Group's 4<sup>th</sup> Anniversary

Friday, July 29<sup>th</sup> 6pm – 7 pm

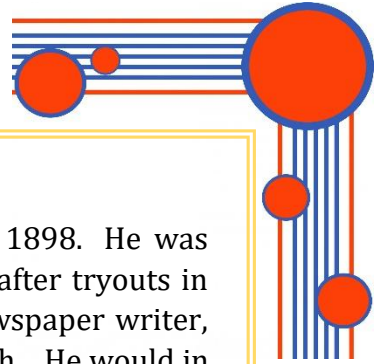
Presbyterian Church, 20641 Chestnut Street, Dunnellon

Open Discussion topic: *What was going on in your life 4 years ago?*

**Pizza and coffee provided during the meeting. Finger foods appreciated.**

**HOTLINE: 352-621-0599**

# HISTORY



## FATHER ED DOWLING AND BILL WILSON



Father Ed Dowling was born in St. Louis in 1898. He was raised in a devout Irish, Catholic family, and after tryouts in professional baseball and some time as a newspaper writer, entered the seminary in 1919 but did not finish. He would in time be ordained as a Jesuit priest in 1931 but before that taught high school in Chicago and attended the Northwestern Medill School of Journalism.

In 1940 Father Ed became familiar with the AA 12 Step program when he helped a friend who had developed a drinking problem and accompanied him to an AA meeting. He was intrigued by the similarities the 12 Steps had with the Jesuit Spiritual Exercises of Ignatius of Loyola. Both systems required recognition of personal shortcomings, turning one's life over to God, and a search for new direction.

When Father Ed entered Bill Wilson's life, Bill was experiencing a rough patch in his own personal life, and in the development and growth of AA. The Big Book had been published the year before but demand for it was not great. Thousands of copies sat in a warehouse and there was little expectation that they would be sold. There was rumbling of dissatisfaction among some AAs and there had been some relapse of prominent members. There were violations of anonymity, some even by Bill himself.

On a personal level, Bill and his wife Lois were living in a rented room in the 24<sup>th</sup> Street AA club. The room was barely furnished, there was little privacy, and Bill and Lois were living from what Lois earned at a job in a department store. Although maintaining his sobriety, Bill was down on himself and the prospects for the AA program.

Then on a cold, wet November night in 1940, at about ten at night, the club maintenance man found Bill in the room and asked if he would see someone from St. Louis who wanted to meet him. The visitor was described as a "bum." Bill agreed and when he heard the person struggling up the stairs thought to himself that he had yet another drunk to deal with.

Bill was stretched out on the bed in his rented room and the stranger pulled up a chair next to him. Bill now saw that the struggle up the club stairs was not caused by the man's inebriation but because of a physical ailment which required that he

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use a cane. Bill also saw when his overcoat was removed that the man wore a collar - - he was a priest. Fr. Ed introduced himself and said that he had come because he had been struck by the similarity of AA's 12 Steps and the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius.

When Bill conveyed that he knew nothing of the Spiritual Exercises, Fr. Ed laughed. They then commenced a conversation which would lead to a lifelong friendship. That conversation included Bill honestly describing his own anger, impatience, and disappointment. Bill would in time come to call the priest his "spiritual sponsor," and would later say after Fr. Ed died that he (Bill) was closer to him (Fr. Ed) than to any other human being on earth.

Father Ed became a close confidant to Bill Wilson and a great friend to the program of Alcoholics Anonymous. He was a passionate promoter of AA and its 12-step program. He established the first AA group in St. Louis and was the first prominent Catholic to strongly recommend AA. He used the steps in his own life to address his overeating issue and the chronic pain he suffered. He also carried the 12-step approach to others in need and established the CANA program to help married couples.

Bill invited Father Ed to speak at the ground-breaking 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Convention of AA which was held in the priest's hometown of St. Louis. At that momentous gathering Bill and the other old-timers of AA turned over the three legacies to the AA to the fellowship. Bill introduced Father Ed to the Fellowship at that meeting as a person being made of the stuff of saints.

Perhaps the most telling evidence of the good priest's impact in Bill's life is the fact that after Fr. Ed died Bill kept the priest's walking cane close to his workstation.

*Bill K., Journal Editor*

### **THE JOURNAL NEEDS YOUR SUPPORT!**

We create AA when we decide to adopt the AA way of life and make it our own. We voluntarily do the things we do to promote AA's common welfare and because we do this, because we are willing to help our fellow alcoholic achieve sobriety, we ensure our own recovery from the disease of alcoholism.

Please help to create the JOURNAL by sending in your stories, poems, articles, anniversary lists, and the like to [news@NCintergroup.com](mailto:news@NCintergroup.com) . We will also consider original artwork and cartoons. A good laugh in any format is always welcome!

We will do our best to respond to every email and will make every effort to include your contributions in an upcoming issue of the JOURNAL. We look forward to hearing from you.

# WANT TO HELP ANOTHER ALCOHOLIC?

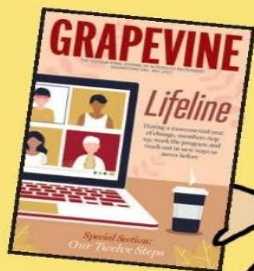
## GRAPEVINE & LA VIÑA are Great Twelfth Step Tools!

Give a gift subscription to an alcoholic who needs it. Great for:

- Sponsees • Newcomers • Prisons • Detoxes • Doctor's Offices • Group Celebrations • District and Area Events • Giveaways

Get your group, district, area or AA friends to join in. Carry the Message, it's easy!

Go to [aagrapevine.org/carry-the-message](http://aagrapevine.org/carry-the-message) to get started and see our new Carry the Message video at [www.youtube.com/c/AAGrapevine](http://www.youtube.com/c/AAGrapevine)



Join in. It's easy!

2022  
**CARRY  
THE  
MESSAGE  
PROJECT**

Go to [aagrapevine.org/carry-the-message](http://aagrapevine.org/carry-the-message) to get started.

Heard at a Meeting  
(OR "TAKE THE COTTON OUT")



*Please send in anything you have "heard" before, during, or after at a meeting. "Heard" can include things observed ("seen"), things you have learned, or anything you take away from a meeting. Send in what you "hear" to [news@ncintergroup.com](mailto:news@ncintergroup.com). Thanks much!*

You can't lean on the shovel and pray for a hole.

When drinking I could not watch football games on television because they were always talking about me in the huddle.

You complain about how much your feet hurt until you meet someone with no feet.

I'm not as funny as I think I am.

When I finally got sober, I would wake up and look out the window and my car would be there!

The people in AA were happy and the guys in the bar were miserable.

The only meeting you are late for is your first.

That's what alcohol did; it sucked the life out of me. Alcohol sucked, I sucked, my life sucked.

Sponsor to sponsee on patience: your gun is going off in your holster.

Old behavior isn't really old behavior if you are still doing it.

On the effects of drinking moonshine: drinking moonshine will make you want to take back stuff you never stole.

I didn't get into trouble every time I drank, but I was drunk every time I got into trouble.

**HOTLINE: 352-621-0599**



## 7<sup>th</sup> TRADITION

**For District and Intergroup contributions,  
please write your group number on the check.**

**Make check payable to “District 28” and mail to:  
District 28, PO Box 640914, Beverly Hills, FL 34464**

Make check payable to “**Nature Coast Intergroup**” and mail to:  
**Nature Coast Intergroup**, PO Box 2634, Crystal River, FL 34423

**For Area and G.S.O. contributions, please write  
“District 28” and your group number on the check.**

Make check payable to “**NFAC**” and mail to:  
North Florida Area Conference, PO Box 10094, Jacksonville, FL 32247

Make check out to “**General Service Board**” and mail to:  
G.S.O., PO Box 2407, James A. Farley Station, New York, NY 10116-2407

**Nature Coast Intergroup and  
District 28 Business Meetings  
are held on the first Sunday of the Month at 4:30 pm at  
Shepherd of the Hills Episcopal Church  
2540 West Norvell Bryant Highway,  
Lecanto, FL 34461  
*District 28 Meeting immediately follows Intergroup***



## MUSICIANS WANTED



**IF YOU HAVE AT LEAST ONE YEAR OF SOBRIETY  
AND PLAY A MUSICAL INSTRUMENT CONTACT:**

**QUENTIN B. CELL: 561-386-0843  
EMAIL: [quentinl@earthlink.net](mailto:quentinl@earthlink.net)**

## WOMEN NEEDED TO CARRY THE MESSAGE

Female AA volunteers are needed to bring the Alcoholics Anonymous message to women inmates at the Citrus County Jail. If interested, please email your name and phone number to [news@ncintergroup.com](mailto:news@ncintergroup.com).



## YOUR TWO CENTS

This is the place where you can put in your two cents. Send in yours and we may share it.

### WHAT I DID TO FEEL PART OF AA

Like many recovering alcoholics, I felt like I found people who “get” me when I found the rooms. I didn’t feel so different during the hour I spent at meetings. However, I did still feel uneasy when I arrived at the meeting place before the meeting actually started.

Although I now have “a few 24 hours”, I moved to this area a little less than a year ago. And, I was having that same uneasy feeling before the meeting started. Here’s what I’m doing to feel like I’m part of AA.

- I have started to sit near the front of the meeting. (My first sponsor told me that the winners sit in the front row.)
- I volunteered to read or to “do” the chips.
- Before the meeting started, I reached my hand out to one woman and introduced myself. After the meeting I approached her, asked her for her phone number and I told her I would be calling her. The next day I took a deep breath and called her.
- I asked the chairperson of the meeting for her phone number then sent her a text thanking her.
- I started attending the Intergroup meeting and the District meeting. (The people doing service work will make you feel welcome and find something for you to do.)
- I make myself aware of the special events that the District is hosting. I let the women I know that I am planning to go to the event and ask them if they are going. If they are, I sit with them. If they aren’t, I look for the people who are at the service meetings and ask to sit with them. A good way to start up a conversation is to ask them what meetings they go to.
- Oh, and yes, I go up to newcomers, and offer them my phone number. I tell them that it’s ok to say, you told me to call so I’m calling. I let them know that I was uncomfortable when I made my first call and that I will do my best to make that first phone call a good experience.

Little by little I am expanding my sober network and now I’m finding that I am feeling more comfortable before the meeting starts.

**“Our stories disclose in a general way what we used to be like, what happened, and what we are like now.”**

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

## WORKING ON A GROUP HISTORY

Group histories are used to provide information on the evolution of AA in the area and are a source of information for new members. Use the “A.A. Group History Questionnaire” to gather information from your older members. Photographs of the interior and exterior of the meeting location should be taken. No people should be in the photos to ensure anonymity.

## INTERVIEWING OLD TIMERS

The District 28 Archives Committee is interested in having interviews of A.A. members with 20 years or more of sobriety. These “old timers” should also have a connection with the District 28 area.

Hopefully, conversations will capture what A.A. was like in the District 28 area for the new person 20 plus years ago. The idea is to sit down with people and record these threads, things remembered and their impressions of the fellowship.

We have put together several questions to guide the conversation that we can share with you. *For more information on how to do a group history or how to conduct an interview, email your request to [news@ncintergroup.com](mailto:news@ncintergroup.com).*

Your help is greatly appreciated!

**VISIT NCINTERGROUP.COM  
FOR THE LATEST  
MEETING LOCATIONS AND TIMES,  
NEWS AND OTHER RESOURCES**



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## 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.”

### 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 A.A. purse for final effectiveness.”

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