



The Communicator

FEBRUARY | 2016

Green Bay Area 74 District 01
newsletter@greenbayaa.org
www.greenbayaa.org
HOTLINE - 920-432-2600

"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."

30th Anniversary Alcoholics Anonymous International Convention-Toronto, Canada (July 1965)

"SPONSOR SHOPPING"

He headed out to find a new guy to help him, but returned with a cart full of compassion

I've now been blindsided twice in AA—by compassion. Living in a small mountain town in southern California where there are just 5,000 residents—and only 40 professing alcoholics—I've lived a somewhat sheltered life in these middle-class, pine-scented rooms. I was two years sober, for example, when for the first time a friend of mine with almost three years of sobriety suddenly identified himself as a newcomer.

What? He couldn't be a newcomer. He wasn't one yesterday, so how could he be today? Then he shared about the night before, when he'd downed an entire bottle of Irish cream whiskey, for me to understand that he'd "gone out."

As he shared—shaky, tearful and obviously devastated—I empathized with him, feeling his pain, remorse and guilt in the pit of my stomach. We'd shared hundreds of meetings together, including one two years earlier when he'd offered to kick my butt if I mentioned drugs one more time. That night, the unseen but growing bond between us was revealed.

Because compassion was an unfamiliar emotion to me, it took a while for me to recognize my response to him as he told the story of his relapse. I now see compassion as another gift of the program.

Thanks to the Fellowship, I've experienced compassion in smaller doses on numerous occasions. One of my cherished more-will-be-revealed moments came when I was four years sober and my sponsor suggested that I pray for the well-being of some old-timers who were on my Eighth Step list. He said the literature recommended praying for them for 14 days, but he'd found that 30 days worked better.

At first, I prayed at them, then gradually for them. As I prayed for these men who I either didn't like, thought inferior or judged to be defective characters, animosity was slowly replaced by feelings of goodwill, tolerance and—that's right—compassion. To this day, if I see old-timer X enter the room, I send out an immediate prayer.

Another major bout of compassion happened just last Friday. Over the past several months, I realized that I saw my sponsor (mostly at district meetings) more than I talked to him. I had gotten into the habit of talking to several other AA members more frequently than I talked to him. I realized the growing lack of a relationship with him weakened my program. Then I had one of those days from hell three weeks ago when I called everyone but my sponsor, and wondered why. I'd short-listed several men to be my new sponsor and finally decided on a friend in Fresno, whom I intended to ask to sponsor me over the weekend.

That was, until last week. I was at the "Thank God It's Friday," open-participation AA meeting in Apple Valley, where raffle tickets are distributed and drawn to identify those who get to share (and to curb those who always share). I hadn't seen my sponsor in several months and was shocked to see how fragile he looked. He was shaky and leaned on a cane. I was not able to greet him before the meeting. Not until he feebly shuffled to the front of the room to take a cake for 31 years of sobriety and wobbled back to his seat, could I stand and give him a hug. I felt embarrassed when someone whispered a compliment to me for being there to celebrate my sponsor's birthday, when instead I was ready to replace him.

I'd, in fact, lost a conscious contact with my sponsor. It started out as a habit of simply not calling much, and ended up in my thinking that something was wrong with our relationship, which merely suffered from lack of exercise.

So last night I called him and arranged to meet an hour before his Cedar Creek Big Book Study meeting to talk to him about sponsorship and everything I've just shared here. As we hugged goodbye, he said that I should pray about whether I should work with another sponsor. I told him that God had already answered that prayer. In the revealing light of compassion, the right action is bright and crystal clear.

This morning at 6:00 a.m., he was there in the parking lot when I pulled in to unlock the door to the Phelan Good Morning meeting. My sponsor-shopping days are over. I don't need a new and improved sponsor. I just need to love the one I'm with

—Ed L., Wrightwood, Calif.

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FOURTH ANNUAL WOMEN'S RECOVERY WORKSHOP

*Seeking Conscious Contact Through Prayer & Meditation
Step 11*

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 13, 2016

12:00 - 4:00 pm

The Bridge

2514 Jenny Lane

Green Bay, WI 54311

Free on-site child care

Snacks and refreshments included

Phyllis 920-609-0668 or Marian 920-366-5950

OPEN AA SPEAKER MEETING

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 14, 2016

6:00 pm Potluck - 7:00 pm Speaker

First Congregational Church

724 E. South River St

Appleton, WI 54915

OPEN AA SPEAKER MEETING

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 19, 2016

8:00 pm

Peace United Methodist

2300 Wisconsin Ave

Kaukauna, WI 54130

4TH & 5TH STEP SPRING RETREAT*

APRIL 29-MAY 1, 2016

AA and Al-Anon

St. Norbert Center for Spirituality

1016 N. Broadway

De Pere, WI 54115

Cost: \$140 – includes lodging, meals, & snacks

Limited Scholarships Available

April 15, 2016 deadline

Judy G. 920-737-2330

Send \$40 deposit to:

Step Retreats PO Box 574

Green Bay, WI 54305

GREEN BAY AREA CENTRAL OFFICE & HOTLINE VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

Mon-Fri: 10:00 am - 1:30 pm or 1:30 pm - 5:00 pm

Saturday: 10:00 am - 2:00 pm

Betsy N. 920-362-9397

1270 Main St. #102, Green Bay, WI 54302

GREEN BAY AREA CENTRAL OFFICE

1270 Main St. Suite 102

Green Bay, WI 54302

(920) 432-2600

www.aagreenbay.com

AA DISTRICT 01 TREASURER

PO Box 632 Green Bay, WI 54305

AA AREA 74 TREASURER

PO Box 84 Paradise, MI 49768

www.area74.org

AA GENERAL SERVICE OFFICE (GSO)

Grand Central Station

PO Box 459 New York, NY 10163

(212) 870-3400

www.aa.org

Donate

Service

FEMALES NEEDED: BROWN COUNTY JAIL MEETINGS

Wednesday night jail meetings, 6:00 to 7:00 pm

3030 Curry Lane

Green Bay, WI 54311

pre-authorization needed and training provided

Please contact:

Tim T.

920-227-3156

corrections@greenbayaa.org

Resources Online

“Keep Recovery in Your Head”

- Alcoholics Anonymous World Org: www.aa.org
- Recovery Short Stories (print/audio): www.aagrapevine.org
- AA Speakers Online/Download: www.aaspeakers.org
- Adult and Teenage Family & Friends of Alcoholic: www.al-anon.alateen.org
- Historical Resources of Alcoholics Anonymous: www.silkworth.net

YOUNG & SOBER

I am writing you on behalf of the North East Pennsylvania Young People in AA (NEPYPAA). Thank you, Grapevine, for printing B.N.'s relevant and meaningful piece about YPAA (Young People in AA) in the May 2015 issue. I teared up while reading it. I can't even begin to explain to you how much it means to us to know that there are AAs out there with long-term sobriety and a wealth of service experience who want to support YPAA.

We have experienced some of the very same opposition from members in our area that the article mentions, some claiming YPAA is divisive. B.N.'s message was received clearly, felt deeply, and identified with strongly by many of us at NEPYPAA. We find it amazing that through the ink on Grapevine's magazine pages, the love, wisdom and power of God is able to be transmitted all over the world. From the bottom of our hearts, we thank you.

—Anonymous

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GENERAL SERVICE REPRESENTATIVE (GSR) MEETING

January 14, 2016

District Committee Member (DCM) Report-Summary:

(Meeting Minutes Online: www.greenbayaa.org)

District 01 DCM Report: Dear Friends, As I begin this new role in service, I'm reminded of what Alcoholics Anonymous has done for me. The fear and anxiety I have associated with this position dissipate when I remember how AA has saved me. It's too easy for me to forget what Alcoholics Anonymous has done for me, but my sponsor and many others in AA won't let that happen. I want to thank those who have served the district before me. I'm grateful for what I've learned from them. I look forward to serving as best I can; working with and listening to current and new GSRs and the District Committee chairs. I'll be attending the area meetings and am excited to see even more of the GSRs at these meetings as well. Thank you, Nate K. DCM

Secretary, The December 10, 2015 minutes were reviewed by those present. A motion was made and seconded to accept the minutes. The motion passed. ~Theresa D.

Archives, Bruce K. There will be a table set up at the upcoming Conference on January 16th.

Bridging the Gap, Christina M. Things are going fairly well. She is looking into getting letter writers to contact those who are or will be in transition from an institution. She is going to be contacting different areas to make introductions.

Cooperation with the Professional Community, Amy G. She is going to be distributing meeting lists to the VA Center on Ashland Avenue and the Veteran's Outpatient Clinic on University.

Corrections, Sean S./Laurie M. They are just getting started. They are going to make an appointment with Brian at the jail re potential contacts.

District Events Co-Chair, Kimberly S. Kimberly spoke about the upcoming 2016 District 01 Intergroup gathering which is celebrating 75 years of AA in Green Bay, which will be held this Saturday at Calvary Lutheran Church. Sid will be the AA speaker, even though she has broken her leg near the ankle. A bit of concern was expressed that guests may leave by 7:00 due to the Packer playoff game and they will try to keep things moving as quickly as possible. Most items were purchased from Sam's Club. Bill D., Tim J and Kristen C. (District Events co-chair) will help her load the vehicle. Josiah will meet them at Calvary and assist with the set up. Kimberly asked if the Central Office or District would be willing to donate a Big Book for the Count Up/Count Down.

Grapevine, John P. He has four people that have subscribed but he has not been contacted with regard to the instructions on selling the Grapevine.

Newsletter, Ronald M. Going well. Nothing to report.

Public Information Chair, Beverly V. She is just getting started

Webmaster, Debbie P. They met with Jack to aid in the transition. Sam is looking at alternative back-up drives.

Treasurer's Report, Dean H. A motion was made and seconded to accept the 01/14/16 Treasurer's Report. Motion passed.

Prepared for the January 14, 2016 GSR Meeting

Starting Balance as of 12/10/2015 5,218.36

Deposits

Flintville Early Risers	180.00
Sisters in Sobriety	27.98
Thurs. Night Women in the Present	100.00
It's In the Book	120.00
Road to Recovery	66.00
Letting Go	16.00
TOTAL DEPOSITS	509.98
TOTAL	5,728.34

Expenses

Color Master (Dec. 2015 Printing)	169.00
City of Green Bay (PI/Advertising Dec.)	42.00
City of Green Bay (PI/2016 Advertising)	504.00
TOTAL EXPENSES	715.00
Ending Balance January 14, 2016	5,013.34
Prudent Reserve	1,300.00
Total Funds Available	3,713.34

*Old Business

- None

*New Business

•Tom Y. attended the Area Committee Meeting on December 12, 2015. The participants in this meeting included DCM's and Committee Chairs from Northern Wisconsin and the U.P. The goal of the meeting was to put together an agenda for upcoming Assembly and Area Committee Meetings and to prepare reports to bring back to each District. The incoming GSO would like to get a group's history with the goal being to formulate an Agenda for what delegates discuss at the General Service Conference in April, 2016.

A handout that lists Area 74 "Dates to Remember" meeting schedule was provided.

Information on an Area 74, District 02 Workshop for GSR's to be held on Jan. 30, 2016 in Oshkosh, WI was distributed.

*GSR Reports

Early Birds, 7:30 am, Sunday, 218 Club, James R. Well attended. Going well.

Eye Opener, Geri L. Has been really busy. Going well.

Flintville Early Risers, Tom B. Doing well. Would like to have a bigger room.

Letting Go, Donna Y. Going well. Nothing to report.

Road to Recovery, Griffin W. Going well. Their group conscious is active.

Serenity Now, Jennifer A. Going well. She has a donation of books brought in by one of their members to be given out at the Intergroup Conference on Jan. 16th. Jennifer also suggested if you have extra meeting lists it may be a good idea to perhaps leave them in places as you go about your daily business. . . i.e., a launder mat would be a good example.

Sisters in Sobriety, Sue C. Going well.

“Place in the Sun”

As the dolphins leaped and his daughter smiled, he knew his Higher Power had brought him to this moment
(STEP TWO: Came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity)

In the course of my alcoholism, I spent years in therapy and hundreds of thousands of dollars on doctor visits and medications. I suffered an intense suicidal depression and was labeled bipolar.

The April before coming into AA, I planned to kill myself. One day after work, I went home to end my life. I had been planning to do it for years, considering various options and performing research on the best means of doing so. So when I went to bed that April night, I waited for the house to settle down so that I could take a lethal dose of pills. I wasn't thinking about a thing—not my wife or my child. I just lay there and waited. After all those years of planning, my life was crumbling around me, and the final solution to all of it was tucked away next to me in a bedside drawer. Amazingly, I did not fill my drink and take the pills. Instead, I passed out. I awoke the next day with something I'd never had: a willingness to change.

The next eight months were tumultuous. First I lost my job; then the state got involved in my life. I was forced to quit drinking. I was dry now, but not clean and sober. A funny thing happened on my way to sobriety however. Even with an active pill addiction, without alcohol my life started to change. Suddenly, my doctors didn't think I was bipolar. Over time, they took me off my last medication and I came into AA. I started a new job and life got better for my family.

One month into sobriety, while working Step Two with my sponsor, I took my family to San Diego for a vacation. The fact that I was alive to be there and had a job to pay for it was amazing. One afternoon, we went to a dolphin show. It was one of those beautiful San Diego days; the sun was shining and the air warm. We sat down in the grandstands and got ready for the show. Out came the dolphins and the performers, all set to music. The show was nice, but I saw very little of it. My eyes and my heart were watching my 2-year-old daughter.

She was so excited as she watched the show. Her face lit up with such intense joy; I'd never seen so much happiness on another person's face. I was enjoying the show through my daughter's eyes, when I was suddenly filled with intense gratitude and light for being alive to witness the moment. For the first time, I paused to ask myself, Why? Why was I alive in this moment?

I had come into the Fellowship of AA an atheist. I used to call myself an agnostic, because I always felt it was disrespectful to openly deny the existence of someone else's God. During my first month in AA, I stared at those Steps on the wall with great fear, wondering how I could ever get past the need to believe in a God of my understanding.

I thought about how my life had changed since that April night I was going to kill myself. I had stability at home now; I was free from suicidal depression and psychiatric medication, with the beginnings of real happiness I'd not known for 10 years. Why hadn't I done the easy thing that dark night and simply filled that glass and taken the pills? Even in my alcoholism, I was always a man of action. When I made plans, I acted on them. It was such a mystery that I hadn't taken those pills that night. But right there, on a sunny afternoon, while sitting in the stands with my daughter, I realized that such things do not happen by accident. The thought shook me to the core: A power greater than myself had reached into my life that lonely April night.

Tears began to stream down my face. For the first time in my life, I felt the presence of God. While working Step Two with my sponsor, I had wondered how I could ever come to believe a power greater than myself could restore me to sanity. I now realized he already had. It turns out I found a God of my understanding through the light and eyes of my daughter.

—Kevin F., Vancouver, Wash.

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District 01 Committee Contact Information

District 01 Chairperson Nate K. 608-217-7315	dcmdistrict01@greenbayaa.org	Archives Bruce K. 920-495-7250	archives@greenbayaa.org
Alternate District Chairperson Jennifer A. 920-265-9053	altDCM@greenbayaa.org	Bridging the Gap Christina M. 920-445-3887	Bridging@greenbayaa.org
Newsletter Ronald M. 920-593-2915	Newsletter@greenbayaa.org	Public Info Beverly V. 920-857-3053	PI@greenbayaa.org
Corrections Chairperson Sean S. 920-468-9283 (Men) Laurie M. 920-336-7698 (Women)	Corrections@greenbayaa.org	Grapevine John P. 740-274-6358	grapevine@greenbayaa.org
Meeting List Changes Ronald M. 920-593-2915	MeetingList@greenbayaa.org	Coop with Prof. Comm. Amy G.	cpc@greenbayaa.org
Treasurer Dean H. 920-592-9337	Treasurer@greenbayaa.org	Events Kimberly S. 920-370-3581 Kristen C. 920-309-0390	events@greenbayaa.org
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