



The Communicator

APRIL | 2017

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)

"13th Step - An Article"

I didn't know what to expect when I came to AA. I was broken in every way a young woman could be broken. In treatment I was encouraged to continue working on my recovery by going to AA meetings. I was afraid to walk in the doors. I was emotional. I was desperate. And in fairly short order, I realized I'd caught the attention of a few of the guys I frequently saw at meetings. Unbeknownst to me, very early on I became a victim of the 13th step.

These guys gave me plenty of attention. One bought me flowers and offered to pick me up for meetings. Another who was self-employed offered me a job, and visited me at my apartment. Still others frequently invited me to spend time with them at their homes. This was all in my first few weeks and months of sobriety. They all seemed nice enough. Plus, I was lonely and the attention made me feel good. I had also learned some very dysfunctional ways of relating to men during my drinking days. I felt it was wrong to hurt their feelings or to say no. And that dysfunction was still clinging to my fragmented self esteem when I found the rooms of AA.

Thankfully I found a sponsor who quickly schooled me on what was and wasn't suggested in regards to spending time with AA members outside of meetings. She informed me that it's suggested the guys stick with the guys and the gals stick with the gals. My wonderful sponsor and some other lovely women with a lot of sobriety took me under their collective wings, and I felt safe there. Safe was a foreign feeling for me, but I loved it.

Years later, when I moved to Green Bay from Marinette, a fellow member introduced himself to me. He invited me to a dance and told me that there were a lot of guys that I should avoid in the program. He also said that he was the only one I could really trust. Thank goodness by then I had learned what signs to watch for and I wasn't afraid to disappoint someone by setting a boundary. I had found my voice, and I wasn't afraid to use it by saying "no." But today, all around me, I see women who are like I was, newly sober and a bit of a target if I'm to be honest. If I hang around her long enough, I can bet confidently that she invites for coffee, rides to meetings, a shoulder to cry on and a few bouquets are in her future.

So what is this "13th Step" anyway? It seems that you can find as many definitions of it as you can find AA members. I find it funny that folks sometimes describe it in ways that take them off the hook, so to speak. "It's only 13th stepping if the attention is unwanted." That sort of thing. Can I call that out for the BS it really is? (I think I just did.)

The 13th step has been described as "Predatory behavior towards unsuspecting members of AA." It's also widely defined as "Someone with more than a year of sobriety trying to start a sexual relationship with somebody who is new in recovery or less than a year sober." This isn't addressing two newly sober people who may not know better. The 13th step is about someone who doesn't know better being pursued by someone who should know better. And it's not just a matter of guys hitting on women. It can, and does, go two ways.

The term "13th Step" isn't found in our Big Book or 12x12, but the topic is addressed in step 12 of the 12x12 on page 119. Bill W. and Dr. Bob, with their wisdom and spiritual direction, knew we'd have some issues in this arena. And while many folks feel they didn't say much about how to handle these situations, I feel they spelled it out beautifully, in a single paragraph. They also gave us guidelines in the preceding steps and in the traditions. The tools they gave us apply to the 13th step, just as they would to any life situation.

They point out that AA's can marry and have very happy unions. I happen to be proof of that. But we are cautioned. "It is only where "boy meets girl on the AA Campus and love follows at first sight, that difficulties may develop. The prospective partners need to be solid AA's and long enough acquainted to know that their compatibility at spiritual, mental and emotional levels is a fact and not wishful thinking. They need to be as sure as possible that no deep-lying emotional handicap in either will be likely to rise up under later pressures to cripple them." That, my friends, is a mouthful.

If we are truly working Step 3 and turning our will and our lives over to the care of God as we understand Him, would we want to do anything to jeopardize our or anyone else's sobriety? We find applicable guidelines in how we are to interact with one another in Tradition Five as well. "Each group has but one primary purpose-to carry its message to the alcoholic who still suffers." And the long and short of it is that we can't carry a message to anyone if we're more interested in getting her or him on their back before they even get on their feet in recovery.

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NEW OPEN AA MEETING-THE 3RD TRADITION GROUP

THURSDAY EVENINGS 6:00 P.M.
Green Bay West Goodwill Store
Community Room in back of store
1660 West Mason St
Green Bay, WI 54303

AREA 74 SPRING CONFERENCE*

MAY 19-21,2017
Friday night to Sunday noon
Panels, Speakers, Fellowship, Hospitality, Literature
Saturday night banquet - DJ/Dance
Ice Cream Social
Alger Park and Recreation
413 Maple St
Munising, MI 49862

AA SPEAKER MEETING-OPEN TO EVERYONE

WEDNESDAY NIGHTS 8:00 PM
218 Club
218 South Oneida St
Green Bay, WI 54303

SEYMOUR A.A. INTERGROUP*

SATURDAY, JUNE 24, 2017
Hot sandwiches provided / Bring a dish to pass
Doors open 4:30 p.m./Dinner 6:00 p.m.
AA Meeting 7:00 p.m.
Emmanuel Lutheran Church
349 North Main St
Seymour, WI 54165

AA SPEAKER MEETING & POTLUCK

1ST FRIDAY OF EVERY MONTH
6:00 p.m.
Please bring a dish to pass
Genesis Club
1213 Appleton St
Appleton, WI 54914

30TH ANNUAL WOLF RIVER-NICOLET AA CAMPING TRIP*

AUGUST 11-13, 2017
Friends/Family are welcome! Many great activities
Campsite Meetings, Rafting, Hiking Trails, Volleyball
Saturday Night Open Speaker and Bonfire
Susan W. - Grayslake, IL
Bear Paw Outdoor Adventure Resort & Campground
N3494 Hwy 55
White Lake, WI 54491

MOOSE AND GOOSE*
SATURDAY, APRIL 22, 2017
Speaker Potluck Dinner
5:00 p.m. - Social + Set Up
6:00 p.m. - Dinner
7:30 p.m. - Speakers
Please bring a dish to pass!!
Emmanuel Lutheran Church
349 North Main St
Seymour, WI 54165

218 SUMMER PICNIC*

SATURDAY, AUGUST 26, 2017
11:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.
Hamburgers and Brats will be served
Bring a dish to pass
Murphy Park Pavillion
1627 Dousman Street
Green Bay, WI 54303

218 CHILI COOKOFF*
SATURDAY, APRIL 29, 2017
12:00 - 4:00 p.m.
\$4.00 Donation at door
218 Club
218 South Oneida St
Green Bay, WI 54303

4TH AND 5TH STEP SPRING RETREAT*

MAY 12-14,2017
(AA and AI-Anon)
Friday night to Sunday noon
Cost: \$140 - includes 2 nights/5 meals
(Snacks and beverages provided throughout retreat)
St Norbert Center for Spirituality
1016 N Broadway
De Pere, WI 54115

~Dedicated Men and Women Are Needed to Help in Jails~

Are you looking for a rewarding way to do service work?

Join us in bringing men's and women's AA meetings into the Green Bay Corrections Facilities

YOU MUST BE OFF PROBATION or PAROLE - TRAINING & BACKGROUND CHECK PROVIDED

Sean S. SSMITH1205@GMAIL.COM

- Details -

Laurie M. LAURIEANN74@AOL.COM

920-445-9594

920-336-7698

GENERAL SERVICE REPRESENTATIVE (GSR) MEETING

March 9, 2017

District Committee Member (DCM) Report-Summary:

(Meeting Minutes Online: www.greenbayaa.org)

Secretary, The February 9, 2017 minutes were reviewed by those present A motion was made and seconded to accept the minutes.
~Theresa D.

Archives, Nothing new to report. ~Bruce K.

Corrections-Women, co-Chair. Nothing new to report. ~Laurie M.

Corrections-Men, co-Chair. There is still a need for a person(s) responsible for scheduling the jail meetings, especially for Sunday nights. ~Sean S.

District Events, A bus to the Brewer's game on June 8th was discussed. Lloyd indicated that additional money was needed in order to make this happen. In the past, the money that was brought in from District Events was funneled back into the general District fund. A motion was made, and seconded, to have the proceeds from District Events be returned to Events so as to keep their balance at \$2,000.

The Mindfulness Walk will still take place, at no cost this year, due to a discrepancy in last year's event. ~Missy F., Lloyd Z.

Grapevine, Nothing new to report. ~Angela P.

Newsletter, We appreciate the many years of service from ColorMasters Printing service. The Communicator Newsletter will be using DigiCopy, a Midwest regional printing service provider located downtown Green Bay. Green Bay AA has been offered a non-profit organization printing discount. DigiCopy is attractive because of their pricing, hours of operation, and the speed of order completion. As Newsletter Chair, I submitted a bill for reimbursement of \$115.37 for the March printing fee and the Treasurer was given a DigiCopy contract for non-profit organizations to establish a billing account.

Matt B. questioned the need for printing so many copies of the newsletter, especially since it is available online. GSR's are to monitor how many Communicators are being taken, as well as informing their groups that the newsletter is available online.
~Ronald M.

Public Information, He is visiting many places in the area and leaving copies of the Green Bay area meeting lists in many locations. ~Paul K.

Webmaster, Sam J. is no longer involved as a Webmaster Chairperson. Nothing else to report. ~Debbie P.

Treasurer's Report, Patrick H. Prepared for the March 9, 2017 Meeting

Starting Balance as of 2/1/2017 \$4,572.16

Deposits		Expenses		Ending Balance Feb. 28, 2017	3,421.32
Friends of Bill	150.00	Milwaukee Brewers	1,056.00	Prudent Reserve	-1,300.00
Total Deposits:	150.00	Envisionlink (Newsletter)	186.90	Total Funds Available	\$2,121.32
Subtotal:	\$4,722.16	Grapevine	57.94		
		Total Expenses	\$1,300.84		

A question was raised as to the expense for the Grapevine. Two subscriptions were made available at the Intergroup in January. This money should have been taken from 2016 as it was decided previously that the monies left in the Grapevine account from 2016 would be applied for this purpose.

A motion was made and seconded to accept the March, 2017 Treasurer's Report. Motion passed, as amended.

Old Business: The AA hotline was discussed. Tom M. will act as a hotline liaison person, not a Chair. Tom M. provided handouts listing Tier 2 contacts for both men and women. He indicated that the calendar for April has been completed. Also, a guideline sheet for answering the AA hotline was provided.

New Business: The need for a new DCM was discussed. Bruce K. our current Archives Chair, stepped up to the plate and announced that he would be interested in assuming the role of DCM. A motion was put forward and seconded and Bruce K. is now our new District 01 DCM. A very huge THANK YOU to Bruce K. for his service in this regard!! There is now a vacancy available for the Archives Chair. GSRs, please announce this to your groups.

General Service Representatives (GSRs)

It is critical to the vitality of our members that you, an alternate, or group member periodically attend monthly district meetings.

*Second Thursday Monthly, Green Bay Area Central Office
1270 Main St. #102, Green Bay, WI 54302*

“13th Step - An Article”

The dangers are many. When we come into AA, we're vulnerable and it's easy to take advantage of someone who has their guard down, is emotional, confused and looking for approval. Early sobriety is kind of like a full time job. It requires all of the energy and attention the newly sober member can give it. Distractions are inevitable with a relationship, and that's why most AA's would discourage anyone from getting involved in a relationship with less than a year of sobriety.

And what if the relationship fails, as they nearly always do when members don't do the tough job of self-healing first? Relapse is a real possibility here. It's important to encourage newcomers, or those with less than a year of sobriety, to take the time to put the pieces of their own life together before venturing into a relationship.

Even though we still have human desires, it's so important to change the self-centered behavior we displayed while sitting in the bars, scanning the room to see who we might hook up with. It's what we knew, but at that early stage of the game, what we are familiar with and what works are not one and the same. As suggested, we need to heal our deep wounds, and be certain of emotional maturity and of mental, emotional and spiritual compatibility before we're ready for a relationship. That can't happen in a few short weeks or in a couple of months. Most AA's would agree on the “one year” rule of thumb.

So why is it that the 13th step is alive and well in our district and beyond? And more importantly, we can ask ourselves why it's only discussed after meetings in small groups, gossiped about, or buried altogether and not discussed at all? Perhaps the former is responsible for the latter. Left in secret, dysfunction gains power. I think we'd serve our groups and fellow AA's better if we didn't shy away from this subject.

We come into the rooms to stay sober. Not to find romance or to find someone to date. The purpose of meetings isn't social interaction for the sake of socializing. They're connecting points so that alcoholics can sit together, face to face to face, and solve our common problem. Yet I see one AA preying on another quite often. I feel like an angry mama bear at times like that. We need to put our selfishness aside for the good of our fellow members, and for the good of our groups.

Someone who is new, or newly sober, may feel embarrassed or shy about bringing up the 13th step, even if it's happening to them. Especially if it's happening to them. How can we make it easier for them, or anyone in recovery, to approach the topic confidently? I feel we could all benefit from suggesting the 13th step as a meeting topic every now and then. I did this recently, and I was surprised at the positive response. Many folks were grateful for the opportunity to share their experience on the subject.

We can address 13th-stepping if we see it unfolding before our eyes. If I see a man acting inappropriately with a female AA, I always start by talking privately with the woman. I ask her if the attention is unwanted and I ask if I can help or intercede in any way. I give her suggestions on setting boundaries. I suggest she surround herself with women in the program. Sit with women at the meeting. Have coffee with women after the meeting. I explain that things go better for everyone when the guys stick with the guys and the gals stick with the gals. If we sponsor others, we can make it a point to ask them if they feel safe at meetings or if they have any problems with any other members.

We can help by bringing this “hush hush” topic into the open. Every person who walks through those doors deserves a chance at sobriety. We can help by doing the right thing, giving sound suggestions and discouraging behavior that threatens sobriety. We can address unethical behavior if it is occurring and group members feel unsafe or uncomfortable. We can take a group conscience to determine how to solve any problems relating to the 13th step. We don't ever want to discourage attendance at meetings by turning a blind eye to it.

Speaking from experience, there was a time that I wanted to avoid bumping into a particular fellow AA. I stopped going to meetings where I thought he'd be. He was clearly pursuing me. This made me very uptight I didn't want to date him. But I hadn't learned to say “no” yet, so avoidance was the only course of action I could come up with. I did want to learn how to stay sober. I wanted to be a sponge in those rooms so I could soak up all of the wisdom. The last thing I needed was to be hit on.

Let's open the dialogue. This program is about moving towards solutions. We each crawled out of our personal hell and found our way to the spiritual rooms of AA. We can surely work to the best of our ability practice AA's principals in everyday life. And for the good of AA we can work hard to recognize and address the behaviors in ourselves or in others that pertain to the 13th step, the step that is sure to cause a stumble. The real healing, stable ground, the things of substance and of sustenance are all found in steps 1-12. No need to go a single step beyond that. ~Linda S. Green Bay Area 74 District 01

District 01 Committee Contact Information

District 01 Chairperson Bruce K. 920-495-7250	dcmdistrict01@greenbayaa.org	Archives	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 Paul K. 920-676-2901	PI@greenbayaa.org
Corrections Chairperson Sean S. 920-468-9283 (Men) Laurie M. 920-336-7698 (Women)	corrections@greenbayaa.org	Grapevine Angela P. 818-267-6557	grapevine@greenbayaa.org
Meeting List Changes Ronald M. 920-593-2915	meetinglist@greenbayaa.org	Coop with Prof. Comm. Amy G. 920-857-6162	cpc@greenbayaa.org
Treasurer Patrick H. 920-819-5284	treasurer@greenbayaa.org	Events Missy F. 920-562-7296 Lloyd Z. 920-713-0760	events@greenbayaa.org
Secretary Theresa D. 920-490-7889 Hotline Tom M. 920-562-2689	secretary@greenbayaa.org	Webmasters Debbie P. 920-676-7585	webmaster@greenbayaa.org