



# The Communicator

DECEMBER | 2019

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)

## *A COLD DECEMBER NIGHT*

*"Watching two AA guys on a Twelfth Step call was a Christmas Eve gift he'll never forget"*

Christmas of 1976 was to be a grand adventure. It began with a ride of more than 24 hours on a bus from Houston, Texas to Chicago. Part of the trip back was on the train that later would become famous in the Arlo Guthrie song The City of New Orleans.

But the trip was not a traditional Christmas visit. My friend in Chicago was a psychiatric resident, which is a psychiatrist in training, in a large hospital in downtown Chicago. He was scheduled for on-call duty on Christmas Eve and Christmas morning. I was a graduate student in clinical psychology and my friend had arranged with his supervisors for me to accompany him while he was on-call.

The early evening was interesting but routine. About 11:30 P.M., we were called to the emergency room. We were advised that the patient my friend was to evaluate was an alcoholic who had been brought in by people from AA. The patient was a big man, intoxicated but not sloppy drunk. He was red-faced and had graying hair. I have always remembered him as a big Irishman, although I don't know that we had any evidence of his ethnicity. What I remember most about him was a pervasive sadness. He had little to say. From his dress and grooming he did not appear to be homeless, but it was apparent he was not welcome at home on Christmas Eve.

My friend determined that he was not appropriate for admission to the hospital. The people who brought him asked if there were any alternatives. On determining the patient was a veteran, as was the usual procedure, my friend contacted the on-call resident physician at the closest VA hospital. My friend's immediate comment after he got off the phone with the VA was that the resident taking the call had just "laughed at me." He wasn't about to admit an alcoholic in the middle of the night on Christmas Eve.

My friend was ready to simply send the man on his way, but those AA people accompanying him pleaded with him to do otherwise. I actually intervened and asked if there was another VA in the area where he might be admitted. My friend yielded, but said the only other possible VA was far, clear across Chicago from where we were. He made the call and the resident there said they were willing to admit him. "Are you sure he'll go?" my friend asked the people who had brought him in. "Oh, he'll go," they assured us. And off they went into the night.

Did I mention this was Chicago in December? It wasn't blizzard conditions, but it was cold, snowing and windy. I could see through the glass doors of the emergency room that it was really dark out there. But these two people from AA took off as happily as if they had been given a nice Christmas present.

Now, as to these people from AA: I had heard of Alcoholics Anonymous before but knew nothing about the organization. My ignorance influenced my perception of the situation. I assumed that like other large service or charitable organizations, AA had volunteers. As soon as I looked at these people from AA, I decided they were not alcoholics but instead were probably volunteers for the organization. These two AA members were about my age, well-spoken and apparently middle-class. They could no more have been alcoholics than I could have been.

But there was no reason to think I was an alcoholic. I had graduated from college and was in a doctoral program. It probably wasn't relevant that I was in my ninth year of a program that was supposed to be completed in five years and had an absolute seven-year deadline. At that point in my life, I overlooked the fact that I'd almost flunked out six years before because of drinking and smoking pot every night. Only through an odd set of circumstances that I later came to interpret as divine intervention was I brought back from the precipice and able to continue in the program.

The memory of these "volunteers" stayed with me. I knew something about organizations in general and believed that any organization that could attract volunteers that dedicated and unselfish must have some real substance. I retained a warm feeling about AA until I arrived on the Fellowship's doorstep about a decade later. So those two AA members had Twelfth Stepped me, as well as the gentleman they were hauling around Chicago that cold December night.

God bless all three of them. They all helped me get sober. It wasn't until after I was in AA that I truly understood that those AA folks had Twelfth Stepped me too. ~Joe G. Athens, Ohio

Stories reprinted with permission AA Grapevine: The Int'l. Journal Alcoholics Anonymous  
www.aagrapevine.org

# Unity

## OPEN SPEAKER MEETING (weekly)

WEDNESDAYS 8:00 P.M.  
The 218 Club  
218 S. Oneida Street  
Green Bay, WI 54303

## DISTRICT 01 MEETING (monthly)

2ND THURSDAY OF EACH MONTH  
6:30 p.m.

All Alcoholics Anonymous members are Welcome  
Alcoholics Anonymous Central Office  
1270 Main Street #102  
Green Bay, WI 54301

## CENTRAL OFFICE BOARD MEETINGS (monthly)

LAST TUESDAY OF THE MONTH  
6:00 p.m.

(CENTRAL OFFICE VOLUNTEERS NEEDED)  
Alcoholics Anonymous Central Office  
1270 Main Street #102  
Green Bay, WI 54301  
For details: 920-432-2600

## CHRISTMAS GRATITUDE MEETING

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 25, 2019  
10:00 a.m.  
The 218 Club  
218 S Oneida Street  
Green Bay, WI 54303

## NEW YEARS EVE DANCE

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 31, 2019  
9:00 p.m. - Midnight  
DJ - Door Prizes  
\$4.00 Suggested Donation at Door  
Ring in the New Year with all of your friends  
The 218 Club  
218 S Oneida Street  
Green Bay, WI 54303

## NEW YEARS GRATITUDE MEETING

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 1, 2020  
10:00 a.m.  
The 218 Club  
218 S Oneida Street  
Green Bay, WI 54303

## DISTRICT 01 GREEN BAY INTERGROUP

SATURDAY, JANUARY 25, 2020  
Social 4:30 p.m.  
Dinner 5:30 p.m.  
Speakers start at 7:00 p.m.  
Meal entrée provided. Please bring dish to pass.  
Silent Auction and Door Prizes (no 50/50 raffle)  
Free-will donation  
We need your help and your donations  
Contact Lauren P 920-905-9793 or Tamra D 920-321-4910  
Redeemer Lutheran Church  
210 S Oneida Street  
Green Bay, WI 54303

## 4TH AND 5TH STEP SPRING RETREAT\*

MARCH 20-22, 2020  
Friday night to Sunday noon  
\$175 - includes 2 nights/5 meals  
(Snacks and beverages provided throughout retreat)  
St Norbert Center for Spirituality  
1016 N Broadway, De Pere, WI 54115  
Registration deadline: March 6, 2020  
Send \$75 deposit to:  
Step Retreats  
PO Box 574  
Green Bay, WI 54305  
Questions? Call Judy G. 920-737-2330

## *HIS OBSERVATIONS ARE*

~Dale E. Denali Park, AK

I could not even begin to count the number of times I have heard at meetings and in AAGrapevine magazine articles the practice of rounding up one's amount of months or years of sobriety upwards to the next number. I can only chuckle to myself when folks feel the need to remind me of something I learned in kindergarten - 19 comes *after* 18.

What an enormous disservice and misrepresentation this is for the newcomer. It appears that once I have X amount of sobriety time, "I got this!" and the next Sobriety milestone is a given. The "I got this!" attitude is one of the biggest red flags I have seen of either drifting away from AA's foundational principles that are incorporated into our daily lives. "I got this!" is also a warning sign of a potential relapse.

On any given day, I am not promised to be alive tomorrow, much less promised the gift of sobriety.

# GENERAL SERVICE REPRESENTATIVE (GSR) MEETING

November 14, 2019

District Committee Member (DCM) Report-Summary:

(Meeting Minutes Online: [www.greenbayaa.org](http://www.greenbayaa.org))

**DCM, Matt B.** Hello GSRs and District Chairs, Well the year is winding down and our agenda is getting lighter. I did attend the assembly in Three Lakes and have a little to share on that. The area budget for 2020 was reviewed and approved including a budget for an ASL interpreter at Area Events. The details are still being worked out but there is definitely progress. Phil D is the new Area archivist and James is the new Area Literature Chair. Brent was confirmed as finance chair and Terry W was confirmed to serve on Structures and Guidelines committee. Guidelines for the editors for the "Now and Then" were presented. Recommendation from the Ad-Hoc Committee for an Area Inventory was passed. The Grapevine Committee motion for digital service media request passed. All in all a very productive assembly. The budget and details regarding the above motions can be found on the Area Website. Yours in service, Matt Buchholz DCM 01

**Secretary, Theresa D.** The October, 2019 minutes were reviewed by those present. A motion was made and seconded to accept the minutes.

**Accessibilities, Joe H.** Nothing to report.

**Archives, Bill D.** He is in the process of getting the recordings of the speakers from the recent "Old-timer's Panel" held at the 218 Club onto a flash drive and is also looking to have the recordings burned onto a disc.

**Bridging the Gap, Marian K.** (Via Email) Everything is going very well.

**Cooperation with the Professional Community, Bruce K.** No report available.

**Corrections - Men, Adam B.** Things are going well, but they do need someone to step up to the plate to help with the December 22nd meeting at Curry Lane.

**Corrections - Women, Theresa D.** Things are going well, but as usual they need more volunteers for the Huber jail meetings. (One individual is stepping down and another is away for the winter months). A Corrections display will again be set up at the upcoming Intergroup in January to solicit more volunteers for this worthwhile service work.

**District Events Co-Chairs, Tamra D. and Lloyd Z.** Tamra has been working with Lauren P. (new Events Co-Chair) in organizing the upcoming Intergroup to be held on Jan. 25, 2020. Flyers were provided to the GSR's to bring to their meeting, along with a sign-up sheet for the event volunteers. Lloyd is organizing a pizza and bowling party at Ashwaubenon Lanes to be held on Sunday, Dec. 29th (Packers vs. Lions, away)

**Grapevine, Vacancy**-No report available.

**Newsletter, Ronald M.** No report available.

**Public Information Chair, Pat. T.C.** No report available.

**Webmaster, Sam J.** (Via email) Nothing new to report.

**Treasurer's Report, Patrick H.** Prepared for the November, 2019 Meeting.  
Starting balance: \$8,406.71

Letting Go	19.00
Saturday Eye Opener	59.35
Flintville Early Risers	180.00
Total Deposits:	258.35
<b>Subtotal:</b>	<b>\$8,665.06</b>
Expenses:	
Central Office	195.00
(corrections literature)	
USPS (P.O. Box102.00)	102.00
DigiCopy	86.85
Central Office (Events)	89.00
Central Office (Hotline)	600.00
Redeemer Church (Events)	75.00
<b>Total Expenses:</b>	<b>\$1,147.85</b>

Ending balance 9/30/19 7,517.21

Prudent Reserve: -1,300.00

**Total Funds Available: \$6,217.21**

A motion was made, seconded and carried to approve the September, 2019 Treasurer's Report.

**OLD BUSINESS:** Open positions from recent District elections. Many Chairs remain open: DCM, alt-DCM, Treasurer, Newsletter, Archives, PI/CPC, Grapevine and Accessibilities. It was suggested that at the upcoming Intergroup in January that District 01 Chairs address the group with the need for these Chairs to be filled, providing a description of what it is they do/have done in relation to a particular Chair position. Copies of the "Duties and Responsibilities" of each Chair position will be made available. Bill D. indicated that he will consider the possibility of becoming District 01's new DCM.

**NEW BUSINESS:** None

## **GSR Reports:**

- Sisters in Sobriety, Sue C. Meetings are going well -- the attendance is growing.
- Women in the Present, Jill V. Meetings continue to have good attendance. Recently they did a pumpkin carving event. Elections are coming up later this month with many of the position hopefully filled.
- Letting Go, Donna Y. The meetings are going well.
- Early Birds, Kathy B. Their elections are coming up. They will be looking for volunteers to go into the Jackie Nitschke Center to bake and decorate cookies.
- Eye Opener/St. Matt's, William W. Meetings are well attended with about 30-35 members with many newcomers. He is getting more volunteers to help out at the Central Office. In his capacity as a liaison for the Central Office, William indicated to the District that he recently was visited by AA members from Akron, Ohio, who commented on the lack of "open" meetings in the area. In reviewing our meeting list, we found many "open" meetings listed.
- Never on Sunday, Bruce K. Meetings are going well. They recently disbursed about \$700.00.
- Promise Seekers, Tom D. The meetings are well attended.
- Walk With Us, Robert J. He is the newly elected GSR for this group. Welcome aboard, Robert !!

## **Big Smile, Bigger Heart**

*He and the coach could not have been more different, but they made it work. Just ask Miss Myrna*

"No, I will not come down there and get you out of jail," I told him. I do not now recall why Willie was in jail that time. He had been sober a while. Maybe an old charge had caught up with him. He had called Miss Myrna, my wife, and told her to tell me to get him out. "Tom, you're to go down there right now and help Willie," Miss Myrna told me. She loved him. So did I. We accepted his calls and the reversed charges, but I was not about to go make his bail.

We were an unlikely pair, Willie and I. He was a black man who had grown up poor and hard in Terrell County, Georgia. I was a white guy from the generation that grew up in a completely segregated world with all the racial prejudices of Jim Crow. Despite all that, he asked me to be his sponsor. I remember standing there and looking at him after the meeting and smiling when I said, "Sure. Call me tomorrow." And inside I was thinking, "Well, here we go."

He was a beautiful man with a big smile and a bigger heart. I wish I could remember all of his story. I heard him speak many times. He came up very poor. His father died drunk and left his mother and at least one sister to raise. Willie had achieved some success and local fame through athletics. He became a very successful basketball coach before the bottle got him. He is still remembered in South Georgia for his coaching. Later, he was able to get an occasional teaching assistant's job, but alcohol had taken away his coaching career and his teaching certificate. After he had been sober some years, he appealed to the state for the reinstatement of his teaching certificate, but without success.

It was hard for him to make a living. He lived in places that scared me and there was always some down-and-out guy living with him who was worse off than Willie. Often, Miss Myrna would tell me, "Call Willie and see if he has any groceries." I would make the call. Willie would reluctantly say he had no food. And she would send me off to the grocery. Today, I wish I had done more. Several of the guys and I carried him to AA meetings for a year or more. I would come by on Thursdays and pick him up for our prison meeting a few miles north of town. The men inside loved Willie. Later, he talked about the little blue station wagon I drove and our "spiritual journeys" to the prison and other meetings.

There is a little story attached to that car. After we had just about worn it out and gotten another car, Miss Myrna suggested we give the old one to Willie. That was like the old joke: If it had been any better, we wouldn't have given it to him. And if it had been any worse, he wouldn't have taken it. He came and got that car out of my backyard and drove it for a couple of years. Then he sold it and got himself a better ride. By that time, he was able to make a small living at different jobs here and there.

Then his kidneys gave out. The cause, I believe, was high blood pressure, exacerbated by all those years of hard drinking. He wound up in a local nursing home on the dialysis machine three times a week. Still, he came to meetings. Always smiling, never complaining. One of the ladies helped him with all the red tape and doctor visits for a kidney transplant and started a fund to raise the money. We all contributed and were hopeful. After several months, it looked possible. But Willie ran out of time. He died in June of 2014.

That first night he called from jail when I told him I would not come get him, I also told him to find somebody inside who needed help. He promised he would do that and he did. Sometimes, in the evening when the phone rings, I pick it up still expecting to hear Willie's smiling voice on the other end. "How are you doing, Tom?" I imagine him saying. "And how is Miss Myrna? You better treat her right and tell her I love her." ~Tom Georgia Albany, GA

## **District 01 Committee Contact Information**

District 01 Chairperson	dcmdistrict01@greenbayaa.org	Archives	archives@greenbayaa.org
Matt B. 920-217-6864		Bill D. 920-621-1258	
Alternate District Chairperson	altDCM@greenbayaa.org	Bridging the Gap	bridging@greenbayaa.org
Henrietta D. 920-530-3297		Marian K. 920-366-5950	
Newsletter	newsletter@greenbayaa.org	Public Info	PI@greenbayaa.org
Ronald M. 920-593-2915		Pat TC 920-301-3436	
Corrections Chairperson	corrections@greenbayaa.org	Grapevine	grapevine@greenbayaa.org
Adam B. 920-680-9496 (Men)		Coop with Prof. Comm.	cpc@greenbayaa.org
Theresa D. 920-490-7889 (Women)		Bruce K.	
Meetings List	meetinglist@greenbayaa.org	Events	events@greenbayaa.org
Ronald M. 920-593-2915		Lloyd Z. 920-713-0760	
Treasurer	treasurer@greenbayaa.org	Tamera D. 920-321-4910	
Patrick H. 920-819-5284		Webmasters	webmaster@greenbayaa.org
Secretary	secretary@greenbayaa.org	Sam J.. 920-362-4832	
Theresa D. 920-490-7889		Accessibility	accessibility@greenbayaa.org
Hotline			
Tom M. 920-562-2689			