

ECO NEWS

\$1.00

November 2021

Edmonton Central Office Society
#205, 10544 114 St. NW
Edmonton, AB T5H 3J7
780-424-5900
www.edmontonaa.org
Email. centraloffice@edmontonaa.org



From the Editor

November 11 is Remembrance Day 2021 in Canada. On Remembrance Day, we acknowledge those who served their country and acknowledge our responsibility to work for the peace they fought to achieve. During times of war, individual acts of kindness occur frequently. The theme of this newsletter is Alcoholics Anonymous in war time.

Yours in service, Julia J.

TRADITION ELEVEN

“Our public relations policy is based on attraction rather than promotion; we need always maintain personal anonymity at the level of press, radio, and films.”

- 1. Do I sometimes promote AA so fanatically that I make it seem *unattractive*?**
- 2. Am I always careful to keep the confidences reposed in me as an AA member?**
- 3. Am I careful about throwing AA names around—even within the Fellowship?**
- 4. Am I ashamed of being a recovered, or recovering, alcoholic?**
- 5. What would AA be like if we were not guided by the ideas in Tradition Eleven? Where would I be?**
- 6. Is my AA sobriety attractive enough that a sick drunk would want such a quality for himself?**

(Reprinted from Service Material from the General Service Office SM F-131)

STEP ELEVEN

“Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God as we understood Him, praying only for knowledge of His will for us and the power to carry that out”

PROMISE ELEVEN

“We will intuitively know how to handle situations which used to baffle us.”

ELEVENTH STEP PRAYER

**Higher Power, as I understand You,
I pray to keep my connection with You
Open & clear from the confusion of daily life.
Through my prayers & meditation I ask especially for
Freedom from self-will, rationalization, & wishful thinking.
I pray for the guidance of correct thought & positive action.
Your will Higher Power, not mine, be done.**

Alcoholics Anonymous, Cleveland

CONCEPT ELEVEN

“The trustees should always have the best possible committees, corporate service directors, executives, staffs, and consultants. Composition, qualifications, induction procedures, and rights and duties will always be matters of serious concern.

- **Do we understand how the roles of non-trustee directors and non-trustee appointed committee members help serve and strengthen the committee system?**
- **How do we encourage our special paid workers to exercise their traditional “Right of Participation”?**
- **Do we practice rotation in all our service positions?”**

(Reprinted from the General Service Office Service Material)

Post-war disillusionment, ever more serious alcoholism, impending mental and physical collapse, brought him to the point of self-destruction.

BB *We Agnostics*, p.56

But the more we fought and tried to have our own way, the worse matters got. As in war, the victor only seemed to win. Our moments of triumph were short-lived.

BB *How It Works*, p.66

Most Western countries, including Canada, experienced large increases in alcohol consumption and related problems **in the 30-year period after the second world war**. However, around 1975 alcohol consumption and alcohol-related problems began to decrease in Canada and many other countries. In some Canadian provinces, these decreases were very large; for example, in Ontario, liver cirrhosis death rates decreased by 25.1% (1975-1983) and the rate of drinking drivers involved in fatal accidents fell by 21.6%. Previously, it was shown that the decreases in liver cirrhosis mortality and morbidity in both Canada and the USA were associated with increased levels of treatment for alcoholism, increased funding for alcoholism treatment, and **increased membership in Alcoholics Anonymous**.

In later study, the trends in alcohol consumption, alcohol-related problems, alcohol availability and treatment efforts were examined for the **province of Alberta**, for the period 1975-1993. Most of the trends previously observed in Ontario were also observed in Alberta. It was found that: (1) stabilization followed by important declines in per capita consumption of alcohol; (2) large decreases in most measures of problems such as cirrhosis mortality and traffic fatalities related to drinking; (3) increases in treatment and Alcoholics Anonymous membership rates; (4) increases in measures of physical availability of alcohol. One problem, impaired driving arrest rate, increased substantially during the years examined.

Paraphrased from:

Smart, R. and Mann, R., Treatment, **Alcoholics Anonymous** and Alcohol Controls during The Decrease in Alcohol Problems in Alberta: 1975-1993, *Alcohol & Alcoholism* Vol. 33, No. 3, pp. 265-272, 1998

“We had to drink because our nation had won a war or lost a peace.”

12&12 *Step Four*, p.47



“When World War II broke out, this spiritual principle had its first major test. A.A.'s entered the services and were scattered all over the world. Would they be able to take discipline, stand up under fire, and endure the monotony and misery of war? Would the kind of dependence they had learned in A.A. carry them through? Well, it did. They had even fewer alcoholic lapses or emotional binges than A.A.'s safe at home did. They were just as capable of endurance and valor as any other soldiers. Whether in Alaska or on the Salerno beachhead, their dependence upon a Higher Power worked. And far from being a weakness, this dependence was their chief source of strength.”

12&12 *Step Three*, p.38

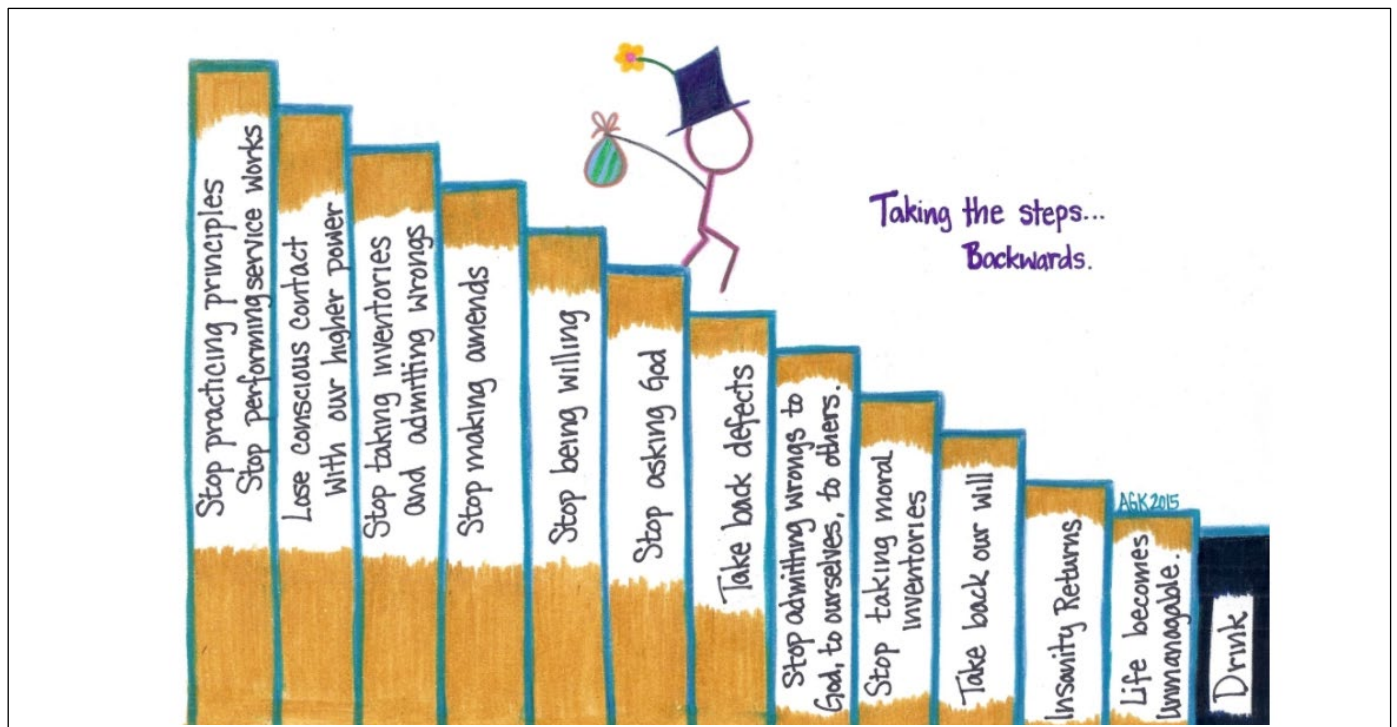
ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS, BILL'S STORY, P.1

War fever ran high in the New England town to which we new, young officers from Plattsburg were assigned, and we were flattered when the first citizens took us to their homes, making us feel heroic. Here was love, applause, war; moments sublime with intervals hilarious. I was part of life at last, and in the midst of the excitement I discovered liquor. I forgot the strong warnings and the prejudices of my people concerning drink. In time we sailed for "Over There." I was very lonely and again turned to alcohol. We landed in England. I visited Winchester Cathedral. Much moved, I wandered outside. My attention was caught by a doggerel on an old tombstone:

“Here lies a Hampshire Grenadier
Who caught his death
Drinking cold small beer.
A good soldier is ne'er forgot
Whether he dieth by musket
Or by pot.”

Ominous warning - which I failed to heed.

Twenty-two, and a veteran of foreign wars, I went home at last. I fancied myself a leader, for had not the men of my battery given me a special token of appreciation? My talent for leadership, I imagined, would place me at the head of vast enterprises which I would manage with the utmost assurance.



Ann Kroger's AA writings and cartoons can be found on her blog at <https://annkroger.com/>

AA HISTORY FOR THE MONTH OF NOVEMBER

Nov 1

1947 – 1st AA Group in Anchorage, Alaska.
1963 – Reverend Sam Shoemaker dies.

Nov 3

2001 – J. P. Miller who wrote screenplay for “The Days of Wine and Roses” died.

Nov 9

1966 – Johnson appoints Marty M to the 1st National Advisory Committee on Alcoholism.

Nov 10

1940 – First AA group formed in Minneapolis.
2001 – First of 400,000 4th Edition Big Books arrives in the mail.

Nov 11

1934 – Armistice Day; Bill started drinking after dry spell, beginning of Bill’s last drunk.

Nov 12

1940 – 1st AA meeting is held in Boston.

Nov 13

1939 – Bill wants to work at Towns Hsp, NY drunks want him to stay on as head.

Nov 14

1940 – Alcoholic Foundation publishes first AA Bulletin.

Nov 15

1949 – Bill W suggests that groups devote Thanksgiving week to discussions of the 12 Traditions.

Nov 16

1950 – Dr. Bob died.

Nov 18

1946 – First Dublin Ireland group met.

Nov 21

1939 – AAs in San Francisco hold first California AA meeting in the Clift Hotel.
1952 – Willard Richardson, past Treasurer/Chairman of Alcoholic Foundation, dies.

Nov 26

1895 – Bill W. born in East Dorsett, VT.
1939 – Dilworth Lupton gave sermon “Mr. X and Alcoholics Anonymous”.

Nov 28

1939 – Hank P. writes Bill advocating autonomy for all AA groups.

Nov 28

1943 – Bill guest speaker San Quentin Penitentiary (sometimes dated Dec 2, 1943).

Other significant events in November for which we do not have a specific date:

Nov 1934 – Ebby T. carries message to Bill.

Nov 1936 – Fitz M leaves Towns Hospital to become ‘AA #3 in NY’, with Bill W and Hank P.

Nov 1937 – Bill and Dr. Bob compare notes in Akron. Count forty cases staying sober.

Meeting of the Akron Group to consider Bill’s ideas for how to expand the movement ... a book, AA hospitals, paid missionaries. Passed by a majority of 2.

Nov/Dec 1939 – Akron group withdrawals from association with Oxford Group. Meetings moved from T. Henry & Clarence Williams to Dr Bob’s and other members’ homes.

Nov 1941 – “First Mass AA Meeting” in Oklahoma City, 8 present, 1 was drunk.

Nov 1945 – Bill’s article called ‘Those Goof Balls’ published in Grapevine.

Nov 1986 – Big Book published in paperback.

Bill W. Speaks of Pearl Harbor

Excerpt from Lecture as given at the Yale School of Alcohol Studies

June 1945 -By Bill W.

My first task is a joyous one; it is to voice the sincere gratitude that every member of Alcoholics Anonymous present feels tonight that we can stand in the midst of such an assembly. I know that in this assembly there are many different points of view, that we have social workers, ministers, doctors and others, people we once thought did not understand us, because we did not understand them.

I think right away of one of our clergyman friends. He helped start our group in St. Louis, and when Pearl Harbor came, he thought to himself, "Well this will be a hard day for the A.A.'s." He expected to see us go off like firecrackers. Well, nothing much happened and the good man was rather joyously disappointed, you might say. But he was puzzled. And then he noticed with still more wonder that the A.A.s seemed rather less excited about Pearl Harbor than the normal people. In fact, quite a number of the so-called normal people seemed to be getting drunk and very distressed. So, he went up to one of the A.A.'s and said, "Tell me, how is it that you folks hold up so well under this stress, I mean this Pearl Harbor?"

The A.A. looked at him, smiled, but quite seriously said, "You know, each of us has had his own private Pearl Harbor, each of us has known the utmost of humiliation, of despair, and of defeat. So why should we, who have known the resurrection, fear another Pearl Harbor?"

For the full lecture, see Silkworth.net

"The Fundamentals in Retrospect," AA Co-Founder, Dr. Bob, June 1955
Best of the Grapevine

We've all seen the new member who stays sober for a time, largely through sponsorship. Then maybe the sponsor gets drunk, and you know what usually happens. Left without a human prop, the new member gets drunk, too. He has been glorifying an individual, instead of following the program.

"Certainly, we need leaders, but we must regard them as the human agents of the Higher Power and not with undue adulation as individuals. The Fourth and Tenth Steps cannot be too strongly emphasized here, 'Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves Continued to take personal inventory and when we were wrong promptly admitted it.' There is your perfect antidote for halo-poisoning."

AA BIG BOOK QUOTE

"Life is exponentially better than it ever was before. I'm living out the life I used to fantasize about, and I have a whole lot of work still in front of me. I have hope to share and love to give, and I just keep going one day at a time, living this adventure called life."

The Missing Link, page 288, Reprinted with permission from A.A.W.S.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO EDMONTON CENTRAL OFFICE

In keeping with the AA Seventh Tradition of self-support, Edmonton Central Office can accept contributions only from AA members and AA Groups.

Contributions can be made to Edmonton Central Office by any of the following methods (AA members or groups only please):

- **E-transfer to centraloffice@edmontonaa.org** you will need to provide the answer to the security question via a separate email to this address.
- Visa or MasterCard either over the phone (780-424-5900) or in person (by appointment)
- Cheque made payable to "Edmonton Central Office" and brought to the office (by appointment) or mailed to the office at:

Edmonton Central Office
Suite 205
10544 114 St NW
Edmonton, AB T5H 3J7

- Cash brought to the office (by appointment).
- Arranging on-going monthly contributions by calling or emailing Central Office

The Edmonton Central Office Society is a registered charity. A tax receipt will be issued early in 2022 to individuals whose contribution is greater than \$20.00. For a receipt to be issued, the full name and address of the individual is needed. The receipt will indicate a contribution to the Edmonton Central Office Society.

Note: You can phone Central Office weekdays from 11:00 AM to 2:00 PM. If you need to visit Central Office, please arrange an appointment by phone or email.



That war-time day in old Winchester Cathedral came back again.

BB Bill's Story, p.10



Please Help!

We would like to hear from you about your AA related experience, strength, and hope, keeping in mind copyright and credit concerns.

For example, write a short article about your home group, give your interpretation of a slogan, explain one of the steps or traditions, send a joke or cartoon keeping in mind the sensitivities of our readership. Any contributions will be appreciated.

Submissions should be between 250 and 300 words. Submit with your full name, group, and phone number where you can be reached (of course we will protect your anonymity).

Material submitted before the 20th of the month will print in the following month's issue.

Submit articles to the ECO Newsletter Editor at editor@edmontonaa.org or to AA Central Office #205, 10544-114 St NW, Edmonton, AB T5H 3J7 Fax: (587) 523-4334

* I * * I * P * D M D *
 B N * W N G H * E E E D
 L T * I T N A * P T P R
 O O S T E I R R R A E I
 O X U H R L M E E B N N
 D I B D V E A C S O D K
 S C S R E S C O S L E I
 T A T A N N I V A I N N
 R T A W T U S E N Z C G
 E I N E I O T R T E E *
 A O C L O C * Y B E E R
 M N E * N * * * W I N E

Answers to last month's Alcoholics Anonymous word search puzzle:

Beer
 Bloodstream
 Dependence
 Depressant
 Drinking
 Intervention
 Intoxication
 Metabolize
 Pharmacist
 Recovery
 Substance
 Wine

FAITHFUL FIVERS

Jillian B. from AB Group

The Faithful Fiver Club was initiated several years ago to generate funds for Central Office. AA members pledge a donation of \$5.00 or more a month. They then receive the satisfaction of carrying the message to the alcoholic who still suffers, and recognition (if they desire) in the monthly ECOS Newsletter.



Pick up your litter.

Cartoon by Kate Curtis. Kate's cartoons can be found on her blog at <http://cluestolife.wordpress.com>.

BIRTHDAY CLUB

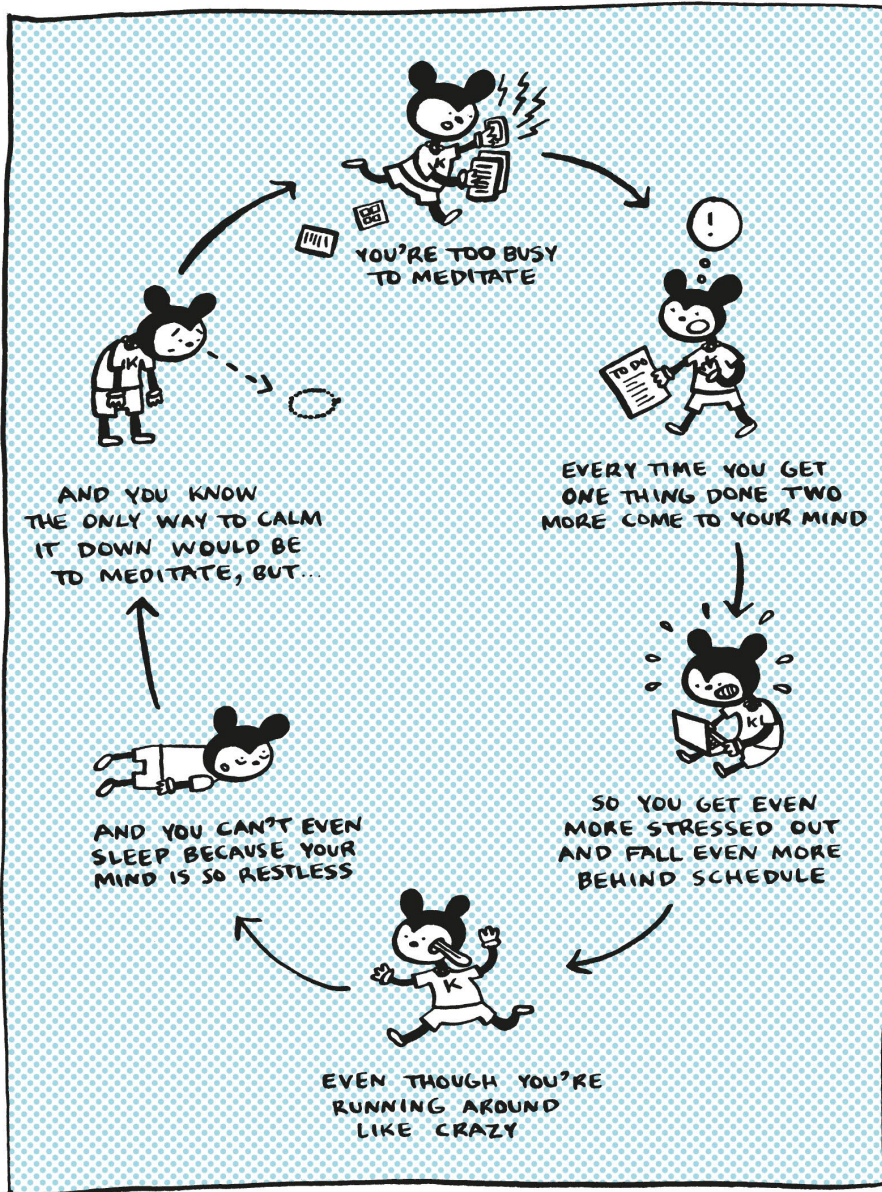
Denise P. from Helping Hands

“What is the Birthday Club?”

- A show of gratitude by AA members, who contribute \$1.00 or more for each year of continuous sobriety.
- These funds are used to HELP SUPPORT Central Office staff and volunteers to carry the Twelfth Step message during the office hours.
- You will receive personal Birthday Card on your sobriety date.
- Please contact Central Office, if you want to join our **BIRTHDAY CLUB!**

#205, 10544 – 114 St., Edmonton, AB
 T5H 3J7 780-424—5900
centraloffice@edmontonaa.org

Too Busy to Meditate

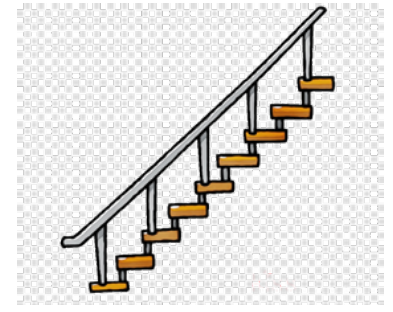


Harmonist.us © KRISANGI DAS

May 24th, 2021 | by Harmonist staff Comic by Krsangi dasi
<https://harmonist.us/2021/05/too-busy-to-meditate/>

Why do children of recovering alcoholics have such big family reunions?

They have twelve-step-parents.



HMCS Haida on patrol in Korean waters, 1952-54.



Buckam Singh and Sikh Canadians in the First World War (Canadian Encyclopedia)

GRAPEVINE Daily Quote

November 28, 2020

“Don’t wait till you’re depressed to practice gratitude.”

New Canaan, Conn., September 1979, “Gratitude”,
 Voices of Long-Term Sobriety



VOICES OF
 LONG-TERM SOBRIETY
 OLD-TIMERS STORIES
 FROM AA GRAPEVINE

Announcing Grapevine's New Podcast

The AA Grapevine Half-Hour Variety Hour. Featuring AA members Don and Sam.

A new podcast episode will be available in English every Monday.

To learn more please visit:

aagrapevine.org/podcast



Group Birthdays November 2021

60 Minutes to Sobriety

Last Sunday
Nov 28 Adam B. 18 yrs

Back to Basics (St. Albert)

First Thursday
Nov 14 Chad VH. 6 yrs
15 Vance M. 9 yrs

Breathe Easy

First Friday
Nov Tom A. 6 yrs
Jordy S. 7 yrs
Alex W. 9 yrs
Diane S. 17 yrs
Tracy M-T 22 yrs

Fellowship Breakfast

Last Saturday
Nov 1 Wayne W. 5 yrs
8 Tanya T. 1 yr
11 Bridgit T. 2 yrs
15 Bethany L. 1 yr

Gratitude

Last Monday
Nov 1 Peter R. 42 yrs

Jasper Place

Last Tuesday
Temporarily cancelled

Last Call

Last Wednesday
Nov 19 Steve N. 5 yrs

Mustard Seed

Last Sunday
Nov 2 Daryl D. 3 yrs
19 Steve W. 43 yrs

Oilman's

First Monday
Nov 22 Dale B. 35 yrs

South Side

Third Friday
Nov 7 Larry L. 3 yrs
14 Betty S. 33 yrs

12 Steps to Serenity

Nov 10 Brent J. 19 yrs
13 Stefan S. 3 yrs
13 Dan M. 5 yrs
16 Ron S. 11 yrs
16 Jamie M. 3 yrs
22 Ed W. 29 yrs
25 Ken G. 8 yrs
26 Dallas K. 1 yr

Sunday Night (St. Albert)

Last Sunday
Nov 2 Matt R. 4 yrs
7 Richard S. 10 yrs
14 Grant L. 1 yr

Step Sisters

Last Wednesday
Nov 9 Sandra R. 13 yrs

St. Albert Breakfast

Nov 11 Mickey L. 33 yrs
15 Dennis B. 8 yrs
21 Debbie H. 16 yrs
28 Chris B. 1 yr

WEMG

First Wednesday
Nov 2 Jon D. 5 yrs
28 Adam B. 8 yrs
30 Ben S. 1 yr

Westminister

Last Saturday
Nov 1 Lil C. 31 yrs
2 Patrick M. 23 yrs
11 Marilyn W. 37 yrs
22 Tom R. 38 yrs
27 Jack H. 50 yrs



Please send members lists
editor@edmontonaa.org
or update your members list
at AA Central Office.

Upcoming Events and other Notables

From the Desk of the Office Manager – Pam L.

It was recently discovered that a number of hard cover Big Books (B-1) have been misprinted. The book goes from page 416 to 353 and then page 384 to 449. They are all the 44th printing from October 2020, but not all of the 44th printing editions are incorrect. You may bring your misprinted Big Books to Edmonton Central Office for an exchange.

14 Week Step Series

Started September 13, 2021

Time: 7:00pm

LOCATION:

**1380 Sherwood Dr Sherwood Park
Church Of Nazarene (Basement)**

Please bring a Big Book and a 12x12

Altered Attitudes Breakfast

December 24th

7:30 AM

Chateau Louis
Conference Centre
\$30.00 (Proof of
vaccination is
required for entry)

Tickets at
Central Office
780-424-5900,
Tom 780-906-1750
Rick 780-907-8890.

DISTRICT 61

14th ANNUAL GRATITUDE NIGHT

Saturday, November 20th, 2021

Presented On Zoom at 7:00 pm

ID. 580 931 0935 Password 163263

On-going Big Book Studies

Tuesday 7:30 PM (Open)

Saturday 9:15 AM (Men)

South Side Chapter House

8318 104 Street

North Entrance on 84th Avenue

District 40 GSR School

District 40 (West Edmonton)
Area 78

January 8, 2022

6:30-9:30pm Mountain Time

Doors open at 6:15pm

District 40 Fall Unity Event

November 20, 2021

5:00-6:30pm (zoom room will
open at 4:45pm)

Zoom Meeting ID 842 743 5949

ICOAA – Intergroup/Central Office/A.A. World Service/A.A. Grapevine – Seminar

I would once again like to thank the Central Office Board and Edmonton and Area Intergroup for sending me “virtually” to the ICOAA Seminar in Rhode Island. I decided to join Colleen M, the Greater Vancouver Intergroup Office in Vancouver, B.C. I was fortunate to have Bryan H. our current Central Office Board Chair attend virtually in Rhode Island from Edmonton.

I flew out to Vancouver and stayed in New Westminster. I met up with Colleen at my hotel to attend the seminar “online” starting with the Policy Committee meeting to discuss the policies for the ICOAA Seminar. This was followed by the Welcome & Opening by our host Sue C. from the Rhode Island Intergroup Office where they took us on a virtual tour of Rhode Island followed by a comedian instructing us on the Rhode Island “speak”. Now we can all understand Sue a little bit better. This was followed by a Guest Speaker, Jack B. who was a past Office manager for Rhode Island.

On Thursday morning we attended the Chair/Secretary Orientation followed by our first workshop 1 B) Legalese-Insurance, State Tax Laws, Employment Laws, Incorporations, and Lawsuits. I was the chair of the meeting with Ken S. from Temecula Valley as the Secretary. I opened with a brief overview of how we handle the office from being incorporated as a charitable organization and much of the discussion in the workshop centered on insurance for the groups.

The next workshop I attended was 2 B) Compensation & Concept XI – There was a lot of discussion around compensation for the special workers and if there were health benefits, retirement benefits, holidays, whether there were raises or if there was only a cost-of-living increase (which is not a raise).

I then attended session 3A) Volunteers – Recruiting, Training, Motivating and Letting them Go. I was able to gather a lot of great information from this workshop and one of them was that there wasn't anything we cannot correct...except rudeness. Another of the helpful sayings was "we manage things and lead people".

This was followed by the report backs of all the workshops.

We had an hour break then we had the evening presentation from G.S.O & A.A.W.S., we discussed how they are trying to put out more communications. The ICOAA body is concerned with not being informed by the roll out of new literature from G.S.O. We were informed that the G.S.O. website had 1.9 million visits in 2020 and 1.87 million visits this year. We were informed that the new Service manual will be available in November of this year with quite a few updates to the manual.

On Friday I attended the Manager's only meeting and then onto session 4 A) "Where Everybody Knows Your Name-Wearing two hats and recognizing burnout". This workshop was pretty much geared towards the "special workers". We heard about the importance of taking time off for our own recovery, having boundaries and sticking to them. That a job is a job and recovery is recovery. Some of the office managers needed to go to meetings outside of their area where they were not known as the office manager. Another saying was "you look silly wearing two hat – so don't! The last session of the day was 5 C) "AA Phones & 12 Step Calls" and the members present spoke about different type of phone lines in the office and how they turned over to the 12 Step volunteers (or "Night watch Team"). There were a few offices that use a VOIP system. We also talked about the 12 Step list and how sometimes there must be a lot of calls made before you get someone to take a 12 Step call. One location said it took on average 10 calls and then 2.4 members picked up before they could get one person to take the call. This session was followed by the report back of the day's workshops followed by the presentation by AA Grapevine where we met the new AA Grapevine Publisher, Chris C.

Saturday morning we had the business meeting of the ICOAA where I will once again sit as the delegate for western Canada at the ICOAA.

It was wonderful to share ideas and build friendships as well as to be able to commiserate with my colleagues in our Central Offices across Canada and the US, and to bring home ideas of how to best be of service to our fellowship and always reminding us of our primary purpose: to extend our hand to help the still suffering Alcoholic.

My full report of all the workshops with more details will be available at Central Office, so come on by, have a coffee, visit with us, and read the report.

Thank you again for this opportunity!

Pam L. – Edmonton Central Office Manager

What's it like to be in the military – And in A.A.?

How is advancement affected?

"I have reached the top of the enlisted ladder, which is a great deal better than being on a greased slide ready to go to the bottom."

"Since joining A.A., I've been commissioned and have gone in five years from first lieutenant to captain to selection for major. I've had the usual succession of overseas and stateside duty tours, each one a little better than the last. I've been awarded at least one medal for meritorious achievement or service at every assignment. I never got any in the seven preceding years as a practicing military drunk."

"I have been extremely fortunate to be promoted quickly. Active drinking sometimes causes problems that lead to reduction or elimination. Often these folks earn the respect and rank back after joining A.A. in either the civilian community or the military."

How do we cope with the social aspects of military life?

"When we're drinking heavily, we tend to think that everyone else must be doing the same. But we're not in A.A. long before we find out that this just isn't so. At first, I avoided social events where there would be heavy drinking, but this didn't last long. Today, now that the physical craving for booze is gone and my self-confidence is up, I can go to a party and have one hell of a time — entirely sober. In my seven years as an officer and an A.A. member, I've never been cited for bad behavior."

"Military life requires attendance at social functions where alcohol is present. As the A.A. Big Book suggests, I ask myself if I have a good reason to be there. Whether I need to attend briefly or for most of the evening, it is always amazing to me that there are others who choose not to drink and that the peer pressure I suffered from was imaginary. Usually the event goes great, but if I am uncomfortable or tempted I always reserve the right to leave. Sobriety is the most important thing."

"I'm a sailor — a chief petty officer — who doesn't drink. Preposterous, yet true. Just what is there for a career military man who doesn't partake at the club now and then? Plenty. No matter where I go, I have a lot of friends I haven't met yet — A.A. friends. From Gitmo Bay around the world in both directions, I have met men and women just like me. Folks who understand and are always willing to help. These are friends — not the kind you'll find in Mary's Bar or the Texas, and not the kind after a sailor's buck. They are friends who open their homes and hearts to welcome the traveling person and perhaps continue the sharing of experience, strength, and hope."

Is difference in rank a problem?

"When we go to A.A. meetings, we leave our rank outside. Each member is addressed by his first name, and just as much respect is shown a member of low enlisted grade as is shown the higher-ranking officers."

"Over the entrance to our meeting place is a sign: "Abandon rank, all ye who enter here."

"One of my closest A.A. friends," says an Air Force enlisted man, "was a Marine Corps major. We spent much of our off-duty time together at A.A. meetings and on Twelfth Step calls — to help alcoholics who wanted to stop drinking. On these occasions, we called each other by our first names, of course, and we were in civilian clothes at the meetings. But when we met in uniform, neither of us had any difficulty showing the proper respect to the other's grade. We felt that, because of our fellowship in A.A., we respected each other more as individuals in our profession."

"Because I'm an officer, A.A. newcomers who are enlisted men are always hesitant about our relationship. I make a point of discussing this problem and reiterating that my rank remains outside the meeting, even when we are forced by circumstances to wear uniforms there. And I find that the problem rapidly dissolves and is soon forgotten."

“I head into combat areas with spiritual tools and principles. . .”

Loaded down with six months of training, my sea bag, M4 service rifle and everything else on the gear list, I left Camp Pendleton, California, and headed to Southern Afghanistan with a company of combat-ready Marines. I was ready and eager to launch out on the next phase of my development. As a platoon commander with three other combat deployments, it has always been satisfying for me to know that I am surrounded by the best and brightest warriors America has to offer. As a sober member of Alcoholics Anonymous, with 16 years of Recovery, Unity and Service under my belt, it is also comforting to know that I head into combat armed with spiritual tools and principles that will enable me to stay focused on the task at hand.

Alcoholics are not a rare commodity in the military, but recovered alcoholics are sometimes hard to find, especially in a combat zone. The normal operating procedure I used in Iraq was to hang flyers in high visibility areas asking for fellow “friends of Bill.” My pick has struck gold on numerous occasions, finding fellowship and recovery in the hardscrabble camps of Fallujah, Haditha and Ramadi. Connecting with the chaplain and asking for the use of his tent for an A.A. meeting has never been a problem and I suspected the base in Afghanistan would yield some fellow members and perhaps there would even be an established meeting.

Upon arrival into theater we were sent to a remote base in the south that had not previously been occupied and was in the heart of the fight. The operational tempo kept us all busy and on edge and it was a month before I was able to reserve a tent and post a flyer announcing a weekly Wednesday night meeting. Following direction from my sponsor, I knew I needed to remain in fit spiritual condition, so each morning 32 I found some time to sit quietly, read a passage from *Daily Reflections* and ask my Higher Power for help. I know that those morning disciplines in Afghanistan kept the four horsemen away, and spiritually connecting each day made the rigors of combat — and yearning for home — more bearable.

As the weeks passed, I was the only member of the Wednesday Night, Camp Dwyer A.A. meeting. I trudged forward with my commitment, despite secretly wondering what the point was. I was grateful to have the time to myself but asked myself why should I continue holding a meeting that no one attended? Every few days I would check on the flyer I had posted, watching it grow brittle and sun-soaked. It was an excellent reminder of the program, the willingness required to hang in there and the importance of suiting up and showing up.

On an extended patrol to pick up supplies from a base up north, I stumbled upon a similar brittle, sun-soaked sign hanging on the chow hall door that called out “Camp Leatherneck A.A. meeting Wed 1900 at the Chapel.” After realizing it was Wednesday, I immediately got A.A. goose-bumps. I arrived 30 minutes early and sat alone reading. Fifteen minutes later a fellow Marine walked in and looked at me with eyes as wide as the Liberty Bell. There was a moment of silence and the customary greeting followed by a hopeful, “Are you here for the meeting?” Replying yes, I reached out for a handshake and was pulled in for a hug. Tony had been looking for a fellow member for two months, showing up each and every Wednesday with little contact. His spirit and dedication was yet another reminder of the importance of the fellowship and the willingness and effort required to stay serene one day at a time. After hours of sharing, he and I agreed to meet for breakfast before I left the wire and headed back “home.”

It states in our Big Book, “The main problem of the alcoholic centers in his mind, rather than in his body.” Even with no alcohol available, Afghanistan put my disease to the test. Every so often I found myself thinking about a fake future with little hope, or a regrettable past that I could have lived differently. But my experience in Afghanistan also taught me an invaluable lesson, I know that I no longer need to be afraid of being away from the physical fellowship of A.A. My faith in a Higher Power and trust in this program has been a source of inspiration and strength. Sitting alone in that tent each Wednesday night week after week I realized I wasn’t truly alone, proving to me again that it truly does work if I work it.

“Canadian Armed Forces”, Reprinted from AA and the Armed Forces pp 31 33, with permission.

Edmonton Central Office Society			
INCOME STATEMENT 2021			
	September		
	Actuals	Budget	variance
General Receipts:			
Group Contributions	\$ 7,389.05	\$8,756.66	\$1,367.61
Individual/Bequeath	\$ 1,415.00	\$2,888.62	\$1,473.62
Birthday Club/Faithful Fivers	\$ 370.00	\$414.96	\$44.96
Office Supplies / Postage	\$ 67.00	\$145.68	\$78.68
Newsletter	\$ -	\$0.00	\$0.00
Rental Income-EGSC, etc	\$ 60.00	\$0.00	-\$60.00
Tradition Seven-meetings	\$ 228.40	\$292.01	\$63.61
Fundraising	\$ -	\$416.67	\$416.67
Other Inc (Interest, etc)	\$ 4.95	\$1.15	-\$3.80
Total General Receipts	\$ 9,534.40	\$12,915.74	\$3,381.34
Literature & Medallion			
Literature	\$ 4,290.05	\$7,945.43	\$3,655.38
Medallion	\$ 1,676.00	\$1,734.55	\$58.55
Total Literature and Med.	\$ 5,966.05	\$9,679.98	\$3,713.93
Total Revenue	\$ 15,500.45	\$22,595.72	\$7,095.27
Expenses: (COS)			
AAWS & Grapevine Literature	\$ 2,482.66	\$4,976.14	\$2,493.48
Meeting list & Greeting Cards	\$ 232.52	\$399.48	\$166.96
Medallion Purch /engraving	\$ 880.99	\$1,000.85	\$119.86
Freight / Brokerage	\$ -	\$0.00	\$0.00
	\$ 3,596.17	\$6,376.46	\$2,780.29
Intergroup Expenses			
12 Step Answering	\$ 404.87	\$408.33	\$3.46
Literature expense	\$ 19.29	\$7.26	-\$12.03
Communications & Tech	\$ -	\$0.00	\$0.00
Other (Archive, 12 Step,Cred,Grp Serv)	\$ -	\$100.00	\$100.00
	\$ 424.16	\$515.60	\$91.44
Administrative Expenses			
Accounting & Legal	\$ 179.38	\$232.16	\$52.78
Bank Chgs & Cr Card chgs	\$ 118.79	\$133.98	\$15.19
Computer & IT Maintenance	\$ 128.12	\$500.00	\$371.88
Equipment Lease/Purchase	\$ 359.77	\$1,320.03	\$960.26
Fundraising expense	\$ -	\$416.67	\$416.67
Insurance	\$ 321.80	\$351.36	\$29.56
Newsletter Expenses	\$ -	\$0.00	\$0.00
Office Supplies	\$ 35.24	\$108.89	\$73.65
Postage	\$ 99.02	\$86.15	-\$12.87
Rent	\$ 3,778.56	\$3,663.41	-\$115.15
Repairs & Maintenance	\$ -	\$0.00	\$0.00
Salaries, Source, WCB	\$ 5,699.34	\$5,360.34	-\$339.00
Staff Training / Seminar	\$ -	\$1,564.23	\$1,564.23
Telephone / Internet	\$ 133.09	\$216.37	\$83.28
	\$ 10,853.11	\$13,453.59	\$2,600.48
Total Expenses	\$ 14,873.44	\$20,345.65	\$5,472.21
Income / (Loss)	\$ 627.01	\$0.00	-\$627.01

