



PROMISES



A PUBLICATION OF THE FLAGLER COUNTY INTERGROUP OF ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS

Beverly Beach Bunnell Daytona North Espanola Flagler Beach Hammock Marineland Palm Coast Painters Hill

JANUARY/ FEBRUARY 2011 ISSUE

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AA Used to be here...

The year is 2019. The place, well it's not important because it could be anywhere. It could be right here where we live.

Tom and Ed had been driving all day. These two sober guys had hoped to make the motel in time for a nice shower, dinner and a meeting before turning in. Tomorrow would be another long day of driving and although they were both sober a few years, their own company and conversation had worn thin. Besides it would be nice to see AA in another part of the country and meet new people!

Sunset was fast approaching and when it was clear they couldn't make their destination as planned, they decided a meeting came first and so they pulled off the interstate and cruised through a small rural town. They stopped at a convenience store, bought gas and checked the phone book for "AA". Oddly enough, there was no listing. Tom grabbed the pay phone and dialed information.

"Alcoholics Anonymous?"

"Sorry no listing."

"What about AA Intergroup?"

"No, there's nothing for that either."

What the hell? thought Tom, no AA? That can't be, there must be an error. The two men discussed the situation and decided to ride around the town



and look for churches, because meetings were almost always in churches. Surely one would have a sign out, some cars parked out back, people smoking outside and waiting. There were seven churches in town—all within a ten minute drive of each other. All were closed and quiet, waiting for Sunday morning to arrive.

The two men drove around aimlessly looking. As they drove down a main road which looked like it might lead somewhere, they spotted a bar. It had a small front door and a string of outdoor tables along one wall beside the road. A lone old

man was sitting at the first table. No beer, no cigarette, no company. "He might turn out to be one of us or maybe used to be," Ed said. "Pull up and I'll ask him if he knows about AA."

Tom stopped the car right alongside the man and Ed rolled down the window, "Say, Buddy, could you help us out?"

"Whadda ya need?" he replied.

"You wouldn't happen to know where we might find an AA meeting here in town would you?"

"AA...that's a hoot—not 'round here...not anymore."

"Huh?" said Ed.

"We used to have it...hell, I was in it too." Tom and Ed looked puzzled. They got out of the car, walked to the man's table and said, "What happened?"

"I'm not sure I really know," said the old timer. "Seems like it just sort of went away, but fact is...we just took it for granted and acted like it was going to be here forever and left everything up to THEM. We forgot that WE were THEM and without us...well soon there was no US. We used to have local District and Intergroup meetings and they worked real good for a time. Intergroup used to print the schedules..."

Story continued on page 4

Chips, Medallions and Birthdays are these symbols of spiritual rebirth in AA?

The traditions of chips, medallions and birthdays vary in different parts of the country and I thought it would be interesting to look up some of the history on them. Sister Ignatia, (the nun who helped Dr. Bob get the hospitalization program started at St. Thomas Hospital in Akron) was the first person to use medallions in Alcoholics Anonymous. She gave the drunks who were leaving St. Thomas after a five day dry out a Sacred Heart Medallion and instructed them that the acceptance of the medallion signified a commitment to God, to A.A. and to recovery.

Story continued page 4



FLAGLER COUNTY ANNIVERSARIES



<u>T.G.I.F GROUP</u>	<u>LUCKY TO BE HERE</u>	<u>LIVING SOBER</u>	<u>WOMEN'S AC-</u>	<u>LIFE'S BEACH</u>	<u>MORNING MAGIC</u>
*****	*****	*****	*****	*****	*****
JANUARY	JANUARY	JANUARY	JANUARY	JANUARY	JANUARY
Bill G. 32	Kip D. 2	Jim V. 3	Lucy 7	Keith H. 10	Peggy Y. 18
Clarice W. 29		Sue J. 1	Donna M. 9	Joe C. 20	Corey J. 2
Sue E. 17		FEBRUARY	Eileen 11		
FEBRUARY	HAPPY WANDERER	Edie S. 29	Annie 24	MESSAGE GROUP	
Dan W. 36	*****		Dee 27	*****	
Kat F. 17	JANUARY		Janet 31	JANUARY	
Alice D. 6	Ron R. 26		FEBRUARY	John H. 13	
WOMEN/WOMEN	Joe J. 15		Ellen 1	Lucy L. 7	
*****	FEBRUARY		Linda S. 7	FEBRUARY	
FEBRUARY	Rich W. 7		Kat 17	Carol W. 7	
Eddie G. 29	Robert T. 5			Berkeley C. 24	

Service Group Meeting Schedules 2011

Intergroup:

Meets the first Monday of the month at 6:30PM

District 22:

Meets the last Monday of the month at 6:30PM

*The meetings are held at the
Florida Hospital Flagler, Classroom C,
in the Lind Educational Center.*

Reminder:

**Need Literature and Medallions?
Contact: Don H. 386-986-3659
hoodyfour@aol.com**

Get the Scoop at www.AAFlagler.org

Celebrating the 72nd Anniversary of the Book Alcoholics Anonymous

Big Book Workshop Weekend

January 21-23, 2011

presented by
**Bob D. Las Vegas, NV &
Polly P., Birch Bay, WA**
with
Clancy I., Venice, CA

International Palms Resort
and Conference Center
1300 North Atlantic Avenue
Cocoa Beach, FL 32931
321-783-2271

Workshop Schedule

Friday
7:00 - 9:30 p.m. - Big Book Workshop

Saturday
9:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. - Big Book Workshop
8:00 p.m. - Clancy I., Venice, CA

Sunday
9:00 a.m. - Noon - Big Book Workshop

Sunrise Meetings &
Late Night Meetings
Every Day and Night

Room Reservations
321-783-2271

Ask for Big Book Workshop
Conference Rate - \$87.00

Flagler County Promises 2011

Submissions to the Promises is another way to be of service! Thank you to every one who helped create this issue.

**Next Promises Deadline is FEBRUARY 1st, 2011
for the MARCH/APRIL 2011 issue.**

All material and information for the newsletter must be received by the 1st of the even months.

2011 deadlines will be February, April, June, August, October, December .

Submit any questions, articles, anniversaries & ideas to:
taragower@gmail.com or call Tara G. at 386-931-8129

Taking Step One puts us on the road to receiving the gifts of AA

When first I arrived in program, I acquired a 12 and 12. My sponsor told me to read ONLY steps 1, 2, 3, as I was a newcomer and she wanted me to concentrate only on the first three steps. Being who I am, and additionally an alcoholic, I proceed to read all the steps. I immediately decided which steps I would take and those for which I had no need.

Four and five were out, far too much work. I had grown up in a church which supported confession. So steps four and five were too religious. I went down the list-throwing out most of the steps. I figured I could get by with the first three steps.

Step twelve was thrown out, it was too long. I could not read it in one sitting, I barely understood the concepts. I could not imagine what the author of this book was thinking.

When I was told this was a simple program, but not easy, I did not get that either. Today I believe step 12 is the gift of all the work! Being prepared to help others, and practicing the 12 steps in our daily lives grants us emotional sobriety. While we are helping others, we are most certainly helping ourselves.

I have no FAVORITE step. I have benefited enormously from practicing all the steps. I have stuck around long enough to realize why the steps are numbered, why one segues into the next. Most of us are not prepared to take the 12th step until we have taken the first step and admit we are powerless.

—Peggy Y.



2011 Quarterly Area Assembly dates:

April 8th—10th

July 8th—10th

October 14th—16th

**The North Florida Area Assembly will move from The Paramount Hotel in Gainesville, to The Renaissance Hotel at World Golf Village, in St. Augustine.*

My Daily Vitamin is AA

When I first arrived in AA I did not understand that alcoholism not only affects the liver but also the brain. For sure, when I drank, I did insane things. Step Two, for me, is one that hits me in the heart. I have this step living in my soul. My recovery comes to me every day through this step.

Making meetings is as crucial to me as eating and sleeping. It is my daily vitamin. I always pull valuable information from them, that help me stay sober for that day.

I thank the fellowship for helping me each and every day in my recovery. I am not drunk today, but I will always be an alcoholic blessed by my Higher Power.

—Rosie



District 21 Workshop The A.A. Member and Medications with Dr. Bobby from Georgia



Saturday, February 5th 11:00 AM
Church of Christ, 1725 Ridgewood Avenue, Holly Hill
Free Doughnuts and coffee!

*The following is taken from the A.A. approved pamphlet
"The A.A. Member – Medications and other drugs":*

Alcoholics Anonymous is a program for alcoholics who seek freedom from alcohol. It is not a program against drugs. However, some A.A. members have misused drugs, often as a substitute for alcohol, in such a manner as to become a threat to the achievement and maintenance of sobriety. From the earliest days of Alcoholics Anonymous it has been clear that many alcoholics tended to become physically and/or psychologically dependent on drugs other than alcohol. However, some alcoholics require medication to cope with mental and biological illnesses. Dr. Bobby, a member of A.A., will share his experience on this subject.

AA Used to be here... continued from page 1

Hell, they even had a newsletter for a while—real nice too. But then nobody wanted to be a GSR or an Intergroup Rep, so the groups stopped sending them to the monthly sessions. When the groups stopped participating, there wasn't enough money to pay for the copying so they stopped the newsletter and then the schedules. Soon the groups had no books or pamphlets and some of them started holding meetings in



people's houses. There was a club here in town for a while that printed their own schedules, but then they closed. The owners moved on. Things kind of got real informal. Newcomers didn't know where to go, so they didn't. I don't think anybody ever really stood up and quit, they just kind of faded away. I don't know where it went. I went out for a while, but AA kind of ruined my drinking and now I sit here most of the day thinking about going in for a drink. Sometimes I do, sometimes I don't. Hey, you guys want a beer?"

Tom looked at Ed. "What the" said Ed.

"You could head up the road to the big city," said the old timer. "It's probably still goin' on up there."

—Lee M.

Chips, Medallions and Birthdays continued from page 1



If they were going to drink, they had a responsibility to return the medallion to her before drinking.

The practice of sobriety chips in A.A. started with a Group in Elmira,

N.Y. in 1947 and has grown from there.

The celebration of birthdays came from the Oxford Group where they celebrated the anniversary of their spiritual rebirth. As we alcoholics have a problem with honesty, A.A. chose the anniversary of the date of our last drink.

Early celebrations of birthdays resulted in people getting

drunk and Dr. Harry Tiebout was asked to look at the problem and he commented on this phenomenon in an article titled *When the Big "I" Becomes Nobody* (AAGV, Sept. 65). "Early on in A.A., I was consulted about a serious problem plaguing the local group. The practice of celebrating a year's sobriety with a birthday cake had resulted in a certain number of the members getting drunk within a short period after the celebration". In *Why All the Congratulations?* (Feb. 1948), "When we start taking bows (even on anniversaries) we bow ourselves right into the cuspidor. The camel is wholly emblematic of the purposes of most sincere A.A.'s, i.e., to live for 24 hours without a drink." The camel is a symbol on the AT Center chips.

In August, 1948 the Artesta, N.Mex. Group awarded marbles to all members. If you are caught without your marbles, you were fined 25 cents. This money went into the Foundation Fund.

In June 1953, we operate a poker chip club in the Portland Group (Maine). We have poker chips of nine colors of which the white represents the probation period of one month. If he keeps his white chip for one month he is presented with a red chip for one month's sobriety. Also at the end of the year and each year thereafter, we present them with a group birthday card signed by all members present at the meeting. (My sister's meeting does the card thing still, I still have and treasure a couple from past Birthdays!)

January 1955, Charlotte, N.C. When a person takes "The Long Walk" at the end of a meeting, to pick up a white chip, he is admitting to his fellows that he has finally accepted the precepts of A.A. and is beginning his sobriety. At the end of three months, he exchanges his white chip for a red one. Later, a handsome, translucent chip of amber indicates that this new member has enjoyed six months of a new way of life. The nine month chip is a clear sea green and a blue chip is given for the first year of sobriety. In some groups a sponsor will present his friend with an engraved chip after five years of clear thinking and clean living.

In March 1956, The One Ton Poker Chip started in Alton, Illinois. Author gave friends a chip on their first day and told them to accept it in the spirit of group membership and that if they wanted to drink to throw the chip away before they do.

July 1957, New Brunswick, Canada marked the Birthday Board. Members contributed one dollar for each year of sobriety. (my sister did this, each birthday she contributed that much to Central Office).

July 1957, Oregon. A member is asked to speak and is introduced by his or her sponsor. The wife, mother, sister or other relatives bring a cake and the group sings Happy Birthday. Then, the wife gives a two or three minute talk. And that's a little bit of info on chips, cakes and medallions.

—Jim Burwell