



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 2009 ISSUE

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We would like to extend our sincere gratitude to all who served Inter-group and District during the last term. We know we cannot keep it unless we give it away and what better way to give it other than service? Our thanks go to: Inter-group—Chairperson Dave H., Alt. Chair Peggy Y., Secretary John H., Treasurer Pat P., Literature Don H., Promises Newsletter Janice N., Printing Bob H., Website Maintenance Bonnie H., and Inter-group Reps. And also, District—DCM Ralph L., Alt. DCM Bill B., Secretary Connie H., Treasurer Tom H., CPC Mal F., Corrections Dutch D., P.I. Annie B., Treatment Jeff J., and Archivist Peter F. and GSR's. We appreciate your

dedication and commitment to District 22. Your service has made it possible for Flagler County Alcoholics Anonymous to continue smoothly.

Last, but certainly not least, our appreciation goes out to the special events coordinators. You know, the guys and gals who plan and implement our picnics, pot luck and gratitude dinners, etc. We applaud you.

Congratulations to all the newly elected officers and committee chairs. We thank you all in advance for your willingness to serve.

Thank you all for serving! Kudos!!!!

Step One—Unlocking the Key to Manageability

When I had made the conscious decision that I was powerless over alcohol, my sponsor then asked me if my life had become unmanageable. "Alcohol has affected me spiritually, mentally, and physically," I said. "But my life has never been unmanageable!" How could my life be labeled as unmanageable? I was doing ninety in ninety, holding down three jobs, helping my sick mother stay sober, and patching up my marriage all at the same time! I was a "yes" person who had every thing under control (or so I thought).

That was almost three years ago, and fortunately, my truth has changed. In retrospect, my life was completely and utterly unmanageable when I took *Step One* and continued in that fashion for the next two years. Although I wasn't drinking, I was still run-

ning on empty. I wasn't honoring my limitations— I had absolutely no boundaries and no equanimity. Yet everyone in the rooms praised me for my painstaking program, so why wasn't I at peace?

I had made the task of spending time with myself an impossible one; my daily to-do list never included time for self excavation. I'd rather work overtime, make fourteen AA meetings a week, spend countless hours on the phone making up problems, and hypochondriacally clean my house—that way I didn't have to spend any time getting to know Tara.

Then something life changing happened in my program. I had hit a new bottom. My mother had died an alcoholic death and I snapped. I became physically ill. I took a leave of absence

from my life, I quit two jobs, and both of my sponsees at the time, unfortunately, relapsed. When the dust settled I had no to-do list, and there wasn't anyone to tend to but Tara. I was alone.

In that silence I became one with my **Source**, all of *The Promises* came true, and the abundance of the **Universe** was presented to me. For the first time I stood in the sunlight with my **Creator** and what a glorious place it was!

Today, I understand the beauty of my humanness and I have balance. I take time to meditate, pray, journal, be one with nature, attend meetings, and practice yoga. Since the day I admitted I was powerless over alcohol, all of these tools became available to me—I was just too busy keeping my life unmanageable to use them. Now, the most important thing on my to-do list is clearing the channel that connects me to my **God**. That's how I'm able to bask in the glory of sobriety!

—Tara G.

Responsibility Declaration:

"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."



FLAGLER COUNTY ANNIVERSARIES



<p><u>SURVIIVORS GROUP</u></p> <p>JAN Jim Mc. 38 Harold C. 31 Cliff P. 25 Kevin P. 19 Tom D. 14 Will S. 12 Tim C. 4 Judy C. 4 Michael C. 1</p> <p>FEB Dewey M. 31 Duke E. 23 Peg V. 19 Tim A. 12 Ed P. 7 Shonda F. 2</p> <p><u>WOMEN TO WOMEN</u></p> <p>JAN Dee K. 25</p> <p>FEB Darlene G. 4</p> <p><u>CAME TO BELIEVE</u></p> <p>JAN Pat S. 22</p> <p>FEB Wayne M. 11</p>	<p><u>BUNNELL GROUP</u></p> <p>JAN Jim McM 37 John H. 8 Pat F. 2</p> <p>FEB Jim A. 17</p> <p><u>NOMAD GROUP</u></p> <p>NOV Andy D. 12 Dave R. 10</p> <p>DEC Jerry K. 17 Jerry T. 4</p> <p>JAN Frank B. 16 John H. 8 Pat F. 2 Tony P. 1</p> <p>FEB Jim A. 24 Duke E. 23 Berkeley 22 Bob B. 5</p>	<p><u>HAPPY WANDERERS</u></p> <p>NOV Tom H. 16</p> <p>DEC Forrest G. 26. Debbie F. 23</p> <p>JAN Ron R. 24</p> <p>FEB Bill B. 41 Robert T. 3</p> <p><u>STEPS TO SERENITY</u></p> <p>JAN Joe Ca. 54 Jim M. 22 Eileen C. 9 Steve R. 1</p> <p>FEB Charles McM. 6</p>	<p><u>JUMP START</u></p> <p>JAN Annie B. 22 Peggy Y. 16 Ron R. 3</p> <p>FEB Jeff J. 16 Pat R. 10 Rich W. 5 Joanne T. 1</p> <p><u>FOOTPRINTS IN THE SAND</u></p> <p>JAN Bill G. 30 Jeri E. 24 Annie B. 22 Kevin P. 9 Jose C.M. 2</p> <p>FEB Mary Ann S. 37 Jeff J. 16</p>	<p><u>LIVING SOBER</u></p> <p>JAN John H. 8 Jim V. 1</p> <p>FEB Edie S. 27</p> <p><u>T G I F</u></p> <p>JAN Bill G. 30 Clarice W. 28 Sue E. 15 Mary S. 6 John B. 3</p> <p>FEB Dan W. 34 Jeff J. 16 Kat F. 15 Alice D. 4</p>	<p><u>MESSAGE GROUP</u></p> <p>NOV Lorraine S. 33 Bob H. 6 Tim D. 2</p> <p>JAN Pat S. 22 John H. 11 Lucy L. 4</p> <p>FEB Berkeley C. 22</p> <p><u>MORNING MAGIC</u></p> <p>NOV Jeffry J. 16</p> <p>JAN Peggy Y. 16</p> <p><u>ACCEPTANCE</u></p> <p>NOV Jewellea 20 Kelly 4</p> <p>DEC Jessica 1</p> <p>JAN Annie 22 Lucy 5</p>
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Declaration of Unity Group
NEEDS SUPPORT
 SATURDAY NIGHT AT 7 PM
Speaker Meeting
 Methodist Church on 5200 Belle Terre Pkwy.
 Please come out and support this meeting!

Letter from the editor...

Allow me to take this time to introduce myself. I am an alcoholic called Valerie and I am so grateful to serve as Flagler County AA's new editor of the Promises. I totally enjoy computer graphics and am looking forward to getting to know more of our members over the next two years. I would like to invite everyone to be a part of the newsletter and welcome all articles, jokes, cartoons, puzzles and ideas from all of you. This is a newsletter written by Flagler County AA's. Don't be surprised if you are approached by our committee and asked to contribute. Or just e-mail stories, etc. to aapromises@yahoo.com. As you see we have received many anniversary announcements. But I am sure there are

some more! Please announce at all the meetings to forward the group's anniversaries to the above e-mail address, or call me at 447-0731. Everyone really enjoys reading the anniversary page. We plan to publish new and interesting articles in each issue. You are welcome to share your stories. Perhaps, you have some thing to relate about the start of AA in Flagler County, or maybe an out of town trip where you attended a meeting and how that experience was different. This is your newsletter! So please join us in making the Promises the best we can. Once again I look forward to being a part of the Promises newsletter. Thank you for allowing me to serve.

In loving service, Valerie J.



EAT THE BOOK!?!

Early in sobriety, my sponsor told me that if I wanted to com-

pletely understand the disease of alcoholism and learn everything about it and how to recover; I had to digest the big book. I asked "what do you mean digest...am I supposed to eat it?" He told me that the first hundred and sixty four pages of the Big Book would teach me every in and out of this cunning, baffling and powerful disease. He assured me that the Big Book would lay out a simple, clear set of directions for my recovery and provided me with an infallible approach for staying sober. It has.

He told me to read it slowly pausing to wring every drop of understanding I could out of it. After I read it a few times and assured him that I knew it, he asked me a few simple questions to show me I did not. He said that my very life might depend on my understanding the Book and that if I had to I should "eat the book," but LEARN IT!

As a newcomer to AA, I had lost my ability to carefully read with comprehension. The truth was I had basically stopped reading books in favor of magazines because they had pictures. They were quicker than books and besides I knew everything anyway and didn't really need books.

Today, with a pretty long history of continu-

ous sobriety, I continue to read, understand and cherish the Big Book. Invariably, I'll read something for the umpteenth time and pause to marvel at the new idea or insight that just came to me. What has so often been old hat has lit up a new idea in my head.

Sadly, newcomers don't seem to be getting that direction so clearly. The other night a group of us read the Doctor's Opinion and marveled at the fact that some people still disdain the notion of God's role in recovery or fail to understand the absolute, undeniable chemical trap an alcoholic faces via the phenomenon of craving. In our county we have maybe two formal big book studies and a lot of newcomers shun them in favor of open discussions where "feelings" can be aired shared and despaired.

When I work with a newcomer, the first thing I ask them to read is the "Doctor's Opinion." We discuss it with great emphasis on "the Phenomenon of Craving", because it is the key to truly understanding the concept of powerlessness embodied in the First Step. After that, they read the rest of the first 164 pages. We talk about each chapter, digesting the message as we go. As we work through the steps, the Big Book is the manual, the clear, simple, how-to set of instructions for getting

and staying sober. I hear people, who are still seething with anger and resentments, say they finished their fourth and fifth steps. When asked how old anger and resentments could still be raging after Four and Five, they sometimes look quizzically and say: "What do you mean?" Well, how did you handle anger and resentments in your fourth and fifth steps?" is answered with the quick assurance "I wrote my autobiography



SPONSORSHIP

and then read it to my sponsor!" I've shown such people pages 64 thru 71 of the Book and ask about "what was my part" or "giving an adversary the same compassion and understanding

we expect others to give to our

sickness" and they often answer, "I never saw that." I think a lot of old sponsors were right about the need to completely digest the Book. You really don't have to "eat it" just READ IT!

—Lee M.

"Why I Came To My 2nd AA Meeting"

At the end of my 45 year drinking career I had insanely walked to the edge of my alcoholic abyss. I was about to leap without a parachute. At my first AA meeting I saw a quality in many members that I badly wanted. I didn't know what it was, but I knew that I could not have it if I chose to drink.

I came to understand that these people had an abiding belief that did not depend on logical proof or material evidence. What a concept! They openly admitted their booze induced insanity. Did they all believe the same thing, in the same Higher Power? Absolutely not! But they had an abiding faith in their own God. I soon came to understand that it wasn't important to specifically define what I had faith in. All I

needed to do was to have faith, to place myself in the care of an unknown Power. I needed to make a "leap of faith"*. So I trashed all my parachutes, shed my fear of jumping, and stopped questioning the unknown. I carefully poised myself. And with abandon I "leapt" into a life of faith.

That day I prayed to my Power that I be relieved of the compulsion to have the first drink. My prayer was granted. My faith was reinforced. It is now growing daily in ways I choose not to try to explain.

For me this is what Step Two is about. It may be the greatest gift AA offers. And it certainly was reason enough to attend my second and many more meetings.

*I attribute the clarity of this phrase to my dear friend Howie.

Fred M. - *Jump Start*

DISCLAIMER - *The Promises newsletter represents the experiences and opinions of individual members of Alcoholics Anonymous. The opinions expressed are not necessarily the opinions of Flagler County AA or AA as a whole. The Promises committee reserves the right to edit anything submitted. It is written for alcoholics by alcoholics.*

Announcements & Information



DON'T FORGET
Our Annual Dinner / Dance



February 21, 2009

Please Purchase Your \$18.00
Tickets in Advance

Contact: *Kenny K.*
445-6863



Hosted by
Flagler County Intergroup



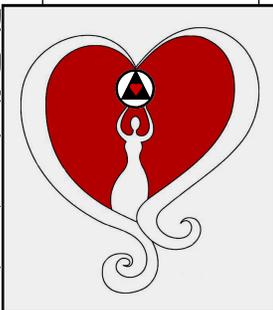
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ACCEPTANCE	COURAGE	HELP	OPEN
ALCOHOLIC	EGO	HOPE	PEACE
AMENDS	FAITH	HOW	SPONSOR
ASK	GIVING	LOVE	AA
CHANGE	GOD	ORDER	WE

46th International Women's Conference

Come and be
a part of this
wonderful
gathering
right here
in Florida



Giving back is the
heart of our
program...

Service
volunteers
are needed!

We are just
getting started!
Everyone is welcome.

Contact
Valerie J.
386-447-0731

Orlando, Florida - February 2010

Service Group Meeting Schedules

Intergroup:

Meets the first Monday of the month at 7:00PM

District 22:

Meets the last Monday of the month at 6:30PM
(except for December)

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

PROMISES DEADLINE

All Material and Information for
the Newsletter must be received by
the 20th of the even months of
Feb, Apr, Jun, Aug, Oct, Dec

Submit any questions, articles,
anniversaries & ideas to:

apromises@yahoo.com or call

Valerie J. 386-447-0731