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# NATURE COAST JOURNAL

DECEMBER 2023

[www.ncintergroup.com](http://www.ncintergroup.com)

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## Step Twelve

“Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these steps, we tried to carry this message to alcoholics and practice these principles in all our affairs.”



## Tradition Twelve

“Anonymity is the spiritual foundation of all our traditions, ever reminding us to place principles before personalities.”



## Concept Twelve

“The Conference shall observe the spirit of A.A. tradition, taking care that it never becomes the seat of perilous wealth or power; that sufficient operating funds and reserve be its prudent financial principle; that it place none of its members in a position of unqualified authority over others; that it reach all important decisions by discussion, vote and whenever possible, substantial unanimity; that its actions never be personally punitive nor an incitement to public controversy; that it never perform acts of government; that, like the Society it serves, it will always remain democratic in thought and action.”

## HELP WANTED AND “THANKS FOR YOUR HELP!”

As we come to the close of the year, I want to send a heartfelt thanks out to everybody who chips in to make the AA way of life possible here in Citrus County. Just to name a few—the people who answer the hotline phones, the ones who chair our meetings, the people who handle our 7<sup>th</sup> tradition money and pay the bills, the people who set up tables and chairs, and most importantly the people who attend our meetings where it all starts!



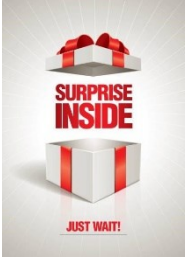
For those of us who are able and willing to chip in there are many opportunities. I am reminded of a young man who regularly attended a meeting I frequented during my early sobriety. He said that working the program of Alcoholics Anonymous is like walking up the down escalator—if you want to get to

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# Happy Holidays

## OUR STORIES DISCLOSE



Bill Wilson once said something to the effect that he could not describe adequately what happens when a drunk finally is able to cross over into the promised land of being sober. He said that since it was not possible to exactly define what happens, we simply tell our story—our past (how it used to be), what happened (the transformation), and what it's like now (just like Christmas every day, it's a present!).

We all know Bill's story and how he had his spiritual awakening "in a flash" and never returned to drinking.

For myself, I had a spiritual awakening like Bill's in which the denial about my drinking disappeared in minutes and I opened up to the *possibility*—perhaps *opportunity* is the better word here—of leaving the drinking behind.

I have met others who have experienced the same sort of sudden transformation but have heard many more sober alcoholics describe transformations in their lives which came in a more gradual fashion, sometimes in the course of months, sometimes in the course of years. These transformations sometimes involve other sorts of awakenings, too.

And so, I ask you to send in your story of what happened to you to enable you to get sober.

Please send in your "transformation stories" to [news@ncintergroup.com](mailto:news@ncintergroup.com)

—Bill K., Journal Editor

## SERVICE OPPORTUNITIES



**Intergroup** has an open position.

The **Special Events Chairperson** must have one year of continuous sobriety and be able to attend the Intergroup meetings. The Special Events Chair coordinates the Founder's Day and Gratitude events as well as athletic events, dances, and picnics. The term of the position is one year.

**District 28** is looking for people to help in these areas: Accessibility, Archives, Grapevine, Treatment, and Alternate DCM.

Come to Shepherd of the Hills Church, 2540 W Norvell Bryant Hwy, Lecanto, at 4:30pm on the first Sunday of the month. Everybody is welcome.

**HOTLINE: 352-621-0599**

## YOU BET YOUR LIFE

When I was young in the 50s there was a game show hosted by Groucho Marx called 'You Bet Your Life'.

If you said the magic word a parrot (not real) dropped down out of the sky, and you won a prize.

OK. I know I'm dating myself, but I understand there's a reboot with Jay Leno. Yeah. I'm an old guy but I will play the old guy card if I can get an edge from it.



My son came back from college and said he had a professor that was so old that he was sure I was born, he was born, and we shook hands and invented dirt. And that was many years ago. I had to assure him I did not ride to school on a brontosaur. Although my grandfather did kill the last one. Kids are such a joy...sometimes. They tell me you should listen to your body. But mine just points at me and laughs. And my guardian angel is in therapy. But there is a magic word. It's 'meetings'. I'm not sure how the magic works but at every meeting I've ever been to I get a prize. Sometimes it's helping another struggling alcoholic. Sometimes it's something I hear that helps me stay sober and sometimes it's learning deep lessons about life. But I've never gotten those prizes by skipping a meeting. I feel guilty every time I miss one. I've

tried to understand why those meetings are such an important part of my life. But they just are. I have a friend that has instructed his wife that every time he's acting squirrely to say, 'Go to a meeting'. There is certainly something magical about them. Maybe it's God's presence. 'Whenever two or more are gathered, etc. Of course, it may cost you a buck but it's the cheapest therapy session I've ever had.

The big book talks a lot about meetings. It's integral to the program. I'm in a big book discussion meeting and it's surprising how often meetings are mentioned. The support they provide, the best defense against that first drink and the twelve step work you can do just by being there. Virtual meetings are better than nothing, as we found out during the pandemic. But face to face, handshaking, the looks around the room was missing somehow. At least for me. I'm so glad they're back in person again although we've lost a lot of attendance which I don't understand. When I've seen someone with a lot of tattoos and say, 'Didn't it hurt?' and they say 'Yes', I say 'I try not to do things that hurt'. It hurts not to go to meetings. It hurts you and it hurts others. And you know what's the worst thing that could happen if you don't go to meetings?

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Nothing. That's the same worst thing that could happen if you took that first drink.

After a meeting, I was talking to someone who gave the lead. They had gone back out and nothing happened. And the time after that nothing happened. But within a few months they were back as bad as they had ever been getting DUIs, losing the respect of their family and friends and suffering the same physical problems they had had before. Just because it doesn't happen right away doesn't mean it's good for you. So, get back to those meetings if you've missed a few. You'll enjoy them, other people need you and you'll keep growing. Do you need to go to meetings? You bet your life.

*by Jeff A., Akron Intergroup News - -  
November 2023*



I am not a big God person and often describe myself as an agnostic. I kept this to myself for my early years, but later found some comfort in finding others who shared by "belief." I was even more comforted when I read what Fr. Ed Dowling said at the 1955 AA Convention when he called all present "agnostic" (*Alcoholics Anonymous Comes of Age*, p. 254 at the bottom).

It's no surprise that most everybody I encounter in an AA meeting has some sort of higher power which they most often describe as God. When I hear "God" I sometimes think "good orderly direction" or one of the other AA truisms. I have my own version of g.o.d—"getting over drinking!"

However, I try hard to learn from everybody that I come in contact with and try to keep what lack of interest I may have in their individual beliefs (the God of *their* understanding) from affecting the good I might hear. Bill W. recommended that we be quick to learn from others and put that learning to use in our lives. I do place great emphasis on the big words I encounter—faith, honesty, perseverance, selflessness, to name a few. A couple of examples follow. *continued on page five*

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I once attended an annual open meeting that was regularly attended by hundreds. The speaker was a member of a religious order who ended her talk with her description of her Higher Power she called God. She described him/her as welcoming all at death with open arms as she opened wide her arms to the audience. A loving mother/father welcoming all home--everybody, no exceptions. That image will never leave me.

In another instance, I regularly attended a meeting where one of the regulars would bring his baby daughter. We attended the meeting together for so long she would eventually move from his arm to walking in at her father's hand. The image I remember was a man who held his infant daughter in the nook of one arm and raised his other hand toward heaven with palm up. Benny (not his real name) would say that he was "re-connected." He wouldn't say more than that and many times said nothing but simply cradled his daughter and raised his uplifted palm toward the sky.

Their belief crafted their views and actions, and I was affected by their words and presence. And though I was never to see their higher power I was able to witness their faith in word and action.

*- Bill K., Journal Editor*

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the next level (or even stay where you are) you need to keep moving. And one of the best ways to keep moving is by offering to do some service work. And the best way to find some service work is to attend the Intergroup and District meetings which are held near the first Sunday of each month (details follow).

And doing service work outside the group ensures that the AA message is carried and available to everybody who wants it. The District web page says it nicely:

An alcoholic recently said "I don't know why we need an Intergroup or a District or an Area or even the General Service conference. I don't need them - I have my group." I can only say to him what the late Bernard B. Smith, nonalcoholic, then chairperson of the board of trustees, answered that question superbly in his opening talk at the 1954 meeting:

"We may not need a General Service Conference to ensure our own recovery. We do need it to ensure the recovery of the alcoholic who still stumbles in the darkness one short block from this room. We need it to ensure the recovery of a child being born tonight, destined for alcoholism. We need it to provide, in keeping with our Twelfth Step, a permanent haven for all alcoholics who, in the ages ahead, can find in A.A. that rebirth that brought us back to life." *- Bill K., Journal Editor*

**LECANTO GROUP**

# Christmas Party

**December 14th, 2023**

**Unity Church**

Lecanto

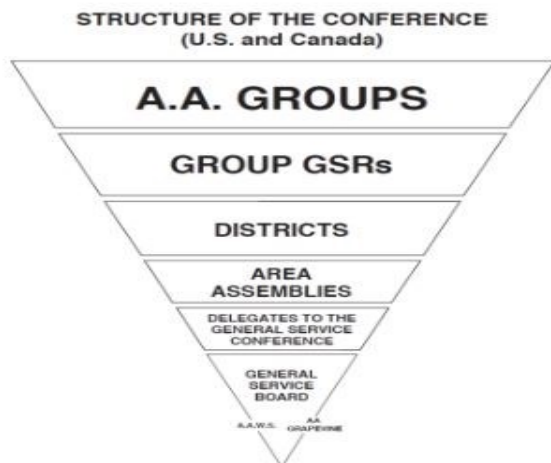
**7-8pm**

Doors Open at 6:30pm

**Food • Fellowship • Speaker**

★ Covered Dishes Welcome!

## IS YOUR GROUP REPRESENTED IN THE DISTRICT AND THE INTERGROUP?



In Citrus County District 28 is our connection to the General Service Conference. And your General Service Representative (GSR) empowers your group to participate in the AA service structure. Don't like the color of the Big Book? Having it changed starts in your group with the GSR.

The Nature Coast Intergroup is a non-profit organization that consists of an association of Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) groups in Citrus County, Florida, which exists to help those groups carry the message to the alcoholic who still suffers. It supports the hotline, publishes the Journal, and sponsors AA activities throughout the year including The Founders' Day and Gratitude Dinners.

The same person can represent your group in both organizations, and they conveniently meet one after the other once a month in the same location.

**Nature Coast Intergroup and  
District 28 Business Meetings  
are held on the first Sunday of  
the Month at Shepherd of the  
Hills Episcopal Church  
2540 West Norvell Bryant  
Highway,  
Lecanto, FL 34461  
*Intergroup meets at 4:30pm and  
District meets at 5:45pm.***

### INTERGROUP AND DISTRICT 28 BUSINESS MEETINGS DATES

Jan. 14 (2nd Sunday due to Assembly)	Feb. 4	Mar 3
Apr 14 (2nd Sunday due to Assembly)	May 5	June 2
July 14 (2nd Sunday due to Assembly)	Aug. 4	
Sept. 8 (2nd Sunday due to Labor Day)	Oct. 6	Nov. 3
		Dec. 1

### ATTENTION GENERAL SERVICE REPS (GSRs)

A reminder that GSO is asking groups to get a GSR and register the group's GSR with Area 14.

To register:

- Go to the Area 14 website (<https://www.aanorthflorida.org>)
- Click on the documents tab
- Click the group information change form
- Fill in information. (If prior GSR info is not available, leave that part blank.)

## NOVEMBER ANNIVERSARIES



If you would like to celebrate the sober anniversaries in your group, please send them to [news@ncintergroup.com](mailto:news@ncintergroup.com).

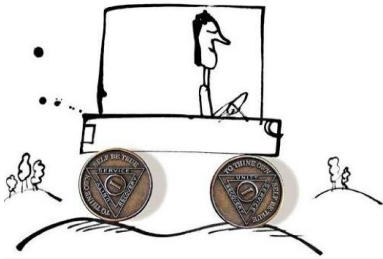
We will publish them in the Journal to congratulate the individual and the group on a job well done!

Crystal River Group at Serenity Club celebrates these anniversaries. It meets daily at noon and 8pm next to St. Benedict's Church.

Cory P.	4 years
Geep W.	27 years

The Monday Nite Men's Step Group at Shepherd of the Hills Church celebrates these anniversaries.

Brandon D.	1 year
Bob S.	3 years
Dan C.	19 years



### SEVENTH TRADITION For District and Intergroup contributions,

please **write your group number**  
on the check.

Make check payable to  
"District 28" and mail to:  
District 28, PO Box 640914, Beverly  
Hills, FL 34464

Make check payable to  
"Nature Coast Intergroup" and mail  
to:  
Nature Coast Intergroup, PO Box  
2634, Crystal River, FL 34423

For Area contributions, please  
write  
"District 28" and your group  
number  
on the check.

Make check payable to  
"NFAC Treasurer" and mail to:  
North Florida Area Conference, PO  
Box 6301, Jacksonville, FL 32205-  
9998

For GSO contributions, please write  
"District 28" and your group  
number  
on the check.

Make check payable to  
"General Service Board" and mail  
to:  
G.S.O., PO Box 2407, James A. Farley  
Station, New York, NY 10116-2407