



Gratitude Month: Our Chance to Say `Thank You!'

A brief history from "Box 459," the A.A. General Service Office newsletter

"The idea is in the air that A.A. might adopt Thanksgiving week as a time for meetings and meditation on the Traditions," A.A. co-founder Bill W. wrote in the November 1949 issue of the Grapevine (The Language of the Heart, p. 95) shortly after publication of the Twelve Traditions. In fact, the idea had already taken hold earlier in the decade when, each fall, the General Service Board hosted small Gratitude Dinners - precursors of the larger, more elaborate Gratitude Luncheons that would be held during the '60s as an initiative of the trustees' Public Information Committee.

The first official recognition of an A.A. Gratitude Week, specifically designed to coincide with Thanksgiving week in the U.S. (Canada celebrates in October), occurred in 1956, when the Sixth General Service Conference approved the motion, stipulating that "this action be noted in the annual pre-Thanksgiving appeals to the groups for funds to help support A.A.'s worldwide services." Three years later, Bill urged in a letter, "Gratitude should go forward, rather than backward... if you carry the message to still others, you will be making the best possible repayment for the help given to you." (*As Bill Sees It*, p. 29).

The motivation behind A.A.'s Gratitude Lunches was threefold: to express personal gratefulness for the gift of sobriety; to carry the message of A.A. to other alcoholics; and to express appreciation to our professional friends for their numerous articles, books and radio and TV interviews relating to A.A. in the year just past. It was hoped, in the words of a General Service Office memo circulated at the time, that the luncheons would "advance A.A.'s public relations by bringing editors, publishers, writers and broadcasters in personal contact with sources of reliable information on the movement."

Held without fail in November at New York City's Roosevelt Hotel, the luncheons were always well-attended. A typical list of invitees to the 1965 luncheon included representatives of The New York Times, McCall's Magazine, Medical World News and The Christian Science Monitor. Bill W. always addressed the gatherings, as did the late "Dr. Jack" Norris, then serving as A.A.'s Class A (nonalcoholic) trustee chairman. A discussion period followed the proceedings, an ample selection of A.A. literature was available for the taking, and in 1965 Bill sent an autographed copy of A.A. Comes of Age to every guest.

The luncheons were discontinued in 1968, but the concept of gratitude persisted and expanded in scope. For decades now, A.A.s in the U.S. have set aside all of November as Gratitude Month - marking the occasion with special contributions to G.S.O. In the spirit of the Seventh Tradition A.A. is self-supporting through its members' contributions, and frequently turns away money from well-meaning outside contributors. This means that the active input of every A.A. is vital to the life of the Fellowship.

Continued on page 2.

2007 Intergroup Board Elections
Tuesday November 20th
At the Intergroup Representatives' meeting



St. Paul Intergroup of Alcoholics Anonymous®

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Office Hours: Monday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday - 9 AM to 6 PM; Tuesday: 9 AM to 8 PM

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Gratitude Month, continued from page 1

Grateful for the sobriety they've been given and eager to pass it on, A.A.s are busier than ever in Twelfth Stepping and service. They are reaching out in greater numbers to Loners, people with special needs, members of minority groups and previously unreached alcoholics. It is clear from their sharing that an overwhelming number of A.A.s - along with many of our professional friends - find their own special ways to say thank you during Gratitude Month and, indeed, all year long. Writes one member: "Enclosed is a check for Gratitude Month, because I want A.A. to be there for all those who need it, just as I did." From another: "The enclosed check is from my own pocket, to help groups in correctional facilities like mine. Some of us are struggling to turn our lives around. We begin the process in here ourselves, and by reaching out." And a nonalcoholic missionary wrote from India, "It is a matter of great encouragement and satisfaction that your A.A. has been a rich resource of guidance, help and light for a number of organizations dealing with problems related to alcohol...."

Besides observing Gratitude Month, many a member uses the A.A. Birthday Plan "to give back what's been given to me," as one wrote. And from another fateful A.A.: "I want to say thanks today for my life and my family's - or all of us alcoholics in recovery," he wrote. "Enclosed is an anniversary check, because I want the hand of A.A. to be there for all who need it". Like him, many members celebrate their A.A. birthdays by sending in a gratitude gift to G.S.O. - usually a dollar or two for each year of sobriety. Some groups follow this Birthday Plan by collecting contributions from members on a voluntary basis throughout the year, or until the number of dollars matches the member's total years of sobriety. On the group's anniversary, the money collected is sent to G.S.O. as a birthday contribution.

Gratitude. It's a weighty, high-dignity word, but in truth its close companions are humor and joy. As Bill W. observed early on in the Big Book (p. 132), "Outsiders are sometimes shocked when we burst into merriment over a seemingly tragic experience out of the past. But why shouldn't we laugh? We have recovered, and have been given the power to help others." What greater cause can there be for rejoicing than this?

Reprinted from "Box 459," October-November 2000, with permission of A.A. World Services

Step 11: 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.

Faith Is Action

RECENTLY, I read a newspaper article in which the writer stated that he could not, of course, will himself to believe. I smiled out of past identification. For most of my life, I tried to find the "truth" and the "meaning of life." I went from one religion to another. Initially, I would experience the joy of discovery, but ultimately there always came the despair of disenchantment. My soul sickness grew worse, and so did my drinking.

Finally, two and a half years ago, I came to AA, not to find faith but to learn how to live without alcohol. At first, the group was my higher power. Then, slowly, a deeper faith began to develop within me. Today, I have a faith that I never thought possible. But it came about only after I stopped asking so many questions and started taking action to change my self-centered attitudes.

Today, my faith amounts to faith *that* rather than faith *in*: faith that if I can continue to live according to certain principles, I can lead the best life possible for me. My faith *in* had always been a kinky bag of intellectual non sequiturs, which is just a fancy way of saying it didn't amount to beans.

Today, I believe that faith is as faith does-it's that simple. The basic simplicity of it all still astonishes me. The final justification for my faith lies in the quality of life it produces. Whether I conceive of God as a set of immutable cosmic laws or as an old man with a white robe and matching beard is totally and gloriously irrelevant. All that matters are my values and attitudes and how I act upon them. That I try to do God's will as I understand it is for me the ultimate meaning of life.

I cannot find words adequate to express my gratitude to God and to Alcoholics Anonymous.

-- H.I. Culver City, California

From the A.A. Grapevine, May 1977 taken from Spiritual Awakenings, page 191 with permission of the A.A. Grapevine, Inc.

2007 Steering Board

<u>Chair:</u>	Jeff T.
<u>Alt. Chair:</u>	Tom S.
<u>Secretary:</u>	Lesli D.
<u>Treasurer:</u>	Mary Jo N.
<u>Members at Large 2007:</u>	Alfred K. and Roxi S.
<u>Member at Large 2008:</u>	Jeff H. and Steve B.
<u>Advisor to the Board:</u>	Marty M.
<u>Office Manager:</u>	Tom N.

Office Calls in September

Meeting information	215
Inventory hours	27
12th step calls	8
Temporary sponsor	24
Speaker request	13
Special events	1
Outside issues	19
Info for Professionals	1
Administrative	66
Other	72
Total Calls	446
Daily average	22.3
Visitors	112


Saint Paul AA Intergroup Representatives' Meeting Minutes, September 18, 2007

- I. The meeting was called to order at 7:30 (see attendees below)
- II. The Primary Purpose of Intergroup was read by Lesli D.
- III. August minutes were approved.
- IV. Office Report --Tom N. A) Reviewed the "Freedom to Breathe" smoking rules effective 10/1/07 (flyer in Lifeline) these rules apply to our meetings; B) GSO revised annual personal contributions increased to \$3000; C) The office is now accepting credit cards for sales.
- V. Treasurer's Report. Jeff T. presented Report.
August Contributions (Group, Faithful Fivers, and Special) \$5,471 – 54.7% of Income. Some of the groups make contributions quarterly or annually. This month a group made an annual payment. August Sales \$4,516– 45.3% of Income. Group contributions \$5,037 – 567 meetings listed on website (28 Groups Contributed in August).
- VI. Website Report – Jonathan L. A) The website has been upgraded; easier navigation and more info on all pages; B) Jonathan participated in a meeting with Area 35, Area 36, Minneapolis Intergroup and other interested parties about creating a statewide directory; C) looking for skilled people interested in aiding Jonathan with web graphics—please contact webservant@aastpaul.org.
- VII. Outreach Program – Alfred K. A) Alfred is getting out to meetings; B) Thanks to Duane and Bill for following up on the New Brighton meeting—it'll be in the directory.
- VIII Night Owl Report – Diane. A) There will be a Night Owl Workshop on October 27th, 10 am til 12pm at The Lutheran Church of the Redeemer – coffee, treats, workshop and orientation – come one, come all! B) There are 2 new committee members—thanks!
- IX. Intergroup Events.
 - Ice Cream Social Sept. 15th --Tom S. The social was terrific! 12 speakers shared lots of wisdom; we had around 125 attendees. We also have a list of speakers for next year.
 - Fall Workshop – Alfred. Tuesday October 9th at 7:00 pm at The Lutheran Church of the Redeemer. 4 speakers will share on Step 5. Flyers and volunteer sign-up sheets were passed around.
- X. Old Business:
 - By-Laws Committee: Marty M. A) Draft is being re-edited & fine-tuned, the board will have it by October and it should be to the Reps meeting October/November.
 - November elections: Nominations will be accepted starting at October meeting; minimum sobriety requirement is 10 months at the October meeting to ensure that board member has 1 year by January 1st. The Open Positions are: 2 At-Large Delegates, Secretary, Treasurer, and Alternate Chair. Each of these members shared their position descriptions. Keith I. will be conducting elections.
- XI. New Business. None.
- XII. Group Announcements or Concerns.
Charlie M., ASL Fund passed around 'green can' flyers for group contributions; many other events upcoming – flyers to be sent to webservant@aastpaul.org for website posting
- XIII. Concept Review (IX) --Thanks to Mark K. on a great job! Jon C. volunteered for October, Concept X.
- XIV. Mock Rep Report. Thanks, Lisa L. for tonight's report! Lee B. volunteered for October.
- XV. Closed with the Responsibility Statement and Lord's Prayer.

Next Meeting: Tuesday, October 16th

Groups & Officers in Attendance:

Marty M-Board	Steve B-Board	Alfred K-Board	Brandon F-Mens HH, St.P
Mark K-Uptown	Charlie M-ASL Fund	Jonathan-webservant	Jon C-3 rd Edition
Peter M-House of Hope	Richard U-Midway	Lee B-Como BB	Brooklyn John-West-end
Suzanne-Mendota Sat am	Claire G-Women's AA	Ashley S-Mac/Plymouth	Greg M-OMD
Matt Z-Roseville Wed	Pat C-Fireside Women BB	Donald B-Main Idea Tues	Duane W-Uptown
Bill C-Uptown	Diane E-Night Owl Coord.	Lisa L-NTLP	Tom S-Board
Jeff T-Board Chair	Lesli D-Board	Tom N-Office Mgr	Juanita & Christine

<p align="center">7th Tradition</p> <p align="center"><u>Suggestions for Groups</u></p> <p>“Every group ought to be fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions.”</p> <p>Your group can make an informed decision regarding contributions with information from A.A. World Services. The information below is a suggestion taken from the pamphlet: “Self-Support: Where money and spirituality mix.”</p> <p>50% <u>St. Paul Intergroup</u> Spruce Tree Center 1600 University Ave. #407 St. Paul, MN 55104</p> <p>30% <u>General Service Office</u> P.O. Box 459 Grand Central Station New York, NY 10163</p> <p>10% <u>Southern MN Area 36</u> Area Assembly P.O. Box 2812 Mpls., MN 55402</p> <p>10% <u>District Committee</u></p> <p>Ramsey County: District 8 P.O. Box 2267 St. Paul, MN 55102</p> <p>Dakota County: District 19 P.O. Box 1466 Burnsville, MN 55337</p> <p>Washington County: District 15 P.O. Box 181 Lake Elmo, MN 55042</p> <p>SE Ramsey County: District 26 P.O. Box 75980 St. Paul, MN 55175</p>	<p align="center">BE A NIGHT OWL !!</p> <p>Night Owls are often the first AA contact for the newcomer! A Night Owl shift is a once-a-month commitment to answer Intergroup phones after hours. Some shifts can be done in the office; all can be done from home. The commitment can be filled by an individual or a group. If you can help, call Matt at the office or go to our website: www.aastpaul.org</p>	<p align="center"><u>INTERGROUP CONTRIBUTIONS FOR SEPTEMBER</u></p> <p>Number Group Contributions: 30 Total Group Contributions: \$3,140.16 Number of Faithful Fivers: 17 Total from Faithful Fivers: \$386.20</p>
	<p align="center"><u>District Meetings</u></p> <p>District 8 (Ramsey Co.) Fairview Community Center 1910 Co. Rd B, Roseville <u>3rd Wed., 7:30 PM</u></p> <p>District 15 (Wash. Co.) Christ Lutheran Church 11194 N. 36th St., Lake Elmo <u>4th Mon., 7:00 PM</u></p> <p>District 19 (Dakota Co.) Rosemount Community Center 13885 South Robert Trail <u>2nd Wed., 7:00 PM</u></p> <p>District 26 (SE Ramsey Co.) 1099 Payne Ave. St. Paul 2nd Fri., 6:00 PM www.district26-area36.org</p>	<p align="center">Thanks! To the groups that contributed in September:</p> <p align="center">Cliffhangers Cottage Grove Dakota Alano Wed. AM Roosters Dakota Alano Wed. 8PM East Side Squad 6 Forest Lake Groups Four Seasons Freedom From Bondage Friday 12&12 By the Book Grovers Thursday Night Happy Hour Men’s AA Highland Park AA Lindstrom AA Group Maplewood Groups Meeting of the Waters North Branch Thursday Oakdale Monday Outright Mental Defectives Primary Purpose Woodbury Shoreview Big Book Plus St. Anthony Park AA St. Luke’s Saturday Men’s Stillwater Wednesday Step TGIF Macalester Third Tradition Northfield Uptown Club Valley Step AA White Bear Lake AA White Bear Lake Redeemer</p>
	<p align="center">Thanks to all the terrific volunteers who helped in the Office in September!</p> <p>Frank, Andy, Lynette, Steve, Jerry, Cara T., Michelle, Nathan, Jack, Jack R., Justine, Russell, Eliot, Val, Megan, Vincent</p> <p align="center"></p> <p align="center">Thanks to all the Night Owl volunteers and groups as well!</p>	

The Lifeline: Purpose Statement

The Lifeline is a monthly newsletter of the St. Paul and Suburban Area Intergroup Association office of Alcoholics Anonymous. It is about, by, and for members of the A.A. Fellowship. Opinions expressed herein are not to be attributed to A.A. as a whole, nor does publication of any article imply endorsement by either A.A. or Intergroup. (Exception: Quotations from A.A. books or pamphlets are reprinted with permission from A.A. World Services, Inc.; The A.A. Preamble is reprinted with permission of A.A. Grapevine, Inc.) We welcome articles of opinion or descriptions of personal experience, which should be sent to Lifeline Editor, St. Paul Intergroup, 1600 University Avenue #407, St. Paul MN 55104. Materials or articles cannot be returned unless accompanied by a self-addressed stamped envelope. Intergroup reserves the right to edit submissions for clarity, language, length and contents that may violate A.A.’s Traditions, etc. The deadline is the 2nd of the preceding month.

ST. PAUL AA INTERGROUP UPCOMING EVENTS!!

St. Paul Intergroup

Gratitude Night

Saturday November 17th, 7:00 PM

Lutheran Church of the Redeemer
285 N. Dale St.

Founder's Day Weekend 2007

November 23, 24 & 25

Doubletree Park Place Hotel

1500 Park Place Blvd
St. Louis Park, MN 55416
wwwFOUNDERSDAYMN.net

VIII Convencion Hispana del Estado de Wisconsin

Grupo Sede "Providencia"
A.A. Hacia la Luz de un Poder Superior
24 y 25 de Noviembre de 2007
Four Points by Sheraton, Milwaukee
(414) 384-4813, (414) 334-1881

Recovery, Unity & Service Conference

sponsored by the

Southern Minnesota Area Assembly

January 4 to 6, 2008
Marriot Minneapolis West, St. Louis Park

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.

Alcoholics who have recovered through our program are themselves the strongest attraction that A.A. has. When people are asked what led them to seek A.A. help, the answer given most often is: "An A.A. member." Their chances would have been slim if all of us had remained completely in hiding. But many of us have chosen to tell our friends, neighbors, employers, co-workers, doctors, or spiritual advisers that we are in A.A. -and when we do so, we are *not* breaking our anonymity in the meaning of this Tradition.

-Reprinted from the pamphlet, *The Twelve Traditions Illustrated*, with permission of AA World Services, Inc.

The Twelve Concepts: Concept XI

While the trustees hold final responsibility for A.A.'s world service administration, they should always have the assistance of the best possible standing committees, corporate service directors, executives, staffs, and consultants. Therefore, the composition of these underlying committees and service boards, the personal qualifications of their members, the manner of their induction into service, the systems of their rotation, the way in which they are related to each other, the special rights and duties of our executives, staffs, and consultants, together with a proper basis for the financial compensation of these special workers, will always be matters for serious care and concern.

In this, the second longest of the Concepts, Bill explains in great detail the composition, functions and relationships of the standing committees of the General Service Board, its subsidiary operating boards, the General Service Office and the A.A. Grapevine - as they existed in 1962. As A.A. has grown and changed, many of the descriptions would be different today, and some of the issues that are addressed are no longer relevant. Nevertheless, the full text is valuable as an historical document, and many of the principles still apply [. . .] .

Underlying the service structure we have been discussing, there is another, internal structure of service consisting of the nontrustee members of the trustees' committees; the nontrustee directors of the two operating boards, and the executives and staff members. "Members of this group," declares Bill, "not only *support* the leadership of the trustees: they *share* the leadership with them."

-Reprinted from the pamphlet, *The Twelve Concepts for World Service Illustrated*, with permission of AA World Services, Inc.

Is your meeting represented at Intergroup?

The November Representatives' meeting will be held November 20, 7:30 pm,
at the Lutheran Church of the Redeemer, 285 N. Dale St., St. Paul, 55103.
The church is located just south of I-94; from Dale turn west on Iglehart to park.

St. Paul Area Intergroup
Spruce Tree Center
1600 University Ave. W., Suite #407
St. Paul, MN 55104

Change Service Requested

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Organization
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Please let us know one month ahead of time if your address changes. It saves us the cost of return postage and enables you to get each issue of the *Lifeline*. Our mailing permit does not provide for mail forwarding. Thank you!



St. Paul Intergroup Faithful Fiver Form

Faithful Fivers contribute five dollars to St. Paul Intergroup each month to enable us to continue to carry our life-saving message. Your contribution entitles you to a one-year subscription to the *Lifeline*. You may also contribute annually, quarterly, etc.

Name _____

Street _____

City, State, Zip _____

Please send this form and a check to:

St. Paul Intergroup, 1600 University Avenue W. #407, St. Paul MN 55104