

Faithful Fiver Pledge:

Emerald Valley Intergroup
1259 Willamette
Eugene, Oregon 97401

- I pledge \$5 per month to support EVI and service work in my community
- I'm feeling grateful, I can send _____ per month
- I will mail or drop off my contribution:
Monthly
- Four times a year (\$15 each)
- Once a year (\$60)

Name: _____

Address: _____

when you acknowledge my contribution, please list me as (first name, Initial, or nickname): _____

"Faithful Fivers" are individuals who donate \$5 or more per month to help support Intergroup. We will post your nick name on a board in the office, with a little red dot placed for each months contribution, so you can track of your contribution. (We don't remind you, or otherwise keep track of it for you, and we will send you a newsletter whether or not you have remembered to send in your pledge.) You can contribute monthly, quarterly or yearly, and if you check the receipt box, and are on the News mailing list, we will send you a receipt at the end of the year. (If you want a receipt, but would like to save EVI postage by picking up the News at the Office, or the EVI Business Meeting, fill out your nickname and address, but write "no news" next to your address.) Our "Faithful Fivers" Program is new this last year, and was a great help. The idea came from an article in the G.S.O. Newsletter "Box 4-5-9 on similar programs at other Intergroups.

GET THE NEWS!



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Happy Holidays

Happy Holidays. For many of us alcoholics, the words "happy" and "holidays" don't seem to go together. If we are new to sobriety, a host of unwelcome memories may come up, or doubts about how to deal with family and freinds. Our relationships may be broken, children not with us, parents, brothers and sisters still drinking. Our financial situation might not be in the greatest shape, and yet we want to make up for our past actions in some way. Even after several years of sobriety, the holidays can interrupt the routine that helps us keep sober. The following are a few suggestions from my experience, and from listening to the experiences of others in the rooms of AA

1. Don't Drink.
2. Easy Does it. Most people around the world don't make a big deal out of the holidays the way Americans do- or at least the way our merchants and advertisers do. We are not all crowded around the tree with loving families and piles of the latest and greatest presents. Our kids don't love us because of what we buy them. The boss is not going to fire you if you're not the life of the Christmas party (or if you're not there).
3. H.A.L.T. - make a special effort not to get hungry, angry, lonely, or tired. Whether it is trying to do to many things in a day, or sitting alone at home, a little extra attention to what we need to do to maintain out sobriety is in order during the holidays.
4. Leave yourself a backdoor. - If your are , say, visiting relatives that you are not comfortable with, let them know that you may have to leave a little early. Spend an hour or two, then take yourself to a meeting, drop in at your local AA Club, or get together with an A.A. friend. Now that you are sober, you can pretend that your schedule is packed.
5. Avoid self pity and resentment at all costs. If you notice it sneaking up, get to a meeting, pick up the big book or some AA literature, make a gratitude list, get out and do something. The combination of the holidays (seems like everybody else is having a good time) and self pity can be fatal to us alcoholics. If you are separated from your (wife, husband, kids, parents, etc) a special effort is in order - invite yourself over to an AA friends house, for example, or camp out at holiday marathon meetings.
6. Live and Let Live. I may have gotten rid of my resentments, but that doesn't mean everybody else has. I can't expect everybody to treat me as "the new me". I find expectation leads to dissappointment, so the less of them I keep around, the better. The idea that "My first Christmas sober is going to be just great" may be a little optimistic.
7. Tis better to give than to recieve. In particular, remember what we, as recovering alcoholics, have to give; our experience, strength, and hope.
8. One day at a time. Christmas (or hananaka, etc) may not be the best time to make all your amends, and expect your kids, ex, and relatives all to love you. In time, by working the program, we can expect our relationships to improve.
9. The Christmas Spirit is not a liquid. In my first few years of sobriety, I was not to be found in the same room as booze during the holidays (or the rest of the year, if I could possibly help it), and while it doesn't bother me now to be around it, I don't hang out with people drinking. In spite of what my previous

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E.V.I. News

December, 2000

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Eugene, Oregon 97401

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OFFICE VOLUNTEER COORDINATOR
Gus P. 688-8454/ Judy B. 687-9389

LITERATURE
Rich F. 744-7902, Dave S. 465-1767

ANSWERING SERVICE
Frank K. 345-7131/ Dan

ARCHIVIST/HISTORIAN
Linda 345-5827

PUBLIC INFORMATION (PI)
Brad 744-3861

COOPERATION PROFESSIONAL COMMUNITY
Cathy B. 343-1962/ Alan 988-3595

ACTIVITIES
Sandi D 463-0586

E.V.I. COMMUNICATIONS
Newsletter: Robert S. 485-8866/ Zeb G.
Website: Michael W. 343-2566

Meeting Books:
E.V.I. SPEAKER MEETING
Al D. 345-2058/ Gaylene G. 953-3425

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vice Myron 345-2058

HOSPITALS & INSTITUTIONS (H&I)
Chair: Harold B. 342-1557 barton@continet.com
Vice: Bruce 338-9892
Secretary: Gus P. 343-4815

COOPERATION WITH TREATMENT FACILITIES (CTF)
Tim A. 726-8558

HOSPITALS
Michael G 338-4920

CORRECTIONS
Karl B. 345-7466 karl@rpginvest.com.
Scott H. 747-7417

Jail: Co-coordinator: Scott H. 747-7414
Co-coordinator: Lee E. 726-6669
ITU coordinator: Jack C. 463-1040
Alma Work Camp Coordinator: Karl B.
Pathways coordinator: Gary C. 935-2557
Garver B. 302-8156
Haag Home: Gary R. 485-7777
Randy G 541-466-3027
Serbu Detention

E.V.I. STEERING COMMITTEE
Chair: Ed R. 726-9490 edrogers@efn.org
Vice-Chair: Chris H. 345-7405 chelmers@efn.org
Secretary: Deana. 345-8750
Treasurer: Gary R. 485-7777
At-Large: Michael W. 343-2566m@mlwebb.com
At-Large: Angel L. 431-4924 angel@efn.org
At-Large: Bill N. 747-7486 rubberspur@aol.com
At-Large: Dann 484-2330 Dann@lowinsure.com
Treasurer: Gary R. 485-7777
Vice Treasurer: Mel M. 345-4450

BOOKKEEPER / Bev. L

Bring in the New Year Sober!
New Years Eve dance - EWEB
sponsored by EVI Activities

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experience tried to tell me, not everybody drinks, in fact, not most people. (what I consider drinking, anyway). I know that I will not feel better if I pick up a drink, I will feel worse. Guaranteed. Because I will have thrown away this gift of sobriety, and soon the familiar guilt, shame, remorse, and all those resentments I have gotten rid of will creep back in.

10. Go to church, or in some way acknowledge the spiritual part of the holidays. A person does not have to be a regular church goer to do this, in fact, one doesn't have to believe in God, to do it. I haven't been in a church yet where they asked me at the door about my religious beliefs. What you generally find is a crowd of nice folks who aren't drinking.

11. Action Before Motivation. Depression can affect anybody during the holidays, ask any psychologist. The only relief I've found (and I do have experience here) is getting into action. One Christmas when I was poor, out of work, and depressed I forced myself to go to lots of meetings and make an effort to help newcomers. Not only did it help the depression, but it adjusted my attitude enough that I soon found work.

12. Volunteer for something - chances are you'll find a little of the spirit we look for in the holidays.

December 2000
Michael W., Eugene, OR



December Calendar:

E.V.I. and District Committee Meetings:

1st	Mon	Steering Committee 7:00
	Tue	District 20 418 A St. Karla B. 744-0509
	Tue	District 33 6:30 EVI office. Tom S. 686-8388
	Wed	District 19 6:30 Tracy R. 338-4320
2nd	Thur	Speaker Mtg Committee 7:00 EVI Office
	Mon	EVI Business Meeting 6:30
	Tues	Activities 7:00
	Wed	District 6 6:30 Larry W. 334-3609
3rd	Sat	Answering 9AM
	Mon	EVI Speakers Meeting, 7:30 Country Club Rd Sun
	Tue	Public Information 6:30
	Tue	Office Volunteer 5:30
Last	Tue	Communication Committee 7:30 2495 Columbia
	Thur	Cooperation Prof. Community
	Wed	H&I Committee 6:00
Last	day	Literature Committee 6:30

* H&I Service Meetings are now listed in the back of the new meeting books!

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meeting while my drunk was beginning to turn into a hangover. Panicked at the thought of being home alone without booze, I asked her, "How do you stop drinking?" She told me to get down on my knees and ask my God, as I understood Him, to relieve my compulsion to drink. I was extremely cynical, not having prayed for some sixteen years. But I was also pretty beat-up inside, and I was touched by that lady's eyes. So I did what she told me to do - alone. What I received was the most beautiful gift of all. It was as though 2,000 pounds of guilt and self-hate were lifted from my shoulders, and in their stead was a sense of being light and of being loved. That night, I cried alongside that unmade, winestained bed for two hours. My time had come, and I surrendered.

Recently, I have been aware of a truly beautiful gift that I have been receiving in bits and pieces over the past five years. But again, I finally had to be alone to receive it fully. I was faced with an extremely difficult decision that would, I knew, cause me great pain no matter what I decided. I feared that I would drink either way. My sponsors, AA friends, and AA "babies" were all totally supportive, and they knew, just as I did, that this decision was between me and my Higher Power. It was a Sunday morning, and I tried to get out of bed, but was too filled with tears of fear and unhappiness to stay out. I cried until I was finished. Then, I went to a book, one that I had avoided reading because it dealt with my specific decision, and I found that others had indeed gone through similar experiences.

For some years, even in sobriety, I had been carrying around one of my "old ideas," which went something like this: "No matter how much good you do for other people, no matter how nice you appear to others, once they get to know you, they will see that you're really a bad seed." That morning, when I decided to take responsibility for my actions in sobriety, I was able to look at myself in the mirror and see that, indeed, there was a seed inside me, but it was not the bad seed that I had feared - it was a seed of love, and it had been planted and allowed to grow by the miracle of Alcoholics Anonymous. I knew then the answer to my dilemma, and I knew also that no matter what the answer had been, I would never think of myself as a bad seed again.

Today, I am beginning to understand that seed of love. I am beginning to feel deep inside that I need to give freely in order for that seed to grow. In my first years, I believed in giving, yes, but with the intent of making you think I was a good person. And when my AA babies got drunk, I would be infuriated and would feel as though I personally had failed. If a drunk woman didn't sober up, I felt used. I was in the rehabilitation business, working with developmentally disabled people, and I had to quit in my third year because I was taking so much personal responsibility for the clients' success or failure that I became "burned out." It seems different for me now. I am experiencing clearly the joy of giving. I don't seem to have as much fear of "being used," and my energy in trying to be of service is high.

For a person like me to say that I am able to give without a price tag (sometimes, mind you, not always; maybe that'll happen when I'm fifty years sober) is an amazing thing. But it is not impossible. What I see here in Alcoholics Anonymous is a wonderful Power. That Power not only keeps hundreds of thousands of drunks sober and clean a day at a time, but changes takers like me into givers who not only need to give to survive, but want to give because it feels good!

B.C.; Los Angeles, CA From the Grapevine, February, 1983 Reprinted by Permission



EVI Office

1259 Willamette
Eugene, OR 97401
Monday-Friday 9:00 am-5:00 pm
Thursday 9:00am- 8:00pm
Saturday 9:00 am - noon
Drop by for a visit!

EVI Web Site

www.efn.org/~eviaa

Meeting schedules, business meeting minutes, and much more.

The little squiggle in the address is found right next to the exclamation point on the keyboard. Save a book mark or favorite and check back often!

E.V.I. News

Emerald Valley Intergroup's Newsletter for the A.A. Community in Lane County

EVI News is a monthly newsletter of the Emerald Valley Intergroup. It is about, by and for the members of Alcoholics Anonymous fellowship. Opinions expressed herein are not to be attributed to Alcoholics Anonymous as a whole, nor does publication of any article or event or notice imply endorsement by either Alcoholics Anonymous or EVI. (Exceptions: Quotations from A.A. books or pamphlets which are reprinted with permission of A.A. World Services, Inc.) EVI News is produced to support communication within the fellowship; please respect the anonymity of any A.A. member mentioned herein. EVI News reserves the right to edit any submissions for clarity, length, language, and editorial policy. Contributions gratefully accepted for consideration for publication.

Submissions due last Monday of each month. To submit articles or event information, mail them or drop them off at the EVI office c/o EVI Newsletter. Submissions can also be e-mailed to: eviaa@efn.org

Communication Committee (Newsletter & Web Site, Meeting Book) meetings are held the 3rd Tuesday of each month at 7:30 pm at 2495 Columbia St. Eugene. OR 97401 (call and check 343-2566)



Contributions:
 (Dec/year to date)
 As Bill Sees It 0/100.00
 Attitude Adjustment 0/1,477.60
 Autumn Group 0/0
 Backwoods Bunch 180.00/180.00
 Cottage Grove Gratitude 0.00/100.00
 Cottage Grove Noon 0/25.00
 Downtown AM group 126.44/1,141.86
 Drop The Rock 0/248.53
 Fireside group 0/0
 First Monroe Group 0/0
 First Things First 120.00/324.17
 Four Corners 0/70.00
 Freedom Of Choice 169.50/230.50
 Friday Big Book Study(M) 0/74.00
 Friday Physical Awakening 0/88.13
 Fri night young people 0/180.00
 From the Heart 0/100.00
 Gratitude Group 0/226.15
 Harrisburg Group 0/0
 Jasper Group 0/60.00
 Last Chance Study Group 180.00/180.00
 Language of the Heart 52.80/52.80
 Life By The Book 0/0
 Lowell Lakeside 0/80.00
 McKenzie Bridge 0/60.00
 Monday Mens Stag 0/100.00
 Monday Night Cont. Study 0/0
 Monday Night New Group 0/0
 New Freedom 100.00/935.00
 New Freedom 20/958.60
 Physical, Mental, Spiritual 0/80.00
 Plug in the Jug 0/70.00
 Saturday Night Beginners 0/0
 Saturday Step 0/269.05
 Sober Awakenings 0/600.00
 Sobriety for life 0/223.25
 Springfield Monday Night 20.00/130.00
 Stairway to Sobriety 0/120.00
 Sunday Morning Big book 60.00/505.00
 Sunday Night 12x12 0/20.00
 Men's Sponsorship 85.00/320.00
 Sunday Women's Step Stdy 0/0
 There Is A Solution 0/50.00
 Thursday Voyagers Group 0/65.24
 Tuesday Night Book Study 10.00/10.00
 Unknown 0/40.15
 We Need Each Other 0/0
 Wednesday Mens Noon 0/110.00
 Wednesday Men's Stag 0/90.00
 Who am I Group 0/84.00
 Womans Road to Recovery 60.00/240.00
 Women's How It Works 0/183.00
 Total Contributions (month/year to date)
 Group ytd 1,163.74/10,256.65
Fundraising:
 EVI Speakers Meeting 0/1,500.00
 Faithful Fivers, individual 91.65

thank you!

The Hard Woman with the Soft Eyes

It was another dreary Tuesday night, and I was drunk once again. I called our local AA central office to see if I could get some help, and asked for information about meetings the follow-ing night. Why don't you go to a meeting tonight? asked the man on the other end of the line.

"Because I'm drunk," I said lifelessly.

"You can go to a meeting drunk. How do you think we alkie get here?" He told me someone would give me a call to get my ad-dress, and would take me to a meeting. Frantically, I made some coffee and brushed my teeth. I would have been tempted to drink some booze, but of course, there was none left. Nothing was ironed, but I really didn't care how I looked, as long as I didn't smell bad. I went out to the street and sat on the curb, hoping to sober up before I got picked up.

The woman who came scared me to death. She was just over three years sober ("Nobody is ever three years sober," I thought); she wore very high-heeled platform shoes; and she stood as straight as if she had stuck a pole down her back. She looked almost beautiful - except that there was a hard street edge to her. I thought the fellow at the central office had really made a mistake, having this formidable woman try to relate to a sweet flower child and closet drunkie like me. But as it happened, I looked twice and found her eyes. They were very warm. They looked at me with love! Now, such a thing was beyond my comprehension. I did not look good; I did not feel good; I didn't have money; and my job, which I had a hard time keeping, wouldn't have impressed anybody. And here was this woman looking at me as though I was her daughter and had gotten a straight-A report card!

That night, over five years ago, was just the beginning of a show-er of love, acceptance, understanding, and giving that I have been receiving to this day. I have received gifts of fellowship, like the birthday party my AA roommate gave me when I was celebrating two years clean and sober. I almost had to run out the back door, because I had a hard time accepting all the love and attention that were being given to me.

I have received gifts of caring, as I did one evening just a few months ago, when pain and anger had gathered unchecked and I was screaming inside for a drink. I called that same hard woman with the soft eyes and asked her if I could spend the night at her house. I got the idea of dyeing my hair red (looking for another identity, perhaps). In her bathroom, she stayed with me as I tried to mix the perfect color. With her presence and conversation, she kept me from pulling the hair out of my head instead of col-oring it. I suddenly realized that it was after midnight and that she had to be up at 4:30 AM in order to be at her job on time. Then I knew: What was really happening was not just one woman help-ing another tint her hair, but one alcoholic sharing and caring to keep another alcoholic sober.

There were times when the gift of love was given, and nobody was there. That first night, the hard woman with the soft eyes took me home from the

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On Holidays Too

I was two years clean and sober and it was nearly Christmas. My girl friend of six months I had met in A. A. was to move in with me and we would play house and be happy. I was living in all that I could afford at the time, a nasty studio apartment down by the college. I had held a job for a year and was going to many meetings trying to sponsor others. Life was pretty exciting and had taken on new meaning.

My girlfriend caught a feeling for a while that she could not shake. Her sponsor told her that since it persisted she ought to reconsider the seriousness of our relationship. I was under standing at first. It all blew up on Christmas Eve, though. I left her place bitterly disappointed by her decision to not commit. Some men would be happy with this. But not a man trying to learn a spiritual way of living.

I spent the rest of the evening depressed at my brother's happy home. And when I left knew I would get drunk at one of the bars. Someone had mentioned an all night meeting at a club. I did not like the idea of joining the rest of the lost souls. I was dizzy with pain all the way there. The neon lights tugged at me but I made it.

I never heard more crap in my life than I did for about two hours that night. I sat there feeling like the lowest form of man on the planet. I decided to go home and that I could stay sober just get me out of here. On the way to the door in poor shape, a wet one staggered in and came right to my face with no pause and said, "hey...your just like me...a reeeal loner." That drunk's words opened my top. I sat down with a grin on my face until three in the morning and talked to that guy about maybe getting sober. And the day after I spent sober with my family.

I continue to believe and live by self-sacrifice. *It is God's will for me.*

Anonymous Alcoholic, Eugene, Or.



There is nobody so irritating as somebody with less intelligence and more sense than we have.

*Revivor
Sidney Australia*

Been to the EVI Speakers Meeting lately?
 Good fellowship, Good Speakers
 2nd Saturday of the month, 7:30pm
 989 Country Club Road
 Grace Community Church



Gratitude:

Currently Available Service Positions:

EVI Service Committees:
Vice-Chairs for the following committees:

Web site: Maintains the EVI Web Site.

Outreach: Visits Meetings to let them know about Intergroup, how to get involved in local service.

Hospitals . Coordinates bringing meetings and info into local hospitals, Lane Psychiatric, and the Johnson unit. You don't have to be crazy to do this.

Other volunteer opportunities:

H&I has a constant, and varied need for people willing to do a little to a lot of service work. The opportunity for this type of service has really expanded, and H&I has been doing a great job, but they need the AA community to step up and volunteer. This is real service work.

Public information - takes speakers into schools, and in general lets the public know that AA didn't die out in the '40's, and is, in fact, alive and well. We could particularly use someone with some enthusiasm for getting some public service spots on local TV and radio.

EVI Office Volunteers work a four hour shift, once a week, or every two weeks. Not very demanding, bring a good book; but you do get to answer the phone, talk to folks who stop by, etc. If you have a little time available, whether you are a year sober, or twenty, this can be pleasant service work, and worth doing.

Twelve-Step list. If you would like to be on the list that is called by the office or the diverter for twelve step calls, there are sign up sheets going around, or stop by the office. People available during the day, and folks willing to give rides are particularly helpful.

AA Meetings:

New:

5:30-6:30 PM Thursday Recovery by the Big Book (C) 390 Vernal Street, Eugene

Changed:

Dexter Men's Group now meets on Thursday, 7:30-8:30 PM, 38965 Dexter Rd. # 5

Veneta Friday night 12-Step Group meets from 7:00-8:00 PM (C) at Valley Methodist, 25133 Broadway, Veneta

Ooops: - not in meeting book;

Women's Continuous Study 7:30-9:00 pm Mon Eugene, (W) 3935 Hilyard Church of the Resurrection

New Meeting Books available at Office

Current meeting schedules are also posted on the EVI website.

Please let us know if your meeting information changes - particularly if your meeting stops meeting, or changes time or place, as it can be discouraging for a newcomer to hunt down a meeting and it not be there. We don't want them to repair to the bar instead!

You can fill out the form at the EVI office, or email EVI at: eviaa@efn.org

A current meeting list can be very important to a newcomer

MINUTES OF BUSINESS MEETING

November 13, 2000

The meeting was called to order at 6:35 p.m. The meeting opened with the Serenity Prayer. Those present introduced themselves. A quorum was present to conduct business.

Old Business:

Nominations for Steering Committee were discussed. The Steering Committee oversees day to day operation of EVI. Elections will be held at the December meeting.

The following are a list of those nominated and the positions they were nominated for. Positions available are: Recording Secretary, Vice Treasurer, Vice Chair, & member at large positions.

Gary R. – Member at large; Linda L. – Vice Treasurer & Vice Chair ; Tom L. – Vice Chair & Member at large; Harold – Vice Chair & Member at large; Bud – Vice Chair

The following positions now open:

Meeting book (Chair & Vice-Chair): Recording secretary until January: Activities (Vice-chair): Outreach (Chair): Hospitals (Vice Chair): CTF (Vice Chair): Corrections (Vice Chair)

Judy B was nominated and voted in as Vice Chair for Office Volunteer Coordinator. Her phone number is 687-9389.

New Business:

Committee reports:

Treasurer: Profit & Loss statements are available in the office. The inventory error from last month has been found and corrected.

Volunteer Coordinator: Volunteers are not at full staff right now. Shift hours for the office are 9-1 & 105 Mon – Fri, and 9-12 on Saturdays. The office used to be open on Thursday evenings but due to lack of office volunteers, there hasn't been staffing available to continue this. A nomination was made to have Judy B. become Vice Chair of this committee. The nomination was accepted and a vote was unanimous to accept Judy as the Vice Chair for Volunteer Coordinator. Welcome.

Literature Chair: Going good. Serenity Lane has placed a large order.

Website: The website needs some updates. Any updates need to be emailed to EVI. We are still getting about 300 hits/month.

Meeting Book committee: Pam has resigned as Chair of this committee. Angel will volunteer to cover this month.

Newsletter: The newsletter is available in the office each month. Also will be available at the EVI meetings for reps to take back to their meetings.

Answering Service: There will be a new 12th Step list available next month. There are also new instructions available. These are simple. A group or individual is needed to cover ever other Saturday on the phone lines. The shift starts at Noon on Saturday and ends 9:00a.m. on Sunday. Please let your group know so we can get this covered.

Public Information: This committee went to Shasta Middle School last week. It was quite rewarding. Volunteers are needed. New phone number for Jim P. 688-7915.

CPC: No report this month

Activities: Halloween dance was a success. Everyone had a blast. There were a lot of compliments on the new DJ. There will be a New Years Dance at EWEB. Flyers available at the next meeting.

Speaker Meeting: The meeting is getting great turnout. December speaker will be from California. The committee is trying to get someone from out of town every other month. The correct E-Mail address for Gaylene is: gglide@svdplancounty.org. This committee meets at the EVI office on the 1st Thursday of the month at 7:00 p.m.

Outreach: No report this month. Myron is the Vice-Chair not Chair for this committee.

Archivist: No report this month.

H&I: There will be a memorial for Bob T. on 11/25 at Knights of Pythias on 12th & Lawrence, at noon. It is a potluck so bring something to share. Willamette Family Treatment meeting has been taken care of. The Code of Conduct has been completed. Anyone doing volunteer work with this committee will be asked to read and sign this document.

CTF: New contact phone number is 726-8558. Since Bob's passing, we need a volunteer to fill in for this committee.

Steering Committee Minutes: There was \$25 missing from the Safe. Since the change in procedures, this is the most \$ that will be stored in the safe. All other will be taken to the bank.

Since the copy machines in this office are not functioning, Gus is working on setting up an account at City Copy for the committees to use.

Let It Snow

...In mysterious ways His wonders to perform

As my first week to chair our Sunday-morning meeting opened, so did the skies, dumping some four to six inches of snow on the ground. By meeting time, it was still coming down fast and furious. Traffic was almost at a standstill, and my friend and I crept along in the car to the meeting hall. We found no one there, no footprints in the snow, and just one door unlocked (even that was an oversight, it turned out).

The kitchen was locked and no key was available—so no coffee. But the room containing the literature and announcements was open, and we were able to turn on two lights. So we set up the room for the meeting, laughing and watching the storm get worse. No phone service to find out who was where. As we waited, I thought of our speaker. It was her anniversary, and she had been nervous when I saw her the night before, since this meeting usually attracts about 150 people!

Fifteen minutes before starting time, it was still just the two of us—and we said the usual “Wherever two or more . . . /” But our speaker arrived; then, one by one, about twenty more people. In the half-light, we listened to one of the most touching leads I’ve ever heard. There was a sense of closeness that I’ve never felt before, and when we all held hands saying the Lord’s Prayer, I found the tears very hard to control.

As we left the meeting, the storm had become really bad, probably a record-breaker (eventually, it left some fifteen inches on the ground). Slowly, we crept back home. And there at home was a message from another member, telling me that the meeting had been canceled. I didn’t say it aloud, but I thought, “Apparently, nobody notified the Higher Power!”

Grapevine 1979

Toledo Ohio



RECENTLY I read a little item in a magazine that was written to illustrate the need for going to church. With a word changed here and there, this same story could so well be applied to AA, so here it is:

A member of a certain group had always attended very faithfully. Then he suddenly did not appear at the meetings. One of the group called upon him after a time and found him sitting very comfortably before a fireplace reading his Big Book. He told the visitor that he was getting along very well in AA and didn't need the meetings. The visitor looked at him thoughtfully for a minute, then bent down to the blazing logs in the open fireplace. He took the firetongs and quietly removed one of the glowing coals and placed it upon the hearth-stone. As the two men watched, the lone coal slowly faded and grew cold, but the blaze in the fireplace crackled and burned bright. "I see what you mean," said the delinquent member. "I'll be right on time next week for the meeting." *O.L.C., Bridgton, Maine reprinted from the Grapevine.*

Have a Friend that needs a little AA Service Work?

- Intergroup has openings in a variety of service opportunities

More comfortable writing than speaking in public?

- If you have a story about getting sober, or AA service work, or how a particular step made a difference in your life - contribute to the EVI News!