

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!



Emerald Valley Intergroup
1259 Willamette Street
Eugene, Oregon 97401

stamp

Some Words To Live By

There are times when a speaker shares a thought that is truly inspiring

We in AA talk a great deal about fringe benefits, those joys over and beyond the delight of sobriety. Among the greatest of these fringe benefits, of course, is having some place to go when the "inner us" needs replenishing- meetings where we can listen and savor the experiences, strengths, hopes, thoughts, and revelations of others who share our controlled addiction.

It is said that man lives by words. We in AA have our Slogans, the Serenity Prayer, and our Preamble, the all encompassing statement of what we are in this Fellowship. Today, realizing I had enjoyed twelve meetings during the past seven days, I began recalling some of the words that have nourished my mind.

For instance, there was the young woman who paused the other evening as she came to the end of her message. "I was about to close by asking God to bless you all. But looking at your faces, I see that He already has done that."

There was the doctor who described his torturous road into AA. His diagnostic mind insisted on rationalizing and finally on experimenting. While he lay in a hospital, stuck full of needles and tubes, fresh out of convulsions and hallucinations, a woman AA came to visit. "How do you work the program?" he asked.

Her reply was a single word: "Simply." One word to live by.

Another meeting brought a young man to the podium to remind us: "Every problem drinker eventually takes his last drink. We in AA have lived to talk about ours."

On our proclivity for needless projection, the words of two women, speaking at different times, sank in deeply. One said, "It's okay to think about the future, but we don't have to live there."

The other: "I was constantly clearing away the wreckage of my future."

The hope for us in our one-day-at-a-time program came through clearly when I heard, "We know we'll die *alcoholics*. Our prayer is that we die *sober*."

"Action is a part of our serenity," one man said. "Think of the majestic swan, gliding smoothly over a lake's placid waters. A picture of serenity. But without two madly churning feet under the surface, the great bird could not carry his serenity far."

A woman said it behooves us to truly live the principles of our program because "Any one of us might well be, at any time, the only copy of our Big Book that some desperate alcoholic would be able to see."

Those of us who were "King Kong on roller skates" when we used liquor as an aid to achievement can appreciate one young man's words: "Alcohol gave me wings to fly, and then it took away the sky."

For former people-pleasers like us, there was one businessman who confessed: "I was eternally busy spending money I didn't have to buy things I didn't need to impress people I didn't like."

A drunk's whole lifetime was unfolded when a member reported, "There were three stages to my boozing. In the fun days, I *lived* to drink. Then, addicted, I *drank* to live. Finally, despondent, I drank to *die*."

I heard that self-pity is like a wet diaper. "At first, it is warm and comforting. All too soon, it begins to stink."

One reason for open-mindedness, I heard, is this: "When we selfishly close the doors of our minds, we are locking out far more than we are keeping locked in."

A smiling young woman shared this thought: "The worst thing about resentments is the perpetual rehearsals of the acts of retribution."

One of the long-time-sober fellows told us one night, "We were the 'almost' people when we drank. We *almost* finished school, *almost* saved a marriage, *almost* became boss of the department- and *almost* stayed sober a whole week."

The fruitlessness of efforts to escape hit home when I heard, "It doesn't make any difference what kind of shoes we wear when we are running away."

And this rang so very true: "Alcoholics Anonymous is a fellowship where losers gather to talk about their winnings."

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E.V.I. News

September, 2002

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Emerald Valley Intergroup
1259 Willamette St.
Eugene, OR (541) 342-4113



OFFICE VOLUNTEER COORDINATOR
Bob E. (747-2246), Bob P. (434-1045)

ACTIVITIES

Leetha (687-6623), Mindy H. (687-9369)

ANSWERING SERVICE

Carola K. (736-8041), Jana (431-3839)

ARCHIVIST/HISTORIAN

Linda (345-5827)

COOP PROFESSIONAL COMMUNITY

Frank K. (345-7131)

COOP TREATMENT FACILITIES(CTF)

Laura K. (345-5788), Cathy B. (342-6675)

E.V.I. COMMUNICATIONS

Newsletter: Teffany H. (746-1438)

Website: Michael S.(349-0504),

Darin (342-1098)

Meeting Books: Amanda W. (988-9656),

Elisabeth R. (747-5814)

E.V.I. SPEAKER MEETING

Angel (439-4924), Mary Jean (485-7854)

LITERATURE

Michelle (232-0101), Dave

OUTREACH

Bill N. (747-7486), Ted H. (338-8380)

PUBLIC INFORMATION (PI)

Tom S. (686-8388), Ryan M. (465-1053)

HOSPITALS & INSTITUTIONS (H&I)

Chair: Karl B. (688-1047)

karl@rpginvest.com

HOSPITALS

Larry W. (334-3609), Steve S.(914-9258)

CORRECTIONS

Ron B. (988-1827), Tom R. (465-1832)

H&I Coordinators

Lane County Jail: Brenda K. (484-6773),

Ted H. (338-8380)

C.C.C. (Women's): Kari M. (344-8147)

C.C.C. (Men's): Tom R. (465-1832)

Alma Work Camp: Bud W. (935-8833)

Pathways: Glen B. (689-8539)

Serbu Detention: Jack C. (463-1046)

Carlton House: Joe C. (554-3558)

W.F.T.-Friday Night: Janis. (935-8833)

W.F.T.-Book Study: Leslie (606-5776)

Serenity Lane-Speaker: Cayce (746-6990)

Serenity Lane-B.T.G.: Gus P. (463-1691)

Serenity Lane-Sat. Kurt (747-8925)

L.C.P.H.: Todd J. (302-6377)

Johnson Unit: Steve S. (914-9258)

V.A. Meeting: Ray T. (689-8429)

E.V.I. STEERING COMMITTEE

Chair: Jim P. (345-5382)

Vice-Chair: Harold B. (579-8087)

Secretary: Roger H.(688-3641)

Treasurer: Ryan A. (513-6498)

Vice Treasurer: Tom L. (683-7706)

At-Large: Todd (607-6349)

At-Large: Sandi (463-0586)

At-Large: Lori B. (684-8670)

At-Large: Bruce P. (338-9892)

BOOKKEEPER

Kurt

In Mysterious Ways

What power opened the way for this prisoner who needed so desperately to make amends?

In June of 1969, I was sentenced to life imprisonment for second-degree murder. I had killed a man in a blackout. I shared this experience in the February 1971 Grapevine, in an article entitled "Peace of Mind in Prison."

After a year, while using the AA program to the best of my ability, I tried to work Step Nine by writing a letter to the widow of the man I was accused of killing. But the institution would not allow the letter out. I talked this over with a man whom I greatly respect, an alcoholic priest who has been sober for many 24- hours longer than I have. He said that maybe it wasn't the proper time just yet, and advised me to refer back to Step Three. I did. For another two years, the thought would cross my mind every now and then, and I would mull it over and fantasize about the way I would do this when the time came. Then I would dismiss it from my mind, for the time being.

Just recently, there was an amazing series of events. A week after I moved from the cell I had been living in for over two years to another block, we underwent a major disturbance. A riot exploded, but thanks to calm, efficient handling by a newly appointed warden and commissioner, another Attica was avoided. Afterwards, there was a heavy blanket of fear and unrest over the whole institution. So an unheard-of move was brought into effect: Members of the Jaycees were allowed to come in and roam among the inmates and guards to ease tensions.

One night, as I was going to my cell, I noticed another inmate talking with two of these outsiders. They were still talking some two and a half hours later, when I got undressed and went to bed. After half an hour, I had the urge to get up out of bed and see if the inmate and the two civilians were still there. They were, so I invited all three into my cell for a cup of coffee. They readily agreed, as it offered them a chance to sit down and relax. The inmate, who also attends the AA meetings in this prison, told them how active I am in the program, and turned the conversation around to me, about my being a lifer and having been in for three years.

One of the civilians asked me if I minded if he asked where this incident had taken place. I said no, and named the geographical area. He responded with the name of the victim. My whole body felt numb. The fear was like that feeling you get when riding a roller coaster or when a car takes that first plunge down the biggest hill- as if every support has been removed from under you.

It turned out that the visitor was the best friend of the victim's son. He knew the family intimately and had been like a second son to the victim. I explained some of my past history and the events that had led to the fateful evening. Before leaving, he asked me if there was anything he could do to help me, as he thought it a shame I should spend so much time in here under the circumstances. I asked him to let me first get used to the idea that he was who he was. He has been back three times since then, and each time he's asked for me. Once, he brought me a birthday card signed "From one newfound friend to another."

It would have been virtually impossible to plan anything such as the conditions under which Step Nine unfolded for me. Out of over 600 men in the institution, I had to be the one to invite him into the cell for coffee. That amend had seemed almost impossible, a huge stumbling block in my program for sobriety. By seeking the advice of someone who had been sober longer than I had, and then by turning the situation over to my Higher Power, a way I couldn't even have imagined opened up before me.

May the God of your understanding be as good to you as mine has been to me.

R.L.H., South Walpole, Mass. *Reprinted from The Grapevine July 1973*

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The importance of participation was emphasized by the AA who said he protected his chances for sobriety by getting *into* the program rather than *on* it. "It's much harder to fall out of something than to fall off it."

Keep coming back even after relapses into more "research," fellow AAs tell us. I liked the story of the mother who went to visit her hospitalized child, a polio victim, and was told that the girl wanted to surprise her. The child started to walk to meet Mother, suddenly fell, and lay crying. A nurse restrained the mother from rushing to help. The child struggled to stand, made it, and completed the walk.

Later, the nurse told the mother, "I was not being cruel, you know. It's just that there is no disgrace or shame in falling. The tragic thing is not trying to get up and make another effort."

Teet C., North Hollywood, Calif. *Reprinted from The Grapevine September 1974*

First Grade Magic

There are some moments I hope I always remember; moments that are fleeting and often not quite definable. I had one such experience today- one of those feelings and times when the clear, clean impact of the magic of AA smacked home.

It happened in the waiting room of a large Navy hospital. I was nervously awaiting the return of my wife from the operating room. Where I was sitting I could look down the brightly lighted corridor which led to a door labeled "Surgery." Over and over again, I prayed simply, "Thy will be done."

Then quickly, almost brusquely, the doors swung open and my wife was wheeled out and down the corridor. As her stretcher passed I looked down at her; a tired sweet smile crossed her face as she saw me. My heart was full of that moment.

The surgeon who had performed the operation stopped and said, "Sergeant, your wife is fine." Hot tears filled my eyes. Gently, he said, "Take it easy. It was nothing- just a simple spinal and a 'hot' appendix." The competent young doctor did not realize he had just said "take it easy" to an alcoholic who, after eighteen months in AA, had just found AA's magic grade one.

I had experienced eighteen months of wet drunks, dry drunks, and confusion. Only a week before this incident some real AAs had taught me, finally, that I could do nothing but live one day at a time, asking God to give me what I didn't have to stay sober. That was all I could do- my best, with God's help- one day at a time.

Those hot tears sprang from the full realization that AA was right again. Because I had learned that all I could do was stay sober, with God's help, one day at a time, I had been where my wife needed me when she needed me- a wondrous thing for an alcoholic.

Thank you for teaching me to pray, "Thy will be done, today."

Anon., Newport Twenty-four Hour Group, North Carolina *Reprinted from The Grapevine June 1960*

ONE MUST CHOOSE

I know when I am spiritually fit because at such times I have no desire to escape life, but feel strengthened to deal with everything I am called upon to face.

However, just when I assume this exalted condition to be permanent, I suddenly find myself confused, fearful, and dependent. At such times of weakness, I come face to face with a choice of what I am to depend on- the greater power or John Barleycorn.

from The Lifeline

As soon as a man thinks he is God, he begins to at like the devil. *H.G. Wells*

Be kind... for everyone you meet is fighting a hard battle. *J.C.T., New York City*
Reprinted from The Grapevine June 1960



EVI Office

1259 Willamette (in the alley behind the copy shop)

Eugene, OR 97401

Monday-Friday 9:00 am-5:00 pm

Saturday 9:00 am - 4pm

Drop by for a visit!

EVI Web Site

www.efn.org/~eviaa

Meeting schedules, late breaking news, 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 immediately following the EVI business meeting the second Monday of each month.

Contributions:

(August/year to date)

Anonymous/Unknown 0/122.90
Attitude Adjustment 335.00/1047.44
Autumn Group 0/135.00
Backwoods Bunch 0/0
Brown Bag Group 0/265.00
Cottage Grove Noon 0/62.00
Cottage Grove Speaker Mtg 34.73/34.73
Courage to Change 0/201.00
Creswell Steps & Traditions 0/0
District 19 0/50.00
Downtown AM group 0/1036.22
Fireside group 0/60.00
First Monroe Group 0/0
First Things First 0/0
Freedom Of Choice 0/0
Fresh Start at Noon 100.00/100.00
Friday Night Stag 0/150.00
Friday Physical Awakening 0/0
Get Well Group 0/15.00
Gratitude Group 0/0
How It Works 0/80.00
Last Chance Study Group 0/0
Language of the Heart 0/0
McKenzie River Group 0/12.00
Men's Daily Reflections 128.57/128.57
Monday Mens Stag 0/150.00
Monday Night Cont. Study 0/0
Monday Night Beginners 0/3.00
New Freedom 0/599.00
New Freedom II 0/300.00
Primary Purpose 0/1.00
Recovery By the Big Book 0/30.00
Saturday Morning Steps 0/180.00
Search For Serenity 0/587.00
Serenity Seekers West 0/50.00
Sober Awakenings 0/540.00
Springfield Monday Night 3.00/15.00
Stairway to Sobriety 25.00/350.00
Sunday Morning Big book 0/680.00
Sunday Sunshine 0/59.76
Sunlight of the Spirit 0/75.00
Sunday Night 12x12 0/45.00
SW Sunset 0/34.50
Thursday Men's Book Study 60.00/60.00
Try God Group 0/546.50
Tuesday Men's Sponsorship 0/50.00
Tuesday Beginners 0/11.50
Tuesday Night Book Study 0/100.00
Veneta Gratitude Group 0/95.39
We Need Each Other 0/100.00
Wednesday Mens Noon 0/120.50
Wednesday Men's Stag 0/210.00
Who am I Group 0/72.00
Womans Road to Recovery 0/60.00
Total Contributions (month/year to date)
Group month/ytd 686.30/8722.11
Fundraising:
Anonymous/Unknown 0/136.67
Faithful Fivers, individual 70.00/946.00
Ind. Contributions/Other 6.05/402.49

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have to face their creator. This applies to them all, the high and the low alike. There is no room for pettiness there. The humble private who has been nothing but a source of trouble behind the lines suddenly realizes that he has a job to do which might mean the difference between life and death, not only to himself, but to his comrades. He will often gladly risk his own life to help save the lives of those comrades. The sergeant who has been a regular slave-driver and petty tyrant in base camp turns out to be a man whose first and only consideration is the care and welfare of his men when under fire.

We alcoholics are always upon a battlefield. We too are near death or insanity. . . we are just one drink away from it very often. The spirit of comradeship is therefore manifest in the spirit of fellowship in Alcoholics Anonymous. It is desirable and necessary. It is also as natural as the comradeship of the soldier's battlefield. Our personal antipathies must be subordinated to this fellowship. A person's looks, dress or ~~actions are of minor importance~~ We must be "all for one and one for all."

So look around at the people near you at your group meeting- every alcoholic is closer to you, at that meeting, than a brother or a sister. They understand you better than a mother or a father. They are sitting there extending to you a wonderful gift -a gift which ranks second only to the gift of your sobriety (which they have already helped to give you) -the gift of the fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous.

This does not mean that we must tamely accept everything that a fellow alky might say. We are all men and women with an experience of life that surpasses most. We have the right -even at times the duty- to express our opinions and to criticize those of other people.

But when we do this, let us do it openly to their faces. We demand of life the right to face our critics and we are under the obligation to grant the same right to all our fellow men.

So, although we are at liberty to disagree, we are obliged to do so openly-or we must keep silent. I feel that it is directly contrary to the spirit of AA fellowship to allow anything with which we personally disagree to pass unchallenged at a meeting, and then to discuss our grievances privately at a later date. Many of us -if not all- are guilty of this.

When the spirit of the AA fellowship is as strong as it should be, it can stand any amount of fair criticism between group members without one member losing one iota of respect for another. In fact, fair criticism, fairly stated, is apt to engender greater respect.

Without mutual respect there can be no affection, and without some sort of affection, no comradeship. We all have something to respect each other for, in AA. We have each to some degree fought the same battle. One must always feel a certain affection for anyone who has helped in any way, and we in AA have all helped each other to some degree, even though no one of us is directly responsible for helping one or two.

It is the spirit of AA fellowship that encourages us to speak of our alcoholic problems before meetings, because we know in advance that our listeners will be understanding and sympathetic. Alkys are prone to confess things to other alkys that they would not dream of confessing in any other company. They will confess things before a public meeting when they know that they have the support of a number of other alkys. This too is part of the great spirit of fellowship which exists among us.

The feeling of not being cut off from the rest of mankind persists even when one is forced by circumstances to become a loner. Never again does the alky feel quite alone and friendless. I cannot be with you in the flesh, but my words are being read by you, my thoughts and feelings are being laid bare to you just as though I were there. I am indeed with you in spirit -the spirit of the fellowship of AA. If it were not for that fellowship, I would be alone indeed.

I started by saying that the fellowship of AA is lacking in my present position. But as I have gone on writing that fellowship has become more and more real to me. I feel now that it can never be lacking. I have thousands of friends scattered all over the country- friends, in most cases, of whom I have never heard and who may never hear of me.

Roy, Vanderbijl Park Group Transvaal, South Africa, *Reprinted from The Grapevine October 1958*

September Calendar: E.V.I. and District Committee Meetings

All meetings at EVI office unless otherwise noted.

- 1st Mon Steering Committee 7:00
Tue District 20, 6:30 418 A St. Ken L. 747-8270
Tue District 33, 6:30 Pam G. 895-5478
Wed District 19, 6:30 Tracy R. 338-4320
Thur Speaker Mtg Committee, 7:00 Angel 431-4924
Sat Cooperation w/Prof. Community, Noon
- 2nd Mon EVI Business Meeting 6:30
Mon Communication Committee, 7:30
Wed District 6, 6:30 Gus P. 463-1691
Sat Answering/Diverter 9AM
Sat EVI Speakers Mtg 7:30 Country Club Rd
- 3rd Mon Public Information, 6:30
Tue Office Volunteer, 5:30
Wed Activities, 6:30
- Last Wed H& I Committee, 6:00
Last Day Literature Committee, 6:30



Fellowship Events:

September 20-22 Eugene, Oregon: Oregon Area General Assembly Contact Karla B. (541)744-0509, Leetha S. (541)937-2705, or Tim (541)726-8558 for more information.

September 27-29 Fall Creek, Oregon: Sky Camp Men's Spiritual Retreat Contact Ted D. (541)686-0825 or Bill N. (541)747-7486 for more information.

October 5 Eugene, Oregon: District 20 First Annual Traditions Workshop and BBQ, Armitage Park, Shelter H, Coburg Road. 10am social hour, 11am Panel, 2pm Turkey and Salmon BBQ. Contact Matthew 942-7453 or Danny 767-2865 for more information.

October 18-20 Angeles City, Philippines: 7th Fall International Conv. Box 308, 1099 Manila, Philippines. E-mail: aabalibago@hotmail.com

November 14-17, Honolulu, Hawaii, 41st Annual Hawaii Convention. EVI Office has registration forms and information or go online to www.lava.net/~hconv

Gratitude:

Currently Available Service Positions:

Women Volunteers are especially needed at the EVI office. **EVI Office Volunteers** work a four hour shift, once a week, or every two weeks. Currently we have over 30 volunteers, but only three women. This is a fun way to get involved and get to know some other AA's in the community. It is recommended that volunteers have 3 months of sobriety. If you are interested, call the EVI office at 342-4113 and leave a message for Bob E.

Other volunteer opportunities: **H&I** has a constant, and varied need for people willing to do a little to a lot of service work. There is also a special need for women volunteers for Lane County Jail, CCC, Willamette Valley Treatment, etc. 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.

The **EVI Newsletter** needs a co-chair and other volunteers. Preferably computer literate or willing to learn. Only a few hours a month. This is rewarding communications service.

AA Meetings:

New:
No A.A. Member Plays Doctor, Tues.,
6-7pm., 938 Jefferson St., Sheppard Apts
Comm. Rm., Eugene. Handicap Access.

AA Para Mujeres, Fri., 6-7pm. 886 1/2
W. Avenida 6A, Eugene. (W)

How It Works Group, 5:30-6:30 Tues.,
390 Vernal, Eugene, Spiritual Growth
Center.

Changed:
The Big Book Study Group Sunday
meeting from 7-8:30pm has a new location!
They now meet at the American Legion, at
8th and "C" streets in Springfield. This is
a non-smoking meeting now.

The Friday night Voyagers Group is now
The Friday night Tradition Study Group.
Same time and place.

Canceled:
AA Nooners at the Alano Club on
Wednesdays

First Creswell Group on Wednesdays

Big Book Study at the Alano Club on
Fridays

Put the Plug in the Jug Meeting in
Eugene on Fridays

Cottage Grove Candlelight Meeting on
Saturdays

NOTE: The updated September meeting
books are now available at the EVI office.
50 cents each.

*Please remember to let us know if
your group stops meeting - it's a
lot easier to remember when you
are starting a meeting, but if you
stop meeting remembering to
remove it from meeting lists may
save someone frustration and
more when they really need a
meeting.*

Emerald Valley Intergroup

Business Meeting Minutes-August 12, 2002

Meeting called to order by Jim P. with the Serenity Prayer @6:30 p.m.

20 EVI reps were present for a quorum.

Committee Reports:

Treasurer: Ryan reports there is \$500.00 for the host assembly committee.

Ryan passed out spending spreadsheet report and a prudent reserve
spreadsheet.

Office Coordinator: Bob We need to recruit more volunteers, both male and
female. Meeting for security issues will be Saturday 8/10/02. Tim A. will do electrical
work.

Literature: Michelle is doing fine.

Website: Darin says we are up and running.

Meeting Books.: Elisabeth: we have been printing 2000 for \$600. 2500 cost \$720 and
3,000 cost \$835. Any changes should be in by next week (Aug. 21).

Newsletter: Kurt says new ones are out.

Diverter: Carola needs diverter chair from the groups to submit changes to her in a
timely manner.

C.P.C.: Frank says we are into Sacred Heart and well received.

Activities: Mindy says there is a Labor Day picnic and is looking for ideas.

Speaker Meetings: Absent.

Outreach: Absent.

Archivist: Absent.

H. and I.: Larry needs a facilities coordinator.

Steering Committee: Jim says the Grace Community Church issue is straightened out.

Old Business: We had elections and our new **Secretary** is Roger H. 688-3641.

Our new **Hospital Co-Chair** is Steve S. 914-9258.

New Business: Office Coordinator made a motion to discontinue security service.
Seconded and passed.

Motion to adjourn seconded and passed.

Meeting adjourned @7:15 with the serenity prayer.

Dessert With A Jolt

Some time ago I was jolted awake to take another real good luck at Step One. At a
dinner party a specialty of my hostess', a fruit compote to which had been added a half
quart of sherry, was proudly and smilingly offered me. The whiff of those fumes did
funny things to me. Cold fear gripped my heart and the insidious insanity of alcoholic
thinking returned. I had such thoughts as, "Surely, no more than a teaspoonful would be
in your plate. What harm can that do? Let go, enjoy yourself. Be one of the crowd. How
can that one little taste hurt you? Be a man!" These thoughts rang as loudly as the praises
of the other guests:

"Dear God, I am an alcoholic. There are things I cannot change. I'll do anything to
be sober. Nothing can be worse than what has been. Today I live. To drink is to die."

As a drowning man's life flashes before him in a moment, so also did my alcoholic
life.

The sudden stillness, the questions, "Don't you like it? Is anything wrong? What is
the matter?" The simple honesty of being honest. "No, thank you. I cannot drink today."

During the course of discussion that followed two opinions emerged. First, that
joker's crazy to think a little cooked wine could harm him.

Second, that joker's a lunatic to touch the stuff in any form. For myself, it has taken
many bitter and lonely yesterdays to make tomorrow, but thanks to the Big Book, the
world-wide friendship only AA can offer, it's nice being a dry alcoholic for today.

P.P., Lower Hutt, New Zealand, Reprinted from The Grapevine June 1960

The Gift Of Fellowship

My name is Roy and I am a loner in the Karro, and a member of the Vanderbijl
Park Group of Alcoholics Anonymous, Transvaal, South Africa. At the time of writing I
have been away for about eight months, in which time I have been able to attend only
one group meeting but, I am proud to be able to write, by the Grace of God I am still
sober.

My point of view on AA has become more objective at this distance of time and
space, and this naturally applies equally to our group. But it is on only one aspect of AA
that I would like to make a few remarks. Please pause for a moment and think. What
does the term "fellowship" mean to you? I would dearly love to hear some of your
opinions.

When I went to the meeting I have mentioned above—a meeting of the small
Graaf Reinets group- I had no feeling of being on the point of entering a room full of
strangers. I felt rather that the people I was about to meet were familiar to me. I knew
that we would understand each other. It was more like going home than going to a
strange house filled with unknown people.

We were a mixed bag that evening. . . An ex-major was seated next to a chap who
had not been long out of a work colony. Some of the members were well-to-do men,
while more were scraping a bare living. A few were well educated, a few ignorant. Judged
by ordinary standards we were poles apart-actually we were closer than brothers and
sisters.

For there was a bond between us that is not to be found elsewhere, except perhaps
on a battlefield. That bond was the spirit of fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous. . . a
bond of sympathy and understanding, none the less real for being intangible, which
stripped away the differences of conventional existence.

We had the privilege-granted to us by God through the medium of AA-of knowing
what was in each other's minds, hearts and souls. There is a rare and precious quality
about the fellowship which can be felt in the very atmosphere of AA group meetings. So
precious is it that those of us who have been granted the honor of partaking of it should
regard it as a sacred trust and solemn duty to preserve it and spread it among those who
need it and want it.

This duty is part of what we pay for our own sobriety. . . a price we are glad to pay
as we gain even in the paying. It is every bit as important to introduce prospects to this
facet of AA as it is to hand them a copy of the Twelve Steps.

There is an old and very true saying that one never misses a well until it is dry, that
good and necessary things are missed only when they are no longer available. This is why
I have chosen to write on this particular aspect of AA. Staying sober has been easy for
me, for I have the power of God to help me, and AA has shown me how to enlist the aid
of that power. But in my present circumstances the fellowship of AA is almost entirely
lacking.

I am quite ready to admit that I have not always placed the value on the fellowship
of AA that I now do. Too often have I let the petty resentments and jealousies of my
alcoholic nature mar my conception of what this fellowship could and should be. I don't
think that I have *always* been in the wrong, but there have been times when I could have
benefited from a thorough Tenth Step upon myself, and promptly admitted my faults.

Too many hours of my life have been wasted in building up resentment against a
potential friend. . . the net result being the loss of the friend and unhappiness for myself. I
feel sure that I am not alone in this, that many alkys go through the same experience. I
am equally sure that this would not happen if we all kept the ideals of the AA fellowship
constantly before us.

The spirit of AA fellowship is one of the mainstays of the sobriety of us all, and we
must guard and protect it at all costs. Once lost it cannot be regained—at least in the
same measure in which we originally acquired it.

I have said that this fellowship is akin to the comradeship of the battlefield. On the
field of battle men know that they are close to death. Close to the time when they may

Rule 62:

A lush who was panhandling on
Wall Street tried to put the touch on a
broker who worked there. "Is this the
only way you can make a living?" asked
the financier.

"No," said the bum. "Actually, I
once wrote a book called *100 Ways to
Make Money.*"

"Then why are you begging on
the street?" asked the broker.

"Well," said the dipso, "this was
one of the ways."

In this anecdote, it probably was
the wife who felt like hammering her
alcoholic husband, because her prized
chest of silverware was missing and she
suspected that he had pawned it. Since
the poor guy suffered from prolonged
blackouts, he didn't know whether he
was guilty or not, but denied it
fervently anyway.

His wife continued to accuse him
bitterly, day after day, until finally he
became so distraught that he put a gun
to his head and was about to pull the
trigger. But at the last moment he cried
out, "Wait! I can't do this! I might be
killing an innocent man!"

A candidate for mayor in a small
town called the local minister to solicit
his vote. "Before I decide," said the
clergyman, "I'd like to ask you
something. Do you drink intoxicating
beverages?"

"Before I answer," replied the
candidate, "I'd like to clear up
something. Is that an inquiry or an
invitation?"

Here's a story of another
alcoholic panhandler who stopped a
stern-looking man on the street and
asked for a handout. "Certainly not!"
came the indignant reply. "I don't give
out money to beggars on the street!"

"Whaddaya want me to do?"
asked the lush. "Open an office?"

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