



# ADD-A-LINE

Special Edition  
Oldtimer Interview

Published for AA Member Northeast Florida Since November 1962

**Northeast Florida**

**Intergroup**

3128 Beach Boulevard  
Jacksonville, FL 32207  
Tel. 399-8535 Fax 399-8537

Website: [www.neflaa.org](http://www.neflaa.org)

E-mail:

[neflintergroup@gmail.com](mailto:neflintergroup@gmail.com)

9 am to 5 pm Mon.- Fri.



**Northeast Florida  
Intergroup Office**

**will be  
Closed for  
Labor Day  
Monday,  
September 6,  
2021**

**Committee Meetings  
Via Zoom**

**Intergroup Steering Committee,  
*Tuesday, August 24, 2021 at 5:30*  
Zoom ID: 881 4593 5259  
PWD: 587098**

**Intergroup Business  
*Saturday, September 11, 2021 at 9:00 am*  
*at JABA Club*  
3645 Spring Park Road  
and Via  
Zoom ID: 897 7440 1312  
PWD: nefl3128**

*Fellowship Starts at 8:30 am with coffee and donuts*

***Don't Miss It!***

***64th Florida State Convention  
August 5-8, 2021***

Registration and Hotel Information  
Available on the website:  
[www.64.floridastateconvention.com](http://www.64.floridastateconvention.com)

***64th  
Florida State Convention***

**Join Your NEFL Intergroup Team  
Hosting the Best Hospitality Room at  
the  
Florida State Convention  
Saturday,  
August 7th, 10 am—12 pm**



**Call Intergroup now at 904-399-8535 to  
volunteer and to order a NEFL  
Intergroup Hospitality T Shirt (\$5.00)**

***But for  
the  
Grace  
of God.***

***The Following  
Member Will Be  
Fondly Remembered  
And Sadly Missed  
Ben W.  
Central Group***

**Motion to change the Steering Committee Composition pg. 21 of the Bylaws**

Currently reads:

Appendix K 4)

Steering Committee Members: The IG Chair, Vice-Chair, Treasurer, and one (1) representative from each of the seven Service Districts. Each Steering Committee member will have a voice and a vote at the meetings including the chair. The Steering Committee will elect its Steering Committee Chair from the voter membership of the Steering Committee

Appendix K 5)

The Seven (7) Service District Representatives: 1,3,4,6,24,25, and 30

Change To:

Appendix K 4)

Steering Committee Members: The IG Chair, Vice-Chair, Treasurer, and one (1) representative from each of the seven Service Districts, ***and in their absence one (1) Alternate-Representative from each of the seven districts.*** Each Steering Committee member will have a voice and a vote at the meetings including the chair. The Steering Committee will elect its Steering Committee Chair from the voter membership of the Steering Committee

Appendix K 5)

The Seven (7) Service District Representatives: 1,3,4,6,24,25, and 30 ***and in their absence, their Alternate Representative.***

**WHERE TO SEND GROUP MONEY**

**IMPORTANT NAMES & ADDRESSES FOR Group Distribution Money**

Please Include on Each Check: Group Name, District Number and Group Service Number on the Check

GSO- General Service Office	North Florida Intergroup Office	Area 14 (Northeast FL)
General Service North Florida	Northeast Florida Intergroup Services	Treasurer, NFAC
AA World Services, Inc. PO Box 459 Grand Central Station New York, NY 10163	3128 Beach Blvd Jacksonville, FL 32207	NFAC Treasurer PO Box 226 DeLeon Springs, FL 32130 AANorthFlorida.org treasurer@aanorthflorida.or

***The Group Inventory  
Evaluate Group Functioning***

October 16, 2021, 2:00—4:00 PM

***First Christian Church  
11924 San Jose Blvd, Jacksonville, FL 32223***

A group inventory is like a Step 4 for the group, and a group conscience is like a Step 11 for the group. These are both done in ways that allow all the people in the group to share their Ideas. In this workshop you will learn from AA members experience with this process.

Sponsored by District 30 Area 14

**Step Eight** “Made a list of all persons we had harmed, and became willing to make amends to them all.” Whenever our pencil falters, we can fortify and cheer ourselves by remembering what A.A. experience in this Step has meant to others. It is the beginning of the end of isolation from our fellows and from God.

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**Tradition Eight** “Alcoholics Anonymous should remain forever nonprofessional, but our service centers may employ special workers.” Eighth Tradition Long Form : Alcoholics Anonymous should remain forever nonprofessional. We define professionalism as the occupation of counseling alcoholics for fees or hire. But we may employ alcoholics where they are going to perform those services for which we might otherwise have to engage non-alcoholic's. Such special services may be well recompensed. But our usual A.A. Twelfth Step work is never to be paid for.

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**Concept Eight** The Trustees are the principal planners and administrators of overall policy and finance. They have custodial oversight of the separately incorporated and constantly active services, exercising this through their ability to elect all the directors of these entities.

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## ***INTERGROUP FALL BANQUET***

***October 23, 2021***

**RAMALLAH AMERICAN CLUB  
3130 PARENTAL HOME ROAD  
JACKSONVILLE, FL**



**GUEST SPEAKER: DEBORAH C. ST. SIMONS, GA**

***\*CAKE AUCTION \*RAFFLES \*CATERING BY BONO'S  
\*VEGETARIAN MEALS BY ENLIGHTENED CATERING***

***COME SUPPORT INTERGROUP AND ENJOY A GREAT SPEAKER AND FELLOWSHIP***

**TICKETS ARE ON SALE THROUGH THE INTERGROUP OFFICE AND VENMO  
\$15 PER PERSON                      \$150/TABLE OF 10**

**SERVICE WORKERS NEEDED : DECORATIONS, SET UP, BREAK DOWN,  
FOOD SERVICE, SECURITY, AND GREETERS**

**REACH OUT TO OUR SOCIAL EVENTS COMMITTEE CHAIRS**

**FOR SERVICE OPPORTUNITIES:**

***CO CHAIR: MONIQUE H. 904-444-9250***

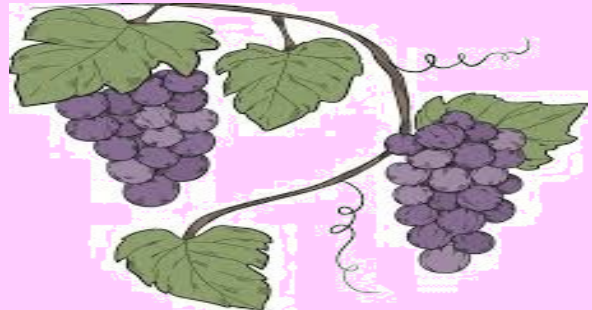
***CO CHAIR: JOHN C 757-977-4351***

<b><u>Committee Chair Positions</u></b>	
<b><u>Intergroup Chair</u></b> Kevin Jr. email: Kevin.Gartland08@comcast.net	904-614-7480
<b><u>Intergroup Vice Chair</u></b> Paul C. email: pacman257@gmail.com	904-885-5934
<b><u>Intergroup Treasurer</u></b> Rita H. email: flrita@comcast.net	904-703-3655
<b><u>Steering Committee Chair</u></b> Maggie R. email: mbmrowe@icloud.com	904-707-6125
<b><u>Accessibility Committee</u></b> Nanci S. email: sandnanci@gmail.com	239-603-1662
<b><u>Add-A-Line Editor</u></b> Angie B email: nefladdaline@gmail.com	904-655-8471
<b><u>Archives Committee</u></b> Charlie M. email: ggmoyer@aol.com	904-247-3421
<b><u>Archivist</u></b> Tom W email: twicks41f@gmail.com	201-424-3827
<b><u>Corrections Co-Chair</u></b> Steve C. email: cgull24@comcast.net Kathy D. email: kadaider@yahoo.com	904-449-6210 602-820-6644
<b><u>CPC/PI Chair</u></b> Stephanie S. email: sandybrown215@gmail.com	904-343-2489
<b><u>Finance Chair</u></b> Dan B. email: d.borcher@comcast.net	904-737-7532
<b><u>Grapevine Chair</u></b> Angie B. email: neflintergroup@gmail.com	904-655-8471
<b><u>Parliamentarian</u></b> Lon L. email: lonlansing61@gmail.com	904-710-7201
<b><u>Phone Army Chair</u></b> Kara B. email: karabphonearmy@gmail.com	904-402-1920
<b><u>Secretary</u></b> Regina A. email: ralai@comcast.net	904-994-6061
<b><u>Social Events Co-Chair</u></b> Monique H. email: intergroupsocialevents@gmail.com John C. email: intergroupsocialevents@gmail.com	904-444-9250 757-977-4351
<b><u>Treatment Chair</u></b> David M. email: david.murphy.jax101@gmail.com	904-614-4559
<b><u>Zoom Host</u></b> Andrew M. email: asmarch89@gmail.com	904-760-2009

INTERGROUP OFFICE LOG		
DESCRIPTION	Jun-21	Jun-20
PHONE ARMY	98	296
AA INFORMATION	145	236
ADMIN & OTHER INFO	66	96
12 STEP CALLS	4	4
VISITORS	94	104

***How To Support Your Grapevine***

- **Renew**
  - **Subscribe**
  - **Give A Gift**
  - **Use Grapevine in Meetings**
  - **Submit Your Story or Art**
- Visit [aagrapevine.org](http://aagrapevine.org)**



**FAITHFUL FIVERS**

<b>Anonymous 1</b>	<b>Jonathan B.</b>
<b>Anonymous 2</b>	<b>Kevin Jr.</b>
<b>Anonymous 3</b>	<b>Linda G.</b>
<b>Barbara M.</b>	<b>Lon L.</b>
<b>Carrie B.</b>	<b>Maggie R.</b>
<b>Carl G.</b>	<b>Mark V. E.</b>
<b>Charlie M.</b>	<b>Michele W.</b>
<b>Cynthia G.</b>	<b>Peter C.</b>
<b>Daniella B.</b>	<b>Rick T.</b>
<b>David R.</b>	<b>Rita H.</b>
<b>Debra W.</b>	<b>Roger L.</b>
<b>D.K. W.</b>	<b>Ruth R.</b>
<b>Haley R.</b>	<b>Samantha L.</b>
<b>Holly C.</b>	<b>Sasha S.</b>
<b>Jodi S.</b>	<b>Sue G.</b>
<b>Jean O'C.</b>	<b>Susan I.</b>
<b>Jeanne W.</b>	<b>William B.</b>

2021 District Committee Contact and Meeting Info updated 08/01/2021

	<b>Position &amp; Name</b>	<b>E mail</b>	<b>Phone</b>	<b>Monthly Meeting</b>
<u>District 1:</u>	DCM - Roger L.	DCM.District.1NFL@gmail.com	904-318-8535	Zoom meeting , 3rd Tuesday @ 6:45 pm on Zoom: ID 481 684 9778, PWD: 752099
<u>District 3:</u>	DCM- Mike M	District3Area14DCM@gmail.com	904-729-9260	In Person , 3rd Sunday, 1 pm. @ Clay County Club, 1835 Smith St. Orange Park, Fl. 32073
<u>District 4:</u>	DCM - June C.	jjjtcart@gmail.com	904-524-7917	Zoom meeting , 3rd Thursday @ 7:00 pm, ID: 830 4297 9644. PWD: ezduzit
<u>District 6:</u>	DCM- Jeanne W.	dcmdist6@gmail.com	904-252-4560	Zoom meeting ,1st Monday @ 6:00 pm, Zoom 399 261 4850 password District6@
<u>District 24:</u>	DCM - 'beth E.	egeserviceaddress@outlook.com	386-259-8724	In Person ,1st Wednesday @ 6:30 pm, St. Marks Episcopal Church, 310 North Second, Palatka, FL
<u>District 25:</u>	DCM - Sarah P.	sarahestes20@hotmail.com	407-865-4861	Zoom Meeting , 1st Sunday @ 5:30PM, meeting ID: 884-8317 PWD: 1234
<u>District 30:</u>	DCM - Bryant G.	ggram1701aa@gmail.com	352-575-4005	In Person, 4th Saturday @ 9:30 am meeting, First Christian Church. 11924 San Jose Blvd. 32223



**Early Sobriety Group**

New Online Virtual Group  
*Saturdays, 9:30 AM*

Zoom Meeting ID: 823 5985 8994  
Password: New2AA

Open Meeting for those new to AA or just out of treatment or those returning to the rooms of AA. Families wanting to know more about recovery are welcome.

The focus of this group will be to study and understand Pamphlets and other Conference Approved Literature each week.

**5th Dimension Young People's Group**

Online Meeting Daily  
9:30 PM EST

*with ASL Interpretation for the Deaf and Hearing Impaired every Wednesday*

Zoom ID: 687 118 144  
(no password)

Please spread the word as ASL Interpretation is critical to some!

**AA Service Manual Interactive Study Group**

Sundays 7:30 pm  
Via Zoom  
Meeting Id: 872 2150 2975  
Password: service

-Journey through the pages via an informal discussion  
-Questions encouraged  
-Come share what your group, district or area does

**New and seasoned members welcome!**

# Celebrating AA Birthdays

## Celebrating AA Birthdays

**June**

**St. Nicholas Group**

Eric P. 1 yr  
 Jeff B. 9 yrs  
 Wendy I. 11 yrs  
 Gregg S. 12 yrs  
 Patti L. 14 yrs

**Mandarin Women**

Jayme 3 yrs

**Middleburg Group**

Beth D. 2 yrs  
 Diana 2 yrs  
 Ron K. 27 yrs

**Sun. Morning Mtg Group**

Leilani 1 yr  
 Patrick O. 9 yrs



**July**

**Fiesta Group**

Chelsey J. 1 yr  
 Patty P. 1 yr  
 Rebekah S. 1yr  
 Frankie N. 2 yrs  
 Kat S. 3 yrs  
 Stephanie I. 3 yrs  
 John S. 5 yrs  
 Jeff D. 8 yrs  
 Samantha J. 11 yrs

Wendy I. 11 yrs  
 Steve W. 31 yrs

**Mandarin Women**

Barbara 10 yrs

**Orange Park Step Sisters**

Erika N. 3 yrs  
 Nancy R. 20 yrs  
 Tish T. 25 yrs  
 Margo H. 42 yrs

**Sun. Morning Mtg Group**

Barbara F. 2 yrs

**August**

**7 am Coffee & Readings**

Ross G. 1 yr  
 Dennis M. 2 yrs

**Billy Goat Hill**

Tracey F. 5 yrs  
 Kit L. 13 yrs  
 Mary D. 14 yrs

**This Too Shall Pass**

Amish P. 2 yrs  
 Shayna K. 9 yrs  
 Mary D. 14 yrs  
 Lloyd 22 yrs

**September**

**7 am Coffee & Readings**

Joey C. 1 yr  
 Rick D. 4 yrs  
 Scott N. 11 yrs  
 Trish L. 13 yrs



## CONTRIBUTION INFORMATION For Intergroup



Please be sure to write your  
GROUP NAME on your donation to  
 Intergroup.

Intergroup thanks all who  
 contribute to AA service work  
 in Northeast Florida.

ACCOUNT BALANCES	Jun 30, 2021
<b>Checking/Savings</b>	
1021 · Cash - Regions Bank	\$13,752.78
1024 · Cash in Drawer	\$102.00
<b>Total Checking/Savings</b>	<b>\$13,854.78</b>
1360 · Inventory	\$13,525.68
<b>1400 · Prudent Reserve</b>	
1476 · Regions Bank 5982- CD #001	\$10,175.37
1481 · Regions Bank 6794- CD #002	\$10,487.37
1486 · Regions Bank - CD #003	\$10,084.95
<b>Total 1400 · Prudent Reserve</b>	<b>\$30,747.69</b>

	<u>Jun 21</u>	<u>Jan - Jun 21</u>	<u>Jun 20</u>	<u>Jan - Jun 20</u>
Ordinary Income/Expense				
Income				
4000 · Contribution Income				
4002 · Groups	\$3,838.21	\$27,494.03	\$3,360.21	\$25,012.63
4003 · Pink Can Contribution		\$287.31		\$414.42
4005 · Faithful Five	\$160.00	\$945.70	\$290.13	\$879.58
4007 · Other Contributions		\$555.48		
4008 · Anonymous	\$7.00	\$1,181.01		
4010 - IG Breakfast/Speaker Mtg.				\$128.00
Total 4000 · Contribution Income	\$4,005.21	\$30,463.53	\$3,650.34	\$26,434.63
4020 · Retail Income	\$4,427.37	\$22,715.83	\$2,790.06	\$21,667.81
4040 - Monthly IG Mtg / Otr				
4042 - Business Meeting				\$92.00
Total 4040 - Monthly IG Mtg / Otr				\$92.00
4060 - Income - Special Events				
4062 - Banquet				\$2,325.00
Total 4060 - Income - Special Events				\$2,325.00
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>\$8,432.58</b>	<b>\$53,179.36</b>	<b>\$6,440.40</b>	<b>\$50,519.44</b>
Cost of Goods Sold				
4510 · Cost of Retail Sales	\$3,164.71	\$15,924.02	\$1,740.93	\$16,423.26
5001 · Cost of Revenues - Other				
4540 - Cost of Event - Banquet Expense				\$594.31
5195 · CC Fees	\$107.62	\$973.00	\$122.18	\$807.24
5290 - IG Breakfast Expjense				\$208.34
59900 · POS Inventory Adjustments	-\$232.58	-\$4,376.76	\$149.99	\$573.71
Total 5001 · Cost of Revenues - Other	-\$124.96	-\$3,403.76	\$272.17	\$2,183.60
Total COGS	\$3,039.75	\$12,520.26	\$2,013.10	\$18,606.86
<b>Gross Profit</b>	<b>\$5,392.83</b>	<b>\$40,659.10</b>	<b>\$4,427.30</b>	<b>\$31,820.58</b>
Expense				
60000 · Salaries and Benefits				
6560 · Wages				
6560 · Wages - Other	\$2,217.25	\$12,889.60	\$1,777.88	\$11,927.89
Total 6560 · Wages	\$2,217.25	\$12,889.60		
6561 · PTO		\$96.00		
6565 · Payroll Taxes	\$254.98	\$1,722.12	\$242.74	\$1,631.17
Total 60000 · Salaries and Benefits	\$2,472.23	\$14,707.72	\$2,020.62	\$13,559.06
61000 · Office Expense				
Total 61000 · Office Expense	\$476.28	\$4,793.74	\$548.23	\$3,145.36
62000 · Facilities and maintenance				
Total 62000 · Facilities and maintenance	\$1,292.86	\$8,139.11	\$1,247.02	\$8,247.09
5300 · When & Where Cost				
55000 · Committees Expense				
5520 · Archives				
5521 · Archives - General Budget		\$247.92		\$69.54
5522 · Archives Workshop Expenses		\$288.98		
Total 5520 · Archives		\$536.90		\$69.54
5540 · Corrections		\$1.29		\$379.03
5560 · Newsletter	\$463.61	\$1,645.28		\$4,274.60
5570 · Phone Army	\$24.95	\$149.70	\$200.00	\$2,270.99
5585 · Accessibility		\$68.14	\$24.95	\$149.70
5590 · Treatment		\$185.90	\$3.20	\$47.14
5595 · Website	\$100.00	\$925.00		\$1,039.00
Total 55000 · Committees Expense	\$588.56	\$3,512.21	\$228.15	\$8,230.00
70900 · Business Expenses				
5220 · Dues/Fees/Licenses	\$13.08	\$139.73	\$74.34	\$243.76
Total 70900 · Business Expenses	\$13.08	\$139.73	\$74.34	\$243.76
62100 · Contract Services				
5200 · Professional Fees	\$300.00	\$1,800.00		\$600.00
Total 62100 · Contract Services	\$300.00	\$1,800.00		\$600.00
65100 · Other Expenses				
5190 · Bank Charges	\$5.00	\$30.00	\$5.00	\$30.00
Total 65100 · Other Expenses	\$5.00	\$30.00	\$5.00	\$30.00
68300 · Travel and Meetings				
68310 · Conference, Convention, Meeting		\$298.87		
Total 68300 · Travel and Meetings		\$298.87		
<b>Total Expense</b>	<b>\$5,148.01</b>	<b>\$33,421.38</b>	<b>\$4,123.36</b>	<b>\$34,055.27</b>
<b>Net Ordinary Income</b>	<b>\$244.82</b>	<b>\$7,237.72</b>	<b>\$303.94</b>	<b>-\$2,234.99</b>
Other Income/Expense				
Other Income				
SBA-PPP Loan			\$1,268.71	\$5,400.00
73000 · Other Income				\$204.35
73050 · Interest Income	\$0.77	\$159.29	\$10.92	\$41.72
6310 · Sales Tax Collection Allowance	\$6.07	\$31.17		\$184.00
Total 73000 · Other Income	\$6.84	\$190.46	\$1,279.63	\$5,830.07
<b>Net Other Income</b>	<b>\$6.84</b>	<b>\$190.46</b>	<b>\$1,279.63</b>	<b>\$5,830.07</b>
<b>Net Income</b>	<b>\$251.66</b>	<b>\$7,428.18</b>	<b>\$1,583.57</b>	<b>\$3,595.08</b>

## GROUP CONTRIBUTIONS JUNE 2021

		JUNE	Att			JUNE	Att
Group Name	Jun-21	2021 YTD	July Meet	Group Name	Jun-21	2021 YTD	July Meet
100 Proof Group		\$200.00		Morning After Group		\$50.00	
7 AM Coffee and Readings				New Beginnings			
Alexis		\$40.00		New Life Group		\$240.00	
Aloha Step 11 at 7		\$76.32		Nocatee Saturday AM Group		\$170.00	
Arlington	\$798.32	\$798.32		Nocatee Sobriety		\$128.00	
As Bill See It	\$65.00	\$65.00		Orange Park Group		\$2,191.00	X
BAA		\$195.00		Ornge Park Step Sisters	\$95.63	\$198.63	
Beaches Unity Group (BUG)	\$360.00	\$1,260.00	X	Other Side of the Bridge		\$100.00	
Callahan Group		\$150.00		Q.C and FW		\$9.30	
Central				Palm Valley Mens Group		\$148.50	
Clean & Free				Reborn Group	\$150.00	\$350.00	
Coffee and Readings	\$138.00	\$1,318.00		Riverside (Tom S) Group		\$183.00	
Coyote Men's Group		\$350.00		Riverview Study		\$10.00	
Dented Can Group		\$57.60		Rule 62		\$300.00	X
District 6 - Treasury		\$1,000.00		St. Nicholas		\$40.00	
Downtown Group		\$700.00		Sandpiper		\$66.00	
Dunes		\$151.00		Salisbury Men's	\$50.00	\$50.00	
DTR				Salisbury Road			
Durbin 12 & 12				Saturday Night Live - St. Aug.		\$121.95	
Early Sobriety				Serenity at Noon Group		\$97.05	
Evergreen		\$20.00		Sober on Purpose		\$200.00	
Eastside		\$60.00		Solutions Group		\$90.00	
Fernandina Beach		\$149.00		Spiritual Knights			
Fiesta Group	\$648.76	\$2,474.03	X	Step Sisters			X
Free Mens Group		\$633.50		Stepping Stones (PV)	\$50.00	\$100.00	
From The Heart				Stepping Up		\$180.00	
Fruit Cove Women		\$13.00		Sunday Morning Group	\$50.00	\$100.00	X
Greenland		\$100.00		St. Aug. Sunday Morning Meeting		\$135.00	
Hold On Group		\$50.00		Surrender To Win		\$134.00	
How it Works		\$10.00		Switzerland		\$58.00	
I Am Responsible			X	The Crux of the Problem		\$300.00	
It's Come to This		\$50.00		The Herd	\$310.00	\$1,321.00	
James Gang				The James Gang		\$400.00	
Jax Beaches YPG		\$184.00		Third St Third Tradition Group	\$120.00	\$360.00	
Jax Men's				This Too Shall Pass		\$300.00	X
Jumping Off Place		\$26.95		Trout River		\$677.00	
K I S		\$133.53		Tuesday Night Step Group	\$80.00	\$252.50	
Ladies Nation				Villagers		\$167.10	
Ladies Unity		\$45.00		Unity meditation (St. Aug)		\$219.00	
Language of the Heart (St. Aug)	\$232.00	\$232.00		Way Out Group		\$49.20	
Lest We Forget		\$595.00		Wesconnect	\$324.00	\$551.00	
Liars Paradise Group		\$160.00		West Jacksonville Mens Group		\$185.00	
Living Now		\$105.00		Westside Group		\$357.50	
Los Lobos Mens	\$70.00	\$303.00		Winner's Group		\$150.00	
LoveNAction			X	Winning Game Group		\$1,600.00	
Mandarin Women In Recovery		\$200.00		Women Enjoying Sobriety		\$759.01	
Men's Big Book Study				Womens Upstart Group		\$264.00	
Men's Blackeye Group		\$300.00		Women YPG		\$25.00	
Middleburg Group	\$100.00	\$300.00		Young People Group (St. Aug)		\$70.00	
IG Rept Attending the JULY 2021 Meeting == 9				Yulee Group		\$140.00	
Total Attending the JULY Meeting == 22				Zoom Meeting 7AM Penman Road	\$196.50	\$1,391.00	
Groups Contributing in JULY 2021 == 17 Y-T-D == 84				<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$3,838.21</b>	<b>\$27,494.03</b>	



# Northeast Florida Intergroup

## Archives Old Timers Their AA Stories Supplement to the August 2021 Add A Line

### OLD TIMER INTERVIEW WITH TOM K

Today is December 18, 2020. My name is Kevin Jr. I'm a grateful alcoholic and today Ken S and I will interview Tom K, who has over 42 years of sobriety. (DOS 6/15/1978)

Kevin Jr: Tom, could you tell us about your life before AA.

Tom K: My name is Tom K; I am an alcoholic. My sobriety date is September 15, 1978. And for that, I continue to be grateful. I was born and raised in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, which was in those days a steel mill town. My father and his brothers worked for Bethlehem Steel. When I went to college, I also worked in the steel mill to help pay for college. We were a normal blue collar, family. I was a musician in high school, and I played in a little trio. Before I could drive, we had a job at the Elks every Friday night. I started to get a taste of beer there but really did not care for it that much.

I left Bethlehem after senior year of high school and attended and graduated from the University of Dayton. I was on my own and really started drinking heavy in college there in Ohio. Beer. And I like the effect. Just like in the big book, I was never comfortable in my own skin. Alcohol allowed me a sense of ease and comfort. It made me comfortable in my own skin.

I started missing classes due to my drinking. Drinking became more important to me than anything else. I met my wife to be in college and I hid my drinking from her. She thought that I could handle the booze. We got married in our senior year. We moved to Cincinnati, Ohio. Then she started to realize who she had really married. I was in sales and started meeting with the guys after work and drank. We moved drinking up to early afternoon and then we moved it up to lunch. And then once we started at lunch, it took off quickly. I was an alcoholic within two years.

In 1969 I started to realize that my drinking was becoming a problem, but I enjoyed it. I enjoyed the effect. I didn't realize what it was doing and how it affected others and me. I got sober in 1978 but fortunately Sue had started going to Al Anon in 1972.

I had read some books on drinking, and I thought self-knowledge. it was just like Bill went through those various stages, self-knowledge, self-control, self-discipline. I tried all those things, as well as, attempting moderation.

Kevin Jr: Did any of it work for you?

Tom K: No, I kept going from one thing to another. I would quit a job just before I got fired., I got into trouble with my jobs right away. But I was swift enough on my feet to kind of dodge and get away from some of those things and just keep a jump ahead.

Kevin Jr: Do you have children?

Tom K: I have two wonderful adult children. Thanks to my wife Sue, they continue to be in my life.

Kevin Jr: Did your drinking affect them?

Tom K: I did really love my family, but I put my family through chaos and turmoil. The children would see her cry and be sad because of my behavior. They didn't know when I walked through the door if it was mad dad, glad dad, drunk dad, angry dad, or sad dad.

Kevin Jr: Were you a traveling salesperson or did you stay in one place?

Tom K: I started in sales management, and rose through the ranks so I traveled a lot. In my last year of drinking, I was a Vice President of a company based in California and was on a plane traveling around the country almost every week. It was great from a drinking standpoint. Expense account and no accountability I did a good enough job to get by, but my family was back in Ohio at that time, and I was not paying the bills. I was getting deeper in debt and my drinking took on more serious proportions. Unfortunately, when it came to drinking or paying bills, drinking came first.

Kevin Jr: When did you get sober?

Tom K: I got sober when I was 34. I had gone to a few AA at a few speaker meetings and in my arrogance and ignorance, I thought I'd be a great AA speaker. I didn't realize you had to give up drinking to really be successful. But anyhow, I got to meet some people who would eventually be my early sponsors.

WHO WILL WIN?  
DRINKING  
VS  
STUDYING



Tom K: Yes, but it was as little as possible. I would go to a Friday and Saturday night meetings in Portsmouth, I'd hear some speakers and it started to plant some seeds, but I didn't even realize it at the time. Chuck H was over 30 years sober. He was originally sponsored by Dr. Bob. He sponsored the guy who was my sponsor, Red. I related to Red more, because Red only was sober about five years they were nice people and kind. They would help with money and made sure there was food. They took care of my family when I couldn't. And that's always impressed me to this day, I believe

what the Big Book says even though a man doesn't respond, we don't ignore his family. With all the guys I sponsor, I make sure that their family member has my phone number. And I try to talk to them at least once and introduce myself. Not that I'm worried about them. I just want them to know how much we appreciate the turmoil and struggle the family members go through.

Kevin Jr: You're around AA. Why did you come in? Tom K: Because I had nowhere else to go. I lost that big fancy job. My drinking had gotten so bad by that time, I was out of work and out of hope. I was desperate for relief. It was either get help or suicide. And I couldn't commit suicide. So, there was no place else for me to go but AA.

Kevin Jr: And you knew the people there? Tom K: Yes, I walked in the door and Chuck and Red were there. I remember saying to Red "I need help". He asked me the same question I ask my guys today, he said "what are you willing to do to stay sober?". The answer I gave him that night hasn't changed in over 42 years. The answer was "absolutely anything, I had enough". And we started on the journey of recovery. Before I was a year sober, I was lucky enough to get a job with a company that I had worked for previously and fortunately left on good terms. They hired me back and moved us moved to Strongsville, Ohio between Akron and Cleveland.

Kevin Jr: What did you do in the first couple years of sobriety? Tom K: Chuck and Red took me on 12 step calls. We got calls out in the county, and I'd drive because I was young and could see at night. When I was five months sober Red took me to the maximum-security prison in southern Ohio at Lucasville. I had never been in jail. I'd never been arrested. Should have been, but never was. It was scary going in there these were hardened criminals. I asked one old man, "what are you in here for?". He said, "they tell me that I killed somebody in a blackout". It hit me between the eyes because I was a blackout drinker. There was a lot of times I got drunk, didn't remember what I did and when I woke up later.

Kevin Jr: You could have been him? Tom K: Absolutely, without question, because I don't remember a lot of things I did in blackouts. Once I got into AA, they got me into service right away. Coffee maker, setup, cleanup, chairing, the whole ball game.

Kevin Jr: What kind of meetings did you attend? Tom K: In those days, pretty much discussion or speaker meetings, if you chaired, and they taught me to chair, you had to have topics. They taught me to get topics out of "As Bill Sees It" that's broken down by index. If you wanted a topic on anger, you had a couple different readings you could do. And that's how we prepared for meetings. I was taught that the person who chaired the meeting, was responsible for guiding and keeping it on track.

Kevin Jr: Were you a coffee maker?

Tom K: Coffee maker, ashtray cleaner. We even had coffee mugs early on, we would wash out. Setting up the meetings, cleaning up afterwards. Chairing the meeting, even sponsoring. They got me into activity pretty quick. I was asked to speak after about five months sober. So, I said to Red "I've been asked to speak at a meeting Is it okay?" He said, "you had better finish up the steps first". We went through the steps in the Big Book. We didn't study the Big Book in those days, like we do today. It was more out of the 12 and 12.

Kevin Jr: How many meetings a week did you go to? Tom K: Five. There were only 4 meetings in town at that time. The two groups in town had a total of four meetings. And then we pick up one other in the area or in a nearby little town

Kevin Jr: What was the reputation of AA at that time? Tom K: It was excellent and respected. The AA people were just wonderful. They would do anything to help. They would help families. They saw the devastation alcoholics created, even in those days. You could see the family trauma I can recognize the damage and the harm I did to my family. And the heartbreak, more than anything, it's the heartbreak we cause. I think the cruelest thing we can do is get sober, give hope to the people that love us, then go back out and destroy their trust and hope yet again. If we've been given this gift, and you are an alcoholic, there's no reason to go back out. You stay here, grow up, and do what you need to.

Kevin Jr: You mentioned that there were two groups in town? Tom K: It wasn't unusual for a group to have two meetings a week, a discussion meeting and a speaker meeting.

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Kevin Jr: What about service? Tom K: Right away they got me into sponsorship by shaking hands. They said, when a new man came in the meeting "go over and shake his hand". And I'd say, "I don't know what to say". And they said, "Say hello". And that is what they taught me to do, is just go over, say hello, and tell them a little bit about myself. I started doing that, and, you know, that taught me to get out of myself.

## Why Service?

- I go to meetings...
- I work the steps of AA
- I have a sponsor
- I have a sponsee
- You want me to do more?



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Kevin Jr: When did you get into service work outside of the group? Tom K: We did not really do much with the general service structure in Cleveland, it was Intergroup. One of the experienced members brought me along to the Intergroup Business meetings. Soon I ended up as an Intergroup rep and then district rep. I eventually got elected to the Central Committee that oversaw the Cleveland intergroup office. Dr Bob had a hand in the early Cleveland office. In Cleveland I met some of the very early members many of whom knew Dr Bob and Bill W personally. At the dedication of Dr Bob's house on Ardmore Street as A State Historical site my wife and I visited with Sue Smith, Dr Bob's daughter. Because My wife Sue was an AI Anon Delegate, I was able to meet and visit with Lois Wilson, Bill's wife shortly before she passed.

Kevin Jr: When did you go to Area? You did service work at Intergroup for a long time.



Tom K: We didn't have Area work in Cleveland, it was all Intergroup. Cleveland Intergroup is the third oldest in the country and predated the Service Structure. Cleveland hosted the first International Conference in 1950. Our Intergroup fundraiser goals were \$150,000 a year, and we usually exceeded that. I didn't learn about the service structure and get active in it until we moved to New England in 1987.

Kevin Jr: That's a lot of money back then!

Tom K: Yes. because we had Cleveland Intergroup office number and everybody in that area that got sober, basically called that number. We weren't in competition with rehabs and detoxes as much back then. It was the Cleveland AA office that they called. And that's why we had a large paid staff. They would answer the phone at night and then they pass out those contacts to the rest of us during the day.

Kevin Jr: Was it an early as 24 hour a day answering service?

Tom K: Yes. We had no problem getting funds, raising money, we had strong support and very strong loyalty to Cleveland intergroup. So, they didn't really didn't get involved in the general service structure. Because it was Dr. Bob's territory, and they kind of saw Bill W. as an interloper back then. it was it was kind of what I was brought up with Dr. Bob's way. He kept Bill straight.

Kevin Jr: What do you think about sponsoring a person long distance?

Tom K: On long distance I can sound good for an hour a week. But that doesn't mean I am. That's me. If it works for somebody else fine, I don't agree with it. I sponsor face to face.

Kevin Jr: You were the delegate from New Hampshire area. How did that happen?

Tom K: I was very active. I learned about Area service work by watching my wife who was a delegate and very active in Al Anon. I got very involved and held many other positions in Area 43. Among them was Area Chair, which I enjoyed and when the election came up for delegate in 2001, I decided to stand. I thought that I could help. During the election, I kept getting about 65% of the vote. And I just could not seem to get over 67% so, it eventually "went to the hat". And when it went to the hat, I felt a calm come over me. Because regardless of what happened, I know it was going to be God's decision and I was okay with it. My name got drawn out of hat. I served as delegate, which was a very humbling experience. I continue to learn as a result. I wish everybody could experience it.

Kevin Jr: You were a NERD?

Tom K: I was a Northeast Regional Delegate, Panel 52, yes, that's what we were known as. Now as a past delegate. I've been very blessed. I am aware of the importance of Area Service and encourage everyone to be involved. I am certainly nothing special. I haven't done anything special. I just had the benefit of wonderful people who are guiding me and showing me how to do things and still do.

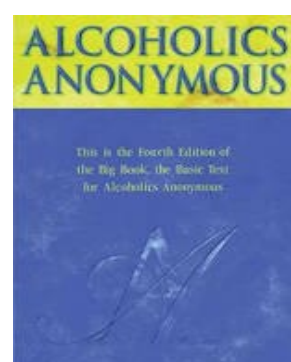
Kevin Jr: Is there anything you regret?

Tom K: I wish I had paid more attention to the moment. I was always looking to what's the next thing coming, and not paying enough attention to the present., I wish I could go back and ask some questions of the people like Red, Chuck, and all those people over the years. Learn a little bit more about them and remember more about their journey. As time goes on, I forget about the details of the journeys I have heard.

Kevin Jr: Looking back when you came. how's it changed over the years in your opinion?

Tom K: I think in the early days, I saw families taking care of families more. I see some of that today in a circle of people I'm lucky enough to be involved with. How it's changed? I think today many people are really focused heavily on the Big Book and studying the steps out of the Book. We weren't in the early days. We used the 12 and 12 more, which I always found more confusing. They didn't really get into the Big Book study, until Joe and Charlie started doing that and that's what revealed it to me. When we lived in the Cleveland area, my wife and I would go to Founders Day every year at Akron University. That's where my wife bought me my first Joe and Charlie tapes. I promptly put them on the shelf for a year or so (because I thought again that I already knew so much). Then one day, when I was struggling, I took them down and what a revelation and I started studying the book from the tapes. I started to realize how much I needed to learn. Today I think we have a lot more students of the Big Book, and there are still many that need to be. I hope that people will stop trying to change the Big Book by dumbing it down.

Kevin Jr: is anything else you tell us about AA from your perspective, that you would like to share.

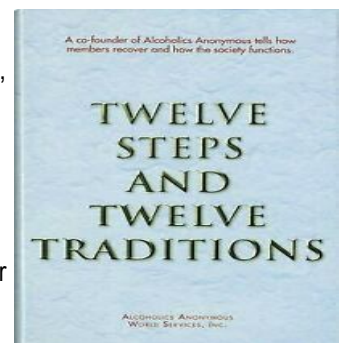


Tom K: When we first moved to Jacksonville, I would talk about the Big Book study meetings that we had up north, you know, Joe and Charlie, read a few paragraphs and then discussion. And they thought that was a good idea. We ought to start a meeting like that down here. And I said, "that's a good idea". And they said "when are you going to start it". So, we started the Mandarin Big Book Study which still meets on Monday nights.

One of the men I sponsor gave me the nickname of "Big Daddy". At first, I didn't care for it because I saw as a possible ego problem in me due to notoriety. However today I see it rather as term of affection. It reminds me to continue to work on honesty, humility, and open mindedness as directed by the Big Book. It reminds me that I am very blessed. I am truly honored when I am allowed to work with people and in some cases even sponsor them. It is they who lift and carry me. I wish to credit my wife Suzanne who was kind, loving and always supportive of my bumpy journey of recovery. I never appreciated her enough while she was here. She passed away ten years ago in April, 2011. Sue was very active in AL Anon joining 7 years before I Got sober. She raised

our family, suffered through my disease and finally succumbed to cancer after a long and valiant struggle. She never complained and was always grateful. I am so appreciative and grateful that God lent her to us. Again, I am very blessed.

Kevin Jr Thank you for sharing your experience, strength and hope today.



***Thank You !***