

ADD-A-LINE

Published for the AA Members of Northeast Florida Since November, 1962

Northeast Florida Intergroup

3128 Beach Boulevard
Jacksonville, FL 32207

Phone: 904/399-8535

Fax: 904/399-8537

Website: www.neflaa.org

E-mail:

neflintergroup@gmail.com

9 am to 5 pm Mon.- Fri.

The Intergroup Office will be closed:

February 2 & 3 (computer upgrade)

February 21 (President's Day)

Committee Meetings

Via Zoom

Intergroup Steering Committee

Tuesday, February 22, 2022 @5:30pm

Zoom ID: 881 4593 5259

PWD: 587098

Intergroup Business Meeting

Saturday, February 5, 2022 @9:00am

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

**STEP TWO - CAME TO BELIEVE
THAT A POWER GREATER THAN
OURSELVES COULD RESTORE US
TO SANITY**

REPRINTED FROM ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS, PAGE 59,
WITH PERMISSION OF A.A. WORLD SERVICES, INC.

**TRADITION TWO (LONG FORM) -
FOR OUR GROUP PURPOSE THERE
IS BUT ONE ULTIMATE AUTHORITY
- A LOVING GOD AS HE MAY
EXPRESS HIMSELF IN OUR GROUP
CONSCIENCE.**

REPRINTED FROM TWELVE STEPS AND TWELVE
TRADITIONS, PAGE 192, WITH PERMISSION OF A.A.
WORLD SERVICES, INC.

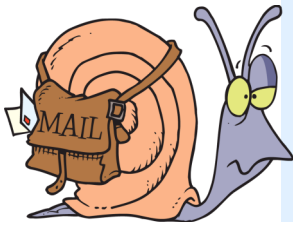
**CONCEPT II (LONG FORM) - WHEN,
IN 1955, THE A.A. GROUPS
CONFIRMED THE PERMANENT
CHARTER FOR THEIR GENERAL
SERVICE CONFERENCE, THEY
THEREBY DELEGATED TO THE
CONFERENCE COMPLETE
AUTHORITY FOR THE ACTIVE
MAINTENANCE OF OUR WORLD
SERVICES AND THEREBY MADE
THE CONFERENCE - EXCEPTING
FOR ANY CHANGE IN THE TWELVE
TRADITIONS OR IN ARTICLE 12 OF
THE CONFERENCE CHARTER - THE
ACTUAL VOICE AND THE
EFFECTIVE CONSCIENCE FOR OUR
WHOLE SOCIETY.**

REPRINTED FROM TWELVE CONCEPTS FOR WORLD
SERVICE, PAGE V, WITH PERMISSION OF A.A. WORLD
SERVICES, INC.

Did You Ever Wonder...?

“Why is the long form of Tradition Two shorter than the short form?” This is a question that G.S.O.’s Archives receives nearly every week; it also comes up at Regional Forums.

Answer: A.A.’s Twelve Traditions were originally published in a series of articles starting with the May 1946 issue of the Grapevine. These are what we consider the Long Form of the Traditions. For the next several years, Bill W. traveled around the country explaining the Traditions and trying to get members to become more familiar with them. In 1949, A.A. member Earl T. of Chicago initially suggested to Bill that he rewrite the A.A. Traditions, stating that they were too long. Bill worked on shortening the Traditions with the idea of producing a concise statement for information and instructional purposes that could be printed along with the Twelve Steps.



GSO Has a new donation address!
 Post Office Box 2407
 James A Farley Station
 New York, New York 10116-2407

WHERE TO SEND GROUP 7TH TRADITION CONTRIBUTIONS:

On your check, please include Group Name,
Group Service Number & District

General Service Office (GSO):

Post Office Box 2407
James A Farley Station
New York, NY 10116-2407

AREA 14:

Treasurer NFAC
PO Box 226
DeLeon Springs, FL 32130

NE Florida Intergroup Services, Inc.:

3128 Beach Blvd.
Jacksonville, FL 32207
NE FL AA Venmo account ID:
@NEFL_Intergroup
Faithful Fivers: A PayPal link is provided on
neflaa.org/contributions

Account Balances - 12/31/2021

Checking / Savings	
1021 - Cash - Regions Bank	\$14,219.89
1024 - Cash in Draw	393.58
Total	\$14,613.47
1360 - Inventory	\$11,315.05
1400 - Prudent Reserve	
1476 - Regions Bank 5982- CD#001	\$10,176.90
1481 - Regions Bank 6794- CD#002	10,534.02
1486 - Regions Bank - CD#003	10,086.73
Total 1400	\$30,797.65



Meetings, Meetings, Meetings

 Please remember to update the IG Office as to reopening and closing of face to face meetings and zoom meetings. Email changes to neflintergroup@gmail.com.

As information, Hybrid meetings (in person and simultaneously zooming) can be distinguished on our website and the “Meeting Guide” app with the zoom access information.

MEETING CHANGE FORMS ARE AVAILABLE ON LINE (NEFLAA.ORG) UNDER THE FORMS TAB. THEY ARE ALSO AVAILABLE FROM THE INTERGROUP OFFICE

December 31, 32021

New Year's Eve...

A huge night for me as an alcoholic. The best excuse to drink uncontrollably (not that I ever needed an excuse!)

Gratefully, that is NOT my life this New Year's Eve. This New Year's Eve it was up to me to set up the room for our weekly Friday night 8pm meeting of the Hold on Group of Alcoholics Anonymous. The church is right around the corner from my house, and it has been my privilege to set up the meeting. As I sat in the totally empty parking lot, I debated whether to open up or just wait to see if anyone showed. I decided to light up the room, hang out the sign, put the coffee on and wait for some drunks! My people!

A solitary car pulled in and a young lady walked up and asked if this was an AA meeting. I answered with a re-sounding yes, introduced myself, welcomed her in. The two of us proceeded to have a meeting while outside the fireworks blasted all around!

One alcoholic to another. She shared with me she had gotten to the meeting early and it was all dark. She headed back home, and halfway there she knew she must return when faced with the thought of no other option but to drink. She came back and this time the room was lit, and this alcoholic was there to greet her.

She left that night with a copy of the Big Book, several pamphlets, and a copy of the Grapevine. We met in that same parking lot next morning for a 7:45am meeting at St Nicks. Despite not being an early riser, what better way to start the new year for a newcomer and this alcoholic!

I will not soon forget this New Year's Eve. No amount of booze could have provided the 'high' I experienced this night and day!

As of this writing, I have not spoken to this young lady again, but I am confident the seed has been planted. I hope and pray that one day she may be a 'part of' this fellowship that has saved me and given me a life, and more importantly... a Higher Power. A Power that gave me the gift to 'suit and show up'!

Begin anew in 2022!!
Happy New Year y'all!
Laura C



WORKSHOP

Hosted by: District 30

Have you ever wondered about Robert's Rules that are used in AA Business Meetings?

District 30 is excited to have two Past Delegates Annette D. & Joyce C. to come and share their wealth of knowledge with us.

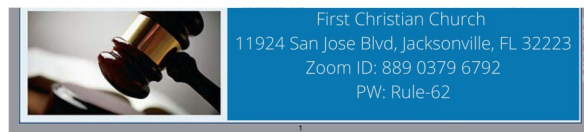
Please join us.

Support material provided.

Light Snacks and Beverages.

Saturday, February 12th, 2022

1pm to 3pm



Looking for a meeting?
NEFL Online meeting are NOW integrated into the Main Directory @ neflaa.org/meetings

Get the national app: aa.org

OFFICE LOG 12/21		
Description	Dec-21	Dec-20
Phone Army	188	169
AA	110	180
Admin/Other	65	84
12 Step	3	2
Visitors	101	75

We need YOU!

Intergroup needs your input, does your group have an Intergroup Rep? Find out how this critical organization helps **Carry the Message.**

Are you a party planner? Do you want to reach special populations?

Become a volunteer!!!!

Committee Chair Positions	
Intergroup Chair Kevin Jr. email: kevin.gartland08@comcast.net	(904) 614-7480
Intergroup Vice Chair Dan B. email: d.borcher@comcast.net	(904) 737-7532
Intergroup Treasurer Walter S. wfstrickland@gmail.com	(904) 303-5071
Steering Committee Chair beth E. EGEServiceAddress@outlook.com	(386) 259-8724
Accessibility Chair Vacant	
Add-A-Line beth E. editor2022.AAL@outlook.com	(904) 399-8535
Archives Committee Chair Charlie M. email: ggmoyer@aol.com	(904) 247-3421
Archivist Tom W. email: twicks411@gmail.com	(201) 424-3827
Corrections Co-Chairs Male: Steve C. email: cgull24@comcast.com Female: Kathy D. email: kadaiker@yahoo.com	(904) 449-6210 (602) 820-6644
CPC/PI Chair Stephanie S. email: sandybrown215@gmail.com	(904) 343-2489
Finance Chair Dan B. email: d.borcher@comcast.net	(904) 737-7532
Grapevine Chair Roger L. DCM.District.1NFL@gmail.com	(904) 318-8535
Parliamentarian Lon L. email: lonlansing61@gmail.com	(904) 710-7201
Phone Army Chair Kara B. email: karabphonearmy@gmail.com	(904) 402-1920
Secretary Regina A. email: ralai@comcast.net	(904) 994-6061
Special Events Co-Chairs Vacant email: intergroupsocialevents@gmail.com	
Treatment Chair David M. email: david.murphy.jax101@gmail.com	(904) 614-4559
Zoom Host Andrew M. email: asmarch89@gmail.com	(904) 760-2009

FAITHFUL FIVERS	
Allison P.	John C.
Anonymous 1	Jonathan B.
Anonymous 2	Kevin Jr.
Barbara M.	Linda G.
Bryon G.	Lon L.
Carl G.	Michele W.
Carrie B.	Rita H.
Charlie M.	Roger L.
Cynthia G	Ruth R.
D. K. W.	Samantha P.
Erika D.	Sue G.
Holly C.	Susan I.
Jodi S.	Tammy M.

WHO ARE...

Faithful Fivers are fellow A.A. members who donate five dollars (\$5) a month to Intergroup as an act of gratitude. Their generosity helps us to carry the message of A.A. to the still sick and suffering alcoholic throughout the year.



Announcing Grapevine's New Podcast BY: CHRIS C. | PUBLISHER, AA GRAPEVINE, INC. The AA Grapevine Half-Hour Variety Hour. Featuring long-time AA members Don and Sam.

Each week Don and Sam will interview a different member about their experience, strength and hope, in a casual "meeting after the meeting" manner. Special features will enhance each episode.

A new podcast episode will be available in English every Monday at 9:00 am EST.

To hear the podcasts go to aagrapevine.org/podcast.

Panel 71 DCMs and District Meetings

	DCM	email	Phone	Monthly Meeting
District 1	Roger L	DCM.District.1NFL@gmail.com	(904) 318-8535	Zoom, 3rd Tuesday @ 6:45pm: Zoom ID 657-779-8258, PWD 239234
District 3	Jim D	dcmd3area14@gmail.com	(904) 729-9260	Zoom, 3rd Sunday before and after Assembly @ 1pm: Zoom ID 826-6405-1982, PWD district3
District 4	June C	jjptcart@gmail.com	(904) 524-7917	Zoom, 3rd Thursday @ 7pm: Zoom ID 830-4297-9644, PWD ezduzit
District 6	Stephanie G	dcmdist6@gmail.com	(904) 501-0694	In Person, 1st Monday @ 6pm, Memorial Lutheran Church 3375 US 1 South, St Augustine, FL 32086
District 24	beth E	egeserviceaddress@outlook.com	(386) 259-8724	In Person, 1st Wednesday @ 6:30pm, St Marks Episcopal Church 310 N Second Ave, Palatka, FL 32077
District 25	Sarah P	sarahestes20@hotmail.com	(407) 865-4861	Zoom, 1st Sunday @ 5:30pm: Zoom ID 884-8317 PWD 1234
District 30	Bryant G	ggram1701aa@gmail.com	(352) 575-4005	In Person, 4th Saturday @ 9:30am, First Christian Church 11924 San Jose Blvd, Jacksonville, FL 32223

The following members will be fondly remembered and sadly missed...

CARL M – WINNERS MEN'S GROUP
IRENE S – WESTSIDE LADIES

Scan to Register



65th Florida State Convention

65th Florida State Convention



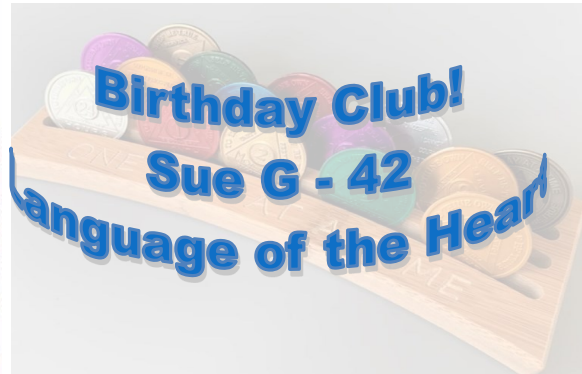
<https://65.floridastateconvention.com>

The Archives Committee will meet via Zoom on February 12, 2022 at noon. Check the website for the ID & password

Celebrating AA Birthdays

BIRTHDAYS mostly for February

Orange Park		Westside Group	
Scott L	4	January	
Diane W	33	Gus B	42
Gary G	39	Donna B	37
Misty H	5	Hagar D	36
Shannon M	1	Rick E	32
Tom P	39	Mary R	19
James W	10	Cyndi H	17
Michele F	2	Valerie B	17
John H	10	Dan B	16
		Tom R	14
I Am Responsible Group		Christo N	7
January		Shane H	6
Sylvia P	47	Richard A	5
Jo Ann R	33	Brian D	4
Charlie M	32	Ernie H	4
		Kristin B	4
Some Group Somewhere		Brad R	3
Paul B	45	Andrew L	3
Scotty B	45	Sue R	2
Patrick B	5	Robert P	1
Sam R	5		
Johanna R	3	February	
George M	14	Scotty B	45
Jim P	20	Paul B	45
Samantha S	4	Jon F	29
Renee B	8	Eleznore T	17
Jessie C	9	Cynthia H	16
Lisa DiC	4	Rudy O	11
		Jonah R	8
Westside Ladies		Cindy T	7
Renee B	8	Barbara A	7
		Vince S	7
Love In Action		Wendy H	5
Vicki T	13	Natalie F	3
		Kristi A	3
Salesbury Men's		Cameron S	3
David K	8	Patricia A	3
Edward	1	Dennis N	2
		Steven K	2
Billy Goat Hill		Stacey B	1
Sue M	18	Anthony C	1
This Too Shall Pass		Drop the Rock	
David G	32	Joyce V	32
Jose L	7		
Sunday Morning Meeting Group			
beth E	36		



People involved with the Akron Area Inter-group had the inspiration to make the painting "The Man on the Bed" into a stained glass window. The finished project fills the front window of the Intergroup Office and was done in time for Founders' Day weekend, 2001. The Four Absolutes (Honesty, Purity, Unselfishness, and Love) are on the four sides, and the picture is bordered by sobriety medallions set into the glass that were contributed by local members. This is truly a work of love and dedication, and many people helped by adding a few pieces whenever they could. In the evening, with the light of the setting sun coming through the panels, it is breathtaking. If you are in the area be sure to stop in and



	Dec 21	Jan - Dec 21	Dec 20	Jan - Dec 20
Ordinary Income/Expense				
Income				
4000 · Contribution Income				
4002 · Groups	\$2,741.08	\$48,226.31	\$2,052.43	\$47,136.85
4003 · Pink Can Contribution	\$54.00	\$373.31		\$685.54
4005 · Faithful Five	\$160.00	\$1,795.70	\$304.20	\$2,289.32
4006 · Birthdays		\$32.00		\$127.00
4007 · Other Contributions	\$358.00	\$3,200.50	\$574.30	\$3,709.05
4008 · Anonymous		\$1,404.68		
4010 · IG Breakfast/Speaker Mtg	\$4.00	\$15.00		\$128.00
Total 4000 · Contribution Income	\$3,317.08	\$55,047.50	\$2,930.93	\$54,075.76
4020 · Retail Income	\$4,258.16	\$42,991.68	\$2,443.69	\$39,382.37
4040 · Monthly IG Mtg / Otr				
4042 · Business Meeting	\$7.00	\$23.00		\$92.00
4044 · Memoriam				\$500.00
Total 4040 · Monthly IG Mtg / Otr	\$7.00	\$23.00		\$592.00
4060 · Income - Special Events				
4062 · Banquet		\$7,500.00		
4065 · Cake Auction		\$6,490.00		
4067 · Raffle Tickets		\$498.00		
4060 · Income - Special Events - Other		\$15.00		
Total 4060 · Income - Special Events		\$14,503.00		
Total Income	\$7,582.24	\$112,565.18	\$5,374.62	\$94,050.13
Cost of Goods Sold				
4510 · Cost of Retail Sales	\$3,099.88	\$35,031.14	\$1,804.66	\$29,523.99
5001 · Cost of Revenues - Other				
4540 · Cost of Event - Banquet Expense		\$8,704.92		\$594.31
5215 · IG Business Meeting Expense		\$192.52		\$92.00
5195 · CC Fees	\$139.90	\$2,079.80	\$124.38	\$1,736.18
5290 · IG Breakfast Expense	\$11.00	\$11.00		\$208.34
5990 · POS Inventory Adjustments	(\$833.30)	(\$5,722.74)	\$138.23	\$869.58
Total 5001 · Cost of Revenues - Other	(\$682.40)	\$5,265.50	\$262.61	\$3,500.41
Total COGS	\$2,417.48	\$40,296.64	\$2,067.27	\$33,024.40
Gross Profit	\$5,164.76	\$72,268.54	\$3,307.35	\$61,025.73
Expense				
60000 · Salaries and Benefits				
6560 · Wages				
Voided checks				
6560 · Wages - Other	\$2,824.20	\$27,300.16	\$2,805.63	\$24,764.42
Total 6560 · Wages	\$2,824.20	\$27,300.16	\$2,805.63	\$24,764.42
6561 · PTO		\$96.00		\$230.00
6565 · Payroll Taxes	\$304.87	\$3,293.68	\$229.92	\$2,956.32
Total 60000 · Salaries and Benefits	\$3,129.07	\$30,689.84	\$3,035.55	\$27,950.74
61000 · Office Expense				
Total 61000 · Office Expense	\$1,847.55	\$11,434.74	\$911.11	\$7,572.05
62000 · Facilities and maintenance				
Total 62000 · Facilities and maintenance	\$1,248.04	\$17,824.81	\$1,468.64	\$17,059.91
5300 · When & Where Cost				
55000 · Committees Expense				
5520 · Archives				
5521 · Archives - General Budget		\$602.65		\$69.54
5522 · Archives Workshop Expenses		\$288.98		
Total 5520 · Archives		\$891.63		\$69.54
5530 · CPC/PI				\$379.03
5540 · Corrections	\$3,762.30	\$3,763.59		\$4,964.31
5560 · Newsletter	\$114.50	\$3,421.32	\$263.61	\$3,935.35
5570 · Phone Army	\$24.95	\$299.40	\$24.95	\$329.40
5585 · Accessibility		\$68.14		\$47.14
5590 · Treatment		\$185.90		\$155.88
5595 · Website	\$100.00	\$2,400.28		\$1,642.00
Total 55000 · Committees Expense	\$4,001.75	\$11,030.26	\$288.56	\$11,522.65
70900 · Business Expenses				
5220 · Dues/Fees/Licenses	\$46.07	\$251.20	\$88.09	\$397.30
Total 70900 · Business Expenses	\$46.07	\$251.20	\$88.09	\$397.30
62100 · Contract Services				
5200 · Professional Fees	\$300.00	\$3,859.00	\$300.00	\$2,059.00
Total 62100 · Contract Services	\$300.00	\$3,859.00	\$300.00	\$2,059.00
65100 · Other Expenses				
5190 · Bank Charges	\$5.00	\$60.00	\$5.00	\$60.00
Total 65100 · Other Expenses	\$5.00	\$60.00	\$5.00	\$60.00
68300 · Travel and Meetings				
68310 · Conference, Convention, Meeting		\$719.33		
Total 68300 · Travel and Meetings		\$719.33		
Total Expense	\$10,577.48	\$75,869.18	\$6,096.95	\$66,621.65
Net Ordinary Income	(\$5,412.72)	(\$3,600.64)	(\$2,789.60)	(\$5,595.92)
Other Income/Expense				
Other Income				
73000 · Other Income				\$433.78
73050 · Interest Income	\$0.76	\$209.25		\$64.29
6310 · Sales Tax Collection Allowance	\$4.58	\$64.95	\$4.50	\$199.41
Total 73000 · Other Income	\$5.34	\$274.20	\$4.50	\$697.48
Total Other Income	\$5.34	\$274.20	\$4.50	\$697.48
Other Expense				
Other Expense				
Balancing Adjustments				
Total Other Expense				
Total Other Expense				
Net Other Income	\$5.34	\$274.20	\$4.50	\$697.48
Net Income	(\$5,407.38)	(\$3,326.44)	(\$2,785.10)	(\$4,898.44)

GROUP CONTRIBUTIONS DECEMBER 2021

Group Name	Dec-21	DEC 2021 YTD	Att DEC MEET	Group Name	Dec-21	DEC 2021 YTD	Att DEC MEET
100 Proof		\$400.00		New Life		\$450.00	
A Way Out		\$120.00		Nocatee Promises		\$218.50	
Alexis		\$40.00		Nocatee Saturday AM		\$385.00	
Aloha Step 11 at 7		\$185.42		Nocatee Sobriety		\$278.00	
Arlington		\$1,384.37	X	Oldest City Men's		\$198.00	
As Bill See It		\$65.00		Orange Park		\$2,891.00	X
BAA		\$460.00		Ornge Park Step Sisters		\$242.63	X
Beaches Unity (BUG)	\$360.00	\$3,300.00		Other Side of the Bridge		\$100.00	X
Callahan		\$300.00		Q.C and FW		\$9.30	
Central		\$500.00	X	Palm Valley Mens		\$193.50	
Clean & Free			X	Phoenix Mens		\$200.00	X
Coffee and Readings		\$2,230.00		Ponte Vedra Men's		\$31.50	
Coyote Men's		\$700.00		Reborn	\$100.00	\$600.00	
Dented Can		\$57.60		Riverside (Tom S)		\$336.00	
District 6 - Treasury		\$1,000.00		Riverview Study		\$10.00	
Downtown		\$1,700.00		Rule 62		\$400.00	
Drop The Rock		\$200.00		St. Nicholas		\$90.00	
Dunes		\$151.00		Sandpiper		\$66.00	
DTR				Salisbury Men's		\$50.00	X
Durbin 12 & 12				Saturday Night Live - St. Aug.		\$141.95	
Early Sobriety	\$48.32	\$48.32		Serenity at Noon		\$236.26	X
Evergreen		\$20.00		Sober on Purpose		\$400.00	
Eastside		\$90.00		Solutions		\$270.00	
Fernandina Beach		\$149.00	X	Sound of Sobriety		\$25.00	
Fiesta	\$102.48	\$2,992.98	X	Spiritual Knights			
Free Mens		\$1,172.68		Step Sisters			
From The Heart			X	Stepping Stones (PV)		\$100.00	
Fruit Cove Women		\$38.80		Stepping Up		\$387.92	
Greenland		\$100.00		Sunday Morning St. Aug	\$40.00	\$140.00	
Halfway Through (St. Aug)		\$215.40		Sunday Morning Meeting Palatka	\$50.00	\$235.00	X
Happy Joyus and Free		\$50.30		Surrender To Win		\$134.00	
Hold On		\$100.00		Switzerland		\$153.00	
How it Works (St. Aug)		\$25.00		The Crux of the Problem		\$300.00	
I Am Responsible			X	The Herd	\$88.00	\$2,483.00	
Island Serenity		\$50.00		The James Gang		\$400.00	
It's Come to This		\$110.00		Third St Third Tradition		\$480.00	
James Gang				Thirsty Thursday		\$100.00	
Jax Beaches YPG	\$319.00	\$824.00		This Too Shall Pass	\$200.00	\$500.00	X
Jax Men's				Thursday Beaches		\$200.00	
Jumping Off Place		\$26.95		Trout River		\$1,262.00	X
K I S		\$566.23		Tuesday Night AA WTP		\$71.00	
Ladies Nation				Tuesday Night Step		\$305.50	
Ladies Unity		\$90.00		Villagers		\$357.60	
Language of the Heart (St. Aug)		\$232.00		Unity meditation (St. Aug)		\$219.00	
Lest We Forget	\$210.00	\$805.00		Way Out		\$49.20	
Liars Paradise		\$265.00		Wesconnect	\$253.00	\$1,179.00	
Living Now	\$120.00	\$225.00		West Jacksonville Mens		\$185.00	
Los Lobos Mens		\$413.00		Westminister		\$210.49	
LoveNAction			X	Westside		\$357.50	
Mandarin Women In Recovery		\$400.00		Winner's	\$151.28	\$301.28	
Mandarin YPG		\$51.00		Winning Game		\$1,600.00	
Mandarin Men's Big Book Study		\$120.00		Women Enjoying Sobriety		\$1,203.30	X
Men's Blackeye		\$500.00		Women Speak		\$30.15	
Men's Redye				Women's Candlelight	\$95.00	\$95.00	
Middleburg	\$100.00	\$600.00		Womens Upstart		\$317.64	
Morning After		\$125.00		Women YPG		\$55.00	X
New Beginnings				Young People (St. Aug)		\$70.00	
IG Rept Attending the JANAUARY 2021 Meeting == 19				Yulee	\$300.00	\$690.00	
Total Attending the JANUARY 2022 Meeting == 28				Zoom Meeting 7AM Penman Road	\$204.00	\$3,033.00	
				TOTAL	\$2,741.08	\$48,226.31	

Archives – Longtimer Story – Tania M. An Archives Supplement

Tania is one of our AA old timers. She has 41 years of sobriety, (DOS December 28, 1980) (interviewed by Christopher G. and edited by Charlie M.)

Christopher G.: I am here to interview Tanja M. My goal is to hear your story of how you got sober and a little about your journey in sobriety.

Tania M.: I was raised and born in Kansas City Missouri. My mom was a blackout drunk. She drank every day from the time she woke up until she passed out. I would wake up many, many nights to my parents fighting and threatening to hurt each other. I would wake up and go listen by the living room door. I knew the fighting was based on her drinking and I learned to not like alcohol. At school I started smoking pot and then cigarettes regularly. Then I picked up my first drink. I had a neighbor over spending the night and we were hanging out downstairs and we wanted to do something different. I went up to my parent's liquor cabinet, and it was a big chest full of every kind of alcohol. I grabbed the first bottle I came to and brought it downstairs. After we drank about three quarters of the bottle, we filled it up with water and put it back. I thought they'd never know. That was my first drink, and I was in heaven

C: What did you want to be when you grew up?

T: I fantasized about being something important, like a doctor, or a lawyer. Of course, my alcohol and drug use interfered with that big time. I managed to sneak by and graduate from high school, but I didn't go to college. The night I graduated my boyfriend came to the ceremony. I had all my stuff packed in his trunk and I left home with him. I didn't want anything to do with mom and dad. I got more involved in the drugs and alcohol. I could never get enough of anything. We moved to Kansas City and got married but that only lasted like a year. One of the most regretful things I've ever done is I got pregnant with this guy's kid, and I got an abortion. I lied to my husband and told him I had lost it.

I decided to move down to Jacksonville, stayed about a year and then got lonely and called a guy I had met in Kansas City. And he came down and I ended up marrying him. So, there I am in my second marriage. Fortunately, he was an alcoholic and would drink with me. My husband enlisted in the army, and we moved to Texas, to Fort Hood. I just knew that if I didn't do something about this intense need to get enough alcohol and drugs I would not survive much longer. Also, my diabetes was really bad. I called the local military base and ask them of any way I can get help? They said they had a treatment center and I could come in. I went in and started learning a little bit about the disease. I started having a little bit of hope. They transported us every evening in a bus to the only a meeting club house in Killeen, Texas. This is where I got sober and learned about the disease of alcoholism. I was destitute inside. My spirit was dead. These people were happy and laughing at themselves falling down drunk, and I thought, man, that is weird. I mean, weird. You guys are weird. But I could so relate. I wanted to be able to laugh at me falling down drunk.

One more important thing happened at the treatment center. They were bussing us every night. One morning, I woke up and they said I'd have to leave. I said, "How come?" We know that you smoked some pot. On your transport to one of the meetings. I said I did not because I didn't. Now the driver had a beer which I shared the beer but didn't tell him that. So, I yelled and screamed, talked to the head honcho of the whole treatment center and told them you guys are repulsive. I can't believe you're throwing me out for something I didn't do. They should know that I'm the Queen Sheba. I was a smartass, I was dirty talker, I was rude and I

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was crude. They threw me out. My husband came and picked me up. The first thing I did was drop him off back at our apartment, went straight to the liquor store, which was like a block away, picked up the biggest case of beer I could get. I blacked out that entire week. I had never blacked out from alcohol alone. I had no drugs in my system at all. I blacked out. I do not remember what happened. That Christmas. It's gone. It just vanished in midair. I have no idea what happened or how I survived or how I got more booze. My husband probably went and got many bottles. I just don't know. When I came to, I knew I had to do something. The only hope I had was to go back to where those people were happy, joyous, and free. And I had never known that. I drove myself there and that clubhouse was open 24 hours a day for marathon meetings. And thank goodness because I stayed there for hours and hours for the next few days and I knew that this was my place. That was December 28, 1980.

C: What did that early sobriety look like?

T: I went to meetings regularly and became friends with a lot of people. And there was a lady whose name was Mary Alice. And she was a counselor at the treatment center on base. I started calling her and she started to help me walk through the steps. And that was phenomenal. I got my big book and went to this little park. I spent days in that park by myself on the ground, reading my big book and saying, that's me, that is me. That is me. I am home. I am home. I knew this was the only hope I had.
I asked my friend Mary Alice to be my sponsor.

C: Did you encounter any problems as you went through the steps for the first time?

T: Mary Alice had me do my steps based on the big book, exactly to the letter. After we finished my fifth step, she asked me what did I want to do with all that stuff? I said, "I got no use for it." She took me outside and we burned it. I loved that. It was so phenomenal because it was like there went all that old Tania up in smoke, I loved it. I loved it. You know, it was just beautiful. I sometimes wish I had saved it so I could look back and remember how dark it had been.

C: What type of meetings did you go to?

T: We had one meeting six days a week. It was at eight o'clock every day and was a discussion meeting. evening. We sat in long, long, long tables and we drank coffee and smoked. I started to help them make the coffee and clean up. I got into the service within my first month. I became a part of and accountable to my group. There were no speaker meetings, but we would drive to Austin to a speaker meeting and then they'd have a dance after it. It was a lot of fun. Our meeting was always packed. If you didn't show up before the meeting started you didn't get a chair around the table. You got one of the chairs along the wall.

C: What kind of sponsorship did you have?

T: I wish she would have been more direct. I wish she would have been more of a guiding force.

At one year of sobriety, I had already had my child, my only child with my second husband. And I would bring her in her little carrier to meetings and she would sleep through the whole meeting.

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She knew about AA from the moment I got sober. Husband two was now out of the picture and I'd married husband three.

He was sent to Germany and we lived there for three years and we started our own meeting because there was only one in our small town where we lived in Germany. Our meetings were at this small church. Maybe two or three people would show up and we would sponsor these people.

C: After Germany then what?

T: He got out. He had done his 20 years. We moved back to New York to Watertown, New York where he was from. I found meetings but it was cold. We'd go to bed and there was no snow. We'd wake up. And snow would be up to the ceiling. That's why I hate up north. We stayed there for three years and then we moved to Savannah, Georgia. The meetings were very different, the format, the types of meetings, etc. were all very different. I lost my brother in a bad car wreck and then my dad got really sick. So, we moved from Savannah to Jacksonville. That was in 1995 I've been here ever since.

We lived in St. Johns County for a while and went to meetings at a firehouse. We used to meet in an old trailer next to where the firetrucks were. There's no longer a meeting there. My daughter was 17 and she graduated from high school. My husband and I were not getting along and we separated. He now lives in Colorado. He was a good stepdad to Trinity, my daughter. He did a good job.

I moved to a house in Mandarin and started collecting dogs. I mean, I had a menagerie of dogs. I love dogs and had a screened in porch and Trinity and I thought it was great.

C: What about meetings? Are you still active?

T: I go to a meeting every day. They saved my life.

C: Wow! Who were some of the people who became important to you in Jacksonville?

T: First I have to tell you about Judy. She was my first sponsor in Jacksonville, she and I were buddies. I could tell her anything and she knew the program inside and out. She had worked the steps well and she sponsored other women. She's passed away. There was Joe in Killeen, Texas who would sit and talk to me like in between the marathon meetings. Then there was Bob, also from Texas who really knew the program and was living it regularly but wasn't perfect. He would talk about his struggles and difficulties.

C: Did your mother ever get sober?

T: She had quit drinking about 10 years before she passed away in '97. She went to a few meetings now and then, but she never picked up a chip. Every year on my anniversary I always got a beautiful card in the mail saying we're so proud of you. It was fabulous.

C: How do you sponsor women? Do you use the literature to help the newcomer?

T: I couldn't do anything for newcomers for many years because I was still so engrossed in learning about sobriety for myself. I just felt so unqualified. I sponsored a couple of women in Germany, but they weren't really serious. I was always into the literature. I read the *Twenty-Four Hours a Day* book every day, never failed.

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That was my meditation book. I've got a couple new sponsees and I have them reading the first chapter or two in the big book, and the first step in the 12 and 12. I know that's where recovery starts. I'm committed to literature,

C: What meetings did you attend when you got here?

T: When I was in St. Johns my main group was the Switzerland group. When I married Brad, we moved out to the beach for three years and I attended the meetings at Penman. Meetings have been like a staple for me like eating and sleeping. I hope I never have to go without them. I've never had trouble finding meetings in Jacksonville. I'm a meeting person not so much a service person. My service is being at meeting as another sober member, to sponsor and to try to help people. I try to share about me and my life and to relate to them.

C: We've gone through this year of COVID and we're coming into a new era of our society. Can you talk about what it was like as you were going through this year and the changes you see for yourself and for AA?

T: I think we're going to continue doing zoom meetings. This morning, we had someone from Australia and someone from New Hampshire. It's wonderful to see so many more people connected through zoom. Can I share the message as well or just as easily through zoom as in person? That's a great question. When you're in a room personally it's easier to relate and connect with each other. I would miss not being able to hug people who came to me.

C: Is there anything you regret? any mistakes you made early on that you could share for the newcomer that that may help them?

T: I wish I could have finished college. I had trouble with my blood sugar and wasn't able to finish college. I wish I would have never had that abortion because now I would still have a child now since my daughter has passed away. I wish that one of my sponsors would have been more service oriented and helped me get to walk through the traditions and concepts. I'm still feel pretty naive about them even though I've been around a while.

C: What other highlights can you share.

T: I loved going to dances. There were dances in Austin with 20 or 30 of us going to this upstairs club house. And man. It was a blast, and we had such a laugh at those dances. Brad and I used to go the New Year's Eve dance at Penman. They used to have a DJ at dances at San Marco.

C: How has AA changed during your time in sobriety?

T: I would say it's changed for the better 100%. I've never had one problem with any person, place or thing or location of any meeting in Jacksonville. I've always been welcomed with open arms.

C: Tania, thank you very much