

ADD-A-LINE

Published for AA Members in Northeast Florida Since November 1962

Northeast Florida

Intergroup

3128 Beach Boulevard

Jacksonville, Fl 32207

Tel. 904-399-8535

Fax 904-399-8537

Website: www.neflaa.org

Email:

neflintergroup@gmail.com

9 am to 5 pm Mon.– Fri.

OFFICE WILL BE CLOSED ON

SEPTEMBER 4 IN

OBSERVANCE OF

LABOR DAY



Committee Meetings

Intergroup Steering

Committee

Tuesday, September 25, 2023 at

5:30PM at IG Office

Zoom information

Meeting ID: 881 4593 5259

Passcode: 587098

Intergroup Business Meeting

Saturday, October 7, 2023 at 9:00

a.m.

**Fellowship Starts at 8:30 with
coffee and snacks**

New Meeting Location

Riverplace Tower

**1301 Riverplace Blvd, 15th
Floor**

Jacksonville, FL 32207

Zoom information

Meeting ID: 870 4750 2345

Passcode: 314187

Committee Chair Positions

<u>Intergroup Chair</u> Holly C. nefligchair@gmail.com	904-662-0646
<u>Intergroup Vice Chair</u> Dan B. d.borcher@comcast.net	904-737-7532
<u>Treasurer</u> Walter S. wfstrickland@gmail.com	904-303-5071
<u>Steering Committee Chair</u> Roger L. rlehman25@yahoo.com	904-318-8535
<u>Accessibilities</u> Gene M. emsailorman@gmail.com	904-742-0152
<u>Add-A-Line</u> Ashley R. nefladdaline@gmail.com	904-399-8535
<u>Archives Committee Chair</u> Kevin Jr. Kevin.Gartland08@comcast.net	904-614-7480
<u>Archivist</u> Vacant	
<u>Corrections</u> Male: Doug Schroeder schrde@gmail.com Female: Rosie M. rosiemak333@gmail.com	904-731-0821 904-444-8259
<u>CPC / PI</u> Lillyn B. neflaa.cpcpi@gmail.com	504-669-1188
<u>Finance Chair</u> Dan B. d.borcher@comcast.net	904-737-7532
<u>Grapevine Chair</u> Melissa D. melissadelbert@yahoo.com	716-228-8805
<u>Literature Chair</u> Roger L. rlehman25@yahoo.com	904-318-8535
<u>Parliamentarian</u> Katie C. katiechorbak@gmail.com	904-728-3692
<u>Secretary</u> Angie B. angiebarton_home@att.net	904-655-8471
<u>Special Events</u> Linda G. sassym1953@gmail.com Holly C. nefligchair@gmail.com	904-608-1634 904-662-0646
<u>Treatment / Bridge The Gap</u> Richard D. richarddespain75@gmail.com	904-802-4178
<u>Phone Army</u> Paul F. paulphonearmy@gmail.com	925-980-1770
<u>Website</u> Ashley R. techitez2023@gmail.com	870-730-6822
<u>Zoom Host</u> Ashley R. techitez2023@gmail.com	870-730-6822

STEP NINE

**“ Made direct amends to such people wher-
ever possible, except when to do so would
injure them or others.”**

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TRADITION

NINE

**“ AA as such ought never be organized; but
we may create service boards or com-
mittees directly responsible to those they
serve.”**

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NINTH

CONCEPT

**“ Good service leaders, together with sound
and appropriate methods of choosing them,
are at all levels indispensable for our future
functioning and safety. ..”**

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Southern States Women's Conference
January 26-28, 2024

Debbie D. (Concord, CA)	Steps 1 & 2
Sharon C. (Los Angeles, CA)	Step 3
Michalene (Escondido, California)	Steps 4 & 5
Amanda B. (Montgomery, AL)	Steps 6 & 7
Juanita U. (Santa Fe, New Mexico)	Alanon
Tina A. (Hollister, CA)	Steps 8 & 9
Mildred F. (Toronto, ON)	Steps 10 & 11
Mary T. (Tampa, FL)	Step 12

schedule subject to change

First Name _____ Last Name _____
 Address _____
 City & State _____ Email _____
 Phone _____ Program: AA ___ AI-Anon ___ Alateen ___
 Check here if you would like to volunteer at the conference: ___

Please make check for \$40 per registration, payable to Southern States Women's Conference and send to:
Southern States Women's Conference
 P.O. Box 35100
 Elmwood Park, IL 60707

Please let us know if you need assistance with accessibility (hearing, vision, and/or physical disability)

\$40 Early registration price online at
southernstateswomensconference.org/registration or use QR code



ASL Interpreter Provided

Hyatt Riverfront Jacksonville
 225 E Coastline Drive
 Jacksonville, FL 32202
 Mention SSWC for conference pricing
 904-588-1234

FAITHFUL FIVERS

- | | |
|-------------|-------------|
| Anonymous 1 | Jonathan B. |
| Anonymous 2 | Jodi S. |
| Anonymous 3 | Jody T. |
| Angie B. | Kara B. |
| Barbara M. | Kevin Jr. |
| Betheny C. | Lega L. |
| Blair S. | Linda B. |
| Brendan M. | Linda G. |
| Bridget M. | Lon L. |
| Bryon G. | Mark Z. |
| Carl G. | Paul F. |
| Carrie B. | Roger L. |
| Charlie M. | Ruth R. |
| D. K. W. | Sherry T. |
| Erika D. | Sue G. |
| Erika N. | Susan I. |
| Holly C. | Tony K. |
| Jim M. | Victor T. |

INTERGROUP OFFICE LOG

July 2023

Description	2023	2022
Phone Army	111	255
A.A. Information	120	104
Administrative & Other Information	49	61
12 Step Calls	3	1
Visitors to the Office	113	81



Masquerade Ball

Let's dress up in costume, have fun, and increase awareness of what it really means to be anonymous in AA. Yes, we are Anonymous. But we are NOT Invisible.



Saturday, October 28, 2023



- 5:15 PM Doors open
- 5:45 PM Opening & Spaghetti Dinner
- 7:00 PM Speaker
- 8:00 PM Dance begins
- 8:30 PM Costume Contest
- 9:00 PM Raffle Drawings (50/50 & Prizes)
- 10:00 PM Last Dance



Baymeadows Baptist Church - Gymnasium
 4826 Baymeadows Rd, Jacksonville, FL 32217



\$15 includes dinner at 5:45 PM
 \$8 Entry at 7:00 PM without dinner

Spaghetti dinner with Potluck Dessert will be served at 5:45 PM. For those that don't wish to eat, the fun begins at 7:00 PM.

For Tickets, Please Visit <https://2023MasqBall.eventbrite.com>
 For More Information, Please Contact abnimasqball@gmail.com

Sponsored by District 30 and NEFL Intergroup CPC/PI Committee



SCAN ME!
REGISTER NOW!

IN THE SPIRIT OF ...



JOE AND CHARLIE

... A Journey through the steps

THE BIG BOOK COMES ALIVE!



\$40 PREREGISTRATION
INCLUDES SATURDAY BOXED LUNCH - SPACE IS LIMITED!
\$50 AT THE DOOR!

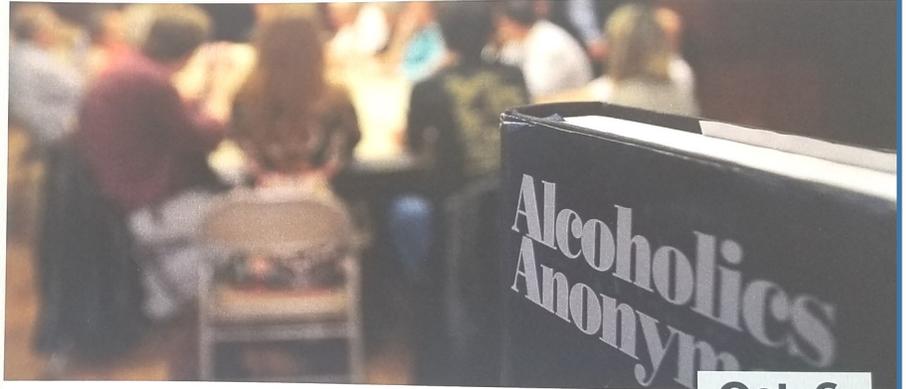


COFFEE, 50/50, DOOR PRIZES!
SNACKS AND LITERATURE FOR SALE!



DEEP DIVE INTO THE PROGRAM OF RECOVERY

BRING YOUR BIG BOOKS, PENS, NOTEBOOKS & HIGHLIGHTERS



**Oct. 6,
7 & 8**

**Fri: 6-9p
Sat: 9a-5p
Sun: 2-5p**

HOSTED BY DISTRICT 21!

WELCOME BACK PAT R AND BRIAN H!



St James Episcopal
44 S Halifax Drive
Ormond Beach, FL 32176



Jenny B
(386) 334-8672



bit.ly/JoeandCharlie



Bambi H
(386)295-4782

ACCOUNT BALANCES JULY 31, 2023

Checking/Savings	
1021 · Cash · Regions Bank	\$12,996.23
1024 · Cash in Drawer	\$102.61
Total Checking/Savings	\$13,098.84
1360 · Inventory	
	\$12,506.66
1400 · Prudent Reserve	
1476 · Regions Bank 5982- CD #001	\$10,000.00
1481 · Regions Bank 6794- CD #002	\$10,540.62
1486 · Regions Bank - CD #003	\$10,090.29
Total 1400 · Prudent Reserve	\$30,630.91

Inspire and Attract! SSAASA⁷

Southern States
A. A.
Service Assembly
Orlando Florida
Sheraton Orlando North
November 17-19, 2023



Room Upgrade!

Every one who has registered AND Reserved Hotel Room(s) by 5/15/2023 Midnight, Your name will go in a drawing to receive a free upgrade on your hotel room

- ✓ Meet your peers around the South East Region
- ✓ Panel Discussions
- ✓ Service Workshops
- ✓ Share Your Service Experience
- ✓ Learn and Discover



Hosted by Area 14 N. FI

Questions? Chair.ssaasa7@gmail.com

SSAASA7.ORG

Scan to go to website



ORTEGA GROUP
 2904 Ionic Avenue 32210
 District 3



- **First Meeting: January 26, 1963**
- **Founders: Eve D., and Flossie I.**
- **Early Members: Tom S., Dave W., Monte C., Bill B., Jack I., Marion M. and Clarence D. attended the first meeting.**
- **Meeting is a closed discussion**
- **1 meeting per week**



District Meetings

	DCM	EMAIL	PHONE	MONTHLY MEETING
District 1	Nora M	nmartin7924@gmail.com	(904) 910-1956	Zoom, 3 rd Tuesday @ 6:45pm: Zoom ID 9374405307, PWD 772699
District 3	Jim D	dcmd3area12@gmail.com	(414) 801-1166	TBD
District 4	Rhonda W	rhondaatt@gmail.com	(330) 571-5650	Zoom, 3rd Thursday @ 7 pm Zoom ID 81509711457 PWD 841276
District 6	Linda K	lindakeener2808@gmail.com	(904) 228-7785	In Person, 1 st Monday @ 6pm, Memorial Lutheran Church 3375 US 1 South, St. Augustine, FL 32086
District 24	Patrick O	patrickortiz45@gmail.com	(904) 814-9367	In Person, 1 st Wednesday @ 6:30pm, St Marks Episcopal Church 310 N Second Ave, Palatka, FL 32077
District 25	Jake K	jlkinter@yahoo.com	(937) 760-1086	Zoom, 1 st Sunday @ 5:30pm: Zoom ID 8848317 PWD 1234
District 30	Rita H	dcm@neflaadistrict30.org	(904) 703-3655	In Person, 4 th Saturday @ 9:30am, First Christian Church 11924 San Jose Blvd, Jacksonville, FL 32223 Zoom ID 86704331234 PWD AA061035

HAPPY SOBRIETY

August

Fiesta Group
 Nikki W. 3 yrs.
 Jason P. 6 yrs.
 Randy Z. 10 yrs.
 Isabella M. 5 yrs.
 Joe N. 35 yrs.
 Renee 19 yrs.
 James 2 yrs.
 Desiree 2 yrs.
 Doug J. 14 yrs.
 Vee 5 yrs.
 Kent 40 yrs.
 Bethany C. 5 yrs.
 Mike C. 20 yrs.

Mandarin Women
 Sheila 31 yrs.
 Michele 5 yrs.
 Aida 11 yrs.
 Linda 7 yrs.

Central Group
 Karen A. 4 yrs. Jeff K. 16 yrs.
 Andrea G. 1 yr. Joe T. 27 yrs.
 Jenn A. 4 yrs. Bill C. 10 yrs.
 Pam W. J. 46 yrs. Kit L. 15 yrs.
 Sheila O. 31 yrs.
 Malkah 41 yrs.
 Mike D. 38 yrs.
 Donald L. 26 yrs.
 Bennet 17 yrs.
 Steve C. 5 yrs.

Arlington Group
 Carmen V. 1 yr
 Rich C. 1 yr
 Gary L. 3 yrs.
 Cliffordd 14 yrs.
 Robert H. 16 yrs.
 Marijean S. 29 yrs.
 Terry F. 30 yrs.
Arlington's Group June Sobriety
 Dana H. 14 yrs.

I Am Responsible Group
 Fred W. 24 yrs.
 Mike C. 10 yrs.

Billy Goat Hill
 Mary D. 16 yrs.
 Kit L. 15 yrs.
 Gary L. 3 yrs.

This Too Shall Pass
 Mary D. 16 yrs.
 Shayna K. 11 yrs.

September

Middleburg Group
 Tom H. 34 yrs.
Central Group
 Margie P. 9 yrs.
Mandarin Women
 Laurie 1 yr.
 Nycole 35 yrs.
Orange Park Step Sisters
 Gloria P. 41 yrs.
 Belinda G. 7 yrs.

Fiesta Group
 Pattie R. 41 yrs.
 Tom M. 36 yrs.
 Ashlyn
 Trish L. 15 yrs.
 Charlie B. 20 yrs.
 Kristen B. 14 yrs.

August
Salisbury Men's Group
 Joe B. 1 yr.
 Kevin Jr 16 yrs.
 Mike D 2 yrs.



"I know you don't want anything to upset your serenity dear, but the house is on fire."

	Jul 23	Jan - Jul 23	Jul 22	Jan - Jul 22
Ordinary Income/Expense				
Income				
4000 · Contribution Income				
4002 · Groups	5,895.45	43,030.55	4,562.77	42,229.94
4003 · Pink Can Contribution	38.02	148.02		234.77
4005 · Faithful Five	275.00	1,830.00	230.00	1,285.10
4006 · Birthdays	64.00	64.00		121.00
4007 · Other Contributions	717.00	3,814.40	253.75	1,017.75
Total 4000 · Contribution Income	6,989.47	48,886.97	5,046.52	45,097.06
4020 · Retail Income	6,553.80	34,900.39	3,187.59	28,396.58
4042 · Business Meeting				
Total Income	13,543.27	83,787.36	8,234.11	73,526.64
Cost of Goods Sold				
4510 · Cost of Retail Sales	5,261.22	25,823.79	2,169.18	21,163.02
5001 · Cost of Revenues - Other				
4550 · Cost of Event - Spring Picnic		1,118.69		
5215 · IG Business Meeting Expense	46.31	195.29		202.62
5195 · CC Fees	197.85	1,094.54	240.01	1,026.52
5290 · IG Breakfast Expense		29.36		31.00
59900 · POS Inventory Adjustments	-61.66	-412.67	155.30	-19.40
Total 5001 · Cost of Revenues - Other	182.50	2,025.21	395.31	1,240.74
Total COGS	5,443.72	27,849.00	2,564.49	22,403.76
Gross Profit	8,099.55	55,938.36	5,669.62	51,122.88
Expense				
60000 · Salaries and Benefits				
Total 60000 · Salaries and Benefits	3,300.98	25,093.43	1,774.24	17,676.35
61000 · Office Expense				
Total 61000 · Office Expense	564.10	7,561.30	809.85	10,580.37
62000 · Facilities and maintenance				
Total 62000 · Facilities and maintenance	2,050.91	10,661.52	2,490.12	10,799.22
55000 · Committees Expense				
Total 55000 · Committees Expense	2,522.12	7,970.61	285.26	8,183.27
70900 · Business Expenses				
Total 70900 · Business Expenses	15.13	167.16	15.13	166.73
62100 · Contract Services				
Total 62100 · Contract Services	300.00	2,100.00	300.00	2,100.00
65100 · Other Expenses				
Total 65100 · Other Expenses	25.25	135.74	8.00	65.22
Total Expense	8,778.49	53,689.76	5,682.60	53,990.86
Net Ordinary Income	-678.94	2,248.60	-12.98	-2,867.98
Other Income/Expense				
Other Income				
73000 · Miscellaneous Income				
73050 · Interest Income		3.35	1.31	6.97
6310 · Sales Tax Collection Allowance	9.42	48.12	6.35	43.57
Total 73000 · Miscellaneous Income	9.42	51.47	7.66	50.54
Total Other Income	9.42	51.47	7.66	50.54
Net Other Income	9.42	51.47	7.66	50.54
Net Income	-669.52	2,300.07	-5.32	-2,817.44

Contributions July 2023

Group Name	Jul ' 23	YTD Jul '23	Att Aug '23 Mtg	Group Name	Jul ' 23	YTD Jul '23	Att Aug '23 Mtg
100 Proof		\$250.00		More About Alcoholism		\$182.50	
5th Tradition		\$0.00		Morning After	\$75.00	\$225.00	
7/11 Meditation Group		\$246.50		Nassauville		\$0.00	
A Design For Living	\$189.30	\$331.30		Neptune Beach Book Study		\$25.00	
A Way Out		\$0.00		New Beginnings		\$0.00	
AA Night Owls Group	\$25.00	\$25.00		New Life Group St. Aug		\$269.33	
Arlington		\$741.94	X	Nocatee Promises	\$190.00	\$274.00	
Alexis		\$30.00		Nocatee Saturday AM		\$190.00	
Aloha Step 11		\$252.32		Nocatee Sobriety	\$75.00	\$356.00	
Amethyst Group		\$32.50		Oak Tree Men's		\$400.00	
As Bill Saw It		\$0.00		On The Way Home		\$0.00	
As Bill Sees It		\$0.00		Orange Park		\$0.00	
Azalea City Group		\$0.00		Orange Park Step Sisters		\$57.82	X
BAA		\$230.00		Other Side of the Bridge		\$50.00	
Baymeadows		\$50.00		Palm Valley Mens	\$100.50	\$278.50	
Bch Agnostics & Free Thinkers	\$90.00	\$180.00		Phoenix Men's		\$250.00	X
Beach Side Step Study		\$135.42		Primary Purpose		\$95.89	X
Beaches Unity 7 AM Meeting		\$0.00		Reborn	\$100.00	\$400.00	
Beaches Unity (BUG)		\$1,800.00		Riverside (Tom S)	\$104.00	\$202.00	
BLIS		\$150.00		Rule 62	\$50.00	\$100.00	X
Callahan		\$100.00		Salisbury Mens		\$150.00	
Central		\$1,050.00	X	Sandpiper	\$101.40	\$101.40	
Clean & Free		\$40.00	X	Saturday Night Live		\$0.00	
Coffee and Readings		\$0.00		Seascape		\$395.40	
Conscious Contact	\$146.25	\$389.75		Serenity at Noon		\$113.20	
Coyote Men's Group		\$0.00		Sicker Than Others		\$0.00	
Day One		\$10,000.00		Sober on Purpose		\$250.00	
Design for Living		\$0.00		Sober Sisters		\$0.00	
District 1		\$2,000.00		Solutions	\$90.00	\$360.00	
District 3		\$0.00		Sons of the Spirit	\$60.00	\$60.00	
District 6		\$200.00		Sounds of Sobriety		\$0.00	
Diverse Views		\$0.00		Spiritual Awakenings	\$58.00	\$122.00	
Downtown Group		\$100.00		Spiritual Knights		\$0.00	
Drop The Rock		\$0.00	X	Step A Month		\$128.00	
Dunes		\$35.00		Stepping Up Group		\$0.00	
Durban 12 & 12		\$0.00		Stepping Stones		\$100.00	
Eastside		\$180.00		Sunday Morning Palatka		\$60.00	
End of Meeting YPG		\$0.00		Sunday Sunrise Beach		\$0.00	
Evergreen		\$30.00		Switzerland		\$114.50	
Fernandina Beach	\$167.72	\$167.72		The Alcoholics Group		\$0.00	
Fiesta	\$930.50	\$3,642.20	X	The Herd	\$176.00	\$1,771.00	
Fourth St.		\$0.00		The Grove Group (Sat 10 AM)		\$279.11	
Free Mens	\$164.50	\$624.85		The Oldest City Men		\$209.50	
Free Thinkers		\$0.00		The Outsiders Group		\$0.00	
From The Heart		\$450.00		This Too Shall Pass		\$0.00	
Fruit Cove Women	\$65.50	\$143.40		Third St Third Tradition		\$100.00	X
Grace Overcomers		\$100.00	X	Tree Mens Group		\$300.00	
Greenland Road		\$25.00		Trout River	\$462.00	\$462.00	X
Half Way Through		\$0.00		Valley Mens Group		\$0.00	
Happy Joyous and Free		\$47.00		Village Womens		\$0.00	
Have The Zeal		\$110.00		Villagers	\$76.20	\$168.60	
Heart To Heart		\$0.00		Way Out	\$200.00	\$300.00	
Hold On PPG		\$0.00		Wesconnett	\$445.00	\$445.00	X
How It Works	\$110.00	\$110.00		Westside		\$0.00	
I Am Responsible		\$180.00		What's The Point		\$158.00	
Island Serenity Group		\$147.00		Winners		\$0.00	
It's In The Book		\$70.00		Winning Game		\$0.00	
James Gang II		\$0.00		Women Enjoying Sobriety	\$282.86	\$446.06	
Jumping Off Place		\$0.00		Women in Recovery		\$0.00	
Keep It Simple		\$309.00		Women Speak	\$35.00	\$35.00	
Ladies Unity	\$23.06	\$95.53		Women Upstart Group	\$26.21	\$191.19	
Language of The Heart		\$90.68		Women YPG		\$160.75	
Lest We Forget	\$240.00	\$479.40		Womens' Candlelight		\$80.40	
Living In The Light		\$2,064.00		Yulee	\$831.45	\$831.45	
Living Now		\$75.00		Zoom Meeting 7 AM Penman Rd	\$205.00	\$2,191.44	
Los Lobos Mens		\$150.00		TOTAL	\$5,895.45	\$43,030.55	
Love N Action		\$60.00		IG Reps Attending Aug 2023 Meeting = 11 Total Attending = 25			
Macclenny Friends of Bill		\$0.00		Groups Contributing in Jul 2023 = 32 Jul. 2023 YTD = 97			
Mandarin		\$160.00	X				
Mandarin Hi-Noon Group		\$1,000.00					
Mandarin Big Book Study		\$60.00					
Mandarin Women in Recovery		\$200.00					
Men's Blackeye		\$250.00					
Men's Redeye		\$0.00	X				
Men's Solution		\$0.00					
Middleburg		\$200.00					



An Old Timer's Story



Gary R. is one of our AA old-timers. He has 41 years of sobriety (DOS 4/21/1982). He was interviewed by Kevin G. and Christopher G. and the following is taken from that interview with his permission (edited by Charlie M.)

Kevin: Could you tell us a little bit about your yourself. Where you were born and what was your childhood like?

Gary: I was born in 1944 in a small town called Nitro, West Virginia. Nitro got its name from World War One. The country had a need for gunpowder to support the war and a factory was built there to manufacture gunpowder. I went to Nitro High School but quit in my senior year. Later, I completed my GED and even took some college courses.

K.: How was your childhood growing up with your siblings?

G.: I had three sisters, two older and one younger sister and one older brother. My older sister was a little bit mentally and physically handicapped. She got near the burner on an old gas hot water heater and her dress caught fire. She died a few days later in the hospital. Since that time, I've lost all my other siblings to various diseases and heart failures. My younger sister was about 10 years younger than me. We didn't have the same father and she resented me a lot for that. We tried to have a good relationship while we were younger, but finally she wouldn't have anything to do with me. My older brother and sister were about 10 and 11 years older than me so I didn't really grow up with them.

G.: When I was in first grade, my mom opened up a beer joint in Nitro, West Virginia. We lived upstairs on the second floor. She ran the joint and my dad just drank. It wasn't too bad until other kids I played with found out that my mom owned a bar. Mom running a bar was looked down upon. For a lot of my childhood, I always considered myself less than that. My family never went to church or Sunday school. The only exception might have been for somebody's funeral or a wedding or something like that. That's the only time we went. I can never remember being in the same car with my mom and dad at the same time. You know, they were just different.

K.: When did you start drinking?

G.: I was probably 15 or 16 years old when I really started drinking. I remember I went to the junior-senior prom. I was a junior. I was kicked out of the prom by the principal because I was drunk. I went to some other parties, continuing to drink. I woke up the next morning in the gym where the prom had been held. How I got there, I have no idea. I had to walk home about six blocks that morning. My white sport coat was covered with blood and puke. I felt so ashamed. I really didn't want to go to school on Monday. When I got to school, everyone was talking about how much fun I was and what a great party guy. That made it all okay.

I was mainly a beer drinker but would drink whatever I could get my hands on. I drank for 21 years until I stopped in 1982.

K.: What was your bottom like?

G.: It was 1982 and my life had come completely apart. My wife divorced me, and I came close to losing my job. My daughter stayed with my wife. I lived in little rat and roach infested apartment. My 15-year-old son stayed with me. I was drinking in the apartment as usual; my son came in, walked to the kitchen, opened the refrigerator and slammed the door and said, "Damn there is nothing to eat here!" That was my aha moment.

Within a couple of days, I was reaching out for help at work. Between the Master Chief who was trying to help me and a Lieutenant who was trying to fire me I got into Navy's treatment program (ARC) at the Alcohol Rehab Center at NAS Jacksonville. I think I was the first civilian to receive treatment there.

K.: What did you think of that program?

G.: Well, they probably saved my life. Yeah. I found out that I was an alcoholic, that I had a disease and was not a bad person. I was a sick person that needed to get well. I went for six weeks. One of my counselors Bill L. a Navy Chief told me after I completed treatment that I needed to get my ass into the middle of AA.

I was living in Glen St. Mary at the time which didn't have any meeting, so I had to go to MacClenny which had only one meeting a week. I had to drive to Lake City or Jacksonville for other meetings.

K.: When did you find a sponsor??

G.: My first sponsor was from MacClenny. I liked him because he laughed and joked and cut him up. I needed that because I hadn't had a good belly laugh in a long, long time. He was great. With a lot of help he and I worked the steps together and shared a lot.

K.: Did you have a home group?

G., MacClenny was my home group for a while. I did help start a meeting at NAS Cecil Field. We met in the Chapel. There were a few guys pretty regularly. We met in the afternoon after I got off work. The base Chaplain was very supportive.

There used to be a place out on US 90 between Baldwin and Jax, Brandy Branch. It was more or less a place for sober people to go and dance and hang out, it was run by Wally M, and his wife. Open daily meetings several evenings a week. Wally took in guys trying to get sober and who had no place to go. Brandy Branch was an important part of my recovery. It taught me you can dance, socialize and have fun sobering.

K.: How do you deal with new people in the program?

G.: I just try to give back what was so freely given to me. I try to listen and identify what their stories. Sometimes I make mistakes. One time this guy came around and I tried my best to help him. He told me to leave him alone. I talked to somebody else about this guy and it got back to his boss. They didn't fire him or anything, but he was all bent out of shape about it. That was the last time I did anything like that! I did not mean for any of that to happen. I was young and wanted to help. Anonymity is very important.

K.: I know you have done 12 Step work and go into people's home. I was with you and another AA guy on a 12 Step call. When we arrived, the police were there. The drunk had a gun. After the police allowed us in, we did our 12 Step work. Some of that tough stuff work can be dangerous.

G.: It can be because you never know what you're walking into. You have to be careful. Just like me when I was drunk. I had an old pistol. I might have shot you too. Who knows what a drunk under the influence will do.

K.: What sort of literature do you read besides the Big Book?

G.: A Day at a Time, 24 Hours a Day, Daily Reflections and one Ed C. gave me several years ago The Eye Opener. The last book really taught me a lot. It's good. Daily stuff. Talks more about daily life than drinking or AA. It helps me keep an open mind. It helps me take it one day at a time.

My oldest son was drinking very heavily, and I thought he was following in my footsteps. Tried getting him to meetings with me. He wouldn't go and said to just get over it. Well, here is the end of that story. His wife, she's a very, very lovely girl. I

love her to death. But her things are her things. They went out one afternoon to go someplace and my son had been drinking and he got sick in her car. Last time he's had a drink. Now he has a son that graduated college.

My mother was more or less drinking when she passed away. I went to her funeral and some folks at the funeral talked about her drinking and her way of life. My Dad walked into a church in West Virginia and gave his drinking problem over to God, didn't take that drink till he died. My Dad was sober. But he did not enjoy his sobriety. He couldn't watch a beer commercial on TV. He would turn his head

K.: Your first wife divorced you. Tell us about your second wife.

G.: I've been married to Joyce for 39 years. It's a funny story about how we met. Joyce had left her husband in Maryland because of his drinking. She moved down here with her two boys. She took a job in the Purchasing Department at NAS Cecil Field. I was working for the Navy at NAS Cecil Field in charge of the two main warehouses. All the forklifts around there were breaking down and I couldn't get them fixed. I told the bosses that if I didn't get some forklifts fixed, I am going to have to shut the doors. They told me you can't shut the doors on the receiving department on a Navy base. They contacted the people to get the forklifts fixed or rent me a forklift. Joyce had just started working for the Purchasing Dept. at Cecil field. They sent a request up there to get a forklift as soon as possible. I got a phone call the next day and the woman said, "I'm Joyce, I need some information about the forklift requirement." We had several phone calls back and forth with questions. Early the next morning, a big orange forklift shows up at the warehouse. All the Navy material handling equipment was painted industrial yellow. Being the gentleman I am, I walked up to the Purchase Department. I hadn't met Joyce yet. I walked in and I said "who's Joyce", and they pointed her out to me. I asked "are you Joyce" and she said "yes". I said it's the wrong color and left. She turned around to one of her coworkers Mary (who was a very religious lady) and she said "who the F... was that". This started the best relationship I have ever had. A few months later we got married.

K.: So, a forklift, a technical issue resulted in a lifelong marriage of happiness. God has a way of laughing.

G.: Absolutely! He put us together without us knowing. I wasn't looking for her, she wasn't looking for me.

Heck looks at me, God has to have a sense of humor.

K.: What do you enjoy most about today?

G.: Staying sober and enjoying life. Best thing that ever happened to me and my wife. Regrets are pretty much behind me. By working the steps, I have cleaned up my past as best I can. If I screw up today, I try my best to make amends as soon as possible. I'm just trying to focus on today and what's important today

If you want to change your life, if you want to get better and you want to stop drinking, join AA. Find people that you can relate to and look up to as I did in an early meeting. They spoke the language that I liked. They were having a good time and enjoying life. That's what I wanted.

When I moved to Jacksonville, I had a lot of meetings at the West Side Club. I don't know how many there were in Jacksonville at the time, but I know there were enough to help me stay sober. I first lived in a house on 103rd Street and moved to Mandarin later. prefer open meetings with good sobriety

There isn't a really right or wrong way to stay sober. The best method for me was finding a God of my understanding, a group I felt comfortable with and a group of honest, sincere friends. There are a lot of different meetings around some might say this one is wrong, and another says this one is right. I know times and society is changing but AA is here to stay. If we stick together for the same purpose, sobriety.

Christopher G.: What about conventions, round ups and stuff like that

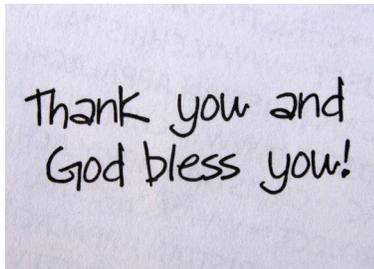
G.: I have been to several. My wife and I went to San Antonio, Texas for the International Convention in 2005. What a blessing. We had a great time. There were a lot of speakers who had many, many years of sobriety but the one that touched our hearts was a young blonde woman with a bunch of tattoos and less than 2 years sobriety. The polished speakers sent a good message, but that young woman spoke from her heart. She was my kind of speaker.

K.: Are there any changes you would make in AA as you see it today?

G.: AA and God have kept me sober for 41 years. If it ain't broke don't fix it.

K.: Thank you for sharing your story with us.

G.: You're welcome.



Thank you and
God bless you!

