

Kent County Central Office Newsletter

September 2019

4920 Plainfield Ave NE, Suite 19
Grand Rapids, MI 49525
Office (616) 913-9216 (M-F, 1-5 PM)
A.A. 24-hour Hotline (616) 913-9149
Website: www.grandrapidsaa.org

Note: Inclusion of articles and announcements in Central Office News does not constitute A.A. or KCCO endorsement. Rather, members of the fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous have been encouraged to share their experience, strength and hope through this humble periodical. Opinions expressed are those of the writer unless otherwise noted. The Kent County Central Office makes these announcements solely as a service to the reader, not as an endorsement.



Please consider donating
A dollar for each year of
Sobriety and joining our
Birthday club show your
GRATITUDE

A.A. BIRTHDAYS!!!

Carol K.	January 13, 1988
Sharron S.	April 12, 1984
Anne S.	August 30, 1981
Ben S.	December 5, 1978
Thomas B.	October 5, 1995
John Z.	March 29 1985
Jim H.	July 5 2005
Paul S.	August 10 1983
Charlie B.	February 14 1982
Harry G.	September 23 1982
Mike W.	January 29 2004
David P.	November 10 2007
Gary Z.	October 31, 1985
David S.	March 20, 1984
Bill E.	May 30, 1965
Amy S.	December 13 2013
John F.	April 22 1989
Joanne D.	June 6 1992
Rebecca M.	November 3 2001
Jason D.	March 5 2014
Peter W.	January 11 2004
Mike Y.	April 22 1989
Shelly H.	April 4 2007
Mary	May 15 1973
Sandee	June 23 1987

MISSION STATEMENT The mission of the Kent County Central Office Newsletter is to serve Kent County and the surrounding A.A. community, in four ways. 1. *To carry the A.A. message* 2. *To inform our readers.* 3. *To provide a forum for discussion of A.A. principles* 4. *To provide service work opportunities for A.A. members.* **Need to find a meeting? Go To Website**
grandrapidsaa.org/meetings

KCCO NEWSLETTER

If you want to get the KCCO newsletter send an email to
aagrandrapids@gmail.com include your email address

THANK YOU TO OUR PHONE VOLUNTEERS FOR AUGUST 2019!!

David A. Marty P. Steve C. Jesse D. Sharon A. Chelsea M. Tad D. Steve E. Sharron S.

KCCO desperately needs volunteers for the 24 hour AA hotline.
We need a one month commitment of 4 hours every week.
Morning and afternoon shifts available.
Call Sharron 616-913-9216

CELEBRATING SPANISH WEEK; SPEAKERS WILL SHARE IN ENGLISH

FRIDAY NIGHT SPEAKER MEETING

COME ONE.....COME ALL

PUBLIC WELCOME

LOCATION: THE NORTH ALANO CLUB

1020 College Ave, NE, Grand Rapids, MI
(Lower Level Balcony)
Phone 616-456-5709

Friday, September 6, 2019, 7:00 pm

Speaker: Sarah

Home Group:

Friday, September 13, 2019, 7:00 pm

Speaker: Homer

Home Group: Grupo Esperanza

Friday, September 20, 2019, 7:00 pm

Speaker: Linda D.

Home Group:

Friday, September 27, 2019, 7:00 pm

Speaker: Nate P.

MCYPAA

FREE COFFEE AND DONUTS AFTER THE MEETING

Sponsored by

Kent County Central Office

4920 Plainfield NE, Suite 19, Grand Rapids, MI 49525

For any information call: 616-913-9216

THE MIDDLE STEPS IN A TIMELY MANNER

Luckily, my sponsor, Carl, allowed me almost no “let me think it over” time as we approached my initial middle step process. No time for fear or hesitation was available! Only minutes after praying the Third Step request for God’s help, he had me start a process I call “spontaneous writing” which provided substantive and honest Fourth Step information. I was warned not to write good things about myself because that would take too many pages. Ha! This “Spontaneous writing” process started on a Saturday, “at once,” per page 64 instructions,” and we then completed the Step Four instructions the following Saturday. Carl then helped me actually “read and do” the Fourth Step process directly from the Big Book (PP 64-71). This process lasted about one hour. The Step Five process of reporting my newly found character defects, etc., began just a few minutes after finishing Step Four (First opportunity, page 74), and Step Six began, “then,” (p. 76) and Step Seven was prayed at “When ready” (p. 76). Steps Four through Seven, were completed in a few hours that last Saturday. Doctor Carl Jung has written: “People will do anything to avoid facing their own soul.” Thankfully, my sponsor didn’t give me time to back out. He followed the Big Book timetable! As years pass, as I watch newcomers too often disappear between Steps Three and Four, I have become much more appreciative of the Big Book’s timetable for the middle steps. I believe too much in-between time allows fear and doubt to take over; then, even the sincerest Third Step decision will often deteriorate into indecision and inaction. Sometimes I hear: “God will show me when to start my inventory,” or, “I plan to take my time and do it right” . . . and so on. I believe it is good to explain, at this point, that what is missed in Step Four can always be taken care of in Step Ten—even years later when they crop up. Step Ten is continually redoing of the mid-steps of the “learning” process above! First of all, I had to learn how to do the mid-steps—only then could I actually put them into action by following these clear-cut Step Ten directions on page 84: We continue to watch for selfishness, dishonesty, resentment and fear. (Step Four) When these crop up we ask God at once to remove them. (Steps Six and Seven) We discuss them with someone immediately. (Step Five) Make amends quickly if we have harmed anyone. (Steps Eight and Nine) Speaking of a “timely manner” as in the title of this article, I believe it is important to realize that as I go through my day, to remember that the step Ten instructions include the phrases: “at once,” “immediately” and “quickly.” Of course, these phrases are to be used in sensible context, for the Big Book infers that God gave me brains to use! For instance, not to phone my sponsor you at work, simply, because I have some trivial concern or small problem. Early on, I thought the above directions were to be done only before going to bed at night. Of course, that came from a mis-reading of the first full paragraph of page 86 which is Step Eleven. I now realize that Step Ten is to be done throughout each day. Living these middle steps, via Step Ten, continually provides relief from the anxiety and fear of my drinking days. But I need to remember that AA is a program of action! ~~ Bob S., Richmond, IN

KCCC Business Meeting
August 15, 2019
Minutes

Present: Mike W., Chairperson; Susie J., Vice-Chairperson; Sharron S., Office Manager; Mary Beth R., Secretary; Ed B., District 7 Chair; David P., Comstock Park; Chris B., Trustee#2; Jeff O., Web Master

Absent: Sandee C., Trustee #3; Jim H., District 7 KCCC Liaison & KCCC Treasurer; Bruce M, Alternate District 7 KCCC Liaison

The meeting opened with a moment of silence, followed by the Serenity Prayer at 6:01pm

Reports:

- Minutes, Financial, Check Detail, Website and telephone reports were submitted.
- Report by Ed B. from District 7 meeting held in Hudsonville. Next meeting on 9/7, 10:00am, hosted by Middleville Miracles (basement of the United Methodist Church). Recovery Palooza will be held on 9/28, from 11-3, at the Salvation Army on Division. District 7 will have a table.

Roundup Business:

- Sharron S. printed a list of past themes. Share the list with your groups. Bring back any new suggestions and we will vote at the October 17th Business Meeting
- Alex B. committed to do artwork.
- Menu chosen. Need to vote on 1 additional side at Sept KCCC meeting.
- Give remainder of 2019 t-shirts, as prizes, at Friday night speaker meetings.
- 2022 Speaker-Sharron S. has two names she will bring to Sept meeting.
- Other Speakers (Al-Anon, MCYPAA)-Still need for 2020. Sharron S to contact Janet from Al-Anon. Chris B. to talk to Lindsey L from MCYPAA.
- It was suggested by Alex B. to have Jesse S. promote T-shirt sales. Mike W. will ask him.
- Sobriety Countdown-Mike W. to reach out to Neil H.

Old Business:

- Mike W presented a draft of the Office Manager job description- Review and bring recommendations to Sept meeting.
- “Theme” months of speaker meetings (Susie J)- Sept (Hispanic Month), Oct (Biker Month).

New Business:

- Bank internet access for Treasurer (tabled).
- Discussion on criteria for meetings listed on website.
- Gratitude Dinner-will discuss at Sept meeting. Add to the newsletter and include basket donations for auction.

Please announce at your individual meetings that volunteers are always needed to answer the 24-hour hotline. Have them call Sharron at KCCO, 616-913-9216.

Next meeting 6:00 pm, Thursday, September 19, 2019 at KCCO office, 4920 Plainfield Ave NE, Suite 19, Grand Rapids 49525, phone 616-913-9216.

Send your GSR or someone to represent your group and have a voice in how your Central Office is run!!! Making decisions now for upcoming events.

7th Tradition: Passed the basket.

The meeting adjourned with the Lord's Prayer at 7:25.

Respectfully submitted, Mary Beth R., Secretary.

Office Manager Report August 2019

Group donations through August 27 were low. If your group can help with a donation, that would be great! It costs about \$3,000 to pay KCCO monthly expenses.

Always looking for AA hotline phone volunteers. Call me if you have any time Mon-Fri 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. (must be an experienced A.A. member for this morning shift, you will be alone), or 1:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. **Just four hours a week** for one month, more if you can!! Opening right now for Mon., Tues. & Fri. mornings, 9:00 am - 1:00 pm. 616-913-9216. There is an opening for Thursday afternoons from 1:00 pm - 5:00 pm. If you can substitute, call. People want vacation time and have other obligations.

Call 616-913-9216 if you can add your name to the 12th Step Call List. We often have to make numerous calls to find someone who will take a call. If you are home during the day or have a cell that you will answer for someone who needs help and wants to talk to an A.A. member, please call Sharron 616-913-9216 (M-F 1-5pm) to get on the list. If there's no A.A. person to answer the hotline, the bill from the answering service is higher. Thanks.

Could your group donate a basket that we can raffle off at our November Fundraiser? Any theme would be great; last year we had a Wolverines-themed basket, purses, snacks. Bring baskets to Sharron at KCCO. Thanks!!

We would sure like to see your group representatives at our monthly business meeting. We are working on our annual November Fundraiser 2019 and Spring Roundup 2020. We will be choosing a theme next month. Show up if you want a part in the decision-making. The Kent County Central Committee makes decisions for Central Office at their monthly meetings. **Next**

business meeting, Thursday, September 19, 2019 at 6:00 pm at KCCO office, 4920 Plainfield Ave NE, Suite #19, Grand Rapids 49525.

2020 International Convention, July 4th weekend, Detroit, MI. Don't miss it!! Registration forms will be mailed in August; online registration available in September.

WE NEED A NEWSLETTER EDITOR - GREAT SERVICE OPPORTUNITY. Call Sharron 616-913-9216.

In love and service,
Sharron

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GROUP DONATIONS AUGUST 2019

The following group sent contributions:

Comstock Park Fri, Coopersville #132731, Cowden Lake, Crystal #682254, Crystal Tues. Big Book #130061, Expect A Miracle #670069 - St. Anthony, Hastings Young to Old, Rockford Thurs. Maple St. Misfits, SJV Book Study, Sunday Freedom #715791 - SAC, Tues. Night Men's Stag #163453, Wyoming - Primary Purpose #722060 and Wayland - Way of Life #107489. Thank you for your support!!

OUR PRIMARY PURPOSE

Sometimes I am uncomfortable with all of the different definitions that I have heard concerning the topic of what our primary purpose is. I can sit in a meeting and hear all kinds of different experiences that members have described, thinking that they are carrying the message of alcoholics anonymous to the new member. We have the big book, and the twelve and twelve, as our primary texts, that have the message that we are supposed to be carrying to the new comers. But I see it misrepresented by well-meaning people that think we are supposed to convince a person not to take a drink. I cringe when I hear someone say "I just don't pick up today," and that it's all about the alcohol. It hasn't always been this way. This attitude has only surfaced in the past 25 years. I sometimes think that it's almost sacrilegious to point these things out but I do it sometimes when someone's chance of sobriety hangs in the balance. On page 31 in the big book, right after it explains all of the methods we have tried," it goes on to say, "We do not like to pronounce any individual as alcoholic, but you can quickly diagnose yourself. Step over to the nearest bar and try some controlled drinking. Try to drink and stop abruptly. Try it more than once. It will not take long to decide if you are honest with yourself about it. It may be worth a bad case of jitters if you get the full knowledge of your condition." Now, to be clear, I have never suggested that anyone go over to a bar and drink, but when I refer him to that page in the big book, he understands that he is the only one that can make the decision to stop drinking, and that I will help him to understand his problem but, I am do not turn into his (parent) protector. The second example of this approach is on page 23 in the 12X12 and it says it this way: "To the doubter we could say, "Perhaps you're not an alcoholic

after all. Why don't you try some more controlled drinking, bearing in mind meanwhile what we have told you about alcoholism." This attitude brought immediately and practical results. Continued page 14 aasandiego.org
heir Published Monthly by the Central Office of the San Diego County Groups of Alcoholics Anonymous
"Made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others"
Reprinted from AA Big Book, page 59

CONCEPT 9: Good service leaders, together with sound and appropriate methods of choosing them, are at all levels indispensable for our future functioning and safety. The primary world service leadership once founders of A.A. must assumed by the General Service Anonymous.

Hello! Peaks and valleys highs and lows not another run in my panty hose. I can't take it anymore I can't make it anymore my life is a mess and I just want to die. I'm so alone now so lost and alone now why do I even try? Still, maybe I'll call that number ... but, what if no one answers? Oh please, please, someone be there I need someone to be there I need someone to help me. Hello? Is this AA? Yes, we're always here for you. By Precious

exercised by the necessarily be Trustees of the Board of Alcoholics

Don't Miss the
Someone in A.A. once promises listed on the and the top of page for alcoholics who lives. Our alternatives

Miracle!
told me that the bottom of page 83 84 are not optional intend to live sober are to either drink

for oblivion or live lives of serenity, purpose and happiness. Recovery dictates that I take actions that I would not take otherwise. In return, I receive blessings that I would not have received otherwise. I believe that this is the "blessing" that comes with being an alcoholic. The moment we begin taking the steps, we begin making amends. The first step is amending the way we view our illness and our definition of a successful life. The second and third steps are amends to the way we

view God and our approach to a relationship with Him. In steps four and five, we make our first attempt to amend our views regarding the past and the future. Steps six and seven require an amend to the way we rely on God for the power to solve our problems. Step eight and nine demand a willful effort from us to amend our past behavior to the best of our ability. Steps ten and eleven are "living" amends to ourselves, God and the people around us. We get to share our new way of living with others in step twelve. My experience has been that it is easy to get overwhelmed and put off making amends. I would like to wait for the resources to become available before I set out to make an amend. However, it doesn't usually work that way. More often, I must take a leap of faith and begin making amends without knowing where the resources will come from. If I'm willing and I take the action, the resources seem to precipitate out of thin air. The result is that I experience the power of God's hand in my life. The miracles that I have experienced through this process have allowed me to truly rely on God and experience His promises.

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REGISTRATION FORMS FOR THE 2020 INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION IN DETROIT, MI HAVE ARRIVED AT KCCO, STOP BY & GET YOURS.

Step 9

Made Direct Amends To Such People Wherever Possible, Except When To Do So Would Injure Them Or Others.

So, here I was, a newcomer - 5 days sober and absolutely desperate to stay that way. I looked around the meeting room and everyone seemed a lot happier than

me, and I wanted what they had. And I was ready to go to any lengths to get

it. They read the 12 steps as part of Chapter 5, and I was finally listening

after several months of coming to A.A. meetings drunk and really not hearing

much of the readings. But now I was serious, (and did I mention desperate?). Well, everything was okay, and I remained willing. Step 4 and 5 might be slight problems, but I could struggle through them, after all, did I mention, I was des-

perate? And then, the hammer dropped - step 9. I remember clear as a bell thinking, "Are you kidding me - making amends to all those people who harmed ME?" And so the decision was made to not even start the steps, because I wasn't that desperate! So, I suffered for another nine months before I reached the level of desperation in sobriety I needed to reach in order to become truly

willing to go to any lengths for sobriety. I got a sponsor, and he took me through the steps out of the Big Book over 5 months, and, sure enough, we reached the 9th

Step. The dreaded 9th Step! But, miracle of miracles - I had remained willing to take my sponsor's direction and as we progressed through the work, the 9th Step hadn't been a really big deal.

But, now I was facing the fact that I actually had to do it. And you know something - it wasn't really a big deal! Remembering the wording in the 8th Step, "Remember it was agreed in the beginning we would go to any lengths for victory of alcohol." And I was still willing. The scariest thing I had done in my life, to that point, was going to my wife and amending that relationship. Merriam-

Webster defines amend thusly - 1 to put right; 2 to change or modify for the better. I had to have faith that this is what I was attempting to do. And then, I had to take the action. It is no accident that the 9th Step, (and 6 others) are described in a chapter called "Into Action." A price was finally paid in the 9th step - the further confession of my shortcomings and the leveling of my

pride. In the process, everything that had come before this was preparation, necessary preparation, but simply preparation. There were many more amends to be made, but that action set the tone. I was finally living a free man. I have not lived the same since. Oh, and did I mention that I had been desperate.

A member of A.A. in Orange County

Text in italics re-printed from the Big Book with permission of

Alcoholics Anonymous World Services, (AAWS)



International Convention Alcoholics Anonymous

July 2–5, 2020 | Detroit, Michigan

Love and tolerance is our code • Amour et tolérance, voilà notre code • El amor y la tolerancia son nuestro Código

September 05, 2019

Dear Friends,

We're happy to announce that Alcoholics Anonymous World Services, Inc., is releasing Meeting Guide 3.0.

Meeting Guide is a mobile app focused on helping people find A.A. meetings and resources near them. The app has been updated to include some new features we're pleased to announce:

- Search – Users will now be able to search for meetings by name or location
- *Daily Reflections* – a selection of reflections by and for A.A. members

There are also enhancements we've made to existing features:

- More accurate locations for access to local contact information
- Improved user interface -- with a new menu bar and Contact feature.

Meeting Guide is available for iOS and Android smartphones. You can download it for free on the App Store or on Google Play.

Yours in Fellowship,



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General Service Office of Alcoholics Anonymous
P.O. Box 659 | Grand Central Station | New York, New York 10163 USA | (212) 670-5600 | www.aa.org