

Kent County Central Office Newsletter

MAY 2020

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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



Mail To:

*Kent County Central Office
4920 Plainfield NE
Suite 19
Grand Rapids, MI 49525*

All birthdays submitted will be published the month following submission. Please contact the newsletter chair if a birthday has not been published for two months following submission.

A.A. BIRTHDAYS!!!

2019

Sharron S. April 12, 1984
Gary Z. October 31, 1985
Shelley S. April 7, 2007
Jim H. July 5, 2005
Jim K. December 16, 2010

2020

Mike W. January 29, 2004
Ed B. May 29, 2010
Sharron S. April 12, 1984
Shelley S. April 7, 2007
Anne S August 30, 1981
Ben S December 5, 1978

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

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 the Website grandrapidsaa.org/meetings**

KCCO NEWSLETTER

If you want to get the KCCO newsletter send an email to

KCCONewsletter@gmail.com include your email address

NOW THAT WE ARE OPEN FOR REGULAR BUSINESS – WE NEED SOME SERVICE WORKERS!! CALL NOW!

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 Steve 616-913-9216

KCCO Business Meeting

April 15, 2020

Due to the shutdown order, the KCCO board did not “physically” meet this month. Instead they had a virtual meeting on the 3rd Thursday of the month to determine how long the office will remain closed. It was determined to remain open for a limited number of visitors at a time. You may want to call before making the trip here to purchase books, coins, and/or other literature. (see more on this in the Office Managers Report below) Know that we are doing what we can to prevent ANYONE in our circles from “catching” and/or spreading this debilitating virus. We are determined to do what we can to maintain maximum safety... There are still a lot of unknowns!

Office Manager Report

MAY 2020

Greetings! My first couple months as office manager have certainly been unique and quite a learning experience for me. The most important lesson has been the resilience and dedication of the AA community. It has been truly inspiring to see how people have adapted to the circumstances and found a way to continue bringing the message to struggling alcoholics.

The good news is that things are starting to slowly get back to normal. We are aware that in person meetings are beginning to happen again and as we hear of them; we are updating the Meeting Guide. I would really appreciate it if you would call or drop me an e-mail at officeadmin@grandrapidsaa.org if you know of a meeting that has reopened.

I have also reopened the office on Plainfield and am available for literature sales Monday – Friday, 1:00 – 5:00 pm. To ensure the safety and comfort of our customers, we are limiting the number of people in the office and ask that you please wear a mask.

If you would like to preorder your supplies, just give me a call and I can have them boxed up and ready for “curbside” pickup when you arrive.

Stay safe and hope to see you soon!

Steve Caimano
KCCO Office Manager

THANK YOU TO THE FOLLOWING GROUPS FOR YOUR DONATIONS TO KCCO IN THE MONTH OF APRIL:

Third Tradition Group
Friday AM Step Group
Gratitude in Action
Coopersville Group
Clean and Sober Riders
Oakview

All donations are greatly appreciated! Anytime – especially during this Pandemic!

The **Friday Night Speaker Meeting** is happening but only as a Zoom meeting. Jim H has the details. He can be reached

at treasurer@grandrapidsaa.org

PROCEEDS SUPPORT KCCO!

KCCO is NOT a part of the ALANO CLUB SOUTH of Grand Rapids (A.K.A. South Club) OR the ALANO CLUB OF KENT COUNTY (A.K.A. North Club) nor do we prefer one over the other. The following copy is for your information, support and/or encouragement only... If you have further information to help keep our recovery community up to date – please do not hesitate to call us! **FIRST – WHAT’S UP WITH THE ALANO CLUB SOUTH OF Grand Rapids:**

“...As Of: April 26, 2020

ALANO South Club is Open.

For those of you who feel comfortable meeting in person again...if not, we shall be here for when you are. Above all, please be safe and considerate of others. God Bless.

PER THE GOVERNOR’S EXECUTIVE ORDER 2020-59 NUMBER 7, “EXEMPTIONS” NO.16. DATED 4/24/20: “TO ATTEND A MEETING OF AN ADDICTION RECOVERY MUTUAL AID SOCIETY, PROVIDED THAT NO MORE THAN 10 PEOPLE ARE IN ATTENDANCE,”

So “... Meeting attendees are required to wear a mask/facial covering unless you have a proven medical condition not to. ALL meetings may only have up to 10 people. No congregation in large groups, and the store shall remain closed until further notice”

The Board of Directors shall meet on a weekly basis to evaluate the adherence to rules and adjust accordingly.

From the ALANO Club of Kent County:

“...This pandemic has forced us to do the last thing we ever wanted to. Close our doors. Looking out at an empty parking lot. Hear no sounds of laughter and fellowship, and today no aroma of pancakes. Yet what proof of good faith to see people continue to donate to OUR Club’s great mission even when our doors have to be shut! I haven’t had a chance to thank you all enough for your continued support to ensure our mission is sustainable.

I miss seeing the energy at the Club, and I wanted to let you know that days like today, YOU are missed! It is just a matter of time when we can open our doors and fellowship in person again! In the meantime, all we can do is practice patience, acceptance, and trust. One day at a time is still the pace, and, as the old English proverb says, “This too shall pass.” It is my hope and prayer that everyone is finding strength, support, and comfort during these challenging days.

We will certainly all be stronger for having lived through this COVID-19! **Meanwhile, stay connected, stay sober, keep taking it one day at a time, and we will continue to recover!”**

With gratitude & service,
Grant Young
Executive Director

BREAKING NEWS

**Wearing a mask 🤔
inside your home is now
highly recommended.
Not so much to prevent
Covid-19 but to stop eating.**

To ALL you Home Group Members and Treasurers!

Many of us are struggling during this quarantine...Groups are not meeting face to face; BUT – YOU don't have to miss meetings! There are plenty of online mtgs available. You can find more info on page 8 of this Newsletter.

Many of us are going through financial hardships too. KCCO, The General Service Office, District 7 and Our Area 34 need support! **Treasurers:** Please contact your home group members to take a group conscience...Anything above and beyond your prudent reserve should be donated to the suggested following supports:

- **50% to Kent County Central Office** 4920 Plainfield NE – Suite 19, Grand Rapids, MI 49525
- **30% to General Service Office** -PO Box 459 Grand Central Station, New York, NY 10163
- **10% to District 7** - PO Box 1131, Grand Rapids, MI 49501
- **10% to Area 34** – Ed Brooks 2590 Lowell View Ave Lowell, MI 49331

Also, YOU can contribute personally & CELEBRATE your sobriety date at the same time by joining our BIRTHDAY CLUB!! It is SO EASY! All you need to do is send in your name and sobriety birthday along with a contribution equal to the number of years you've been sober; e.g. Sober 1 year- contribute \$1, Sober 20 years- contribute \$20...Your name and sobriety birthdate will be on the FRONT PAGE of this Newsletter EVERY MONTH for a year. Many people have joined in the past & your names have dropped off. PLEASE rejoin! Every Year!

CORONA VIRUS / COVID - 19 ??

Don't know about anyone else; but I have heard about enough on this virus. But here is a lighthearted message:

Just be careful because people are going crazy from being in lock down!

Actually I've just been talking about this with the microwave and toaster while drinking coffee and we all agreed that things are getting bad.

I didn't mention anything to the washing machine as she puts a different spin on everything.

Certainly not to the fridge as he is acting cold and distant.

In the end the iron straightened me out as she said everything will be fine, no situation is too pressing.

The vacuum was very unsympathetic... told me to just suck it up, but the fan was more optimistic and hoped it would all soon blow over!

The toilet looked a bit flushed when I asked its opinion and didn't say anything but the door knob told me to get a grip.

The front door said I was unhinged and so the curtains told me toyes, you guessed it... Pull myself together!!

NEED A MEETING?! THINGS TO DO IF YOU CAN'T GET TO ONE: Call 3 alcoholics EVERY day, (make sure one is your sponsor and one I a newcomer), join one of the many AA FACE BOOK Groups. Is anyone using the application ZOOM to live online meetings? Let us know and we will publish your info if you want more participants! Read your Big Book, stay on your knees, meditate, READ your Daily Reflections and discuss it with your sponsor or another alcoholic...

FIND MORE ONLINE MEETINGS – FOLLOW LINKS HERE:

Local in Akron meeting list:

<https://akronaa.org/online-meetings/> Alcoholics

Anonymous Online Intergroup

<http://aa-intergroup.org/directory.php>

12 Steps.org calendar/ Listing of online 12-step meetings on various platforms.

<https://www.12step.org/social/online-meeting>

In The Rooms (Online Meetings)

[https:// www.intherooms.com/home/](https://www.intherooms.com/home/)



MAY 2020

MAY 1ST – Will our country be off lock down? Your guess is as good as mine. My worst day sober is **STILL** way better than my best day drunk! I don't know about you – but I am embracing the stay at home order... It's been a loooooong time since I've spent more than one day at home...

MAY AA HISTORY:

1-1939: Lois and Bill Wilson left their home at 182 Clinton St., Brooklyn
1941: First Wisconsin AA meeting was held in a Milwaukee hotel.
2-1941: Jacksonville, FL, newspaper reported start of a new AA group.
1941 First meeting was held in San Bernardino, California.
1941 The first AA group in New Orleans, Louisiana, was formed. (sometimes dated as May 2, 1943) by New Orleans Times
3 -1941: First AA group formed in New Orleans, Louisiana.
1943: Democrat Chronicle in Rochester, NY, reported first annual AA dinner at Seneca Hotel with 60 attending.
4 - 1940: Sunday Star reported founding of first AA group in Washington, DC.
4-1940: Rollie H, Cleveland Indians, first anonymity break on national level.
4-1946: Marty Mann explained Alcoholics Anonymous and the National Committee for Education on Alcoholism on the "We the People" radio show.
AA HISTORY – CONTINUED PG 6)

STEP 5

“Admitted to God, to ourselves and another human being the exact nature of our wrongs”

SPRITITUAL PRINCIPLE: INTEGRITY

UNDERSTANDING THE 5th Step

It is one thing to admit these wrongs and defects secretly to ourselves and quite another to write them down on paper and them in black and white. It is still more humbling to admit them to another human being. The final admission makes them more real and more painful to us, while at the same time, removes some of their power.

KEY CONCEPTS

Step 5 is an ego-deflating experience.

AA 12X12: “...scarcely any Step is more necessary to longtime sobriety and peace of mind than this one.”

The humility that comes with “...confiding our defects with another human being.”

The word “humility” means “a clear recognition of what and who we really are, followed by a sincere attempt to become what we could be.”

Honesty is essential to the 5th Step: “Few muddled attitudes have caused us more trouble than holding back on Step 5. Some people are unable to stay sober at all; others will relapse periodically until they really clean house. Even AA old-timers, sober for years, often pay dearly for skipping this step.”

The 5th Step is a search for patterns and thinking and behaving that have served us poorly. It is an effort to see clearly, with the help of another individual, what it is about ourselves that we need to change in order to be productive and happy.

(MAY AA HISTORY – CONTINUED FROM PG 5)

5-1940: Washington, DC, Sunday Star reported formation of first AA group in the District of Columbia.

6 -1939: Clarence S of Cleveland told Dr. Bob, his sponsor, he would not be back to Oxford Group meetings in Akron and would start an "AA" meeting in Cleveland.

6-1946: The long form of the "Twelve Traditions" was published in the AA Grapevine.\

7-1956: The first English AA Convention was held in Cheltenham, England.

8 -1943: Akron AA group had its 8th anniversary celebration with 500 present and sober.

8 – 1971: Bill Wilson was buried in private ceremony, East Dorset, Vermont.

10 - 1939: Clarence S announced to Akron Oxford Group members that the Cleveland members were starting a mtg in Cleveland and calling it Alcoholics Anonymous.

10 -1946: Searcy W. had his last drink. (Searcy died September 30, 2003.)

11 -1935: From the Mayflower Hotel, Bill Wilson called Walter Tunks who referred him to Henrietta Seiberling who introduced Bill to Dr. Bob.

11 -1939: First group to officially call itself Alcoholics Anonymous met at Abby G's house in Cleveland. (some sources say the 18th)

12 – 1935: Mothers' Day - Bill Wilson and Dr. Bob Smith met for the first time in Akron, Ohio, at the home of Henrietta Seiberling.

14 -1998: Sybil C., first woman to enter A.A. west of the Mississippi, died. Her date of sobriety was March 23, 1941. Her name at the time was Sybil Maxwell, though she later opened her talks by saying, "My name is Sybil Doris Adams Stratton Hart Maxwell Willis C., and I'm an alcoholic."

14 -1948: Long Beach, California. Central Office was opened.

15 -1961: Bill Wilson's mother, Dr. Emiliy Strobell, died.

16 -1941: Ruth Hock learned that Joe W. (credited with coming up with the name Alcoholics Anonymous) had a "wet brain."

17 - 1942: The Journal-Herald in Dayton, Ohio, ran a story on A.A. with photos of members in Halloween masks to protect their anonymity.

17 -1942: New Haven, Conn paper has article on AA. Picture shows faces of members sitting in a circle.

18 – 1950: Dr. Bob told Bill "I reckon we ought to be buried like other folks" after hearing that local A.A.'s wanted a huge memorial.

19 -2000: Dr. Paul Ohliger died at the age of 83. His story, "Doctor, Alcoholic, Addict," was retitled "Acceptance Was the Answer," in the 4th edition

22 – 1948: Atlantic City Group celebrated its second anniversary with Dr. C. Nelson Davis of St. Luke's Hospital, Philadelphia, and other A.A.s speaking.

28 -1974: The first World Service meeting of AA outside of America was held in London.

31 -1938: Bill and other AA's began writing the Big Book.

May events with no specific date:

1935: Bill works with alcoholics but fails to sober any of them. Lois reminds him HE is still sober.

1946: The AA Grapevine announced: "AA has 6,000 members in 180 groups."

1939: Lois W Home Replacement Fund started at Alcoholic Foundation

1942: Richmond Walker, author of "Twenty-Four Hours a Day," had his last drink.

1946: Long form of 12 Traditions was published in AA Grapevine for the first time.

1946: The A.A. Grapevine announced, "A.A. has 6,000 members in 180 groups."

1948: The A.A. Grapevine reported \$2.00 was sent to the General Service headquarters of A.A. in New York, asking for "a bottle of Alcoholics Anonymous".

1951 – Al-Anon was founded by Lois W. and Anne B.

Thanks to Billy C. and Nancy O. for this list

Step 5 – OBJECTIVE OF THE 5TH STEP

1. To look honestly and completely at the wreckage of our past in order to identify those character defects that have gotten us into trouble. These are the defects we will need to work on in Steps 6 and 7.
2. To identify the specific instances and behaviors of the past that we want to put behind us so we can begin anew with a clean slate. This part of the 5th Step relates to the amends we will become willing to make in Step 8 and will actually make in Step 9.
The 5th Step is both humbling and freeing.
3. To experience a needed sense of humility by admitting to God, to ourselves and to another human being, “the exact nature of our wrongs.”

5TH STEP-OBJECTIVES (CON'T)

3. To feel guilt and remorse about what we had done & to motivate us to do something about our character defects in the Steps to come.
4. To discover that we can both forgive others and receive forgiveness from them.
5. To rid us of our terrible sense of isolation and loneliness. At the end of the 5th Step, to relieve our guilt and reduce our shame. Once the 5th Step is over, we need had no more guilt or shame about anything that we have done in the past. We are FREE.

Once the 5th Step has been taken, we have been completely honest with ourselves and another human being.

The fruits of a well-executed 5th Step are relief, forgiveness and healing.

The Twelve Step Expression, “*We are as sick as our secrets.*” Only revealed secrets can be healed.

Step 5 is about starting over. The AA Big Book says: “*Once we have taken this Step, withholding nothing, we are delighted. We can look the world in the eye. We can be alone at peace and perfect peace and ease. Our fears fall from us. We begin to feel the nearness of our Creator. We may have had certain spiritual beliefs, but now we begin to have a spiritual experience. The feeling that the drink problem has disappeared will often come on strongly. We feel we are on the Broad Highway, walking hand in hand with the Spirit of the Universe.*”

With the 5th Step, we begin to have a spiritual experience.

CHECKLIST – TRADITION FIVE www.aagrapevine.org © AA Grapevine, Inc. These questions were originally published with a series of articles on the 12 Traditions that ran from November 1969 – September 1971. While they were originally intended as suggestions for individual use, many AA groups have since adopted them as a basis for wider discussion.

Each group has but one primary purpose – to carry its message to the alcoholic who still suffers.

1. Am I willing to fully explain to newcomers the limitations of AA help – even though they may get mad at me for not giving them a loan? Or dating advice? Or help with a job?
2. Have I ever imposed on any AA member for a special favor or consideration simply because I am a fellow alcoholic?
3. Am I willing to Twelfth-Step the next newcomer without regard to who or what is in it for me?
4. Do I help my group in every way to fulfill our primary purpose?
5. Do I remember that AA long-timers, too, can be alcoholics who still suffer? Do I try both to help them and to learn from them?
6. Does our group ever use money from the basket for dinners or events or for memorials for members who have passed on?

Accept Direction

Hence it was most evident that a solitary self-appraisal, and the admission of our defects based upon that alone, wouldn't be nearly enough.

We'd have to have outside help if we were surely to know and admit the truth about ourselves—the help of God and another human being. Only by discussing ourselves, holding back nothing, only by being willing to take advice and accept direction could we set foot on the road to straight thinking, solid honesty, and genuine humility.

- *Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions*, (Step Five) p. 59

Thought to Ponder

A fear faced is a fear erased.

AA-related 'Alconym'

P R I D E = **P**ersonal **R**ecovery **I**nvolves **D**eflating **E**go



Trust God, Clean House, Help others; Keep Coming Back, Get a Sponsor, Work the Steps-

A man in a hot air balloon realized he was lost. He saw a person on the ground and yelled down to him, "Can you help me? I don't know where I am." The man replied, "Sure, I'll help you. You are in a hot air balloon hovering 30 feet above the ground...between 40 and 41 degrees North latitude and between 59 & 60 degrees West longitude."

"Wow, you must be an AA sponsor", said the man in the balloon. "I am", said the man, "but what gave me away?"

"Well", answered the balloonist, "everything you told me is technically right but I am still lost. Frankly you're not much help at all and you might even have delayed my trip."

"You must be an AA sponcee", replied the man. The man in the balloon was amazed and said, "I am, but how did you know?"

The man on the ground said, "Well, you don't know where you are or where you're going. You have risen to where you are due to a lot of hot air. You are expecting other people to solve your problems and the fact is that you are in exactly the same position you were in before we met, but somehow now IT'S MY FAULT!"

DAILY REFLECTIONS

MAY 17th

MYSTERIOUS WAYS

"... Out of every season of grief or suffering, when the hand of God seemed heavy or even unjust, new lessons for living were learned, new resources of courage were uncovered, and that finally, inescapably, the conviction came that God does 'move in a mysterious way'. His wonders to perform."

TWELVE STEPS AND TWELVE TRADITIONS. PAGE 105

After losing my career, family, and health, I remained unconvinced that my way of life needed a second look. My drinking and other drug use were killing me, but I had never met a recovery person or an AA member. I thought I was destined to die alone and that I deserved it. At the peak of my despair, my infant son became critically ill with a rare disease. Doctors' efforts to help him proved useless. I redoubled my efforts to block my feelings, but now the alcohol had stopped working. I was left staring into God's eyes, begging for help. My introduction to AA came within days, through an odd series of coincidences, and I have remained sober ever since. My son lived and his disease is in remission. The entire episode reminded me of my powerlessness and the unmanageability of my life. Today, my son and I thank God for his intervention.

The above May reading is a good one – it can remind us today, that no matter how bad we think we have it – there is someone else out there who has it worse and could use your help. Remember – "This too shall pass." Even more importantly our Primary Purpose – to "help the alcoholic who is still suffering!" Watch out for the next guy God puts in your path! He may be the one you can give what you got to keep it!

POWER

"Power does not corrupt. Fear corrupts, perhaps the fear of loss of power."

—John Steinbeck

In my recovery, I am beginning to understand that so much "power" in the world is really fear. The power that seeks to attack first in order to feel secure is really fear. The power that always must have an answer is really fear. The power that arrogantly refuses to listen is really fear. So much power is "fear" dressed in illusion!

Spiritual power has the ability to be vulnerable. It can live with confusion. It can stand alone. It allows others to walk away to pursue their happiness. Spiritual power can exist in suffering and loneliness, and it does not expect perfection.

My recovery is teaching me to live and let others live, too. My freedom must respect the freedom of others; respect is a two-way street!

Give me the power that can rest in imperfection.

Father Leo

IF YOU HAVE A STORY YOU WOULD LIKE SUBMIT TO YOUR KCCO NEWSLETTER, DON'T HESITATE TO SEND AN EMAIL TO: siscram@gmail.com OR, [graaweb](http://graaweb.com) TO [@sbcglobal.net](http://sbcglobal.net) PS – We'd love to hear from you!

Some more updated news –

Intergroup Office (AKRON) Open for retail sales on May 12

Using guidelines issued by the State of Ohio, on Tuesday May 12, 2020 the Akron Intergroup Office will open with restrictions and resume retail sales. Only the front retail portion of our building will be open. Restrooms will not be available. Posted occupant limits for social distancing must be respected and masks must be worn. Please limit visits to sales and donation transactions only; continue to handle what you can by phone and internet. The Akron AA archives and historical displays/tours will continue to be closed. When a re-open date is available it will be posted here.

HOURS: Monday – Friday 9:00 am – 5:00 pm. Closed Saturday and Sunday

Onsite Founders' Day 2020 Has Been Cancelled – Online Event Will Be Held Instead!!

The Founders' Day 2020 Event, which was scheduled for June 12-14 at Akron University, has been cancelled. We are in the process of organizing a two-day online event Saturday June 13th and Sunday June 14th 2020. For more information as it becomes available, please visit the [Founders' Day website](#).

This is what is listed on the FOUNDERS' DAY WEBSITE :

Onsite Founders' Day 2020 at Akron University is Cancelled

Instead, We Are Holding a Special Two-Day Online Event Sat June 13th & Sun June 14th 2020.

Please check back for further updates – we will have more information to share soon. As previously announced, the on-site event at the University of Akron has been canceled this year and everyone who pre-registered for the on-site event will be receiving a full refund.

THERE YOU HAVE IT! IN THIS CASE, SOME NEWS IS BETTER THAN NO NEWS!

STAY TUNED FOR MORE ON FOUNDERS DAY 2020 – WILL PROBABLY BE THE LARGEST ATTENED ZOOM MEETING IN HISTORY! THANK YOU, GOD FOR INTERNET & WIFI!

