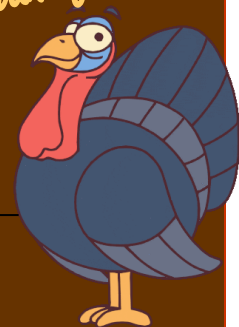




HAPPY! JOYOUS! FREE!

What are YOU
thankful for?



November 2023 Issue - KCCO Newsletter

Kent County Central Office

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

Office Phone (616) 913-9216 (M-F, 1-5 PM)

AA 24-hour Hotline (616) 913-9149

Website: www.grandrapidsaa.org

Upcoming Events

Friday Evening Speaker Meetings

November 3, 10, 17, & 24
7 p.m., North Alano Club

District 7 Business Meeting

Saturday, November 4
10 a.m. to 1 p.m.
Boys in the Barn
South Alano Club, Wyoming

Fall Gratitude Dinner

Saturday, November 4
6 to 8 p.m., South Alano Club

KCCO Business Meeting

Thursday, November 16
6 p.m., KCCO

Spring Roundup

April 27, 2024
North Alano Club

Michigan State Convention

June 7-9, 2024
(see attached flyer)

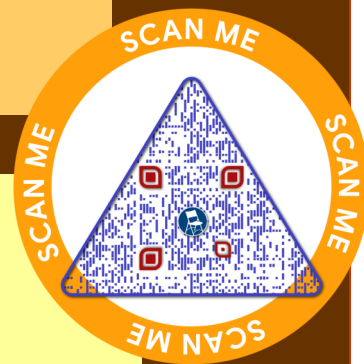
KCCO continues to seek
volunteers for our
24-hour AA hotline.

A one-month commitment of
4 hours is needed every week.
Morning and afternoon shifts
are available.

If you can help, please call
Steve at 616-913-9216 .

NEED TO FIND A MEETING?

Scan the QR Code at right, or go
to the AA meetings listing at:
www.grandrapidsaa.org/meetings



Do you practice an attitude of gratitude?

Thanksgiving in our society, and in most families, is a special day to express gratitude for the wonderful abundance of life. For those working a program of addiction recovery, gratitude becomes an essential daily practice, vital to ongoing serenity, sobriety, and life itself. How can something as simple as being grateful, and possessing an attitude of gratitude, help with addiction recovery?

From a young age, perhaps influenced by media, societal messages, or limiting self beliefs, many develop an attitude based upon lack - looking for what we don't have - things that are missing in our lives, and always striving for more. The simple act of being happy or content with our lot is often overlooked. Maybe even frowned upon.

What if we've been ignoring the one thing that can boost health and happiness and overall quality of life in sobriety? Science has now proven that gratitude promotes health and wellbeing in many areas of our lives, and socially, such as by promoting empathy. *It's not happiness that brings us gratitude. It's gratitude that brings us happiness.*

7 Ways to Practice Gratitude in Recovery

Like anything in life, gratitude takes practice. Our brains are continually forming new neural pathways, so why not make them pathways to happiness and health?

There are several ways you can practice gratitude. The first is simple daily mindful effort. There are also several practices that you can take up to keep you *focused* on gratitude. Here are seven gratitude practices that you can start today:

Continued on page 2 . . .

What is your local AA group up to?



Inquiring minds would like to know! We would be happy to promote your special events here, in this monthly publication. You can submit event information by emailing our Newsletter Editor at newsletter@grandrapidsaa.org. We request that any digital flyers or prepared materials be sent using a JPEG format. We look forward to being *in-the-know*, and passing on your information to others in our area!

Attitude of Gratitude, CONTINUED from page 1

1. Write a Thank-you Note

Write a thank-you note to someone, to share your appreciation for them.

2. Write in a Gratitude Journal

Dedicate a notebook to gratitude. Then write out 5 things that you are grateful for, daily.

3. Create a Gratitude Jar

Write what you are grateful for and why in a note, and place it in your gratitude jar, daily.

4. Perform Acts of Kindness

Practice simple acts of kindness, not telling the recipient that you have performed the act. Simply be kind, with nothing expected in return. Being kind, giving of self, promotes gratefulness. It shifts your attitude to one of gratitude.

5. Mentally Thank Someone

Think about someone you appreciate, and thank them in your thoughts for what they have done.

6. Pray

A more traditional way to practice gratitude is to pray. Express gratitude for what you experience in life.

7. Meditate

Quiet your mind, get present, and be grateful for all of the blessings in your life. Practice acceptance of what is, letting go of judgment of right or wrong or good and bad. This helps develop your attitude of gratitude. 'What is', simply is. And 'what is' is an opportunity to be grateful for whatever 'it is' presents. Meditate on that.



WE NEED YOUR HELP!

Do you have a clever suggestion for the title of our newsletter. You can submit your entries by email to:

newsletter@grandrapidsaa.org.

We would like to have our new title chosen by year's end and revealed in our January 2024 New Year's issue.



THE BIRTHDAY CLOB Celebrating Sobriety!



WHAT IS THE BIRTHDAY CLUB?

We will add your name, or that of someone you know, to our Birthday Club list, for a donation of the amount equal to your number of sober years. Names and sobriety dates will appear in our newsletter all year.

Mike W. - January 29, 2004

Anne S. - August 30, 1981

Tom W. - March 30, 1980

Steve C. - August 14, 2018

Ed B. - May 29, 2010

Dave P. - November 18, 2007

Ben S. - December 5, 1978

Pamela W. - 20 years

Sharron S. - April 12, 1984

Wanda W. - 33 years

Jim H. - July 5, 2005

PLEASE NOTE:

Inclusion of articles and announcements in *Happy! Joyous! Free!* does not constitute A.A or KCCO endorsement. Rather, members of the fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous are encouraged to share their experience, strength and hope through this humble publication. 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.

KCCO 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.

If you would like our KCCO newsletter sent to you through email, please send an email request to: newsletter@grandrapidsaa.org.

THE ELEVENTH STEP

"Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscience contact with God, as we understood Him, praying only for knowledge of His will for us, and the power to carry that out."

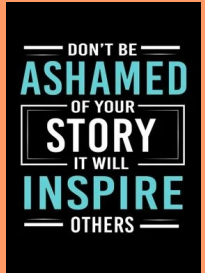
Lord, make me a channel of Thy peace - that where there is hatred, I may bring love - that where there is wrong, I may bring the spirit of forgiveness - that where there is discord, I may bring harmony - that where there is error, I may bring truth - that where there is doubt, I may bring faith - that where there is despair, I may bring hope - that where there are shadows, I may bring light - that where there is sadness, I may bring joy. O, Divine Master, grant that I may not so much seek to be consoled, as to console; to be understood as to understand; to be loved, as to love; for it is in giving that we receive; it is in pardoning that we are pardoned, and it is in dying that we are born to eternal life.

THE ELEVENTH TRADITION

"Our public relations policy is based on attraction rather than promotion; we need always maintain personal anonymity at the level of press, radio, and films."

Our relations with the general public should be characterized by personal anonymity. We think A.A. ought to avoid sensational advertising. Our names and pictures as A.A. members ought not be broadcast, filmed, or publicly printed. Our public relations should be guided by the principle of attraction rather than promotion. There is never need to praise ourselves. We feel it better to let our friends recommend us.

What's Your Story? We'd love to hear it! Let your story be heard. It just might be what another alcoholic needs to jump on the recovery bandwagon, or what encourages another to stay the recovery course. We all have a story. Will you share yours?



Thank you, Ben, for sharing your story! (Read on . . .)

My name is Ben D. My sobriety date is Jan. 2, 2017. I serve as the District 7 Grapevine Representative. I have held this position for the past 4 years. The spirit of rotation is normally 2 years but with the nuances of the last few years I stood for another 2 year term.

I originally sobered up at age 23 and remained clean and sober for over 10 years. We all know the story, got comfortable, complacent and sure enough the literature is correct: this disease is cunning baffling and powerful. After receiving a coin with an "X" on it, I let my guard down. It is not getting any better out there, and I am eternally grateful to have made it back to the tables. I have been back now 6 1/2 years, and had to take a hard look at not only what led up to my relapse, but what was missing.

Service comes in many ways, but I have chosen to live out my amends to the program of Alcoholics Anonymous by plugging in on the District level. I got a service sponsor who helped with rides the first few years. After 4 years of hard work, the State of Michigan reinstated my full drivers license.

I give back as a way of saying thank you. The friends and support I have found by serving as a GSR of my home group, and the Grapevine Rep., far outweigh the alternative.

My experience has taught me to be the change I want to see in the world, as opposed to forming resentments AND not doing anything about them. Sobriety has taught me, and many within the fellowship have shown me, to take action. I had a lot of questions, and I found the answers through willingness and plugging in. It is too easy to jokingly make cynical comments at a regular meeting about business meetings, District and Area meetings, but I have grown in this fellowship and am no longer ok taking what has been freely given to me for granted.

I had nothing to do with what AA was when I found my way to the tables, but I have everything to do with what it is when I am no longer here. I owe it to myself and the fellowship of AA. You can pretend to care, but you cannot pretend to show up. (My service sponsor taught me that one.) I am grateful to serve even when it's not what I may want to do. I grow each and every time. Isn't that my goal? They told me the same man will drink again.

One day at a time. I pray I will continue to grow in this fellowship. I believe the best is yet to come.

With gratitude,

Ben D. (reminding me to remain flexible)

KCCO Committee Business Meeting
October 19, 2023
Minutes

Present: Susie J. (Chairperson), Dave P. (Vice Chair), Steve C. (Office Manager), Peggy (Office Assistant), Shelley W (Treasurer), Emily B. (Secretary), Mike W. (Trustee #2), Damion L. (Young People Liaison), Jessica R. (Young People Liaison), Ed B. (Area 34 Alternate Delegate)

Present Online: Lisa D. (North Alamo Club Liaison), Tony (Newsletter Editor)

The Meeting opened with a moment of silence followed by The Serenity Prayer at 6:00pm.

Reports:

- Minutes and financial reports were submitted and approved.
- **District 7 Report:** Bids to host district 7 next year are open. The State convention will be at Calvin College in 2024. Elections will be held next month (November) at the South Club.
- **Young People:** Young People will be taking a month to host the Friday Night Speaker Meeting and volunteered for a panel at the 2024 Spring Round Up. The Young People Convention will be at Motor City Casino in Detroit November 24-26. Registration is \$30.
- **Web and Phone:** No updates at this meeting.
- **Call List:** New list is being created. Contact Steve at the office to be added to the list. Please announce this list at your meetings to get more people involved.

Round Up Business:

- Speaker is confirmed
- Shirts and Flyers will be proposed next meeting
- A motion was made to have Billy K cater the 2024 round up. **Approved.**
- A motion was made to have dinner tickets be \$30 each. **Approved.**
- A motion was made to have registration for the round up be free of charge again this year. **Approved.**
- Ed B will be asking Norm B to host a workshop on AA history at the Round up again this year.
- Young People will be hosting a panel.
- Shelley W volunteered to take care of Programming and be the point of contact for the event.

Old Business:

- **Office Move Update:** New Space will be available on October 27th. The office will officially be moving on November 5th at noon. Any one who is available to help would be much appreciated.
- **Laptop:** Tabled until next meeting
- **Newsletter:** Still Trying to figure out points of contact for different flyers and input for the newsletter every month. Otherwise, everything is on track.
- **North Alano Friday Night Fundraiser:** Basket will be donated to this event.
- **Fall Gratitude Dinner:** Dave will be getting pizzas and all sides. Jessica R Volunteered to pick up all baskets brought to the Office before the day of the event. Please keep announcing basket donations at your meetings.

New Business:

- **KCCO Committee Email Addresses:** Motion was made to have committee start using designated emails for each position. **Approved.** This will help make transitions to new positions easier to pick up where someone left off.

Next Meeting: Thursday, November 16, 2023 at 6:00pm at the Kent County Central Office. 4920 Plainfield Ave NE, Suite 19, Grand Rapids 49525. 616-913-2916

Option to attend via Zoom, hosted by District 7. **Meeting ID: 881 7063 2218**
Password: 23525

Send your GSR or someone to represent your group to have a voice in how your Central Office is run!

Meeting was adjourned with The Lord's Prayer at 7:50pm

Respectfully submitted,
Emily B. (Secretary)

**FRIDAY NIGHT
SPEAKER MEETING**

LOCATION: THE NORTH ALANO CLUB
1020 College Ave, NE, Grand Rapids, MI (Lower Level Balcony)
Phone 616-456-5709

Friday, November 3, 2023, 7:00 pm

Speaker: N/A

Home Group: N/A

Friday, November 10, 2023, 7:00 pm

Speaker: Gary R

Home Group: Tues Night Men's Stag

Friday, November 17, 2023, 7:00 pm

Speaker: Marsha G

Home Group: Second Chance

Friday, November 24, 2023, 7:00 pm

Speaker: Chris L

Home Group: Second Chance

Sponsored by Kent County Central Committee
4920 Plainfield NE, Suite 19, Grand Rapids, MI 49525

For any information call: 616-913-9216

MCYPAA 44

NOT A GLUM LOT

Register now
and book a room
at mcpaa.org!



November 24-26 | Motor City Hotel | Detroit

71st Michigan State Convention

combined with the

ECR Conference

June 7th-9th, 2024

Calvin University

3201 Burton S.E.

Grand Rapids, MI 49546



**CONNECTING WITH
LOVE**



UNITY



SERVICE

Keynote Speakers:

Friday: **Rich H.**, Hebron, IL

Saturday: **Madonna V.**, Auburn Hills, MI

Saturday Al-Anon - **TBA**

Sunday: **Barefoot Scott S.**, Hersey, MI

CARRYING THE A.A. MESSAGE OF RECOVERY

What makes an A.A. convention click for its participants?

It's probably not style or form that matters so much as the spirit and feeling behind it. As one member puts it, the best A.A. convention is "*just a darned good A.A. meeting blown up big.*" Just watch enthusiastic members at any A.A. convention and you'll get what he means. The atmosphere alone is worth the trip. Here you'll find fellowship, laughter, warmth, and understanding — "*heaped up, pressed down, and running over.*"

Mg-04 A.A. Guidelines, Conferences, Conventions, and Roundups

Please visit wmaa34.org for more information as it becomes available.

Co-Chair Contacts: **Linda B** 269.329.3159 • linbow421@gmail.com | **Brian S.** 616.366.5827 • digi@wmis.net



GRAND RAPIDS AREA MAP
 Calvin University
 3201 Burton Street SE
 Grand Rapids, MI 49506
 (616) 683-4122

DIRECTIONS:

- I-96 from Muskegon, use East Beltline exit.
- US-131 from Kalamazoo, use 28th Street exit.
- I-96 from Lansing, use Kentwood (28th Street) exit.
- M-6 from Holland, use Broadmoor (M37) exit.

Register here, or online at: wmaa34.org Look for the 2024 State/ECR Button

Registration Early: \$30 per person (before 5/1/24), after 5/1, \$35 Total Registration \$ _____

#1 Name _____ Email _____ Phone _____ Area _____ Home Group _____

#2 Name _____ Email _____ Phone _____ Area _____ Home Group _____

Dorm Lodging #1 6/7 6/8 Check if sharing with Registrant #2 Need a Roommate? _____
 Roommate gender preference _____

Choose one: Shared + Shared Bathroom \$30/night Private Room + Shared Bathroom \$45/night
 Shared + Private Bathroom \$40/night Private Room + Private Bathroom \$70/night

For shared occupancy, list roommate if registering separately or a roommate will be assigned by committee:

Dorm Lodging #2 6/7 6/8 Need a Roommate? _____
 Roommate gender preference _____

Choose one: Shared + Shared Bathroom \$30/night Private Room + Shared Bathroom \$45/night
 Shared + Private Bathroom \$40/night Private Room + Private Bathroom \$70/night

Dorm lodging can be reserved until 5/24/24. Total Dorm Lodging \$ _____

Meals 5-meal package-\$80 x _____ Sat. dinner only-\$18 x _____ Ice cream social-\$12 x _____ Total Meals \$ _____

Extra Contributions _____ Extra Contributions \$ _____
 If group contribution, provide group name _____ Grand Total \$ _____

To Reserve a room on line: HOTEL ONLY
 Guests will need to go to princecc.com
 At the bottom of the home page select Reserve A Room
 Below the banner click on RATE OPTION
 Type in the code: **DIGI**
 This will take you to the block dates and rates. Select from the room types available and click on the picture and then click **BOOK IT!**

Make Checks out to:
 2024 Michigan State Convention
Send Registration and Checks to:
 2024 Michigan State Convention
 PO Box 319
 Plainwell, MI 49080

If you encounter a problem, please contact, **Jim Nyhoff**
Hotel Operations Supervisor at 616-526-0107 or
 at jln3@calvin.edu and he will assist you as soon as possible.

Register/Dorms/Meals On-Line
<https://tinyurl.com/vptsx77j>
 or use the QR code

