

June 2005

Newsletter of the South Palm Beach County Intergroup Assn., Inc.

SCAAN

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Email: southcountyaa@bellsouth.net, & visit: www.aainpalmbeach.org
Also visit: www.alcoholics-anonymous.org & www.aagrapevine.org

What has happened...?

What happened? That question is being asked by a lot of alcoholics lately. What happened to our high success rate? Thirty and forty years ago, we were keeping 75% or more of the alcoholics who came to us for help. Today, we aren't keeping even 5%. What happened? What happened to that wonderful A.A. Group that was around for 20, 30 or 40 years? There used to be 50, 75, 100 or more at every meeting. It is now a matter of history, gone!

More and more groups are folding every day. What happened? We hear a lot of ideas, opinions and excuses as to what happened but things are not improving. They continue to get worse. What is happening? Bill W. wrote:

"In the years ahead A.A. will, of course, make mistakes. Experience has taught us that we need have no fear of doing this, providing that we always remain willing to admit our faults and to correct them promptly. Our growth as individuals has depended upon this healthy process of trial and error. So will our growth as a fellowship. Let us always remember that any society of men and women that cannot freely correct its own faults must surely fall into decay if not into collapse. Such is the universal penalty for the failure to go on growing. Just as each A.A. must continue to take his moral inventory and act upon it, so must our whole Society if we are to survive and if we are to serve usefully and well."
(A.A. Comes of Age, PG 231)

With so very few finding lasting sobriety and the continued demise of AA groups, it is obvious that we have not remained willing to admit our faults and to correct them promptly. It appears to me that the Delegate of the Northeast Ohio Area, Bob Bacon, identified our mistakes and our faults when he talked to a group of AA's in 1976. He said, in essence, we are no longer showing the newcomer that we have a solution for alcoholism. We are not telling them about the Big Book and how very important that Book is to our long-term sobriety. We are not telling them about our Traditions and how very important they are to the individual groups and to Alcoholics Anonymous as a whole.

Rather, we are using our meeting time for drunk-a-logs, a discussion of our problems, ideas and opinions or "my day" or "my way." Having been around for a few years, and reflecting on what Bob Bacon had to say, it would appear that we have permitted newcomers to convince the old-timers that they have a better idea. They had just spent 30 or more days in a treatment facility where they had been impressed with the need to talk about their problems in Group Therapy Sessions. They had been told that it didn't make any difference what their real problem was; A.A. had the "best program." They were told that they should go to an A. A. meeting every day for the first 90 days out of treatment. They were told that they shouldn't make any major decisions for the first year of their sobriety. And what they were told goes on and on, most of which are contrary to the program of Alcoholics Anonymous!

Apparently, what they were told sounded pretty good to the A.A. members who were here when the Treatment Center clients started showing up at our meetings. And a lot of the A.A. members liked the idea of the treatment centers because the centers provided a place where they could drop off a serious drinker, if he or she had insurance. That eliminated some of the inconveniences we had been plagued with before; having to pour orange juice and honey or a shot of booze down a vibrating alky to help them "detox".

.....continued on pg.3

The Step & The Promise

Step Six

"Were entirely ready to have
God remove all these defects of
character"



The Promise

"We will lose interest in selfish
things and gain interest in our
fellows."

INTERGROUP MINUTES – APRIL 27, 2005

Chairperson: Diane S. filled in for Rick G. who was unable to attend. Diane opened the meeting with a moment of silence followed by the Serenity Prayer. Henry read the Twelve Traditions. New representatives introduced themselves: Holly from We Are Not Saints and Danielle from One Page At A Time. The February minutes were approved.

Treasurer: John S. reported March closed with a loss of \$1,208 and only a small percentage of Groups contribute on a regular basis. If it were not for last years Gratitude Dinner we would not be able to pay the monthly bills. John reported the air conditioner in the Intergroup office is starting to have problems and is our responsibility to repair and/or replace which could cost any where from a couple hundred to a couple thousand dollars. John thanked the faithful groups that contribute and asked how can we reach the other groups to contribute. Helen T. stated that other areas get additional funds from their Birthday Club and suggested an article in the SCAAN about our Birthday Club might help.

Office Manager: Pam T. thanked Tara, Julie and Danielle for volunteering to help in the office. Pam also reported that World Service is increasing all books \$1.00 (except the Big Book) starting July 1. A new computer was needed and Pam thanked Bob M for his many hours of service setting it up.

General Service Liaison: Jim M. reported the International Food Fair is scheduled for Saturday May 14th at the Fern House in WPB and flyers are available. Volunteers and food are needed and the 'Snow White and the seven character defects' skit will be performed. Jim also reported about the \$42,000 debt occurred from the 2003 Convention and stated there is an article in the SCAAN. There were several questions about how this could happen. Ron S. shared his experience with helping with the Sponsorship weekend and how meeting rooms, hospitality rooms and coffee are given in exchange for guaranteed room rentals and if enough rooms are not taken the weekend has to pay for the meeting rooms etc., which could be quite expensive. Helen T. reported that several new changes are being set in place to eliminate this from happening again.

Group Information: No report.

Intergroup Dinner: No report.

Institutions Committee: Charlie O. thanked all the volunteers who attended the meeting before the Intergroup meeting and reported 31 meetings for March and 70 Big Books, 51 12&12, 72 Grapevines plus some pamphlets and meeting lists were given out. Charlie stated contributions are low this month and they are doing the best they can with what they have.

Public Information: No report.

SCAAN / Website: No report.

Speaker Exchange: Barbara McG. reported only one speaker request for the month.

Special Needs: Abby K. reported this committee is new and is available to the membership.

Telephone Relay: Albert M. was not able to attend however Central House volunteered for October and North Delray Step and Traditions volunteered for November. This leaves only the month of December open. THANK YOU to all the groups that have volunteered to keep this committee going strong.

Where and When / Internet Liaison: Al A. reported every thing is going well and if you have any changes please email them to him or call the Intergroup office.

Old Business: Special Events - Tara H from One Page At A Time and John W from North Delray Step and Traditions volunteered to co-chair the Special Events Committee together.

New Business: John S. reported that the possible lack of attendance at the monthly Intergroup meetings might be due to groups celebrating anniversaries. John asked each member to bring to their group the possibility of changing the monthly Intergroup meetings from the last Wednesday of each month to the third Wednesday to increase attendance. The meeting adjourned at 8:00 PM with the Lord's Prayer. In Love and Service, Tara H.

A.A. Announcements

New Meetings / Old Meetings

New: **Living In Sobriety – (CSL) Closed Speaker Lead**
Wednesdays @ 7:00 pm
St. Joan Of Arc Church, Boca Raton

Temporary Location Change:
West Boca Friendship Group (OSD)
Sundays @ 11:00 AM
Southwinds Golf course to Coconut Cove Waterpark,
11200 Park Access Rd., Boca Raton 33498

A General Service FYI....

The June General Service monthly meeting is on June 19th Father's Day. It is at 3PM due to the Area Delegate's report of what happened at the General Service Conference in NY.

Hospitals and Institutions Committee needs your old literature...any edition, any condition.

\$\$Donations gladly accepted\$\$

Have your Intergroup Representative bring books or cash to the month-end Intergroup meeting or contact the South County Intergroup office.

***** In Loving Memory*****

We would like to take a Special Moment.... To remember with love and gratitude for their gift of sobriety, hours of service, moments of wisdom.

Ron C., Home Group - Central House
Bill D., Home Group - Serenity Hour

South Palm Beach County Intergroup Inventory Questions

June's Question:

Do we practice the spirit of rotation in all of our service positions? (11th Concept)

July's Question:

While the least possible organization is our tradition, some are mandatory: are we structured correctly? (9th Tradition)

August's Question:

Are we mindful of the committee system: that decisions affecting other groups or AA as a whole are not made in the dark or by a single individual? (11th Concept)

September's Question:

Is everyone given a chance to participate in our elections, on our committees and 'at the mike' at Intergroup meetings? (4th Concept)

Continued from pg. 1..... When A.A. was very successful, the folks who did the talking in meetings were recovered alcoholics. The suffering and untreated alcoholics listened. After hearing what it takes to recover, the newcomer was faced with a decision; "Are you going to take the Steps and recover or are you going to get back out there and finish the job?" If they said they "were willing to go to any length," they were given a sponsor, a Big Book and began the process of recovery by taking the Steps and experiencing the Promises that result from that course of action. This process kept the newcomer involved in working with others and continued the growth of our Fellowship.

Our growth rate was approximately 7% per year and the number of sober members of Alcoholics Anonymous doubled every 10 years. With the advent of the rapid growth of the Treatment Industry, the acceptance of our success with alcoholics by the judicial system and endorsement of physicians, psychiatrists, psychologists, etc., all kinds of people were pouring into A.A. at a rate greater than we had ever dreamed possible. Almost without realizing what was happening, our meetings began changing from ones that focused on recovery from alcoholism to "discussion or participation" types of meetings that invited everyone to talk about whatever was on their mind. The meetings evolved from a program of spiritual development to the group therapy type of meeting where we heard more and more about "our problems" and less and less about the Program of Recovery in the Big Book and the preservation of our Fellowship by adhering to our Traditions.

What has been the result of all this? Well, never have we had so many coming to us for help. But never have we had such a slow growth rate which has now started to decline. For the first time in our history, Alcoholics Anonymous is losing members faster than they are coming in and our success rate is unbelievably low. ***(Statistics from the Intergroup Offices of some major cities indicate less than 5% of those expressing a desire to stop drinking is successful for more than one year; a far cry from the 75% reported by Bill W. in the Forward to the Second Edition).***

The change in the content of our meetings is proving to be misery-traps for the newcomer and in turn, misery-traps for the groups that depend on the "discussion or participation" type meetings. Why is this? The answer is very simple. When meetings were opened so that untreated alcoholics and non-alcoholics were given the opportunity to express their ideas, their opinions, air their problems and tell how they were told to do so where they came from, the confused newcomer became more confused with the diversity of information that was being presented. More and more they were encouraged to "just go to meetings and don't drink" or worse yet, "go to 90 meetings in 90 days." The newcomer no longer was told to take the Steps or get back out there and finish the job.

In fact, they are often told, "Don't rush into taking the Steps. Take your time." The alcoholics who participated in the writing of the Big Book didn't wait. They took the Steps in the first few days following their last drink. Thank God, there are those in our Fellowship, like Joe and Charlie, Wally, etc., who have recognized the problem and have started doing something about it. They are placing the focus back on the Big Book.

There have always been a few groups that would not yield to the group therapy trend. They stay firm to their commitment to try to carry a single message to the suffering alcoholic. They tell the newcomer "we have had a spiritual awakening as the result of these Steps and if you want to recover, we will see to it that you have a sponsor who has recovered and will lead you along the path the first 100 laid down for us."

Recovered alcoholics have begun founding groups that have a single purpose and inform the newcomer that until, they have taken the steps and recovered, they will not be permitted to say anything in meetings. They will listen to recovered alcoholics, they will take the Steps, they will recover, and then they will try to pass their experience and knowledge on to the ones who are seeking the kind of help we provide in Alcoholics Anonymous.

As this movement spreads, as it is beginning to, Alcoholics Anonymous will again be very successful in doing the one thing God intended for us to do and that is to help the suffering alcoholic recover. If the newcomer has decided he or she wants what we have and is willing to go to any length to recover, we ask the newcomer to take and apply our Twelve Steps to his or her life and protect our Fellowship by honoring our Twelve Traditions.

There is a tendency to want to place the blame for our predicament on the treatment industry and professionals. They do what they do and it has nothing to do with what we do in Alcoholics Anonymous. What they do is their business. That is not where to place the blame and also to do so is in violation of our Tenth Tradition. The real problem is that the members of Alcoholics Anonymous, who were here when the "clients" began coming to our Fellowship did not help the "clients" understand that our Program had been firmly established since April 1939, and that the guidelines for the preservation and growth of our Fellowship were adopted in 1950. They weren't told that they must get rid of their new "old ideas" and start practicing the Twelve Step Program of Alcoholics Anonymous as it was given to us. They weren't informed that until they had taken the Steps and recovered, they had nothing to say that needed to be heard except by their sponsor. But that didn't happen. To the contrary, the old-timers failed in their responsibility to the newcomer to remind them of a vital truth, "Rarely have we seen a person fail who has thoroughly followed our path. Those who do not recover are people who cannot or will not completely give themselves to this simple program."

We have permitted untreated alcoholics and non-alcoholics to sit in our meetings and lay out their problems, ideas and opinions. We have gone from, "Rarely have we seen a person fail" to "Seldom do we see a person recover." So there we have it. We have had 30 years of unbelievable success by following the directions in the Big Book. We have had 30 years of disappointing failure by wanting to hear from everyone. We now have something to compare. We now know what the problem is and we now know what the solution is.

Unfortunately, we have not been prompt to correct the faults and mistakes, which have been created by what would appear to be large doses of apathy and complacency. The problem we are trying to live with is needlessly killing alcoholics. The Solution? The Power greater than ourselves, that we find through our Twelve Steps, promises recovery for those who are willing to follow the clear-cut directions found in the Big Book.

Cliff B., Dallas, TX

INTERGROUP COMMITTEE

Chairperson, Rick G.
 Vice-Chair, Diane S.
 Treasurer, John S.
 Secretary, Nancey P.
 Office Manager, Pam T.
 General Service Liaison, Jim M.
 Group Information, Christine H.
 Institutions, Charlie O.
 Intergroup Dinner, Stephan C.
 Public Information, Bill J.
 SCAAN/Website, David R.
 Speaker Exchange, Barbara McG.
 Special Events, Tara H. & John W.
 Special Needs, Abby K.
 Telephone Relay, Albert M.
 Where & When, Al A.

BIRTHDAY CELEBRANTS

Don A. , Boca Mens & SOS **23 yrs**
Rob P., Boynton Beach Group **11 yrs**
Chris M., Boca Men's Central **9 yrs**
Pam T., Boynton Bch Grp/Central House **5 yrs**
Heidi M., Boynton Bch Grp **1 yr**
Abby K., Central House Grp **1 yr**

JOIN THE BIRTHDAY CLUB

If you or your group is celebrating an A.A. anniversary and would like to be added to the list of celebrants, please fill out this form and mail to the Intergroup office. Suggested donation is \$1.00 for each year of sobriety. This money is used to help the sick and suffering alcoholics in South Palm Beach County.

Name _____
 Address _____
 Home Group _____
 Sobriety Date _____
 Donation \$ _____

Clip and mail to:

South Palm Beach County Intergroup
 75 NE 6 Ave, Delray Beach, FL 33483

SCAAN SUBSCRIPTIONS

For monthly delivery of our newsletters, Please return this form to SPBC Intergroup With suggested donation of \$12/year:

NAME _____
 ADDRESS _____

MARK YOUR CALENDARS

- June 5** **Boynton Beach Group Annual Picnic "Celebrating 34 yrs"**
 Intracoastal Park, Boynton Beach
 11am-4pm \$5 – All Welcome!
 Water sports for kids of all ages
- June 10-12** **Founders' Day – Florida Style Tallahassee-Double Tree Inn**
 800-222-8733/www.doubletree.com
 Info: www.foundersdayfl.org
 Regina – 850-562-2440
- June 16 -19** **27th Big Book Seminar (Last Seminar with original facilitators) Embassy Suites, Boca Raton 561-994-8200**
 Seminar Info: 954-941-3042
 Reg. forms available at Intergroup
- June 19** **General Service District 8 @ Triangle Club, WPB 5pm**
- June 29** **SPBC Intergroup Meeting @ Central House 7pm**
- June 30 - July 3** **International Convention**
 Toronto, Canada
 AA 70th Anniversary
 Information: www.aa.org
- July 10** **General Service District 8 @ Triangle Club, WPB 5pm**
- July 15-17** **South Florida Area 15 General Service Quarterly @ The Hilton, St.Petersburg 727-894-5000/www.stpetehilton.com**
- July 27** **SPBC Intergroup Meeting @ Central House 7pm**
- Aug 3 - 7** **49th FL State Convention**
 Orlando, FL
 Wyndham Palace Resort
www.flstateconvention.com
- Aug 14** **General Service District 8 @ Triangle Club, WPB 5pm**
- Aug 31** **SPBC Intergroup Meeting @ Central House 7pm**
- Sept 1 - 4** **ICYPAA48**
 Young People in Alcoholics Anonymous
 New Orleans – Sheraton Hotel
 Information: www.icypaa48.org
- Oct 10 – Nov 6** **Gratitude Cruise Mariner of the Seas**
 561-477-5580
Cruise@sobercelebrations.com

**SOUTH PALM BEACH COUNTY INTERGROUP
FINANCIAL REPORT ~ APRIL 2005, YEAR-TO-DATE**

I N C O M E	A P R I L	Y E A R - T O - D A T E
BIRTHDAY CLUB	63	373
GROUP CONTRIBUTIONS	4,197	13,288
LITERATURE SALES	4,079	15,634
OLD TIMERS MEETING	0	0
ALCATHON	0	900
SPECIAL EVENTS		0
TOTAL INCOME	8,339	30,195
EXPENSES		
ADVERTISING	0	0
BANK SERVICE CHARGE	0	48
ELECTRIC	61	210
EMPLOYEE EXPENSES	2,562	10,559
INSURANCE (LIABILITY)	75	315
LITERATURE (BOOKS,CHIPS,MEDALLIONS, ETC)	2,899	12,473
OFFICE EXPENSES	727	1,706
OFFICE REPAIRS	115	227
PRINTING (SCAAN / WHERE & WHEN)	283	1,621
QUARTERLIES & MEETINGS	0	169
RENT	617	2,470
TELEPHONE (OFFICE & CELL)	388	1,234
SPECIAL EVENTS	0	0
TOTAL EXPENSES	7,727	31,032
INCOME MINUS EXPENSES	612	(\$838)
PETTY CASH BALANCE 4/30/05	\$ 150	
PRUDENT RESERVE BALANCE 4/30/05	\$ 6,000	
OPERATING ACCOUNT BALANCE 4/30/05	\$ 2,202	

<p>Inventory Balance \$ 7,821</p> <p>(inventory balance is not included in figures above)</p> <p>Keep those H&I donations coming!</p>
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HOSPITAL & INSTUTIONS	
BALANCE 3/31/05	\$ 529.77
GROUP DONATIONS	26.00
INTERGROUP DONATION	100.00
PERSONAL DONATIONS	287.00
EXPENSES	(534.00)
BALANCE 4/30/05	\$ 408.77
THANK YOU	

SOUTH PALM BEACH COUNTY INTERGROUP
75 NE 6 AVENUE ~ SUITE 208 ~ DELRAY BEACH, FL 33483
PHONE - 276-4581 ~ email southcountyyaa@bellsouth.net
OFFICE HOURS ~ MONDAY ~ FRIDAY 9am to 5pm ~ SATURDAY 10am to 3pm

SOUTH PALM BEACH COUNTY INTERGROUP ~ 2005 GROUP CONTRIBUTIONS

	APR	YTD		APR	YTD		APR	YTD
BOCA RATON			Wed Night Beginners			Depression & The Alcoholic	17	75
Happy Hour		200	We're Just Beginners		20	Double Digit Gang		120
Journey to Freedom			Just Do It		25	Young At Heart		
Saturday with Bill W	200	200	Mon Night Step & Tradition			DELRAY BEACH		
Boca Friendly		450	First Things First			Central House		
N Boca Step & Tradition	425	429	Last Chance Candlelight			Young People w/Solution	43	435
Sat Night Live @ Five		301	Sober Friday Night		200	Westside Delray		352
Prime Time Sunset Step			Spiritual Candlelight			Beach Meeting (Tues)		
Women Living Sober			West Boca Serenity			Delray Step & Tradition		
Keep It Simple			WEST BOCA RATON			Wine Into Water		200
We Agnostics	15	30	West Boca Beginners		50	Monday Night Miracles		
Women's BB Study			Boca Boyz	100	196	New Beginning		
Spiritual Awakening	180	255	Sunday Night Speaker			Five Time Losers		
Sobriety On Sunday		800	9 th Chapter			One Paragraph At A Time		
Boca AA Study	40	120	Friendship Group		50	Oceanside Step	5	5
Lets Do Lunch			BOYNTON BEACH			Sunday Night Men's		
Lunch Bunch	76	644	Boynton Beach Group		130	Open Your Heart		
Today Not Tomorrow		100	Downtown Group	48	103	Delray Recovery - DAF		
Women In Recovery		222	Sat Boynton Beach BBSS		100	Language Of The Heart		
Step Into The Solution			North Delray Step			Bridge Back To Life		
Big Book Adventure	72	245	Boynton Beach Men's			LAKE WORTH		
B.A.S.I.C.S.			Friday Night Special			Wednesday Nite Women's		
By The Book			Saturday Evening Post			Saturday Sobriety		
Men-On-Track		600	West Boynton			LANTANA		
Men's Boca Central	200	200	Neighborhood			Sunny Isles		
Inner Voice Candlelight			Re-Entry Group		60	Grapevine Group		
Easy Does It		145	KISS Group			Lake Worth Serenity		
Road To Recovery	40	40	We Are Not Saints	140	305	Recovery First		
Boca Men's / St Gregory		400	Experience, Strength, Hope			Lantana Group, Monday	14	14
Boca Men's Recovery		20	Line By Line			Lantana Group, Thurs		
Boca Women's		10	Safe Harbor	50	100	Serenity On The Beach		
We Believers		60	DELRAY BEACH			Cardinal Lane		23
Just For Now	24	661	Sunrise(at the Beach)7am		260	Women's 4 th Dimension		
Steps & Traditions			Beach At Atlantic 7am			Sobriety in the Wind I I	4	204
123 Step Group	200	500	CROSSROADS CLUB					
BOCA PINES CLUB			One Day At A Time	300	600	ANONYMOUS	26	48
Sobriety For Breakfast		34	Sober Solutions			INTERGROUP 7 TRADIT	34	149
Sunday Serenity	83	133	Big Book Study			FCYPAA		
Morning Medicine	60	150	Living Sober Women		50	TOTAL CONTRIBUTIONS	\$4,197	\$13,288
Saturday Beginners	240	240	Downtown Delray 10am					
Sunday Morning Spiritual	135	135	Serenity On Saturday					
12 O'clock High		300	Midday Miracles	800	800			
Something Old, New...			Serenity Hour	625	625			
Living Sober			Women's Step By Step					
Sober Sunset			East Delray Men's					
Peace Of Mind		125	Second Chance Women's					
Step & Tradition		20	Thank God Its Friday		100			
Romance & Finance		120	4 th Step Workshop					
Singleness of Purpose		81	Sobriety In The Wind					
Primary Purpose								

**ATTENTION ALL GROUPS – Please check your group contributions and if you have any questions please call or email Intergroup and Pam will help you.
Phone 276-4581 or email southcountyyaa@bellsouth.net**