

INTO ACTION

CONFIDENTIAL
June/July 2010

*Perhaps it isn't Steps **4/5** that Needs Repeating*

*~But to Take a Real Look at Steps **6/7***

~REPLACING OUR WILLFULNESS WITH GOD'S WILL FOR US~

Step Six:

6.) Were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character.

Page 63 of the 12X12:

"THIS is the Step that separates the men from the boys." So declares a well-loved clergyman who happens to be one of A.A.'s greatest friends. He goes on to explain that any person capable of enough willingness and honesty to try repeatedly Step Six on all his faults - without any reservations whatever - has indeed come a long way spiritually, and is therefore entitled to be called a man who is sincerely trying to grow in the image and likeness of his own Creator.

Pages 68-69 of the 12X12:

If we would gain any real advantage in the use of this Step on problems other than alcohol, we shall need to make a brand new venture into open-mindedness. We shall need to raise our eyes toward perfection, and be ready to walk in that direction. It will seldom matter how haltingly we walk. The only question will be "Are we ready?"

Looking again at those defects we are still unwilling to give up, we ought to erase the hard-and-fast lines that we have drawn. Perhaps we shall be obliged in some cases still to say, "This I cannot give up yet . . ." but we should not say to ourselves, "This I will

never give up!"

.... The moment we say, "No, never!" our minds close against the grace of God. Delay is dangerous, and rebellion may be fatal. This is the exact point at which we abandon limited objectives, and move toward God's will for us.

Step Seven:

7.) Humbly asked Him to remove our shortcomings.

Page 70 of the 12X12:

Since this Step so specifically concerns itself with humility, we should pause here to consider what humility is and what the practice of it can mean to us.

Indeed, the attainment of greater humility is the foundation principle of each of A.A.'s Twelve Steps. **For without some degree of humility, no alcoholic can stay sober at all.** Nearly all A.A.'s have found, too, that unless they develop much more of this precious quality than may be required just for sobriety, they still haven't much chance of becoming truly happy. Without it, they cannot live to much useful purpose, or, in adversity, be able to summon the faith that can meet any emergency.

(Continued on page 2)

(Continued from the front page)

Page 76 of the 12X12:

The Seventh Step is where we make the change in our attitude which permits us, with humility as our guide, to move out from ourselves toward others and toward God. The whole emphasis of Step Seven is on humility. It is really saying to us that we now ought to be willing to try humility in seeking the removal of our other shortcomings just as we did when we admitted that we were powerless over alcohol, and came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity. If that degree of humility could enable us to find the grace by which such a deadly obsession could be banished, then there must be hope of the same result respecting any other problem we could possibly have.

A few gathered notes on Steps 6 and 7:

- ❖ *Twelve and Twelve* set me right. It calls Step Six AA's way of stating the best possible attitude one can take in order to make a beginning on this lifetime job." (12X12; page 65)
- ❖ **I took out the list of defects, read it over, and asked myself two questions:**
 - 1.) *Why are you holding on to these things? &*
 - 2.) *What did these things ever do for you*

(I may choose to hold on to them for fear of letting go, but holding on to them for years and years led me into alcoholism.)
- ❖ We get active with Step Six when we get sick and tired of being sick-sick and tired of the character defects of which alcoholism is a symptom, sick and tired of their effect, not on our past, but on our present lives.
- ❖ In this ongoing process, the Program is asking us to go where none of us has ever been before-into lives of :
- ❖
 - lessened fear,**
 - diminished anger,**
 - fewer resentments, and**
 - genuine self-esteem instead of self-pity.**

- ❖ There are four basic reasons we won't be "entirely ready" to work the Sixth and Seventh Steps.
 1. A conscious decision that we will never give up a specific character defect.
 2. We blame our defects on others: people, situations, or institutions
 3. We rationalize (*justify, make excuses*)
(RATIONALIZATION: BB; Page 550: Rationalization is giving a socially acceptable reason for socially unacceptable behavior and socially unacceptable behavior is a form of insanity.)
 4. We are in denial
- ❖ The order of the Twelve Steps occurs for a reason. There's not much use in doing our amends in Steps Eight and Nine if there is no sign of our willingness to change by doing Steps Six and Seven.
- ❖ Working Steps Eight and Nine is hollow unless we've begun working the Sixth Step with humility as our guide
- ❖ Yes, the Sixth Step is also about surrendering, just like the Third. But Shoemaker made one point very clear: We surrender as much of ourselves to as much of God as we understand. In other words, our spiritual progress is based in direct proportion to removing defects and practicing principles.
- ❖ Others have called these Steps the most important. **Perhaps the whole program is about Six and Seven.** Some have called the Sixth and Seventh Steps the "**forgotten Steps**" because they aren't talked about that much.
- ❖ By working the Sixth and Seventh Steps, we are less likely in recovery to stay stuck in old, unproductive, negative behavior patterns. We gain more understanding on how all the Steps, although ordered for a reason, need to be worked together.
- ❖ (6 & 7) This prevents us from falling into the trap of understanding only just enough of the Program to make us miserable and not enough to make us happy.
 - For example, some of us might fall into the trap of thinking the support system of the fellowship (meetings) is the entire Program of action.**

(Continued on page 3)

(Continued from page 2)

- ❖ If our sponsor is a good one, perhaps he or she responds that maybe *it isn't the Fourth or Fifth Step that needs repeating, but that it is time to take a real look at the Sixth and Seventh.*
- ❖ Rather than blaming the Program and the people in it for the flatness in our life,
Maybe it's time to **rejuvenate the growth process through a jump start of the Sixth and Seventh Steps.**
- ❖ Remembering that the Program helps those who help themselves.
- ❖ The Program works for those who understand it.
- ❖ Steps 6 & 7 don't say "give me" (gime), but REMOVE. When "God" removes our defect the replacement is automatic. "Nature abhors a vacuum", Meister Eckhart.
- ❖ When my selfish will (Defect) is removed God's will automatically replaces it. **To know God's will is to know what God's will isn't.**
 - ⊗ **Fear into Faith**
 - ⊗ **Hate into Love**
 - ⊗ **Egoism into Humility**
 - ⊗ **Anxiety and Worry into Serenity**
 - ⊗ **Complacency into Action**
 - ⊗ **Denial into Acceptance**
 - ⊗ **Jealousy into Trust**
 - ⊗ **Fantasy into Reality,**
 - ⊗ **Selfishness into Service,**
 - ⊗ **Resentment into Forgiveness,**
 - ⊗ **Judgmentalism into Tolerance,**
 - ⊗ **Despair into Hope,**
 - ⊗ **Self-Hate into Self-Respect, And**
 - ⊗ **Loneliness into Fellowship.**

MORE SHARES ON STEPS 6 & 7 WITHIN.....

Submitted by the editor:

International Conventions

1st A.A. International, Cleveland, 1950
 2nd A.A. International, St. Louis, 1955
 3rd A.A. International, Long Beach, 1960
 4th A.A. International, Toronto, 1965
 5th A.A. International, Miami, 1970
 6th A.A. International, Denver, 1975
 7th A.A. International, New Orleans, 1980
 8th A.A. International, Montreal, 1985
 9th A.A. International, Seattle, 1990
 10th A.A. International, San Diego, 1995
 11th A.A. International, Minneapolis, 2000
 12th A.A. International, Toronto, 2005
 13TH A.A. International, San Antonio, 2010

INTO ACTION Editorial Policy

INTO ACTION News is a bimonthly newsletter of District 11; NIA 20 of Alcoholics Anonymous. It is about, by and for the Members of the Fellowship of AA. Opinions expressed herein are NOT to be attributed to AA as a whole, nor does publication of information imply any endorsement by AA. Quotations and artwork from AA literature are reprinted with permission from AA World Service, Inc. and/or The AA Grapevine; Inc. Submissions are edited for space and clarity ONLY. Contact information is required and anonymity is respected.

The Ten Points

1. Completely give yourself to this simple Program.
2. Practice rigorous honesty.
3. Be willing to go to any lengths to recover.
4. Be fearless and thorough in your practice of the principles.
5. Realize that there is no easier, softer way.
6. Let go of your old ideas absolutely.
7. Recognize that half measures will not work.
8. Ask God's protection and care with complete abandon.
9. Be willing to grow along spiritual lines.
10. Accept the following pertinent ideas.
 - (a) that you cannot manage your own life;
 - (b) that probably no human power can restore you to sanity;
 - (c) that God can and will if sought.

THEME FOR THE AUG/SEPT ISSUE OF INTO ACTION IS: STEPS 8 & 9 or anything you wish to submit.

INTO Action: District 11's Newsletter
 Editor: David Gilbert 815-344-6523
 E-mail: Soulsurgery@comcast.net
 Co-Editor: Justin K. "Voices of District 11"
 E-mail : Caius_4@yahoo.com

District 11 G.S.R.
 Meetings Are Held
 On 1st Thursday of
 the Month at the
 McHenry Alano Club;
 409 Front Street-Unit 1
 (route 31) McHenry, IL



District Meeting 7:30 PM

DISTRICT 11's WEB SITE:

<http://www.aa-nia-dist11.org>

District 11 Secretary

aadistrict11sec@yahoo.com

SOBERFEST WEB SITE

<http://www.soberfest.org/>

NIA 20 *EVENTS* WEB SITE:

<http://www.aa-nia.org/events.html>

Live Links

****SCHEDULE INFO CHANGES:**

PLEASE CALL LINDA S., 815-678-4129 OR

Bill J. ~ ~ EMAIL AT:

schedulemaker@ymail.com

CONTRIBUTIONS

From Group (Name) _____

Group #: _____

Dist. #: _____

Meeting City: _____

Northern Illinois District Eleven

P.O. Box 846

McHenry, IL 60051-0846

N.I.A. Treasurer



Northern Illinois Area, Ltd.

P.O. Box 3926

St. Charles, IL 60174

The General Service Office

AAWS

P.O. Box 459

Grand Central Station

New York, NY 10163-0459

[Group Contributions ~ Mail To:]

DCM REPORT

May 6th, 2010

Hello !

First I want to thank everyone that came out to help or participate in the Pre-General Service Conference Workshop that we hosted. It was a great success in that we had about 150 AA members from area 20 discussing the work that we want our General Service Office to carry out for us. Thank you All!

I attended the Spring Committee Meeting in La Fox on May 1st and much of my report is based on information obtained there. I have made copies of a couple documents that Ray M., our Delegate, gave to us at the committee meeting. One of which is a "summary of certain actions taken by the general service Conference". Another is a financial statistics page that I found interesting. Ray also said that online contributions to GSO should be possible this month and there is a new young peoples video called Animation that should be available May or June. Ray spoke very highly of this video.

I am talking to Carmela R., DCM for District 10, and also some other DCM's in our area about co-hosting a Post General Service Conference Report so that we may have an opportunity to hear about the work that was done at the Conference and the work that is to be carried out by GSO. The deadline for the next issue of the Concepts, our Area's newsletter is June 10 and he seeking stories about AA clubs(issues?). I am sure any AA related submissions would be welcome. The NIA treatment facility website is up and running and looks like it can be a useful tool. There is a link from the NIA website. District 20, NIA's Spanish speaking District is splitting into two more manageable districts.

At the Summer Assembly in June there will be an election for an Area Corrections Chair and also Alternate Public Information Chair. In District 11 we are still in need of an Alternate DCM and Alternate Treasurer. Please bring this back to your groups.

Thank you for allowing me to be of service,
 Brandon Long
 DCM District 11, Area 20
 (815) 219-1667
psychicchange@gmail.com

Minutes for District 11

May 6th 2010

(Editor's Note: Dates and times contained in the following minutes are a reflection from the minutes taken on May 6th, not the date of this publication.)

Meeting Time: 7:30 PM • Attendance: 46
Committee Members 12 • Groups Represented: 31

Anniversaries Nick 2 years, Megan 4 Years,
Bill 4 years, David 7 years, Rich 22 years

**CONGRATULATIONS ON ALL
ANNIVERSARIES!**

Secretary's Report:..Glen R (alt Mary F)

Written committee report forms must be submitted to the secretary to be included in the minutes. The new E-Mail for the secretary is aadistrict11sec@yahoo.com

Treasurer's Report: Linda I (alt open)

Starting Balance	\$6269.05
Expenses	\$2691.88
Income	\$1381.76
Ending Balance	\$4958.93

Dist 11 Contributions Mar/Apr 2010

135244	Fri Men's Group, McHenry 1st Unit	151.00
657604	Living Sober group	72.00
657318	Fri 12&12 Huntley	50.00
141413	M/W/F 10 am Serenity Group	120.00
653347	Fri BB Burtons Bridge	60.00
675712	St.Mary's Attitude Adj,C.L.	300.00
691143	Unusual Suspects, Cary	30.00
689268	Mon Night BB	60.00
150979	Clean Air Group	240.00
691690	12&12 Group	50.00
614507	Winners & Beginners	470.00
657321	Mon Big Book Huntley	50.00
672942	Thu Priority BB	60.00
		1713.00

Public Information Report Nick (alt Brian B)

We attended McHenry county substance abuse town hall meeting 4/12/10., there is an open invitation from Todd Weihofen, director of Lake moor, to us the town hall for meetings. Met with counselors from Woodstock High School. And have made contact with McHenry High school. Looking to be involved with these schools next year. Request from Lakemoor to drop off pamphlets at their city hall.

Hospital & Treatment Report Mike R (alt Dave R)
All is good; Bridge the gap is doing fine

Corrections Report: Chuck L, (alt Julie Z)

Added 8 men to attend meetings, increasing to 4 volunteers per meeting. Added 4 females so we have 3 per meeting each week. We now have 2 men meeting each night lasting 1 hour each.

CPC Report: John S: (alt Nate P)

Got 2 packets of information together for both McHenry High Schools which I delivered. Personally talked with Dr Roberts the principle of West about getting a presentation together for faculty and students, have not heard from East

Answering Service Report: Fred G' (alt Justin K)

Received 97 calls total as followed: 67 meeting info, 2 open meetings 4 out of district, , 13 wanted to talk to AA, 2 AI-anon, , 1 NA/CA, 4 treatment info, 2 solicitors, , 1 needed a ride, 0-10 min 71, 11-20 min 15, 21-30 min 4 over 30 min 2

Archives Report: Clarence J, (alt open)

No report

Grapevine Report: Steve L, (alt Brad B)

No report

Special Needs Report: Pat C, (alt chuck d)

Chuck attended special needs workshop in Bartlett. Been contacting the elder community about advertising AA in senior voice newspaper and placing literature at local senior centers, attended the pre-general service conf.

LCM Report: Steve S, (alt Justin K)

Looking into having each Alano club to have their own LCM to attend all meeting and to get the GSR's more involved.

Workshop Report: Craig C, (alt Sue C)

Workshop was held 5/1/2010, thanks to the flying geese group for hosting. And all the other groups that participated. About 80 persons attended and the discussions surrounding the group and AA were very informative, the café style of the event made for a wonderful evening.

Any group interested in hosting a workshop please feel free to contact me. (Contributed on the next page)

(Continued from page 5)

Up-dated by editor:

Newsletter Report: Dave G , (Alt Justin K.)

The dead line for the Aug/Sept issue is JULY 24th.

The theme will be Steps 8 & 9 or anything you wish to submit. Share your or your groups experience, strength and hope or event news.

Webmaster Report: Chuck T

No report

Schedule Maker Report: Linda S

Sent to district and area websites the new schedules.

Old Business:

Still looking for alternate DCM and Alternate Treasury Chair.

State conference planning committee report



2010 Illinois State Conference Planning Committee Report

To: District 11

May 6th, 2010

We, the members of our District 11 host committee, consider it an honor and privilege to serve as host for this year's Illinois State Conference, taking place in just 106 days, 15 weeks, **August 20-22nd at the Wyndham Hotel and Conference Center in Lisle, Illinois, a site easily accessible for all three Delegate Areas in Illinois.** We are excited about the theme for our conference, *A Vision for You*, and are hoping to build on the enthusiasm generated at the 2010 International Convention with that same theme. Our program is being developed around it.

We would like to thank the Flying Geese Group for successfully piloting the "café" style workshop last weekend.

Our hope is to use that experience to host a "Vision for You Café at our conference in August.

Your 2010 Illinois State Conference Planning Committee meets every third Sunday of the month at 3PM in Classroom "A" at Centegra, McHenry Hospital (SW corner of Bull Valley Rd. and Rt. 31). Our next meeting is Sunday, May 16th at 3PM.

Thank you to all of you who have stepped up as groups and individuals to let us know we are all together in this endeavor. Please call us and/or visit the District 11 Website to contact us to participate in any way.

<http://www.aa-nia-dist11.org/>

District 11 Website

<http://www.aa-nia.org>

NIA 20 Website

<http://www.aa-nia.org/events.html>

NIA Events page with hotel link

Please share our Report and Registration forms with your Home Group members and help us bring awareness to our collective responsibility. Early registration is critical to the success of our Conference. As of today, we have 27 conference and banquet registrations. Our realistic goal is 700 conference and 350 banquet registrations. As you can see, we have a ways to go with our vision for you. We are however encouraged by the calls and e-mails from you, asking how you can help. One way you can do that is to help bring awareness to our conference, model the way and register early. Our NIA website provides a downloadable, printable registration form. Send your check or money order payable to the 2010 Illinois State Conference. Our NIA Web-administrator also provided a link for hotel room registration.

- Hotel room rate @\$92, registration cost of 20 and banquet @ \$32

Respectfully Submitted,

The Members of the ISC 2010 Planning Committee



The Age of Miracles

<http://soberfest.org>

Soberfest Website

Visit us Soon

Register on Line after June 9th

(Continued on the next page)

(Continued from the previous page)

Upcoming Events

- **Saturday, May 22nd – Winners and Beginners Third Annual Anniversary Party.** No Charge. Fellowship and dinner/refreshments start at 5: pm; the Open AA meeting and speaker starts at 7: pm. Messiah Lutheran Church, 25225 West Ivanhoe Road, Wauconda, Il.
- **June 12, 12th Annual Friends of Bill W. Steak Fry. Softball Game at Noon, Horseshoes, and Volleyball...Tickets must be purchased BY: June 6th.** \$10.00 for adults dinner (Steak) \$2.00 for kids hot dog plate. Open Speaker Meeting at 6: pm. Harvard Moose Shelter, Route 173 1 mile west of route 14 Harvard, Il.
- **Jun 19 Summer Assembly/Post-GSC/Panel 60 Delegate Report-** Weitendorf Agricultural Education Center, Joliet
- **Jul 1-4 2010 AA International Convention/"A Vision for You"--San Antonio, TX**
- **July 22, 23& 24: Benet Lake Summer Retreat;** Fri-Sun; (Steps 1-12) \$175.00
For further information call:
Marilyn C.: 847-865-5376
- **July 9-11, 2010: "Came To Believe" Retreat** \$120.00
The Salvation Army Wonderland Camp & Conference Center
9241 Camp Lake Rd, Camp Lake, WI 53109
The Clarence Snyder Legacy (AA, Al-anon, ACOA)
For further information call 414-698-4194 or 262-745-2090
- **August 7th : Soberfest Al-anon Fundraiser;** McHenry Township Hall; 3703 N. Richmond Road; Johnsburg
- **Aug. 6-8: 23rd Annual Getaway; Nicolet Forest Campground,** N3116 Highway 55, White Lake, WI. 54491-Visit the 2010 AA Getaway Website! <http://www.aagetaway.com>

Open Mic

- Justin- Asked for help on the LCM'S committee,
- Sue suggested each club have their own lcm
- Brenda- 6/12/2010 12th Annual Friends of Bill W. Steak Fry Harvard Moose Shelter (see flyer)
- Steve thanked Dave G for a good 4th Step Workshop

The next district meeting will be held on ****

Thursday, **JUNE 3RD, 2010** •THEN **JULY 1ST**

Respectfully Submitted, Glen Reid, Secretary;
Mary F., alternate secretary



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Bill W., 1959, referring to the Grapevine.

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McHenry
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NOV. 19-21**

<http://soberfest.org>

AA Conference *Speakers* Banquet *
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Workshop * Literature * Archives

ON LINE REGISTRATION AFTER JUNE 9

GRAND GENEVA RESORT - Lake Geneva, WI

Report on the 60th General Service Conference Practicing AA's Principles - the Pathway to Unity

Presented by Ray Mengler, Panel 60/Area 20 Delegate

Spiritual Principles••Trust•Self-support•Carrying the Message•Anonymity

Actions taken at the 60th GSC (General Service Conference)

ISSUE

ACTION

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Procedures for hiring the GSO/General Manager Concept V minority appeal Executive Sessions of the General Service Board 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Comprehensive review of guidelines for hiring GSO/GM Draft 12-Step procedure for submission of appeals to GSC Trustees' Sharing Session to be open and reported on
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Procedures for hiring the GSO/General Manager Concept V minority appeal Executive Sessions of the General Service Board 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Comprehensive review of guidelines for hiring GSO/GM Draft 12-Step procedure for submission of appeals to GSC Trustees' Sharing Session to be open and reported on

SELF-SUPPORT --Based on its review of Fellowship sharing, Conference Finance Committee concluded:

- Majority of Fellowship **did not** favor a limit on literature profits.
- Fellowship agrees with the Trustees' policy on self-support:
Income from literature sales should only be in amounts required to allow continued provision of vitally needed services and maintenance of a prudent reserve fund.

BRIEF SUMMARY OF CERTAIN ACTIONS BY 2010 GSC

Archives	Consid	Workbook	Suggested revisions to Workbook adding activities for local committees
	Consid		Accepted report not to undertake streaming self-guided tour on AA website
CPC	Consid	Workbook	Gather sharing on need for sample format for 1-on-1 contact w/ professionals
	Consid	Workbook	Consider showing videos "AA CPC," "Hope," young people videos
	Consid	Workbook	Develop service piece/sample letter re value of AAGV/LV/LVAA
Corrections	Recom'nd	various	Revisions made re volunteer orientation and facility rules
			Continued gathering sharing re local solutions used to resolve perceived difference between facility rules/regs and what AA is/isn't
Literature	Recommit	"Meds/Drugs"	Dissatisfaction over stories and dual purpose of pamphlet.
	Recom'nd	"Q&A on Spons"	Approve revised pamphlet
	Recom'nd	spirit. pamph	Draft/progress report to be presented at 2011 GSC
	Recom'nd	"Freq. Asked Qs"	Revised language re closed meeting
	Recom'nd	"Armed Services"	Update and include vets
	Recom'nd	"Living Sober"	Minor updating rewrite.
	Failed	early women	Expressed rationale: lack of widely expressed interest among Fellowship
Public Info	Recom'nd	"My World" (PubServAnn)	Approved w/ centralized distribution and tracking
	Recom'nd	"Understnd Anon"	Revised language re protection of anonymity of friends/relatives of deceased
	Recom'nd	"Animation"	Approved with change to one informational frame
	Recom'nd	"AA at a Glance"	Change "drying out" to "detox" and "sanitarium" to "rehabilitation"
	Recommit		Request to prepare draft policy re full-face actors
Trtmnt/ SpNds-A	No action		Request for add'l backgrnd re impact of use of "treatment" vs. "treatment facility"
		Workbook	Add "Hope" and Young Peoples videos to

**Partial
Information
Only -
See Your GSR**

GENERAL SERVICE OFFICE FINANCIAL OVERVIEW						
GENERAL SERVICE OFFICE	2008		2009		2010 Budget	
Contributions	\$6,462,760		\$6,296,110		\$6,350,000	
Interest	2,206		\$450		\$300	
Literature Profits	<u>2,706,929</u>		<u>3,760,764</u>		<u>3,852,893</u>	
Total Income	\$9,171,895		\$10,057,324		10,203,193	
G.S.O. Expenses	<u>9,447,260</u>		<u>8,783,762</u>		9,160,198	
Profit (Loss)		(275,365)		\$1,273,562		\$1,042,995
A.A. GRAPEVINE						
Publishing Income	1,740,417		1,784,611		2,023,610	
Interest	<u>66,200</u>		<u>45,900</u>		<u>45,900</u>	
Total Income	1,806,617		1,830,511		2,069,510	
Expenses	<u>1,945,073</u>		<u>1,963,105</u>		<u>2,315,251</u>	
Profit (loss)		(138,456)		(\$132,594)		(245,741)
LA VIÑA						
Publishing Income	44,890		50,405		47,897	
Expenses	<u>121,154</u>		<u>104,877</u>		<u>126,861</u>	
Profit (loss)		(76,264)		(\$54,472)		(\$78,964)
Excess of Revenue Over Expense		(\$490,085)		1,086,496		\$718,290

MEMBER STATISTICS	2007	2008	2009
Cost of Service per member per year	\$6.49	\$7.04	\$6.46
Cost of Service per group per year	\$146.18	\$157.21	\$142.64
Number of members reported	1,314,552	1,342,380	1,358,879
Number of groups reported	58,340	60,093	61,581
Contributions for member per year	\$4.82	\$4.69	\$4.50
Contributions per group per year	\$111.86	\$107.55	\$102.24
Literature contribution to Service cost	\$1.67	\$2.35	\$1.96

The Pause Prayer--"As we go through the day we pause, when agitated or doubtful, and ask for the right thought or action. We constantly remind ourselves we are no longer running the show, humbly saying to ourselves many times each day "Thy will be done." We are then in much less danger of excitement, fear, anger, worry, self-pity, or foolish decisions. We become much more efficient. We do not tire so easily, for we are not burning up energy foolishly as we did when we were trying to arrange life to suit ourselves." **Big Book** pgs 87-88

Voices of District 11

Shares on Steps 6 and 7

1.)

The memory still rings clear as a bell. I was only several months removed from a drink. Sitting in my sponsor's living room couch, I had just gotten done sharing my very first 5th step. It was a watershed moment to put it mildly. Benjamin was the first human being I had ever opened up to on such a gut level. Being in a deep fog and a slow learner, yet wanting what Alcoholics Anonymous had to offer, several things had become apparent to me. The first was that resentment would kill me from the inside out. and secondly, that I was not so terribly different than the average alcoholic.

Benjamin reached for the Big Book on the coffee table. handing it to me he instructed me to read the 6th step. I began, "Were entirely ready to have God...." "Stop!" he interrupted, "read it again". Once again I started, and once again was cut short by Ben when I had gotten to the word God. This continued several more times. Finally, I asked what point he was trying to make. To this he replied, "Were entirely ready to have God stop me from doing the things that I cannot stop doing". was I entirely ready? If you were to ask me that question, at that moment, I would have given you a quick affirmative and meant it too. Shortly thereafter, he had me on my knees reciting the 7th step prayer found on page 76. This was my first experience with steps 6 and 7.

On through the years, my sponsor and others would constantly encourage me to dive into our co-founder Bill W's essays on 6 and 7 in the Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions when there would be upheavals in my daily living. I have found both chapters, especially 7, to be a treasure trove of guidance and wisdom.

From the get go, early on, one thing that had me scratching my head was the fact that the term "defects" were used in step 6 and then "shortcomings" in 7. Some people hold the opinion that the two are one in the same.

I have heard others claim that there is a distinct difference between the two words. After attendance at many meetings and listening to both sides of the argument, the Twelve and Twelve comes to the rescue for me. Bill writes near the top of page 65 in step 6, about most of us being born with an abundance of natural desires. He describes the measure of a defect or shortcoming as having that desire drive us blindly or demand it supply us with more pleasure or satisfaction than we are due. This makes sense to me. it is my belief that both terms are covered under the umbrella of that definition. I am basically dealing with unhealthy extremes of something God-given.

The 7th step reads, "Humbly asked Him to remove our shortcomings". What does humbly mean? What is humility. It has been well stated that steps 6 and 7 can be boiled down to

"not doing what I want to do" and "doing what I don't want to do". Now that is something I can digest. I need to be an "opposite man", as it were. A prime example, I had the opportunity to pass on some non-edifying information about a colleague from work yesterday. the temptation was there and I would have drawn some serious laughter at his expense.

I prayed instead and asked God to help me keep my mouth shut. It worked. Referring to our Twelve and Twelve once more, the phrase "character building" is mentioned over and over. On page 72, Bill outlines the basic ingredient of all humility as a desire to seek and do God's will. In appreciation of 6 and 7, as well as all of the steps, character is built and God's will is done in my life.

Submitted Anonymously

2.)

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

Boy, was I. Probably the biggest defect of character I had to overcome would have to be my negative attitude. God seemingly all but removed it. I would feel compelled to stir it up any chance I could get. It wouldn't matter if I had been drinking or not. My fuel was getting someone fired up or just tearing them down. I was under the belief that I needed to bring someone down to my level in order to make myself feel better. That or I would just tell outlandish lies to make others think I was some kind big shot. Knowing I was full of it! I guess I felt like the world owed me something and was going to say or do whatever was necessary to get it.

THE LIGHT SHINES BRIGHTEST THROUGH BROKEN GLASS

It was shortly after having done my 5th step that God intervened again and not only did I start to understand what it was to have a conscience but to have the awareness to look at it from the other side.

All the people I've hurt along the way. All the relationships I ruined and the jobs, opportunities wasted. I knew that it was time to forgive myself and turn it over to God.

Humbly ask him to remove my shortcomings...

Awareness is for me without a doubt one of, if not the biggest things that God gives to me on a daily basis. Without it I would be lost. It gives me the ability to take that step back and think things through before making bad decisions. The ability to choose my words carefully before I speak so that I don't have to make amends. Having the wherewithal to look at things from another point of view, rather than mine so that I don't develop resentments.

Humbly, to remain Humble! I have to remind myself that it is what it is and I no longer have to control outcomes! Thy will be done! That's it in a nutshell for me. God will do all he can for me as long as I never forget what brought me to this point. Using the tools that this program has given to me. I know that if I can keep my side of the street clean God can and will do the rest! May God bless you and keep you!

Submitted Anonymously

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Voices of District 11

Shares on Steps 6 and 7

3.)

Steps six and seven are a corner stone of my sobriety today. Its kinda funny to me because when I think of my first real look at them I was most confused about them. In building my relationship with God I've come to understand them a little better. I still struggle with turning things over sometime. I believe I still get confused between my will and Gods will. There's the part in the 12&12 where it says, this is the step that separates the men from the boys. Witch always reminds me of where I was at with the first step in the beginning. The, our lives had become unmanageable part. For me the unmanageable part I finely began to realize was my total inability to controls how I felt. Which in turn I couldn't control how I acted or reacted toward life in general.

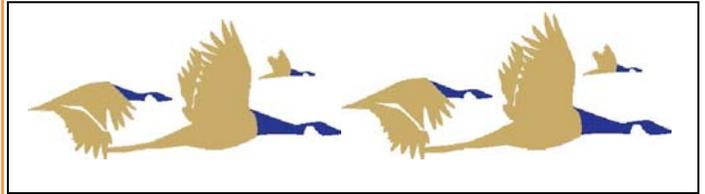
Those are thing I drank over for years and the things that had a big effect on how my relationships were with God and other people. Once I personally was able to see that, I was able to move forward with the rest of the step. So that bring me back to the men and the boys statement, because it was when I began to see that being a man had nothing to do with maturing beyond puberty.

It was no long reacting towards life in a immature and childish manner. In other words if when my feeling get in the way of how I act towards life I know I'm putting me before God instead of God before me. I love the 7th step prayer out of the Big Book. It is simple enough if I could just apply it regularly without fault. But I'm human and my will is insufficient that why I need prayer. Personally for me the sixth and seventh are an everyday thing. Without this wonderful program I wouldn't even have a relationship with God let alone be talking about one. Today the saying, without God I am nothing means everything to me.

Humbly asking Him to remove our shortcoming dose not come without seeking humility. I found when I had first heard the old timers say that humility was something desirable I began to realize I understood humility as something different. Its funny how your perspective changes the longer you stay sober. I have found some of the more humbling experiences for me happens in a group conscious. What one might think is good for a group, a group might decide different. Accepting a groups decision can be a learning experience weather the group is right or not. For me the humbling thing is having the right to be wrong. And knowing a group can't be wrong as long as it has the primary purpose in mind. Carrying the message to the Alcoholic who still suffers.

Submitted Anonymously

CORRECTION: The New Meeting in Carry, "A Vision for You", Tuesdays Night meets at 7:00pm (Not 7:30) at St. Barnabas Lutheran Church-8901 S. Cary-Algonquin Road- -Mitch P. 847-525-2758* Justin K. 847-815-8664* Christine G. 847-489-4471



The Flying Geese 8:00 a.m. Saturday Morning Women's meeting at the Crystal Lake ALANO Club has been my home group for almost 12 years. My first sponsor's sponsor was one of the women that started the group somewhere around April 1997. At the time I wasn't really into chatting with women which is why my sponsor "suggested" that I attend only women's meetings. But this wasn't just a women's meeting, it was a life saver for me. The following story says it all.

In the fall when you see geese heading south for the winter, flying along in a V formation, consider what science has discovered about why geese fly this way. As each bird flaps its wings, it creates uplift for the bird immediately following. By flying in a V formation, the whole flock adds at least seventy-one percent greater flying range than if each bird flew alone. People who share a common direction and sense of community can get where they are going quicker and easier too when they are traveling on the uplift of one another. When a goose falls out of formation, it feels the drag and resistance of trying to go it alone.

It quickly gets back into formation to take advantage of the lifting power of the bird immediately in front. If we have as much sense as a goose, we will stay in formation with those who are headed the same way we are going. When the lead goose gets tired, it rotates back in the formation and another goose flies point. It pays to take turns doing hard jobs. Geese honk from behind to encourage those up front to keep up their speed. We too say something when we "honk from behind". Finally, when a goose gets sick or is wounded and falls out of formation, two geese fall out and follow it down to help and protect it. They stay with the ailing goose until it is either able to fly or until it dies. Then they launch out on their own to catch up with the former group or join another. Like the geese, the Saturday Women's Group of AA stands by each other.

When I first started attending the Flying Geese they were times when there were three of us in attendance. Most of the time we barely met our rent commitment but as the years passed our flock began to grow.

(See next page please)

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We finally found our way to electing a GSR, who unfortunately didn't follow the spirit of rotation. Guess who? Me. But it kept me going to District meeting and being involved until the time came when someone new stepped up to the plate, and from that point on we had a new GSR and Alternate every two years.

Our Group has grown quite a bit in the past five years and three years ago we decided to do our first retreat. Not many of us had ever tried such an undertaking but it turned out to be a complete success and if nothing more than getting a lot of women involved in service and learning how to work together as a sober women. This year will be our third retreat and more women continue to be involved in the planning and preparation.

So we decided our next adventure would be to plan a workshop for District 11, and when trying to come up with a topic it seemed very appropriate to pick the **"AA Group – How it Works"**. We have elected officers for our Group and they rotate every six months, except for our Treasurer. We have a Special Needs Chair to assist with one of our members that is home bound. But the question was what do other groups do and how do we find out?

We have the theme for the workshop but what about the style or format. Well an idea was presented to me as the Program Chair for the 2010 State Conference to do a **World Café** program for the conference. Since this was an atypical format we decided to try it out on the workshop first to see if it was effective, successful and fun. **The purpose of the workshop was to bring to the forefront, the importance of the AA Group, to raise an awareness, open doors that have never been, have everyone share their experiences, and explore questions that matter.**

Well our committees went to work, found a great facility, planned and purchased the decorations, food etc. The program committee worked hard to come up with the right questions, and then to find the right hosts for each of the ten tables, or topics.

TABLE 1

Host – Candace R.: PRINCIPLES BEFORE PERSONALITIES

TABLE 2

Host – Mary F.: THE AA GROUP

TABLE 3

Host – Jane S.: TYPES OF AA GROUPS

TABLE 4

Host – Matt S.:WHAT IS THE SERVICE STRUCTURE INSIDE THE AAGROUP?

TABLE 5

Host – Cheryl B.: THE NEWCOMER AND THE GROUP

TABLE 6

Host – Pat C.: THE GENERAL SERVICE REPRESENTATIVE (GSR)

TABLE 7

Host – Rich H.: MEETINGS, GROUPS, & CLUBS "OH MY!"

TABLE 8

Host – Nate' G.:

TABLE 9

Host – Dean G.: THE AA GROUP AS IT RELATES TO A.A. AS A WHOLE

TABLE 10

Host – Dan M.: THE GROUP INVENTORY

But the real fun began when the noise maker sounded and the rounds began, and everyone started discussing the table topics with the Hosts.

As people moved from table to table it was very obvious that everyone was enjoying themselves. At ten minute intervals the noise makers sounded again and I am not sure which sound was loader, the nose makers or the grunts from the participants that their time was up. Everyone seemed deeply engrossed in their table conversations and as I traveled around the room it appeared that a lot of sharing was taking place.

Our plan was to share the results of this workshop, the ideas and thoughts that came out of the discussion. But as I prepare this report and type up all the notes the total number of pages is already more than 10 and there are four more tables of notes to be typed. So that may be more than can be shared in an article in our District newsletter but the true results are in the hearts and minds of those who planned, prepared and participated in this event. One of our volunteers shared that this was the first time she ever attended and did service work at an AA workshop. **This is what it is all about, raising the awareness, getting people involved, helping people realize that they can make the difference. There would be no AA without you!**

The comments and notes from the tables will be available as a document at the District 11 meeting. And yes, we will be having a **Café on the "AA Group – How it works" at the 2010 IL State Conference on August 20 – 22, 2010.** If your Group would like to participate please give me a call. What is your vision for AA?

Heard Around the Tables ***District 11's Wisdom and Witticisms***

- ⊕ I am grateful for the people that I have in my life that lead by example and when they come to a turning point show me how to choose growth over comfort.
- ⊕ **I was a periodic drinker.--I drank. Period.**
- ⊕ Self-acceptance is more important than self-abuse.
- ⊕ **I cannot abuse myself into spirituality by shaming and ridiculing myself.**
- ⊕ God, I don't care what I sound like, or look like, who my partners are, or where I live. I just don't want to be like this anymore. On Your terms, in Your time, please remake me as You will. Thank You.
- ⊕ **Defects of character are our best attempts to get our needs met.**
- ☺
- To err is dysfunctional. to forgive co-dependent**

Additional Information

- **June 12, 12th Annual Friends of Bill W. Steak Fry. Softball Game at Noon, Horseshoes, and Volleyball...** Tickets must be purchased BY: June 6th. \$10.00 for adults dinner (Steak) \$2.00 for kids hot dog plate. Open Speaker Meeting at 6: pm. Harvard Moose Shelter, Route 173 1 mile west of route 14 Harvard, IL.
 - **Jun 19 Summer Assembly/Post-GSC/Panel 60 Delegate Report-** Weitendorf Agricultural Education Center, Joliet
FLYER LINK = http://www.aa-nia.org/pdf/events/Summer_assy.pdf
 - **June 11-13, 2010 10th Annual Midwest Motorcycle AA Convention (MMAAC) Pearl City, IL**
FLYER LINK = <http://www.mmaac.org/>
 - **Jul 1-4 2010 AA International Convention/"A Vision for You"--San Antonio, TX**
INFO LINK = <http://www.aa.org/lang/en/subpage.cfm?page=211>
 - **July 22, 23& 24: Benet Lake Summer Retreat; Fri-Sun; (Steps 1-12) \$175.00**
For further information call:
Marilyn C.: 847-865-5376
 - **July 9-11, 2010: "Came To Believe" Retreat \$120.00**
The Salvation Army Wonderland Camp & Conference Center
9241 Camp Lake Rd, Camp Lake, WI 53109
The Clarence Snyder Legacy (AA, Al-anon, ACOA)
For further information call 414-698-4194 or 262-745-2090
- <http://www.icypaahost.org/>
- **August 7th : Soberfest Al-anon Fundraiser; McHenry Township Hall; 3703 N. Richmond Road; Johnsburg**
 - **Aug. 6-8: 23rd Annual Getaway; Nicolet Forest Campground, N3116 Highway 55, White Lake, WI. 54491-Visit the 2010 AA Getaway Website!**
INFO LINK = <http://www.aagetaway.com/>
 - **August 20-22 Illinois State Conference**
FLYER and Registration INFO = <http://www.aa-nia.org/pdf/events/ISC.pdf>
 - **November 19-21 21st Annual McHenry Soberfest 2010 -REGISTER ON LINE AFTER JUNE 9TH.**
LINK INFO = <http://www.soberfest.org/>