



AA Area 73 District 11 Newsletter

September 2023 Volume 104

West Virginia – Wild, Wonderful, and Sober

Grapevine Corner

“The thing is, if I don’t have sobriety, I don’t have anything.” - Matthew Perry

“Sometimes we motivate ourselves by thinking of what we want to become. Sometimes we motivate ourselves by thinking about who we don’t ever want to be again.”
- Shane Niemeyer

“Getting sober is a radically creative act.” - Meredith Bell

“The only person you are destined to become is the person you decide to be.” - Ralph Waldo Emerson

It’s September already! Kids have gone or are going back to school and vacations are winding down but we still have almost a month of summer left. This month’s Grapevine Magazine cover is Young and Sober and features members who came into AA at an early age. I have a good friend in AA who got sober at the age of 22 after 10 years of drinking. She just celebrated 35 years of sobriety at our home group and a few of her friends from the beginning of her sobriety attended the celebration. It was a lovely meeting.

As usual, I digress, but it’s not a shortcoming I plan to let go of any time soon. The titles of the young and sober members’ stories include: “The good life”; “Young and sober in Akron”; “Pitcher’s last stand”; “Way beyond”; “Get the fun going”; “Glad I got here when I did”; and “All in for ITALYPAA!” Grapevine magazine has put out another fine edition this month.

Last month I listed some of the books available from Grapevine publications. Here are a few more:

The Home Group: Heartbeat of AA - This updated anniversary edition includes extra stories and a brand-new chapter on meetings using technology, showing how members have adapted to meet new challenges. A great way to start an AA meeting.

For Beginners Book Set - The For Beginners Book Set includes two great collections: "Beginners' Book: Getting & Staying Sober in AA" and "One On One".

9th Step

Made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others.

9th Tradition

A.A. as such, ought never be organized; but we may create service boards or committees directly responsible to those they serve.

9th Concept

Good service leadership at all levels is indispensable for our future functioning and safety. Primary world service leadership, once exercised by the founders, must necessarily be assumed by the trustees.

9th Promise

Our whole attitude and outlook upon life will change.

9th Reward

Real friendships instead of loneliness.

Forming True Partnerships - This collection of Grapevine stories shows the many ways members use the Twelve Steps, sponsorship, and the tools of the program to improve and repair relationships, old and new.

Fun in Sobriety - Features 50-plus inspiring stories by members of Alcoholics Anonymous about the many ways they've learned to have a good time after putting down the drink. Chapters include travel, outdoor activities, arts & hobbies, social entertainment, fun-filled AA activities and sober events.

To receive the Grapevine quote of the day, log on to www.aagrapevine.org and provide your email address at the end of the quote. Grapevine has started providing stories of the week in email which is another good reason to sign up. While on the you can subscribe to The Grapevine magazine, order books, and play with the sobriety calculator among other things. Please don't forget to read At Wit's End which is near the end of the magazine.

*Also, every Monday is Grapevine's fun half-hour Grapevine Podcast. It features jokes, interviews, and member sharing at www.aagrapevine.org/podcast. You can also follow Grapevine on Instagram at: [alcoholicsanonymous_gv](https://www.instagram.com/alcoholicsanonymous_gv).

And finally, a few words of wisdom:

"I'm sick of following my dreams, man. I'm just going to ask where they're going and hook up with them later." - Mitch Hedberg

"Clothes make the man. Naked people have little or no influence in society." - Mark Twain

"People who are wrapped up in themselves make small packages." - Benjamin Franklin

Pat McElroy

This month we have a special treat in receiving a wonderful article from a local long time AA member:

Campfire Circle Group remembrances

In my diary, the day of the first meeting, June 5, 1998, I wrote:

“Tonight is the first meeting of the Cacapon Group of AA. Outside meeting in the state park.”

That entry was June 5, 1998.

The next day, June 6, 1998, I wrote:

“The Cacapon meeting was nice. Paul K, Bob D, Dan K, Louie (new-comer), Smitty, and Barbara, a lady who moved here from Philly a few months ago.”

The above were the folks at that first meeting.

I assume that either the original folks called it the Cacapon meeting or Cacapon Group or that's just the way I chose to write it back then in my diary. At some point, likely within a year, the official name was adopted and registered at the General Service Office in New York: “Campfire Circle Group”.

Bob D. (known in our AA circles as “spiritual Bob”), was the cook at a local restaurant. If the group had a single founder, he would be it though I don't think that was ever explicitly stated, and he was humble enough that he would have shunned that designation.

(I was excited about being one of the folks at the first meeting. I was involved in the talk about starting the meeting. I was the only one who had experience in starting an AA group. It's nice to think that I played a role).

Paul K is an oldtimer who worked at a local resort. He and his AA wife moved to Martinsburg some years later. Paul was trying to help Louie,

who was drinking pretty heavily. His whereabouts after he left his local job are unknown.

I'm almost completely certain that Smitty was the AA member who was well known in Berkeley Springs as the "town drunk." He was in and out of sobriety over the years. His drinking was kind of "legendary" in that folks would wonder how he could continue to drink so very hard, get sober, and repeat this cycle so many times, and not die. Some years later, he did die.

Barbara was a good AA who got sober in Philadelphia and was a regular at the campfire meeting for a number of years.

If I remember correctly, the campfire circle where we continue to meet today is the location of the first and the subsequent meetings in the warm weather. I do not recall whether we met in the boat dock shelter or "gazebo" on rainy Fridays, though the boat dock shelter has served that purpose for many years now.

One of the original locations of the meeting during the cold months was the United Methodist Church south of the park at 522 and Oakland Road. I don't recall if that was the location for more than one year. There were some very cold Fridays when there were only two or three folks at the meeting. Several times it was just me and Frank G (who got sober just a bit after the group started and was one of the anchors of the group for many years. (He now lives in Pennsylvania and gets up around 3:00 AM to go to work, so he has not been able to attend regularly for some years now).

The church provided us with different rooms in the church, some of them quite small (almost closet-sized!), but no one ever complained! After some months, the church hierarchy changed a number of their policies, and gatherings in the church when there were no church officers on the grounds were discontinued. I believe that it was at this time, though I'm not sure, that we approached the staff at the State Park to see if they would rent us a room for the cold months. This might have been after another very active AA member,

The State Park regulations were such that they could not officially rent rooms to us, but an arrangement was made wherein the group could make donations, and in an informal exchange, the staff would let us meet in one or another room in the main lodge. Perhaps misunderstood by some AA members even today is that the donations we provide (two times a year, in the past) do not guarantee a room or guarantee the Campfire Circle or boat dock shelter location for us on any given Friday. The group has no "rights" to any location but are only provided the space as a courtesy if there are no other groups reserving the locations. This has very rarely been an inconvenience. The State Park has been incredibly accommodating to the group over the years.

A really delightful and pleasant, though perhaps a bit quirky, fellow AA named Harry constructed the red and white signs that are (still, I believe) set out every Friday. This was many years ago). They have held up so well! Harry left the area a number of years ago, along with the tiny trailer he often had behind his car (and lived in!). Our hats will always be off to Harry and his great work!

Of course the group gets larger as weather improves and smaller as it gets colder. Never, in my recollection, has there been a time when the meeting was cancelled for any reason.

There is so much wonderful sobriety and experiences over the years that is not documented here, Frank G is still around and I have asked if he would be willing to add to the history

Dan H

Anyone else with remembrances or history on any meetings or activities from District 11 is encouraged to please share them with us at AAdistrict11@gmail.com

AREA NEWS

1. Here's some info for those wishing to make financial contributions:
 - District 11
Make check payable to
District 11
PO Box 1831, Martinsburg WV 25402
 - Area Contribution:
Make check payable to
Area 73
PO Box 461, Morgantown WV 26507-0461
 - General Service Office contribution:
Make check payable to
GSO
Po Box 459, Grand Central Station. New York, NY 10163

DISTRICT NEWS

1. Grapevine: Joi ordered (9 -30 pack) back issues of the grapevine. We are giving a box to the detox. Frank will give a box to Thomas for the VA. The rest will be left at Snyders Bible Church. GSRs are free to take some copies to their groups. Possibly drop off some at MRC and any other places that serve recovery needs.
2. Activities: Marliene reported game day was success. They had 20 people attend. People came, they ate, they played games. It was great fellowship. They are looking now for the next activity for the next quarter and are open to any suggestions. Dana suggested movie night possibly at the Apollo or in Berkeley Springs showing My name is Bill W. We talked about having a movie night in Berkeley Springs Big Star theatre. Marliene will reach out to Pam about something up in Berkeley Springs. As well as Jeopardy night. Possibly the end of Oct. or beginning of fall. They do have some receipts to hand in. Linda bought \$32 worth of games
3. New "WHEN & WHERE" pamphlets have been compiled and printed (thank you Dana), Ask your GSR for copies to distribute
4. For groups that cannot afford to send their GSR to the 2 Area Assemblies, it was suggested that perhaps District 11 could provide scholarships. If we have enough people going we can room together and definitely carpool this will cut down on the cost to the groups and the district. Please talk to your groups and see if this is something that you think the district should do. We will be discussing this over the next two months and then make a final decision so please do get your group's and GSRs input.
5. A District AA member is carrying the message into the VA Hospital in Martinsburg. The VA is allowing him to bring a weekly speaker each Wednesday to an (open) at 4 pm. If you have an interest in volunteering to be a speaker, please discuss this with your GSR.

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6. Please note that if you'd like to view the monthly newsletter online, you can do so at <https://aawv11.org/>
 7. And, if you'd like to have the newsletter delivered to your inbox every month, please send an email request to AAdistrict11@gmail.com
 8. **We would like to celebrate YOUR birthday!** Please email your annual birthday information including: First name, last initial, anniversary date, and name of home group to: AA-district11@gmail.com
 9. If you know when/where you will be celebrating, please be sure to send to the above email address not later than the 25th of the month before your anniversary.
 10. GSRs and long time meeting members, please notify us here if you notice any inaccurate info on the anniversary lists (members no longer active, in the area, or deceased).
 11. **If YOU have an announcement you want posted here** (sober room for rent, items for sale, looking to carpool to meetings, etc.) please send your announcement to us at AAdistrict11@gmail.com. Deadline for submission in next month's newsletter is the 25th of each month

Coming Events & Announcements (Please see your local secretary for more information)

1. **Carrie H** is available to provide rides to meetings for women who need it. You can reach her at: 7178212096
2. **Eye Opener Group picnic is scheduled** for October 21st in the main pavilion in War Memorial Park.

For more detailed information, please speak with your group's GSR.

District 11 Meetings On-line

According to the latest Where and When published June 2021, all groups are meeting in person or have a hybrid meeting format except for the following which are on-line.

Daily at 7:30am- Eye Opener Group Hybrid

<https://www.gotomeet.me/EyeOpenerGroup>

Dial in at [\(646\) 749-3122](tel:6467493122)

Access Code: 604-461-373

Daily at 5:30pm - Early After Work Friends of Bill W. Group

Zoom Meeting ID 671-314-2769

Password: 118

Daily at 7:00pm - Doomsdayers Group

Join Zoom Meeting ID 942-899-066

Password 049396

Sundays at 2:00pm - Women On A Journey Group

Join Zoom Meeting ID 274-008-239

Password: woaj

Wednesday at 7:00pm – Wednesday Night Men’s Group Hybrid

<https://www.gotomeet.me/EyeOpenerGroup>

Dial in: [+1 \(646\) 749-3122](tel:16467493122) Access Code 604-461-373

Let's Celebrate

Anniversaries for August and the first week of September. As of March 1st the district has 4,099 year of sobriety with an average of 14.4 years per member.

Name	Anniversary	Years	Group	year
Howard N	9/29/1999	24	11th Step Group	1999
Olin D	9/5/2014	9	11th Step Group	2014
Ran F	9/12/2014	9	11th Step Group	2014
Lesli Neel	9/12/2018	5	Behind the Star	2018
Julie V.	9/24/1998	25	Berkeley Springs	1998
Michelle S,	9/22/2016	7	Campfire Circle	2016
DANA K.	9/5/1997	26	Design for Living	1997
ANN.G	9/17/2016	7	Eye Opener	2016
DAVID.M	9/15/2013	10	Eye Opener	2013
GEORGE.Br	9/28/2017	6	Eye Opener	2017
JEFF.E	9/21/2004	19	Eye Opener	2004
LINDA.S	9/15/2015	8	Eye Opener	2015
MICHAEL.M	9/12/2014	9	Eye Opener	2014
OLLIE.T	9/7/2016	7	Eye Opener	2016
SEAN.D	9/17/2013	10	Eye Opener	2013
CALEB.H	9/22/2019	4	Good Orderly Direction	2019
DAVE.S	9/10/2018	5	Good Orderly Direction	2018
GIDEON.E	9/1/2019	4	Good Orderly Direction	2019
Tammy H	9/11/1994	29	HOW	1994
CHRIS.C	10/2/2015	8	Eye Opener	2015
DAWN.L	10/5/2015	8	Eye Opener	2015
MIKE.S	10/1/2014	9	Eye Opener	2014
MARYLEWIS.B	10/5/1991	32	Good Orderly Direction	1991
Kassy A	10/3/2017	6	Woman on a Journey	2017

CALL FOR NEWSETTER CONTRIBUTIONS.....

Anyone wishing to submit an announcement, or story for the newsletter is encouraged to do so by emailing Pam Washington at AAdistrict11@gmail.com