

District 8 Newsletter Web Version

Names and finances removed for anonymity

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Every AA group ought to be fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions. *Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions*

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This issue contains a selection of the **minutes of District Committee meetings** for the previous month outlined in a gold box.

There will be a description of one **District position** and a short bio of the person elected to that job.



If there is important information to pass on about **AA as a whole**, that will be included.

There is also room for **personal stories**. Names used with permission.



One will be included per issue.

There will be **District news and events**

And finally, the **Gotta Laugh** section.



If this sounds like fun and you are an AA member, contact newsletter@cowichanaa.ca and we will put you on the distribution list.



Tidbits from the June minutes represented by a gold box.

Any deletions represented by

DCM Report:

First, we have filled vacant positions one by one such as Archives, Corrections and Meeting Lists. Suffice it to say that all positions are key for a fully functioning District. So, well done everybody. We are moving in the right direction.



Second, we have a Service Workshop ready to go June 12. We have the July Quarterly Assembly coming up. I hope as many GSRs and AAs in the District attend as possible. It will be a Zoom event. A helpful suggestion would be to have a really comfortable cushion to sit on and to take breaks from the screen.

Third, in the area of communication, we have a fully functioning Newsletter again. On today's agenda, our Newsletter editor is seeking direction from you in a couple of important areas. With regard to your District positions and your registrations with Area 79 and GSO in New York, the registration process has not been working as we would like. I cannot speculate as to just what was wrong, however, it appears "stuff" happens even at Area 79 as technical issues occur and we are all human. We now have a new Area 79 Registrar... who emailed me yesterday and asked for our patience as things are caught up with and sorted out.

Fourth, as Covid has affected us all inside and outside of AA, we have all adapted and changed our ways according to health restrictions and choices. Now, as restrictions are beginning to change, we can expect more changes to be the norm for a while. It seems appropriate to remind you of what you already know. Each AA can make his or her own choices during this time. Each AA Group makes its own choices. We, as a District Committee, also have choices to make. I request that you think of this as I will place this in our July Agenda. My intent is to ask for a District Conversation re Covid and opening up, to at the very least, begin. What we do and how to do it is your decision.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Corrections: Chair reported that he had received the Meeting Directories. He took these to the RCMP station and the probation office.



Grapevine: Chair reported that the June issue is on relationships and the COVID crisis. In honor of Founders Day, everyone has free access online to the stories for a couple more days.

Meeting Directories: Chair reported that previous chair had shown her how to make changes to the document. She hasn't received notification of changes yet.

Telephone Answering Service: Chair reported that there were 3 calls this past month. There were no technical issues or problems with people needing help.

Treatment & Bridging the Gap: Chair noted that a Public Information chair would be helpful in getting information out. The Hospital and Cedars still do not need help with meetings. There weren't any Bridging the Gap requests since the last meeting.

Webmaster: Member reported that everything is going fine. He raised the concern that he is the only person with the passwords for the website and service provider. Furthermore, the District needs to find someone to train on maintaining and managing the website. It was agreed that he would forward the passwords to the DCM and the Secretary.

GSR REPORTS:

Brown Baggers: GSR reported that the meeting is doing well at the Alano Club. They average about 20 people via in-person and Zoom combined.

Chemainus Wednesday Night: GSR reported that an average of 22 people meet on Wednesdays. They celebrated two birthdays and will celebrate a 25 year cake in June. There is no Zoom meeting.



Cobble Hill Discussion: GSR reported that more and more people are showing up for the in-person and Zoom meeting. They have had 3 newcomers.

Courage to Change: GSR reported that they have 7-8 members.

Cowichan Station: GSR reported that there are no changes from last month. The meeting can take up to 20 people. They will celebrate June birthdays for two members.

Grassroots: GSR reported that this group just recently registered with the World Services Office. He is serving as the GSR. The group meets in-person outside every odd calendar day on Chesterfield at the Sportsplex. The group averages 12-14 per meeting and has been getting newcomers. The group has a Facebook page. They have 2 regularly scheduled hiking outings every Thursday evenings and Sunday afternoons.

Heart to Heart: GSR reported that 3-7 women meet regularly at 1:30 pm Wednesdays at St John's Anglican Church in Duncan. They read from the Daily Reflections. They're able to pay the rent and life is good.

Hump Day United: GSR filling in as the group does not have a GSR, reported that 15-20 people meet via Zoom and in-person.

Quamichan Step Study: GSR reported that 5-10 people meet every Thursday at 7:00 pm on Zoom only. The New Life Baptist Church is available for their meeting and at the upcoming business meeting they will decide about when they can start meeting in-person.

Saturday Morning Womens': GSR reported that attendance has been regular at both the Saturday in-person and the Thursday Zoom meeting. The in-person meeting has welcomed folks who have not been to a meeting in a long time. A recently formed Outreach Committee has contacted 9 members who had not been at either meeting in the past year. There was a positive response to this outreach. Three of the women have now come to the in-person meeting. The committee is considering how to keep conducting outreach. Members also identified an excellent list of places where AA information could be dropped off. Some of these places might benefit from a member contact, e.g. Warmland sobering Centre, RCMP bike program. Detailed information has been compiled and shared with the District board.

Sisters of Sobriety: (see report above)

Stepping Stones: GSR reported that the meeting is still on Zoom. About 15-20 people attend each meeting.

Traditionally Yours: GSR reported that this group has been suspended.

Service Opportunities

There are 2 empty chairs at our district 8 table and one exciting opportunity for a techy kind of person in area 79. To check these out, go to cowichanaa.ca.

District 8 meeting news: Check this spot for changes in meetings, times, venues, access.

Quamichan Step study now hybrid. In person outside, rt. side New Lf Baptist church. Link to Zoom cowichanaa.ca

Freedom Fridays resumed in person, 8PM, Duncan United Church

Crofton Waterfront resumed in person Tuesdays, 7PM, Senior's centre, 1507 Joan Ave.

Brown Baggers has a new phone ID for Zoom. Go to cowichanaa.ca

Sat. AM Women's back in old location (Burns Hall), Duncan United. You can enter at the back.

Cobble Hill Discussion Mon and Fri meet outside July and August, no zoom. Thurs, continue zoom.

All meetings are listed at cowichanaa.ca and regularly updated but we know not everybody checks there so we will also post updates here. Please let admin@cowichanaa.ca know of any changes asap

Zoom meetings of interest around the world

INTERNATIONAL BORDER GROUP: St. Stephen's NB, speaker meetings, Sunday, 4pm PDT. They would love to see some new faces. 939 8923 3435, no password needed.

***IN A POWER OUTAGE, THE FIRST
STEP IS TO ADMIT YOU ARE
POWERLESS.***

Positions

You can find out about each position and the person in it by reading this place every month

Treatment Chair

Treatment facilities committees are formed to coordinate the work of individual A.A. members and groups who are interested in carrying our message of recovery to alcoholics in treatment facilities, and to set up means of “Bridging the Gap” from the facility to an A.A. group in the individual’s community. The Treatment Committee is in contact with District Committee members who will link with members in their district who are willing to extend the hand of A.A. to those released to their community after completion of a treatment facility program.

Retrieved from <https://bcyukonaa.org/area-79/appointed-members/treatment/>



Treatment Chair:

I wanted to do this position because I have gone through a lot of different treatment centres, starting when I was 19. It is really important what you do when you leave treatment. It’s not going to be a magic wand that makes it all better. You go there, get some tools and coping strategies, learn about addiction and recovery, get your head back on straight, but what really matters is what you do when you leave. Sadly, there are some people who go to treatment and then don’t do anything after to maintain their sobriety, or they leave early, and they don’t have a plan and most times it doesn’t work and they end up drinking again.

Bridging the gap is so important to get connections to people in the community they are going back to and it makes it so much easier to get involved. I have been able to connect with a few people and direct them to meetings. There have been a few who have stuck, become friends, and I see them in meetings. That feels really good.

Because of COVID things are different than they would be usually. We haven’t had the meeting at the hospital and the people from the local treatment centre are not going to outside meetings. I have managed this position during COVID but once things open up I think we will probably need a committee again.

I have gone to some Area treatment meetings so I have found out what other Districts are doing. Some Districts arrange speakers for treatment centres. We have done this before and it is something I would like to revive. I would like to go to detox areas to plant the idea that AA cares. Nobody is going into senior’s facilities to hold meetings or to take people to meetings. I didn’t think of that as part of the job until I went to the Area meetings, but the job is really “Treatment and accessibility”. Right now, COVID care takes priority and the alcoholics in senior’s facilities will get to come to outside meetings once things open up again and I hope we will be able to have more of a presence there.

I remember when I was at my last treatment centre I didn’t have a license for 3 years, and people came and picked me up to go to meetings or even just for a visit. I am sure there are a lot of people, seniors included, who are in a similar position. Now I am in a position to do that for others. Service to me is like taking out insurance against a slip. I am doing this to help others and in doing that, I am helping myself.

WHAT'S SO GREAT ABOUT MY GROUP?

For the next few issues, we are asking representatives from various groups to tell us what they like about their group and why they would recommend it to others. We recognize and celebrate each group's autonomy and unique spirit and want to hear about yours. Some reports are long and involve several members, and some are short. That doesn't matter. We will fit them in as they arrive. If you think your group is great, let us know and we will tell everyone. Email newsletter@cowichanaa.ca



Wednesday Women: Heart to heart



I was looking for a group since mine closed over COVID and I was feeling a bit lost. I didn't have a connection. I need to be in a group so I can give back. I had gone to the meeting in the park last summer when the meeting first started and I liked the format, I liked the women, so when it was decided to form a group and find a place to meet inside, I felt comfortable and a part of something. For me that is so important to feel a part of something and give back. I just fit there. I want to be in a group and help out where necessary: opening, chairing, etc. That's what helps my sobriety. I know if I float too much I'm not going to find a group and I am not going to go to enough meetings to keep me sober. At first it worked for me, being on Wednesday, because that was my day off. Now it doesn't matter. I feel safe with the COVID precautions. The church is very clear about their expectations of us and we are very clear about our expectations of people coming in. It doesn't matter to me that it is a small meeting but it would be nice to have more women coming to the group. I think some women may be missing out and we could have more input with more people attending. I have told a few women about our group but they are just not ready yet to go back into face-to-face meetings. I think we need more women's meetings. I like that it's the middle of the week and I find it a convenient time for me and other women who are not working. I like that we laugh, and I feel safe, I feel connected, and I like the women. I just love my group!

The Shack (Cobble Hill Discussion)



I moved back to Vancouver Island in the year 2000 so I have been a member of the group since then, just coming up for 21 years. To be totally honest, one of the reasons I like it is that it's super close to where I live, but it's also got a bunch of very diverse, good people. It was mostly guys at the beginning for many years with just a couple of gals, but recently we have had an incredible influx of new people and about 5 or 6 newcomers, which makes it even more interesting. COVID really put things on its ear because a lot of people who were coming from Duncan and Maple Bay were staying home and attending on Zoom. It's just a great little group with the discussion meeting, and Thursday we have the steps and traditions, so it's a little diverse as well as being a good mix of people. I just like it because it's got a solid core of people who show up and get things done, like make the coffee and start the fire. Once in a while we have a work bee to get firewood and 6 to 8 people show up on a Saturday. We actually helped build the shack. We tore down the old one about 12 or 14 years ago and built a new one. We had 17 people there helping to put one wall up 'cause everyone wanted to help. We didn't actually ever shut right down during COVID. As long as we wore masks, put our name on a list when we went in, sanitized our hands, and kept 6 feet apart we could meet in the building. We have a hybrid meeting, so some come in person and some on Zoom. We are allowed 12 people in the room. I don't move around and change groups. I've only had two home groups and this group has a deep place in my heart.

Some other members of Cobble Hill Discussion

I like it because it has more long-time members than newbies. Good for raw new people to get opinions regarding how it works--and how important "just for today" is. Old timers are good for reminding people you can't undo yesterday but you can use today to build a defense against the things that plague you. The Shack has plenty of old timers. Newcomers will see that Old and New can integrate easily. There is no "class warfare" and there is good sponsor potential here.

I like it because I came from the lower mainland with huge meetings of sometimes over 100 people. This is a small group and everyone is more like friends or family. We are not renting a hall or a church that controls when we can have meetings. I noticed that during the pandemic when churches etc. closed it caused meetings to shut down. From the 1st meeting I felt I belonged. It's like family to me. I think it is the greatest AA Group because members are friendly, warm, and serious about sobriety.

We are a fun group. We laugh a lot and keep it light and simple. If I was able to get sober, it's truly possible for other people if they keep coming back. There is a lot of support and love at The Shack! Plus, we have a wood burning stove in the winter! Can't beat that coziness.

It's the people that make the shack so great. I've felt comfortable and at home since day one. If I bring a newcomer I know they're in good hands and will receive the same warm welcoming I did.

The Alano Club

Depends on Memberships

To Keep the Doors Open

**\$50
PER YEAR**

**\$25 PER YEAR
- SENIORS (65+)
ON ASSISTANCE**

PURCHASING A CLUB MEMBERSHIP NOT ONLY GIVES YOU
REDUCED CONCESSION PRICES AND ACCESS TO SPECIAL EVENTS
BUT IT ALSO ALLOWS YOU TO BE PART OF
THE COWICHAN VALLEY'S 12 STEP SUPPORT COMMUNITY

WE CAN'T DO IT WITHOUT "YOU"

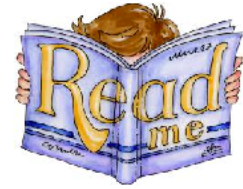
PLEASE HELP AND BUY A MEMBERSHIP

Phone or text Judy S. at 250-710-7741
or email: sullivan687@msn.com

Name and contact in above poster used with permission

Here is the the Alano club "Go fund me" link: <https://gofund.me/767ad717>

Personal Story: Wes. Name used with permission



My sober date is June 20th. I will be at the 2-year marker very shortly. But how did I get here? I suffered with my disease for about 20 years, binge drinking from Friday to Monday, for the most part overseas.

I grew up in Southern New Hampshire in Massachusetts in a small rural town where my father was the local veterinarian: basically an “All Creatures Great and Small” scenario. About 2000, my parents relocated to West Vancouver where my mom had grown up. My dad semi-retired and I had graduated University and went overseas with the US peace corps and that’s where my disease progressed. Going to university, I got away with partying as a norm, where it was fun and socially accepted. That’s where I associated the weekend with partying, but when I was left to my own devices in Guinea, West Africa, I really made it part of my routine; something I could look forward to and control over a 20-year period across a variety of countries. I worked for the US government just over 16 years in West Central, the Great Lakes, and the Sahel parts of sub-Saharan Africa.

I was a creature of habit. As a youth, I was a competitive swimmer, with a habit of regular practices in the morning and the afternoon. In my disease as an adult I had a set of clothes for every day and I also had a set way I drank. No matter how bad the hangovers were on Monday, all that was associated with them, and all the promises and swearing off and saying things will change, by Wednesday I would already be planning a weekend where I would have no responsibilities and I could just be a drunken pig.

I met my wife when I moved from Massachusetts to West Vancouver. She was the head of the boys and girls club and training to become a teacher. She followed me to Nova Scotia where I completed my Master’s degree in International Relations, and then went with me to my first official posting with the UN in Senegal, West Africa. For a period of 8 years she would teach in various countries where I was posted, and finally we married and began planning a family.

In 2012 my wife put down roots in Vancouver Island where her family lived. She bought a cabin in Shawnigan Lake and then got pregnant. I put down some roots in Canada too but in Saskatchewan. My disease went from weekends in West Africa to Saskatchewan where I stayed up late, isolated, and drank.

Things finally came to a crisis in 2019. We were then living in Mill Bay, with a house, twin boys, and me drinking and trying to hide it. My wife and I had a huge fight. She called the police, who arrested me on my own property. That was my waking up moment, where I realized I couldn’t manage it all. I didn’t understand what managing my own life was. I thought it meant money and things like managing my family and house payments. I didn’t understand that it meant managing myself, my emotions, and having love for myself. I stood looking in the mirror, admitting I couldn’t continue like this, and asked for help. I didn’t go to treatment. I went to an intensive outpatient program out of Victoria for nearly 2 years. I immediately started going to AA in Cobble Hill and Mill Bay and I have maintained that since. I go to four meetings a week. I have attended 2 step studies and have a belief in a higher power that I maintain a connection with all day long. I now understand the power of being present and that I can never say I won’t drink again. Those were the kinds of meaningless words I used to say. I know that if I maintain a connection with my Higher Power it brings me the best version of myself every day. I put my sobriety above everything else. Everything falls into place as long as I maintain that. I have the full support of my family. When I think that just two years ago I was asked to leave my family, to stay in a different place, and only visit, I am very grateful for what I have today. I didn’t explain, I didn’t brag or promise. I just asked for time. And those promises in the Big Book on page 83 have started to come true for me, in spades. All I have to do is keep on the edge of my seat, not doing it half way. I have made amends with my family, my parents, my wife, and some close friends. I am a work in progress, one day at a time.

Gotta Laugh



Where there's a will, I want to be in it.
The last thing I want to do is hurt you...but it's still on my list.
Since light travels faster than sound, some people appear bright until you hear them speak.
If I agreed with you, we'd both be wrong
We never really grow up...we only learn how to act in public.
War does not determine who is right, only who is left.
Knowledge is knowing a tomato is a fruit. Wisdom is not putting it in a fruit salad.
I didn't say it was your fault. I said I was blaming you.
In filling out an application, where it says, "In case of an emergency. notify..." I answered, "A doctor."
Women will never be equal to men until they can walk down the street with a bald head and a beer gut and still think they are sexy.
You do not need a parachute to skydive. You only need a parachute to skydive twice.
I used to be indecisive, but now I am not so sure.
To be sure of hitting the target, shoot first and call whatever you hit, the target.
Going to church doesn't make you a Christian any more than standing in a garage makes you a car.
I'm supposed to respect my elders, but it's getting harder and harder for me to find one now.

Where can you send people who never shut up? Onandonanon.



Bob loved the outdoors. He had quite a collection