

District 8 Newsletter Web Version Names removed for anonymity

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Alcoholics Anonymous has no opinion on outside issues; hence the AA name ought never be drawn into public controversy. *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 an orange box.



This includes **finances, reports from the DCM, Committee Chairs, and GSRs.**

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**. 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 September minutes represented by an orange box. Any deletions represented by

Finances

"...We are getting a little low in funds so please take that back to your groups."...people can send their 7th Traditions via treasurer@cowichanaa.ca...

DCM Report:

"Please take a moment to reflect on the fact that despite the changes brought on by Covid and despite dealing with the usual changes that happen within AA, we here are still gathering to do the business of District 8. Much work remains to be done so I ask each of you to continue honoring the commitment you made in becoming part of this District Committee. As DCM I presume to say thank you. Without the core District Functions being carried out by this committee and without the work being done by the District Groups we support, the effects of Covid might be much worse.

Looking ahead, I encourage GSRs to register and attend the October Voting Assembly. I would remind you that it is so vital that you participate at District as much as you can and *be* that link between District and Groups.

We may not be having a Rally this year but the idea of a Gratitude Day is still afloat and as preparations take place we will learn more.

Our Ad Hoc Committee, working on job descriptions is coming together. We are bearing in mind Henk's sage counsel that all who offer to take on a position are usually learning the job from the beginning as a part of volunteering so the Job descriptions are a guide and a tool to help candidates, not a definitive guide.

Myself and an interested GSR have been invited to attend, via ZOOM, a Mini Assembly of Central BC groups this coming Saturday, Sept 18. If there is an interested GSR please contact me for details."

Old Business:

Vacant Positions: A member volunteered to take the Alternate DCM position. ...

New Business:

TAS Call List: The group was asked to discuss the question from the PI committee regarding the use of the TAS Call List. The list will be used for 12 step calls....

Motion: TAS will provide the list to the PI chair for use in outreach. Member moved; Member seconded. Carried.

Group Discussion/Group Conscience: ...While members prefer meeting in-person, the current uncertainty and uptick in Covid cases, they felt it best to continue meeting on Zoom and to revisit the decision again in a few months.

Motion: To continue District 8 meeting via Zoom for a period of 3 months. Member moved; Member seconded. Carried.

Committee Reports:

Meeting Directories: Chair reported, "...I have had copies printed for Brown Baggers and Grassroots. These groups meet the most often and have lots of newcomers. There will be another revision when Grassroots has an indoor venue."

Newsletter: Chair reported "... I am well-supplied with stories and events. I find I just have to contact people and ask and most are very willing to give me something...."

Public Information: Chair reports that: "Over the past month, the Public Information (PI) committee has been at work, looking at what has been done in the past, reviewing available resources and developing a plan. The committee has been very fortunate to have three members with many years of experience in AA share their expertise."

The main purpose of the Public Information Committee is to ensure that the still-suffering alcoholic is aware of and can easily access the Alcoholic Anonymous Program. Our committee is striving to "Keep it simple" by;

- Respecting the time of our members by making the distribution process easy
- Ensuring that our materials are targeted and user-friendly
- Making the best use of our financial and print resources
- Utilizing existing information systems such as newsletters, the internet, facebook etc.
- Identifying and developing strategies to reach under-served communities

... Members can **HELP** by:

- Being there if someone reaches out for help....
- Helping the PI committee to find new opportunities to connect.... some free or low-cost newsletters...
- Identifying community sites or individuals...to share AA information with potential members
- Volunteering to distribute AA materials in the community.

Together we can ensure the hand of AA is always there when anyone reaches out for help. If anyone would like to help please contact me at pic@cowichanaa.ca."

Telephone Answering Service: Chair reported that there were in August two calls for information and one reaching out.

Treatment: Chair reports that he spoke with person at Cedars and with the new restrictions and uptick in COVID cases, their folks won't be meeting outside the facility. The same is true for the Hospital. There were no Bridging the Gap requests in August. He has been taking meeting directories to hospitals and treatment facilities. Will be going to the Area meeting for Treatment Chairs.

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

Cobble Hill Discussion: Hybrid M, Th, Fr at 7:30. Tuesdays in person only at 5.

Chemainus no longer requires attendees to bring their own chair.

Grassroots has moved to Knights of Columbus, 5864 Indian Rd. Wed-Monday (no meeting Tuesday)

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

GSR Reports:

Brown Baggers: GSR reported that attendance continues to be 8-16 per meeting. The 7th Tradition has picked up. They could use more people for service.

Chemainus Wednesday Night: GSR reported "...continues to meet in person on Sunday and Wednesday at 7 pm... an average of 15 attendees...."

Cobble Hill Discussion: GSR reported that the attendance is 10-18 per meeting. Birthdays are celebrated on the last Monday of the month....

Courage to Change: GSR reported that they welcomed 2 newcomers... Everything is good.

Grassroots: GSR reported that they are doing well. They are still looking for an affordable indoor facility for the cool weather ahead.

Hump Day United: Member reported for GSR that the group is doing well. They have moved to Alano Club as of September 1st. They are meeting Wednesdays at 7:00 p.m in-person and on Zoom. The audio has improved...

Lifeline Lake Cowichan: GSR reports that they had to fold one of the meetings. They are meeting Monday and Thursday at the Community Service Building. They continue to have 8-10 attendees and the 7th Tradition is doing well. They are holding their own.

Saturday Men's Meeting: GSR reported that they have 5 members and 15-20 people attend the meetings....

Saturday Morning Women's: GSR reported... "Both...in-person... and...Zoom meeting on Thursday evening (SOS) are...well attended....many new faces... "

Sisters of Sobriety: (See report above)

Stepping Stones: GSR reported that the meeting is doing well. They meet by Zoom and the meetings are attended by 15-20 people. ...

The Solution: GSR reported that they have 8-15 people per meeting. They are meeting at 6:30 pm on Fridays. There are only 2 members.

Thetis Island: DCM reports that the group is meeting again, but is not quite ready to return to District 8. They are back at the Thetis Island Community Center.

Wednesday Women: Heart to Heart: GSR reported that "We meet...every Wednesday at 1:30 pm, at St.John's Anglican Church.... Attendance is 10 to 12 women...Birthdays are open to family & friends."



**BC/Yukon Area 79 Voting Assembly
October 22-24
Everyone is welcome to attend**



**Brenda B from GSO in NY will give the opening remarks Friday night and tell her story
Saturday evening.**

Here is your chance to get a glimpse into the inner workings of our wonderful fellowship.

For more information, and to receive a package, email DCM@cowichanaa.ca

LATE BREAKING NEWS!

Our District 8 DCM has resigned. The resignation came about after a group submitted a motion to take the District meeting to hybrid. District agreed to the motion and plans are underway to find a suitable venue, time, and day to suit all. Due to his age during this time of COVID, the DCM decided he is not able to attend in-person meetings and believes the District meeting will be very difficult to chair using a hybrid format. We are all shocked and sorry about this development.

If you are looking for a new preamble to be in line with the Grapevine official version, contact grapevine@cowichanaa.ca and the Grapevine will provide your group with one.

It is now possible to make your group's contribution to District by e-transfer. The address to use with your bank account is treasurer@cowichanaa.ca.

Positions

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

Public Information Chair

Like all of A.A., the primary purpose of members involved with Public Information service is to carry the A.A. message to the alcoholic who still suffers. Working together, members of local Public Information committees convey A.A. information to the general public through activities such as giving A.A. information talks at schools and civic organization meetings, providing A.A. literature to schools and offices, and insuring local media have accurate information and providing them with A.A. public service announcements.

https://www.aa.org/pages/en_US/public-information-committees

PI Chair: “May the Hand of AA Always Be There”

I felt compelled to take on the PI position even though I have limited time and very little experience or knowledge about PI. Each year of my sobriety I have become more grateful that my sponsor in Al-Anon introduced me to AA. I want to be sure that a similar pathway is there for others who are still suffering.

Public Information is an essential function of Alcoholics Anonymous. The AA preamble clearly states that “our primary purpose is to stay sober and the help other alcoholics to achieve sobriety.” We can’t help the still-suffering if they are unaware of our organization or unable to find us. Our responsibility statement clearly states “When anyone, anywhere reaches out for help, I want the hand of AA always to be there and for that I am responsible. How does the PI chair accomplish this?

I soon realized this was not a ME job but a WE job. I carefully read through the PI package and sought help from other members. We learned there is no one right answer or strategy. A 2014 AA membership study found that members were introduced to AA through a variety of ways that included AA members (32%), family members (32%), treatment facility (32%), self-referral (30%), family (27%), judicial system (12%), counsellor (13%), medical professional (4%), employer or worker (4%), non-AA friend or neighbour (3%), correctional facility (2%), Al-Anon or Alateen (2%), AA literature (2%), newspaper/magazine/radio/TV (1%), member of the clergy (1%), Internet (1%) and other (6%).

To ensure the broadest reach possible, our committee has developed a multi-pronged strategy based on the principle of ‘Keep it Simple’ and ‘Many hands make light work’. We have developed a package that can be adapted to meet individual needs. It includes an agency letter, posters, meeting lists, and introductory pamphlets along with a list of potential sites. We need your help to spread the word by identifying new potential sites such as newsletters or social media and by contacting potential partners and dropping off information. If you would like to help in any way, please contact me at pic@cowichanaa.ca

In love, gratitude, and service.

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

WHAT'S SO GREAT ABOUT MY GROUP?

We recognize and celebrate each group's autonomy and unique spirit and want to hear about yours.



Hump Day United

The first time I walked into an A.A. meeting after attending treatment, I found myself surrounded by laughter and happy people. I wondered if I was in the right place. I was not laughing nor was I happy; I had 70 days clean and sober and I WAS STRUGGLING. I could quickly see that these people were in a way better state than me and thought that they must put something in the coffee...lol. I sat with my head down and cried for most of that meeting. I returned the next week and again was surrounded by very welcoming people having great conversations, laughs, and they seemed happy to see me.

For weeks I attended and mostly cried. I had so many "Feelings" running through my newly thawed out mind and body. I also began to really listen to what was being shared around me. I must have heard "My Story" told about a hundred different ways. I suddenly felt a sense of belonging and of being understood. It was like each week someone shared something that completely matched what I was thinking or feeling, or said exactly what I needed to hear. I never felt alone.

The people in the room often varied but it was the constant faces, the ones that showed every week, that made me feel most comfortable and welcome. I decided this was my place, I belonged here, and I made it my home group. It was called "Hump Day United": super fitting, being that it was held every Wednesday night. It was just what I needed to get me from week to week: my recharge.

The laughter and happiness the people in my group displayed was a clear result of working the A.A. program in their lives. I began to feel lighter and found myself laughing and feeling happy to attend each week, where before I felt it a chore to maintain my sobriety.

The wonderful people of "Hump Day United" have become like family to me. They've seen me at my worst and they've seen me at my best. Either way, I'm welcomed with open arms each week.

It was my 4TH birthday on September 4th (Just realized that some would call that your champagne birthday...lol love how my higher power works in my life today...lol). I can honestly say that the people at "Hump Day United" have a huge part in every day, week, and month of each of these 4 years. After all, there are still bad days, but I never leave the group without feeling a million times better than how I felt when I walked in.

The diversity of the people that make up "Hump Day United" is amazing. You will find people from all sorts of backgrounds, ages, races, creeds, and differences in the lives they each live today. Although we're all very different we do all have one common goal: to reach another 24 and help bring the message of A.A. to those in need.

Today I walk into "Hump Day United" with a smile and great cheer in my heart to see everyone. To any newbies I think I must look like one of those happy people I saw on my first day. To them I would say, "I hope you stay, I hope you hear something that speaks to you, and I hope that you too will find your smile and your happiness, as I did mine."

Chemainus

About 5 years ago now I went to the Chemainus AA group to go back to meetings when I moved to Chemainus. I had a long break of not connecting to a group although I worked the program on my own and with my AA friends by phone. I was truly missing fellowship. From the first meeting in the basement of the United Church in Chemainus I felt welcomed and at home. There were greeters who welcomed me and a lot of friendly faces. I liked the way the meeting was run and joined the group after that first meeting. I have grown to know a lot of the members personally outside of the meeting now and feel like every member is my family. I try to participate in every group meeting by chairing often and have acted as the secretary and currently as the literature person. I feel connected and happy and fully willing to share what was given to me. I try to say hello to each new comer and to be that welcoming face that I experienced and needed when I first came back and to continue to carry the message gratefully.

Personal story: Erin H. (Name used with permission)



My name is Erin, and I am an alcoholic. The following letter is written from the bottom of my heart in gratitude and sincerity.

I first walked through the doors to the shack a very troubled, nervous, scared but determined, alcoholic. I was determined to find a solution to the emotional pain, loneliness, frustration, and significantly dis-regulated mental health state I had been in for so many years. Despite other extensive measures taken to aid both my mental state and significant struggles with alcohol, I would, time and time again, come to no solution or sense of peace...until I walked into my first AA meeting at the Shack in Sept of 2019, also known as the Cobble Hill Discussion Group.

When I attended my first AA meeting at the Cobble Hill Discussion Group, it was here I finally felt home. I had arrived at a safe and inspiring place full of hope. I found a room of those who understood and welcomed me with open hearts and minds. I began to attend regularly, sharing my experience strength and hope. Along with listening to other alcoholics, I could relate, and learned to care for them like family. I was blown away by their honesty in their shares and being able to relate to them and their stories. Within my first few meetings I met my sponsor. This is where I started to feel a sense of fellowship, pride, courage, understanding, and I found the determination to get well. My sponsor and I then dove into the step work together and my life finally started to change, and I started to grow. I would also later complete two step studies. My family soon followed and started to connect with me in more meaningful ways. I began to make true friends who understand my experience, and I began a new way of living. I then started to love myself more and learn how to let people in and trust in the process. This has been my experience so far and what my sponsor, the steps, the big book, the fellowship, and AA is doing for me these past 2 years.

Lastly, I just want to make a mention to how thankful I am to have my family, who have seen me through my most dark and difficult of times, at my side. My family, despite what storms they weathered because of my alcoholism, held steadfast and were ready to cheer and support me on as I got sober and got my life facing forward to a **Good, Orderly, and meaningful Direction.**

Thank you for reading my story.

In Gratitude

Gotta Laugh



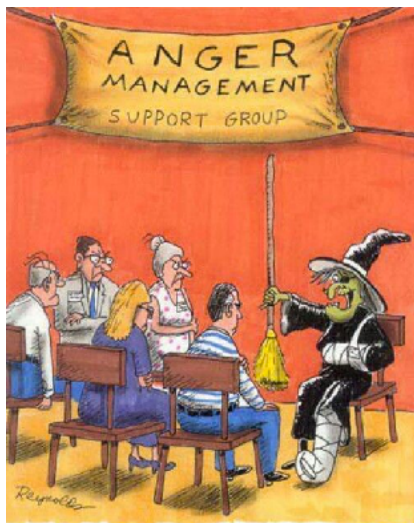
Ready to pawty.
Fangs for letting me in.



Why did the ghost go into the bar?
For the Boos.



Why do witches still use
broomsticks? Vacuums don't
have long enough cords.



"My name is Helda, and I have a
tendency to fly off the handle."



How can you tell when a vampire has
been in a bakery? All the jelly has been
sucked out of the jelly doughnuts. 9