

The Alternative

Reading and Berks Intergroup Newsletter for Nov. 2004

Intergroup Spotlight

"Frequent contact with newcomers and with each other is the bright spot of our lives"

The AA "Hotline"

Local AA "hotlines" are often the first contact suffering alcoholics have with the fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous. In the Reading-Berks area, an answering service is used to staff our hotline. A large number of the calls are general questions that are answered by the answering service staff. But when a suffering alcoholic calls seeking help, the answering service forwards the phone number of the caller to an AA member on the Hotline volunteer list. The member calls this person back and the twelfth-step work begins. As members of Alcoholics Anonymous we are responsible to be there for the alcoholic that still suffers and needs help. Volunteering for the Hotline is a great way to give back what was so freely given to us.

It's easy. You sign up by contacting your Intergroup rep or our committee chair for the Hotline (Bill R., whose phone number can be found on the back page of this newsletter.) Let him know what times you are available to receive phone calls. That's all there is to it!

A member writes: "When first getting sober several years ago I had to make a call to A.A. I called information the operator gave me the number to A.A., when I got the return call I'm sure it was minutes later, but it felt like years. The person on the other end of the phone talked to me gave me a list of meetings close by. I TOLD HIM I WANTED TO DIE.

He said that he had been there at one time too. That phone call saved my life, I'm so grateful that there are phone volunteers if there wasn't I may not be here today"

****NOTE TO ALL ACTIVE HOMEGROUPS****

Reading-Berks Intergroup of Alcoholics Anonymous will be holding elections for officers at November's Intergroup meeting. We will meet on November 23rd, at 7:30 pm in the Flame Room of the UGI building on Route 10. PLEASE BE SURE THAT YOUR INTERGROUP REPRESENTATIVE (OR ALTERNATE) ATTENDS THIS MEETING!

Reading / Berks Intergroup P.O. Box 184 Reading, PA. 19607
www.ReadingBerksIntergroup.org

From The Archives – Your Local A.A. History

The Sunday Morning Speakers Group in District 33 began in the fall of 1985. Original members were Mike S., Barb S., Gus B., Crissy B. and Brian S. It began as the brainchild of Brian S. whose idea was to provide a breakfast meeting on Sunday mornings. It was also decided that it should be a speakers meeting, as there were not many speakers meetings at that time. The group was offered the workshop of two original members Mike S. and Barb S. as a start up place. The group began to meet there each Sunday at 11:00 a.m. Coffee and donuts were always available. When the group tried cooking breakfast, as was the original intent, it was not successful. The meeting was not well attended and the breakfast idea was dropped. After three to four months of meeting in the workshop, Mike and Barb could no longer make the workshop available and the members began to search for a more permanent meeting place. The group met at the homes of two group members Chris ? and Ann R. for one to two months, while the search for a new meeting place continued . After the first year, the present site at the Muhlenberg Township Recreation Center was found by an unknown group member. The meeting was always known as the Sunday Morning Speakers Meeting. The growth of the group was a surprise to the founding members and they were amazed by the response. The group quickly grew to about thirty members. While they searched for a permanent site, the attendance fluctuated to as low as ten or eleven. At the recreation center, the group started in a small room upstairs. There were several other moves within the building as the group grew in size. The group now occupies a large room downstairs and has about 40 members. The group continues to meet Sunday mornings at this location and attracts participants from a wide geographical area.

The Sober Thought - Meditation

When the Eleventh Step says "Sought through prayer and meditation, "it means to me that what I need to develop is a daily practice. It is not something for me to do on a hit-or-miss basis . . . It is for good weather and bad weather and just your average cloudy day. . .Clarity, focus, and awareness have entered my life in a way and to a degree that would not have been possible without it. The strongest, most consistent message I receive from the Higher Power is love yourself, respect yourself. Love is the absolutely crucial, indispensable ingredient in recovery.
(Reprinted from *Box 1980: The AA Grapevine*, November 2003, Page 13. with permission of The A.A. Grapevine, Inc.)

Tradition of The Month for November - Tradition Eleven.

"Our public relations policy is based on attraction rather than promotion; we need always maintain personal anonymity at the level of press, radio, and films."

Step of The Month for November - Step Eleven.

Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God as we understood Him, praying only for knowledge of His will for us and the power to carry that out.

Eleventh Step Prayer -

Higher Power as I understand You, I pray to keep my connection with You open and clear from the confusion of daily life. Through my prayers & meditation I ask especially for freedom from self-will, rationalization, and wishful thinking. I pray for the guidance of correct thought and positive action.

Your will Higher Power, not mine, be done. Source: www.aaserenity.com

Monthly Contributions to the General Fund :

Gibraltar, Wilshire, Walnut St., 8:15 AM Group, St. Gabriel's. *Thanks !*

Contributions to the Activities Fund :

St. Gabriel's, Young Peoples, Books and People. *Thanks !*

The following groups were represented at the October Intergroup Meeting :

8:15 AM Group, Alpha, Birdsboro, Boyertown, Gibraltar, Hilltop, Kutztown, Leesport, New Millennium, Robesonia, Spirit of Recovery, Sunday Morning Speaker's Meeting, Walnut St Recovery, Wilshire, Dist. 33.

Bulletin Board

Reading - Berks Intergroup meets on the 4th Tuesday of the month in The Flame Room of The UGI Building on Rt.10 at 7:30 PM. The next meeting is November 23rd, 2004.



The District 33 meeting for November will be held on the third Sunday of the month (November 21st) instead of the fourth Sunday due to the Thanksgiving holiday.



NOTICE : The Reading-Berks Intergroup website has moved!!

It is now located at www.ReadingBerksIntergroup.Org

Please make a note of this and bookmark the new location. Check out the site for all events, schedules, institutional commitments, and lots more! Happy Surfing!



We are currently in need of volunteers to carry the message of A.A. to those in need, behind the walls of Berks County Prison. There is a specific need for women volunteers and men and women who speak Spanish or are bilingual.

Interested ? Please contact Nikki P. at 610-562-0507 or Glenn L. at 610-763-4441.



Are you getting enough ? Does your group need more copies of The Alternative than it is currently receiving ? You can get more if you ask ! To simplify mailing, The Alternative is mailed out in increments of 7, 14, 21, 28 etc. To increase the size of your groups allotment, Please contact Paul S. at 610-856-7556 or Roger M. at 610-582-3534.



The Alternative is printed each month during the week after Intergroup meets and is mailed out within the first week of the next month. If you have an announcement to be printed for an event which is being held in the first week of the month it may not reach the groups in time to inform them of your event. So it is a good idea to submit your announcement so that it will appear in The Alternative a full month before your event is actually going to take place.

Do you have an announcement for The Alternative? Submission deadline is the 15th of the month prior to when the announcement is to appear. Contact: Paul S. 610-856-7556



******* Reading-Berks Intergroup has no outside affiliations. *******

We exist as a central office to serve A.A. groups in the Reading-Berks area.



Intergroup Staff

Chairperson : Jay K. 610-376-6343	Alternate : Bob C. 610-927-1422
Secretary : Kathy C. 610-212-1427	Treasurer : Roger M. 610-582-3534
Hotline : Bill R. 484-794-5557	Schedules : Kelly H. 610-916-2459
Alternative : Paul S. 610-856-7556	Books & Literature : Stephanie K. 610-376-6636
Women's Prison : Nikki P. 610-562-0507	Men's Prison : Glenn L. 610-763-4441
Archives : Grace C. 610-927-1422	Institutions : Stan S. 610-375-1441
Unity : Roger M. 610-582-3534	Spanish Liaison : Angel R. 610-372-2438
Website : info@ReadingBerksIntergroup.org	Bridging The Gap : Terry McF. 610-944-3167
Alternative Email : alternative@ReadingBerksIntergroup.org	

Institutional Commitments for November 2004

Caron Adolescent (Female)	Caron Adolescent (Male)
Sunday 7:00 PM	Sunday 7:00 PM
11/7 Time to Start Living	11/7 Time to Start Living
11/14 Archives Committee	11/14 Archives Committee
11/21 Alpha Group	11/21 Alpha Group
11/28 Boyertown Group	11/28 Robesonia Group
12/5 Hilltop Group	12/5 Hilltop Group
12/12 Gibraltar Group	12/12 Birdsboro Group
St. Joe's Hospital	Wernersville State Hospital
Monday 7:00 PM	Monday 7:00 PM
11/1 Alpha Group	11/1 Jody M.
11/8 Topton Group	11/8 Robesonia Group
11/15 Birdsboro Group	11/15 Intergroup Chair
11/22 Alpha Group	11/22 Boyertown Group
11/29 Sunday Morning Speaker's	11/29 Walnut St. Group
12/6 Kutztown Group	12/6 Institutions Chair
12/13 New Millenium Group	12/13 District 33
Wernersville State Hospital	Caron Foundation
Thursday 11:00 AM	Thursday 8:00 PM
11/4 Institutions Chair	11/4 Wilshire Group
11/11 OPEN	11/11 Alpha Group
11/18 District 33	11/18 Hilltop Group
11/25 OPEN	11/25 Spirit of Recovery
12/2 OPEN	12/2 Leesport Group
12/9 OPEN	12/9 Robesonia Group
Reading Hospital Detox	Conawego DNA Unit
Thursday 8:00 PM	Friday 6:45 PM
11/4 Leesport Group	11/5 Leesport Group
11/11 Walnut St. Group	11/12 Walnut St. Group
11/18 Wilshire Group	11/19 Wilshire Group
11/25 Sunday Morning Speaker's	11/26 Spirit of Recovery
12/2 New Millenium Group	12/3 Spirit of Recovery
12/9 Leesport Group	12/10 Leesport Group

Please notify anyone at Intergroup if you cannot make your commitment. If you take one for your group, make sure the person scheduled to go has a substitute. When sending group members to commitments, it's great to double up. Send a newer and older member and everyone will benefit. For particulars on the Caron Meetings contact Glen Goodman at 610-678-2332 Ext. 2206.

Please make sure that someone honors your groups commitment . This could be the only exposure to the fellowship that these people have.