

I am responsible. When anyone, anywhere, reaches out for help, I want the hand of AA always to be there. And for that: I am responsible.

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**Stepping Stones** is a monthly newsletter of the Ninth District Intergroup with the office located at: 4224 College Street Beaumont, TX 77707. 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 either AA or the Ninth District Intergroup.

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**Contributions from our readers is encouraged.** Submissions are edited for space and clarity only. Contact information is required and anonymity is respected. ■

# Concept I

**“The final responsibility and the ultimate authority for A.A. world services should always reside in the collective conscience of our whole Fellowship.”**

*The A.A. groups today hold ultimate responsibility and final authority for our world services — those special elements of over-all service activity which make it possible for our Society to function as a whole. The groups assumed that responsibility at the St. Louis International Convention of 1955. There, on behalf, of Dr. Bob, the Trustees and A.A.’s old-time leaders, I made the transfer of world service responsibility to our entire Fellowship.*

*Why, and by what authority was this done? There were reasons of stark necessity for it, and there were further reasons which have to do with A.A.’s fundamental structure and tradition.*

*By the year 1948 our necessities had become clear enough. Ten years earlier—in 1938—helped by dedicated friends, Dr. Bob and I had commenced work upon a world service structure. Our first step was the creation of a trusteeship for A.A. as a whole. We called this body the Alcoholic Foundation; and in 1954 it was re-named The General Service Board of Alcoholics Anonymous.*

*This trusteeship was designed to inaugurate and maintain all of those special services for A.A. as a whole that could not well be performed by single groups or areas. We envisioned the writing of a uniform A.A. literature, the development of a sound public relations policy, and a means of handling the large numbers of pleas for help that might follow in the wake of national and international publicity. We thought in terms of aiding newly groups to form and of furnishing them with counsel based upon the experience of the older and already successful groups. We thought there would be a need for a monthly magazine and also for translations of our literature into other languages.*

*By 1950 nearly all of these dreams for world service had come true. In the dozen years following the creation of The Foundation, A.A. membership had jumped from 50 to 100,000. The A.A. Traditions had been written and adopted. A confident unity had pretty much replaced fear and doubt an strife. Our services had unquestionably played a large and critical role in this unfoldment. World service, therefore, had taken on crucial meaning for A.A.’s future. If these vital agencies were to collapse or bog down, our unity within and the carrying of our message to innumerable alcoholics without, would suffer serious and perhaps irreparable damage. Under all conditions and at any sacrifice, we would have to sustain those services and the flow of life blood that they were pumping into the world arteries of our Fellowship. Among the A.A. groups it had been proven that we could survive great strain and stress. But could we stand heart failure at our world center?*

*Excerpts from The A.A. Service Manual/Twelve Concepts for World Services—pg. 4 of the Concepts Section*

# AA GRAPEVINE



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The International Journal of Alcoholics Anonymous

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JANUARY 2021 | OLDTIMERS!

## Time to live

BY: RACHEL H.W. | LONDON

*Though she only drank for a few years, it was bad enough to stop early. And what a gift it is to enjoy a long, full, sober life*

In my hometown of London, two months before my 23rd birthday I set down the glass that contained the remnants of a homemade margarita. I was unable to finish the last sips without retching. I was colossally hungover and on a real hellish comedown. Had I known that would be my last alcoholic drink to date, I'm sure I would have found it in me to soldier on with it.

I didn't start drinking until I was 17, but all the "ism" behaviors were there from childhood. I was chronically anxious, oscillating between dread and overwhelming sadness. To medicate these states, I'd developed tactics early on to either exert control or to check out. My tools were self-harm, over- and under-eating and promiscuity. My life was a constant battle.

When I finally picked up my first drink I thought, Oh, thank God. What a relief. I gave a metaphorical exhale. The uptight, fearful girl that I was suddenly didn't give a damn what anyone thought about me. I was not only able to dance wildly and happily chat with anyone, but it was as though my "washing machine head" had been put on pause.

If drinking had continued to work to relieve what I now understand to be a spiritual, mental and physical sickness,

I'm sure I'd still be at it. However there came a point a couple of years later when I was frequently drinking to blackout and coming to in a number of compromising situations. All the while, the noise in my head was getting much worse.

I started hearing people say, "I'm worried about you," accompanied by concerned expressions. These comments and looks came repeatedly, as though on some kind of irksome loop. Meanwhile, it took more and more alcohol to get me drunk. I mean, I'd still be stumbling and slurring my speech and acting inappropriately pretty early in the evening, but I was unable to get that relief that felt so magical in the beginning.

I began using cocaine frequently, as it decreased my blackouts and increased my sense of not caring about anything and anyone. I rotated friendship groups, so no one knew the extent of my drinking. I sought out people who partied harder than me, so I didn't feel abnormal.

There are many war stories, some quite dangerous. One evening, all was going "so well" that I began drafting a kind of precursor to a suicide note. I didn't want to do anything as drastic as kill myself, but I knew with absolute certainty that my lifestyle was unsustainable. However I decided I'd try to hang on until my 25th birthday. If I weren't dead by then and still miserable, I'd follow in my aunt's footsteps and take an intentional overdose.

Over the years, the thought that I might be an alcoholic had crossed my mind, but I knew I couldn't be because I wasn't really keen on the taste of liquor. I hated being bloated, feeling nauseated and hungover. OK, so I put up with it, but a proper alcoholic would be cool with all that, right? Still, I recognized that my compulsiveness around drink and my weird uncontrollable behavior once I started drinking was causing the majority of my problems.

So I decided I'd try going to an AA meeting as punishment for being such a complete mess. I'd listen patiently to old people complain and maybe listening would do something.

At that first meeting, I couldn't make eye contact with anyone. Strangely, people weren't gripping their seats with white knuckles, rocking back and forth or rolling around in their own puke wailing about how unbearable it all was. People of all ages were present. They were even well-dressed and smiling, for God's sake. One lady suggested to me that I try to get to bed that night without taking a drink. And that's kind of the first Step, isn't it? Not picking up a drink a day at a time.

I kept going back to that meeting, as the people there seemed to speak the language I'd always had in my head. I got a sponsor who took me through the Steps. Day by day, I gained more and more sober time.

That was almost four years ago. Now I'm 26 and living a quite unbelievable existence. It turns out there are a ton of hours in the day when you're not off your face or suffering a colossal hangover.

There are still times when I go to bed feeling hideous, poor and worthless and wake up beautiful, content and useful. Or the other way around. My head still chats some proper craziness to me. But I've learned that in those moments it's a good idea to pray, call someone and share about it, or—shocker—call a newcomer and ask how they are.

I work a fairly consistent program, but let's be real, I do nothing perfectly, except not picking up a drink one day at a time. It's not about winning or losing the battle, it's about walking away from it. Progress not perfection is the way it's done.

Getting sober at any age gives us our lives back. But doing so in my early 20s gave me so much time. I had no idea that I would not only look forward to meetings, but that I'd find some of my best friends there. I never thought I would laugh so much or that I'd be able to find my tribe in the rooms of every country I've visited. Or that I'd be granted an existence in which I feel light, happy and fulfilled.

*Group Contributions — December, 2020*

<u>Group</u>	<u>Month</u>	<u>Y to D</u>	<u>Group</u>	<u>Month</u>	<u>Y to D</u>
6 O'Clock	\$0.00	\$0.00	Lumberton SOP	\$0.00	\$160.00
A New Beginning	\$0.00	\$0.00	Mid County	\$0.00	\$160.00
Any Lengths	<b>\$750.00</b>	<b>\$750.00</b>	Murray Street	\$0.00	\$140.00
Anahuac	\$0.00	\$65.00	Mustard Seed	\$0.00	\$1,164.00
Bolivar	\$0.00	\$50.00	New Life	\$0.00	\$0.00
Bridge City	\$0.00	\$0.00	Newton	\$0.00	\$0.00
Buna	\$0.00	\$0.00	Nueva Vida (Port Arthur)	\$0.00	\$0.00
Cornerstone	\$0.00	\$0.00	<b>Orange</b>	<b>\$20.00</b>	<b>\$240.00</b>
Deweyville	\$0.00	\$0.00	Pecan Groves	\$0.00	\$0.00
Downtown	\$0.00	\$0.00	Pineywoods	\$0.00	\$0.00
Fellowship	\$0.00	\$0.00	Personal Stories Group	\$0.00	\$50.00
Fresh Start	\$0.00	\$101.90	Port Arthur	\$0.00	\$37.28
Friends of Bill	\$0.00	\$0.00	Primary Purpose	\$0.00	\$0.00
Hope Group	\$0.00	\$0.00	Serenity	\$0.00	\$0.00
Jasper Noon	\$0.00	\$0.00	St Francis	<b>\$300.00</b>	<b>\$680.00</b>
Jasper Serenity	\$0.00	\$0.00	The Buck Stops Here	\$0.00	\$0.00
Keep It Simple	\$0.00	\$0.00	TLC	\$0.00	\$656.60
Kirbyville	\$0.00	\$200.00	Un Dia A La Vez	\$0.00	\$0.00
Kountze Daylight	\$0.00	\$0.00	Vidor	\$0.00	\$0.00
Lewis Drive	\$0.00	\$0.00	West End	\$0.00	\$50.00
Liberty	\$0.00	\$200.00	Unconditional Love	\$0.00	\$0.00
Lifeline	\$0.00	\$50.00	Way Out	\$0.00	\$0.00
Lufkin	\$0.00	\$0.00	<b>Totals</b>	<b>\$1,070.00</b>	<b>\$4,754.78</b>

**We want to sincerely thank you for your contributions. Please address your gifts to:**

**Ninth District Intergroup Association — 4224 College St — Beaumont, TX 77707**

**Phone: 409-832-1107 — Fax 409-898-8977 — E-mail: intergroup9@att.net — Web: aabeaumont.org**

**Would You Be On Our 12 Step List?**

**Addresses AA Entities**

Home Group: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: (Please Print) \_\_\_\_\_ Male/Female: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: Home: \_\_\_\_\_ Work: \_\_\_\_\_ Cell: \_\_\_\_\_

Area In Which You Will Serve: \_\_\_\_\_

Car Available: Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_ Languages Spoken \_\_\_\_\_

Times Available: (Circle Choices Please)    8 AM – 6 PM    6 PM – 12 MDN    12 MDN – 8 AM

Days Available: (Circle Choices Please)    SU    M    TU    W    TH    F    SA

**Ninth District Intergroup**

4224 College St  
Beaumont, TX 77707

**District 90 GSR Committee**

PO Box 21279  
Beaumont, TX 77720-1279

**Southeast Texas Area 67**

PO Box 130433  
Houston, TX 77219-0433

**AA General Service Office**

PO Box 459  
New York, NY 10163-0459

## *Opportunities For Service*

### **SHARE THE MESSAGE IN THE COUNTY, STATE AND FEDERAL FACILITIES**

We need men and women to go into the County jail on Sat. @ 11:30 each week. There is also a need for men to go into the State and Federal facilities on a weekly basis or even just once a month to give current volunteers a much needed break. Each facility requires a background check before you enter. To find out more information please come to the monthly GSR meeting and talk with the correction committee members or call Intergroup @ 409-832-1107.

### **TREATMENT FACILITY COMMITTEE**

We need volunteers to go into both the men and the women's facilities. Come to the next District 90 GSR Meeting.

## *Announcements*

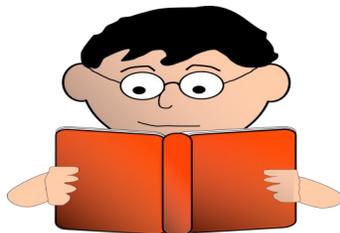
**Next District 90 GSR Meeting**  
**February 7, 2021 At 2:00 PM**  
**West End Group**  
**1235 Crockett, Beaumont, TX**

Everyone is encouraged and welcome to attend.

**Next 9th Dist. Intergroup Meeting**  
**January 24, 2021 At 2:00 PM**  
**Westgate Memorial Baptist Church**  
**6220 Westgate Drive, Beaumont, TX**

Everyone is encouraged and welcome to attend.  
Meeting is held in the rear of the building.

**MAIL RECIPIENT PLEASE MAKE THIS MONTHLY NEWSLETTER  
OF STEPPING STONES AVAILABLE TO YOUR GROUP**

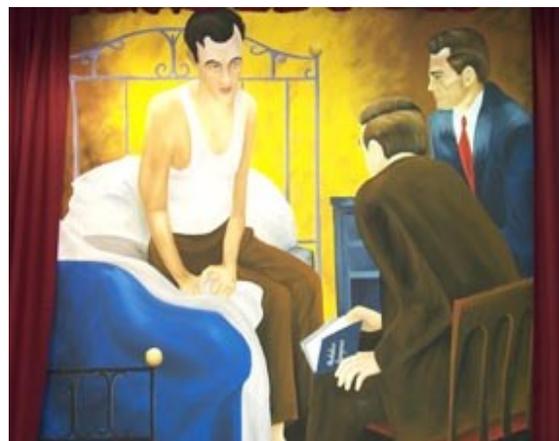


## 2021-2022 District 90 GSR Officers and Committee Chairs

<b>DCM</b>	<b>Art G.</b>	<b>409-779-4286</b>
<b>Alt DCM</b>	<b>Julian L.</b>	<b>409-331-4331</b>
<b>Treasurer</b>	<b>Carrie S.</b>	
<b>Alt Treasurer</b>	<b>Ginger Q.</b>	
<b>Secretary</b>	<b>Cassidy R.</b>	
<b>Alt Secretary</b>	<b>Open</b>	
<b>Registrar</b>	<b>Laurie B.</b>	
<b>Alt Registrar</b>	<b>Open</b>	
<b>Finance Chair</b>	<b>David S.</b>	
<b>Alt Finance Chair</b>	<b>Chad L.</b>	
<b>Archives Chair</b>	<b>David S.</b>	
<b>Alt Archives Chair</b>	<b>Open</b>	
<b>Intergroup Liaison</b>	<b>Ray F.</b>	
<b>Alt Intergroup Liaison</b>	<b>Open</b>	
<b>PI/CPC Chair</b>	<b>Open</b>	
<b>Alt PI/CPC Chair</b>	<b>Open</b>	
<b>CFC Chair</b>	<b>Rocco M.</b>	
<b>Alt CFC Chair</b>	<b>Open</b>	
<b>TFC Chair</b>	<b>Open</b>	
<b>Alt TFC Chair</b>	<b>Lester J.</b>	
<b>Website Chair</b>	<b>Frederick M.</b>	
<b>Alt Website Chair</b>	<b>Annette C.</b>	
<b>Grapevine Chair</b>	<b>Open</b>	
<b>Alt Grapevine Chair</b>	<b>Open</b>	
<b>2021 Convention Chair</b>	<b>Donna B.</b>	
<b>2021 Alt Convention Chair</b>	<b>Kevin W.</b>	
<b>2021 Convention Treasurer</b>	<b>Amy K.</b>	
<b>2021 Alt Convention Treasurer</b>	<b>Carrie S.</b>	
<b>2021 Gratitude Dinner Hosts</b>	<b>Don H. (Bridge City )</b>	
<b>2021 Alt Gratitude Dinner Hosts</b>	<b>Aaron S. ( Pecan Groves )</b>	

Please consider standing for the open positions above.  
You must be present at the GSR meeting to stand for a position.

**Next GSR meeting February 7, 2021**



Intergroup would like to congratulate everyone who is celebrating a birthday in January !!!



**1st Step  
Principle  
Honesty**

**1st Promise**  
**We are going to know a  
new freedom and a new  
happiness**