

# The Chronicle

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## DISTRICT 09 GSR MEETING – June 4th, 2017 Menominee, MI

Norm opened the meeting with a moment of silence for the still suffering alcoholics, followed by the Serenity Prayer. The Traditions were read by Norm and introductions made. A sign-in sheet was passed; there were 11 members in attendance from Oconto, Menominee, Peshtigo, Crivitz, Gillet and other various areas. The minutes from the last meeting were accepted as printed in the Chronicle. Jerry (motion) and Gloria (accept) **Treasurers Report:** John E. reported a balance of 1342.38. John (motion) and passed to Jerry (accept) the Treasurer's report.

**COMMITTEE REPORTS PUBLIC INFORMATION:** Open Position.

**CORRECTIONS:** Kim, nothing to report

**NEWSLETTER:** Aman B., will be adding AA stories to news letter

**ARCHIVES:** Open, material with Norms when someone is ready to take the position.

**GRAPEVINE:** Mary C. absent

**LENDING LIBRARY:** Available, please contact Mo for more information

**TREATMENT:** Open Position.

**WEBSITE:** ([www.district09aa.org](http://www.district09aa.org)) Jeff O. absent.

A motion was made and carried to accept the Committee reports.

### **OLD BUSINESS**

Still looking for someone to fill secretary position, Alt. DCM position, and chair positions. Nominations will be at the august district meeting and elections for next year will be the September district meeting. Please continue to relay this information at home groups.

### **NEW BUSINESS**

2018 Meeting schedule will be set up soon (time & place, etc...), Grapevine subscription is up 41.5 %, GSO nationwide is up 81% in contributions and is in a positive revenue. Oconto Group taking over district meeting location from Oconto Falls on March 4th and September 9th 2018.

### **GSR SHARING:**

6th Step.

### **ANNOUNCEMENTS:**

**Next District Meeting:** Next district meeting will be July 9th in Crivitz WI @ 2:00 P.M. Please send your personal stories to Aman B. Bhatak30@yahoo.com I would like to put one personal story in each newsletter, Thank you!

**District 09 Treasurer's Report**

Balance as of 10/01/2014: \$1342.38  
Total Income: 132.00  
Total Expenses: 24.00  
Total Earmarks: 700.00  
Liquid Assets: 750.38

**Donations may be sent to: District 09 Treasurer**  
John E. Netzel 1516 Kenny Dr. Lot 16 Crivitz, WI 54114  
(Please include a Group number and name.)

~~~~~  
**Area 74 Treasury**  
W3130 E. Broadway #312  
Freedom, WI 54913

Please include with remittance:

Group number, group name, address of group location or point of contact OR If there is only a group name and location or contact address, please include this.

~~~~~  
**The General Service Office**  
P.O. Box 459, New York NY 10163

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**Green Bay Central Office**  
1270 E. Main St. Suite 102  
Green Bay, Wis. 54305

**GSR/District Meeting – 2:00 P.M.**

July 9<sup>th</sup>, 2017  
Faith Presbyterian  
806 Fritzie Ave  
Crivitz, WI

**AA & Al-ANON Camping**

July 21<sup>st</sup>, 22<sup>nd</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2017  
Newberry, MI

@ Tahquamenon Waterfowl Association Campground  
8:00 P.M. Open Meeting & Camp Fire  
Please Bring a dish to pass  
Saturday Afternoon potluck & fellowship  
No swimming allowed due to unsafe conditions  
Contact: Ken and Jan (906) 293-9916

**Peshtigo AA/Alanon Meeting**

Are on the last Sun. of each month  
At 7:00 P.M. at the Good Shepard Lutheran Church  
331 Pine St. Peshtigo, WI 54157

**Sober Birthdays to Celebrate!!!**

1 1994 Steve C. Menominee 23 yrs.  
1 1988 Jim B. Menominee 29 yrs.  
2 2004 Vicki K. Marinette 13 yrs.  
4 1998 Barb.H. Lakewood 19 yrs.  
22 1990 Arliss W. Coleman 27 yrs.  
25 1996 Jerilyn Shawano 21 yrs.  
31 1989 Steve C. Oconto 28 yrs.

To receive a hard copy of newsletter, send \$8.00 along with your mailing address.

Make check out to District 09 Treasurer

The Newsletter may be sent free through e-mail by contacting Aman B. [Bhatak30@yahoo.com](mailto:Bhatak30@yahoo.com) Fliers are \$10.00  
a page per month.



**District 01 Mindfulness Walk  
& Open Sunset Bonfire Meeting**

Fellowship, snacks & dessert  
Bring a blanket and chair  
7:00 P.M fellowship  
8:00 P.M. Mindfulness walk  
8:45 P.M. Open Bonfire meeting  
Barkhausen Waterfowl Preserve  
2024 Lakeview Dr.  
Suamico WI 54173  
Contact: Missy 920-562-7296

**12<sup>Step</sup> High AA Group**

July 23<sup>rd</sup> - 30<sup>th</sup>

EAA Nature Center, Tent #1  
EAA Convention Grounds  
No EAA admission fee for  
Meetings

July 29<sup>th</sup> Speaker

Meeting at 8:00 A.M.  
Regular meetings  
At 8:00 A.M. after  
Coffee fellowship

**\*AA Story Below\***



**July Issue of Grapevine**

This month's special section features stories about AA Jail Birds. Hope as you're as excited as I am to check it out!



### **Need Medallions?**

Call John N. at 715-854-2244 or email him at [leztenej@centurytel.net](mailto:leztenej@centurytel.net) if your group is in need of ordering medallions at a reasonable cost

### **Note from Author:**

I think in one form another, we can all say we went down that path of unhappy destiny. Looking forward on that path we saw our ends, a painful or sudden alcoholic related fatality. I can remember times where I should not have lived. We had a God intervene that has brought us back into the biggest organization no one wanted to join. We were going to our ends literally reaping and sowing death and destruction. God has called us back at the fork where we so long have forgotten about. At one point, we have crossed that line into alcoholism where there was a fork, even though most of us don't remember one. Today we have a new fork we wake up to every day. Do I choose to follow God's will for me and allow him to remove my self-will, or will I choose to drink again and go back down that old Merry Go Around where I possibly may not return? No one knows except for God how many chances we have, but I will say the man in the AA story below will tell you that the AA road is a better road to travel. Enjoy Joe's story...

## **This Party Animal found Life outside of the Party**

### **Story of Joe**

Over the years, I've learned that my story is not entirely unique. I grew up in an area where alcoholism seemed to be an epidemic. As a teenager and later as a young adult, I was having trouble with personal relationships, I couldn't control my emotional nature, I was prey to misery and depression, I couldn't make a living, I had a feeling of uselessness, I was full of fear, I was unhappy, and I couldn't seem to be of real help to other people (page 52, Alcoholics Anonymous). Alcohol was there for me, at first, and seemed like a soothing answer to my problems. How could alcohol itself ever be a problem?

As younger child, I used to take some sips of beer and my grandparents and their friends would laugh as I pretended to like it. I remember enjoying the attention of being someone who could bring life to the adult party. Years later, I refused some stolen church wine and looked on as over 20 of my 8th grade classmates shared it in the middle of the street. I told myself I wasn't about to let peer pressure guide me.

I got drunk for the first time at age 14 when I was invited to the house of an older gentleman with an indoor pool and a fully stocked bar. I drank with my friends and we enjoyed the hospitality of the older guy who was probably in his 50s. I started to feel a warm buzz all around me and we decided to go swimming. I remember loving the feeling of being drunk but panicked when I was under water and couldn't really tell which way it was to the surface. We later found out that the old man was a pedophile after he made advances towards one of my friends on his yacht. Still, I felt glad to have discovered getting drunk and even more pleased to have dodged the bullet of a sick old prev. that fed alcohol to children.

As a new drinker, I remember wanting to find ways to drink more often. I figured that I was the guy that was going to find a way to keep my friends drinking when we wanted alcohol. I would take bottles from my parent's bar, get my friend to steal bottles from the liquor store while I stood as lookout, or get older friends to score it. I kept us supplied and kept us in trouble. At least two of my friends, age 15, had to have their stomachs pumped in the emergency room after my stolen booze parties. I got upset with them for bringing heat on me from what I saw to be over-cautious parents. Negative consequences didn't slow me down and I blamed others when my parents started to take notice of my new interests.

As I got a little older and started high school, I realized I couldn't handle beer like I handled harder liquor. I seemed to be allergic to it. I nervously consumed large amounts of beer at parties. I threw up on kitchen tables and couches. I peed on floors or sometimes in my pants. I wrecked stuff and blacked out. I smashed birthday cakes before they were cut. I often didn't remember how I got home or why I was waking up in my yard or in my garage. My parents started to ground me for drinking or staying out all night. As soon as I got out from being grounded, I was off running and gunning again and blacking out or not going home. One thing that made matters worse was that the friends I partied with were very into competitive drinking and drinking games such as who can do the most beer bongs. On top of that, I was a newly licensed-driver of cars and motorcycles and I liked to drive fast and I often drove fast and drunk. Sometimes we would get drunk and race cars around town backwards. During my junior year in high school, I told my girlfriend that she needed to leave me the key to her house while she went out of town with her family. I had a party at the house while my girlfriend's family was away and we trashed their large, beautiful home. When they returned, we confessed to what had happened because the parents thought their house had been burglarized and wanted to call the police. Her father promptly called my parents and asked that I not see daughter again. I was heartbroken and depressed that I couldn't be with someone I cared about because of my partying.

I started drinking by myself before school or on lunch break and even the friends I partied with started thinking I had issues. My grandfather had recently passed away and my family dog had to be put down. I was feeling extremely depressed and alone. I drank more and more to sooth the depression but I wasn't getting the same results. Friends started to see me as a guy that would trash the party or get too obnoxious and bring everyone down. They were tired of having stuff vandalized or being party to my crimes. On top of that, my parents started calling the police on me for leaving while I was grounded. I was a risk to others and became somewhat of a pariah. It was around that time that my parents sent me to a 30 day out-patient treatment program. I was in group therapy with other teenagers that were getting in trouble. I was unwilling or unable to stay sober during the 30-day treatment. The counselors and my parents found out that I was still drinking and people began to say that I

had an alcohol problem. I had more counseling with yet a different counselor that said I was just depressed, so depression then became my golden ticket to drink. My life became a confusing whirlwind of emotions with my parents battling to get me to straighten up. They made me attend Alcoholics Anonymous or they would threaten to kick me out of the house. I was 17 years old and my first AA meeting was in a smoke-filled room with what I thought was a bunch of old losers. I didn't listen and I didn't give it a second of a chance. My parents were cruel, I thought. I tried to convince them that I was just depressed and that they were off base. Alcohol was just a symptom.

Still only 17, it seemed I couldn't stop drinking no matter what the consequences were. I wanted to drop out of high school but my father insisted I graduate or leave the house. My parents stuck me in a shelter for juveniles after I did some damage around the house by pounding a hole in some doors and kicking a hole in a wall. I was there for a couple of weeks and decided that I needed to quit drinking to get back home for Christmas. I made a deal, I wouldn't drink long as I could do it on my own.

I sobered up when life demanded that I do it to survive. I was welcomed back to the parties long as I controlled myself. I told myself that it was just temporary and that I'd be of legal drinking age and soon living on my own. Controlled drinking had its perks but it took careful scheming and all the self-discipline I had left to fake it. After I graduated high school and still only 17, I quickly blew it. My mom booted me out of the house. I stayed with friends and more friends until I burned too many bridges. Sometimes I stayed in my car. I slept outdoors a few times but figured that was for bums and it was better to stay with people. Parents of friends started to take me in because I had convinced them that my parents were too harsh for making me leave. At least 3 sets of parents took pity on me. I didn't know what it meant to pay rent and figured any money I had could be used for partying. I played drums in bands but was never able to stay sober enough to practice and play paid gigs. Bands I was in played parties and we got kicked out of houses and apartments many times. As a drunken drummer, I had to move a lot. Neighbors near places I stayed hated me because late night music and parties would keep them up all hours. I learned to lock the door and pretend the music was too loud to hear the police pounding outside. I burned through friends like I burned through bottles of booze or twelve packs of beer.

I remember the feeling of disgust in the pit of my stomach when the money started to run dry. After leaving high school, I had a couple thousand dollars in money saved over the years from birthdays and odd jobs. Partying quickly burned through that. I hated not being able to drink when I wanted to drink, but the need to find a job and keep a stable living arrangement seemed necessary. Sometimes I'd check myself into inpatient treatment and haphazardly try to get sober to either get off the street or to fix my life and go to college or find a job. Treatment helped a little and I occasionally went to AA to fake it and try to get it together in a selfish and insincere way. I hated that I couldn't be a functional alcoholic. My drinking took 100% of my focus and 100% of my drive. Attempts to sober up were very short-term. I'd get it together to save up enough to go off running and gunning again. When I relapsed, I blamed others such as girlfriends or my parents or anyone that I thought I could channel my negativity towards. I hated sobriety and I hated to work and go to college. I hated that I wasn't rich and blamed fate, society, and God. I wanted to drink, and dammit, I wanted to drink! Why couldn't other people just get it through their thick heads and help me find a way to drink for a living? I didn't care that I was an alcoholic. I wanted to drink.

A couple of years had passed and I was going nowhere in a hurry. I even lost a telemarketing job at which the boss said it was OK for me to drink on the job if I just showed up. Drinking problems had progressed to the point that I was getting in trouble with the law. I was driving drunk and lost my license often. I drove without my license and continued to drive drunk anyway. I had little regard for the laws of others and didn't consider the law to be my law. When the police would try to come after me, I'd ditch them on my motorcycle. At age 20, I was drinking daily. One night, I came out of a blackout in the middle of a rainstorm. I had been in a car accident and a guy was yelling at me for rear ending his car and driving too fast for conditions. He suggested that we handle it out of court and move around the corner to get out of the intersection. He turned and I took off. I remember going as fast as I could in a 25-mph speed zone because I was afraid he might chase me to get my plate number, never thinking that he might have memorized it already. That night, I hid my smashed-up car in the garage and told myself that my drinking had progressed to the point that I'd better start using my motorcycle, even when raining, so I didn't kill anyone with my car. The very next night, again after bar time, I took off on my motorcycle as the police tried to pull me over. As they chased me, I came out of my blackout very disoriented and not knowing what street I was on. I was going 80 mph within a 25-mph speed limit and blowing through stop signs without

slowing down. I crashed into a steel barrier by a railroad track. I flew off the bike and landed on the tracks, with the bike almost landing on top of me. I couldn't move my leg and the rescue squad was called to take me in for emergency surgery. My knee was completely dislocated, all the ligaments were torn. My femoral artery was severed and I was bleeding out. I was fortunate to have the police chasing me. Paramedics and surgeons saved my life that night.

I soon developed a severe staph infection in my leg. Doctors told me that the leg would probably need to be removed but I fought and fought to save it. I had a couple of surgeries just to scrape away infected bone and place irrigation tubes around my knee. I was in and out of the hospital for several months. While in the hospital, I again went through inpatient treatment for alcoholism. I was fully determined to sober up for good this time. I was out of control and drinking was going to kill me.

I attended AA meetings regularly at that point in my life. For the first time, I was trying to work the 12 steps. I realized that living sober required having a strong support group. I tried to do some of the right things but still would cut corners. I tried to find easier, softer ways. I remember my will as still being very strong. I was stubborn and tried to do it my way. I lacked humility and kept in contact with people that I used to drink with. I still went to bars and started skipping meetings. After nearly a year of sobriety, I was out running and gunning again. The relapse led to the darkest and most trying period of my life.

I was back on motorcycles and racing around drunk before I was off crutches. I told myself I needed to get back on the horse. My total lack of humility infuriated my doctors, friends, and family. Nearly everyone I knew stayed away from me and out of my life. I started stealing alcohol from bars while laughing at bartenders and running from one bar to another before the cops could catch me. I stole bottles from liquor stores while living in a one-room flop house with the last of my money. I had no food and no money; only stolen booze. I stayed drunk for months at a time. I tried to steal from open cars. One night I put on a ski mask and stole a twelve pack in front of the gas station cashier who yelled at me as I ran off. Another night, I came out of blackout eating cheese and crackers in a complete stranger's home and soon realized that no one was there to let me in. I got beat up a lot in bars because I was too drunk to fight back. I fell down steps often, once down a cement set of stairs to a dark basement while trying to prowl behind a building. I often fell over drunk on my motorcycle at stop signs and also dumped the bike a few times while moving. I had concussions often and bruises, abrasions, and lacerations all over my body. I was depressed and lonely and it seemed that no one wanted to know me. I tried to check myself back into the hospital for AODA help and they'd turn me away because I'd been there too many times. The police picked me up in a bar one night after getting called by a bartender and they took me to the hospital psych unit where they proceeded to strap me down to the bed until I sobered up the next morning. Days later, I was again getting pulled over but this time by the animal control officer while riding drunk on my bicycle and fined for having no light. I was having visual and auditory hallucinations and never knew what time of day it was. During that period, I tried to kill myself by drinking large quantities of whiskey in a couple of minutes after also taking a mass number of antidepressants. I was ashamed to return to AA meetings because I had relapsed so many times. I was like the boy who cried wolf and no one wanted to listen to my whiny bullshit. I thought that I was going crazy and so did everyone else.

My family and a close friend finally came to the rescue again. They decided to do a three-signature commitment that sent me to a psychiatric hospital 30 miles away. While there I went through detox and moved to the inpatient AODA unit. Things quickly improved as they always did when I sobered up. I arranged to go to college again in my new city, secured a room in a halfway house and received more counseling after inpatient treatment. I became dedicated to going to AA meetings and saw them as a way of life now. I hung around with AA people and seldom spent time with people that drank. I avoided bars, called my sponsor, read AA literature, and went to meetings. I buckled down and went back to school full time and worked to put myself through school. I had a couple of slips around that time but had already come to accept my alcoholism and realize that AA would welcome me back with open arms; no matter what. In fact, I learned that acceptance was the answer to all my problems.

My son was born in 1991 and I had already sobered up for the last time prior to him being born. Due to drinking, I had almost destroyed one life; my own. I told myself that I would never let my drinking be of harm to another life; my son's life. I'm proud to say that my son has never known or seen my past horrible behavior. He has never seen his father take a drink. I've always talked openly and honestly with him so that he knows where substance abuse can land a person.



Today, I have had 26 years of continuous sobriety and am still a grateful recovering member of Alcoholics Anonymous. I go to meetings, I get involved in service work and help others, and I help myself by living the program. My recovery has been far from perfect and there have been a few times that I've tried to take the reins to life again. Occasional selfish, self-centered behavior has nearly taken me, more than once. I have had periods of restlessness, irritability and discontent that were totally unnecessary had I always been living the 12 steps instead of simply going through the motions. Speaking of my will, "plainly enough, it is a bone-crushing juggernaut whose final achievement is ruin" (12&12 Step Three, p.37). And complete abstinence is the only way it can work. I also found that there was more that AA could do for me beyond helping me stay sober. I realized long ago that I am also powerless over people, places, things, and situations. AA is showing me how to lead a healthier life in which I deal with problems head on by doing the next right thing. I work through my character defects and strive for progress rather than perfection. Today, I choose to trust in my AA friends and God. God works through people to carry me when I feel unable to carry myself. I also remind myself often that alcohol is like a street thug waiting around the corner to jack me just as soon as I let my guard down. It's truly cunning, baffling, and powerful. I have complete acceptance of my alcoholism today and am blessed with no obsession to drink. Today, God has removed thoughts of ever going back to the dark and lonely places that I've been while trying to do it on my own. Alcoholics Anonymous is truly the easiest, softest way to stay sober and that comes from someone that has tried virtually every other foreseeable way. Being willing to grow along spiritual lines offers a better life and I wholeheartedly recommend it.