

Families in Recovery



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2009 Potluck Schedule

Join us for delicious food and company! Bring a dish...your choice. Held at 7:30 on the Friday nights listed below, in the 4H building (#501) at the Evergreen State Fairgrounds in Monroe.

- May 8
- June 12 AUCTION!
- July 18 BBQ Sultan
- September 18
- October 2

Dear Friend

June 12th will be our famous auction potluck. This event helps raise funds needed to pay for food and supplies for our picnic and BBQ. Please consider donating good used items that have life and desirability left in them. (No refrigerators or analog TV's!). If you need help transporting the item or have questions, call a Board member.

Remember, you can also access our website at <http://www.FIR-Monroe.org> for information, or to sign up for an email subscription.

Write to us!!!

Tell us what you feel. Send us ideas for articles, or write one. Tell a good story. The email address is familiesinrecovery@verizon.net.

If You Are New

Welcome to our family! Things may seem strange for a while, you may feel uncomfortable, but things WILL get better so long as you don't pick up. It takes time to learn a new way of living and you are responsible for doing the footwork.

President's Message

The April potluck was in my opinion a great success, although some regular attendees and committee folks were absent due to Good Friday commitments and Easter activities. But some of our newer and not so new members stepped up to assist in the tasks that needed to be done to insure the success of our festivities. Good food was very abundant. I very much enjoyed feasting on corned beef. My opinion is that we should have corned beef at all of our potlucks. But that would probably create a lack of my other favorite food 'Chili'. Oh well, after all it is a potluck so there is always something new to try.

I got positive feed back from folks attending their first potluck. I was told that they really enjoyed the evening and planned to make this a monthly event on their road to a life

- November 6
- December 11

Potluck

**NEXT POTLUCK,
FRIDAY, May 8th**

**Diane,
Remember to
bring the birthday
cake!**

April Potluck Recap

Congratulations to April Birthday Celebrants!

John, 2 years
Lisa, 22 years
Greg, 6 years

Winners

Everyone was a winner
at the last potluck!
Here are those that
won in the raffle:

Kyle 50/50
(\$83.50)

Tyler. BBQ grill,
binoculars
Kohlton, weed
wacker

Jim S Smelly bath
products

Kevin won the
doorprize which was a
begonia, and patients
Rick W. and Gerald
each won a
leatherbound Big Book
in the patient
drawing.

Contacts

**Board Of Directors
President**

of sobriety.

Our monthly board meeting, which normally takes place on the Saturday evening following the potluck, was rescheduled due to Easter commitments of the members. The meeting was held on the second Saturday after the potluck and was poorly attended. Folks, this is an open board business meeting. This means that any one who considers his/herself a member of FIR can attend and voice opinions and suggestions. It is at this meeting that the activities for the next potluck are planned. We need your input.

For many years the core of the Alumni /F.I.R. has been folks that regularly attend Couples on Saturday evenings. These Saturday evenings have been a significant and important part of my recovery, for it was at the board and Couples meetings that I found I was not unique, and that I could enjoy being with other sober people.

In closing I must comment on an incident that happened on the fair grounds after the potluck had ended and most everyone had left. It was reported to me that a car left at high speed and turned doughnuts on the grass. This type of incident can not be tolerated. This act of irresponsibility could have very easily resulted in our loss of use of the fair grounds as well as future potlucks.

Jerry S

Board Meeting Minutes

**Next meeting is May 9th 6:00 at
the VGH Recovery Center. Please
Come!**

FAMILIES IN RECOVERY MINUTES
April 18, 2009

The meeting was called to order at 6:23 by President Jerry.
Members in attendance: Dianne, Jerry, Jo, Mary and Wade

MINUTES: Jo brought hard copies of last months minutes as well as this months. The March Minutes were accepted.
Jerry motioned Mary 2nd.

KITCHEN REPORT: There are no needs to be bought next month. After some discussion it was decided to stick with the smaller styrofoam cups so not only could they be used for coffee but also for the kids' juice.

TRANSPORTATION REPORT: The transportation van used by the recovery center is working well.

RAFFLE REPORT: There was not much to report on the raffle since not many people were present other than the "pass the

Jerry S. 360-794-4367
jerry.stackpole@gmail.com)

V.P.

John L. 206-909-4334
lightrays12@yahoo.com

Secretary

Jo B. 425-879-0412
jadewella@hotmail.com

Treasurer

Greg S. 360-568-3207
jgstarup@tgi.net

Director

Diane E. 360-397-9010
peterdianne@clearwire.net

Director

Wade B. 425-879-0412
jadewella@hotmail.com

Director

Wally C. 425-775-7012
crows4u@msn.com

Director

Annette S. 360-568-3207
amshannon@tgi.net

Committees

Hospital Representative

Dave A. 360-794-1405

Kitchen

Diane E. 360-397-9010
peterdianne@clearwire.net

Newsletter

Greg S. 360-568-3207
jgstarup@tgi.net

Potluck Raffle

John L. 206-909-4334
lightrays12@yahoo.com

Treasurer's Report

View the Treasurer's Report at our website, at <http://www.FIR-Monroe.org/id11.html> .

hat" and walking around with the 50/50 bucket seemed to work well.

TREASURERS REPORT: The year to date and monthly activity report for April were presented and accepted. The bill from the fairgrounds arrived for \$240 for the next three months rent. We cannot meet all our expenses as Dianne and Greg needed to be refunded as well. Jerry discussed priorities. Greg was written a check and the next three months were paid through June. July will be the next month due. Dianne will be refunded next month. Wade motioned Jerry 2nd. We need to look forward to upcoming expenses such as the picnic which usually costs \$700. The raffle in June usually only brings in \$400.

NEWSLETTER REPORT: There was an online response from Doc and Donna about the new online newsletter. We need folks writing in more for the newsletter about what they want and what they like. Also, a reminder needs to be put in the newsletter for next month birthday cake. We do need a paragraph from someone about the June auction and a blurb that says, Where is the bunny costume?

OLD BUSINESS: No old business.

NEW BUSINESS: RAP will land on the same day next month as Panel. Wade will discuss this with Greg. Wade and Jo will donate next month's Mother's Day flowers for the potluck to be handed out.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:56pm motioned by Jerry and 2nd by Wade.

Submitted by Jo

Family Support

It is very hard to come out of the recovery center into "real" life and maintain sobriety. Some people come home to families full of chaos. There are still hurt feelings and trust issues. Usually finances are an issue at this time. Maintaining sobriety even on the best of days can be difficult much less adding hardships to the list of distractions.

When my spouse came home from the recovery center they talked often of needing to put their program first. This just plain hurt. Slowly I began to realize how right they were. There would be no family, no relationship, no home life, no financial recovery if there first was not a program in place. I needed to get out of the way and dig deep inside to not interfere with the alcoholic/addict's program. Sometimes it was lonely. That is when I worked on my program. I got busy.

Al-Anon/Nar-Anon is a great resource during this time. There are many of us who struggle along side the newly recovering. Do I want success for my alcoholic/addict? You bet! Would I be willing to do whatever it took to help? Isn't that what I have been doing for so long? In Al-Anon/Nar-Anon I finally learned the tools to "help" in the right way. To do things that would be successful and produce results rather than just spinning my wheels. Learning tools to help not only the alcoholic/addict but ME too!!!

When other family members, parents, children, etc. saw the tools I was using they wanted to help too!! I encourage any family member or friend no matter the relation to attend at least six meetings. Try some different ones out. See what fits. I could not take care of myself and my family when I was emotionally upset with someone's recovery. I replaced panic and determination with peace and acceptance. I learned how to do it in Al-Anon/Nar-Anon and you can too!!

-grateful family of a recovering alcoholic/addict

Recovery

Once We Become Willing. . .

May 01, 2009 Story of the Day, [AA Grapevine.org](http://AA.Grapevine.org)

Originally published in The Grapevine September 1979 Vol. 36 No. 4

HOW MANY times have you said, or heard someone say, to a newcomer, "It's a simple program, but it's not easy"? I have come to believe that this well-meaning statement could prevent people from working any of the Steps after the Third. I think that instead of stressing the difficulty of working the Steps, we should be stressing how they are, once we become willing.

In the first part of the fifth chapter in the Big Book, we find two short sentences telling us that it is not easy: "We thought we could find an easier, softer way. But we could not." We hear this read at many meetings, and this is probably the basis for our statement that it is not an easy program. But is that really what was meant?

As we drunks so often do, we may be complicating things, in this case by concentrating on those two sentences, rather than on understanding the whole paragraph. But the first sentence of that paragraph reads: "At some of these we balked." To me, this means that we balked before we even got started on some or all of the Steps, that therein lies the difficulty. Becoming willing to work the Steps is difficult, but the Steps themselves are easy, once we have made up our minds to do them. Once we became willing to work each Step, was it then really so difficult? I think not. A careful reading of both the fifth and the sixth chapters will show us that they are aimed mostly at making us willing to work each Step; comparatively little is written about how to work the Step itself. We are given a guide to find our own best way.

Over and over again in those chapters, it is stressed that the willingness to practice the principles of the Steps is more important than any precise set of words, actions, or prayers, or even the actual perfect accomplishment of the Steps. For that matter, the first part of the fifth chapter tells us that we should strive for "spiritual progress rather than spiritual perfection."

In my own experience, I can say that once I had become willing to work each Step, it was then the easiest and most natural thing to do. When taken as a whole, working the Steps has become the most

rewarding and satisfying part of my life.

The night before I made my first AA meeting, I had actually worked the first three Steps, even though I didn't know what they were at the time. For the next three months, concentration on those three made it easy for me to stay away from that first drink. After barely three months in AA, and surely by design of my Higher Power, I was placed in a situation where I had to begin working the rest of the Steps or get drunk. At that time, I began rereading the Big Book. When I got to the fifth chapter, I was completely ready and willing to start on the Fourth Step, and I did.

Virtually every waking minute of the next seven days was spent on taking my inventory. On the eighth day, I went over and over what I had written, but nothing more would come to mind. With the understanding that I had completed my inventory to the best of my ability at the time, I commenced reading about the Fifth Step.

Then, I realized that in working the Fourth Step, I had really worked the first two parts of the Fifth Step, and all that remained of it was to find another human being with whom I could talk. I made up my mind that I would do this at the first opportunity. As soon as I had made the decision, the opportunity presented itself, and I completed the Fifth Step that very afternoon.

I can say that the rest of the Steps were just as easy for me. It seemed that no sooner was I willing to work a Step than it was accomplished for the first time. The last part of the Twelfth Step sent me back to the First, and since then, with the passing of each twenty-four hours, the practice of these principles has become a natural part of my life.

For the person who is not willing and is afraid of the difficulties ahead, that Third Step can be made, perhaps subconsciously, into a monumental stumbling block. We can complicate it to the point that it stymies all progress, and at the same time, use the thought that we are trying to work it as a balm on our conscience for our lack of progress.

Once we become willing to progress, we see that the Step requires only "a decision." We make it, and we move on to the Fourth Step. What could be easier?

At a discussion meeting I attended not long ago, the topic was the question "How does one become ready and willing to work the Sixth Step?" What ensued for the next few minutes was a discussion of whether or not God would actually remove any defects of character. Finally, one of the older members spoke up and said, "If you want to become ready and willing to work the Sixth Step, work the first five!"

Let's think positive. It is a simple program, and it's easy--if we are willing to try it!

R. G.
Kentucky

More Recovery

Another day at the office

I'm an addict and have been clean for eight years. I came to Narcotics Anonymous through a weird set of circumstances and heard the message that I didn't have to live the way I was living. I decided to stay because people encouraged me to, and now I live a different life full of the blessings that recovery has given me.

These days I work in the family court. Nobody there knows I used to be a junkie, and I value my anonymity. It's a challenge, and I love it, but the work is often confrontational. Being sworn at is a regular occurrence. Getting into my place of work is like getting into an airport. We have closed-circuit television monitoring, metal detectors, the whole kit and caboodle. A client has been murdered on the premises by another client.

Most of the people I deal with are truly good people who wonder how on earth their life came to this. It's a feeling I am familiar with. When I deal with the addicts, the wifebeaters, and the pedophiles, I try to practice the principles recovery has taught me and treat them at face value, as I would treat anyone else. Those days are tough, but I am good at my job. I have learned much in the rooms that helps me every day.

A while ago, I had been having "one of those days." I called what I hoped would be

my last ticket of the day, and a woman approached my counter. I asked how I could help and she asked me to file a document. I could smell alcohol on her breath; she was smashed. Something about it was strange. She was filing it on behalf of her husband, who was represented by a lawyer. I asked her why she was doing this, and she shot back, "because he couldn't organize a f\$%@ in a brothel!" As I filed the document, I gently suggested she keep such comments to herself, and she started to rant a bit. As I have said, I value my anonymity, but I thought it would be appropriate to inquire if she had ever sought help for her own (obvious) problem. She calmed down a bit and I handed back her copies. I was about to look up some helpline numbers for her when she told me to "get f*&%e@!" I'd had enough, and suggested that she leave. She did leave, but I thought to myself that I had lost an opportunity to plant a seed.

About three months later, I was at my home group, which is the biggest meeting in town. A woman got up to share on her sixty-day milestone. She looked familiar, but I couldn't be sure. At her ninety days, I was pretty certain it was her; and then when she celebrated six months clean, I was certain because some of the things she shared at the meeting were some of the things she had told me that day at work.

I have never spoken to her to ask if she remembers that day. I suspect that it was in the midst of a fairly nasty bottom for her. What matters is that she is in recovery. Somehow the seed was planted, maybe not by me that day, but somehow a loving higher power found the way.

It's a good job I have, tough at times, but rewarding on a regular basis. It's a gift of recovery, and sometimes God throws in a little bonus.

Damien R, Sydney, Australia
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From Our Readers

Letters from our readership are encouraged! We will publish those that may have interest for our members. Email your comments to familiesinrecovery@verizon.net.

Newsletter Articles

I have a question about the newsletter. After reading this past issue, I see there are very few articles. The only ones are from the president and the hospital, nothing about recovery, and living life in recovery. Is this the way the newsletter is going to be from now on? I am trying to keep a positive out look from month to month. Please keep me pumped up on this issue. Right now I feel a little deflated.

Doug

May 2009 at the VGH Recovery Center

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
					1	2

NA Mtg 10:00			AA Mtg 7:30		NA Mtg 7:30	Couples 7:30
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
NA Mtg 10:00			RAP 6:00 AA Mtg 7:30		Potluck 7:30	Board Mtg 6:00 Couples 7:30
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
NA Mtg 10:00			AA Mtg 7:30		NA Meeting 7:30	Couples 7:30
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
NA Mtg 10:00			AA Mtg 7:30		NA Mtg 7:30	Couples 7:30
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
NA Mtg 10:00	Memorial Day		AA Mtg 7:30		NA Mtg 7:30	Couples 7:30
31	June 1	June 2	June 3	June 4	June 5	June 6
NA Mtg 10:00			AA Mtg 7:30		NA Mtg 7:30	Couples 7:30

