

NNIG MONTHLY MEETING SPEAKER



September 10, 2022
Michelle Q., Sparks
Positive Acceptance Group
Speaker at 7:00
Silver Legacy Silver Baron Rm 1-6

Silver Legacy - 407 North Virginia St., Reno - Doors open at 6:30

September, 2022

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GENERAL WARRANTIES OF THE NORTHERN NEVADA INTERGROUP ASSOCIATION OF ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS

In all its proceedings, the Intergroup Association observes the spirit of AA Traditions, taking great care that the Intergroup Association never becomes the seat of perilous wealth or power; that sufficient operating funds, plus a reserve be its prudent financial principal; that none of the Intergroup Association members shall ever be placed in a position of unqualified authority over any of the others; that all important decision be reached by discussion, vote and whenever possible, substantial unanimity; that no Intergroup Association action ever be personally punitive or an incitement to public controversy; that though the Intergroup Association may act for the service of AA Groups in the Northern Nevada area and parts of Northern California, it shall never perform any acts of government; and that, like the Society of Alcoholics Anonymous, the Intergroup Association itself will always remain democratic in thought and action.

(The above is adapted and modified from "The AA Service Manual", and AA Co-Founder Bill W's. Twelve Concepts for World Service; Concept XII, as adopted by the General Service Conference on April 26, 1962. This adaptation of copyrighted AA material has been approved by the General Service Board)

CENTRAL OFFICE

436 S. Rock Blvd.,
Sparks, NV 89431
Monday thru Friday
9:00 AM to 5:00 PM

Saturday 9:00 AM to 1:00 PM

24 Hour Answering Service:

(775) 355-1151 Fax: (775) 355-1560

EMAIL: officemanager@nnig.org

Web Site/Meeting Schedule: nnig.org

The Bracer: nnigbracer@gmail.com

THE BRACER



NORTHERN NEVADA INTERGROUP

A Patron Saint of AA

Ninth Tradition - AA, as such, ought never be organized; but we may create service boards or committees directly responsible to those they serve.

I wish I could tell you that after reading the Big Book and the book *Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions* I experienced a spiritual awakening and grasped a total understanding of our Traditions. I wish I could tell you that as a GSR, DCM, and an active member of several standing committees, I have never violated the principles set forth in the Traditions. But, typically alcoholic, I gained most of my knowledge and understanding from my mistakes and through the mistakes of others. Sadly, I made most of those mistakes after several years of sobriety when I should have known better.

As a GSR at my home group, I was extremely adamant about Traditions. I tried to dictate moral behavior, told people what literature they could or could not read, and even made violent threats to one man because he was saying bad things about the group. I would run guilt trips on those who refused to get involved with service work while bragging about my own involvement.

After about a year of this self-imposed misery, I found it necessary to get back to the basics of AA. I discovered that I had forfeited my own serenity.

Being a slow learner, I found myself gradually slipping back into my old behavior. I was a DCM at the time. Controversy seemed to dominate my AA life. I was constantly engaged in heavy debate with other trusted servants over issues that were none of my business. I justified this behavior by rationalizing that I was preserving the integrity of the Traditions of Alcoholics Anonymous. Today I realize that my behavior was just another example of my alcoholic thinking.

One day as I was reading the Ninth Tradition in my "Twelve and Twelve," a message was suddenly revealed to me that I had never noticed before. Even though I had read that particular chapter many times before, I had never understood its true meaning. I had always thought that it merely gave authority for the formation of a service structure. The new message had an entirely different meaning.

I suddenly realized that I had been trying to impose organization into the Fellowship. In my own way, I had been exacting my own brand of punitive action against those who I judged to be less sincere than myself. I had ordained myself as a patron saint of AA.

In prayer, I asked for forgiveness from my Higher Power. At the next area assembly I was selected to chair a meeting with the GSRs and DCMs. With all the humility I could muster, I made amends to all those present and later to those individuals who had felt the sting of my verbal whip. Finally, again in prayer, I turned my will and the care of AA over to God, as I understand him.

Continued on Page 7

AA's

Recovery Step Nine:

"Made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others."

Three

Unity Tradition Nine:

"A.A., as such, ought never be organized; but we may create service boards or committees directly responsible to those they serve."

Legacies

Service Concept Nine:

"Good service leaders, together with sound and appropriate methods of choosing them, are at all levels indispensable for our future functioning and safety. The primary world service leadership once exercised by the founders of A.A. must necessarily be assumed by the Trustees of the General Service Board of Alcoholics Anonymous."

Concept IX – The Need for Good Leadership Throughout A.A.

Bill begins his discussion of Concept Nine by saying that the success of any service structure always depends on the quality of persons available to carry out the jobs that need to be done. In A.A., this starts at the group level with the selection of its General Service Representative, and extends with increasing importance through to District Committee Members, Area Committee persons, Conference Delegates, and Members of the General Service Board. A.A.'s long term success depends on the selection of the best persons available at each job level.

Discussion of qualities of good leadership is central to Concept IX. Bill begins this discussion by setting up two opposite and extreme situations. Putting "principles before personalities", carried to an extreme, would set up a rather faceless group of automatons trying to please everybody. At the other end would be leaders who are "...people of the most sterling judgment, morals, and inspirations; big doers, prime examples to all, and practically infallible." Real leadership falls somewhere between these two extremes, being neither faceless and without personality differences, nor perfect.

Here are some bullet points drawn selectively from Bill's discussion of good leaders in A.A.

- They lead by example; they do not drive by mandate.
- They originate plans, policies and ideas for innovation while also consulting widely with others.
- They are neither over-bearing "power-drivers" nor meek "order takers".
- They never pass the buck, but take effective action within the framework of their defined authority and responsibility.
- They recognize that even prideful and angry people can be right while the humble may be quite mistaken.
- They listen carefully to their critics and others who disagree with them.
- They respect the quality of "give and take", being willing to compromise cheerfully.

Bill continues to discuss *vision* as another attribute of leadership. By vision, he means "...the ability to make good estimates, both for the immediate and more distant future. Tolerance, responsibility and flexibility are other leadership attributes are needed along with vision.

Every leader does have all the needed skills and experiences. Talents vary greatly among our members. Because of this, it is important to have sound methods for selecting leaders. At many levels of A.A., leaders are selected by what is called the "Third Legacy" method, which means selecting persons who either receive a two-thirds majority in a voting process or, in the case of no one receiving this majority, by lot (drawing names from a hat). Over the years, this has proven to be a most successful A.A. leader selection method. People with good combinations of skills and talents as well as good leadership attributes always seem to emerge from this procedure.

This is a 12 part series written by members of the 12 Concepts Study Group in Reno, Nevada. Efforts were made to use simple, everyday language. Each concept is written by an individual member of the group and is not necessarily the opinion of AA as a whole or NNIG. We hope this series will help our community to understand the Concepts and bring interest to those wanting to know more about them. Revised May, 2017.

The Bracer is a monthly publication intended for members of Alcoholics Anonymous and their families only. It is about, by and for members of the fellowship. Opinions expressed herein are not necessarily those of A.A. as a whole or NNIG. For article submissions or comments, email the Editor at nnigbracer@gmail.com

Deadline for submission is the last Friday of the month.

NNIG & AREA EVENTS

EVENTS HOSTED BY NORTHERN NEVADA
INTERGROUP TO SUPPORT CENTRAL OFFICE

NNIG Monthly Speaker Meetings
Silver Legacy – 407 North Virginia Street, Reno 89501



Monthly Speaker Meeting
Doors open at 6:30 PM
Speaker at 7:00 PM



All meetings located in Silver Barron Room 1-6
Unless otherwise noted

September 10, 2022
Host Group - Positive Acceptance Group
Speaker- Michelle Q.- Sparks, NV.

October 8, 2022
Host Group – A Vision for You
Speaker – John S. – Santa Clara , CA.

November 5, 2022
Host Group - RENYPAA
James S. – Reno, NV.

December 10, 2022
Host group -District 2
Rosy T.- Seal Beach, CA.

Speaker Chair – Kevin B. (775) 470-4614
Need more info call: Central Office – (775) 355-1151
Join us for dinner at Cafe Central inside the Silver legacy @ 5pm

Time for the NNIG Halloween Bash

Saturday October 29
6-10pm

Speaker @ 7pm

followed by Costume Contest

1st, 2nd, 3rd

Best & Original

Dessert Contest 1st, 2nd, 3rd,

Creative & Yasty

Bring a Dessert to share

Family Friendly Event

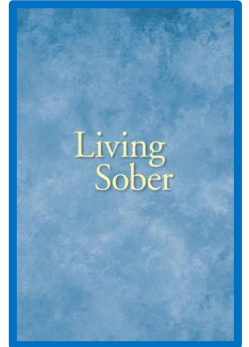
Neil Road Rec Center

3925 Neil Rd Reno

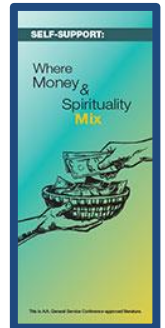
Questions: Michele Q. 650-207-2746



**BOOK OF
THE MONTH**
\$2 Off



PAMPHLET OF THE MONTH
FREE



OTHER AREA EVENTS

NNIG GRATITUDE DINNER 2022

Saturday
November 12th, 2022

ATLANTIS HOTEL CASINO - RENO NV
Doors open 4:30pm Dinner @ 6pm
Speaker @ 7pm

**UNITY:
CELEBRATING THE
FELLOWSHIP**

AA Speaker Paul W.
Los Angeles, CA.

TICKETS \$59
Only at
CENTRAL OFFICE
775-355-1151

What in the world is
General Service?



Find out how AA stays unified

**GENERAL SERVICE and UNITY
INSIDE AA WORKSHOP**

Sunday Sept 11th, 2022
5pm to 7pm via Zoom

Meeting ID: 898 1243 7721

Passcode: area42

For more information contact Jake at alternatedelegate@nevadaarea42.org

SOBRIETY IN THE SIERRAS



Lake Tahoe 2022

Register online here ...

<https://www.laketahoe-aa-fallfestival.com/>

Annual Fall Festival

Sep 30 3:00 PM PDT –

Oct 02, 12:00 PM

Harvey's Hotel and Casino,
18 Hwy 50, Stateline, NV

Central office report from Ronda H. September 6, 2022

Volunteer hours- 155 hours

Calls into Central Office:

- Calls for AA help - 5
 - Calls for Alanon/Alateen - 1
 - Meeting information- 47
 - Retail/merchandise- 16
 - Other 12 step programs- 5
 - Events - 10
 - New to A.A. - 5
 - Business/Central office- 92
 - Total calls - 181
 - Visitors - 324, 4 dogs
1. Book of the month is "Living Sober", this is \$2 OFF, \$7. Pamphlet is "Where Money & Spirituality Mix" FREE.
 2. The website had 20,789 pageviews. New - 42%, Returning 58%
 3. Please let your Home Group know of the Bracer.

Ronda
Central Office Manager



Previous Birthdays



August 2022

Linda G. 30 Years

Danny S. 20 Years

July

Joanne P.
10 Years

June

Ann G. - 18 years

Ron T. - 11 years

May

Donn T. 32 Years

April

Paul 31 Years

March

Ken L. 40 Years

Kim D. 43 Years

February

Skip 22 Years

December

Sean S. - 32 Years

Mystery Person!!- 34 Years

November 2021

Rieh T. - 35 Years

Shawn - 30 Years

October 2021

Sharon F. - 37 Years

Naney T. - 36 Years

September 2021

Phil S. 45 Years

Mike 26 Years



Maybe I'll get some food at that campfire.

What's the worst thing that could happen?



10,000 Years Later

ROLLS 52

Did you know you can share your sobriety and gratitude in a practical way by joining the A.A. Birthday Club? Sign Up today and be featured in the Bracer Birthday Club section of the Bracer. Show your Support for your NNIG & Central Office, Join the Birthday Club. A donation of only one dollar for every year of your sobriety. Envelopes available at Central Office, NNIG Business Meeting or Intergroup Representatives

DAWN PATROL
SUN-SAT 7AM
10046 CHURCH STREET
TRUCKEE CA

Verdi Greener Pastures
Mon 7pm
Bridge St. & 3rd
Verdi

Please respect all meeting place mandates about face coverings.

12&12 Steps and Traditions
Thur. 6pm
1276 Pit Rd.
Gardnerville

Not a Glum Lot
Thursday
7:30pm
635 S. Wells Ave
RENO

AA ANSWERING SERVICE NUMBERS

Reno, Sparks, Carson City and all of Northern Nevada: (775) 355-1151
Las Vegas and all of Southern Nevada: (702) 598-1888
Mammoth Lake: (760) 934-3434
North Lake Tahoe: (530) 546-1126
South Lake Tahoe: (530) 541-1243
Susanville, CA: (775) 355-1151
White Pine County/Ely: (775) 296-0656 Jim C.

N.N.I.G. STEERING COMMITTEE
 Last Tuesday of each month, 5:30 PM
 Central Office, 436 S. Rock Blvd., Sparks

N.N.I.G. BUSINESS MEETING
 First Tuesday of each month, 6:30 PM
 Alano Club, 1640 Prater Way, Sparks

N.N.I.G. MONTHLY SPEAKER MEETING
 7:00 PM Silver Legacy - Silver Baron A
 2nd Saturday of the month

N.N.I.G. H&I
 First Monday of each month, 5:30 PM
 Central Office 436 S. Rock Blvd., Sparks



District Meetings

DISTRICT-2 2nd Tuesday of each month, 6:30 Central Office
 Zoom # 91904741396 Password D2

DISTRICT 4 First Thursday of each month, 7:00 PM-
 Zoom ID: 876 7717 4234 PW: District4

DISTRICT 6 2nd Sunday of even numbered months-
 For information email district6@nevadaarea42.org

DISTRICT 8 First Sunday, 3:30 p.m. on odd months
 Call (760) 937-8407

DISTRICT 10A Third Sunday of every other month, 1:30 PM
 680 River St. Elko, NV

DISTRICT 10B Dark since 2017

DISTRICT 11 Only holds meetings 4 time a year, call DCM

DISTRICT 12 2nd Saturday of each Month at 5:00 PM- 457
 Esmeralda Street Wolf Center, Fallon NV

DISTRICT 14 3rd Wed of each "Odd" month at 6:00 PM -265
 Bear Street in Kings Beach CA

DISTRICT 16 Meeting is held 3rd Tuesday of the month
 Sparks Family Christian Church 510 Greenbrae
 Blvd 6:00PM-7:00PM

DISTRICT 18 DARK DISTRICT

DISTRICT 20 Third Saturday of Jan, Mar, May, Aug & Oct
 10:30 AM- Contact DCM @ district20@nevadaarea42.org for location

DISTRICT 22 1st and 3rd Thursday of every month 6:30 PM @
 Central Office

AREA CLUBS

Reno / Sparks Clubs
 Alano Club Sparks, 1640 Prater Way (775) 359-2727
 Driars Club Reno 345 S. Wells Avenue (775) 324-9210
 Triangle Club Reno 635 S Wells Avenue (775) 324-7977

Clubs outside Reno/Sparks Area
 Alano Club Carson City, 1800 HWY 50 East (775) 882-0443
 Bishop Alano Club (760) 873-6700
 Elko Alano Club (775) 738-4747
 Las Vegas Triangle Club (702) 435-0597
 South Lake Tahoe (530) 541-1243



9TH STEP PRAYER

God give me the strength and direction to do the right thing no matter what the consequences may be. Help me to consider others and not harm them in any way. Help me to consult with others before I take any actions that would cause me to be sorry. Help me to not repeat such behaviors. Show me the way of Patience, Tolerance, Kindliness, and Love and help me live the spiritual life. AMEN (p. 78-80 BB)

Lakes Crossing Center Meetings

Lakes Crossing would like to start meetings back up at their facility. This is a psychiatric evaluation and treatment center, for incarcerated individuals.

Location: 500 Galletti Way, Sparks, NV 89431

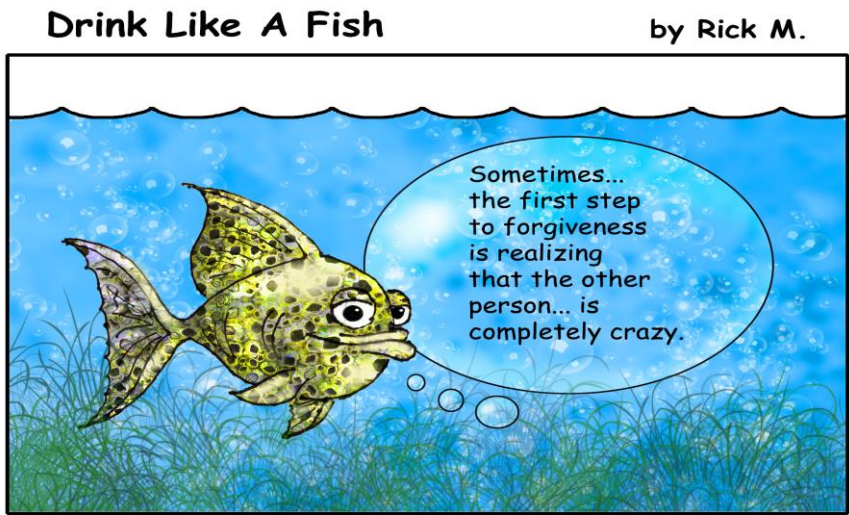
The Need:

- Provide two meetings both on Monday's at 6pm.
 - o One serves primarily women. The women's building could get by with every other week if volunteers are scarce. If another day is better for the women's building, we can do that too, any day but Wednesday works for them.
 - o One at the main building. Requested every week.

Requirements:

- All volunteers must be vaccinated against Covid.
- New volunteers to Lake's Crossing must undergo a quick background check which isn't to explore all legal entanglements, just current ones that are open.
- Orientation. This could be done at any of the TB Tests/readings. Please coordinate with Melissa Curley, facility coordinator. 775-688-0492
- The third step which is the most labor intensive is the 2 step TB test. This requires the person to come in to get test administered, then come back 3 days to get it read, then come back a week from the first administration, they have to come back again to get the other arm tested and then return again 3 day later.
 - o The facility is a 24 hr facility so nurses are available all day to read the tests at your convenience.

Contact:
 Joe H. NAGSC Corrections Chair, 415-203-4888
nagsccorrectionalfacilities@nevadaarea42.org



NNIG/Central Office Group Contributions 2022

<u>Group</u>	<u>August</u>	<u>YTD</u>	<u>Group</u>	<u>August</u>	<u>YTD</u>
3rd Tradition Secular Group			Happy Hour Reno		825.00
4th Dimension- ON-LINE	20.00	144.62	Kings Beach AA Golden Group		234.55
A Way Home		99.50	Knuckleheads		30.00
Alano Brown Baggers		50.00			
Alano Captains Table		15.00	Minden Saturday Night Fever		240.00
Alano Dawn Patrol			Ladies of the Evening		
Alano Jaywalkers	197.08	482.08	Ladies of the Lake	30.80	83.84
Alano Open Heart Open Mind	129.00	262.00			
Back Room Group		497.14	Minden Stephanie Way Group		595.61
Back to Basics Saturday Night		202.00	Minden Wednesday Night Live		48.60
Battle Mountain Fellowship		20.00	Minden/Gardnerville Group		703.13
Beginners are Winners On-Line Group		671.26	NNIG Business Meeting	33.00	161.75
Buena Vista Group		150.00	Mt Rose Recovery Room		3134.00
Caring & Sharing in Stead		879.92	Minden Saturday Night Group	240.00	240.00
Carson Airport AA		50.88			
Carson Big Book Experience	46.00	106.00	Pyramid Way Discussion Group		
Carson Brown Baggers	740.00	740.00	RTC Monday Night Mens		
Carson Dr. Bob Nightngales			RTC Afternoon Delight		
Carson Early Birds		1954.43	RTC Almost Heaven	50.00	750.00
Carson Fallen Women			RTC Grapevine/Big Book		
Carson Happy Hour		533.85	RTC Aloha Group		2091.12
Carson Happy, Joyous and Free		45.53	RTC Big Book Study		50.00
Carson Jay-Walkers Men's		100.00	RTC Beginners are Winners		287.00
Carson Men's NO BS Stag		80.00	RTC Coffee with Bill		
Carson Sandbaggers	100.00	700.00	RTC Don't Trip Music Meeting		
Carson Sisters in Sobriety		100.00	RTC Just for Today Women		
Carson Sunday Morning Fire Station		460.00	RTC How We Stay Stopped		125.00
Carson Valley Gratitude		501.00	Positive Acceptance Group	488.43	740.43
Carson Women's Night Out		433.00	RTC Mid-Day Group		
Chester Fellowship			RTC Champions of Sobriety		
Chester Saturday Night Group	90.00	208.25	Mid-Day Group ON-LINE	20.00	198.12
Choices		200.00	RTC Recien Llegados		40.00
Cornerstone Group		300.00	RTC New Awakenings Group		986.63
Crystal Bay Nooners		350.00	RTC Little Rascals		200.00
Dayton Friday Night Rule 62		300.00	RTC Sober N Sane		100.00
Dayton Red Rooster	100.00	250.00	RTC Men's Trudgers		160.00
Decompression Chamber/online		720.45	RTC Good Morning Sobriety		126.00
Deer Park Rebels			Recien ilegados		50.00
District 14	50.00	950.00	Sisters in Sobriety		
District 2	10.00	394.00	Sisters of Sobriety SOS		395.40
District 22	52.00	425.00	The Next Chapter		100.00
District 6			South Shore Group		120.00
Double R at Noon		450.00	Spring Festival		77.46
Driar's Oldtimer, Newcomers			Southside Group	164.40	1247.70
Driar's Serenity Night Ows		50.00	Slide Mountain Candle light Gro	150.00	150.00
Eye Operner		1095.00	Sunnyside Group		1140.91
Fallon Fallen Women's AA Meeting		25.00	Silver Springs Groups		75.00
Fallon Grapevine Online		20.00	Susanville Wed Womens		
Fernley Groups			Tahoe City Fellowship		750.00
Fireside Group			The Rock Group		304.00
Galena Friday Night			Truckee Dawn Patrol	300.00	1000.00
Ground Zero		372.91	Truckee Fellowship		
Grupo Accion		30.00	Truckee River Men's Stag		1785.20
Grupo Fe Y Esoeranza			The Next Chapter		100.00
Grupo La Nueva Luz	10.00	70.00	Virgina City Plug in the Jug		
Grupo Latino			Verdi Greener Pastures		50.00
Grupo Nueva Vida			Whole in the Soul		51.00
Jamesville God Grant Me			Whole in the Ground Sunnyside		300.00
Jamesville Women's Monday Night			Willing to go to any Lengths		322.00
			Winnemucca Serenity Seekers		50.00
			The Shop	300.00	300.00
			Minden Language of the Heart		40.00
			Our Group Big Book		
			Out and Sober		
			Serenity on Sundays		200.00
			The Twilight Zone		
			Wednesday Night Beginners Meeting		
			Weekend Warriors		
			Whole in the Soul		80.00
			Women's New Beginnings	108.42	351.40
			Women's New Harmony		175.00

Total 3,429.13 36,854.67

Continued from Page 1

I found the essence of the Ninth Tradition cleverly concealed on page 174 of the "Twelve and Twelve." Bill wrote, "Great suffering and great love are AA's disciplinarians; we need no others." To me, the Ninth Tradition epitomizes the spirit of anonymity, clarifies the Second Tradition, and provides us with an avenue through which our efforts in carrying the message of AA can have continuity, structure, and cohesiveness. It is the principle that necessitated the foundation of the Twelve Concepts. It requires that I recognize the autonomy of each group, even when I disagree with some of its policies. It will always stand as a personal reminder to me that my service to the Fellowship must come from a space of love. And finally, the Ninth Tradition will always serve as a tourniquet for this once-bleeding deacon. **BY: CHARLES M. | COLUMBIA, TENNESSEE**

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I stole the wallet

Awkward and painful as it was, this amends had to be made

WHEN I grew up I had a favorite uncle whom I've come to believe was an alcoholic, just like me. I was always excited to be around this uncle. He drank and seemed to have a lot of fun. At one time, he was a deputy sheriff, and so he knew everyone from one end of the county to the other. The first time I drank was with him, and the first time I got really drunk was with him—at the ripe old age of 11.

I was 18 years old when I was drunk one Sunday night and broke, so I drove up to his place to see if I could borrow some money. I found both him and a man who was living with him passed out. I stole the wallet of the man living with him and left the house unnoticed.

This man blamed my uncle for stealing his money. The sheriff was called in. My uncle had worked for him and had drunk himself out of that job. It was very embarrassing and shameful for my uncle to go through that. Eventually, it blew over.

I left for the Marine Corps and tried to forget about the incident, but every now and then when I was back home I would think about it when I ran into my uncle. I felt a lot of guilt and shame when it came up in my thoughts, and I drank to make it go away. It was like a monkey on my back.

When I sobered up and was in treatment, this came up in my Fourth and Fifth Steps, so obviously it was on my Eighth Step list. It was meant to clear up the wreckage of my past so I didn't have to have it haunt me for the rest of my life.

My uncle, although a fun-loving man, had a very volatile temper. I was scared, to say the least, but I knew I had to make that amends. I met with him on a Saturday morning in his garage and brought up the incident. He remembered it as though it were yesterday. I told him that I was the one who stole the money. Believe me, I was extremely uncomfortable. It was very awkward for both of us. I was, you could say, the apple of his eye and we had done many things together, so it really took him for a loop. I asked my uncle for forgiveness and told him I was very sorry for the misery I had caused him.

He looked me right in the eye and said, "Lee, what's between us is between us, and that's the end of it." When I walked out of that garage I was a free man, released of the bondage of self. This gave me faith that I was on the right path and that this AA business worked. Years later this same uncle was in an assisted care home. He needed help with his affairs but was strongly rejecting help, even from a very close brother, another uncle of mine. This other uncle asked me to help him. I met with my first uncle and told him we loved him and wanted to help him, but we needed his help to go through a power of attorney hearing. With much skepticism on the part of a court administrator and others, the next day we had the proceeding. I prayed for the strength to go through with this and was prepared for the worst, but everything went without a hitch and people walked out of the room shaking their heads. I put my arms around my uncle and just cried. I know that when I made that amends to him years before he knew I wouldn't lie to him and he trusted me to do the right thing. Six months later he passed away and my other uncle was able to handle the estate without any glitches.

There's only one way this would have happened and that is with God's help and guidance. **BY: LEE C.J. | FARGO, N.D.**

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Long overdue

Sometimes when we clean house and pay people back, we get a wonderful surprise

My sponsor said, "It can't be that hard. There must be someone in 50 years who you owe an amends to."

"No." I replied. But I knew better. It had been a weight on my heart for over 20 years. I was sure it was no big deal to the person I had wronged. It was only \$400 after all. And anyway, he probably had forgotten it long ago, with all his money. Please!

But all along, I had been carrying around his business card through three different wallets for 20 years, every few days remembering it was there, then pushing aside my guilt. Finally Jim, my sponsor, said, "Until you stop lying to yourself, it will be hard to move forward."

Back in 1998, I had left my wife of 28 years and run away to California. It was the worst time in my life. I had hooked up with a female body builder who promised to make me tingle from head to toe. When we got to California, we rented a little house in La Mesa, just north of San Diego. It didn't take long for things to collapse between me and the body builder, and at the end of the day, I owed \$2,500 to Bill, the owner of the house. I didn't have the money.

I used to sit with Bill and throw back tequila shots when I delivered the rent money. He was a decent guy and he trusted me. And what did that trust get him? He had to take me to court to get a judgment.

I had actually worked out a payment plan and over the next year or so I paid it down to \$400. Every time I delivered a payment, he'd mark it on the back of his business card and I would put it back in my wallet.

One day I said, "The hell with California," and I escaped to Virginia with yet another woman I found online. I was sinking deeper and deeper, all the while holding onto the business card of the wealthy real estate mogul.

Years passed and I found myself sitting in front of one of the finest men I had ever met—my sponsor, Jim—and he told me I was lying. "There are people you need to make amends to," he said. "I can see it in your eyes."

My tears began to flow. I removed that worn and frayed business card from my wallet. "Well, there is one," I said. And I told Jim the story of Bill and the \$400.

He asked what I planned to do. "Am I supposed to call him?" I asked. Jim asked me what I felt I needed to do. "Call him and pay him the remaining \$400," I answered. Jim smiled. "Call me when you complete the amends," he said.

It took me weeks to get the nerve to call Bill and to put together what I owed him.

One Monday I called Bill's office and they said he had not worked there since he had gotten sick. I thought, Oh, my gosh, he's died.

I was flooded with guilt and relief, but I also knew I couldn't quit now. I began searching the online property records and ended up with a lead. After a week of work, I had a phone number. For what seemed like an hour, I stared at the phone. I kept thinking of my sponsor and sobriety and I picked up the phone and called.

After four rings, there was an answer. The voice was weak and quiet. I asked for Bill and he said, "Speaking." I explained about the \$400 and Bill began to cry. He explained how his drinking had ruined his business. He had lost both legs below the knees and was about to be evicted from his apartment. And, yes, he owed \$400.

I often think back about this little miracle in my sobriety. I have to thank my Higher Power. That's the real miracle of AA. **BY: DAVE R. |**

WINSTON-SALEM, NORTH CAROLINA

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