

## BRIDGING THE GAP

### SERVICE, GLADLY RENDERED

This past September, my husband Scott and I were able to attend the 28th Annual Bridging The Gap Workshop Weekend in Denver, Colorado. Our trip to the conference was partially funded by Fort Wayne Area Intergroup in an effort to gather information and tools to strengthen our local BTG committee. I'd like to take this opportunity to share some insights that will help us in our efforts to reach out to the still suffering alcoholic.

Just to refresh us... Bridging the Gap is a small part of the Public Information Committee (PIC). Similarly, PIC is a sub-committee of the Fort Wayne Area Intergroup. Bridging the Gap Twelfth Step work, in its rawest form, dates back to the beginning of Alcoholics Anonymous. Over time, Bridging The Gap committees were formed across the country as areas tried to better organize their outreach. The conference workshops began in 1991, bringing BTG members together to share their experience, suggestions and resources.

Bridging the Gap is a temporary contact program designed to assist the newcomer when making the transition from a treatment or correctional facility into Alcoholics Anonymous. People are often introduced to A.A. while in treatment or prison. But when they return to their community, it can be difficult for them to reconnect with A.A. and get started in a program of recovery. Bridging the Gap gives them the opportunity to put that connection in place *before* they are released if they so choose.

Temporary Contacts are volunteer A.A. members who help this connection take place as part of their own 12th Step work. One or two volunteers explain the BTG program inside the prison or treatment center where inmates or patients can then sign up for a temporary contact. Upon release, our 12th Step work happens when we (as temporary contacts) meet up with that individual and take them to their first meeting. It isn't sponsorship. Rather, it is offering support, introductions and correct information. If the individual chooses 12 Step recovery or not, we have given them an authentic introduction to Alcoholics Anonymous.

As we listened to the activities and experience of all the various Bridging The Gap groups, it became obvious that each one is autonomous. There is no specific A.A. structure for BTG across the country because each group is adapting to the specifics of the treatment facilities and prisons in their area. Many were having great successes in their work within the prisons where presently, we are not. Some are struggling to make their program available to treatment centers while we are experiencing success locally.

At our conference in September, it became obvious that Bridging The Gap is an underused resource that can't be utilized without the support of A.A. members already in recovery. There were less than 100 people at this National Convention. The vast majority of them said their biggest problem is getting A.A. in their area aware of, excited about and involved in BTG. One man offered his observation, "Where early A.A.'s made an effort to go to the still suffering alcoholic and offer them hope, we often wait until the individual accidentally sits by us in a meeting before we extend a hand."

Cont. on Pg. 2...

...Cont. from Page 1

In Fort Wayne many other activities fall under our BTG umbrella such as providing volunteer speakers at IOP meetings and increased distribution of AA literature. We are continually reviewing additional outreach programs to provide awareness to the alcoholic who still suffers. In our area, awareness is our first goal. The Amethyst has greatly supported those efforts and we are holding a Symposium January 26 in Fort Wayne's main library downtown. Follow updates on the A.A. website <http://aafortwayne.org>, and please, come join us at our monthly meetings. BTG meetings are held the 3rd Saturday of the month at 11:30am in the basement of Parkview Randallia, entrance #4 off of Carew Street. We would welcome your input and enthusiasm as we strive to give back what we were so freely given.

Any additional questions? Please email Greg S. at [BTGFortWayne@gmail.com](mailto:BTGFortWayne@gmail.com)

~Cathy M.  
PIC member

Welcome to **MAN CAVE**, the section primarily targeting things that keep men from focusing on more productive issues. In the interest of not being sexist we also welcome women seeking a break from productivity to visit and share.

This edition addresses the months of November and December, a period when drooling is acceptable due to Thanksgiving and Christmas over indulgencies, Hanukah marvels of Jewish delicacies and other religious, ethnic or geographic celebrations of calories. This edition's contest will be to recognize the Fellow with the greatest weight gain for these months. Please submit the following to the central office for your entry;

<u>First Name, Last Initial</u>	<u>Weight at 11/21/2018</u>	<u>Weight at 12/31/2018</u>	<u>Gain</u>
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The winner will receive condolences from the steering committee.

#### THE RYDER CUP

**The Ryder Cup** contest was won by Brad S. When asked how he won Brad said he first **called a friend**, then **consulted the audience** at the St. Alban's meeting before selecting his **final answer** of 16.5 points for the Europeans. Good work, Brad.

#### THE WORLD SERIES

First an old story from the Series. Years ago when the Braves were still in Milwaukee they were in the **World Series** against the Yankees. Back then there was a lot of beer drinking in the dugouts and both teams were notorious for it. In game seven the Braves had their ace, Milt Famey, on the mound and the score was 0 to 0 in the bottom of the ninth even though he had been pounding the Schlitz. Well they finally got to him and he walked the first four batters, giving the Yankees a 1 to 0 victory. When the press asked the Yankee Manager the inevitable "How'd you do it?" He replied "It was Schlitz, the beer that made Milt Famey walk us." If Milt had only found AA.

The winner of our **World Series** contest was Mike N. He was only one run off the total in the tie breaker. When asked how he did it, Mike gave credit to math courses at Ivey Tech where he found an algorithm of recovery applicable to AA contests.

**The Amethyst Statement of Purpose:** The Amethyst is published every two months for members of the A.A. community in the Fort Wayne area. The Amethyst is financially supported by contributions to Fort Wayne Area Intergroup. The purpose of The Amethyst is to share information and experience in recovery, unity and service within the Fort Wayne area. The articles published in The Amethyst are not intended to be statements of A.A. policy nor does publication of any article imply endorsement by either Fort Wayne Area Intergroup, Inc. or A.A. as a whole.



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## *Prayers for Steps Eleven and Twelve*

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### *The Final Two Steps...Steps 11&12*

#### **Step 11**

*"Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God as we understand him and the power to carry that out."*

Prayer-easy enough and I've been doing it forever. Eventually made it to the drunks prayer, "Lord get me through/out of this and I'll never do it again!" Hmm...not everybody prays but by not drinking and becoming a better, dare I say decent human being and a functional member of society, I have found that I care about/for others and can pray for them.

Meditation-Now that's a scary word! Way back in 1982 I remember making myself "meditate" for 10 minutes each morning. I would read the day's reading, check the clock, and wonder what I was supposed to think/meditate about for the remaining 9 minutes. Over time and through the sharing of others, I have gone through many different scenarios. As I grew and added days to my sobriety, what I used to not care for, and skip doing some days, now comes naturally. From trying to figure out what to do with those 9 extra minutes, I can now pray and meditate for nearly an hour. Some days less and some days more.

So what do I do? Well if the word meditate conjures up confusing or scary thoughts, allow me to share what has been shared with me. Use contemplation, reflection, self-searching, or just plain thinking. So, I start by reading (from bookmark): Upon awakening...and then I follow the instructions. I reflect on the day prior-or what I can do better. I think about the day ahead. I actually write down the things I want and need to do including meetings, phone calls, store, work, bank, etc. Small or large I write them down. As I accomplish those tasks, I cross them out. What didn't get done goes on tomorrow's list. At the end of the day, I can look and see that yes, I did accomplish some things I wanted to. A sense of accomplishment feels good. Next, I pray. When my Father was near the end, I mentioned it at a meeting. A good friend asked me his name and said he would put my dad on his prayer list. WOW! I decided to make a list of people I know who are struggling, suffering, have illness/disease, etc. and instead of praying for world peace or the ants to go home marching safely, I ask for courage, tolerance, hope, or whatever they may need to get through that day. I've now come to my gratitude list. Sometimes, I write it and sometimes I don't. Mostly, it's the little things, the things we take for granted. Until a person lives without transportation, a roof over their head, indoor plumbing, heat in the winter, shoes without holes, and a belly not rumbling from hunger, it's not as easy to be truly grateful. So, I try to look at what I have today and be grateful for it. Another biggie for me-friends and family that share with me, listen when I am troubled, give me hugs and sometimes advice or a swift kick in the butt. Sometimes, when I think about it, I know I don't have or measure up to others standards. That's okay. Unless someone could actually wear my shoes from 27 years ago, they cannot realize or understand how truly blessed and happy I am. I wish that feeling for everyone. After my morning routine and trying to look presentable, I can leave my house, ready for the day. Bring it on!!!

#### **Step 12**

*"Having had a spiritual awakening as a result of these steps, we tried to carry this message to alcoholics, and to practice these principals in all our affairs."*

Spiritual awakening is such a personal thing. For me, a belief that someone in the great somewhere hears my every prayer. Through these steps I developed my "design for living" as it were my own sense of right and wrong. My realization that everyone does not think, feel, or have the same goals or beliefs as I do. That's ok. I can only judge and live with myself. OMG!! PRACTICE these principals in all our affairs! I was so ready and willing to have my defects removed. I even sincerely asked. I had to look at who I wanted to be. How I wanted to behave and treat others. I try to be aware of what I say and do. I just keep practicing. You'll know when I get it perfect, I'll be in the obituaries. Be true to yourself and keep it simple

~Dory D.

## Anniversaries

### November

Tim K. 11/1/06  
Tom B. 11/2/13  
Brad M. 11/3/96  
Matthew E. 11/3/03  
Shon L. 11/3/09  
Dennis S. 11/5/11  
Jess B. 11/5/11  
Cathy N. 11/6/06  
Frank F. 11/9/68

### November

Ray M. 11/11/06  
Bernadette G. 11/15/06  
Fred R. 11/15/16  
Wendy C. 11/16/03  
Alicia B. 11/17/17  
Jan Marie E. 11/19/08  
Johnny B. 11/19/17  
Louis R. 11/21/05

### November

John M. 11/22/16  
Gary S. 11/24/09  
Jim G. 11/25/81  
Mike D. 11/26/08  
Dick B. 11/30/93

### December

Nicole K. 12/1/17  
Buck L. 12/2/15  
Tommy W. 12/6/17  
Jim S. 12/7/09  
Barb H. 12/9/82  
Dave T. 12/10/12  
Cathy C. 12/11/98  
Holly J. 12/12/00  
Don B. 12/13/77

### December

Dave J. 12/19/01  
Samantha G. 12/20/17  
Jeremich K. 12/21/17  
Todd D. 12/23/12  
Mark D. 12/27/84  
Winston B. 12/28/82  
Chris H. 12/31/09  
Rae M. 12/31/81

## *Events & Notes*

### Events:

#### **November 10, 2018**

#### **Frank's Flippin Fifty**

St. Judes Catholic Church  
St. Street and Pemberton Ave.  
Fort Wayne, IN  
12:00 P.M.-2:45 P.M.

#### **November 21, 2018**

#### **Gratitude-fest-athon**

St. Judes Catholic Church  
St. Street and Pemberton Ave.  
Fort Wayne, IN  
7:30 P.M.8:30 P.M.

### New Meetings:

#### **Women's AA Meeting**

#### **Big Book and 12&12 Study**

#### **The Rose Home**

2208 Wayne Trace

Fort Wayne, IN

Thursday's at 7:00 P.M.

#### **One Day at a Time Meeting**

Sacred Heart Church

4643 Gaywood Dr.

Fort Wayne, IN

Sunday's at 7:00 P.M.

### Alcoholics Anonymous Newcomer Orientation Meetings

Saturday's at 8:30 A.M. Parkview Hospital 2231 Carew St.  
Door 4 Down 1 Level

Sunday's at 4:00 P.M. Taylor Chapel 10145 Maysville Rd.  
Questions answered by email:BTGFortWayne@gmail.com

### *The Amethyst*

**SUBMISSIONS:** The Amethyst welcomes feature articles, supporting articles, group histories, anniversaries, jokes, cartoons and upcoming events as long as they relate to A.A. experience and reflect an awareness of A.A.'s singleness of purpose. Submissions are reviewed by The Amethyst committee and recommended to the editor for publication.

**Length of submission:** The Amethyst will publish work of different lengths, from feature articles to one-liners.

#### **Send submissions to:**

[editor.amethyst@gmail.com](mailto:editor.amethyst@gmail.com) or:

The Amethyst

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