

DISTRICT 8 TELEGRAM

the newsletter for district 8

fall 2024 edition

The Gift of Service

by Jenn P, Boo Bash Secretary

I do a lot of service, and luckily for me, service takes a lot of forms. You can chair a meeting, you can set up and clean up, you can have a formal position in your home group, or you can take a position at the district or area level, in General Service. You can also do service in many other smaller ways every day. I love doing service. As Dr Bob says in his Big Book story, there are four reasons that he does service.

1. Sense of duty.
2. It is a pleasure.
3. Because in doing so, I am paying my debt to the man who took the time to pass it on to me.
4. Because every time I do it I take out a little more insurance for myself against a possible slip.

When I was six months sober, one of Olympia AA's elder stateswomen asked me to share my story as the speaker in a meeting. My first thought was that I had nothing important to share – no experience, strength, or hope. She said not to be nervous, not to worry, just to share my story as it is. She said that I never would know what part of my story would resonate with someone else. I asked my sponsor (hoping she would tell me I didn't have to do it) and she said I totally did have to because, like Dr Bob said, it's part of paying it forward and ensuring the program continues to be there for the still suffering alcoholic. So I did! And it was scary, but freeing. And then my dear elder stateswoman signed me up to chair my morning meeting for six months.

At first I was terrified to chair, but it did a couple of important things.

1. It made me realize my duty to the program.
2. I actually had fun doing it and I got to know a lot of people because of it, chairing meetings allowed me to use my skills to serve others.
3. I helped my beloved meeting.
4. Chairing kept my own butt in my seat every Wednesday morning.

After that, I was off and running with service. I got to serve as chair for another meeting that I was a regular at. I got to serve as the secretary for my home group. I am now the alt-GSR, learning how to serve at the district level. I also have contributed to the planning committee for the Capital Jamboree for three years and now I am having fun helping with the Boo Bash this year. I also do smaller bits of service – reaching out to other alcoholics to say hi, greeting newcomers, putting my number down when the phone list goes around, and most importantly, sharing my experience, strength, and hope in meetings. I am so grateful for what I have been given through AA that I don't think it's possible to pay my debt to this program that has not only saved my life but totally transformed it. I only know that I get to give back a fraction of what I have been given, and it's a real joy to be able to do it.

So, the real message is, do some service!

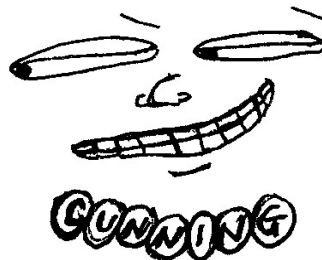
District 8 is of service to AA members in and around Thurston & Mason Counties. To find out more, including a meeting directory, please visit www.aadistrict8.org District 8 is part of Western WA Area 72 area72aa.org

Are You Available?

by Melissa K, Public Information (PI) Chair

When I was new in sobriety my sponsor told me I needed to always have 3 service commitments. Her rationale was that the commitments would get me to at least 3 (of the suggested 7) meetings I needed to attend each week, as well as help me meet people and get comfortable in AA, be visible enough to be missed, eventually find sponsees and slowly chip away at my alcoholic self-centeredness. Naturally I balked, but I did it. As I got a bit of time and recovery she started inviting me to the District meetings. District meetings are attended by the GSR's of the groups, as well as trusted servants of the district. I was fascinated by the wide diversity of approaches used by groups at the district level to carry the AA message to alcoholics who still suffer. My sponsor was the chair of the Treatment committee at that time. She gave me a job to start a men's treatment meeting in Shelton—and so I did! It was an amazing experience and helped me meet so many people, gain confidence and develop an appetite for service. Around that time, my sponsor and I also worked the 12 traditions out of the 12 x 12 and Language of the Heart. Soon after, one of my group service positions ended and I was left with only 2 service commitments so I knew I had to get busy. At every District meeting it was announced they needed an Archives chair. That sounded boring and uninteresting. I also felt massively unqualified. She asked me to stand for it. I said no. She asked me the next meeting. I said no, it's boring. She chuckled a bit and said our job is to be helpful and the district needs help with archives. Raise your hand if you are available. Big eye roll. Fine. The third meeting I finally stood to be archives chair and was voted in.

Now what? I had boxes and boxes of stuff I didn't know what to do with at the South Sound Service Center (District 8's main office). I called the Area Archivist to ask for direction. She drove down and we spent 6 hours going through every



piece in our District 8 collection. Now, here is what hooked me. We went through the history of District 8 in those hours and I got to see the love of AA by those who came before us. There were artifacts and documents and photos and trinkets. We uncovered an extraordinary and rare artifact—a 1946 pamphlet called “A.A. Tradition” published by Works Publishing. (As an aside, this same pamphlet is in our Area Archives traveling display.). I looked at that gem shoved in the back of the cabinet, seemingly unloved and forgotten. It reminded me of how I felt coming into the rooms unloved, forgotten, and lost in my disease. In that moment I thought, I see you. I see all of you, meaning all the sober members of AA in District 8 who came before and who left something behind; something that was special to them and the district. Those things they wanted to have preserved and carried to future generations of recovering alcoholics. It moved me. I started going to the Archives quarterlies and began working with the Area Archives Steering Committee and since then I have been asking myself just one question when presented with opportunities to do service: Am I available?

I have done things in service I felt deeply unqualified for. That is the beauty of this program. I believe that God doesn't only call those who are qualified, God also qualifies those who are called. As with everything else, HP is with me. I have learned how to do things I never thought I could do with the help of others. My recovery and fellowship have been strengthened by this service side of the triangle and I have never been so grateful.



art by Jude

I initially kept coming to the District meetings and heard people do what sounded like bickering about stuff which seemed unimportant...to me. What I know to be true today is that the room is filled with people who love Alcoholics Anonymous and are active participants in shaping how District 8 can most effectively carry our message of hope to the alcoholic who still suffers.

We are coming to the end of the current rotation which means all our District service positions will need to be filled—not to mention group GSRs who are rotating. My question to you is “Are you available?”

An Alano Club Update

from Judy L, Alano Club Board Member

Our local Olympia Alano Club has a new home at 1015 10th Ave SE, and are recruiting Alano Club Members to help keep this vital AA hub churning. Alano Club membership is \$35/month or \$350/year. If membership is too expensive, a day pass can be purchased for \$5. You don't need to be an Alano Club member (or buy a day pass) to attend meetings at the club. Like any other AA venue, the only requirement to attend meetings at the Alano Club is a desire to stop drinking.

The club offers space to a wide variety of meetings. The Royal Treatment Center brings their patients to the 7am As Bill Sees it Meeting, which is an early morning hybrid meeting. If attending in person, be sure to arrive early to get a good seat. This meeting is a great opportunity to share with newcomers, as are many other meetings held at the club. While the club currently hosts many AA meetings, they also hold one NA meeting and are open to other 12 step meetings renting space. AA meetings are currently held daily at 7am, noon, 6pm & speaker meetings at 8pm on Friday & Saturday. The club hosts a Spanish Speaking meeting 4 times a week, and a Women's meeting was recently added at 1:30 pm on Sundays.

There's space downstairs for club members to hang out, meet with sponsees, or bring their children as there is a play space as well. Snacks, beverages, & reheatable food items are available to purchase, as are coins & books. A group of sober musicians often gather on Saturday evenings after the speaker meeting. As a club member you're welcome to attend the musician gathering.

The club is also looking for volunteers. If you have at least 6 months of sobriety and are working with a sponsor, you can be trained to become a volunteer. Volunteers can receive club membership based on their volunteer time.

The Olympia Alano Club is a community driven space that is welcoming to the newcomer and anyone struggling with alcoholism. The membership structure was created as an opportunity for those who can afford it to help keep the Olympia Alano Club doors open. If you have any questions, please call the Olympia Alano Club at (360) 753-9934

District 8 24-HOUR 12 STEP HOTLINE

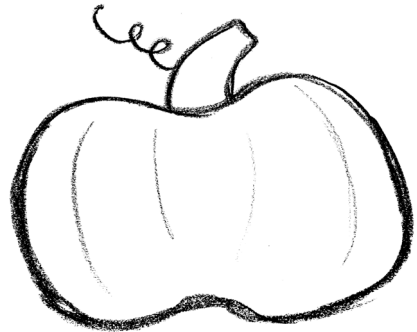
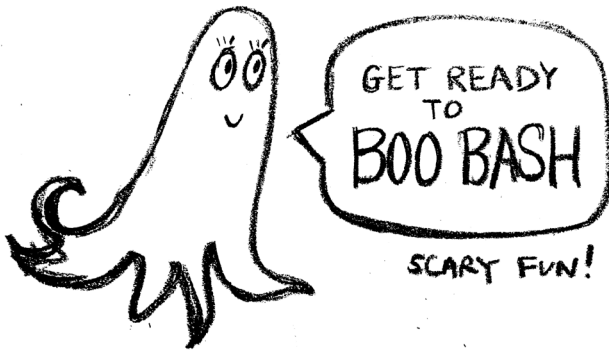
Call 360-352-7344 to speak to a local, sober alcoholic 24 hours a day. The District 8 phone line is often the first place the general public acquires information about AA in Thurston and Mason counties. If you need support, please call us. Would you like to be of service and support the hotline? Please contact our Hot Line Chair, Sue C at phones@aadistrict8.org

DISTRICT 8 BUSINESS MEETING

The District 8 Business Meeting meets on the second Thursday of every month from 6-8pm, and is hybrid - both on zoom and in person at St. Mark's Lutheran Church in Lacey. All members of AA are welcome to attend. Please visit our website for more information aadistrict8.org

The SOUTH SOUND SERVICE CENTER

at 344 Cleveland Ave SE, Suite K, Tumwater, is open Mon-Fri from 2-6pm & Saturday 10am-2pm.



ANNOUNCEMENTS

October 4-6, 2024, Western Washington Area 72 General Assembly, Hosted by the South Sound Districts, Hybrid Gathering on zoom and Hotel Murano in Tacoma, 1320 Broadway, Tacoma, WA 98402 We will be electing the next rotation's elected officials at this assembly. For more info & registration <https://area72aa.org/2024-area-assembly/>

Saturday, October 26th, 5-11pm, District 8 **BOO BASH: a night of fun, frights & fellowship!** Join us for a Speaker meeting, Potluck, Dancing and best of all - a Costume Contest with cash prizes! Boo Bash is at SPSCC Lacey Campus, for more information visit the district 8 website or talk to your home group's GSR.

Saturday, November 9th, 2024 Mark your calendars for the most amazing Gratitude Banquet EVER! At Capitol High School. Details to come.