

DISTRICT 8 TELEGRAM

the newsletter for district 8 spring 2025 edition

Chairing a Meeting

By Melissa K, Alt DCM

Sounds simple, but is it? Chairing a meeting is more than reading a script. Do you know who you are calling on next when someone takes their share off topic? What do you do for those long shares or disruptions? Who do you look to when you are unsure about something? When the safety of the meeting is threatened?

District 8 had a Chairing a Meeting workshop on January 25th and it was wildly successful. There were over 60 people in attendance offering strategies and solutions to those and many other questions.

This was no ordinary workshop. It was thoughtful and engaging. There were people from different districts, different groups and different experience levels coming together to listen to short presentations and answer questions in smaller groups such as - How to apply Tradition 1 to chairing a meeting? What about tradition 2? How does your group handle disruptions? What is working in your groups around safety? Does your group have a safety plan? There were handouts such as GSO's Safety and A.A. flyer and the service material titled Safety and A.A.: Our Common Welfare. We had an ask it basket and a question and answer panel including Geene, our past delegate, Derek, our current Area Chair, Lisa, our current Area Alt Chair, Debbie, our DCM and Roy, our GSR for the Winners Group. There was such wonderful participation and engagement. Notes from the workshop are being compiled and will be sent to GSR's as well as DCM's of other districts. Definitely check it out!

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



A New Tool: The Plain Language Big Book

In 2024, the AA General Service Office approved, Plain Language Big Book was published to help still suffering alcoholics get sober. The book isn't meant to replace the original "big book" Alcoholics Anonymous, rather to serve as a supplement or alternative.

Plain language is more accessible to more people, especially when our original text was written in 1939. As culture shifts language changes, and often there are phrases in the original book that are outdated.

The South Sound Service Center carries the Plain Language Big Book, swing by and check one out and maybe buy your own copy!



Our Stories Disclose...

Broad Highway Herstory

by Celia C.

2019 was a year that began like many others. It marched through time, bringing all walks of life along with it. For a small group of women in Olympia Washington, the march through time that year was pebbled with the desire to have a women's meeting. One of the founders returned from a sponsorship retreat and wanted to keep the connection to women strong, for as long as possible. They decided the way to capture that spirit was in a women's meeting, and the spark of Broad Highway began.

The women convened and discussed what they wanted the meeting to look like. They took elements of other meetings in the area, such as calling on others to maximize participation, allowing the chairperson more time at the beginning of the meeting to share their specific experience, and reading from AA literature. They incorporated their own flavor to make it unique. One element was arranging chairs in a circle, minimizing the opportunity to hide in the back. Sitting in a circle also brought members' attention and focus on the meeting.

The women engaged with one of the local old-timers who had experience starting meetings. They got a group number from GSO, wrote the script, and selected the readings. They researched a location and decided to hold their meetings at Tumwater Baptist Church. Finally, all the pieces were in place and the Friday night women's meeting Broad Highway was born.

A founding member said, "The first meeting was amazing. It was about 25 women and even went slightly over in time because we got so wrapped up in the meeting. The first few months, the meeting was on fire."

But 2020 was a year of upheaval. AA meetings could not meet in person; they either switched to Zoom or closed completely. Fortunately, for Broad Highway, the switch to Zoom ensured the continuity of the meeting. The treasurer opened a Venmo account to collect 7th tradition funds, and women continued to seek sobriety and recovery.

March 2021 was the first month Broad Highway returned to in-person meetings at the Tumwater Baptist Church. It saw old-timers return, and newcomers arrive. I was one of those newcomers. It took me a couple of months to truly believe I was an alcoholic; I couldn't stop drinking, no matter how much I wanted to. I attended Zoom meetings in March, but it wasn't until April 22nd

that I had my last drink. Another woman told me that Broad Highway was a women's meeting that met in person, so I went. Broad Highway was my first in-person meeting I attended as an alcoholic. The meeting was set up with chairs in a circle, so we could all see each other. At the end of my first meeting, we all stood up, held hands, and said the Lord's prayer. With my eyes closed, hearing all the women's voices saying the prayer in unison was a spiritual experience for me. I finally felt serenity and peace, and the unerring sense of a power greater than myself.

Near the end of 2021, the arrival of new leadership at the church and their attitude toward LGBTQ+ prompted Broad Highway to find a new location. The Good Shephard Lutheran Church in Olympia became Broad Highway's second home and continues to be the location where women meet every Friday night from 6:00pm to 7:15pm.

Broad Highway holds its business meeting the first Friday of every month after the regular meeting. The birthday meeting is held on the last Friday of every month, which is also a speaker meeting. The group has seen some ups and downs. It tends to drop in attendance during the winter months, which sometimes makes paying rent a little tough. During the summer, we can see upwards of 25-30 women, but the average is about 12-15. I would describe it as a smaller group. An advantage of a small group is everyone has a chance to share. The group dynamic tends to be a little more intimate, and women share more openly and vulnerably.

Each meeting closes with the paragraph found on page 55: "We can only clear the ground a bit. If our testimony helps sweep away prejudice, enables you to think honestly, encourages you to search diligently within yourself, then, if you wish, you can join us on the Broad Highway. With this attitude you cannot fail. The consciousness of your belief is sure to come to you."

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

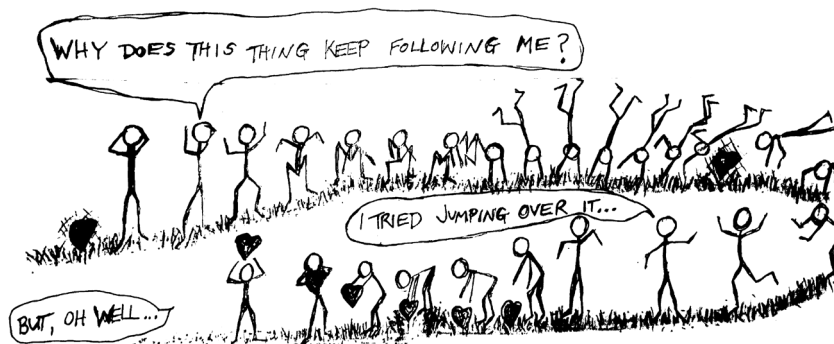
The District 8 Business Meeting meets on the second Thursday of every month from 6-8pm, and is hybrid - both on zoom and in person at St. Mark's Lutheran Church in Lacey. All members of AA are welcome to attend. Please visit our website for more information aadistrict8.org

SOUTH SOUND SERVICE CENTER

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

District 8 Telegram - quarterly newsletter

Are you interested in contributing to the District 8 Telegram? We need artists, writers and editors. Please contact Lisa G newsletter@aadistrict8.org



District 8
Website

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Bringing meetings to treatment centers is important service work. Are you interested in joining a meeting in a local rehab or seeing about your home group hosting a regular meeting in a treatment facility? Please contact our Treatment Chair Jason G at treatment@aadistrict8.org

NEW MEETING: WOMENS BIG BOOK STUDY at 7am Fridays at Olympia Alano Club

DONATE YOUR GRAPEVINES District 8 is collecting old copies of The Grapevine for AAs who are incarcerated. Bring them to the South Sound Service Center or to the Happy Hour Meeting, 5:15-6:15pm Mon-Fri at Capital Vision Church, 1775 Yew Ave NE, Olympia

AREA 72 ASSEMBLY is coming up October 3-5th 2025 at Lynwood Event Center in Lynwood, WA For more info visit area72aa.org