



D5 AA  
FARGO

JULY 2025

# DAKOTA LANTERN

District 5 Alcoholics Anonymous

## DCM Corner- June Assembly Reflection:

Earlier this month, I had the privilege of attending the Area 52 Assembly in Watford City, ND, held June 6–8. Whether you're new to AA or have been around for a while, I hope this reflection offers insight into how our service structure works—and why it matters.

### Workshops That Hit Home:

Two workshops stood out: one on Anonymity, and the other on Group Conscience. I've been in the program for a while, but these sessions opened my eyes to just how deeply the Twelve Traditions and Twelve Concepts guide us—not just in structure, but in spirit. They helped me better understand why we hold Group Conscience meetings and how anonymity protects both the individual and the Fellowship as a whole. These principles aren't just guidelines—they're spiritual tools that keep us grounded and unified.

### Committee Highlights & Practical Takeaways

The assembly was packed with updates from Area committees. Here are a few

## Service Sunday

### Institutions Committee

3rd Sunday of the Month at 2:00pm  
SDSOS Clubhouse  
(basement)

### Public Information / CPC Committee

3rd Sunday of the Month at 2:00pm  
SDSOS Clubhouse  
(2nd Floor)

### Group Activities Committee

3rd Sunday of the Month at 2:00pm  
SDSOS Clubhouse  
(2nd Floor)

### District 5

3rd Sunday of the Month at 3:00pm  
SDSOS Clubhouse  
(3rd Floor)

key points:

Fellowship Connection Accuracy: Groups without a current contact person listed in GSO's Fellowship Connection risk being marked inactive—even if they're still meeting. If your group has a new GSR or contact, please make sure that information is submitted. It matters—

Have an article you would like to submit?



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more than you might think.

PICPC (Public Information/Cooperation with the Professional Community): Amanda, our Area PICPC Chair, led a thoughtful breakout session. The committee is working to streamline responsibilities and improve how we manage contact lists. There's a push to use a shared Google Drive for district-level info, and a Zoom workshop is planned for October—community input is welcome!

GSR Sharing: We heard powerful stories about group health, structure, and unity. Topics included how to handle disruptive behavior, support members with mental health challenges, and keep meetings solution focused. One theme was clear: structure and sponsorship help create safe, welcoming spaces for newcomers.

Delegate's Report – A Glimpse into the GSC

Jessie, our Area Delegate, gave a preview of her experience at the General Service Conference (GSC) in New York this past May. The GSC is where AA's collective conscience is expressed on a national and global level.

Some highlights:

- The GSC cost \$1.4 million this year. While contributions are down slightly, AA is not in financial crisis.
- A new Indigenous pamphlet is coming soon.



- A video version of the Twelve Concepts Illustrated is in development.
- A proposal to include the Concepts in the 12 & 12 sparked deep discussion but ultimately did not pass.
- The Compliance Committee was a hot topic—created in response to internal trust issues, it's a reminder that accountability and spiritual principles must go hand in hand.

Jessie will be making her full report available soon, and we've invited her to District 5 on August 10th to share it in person. I encourage everyone to attend—it's a great opportunity to learn more about how AA functions beyond the group level.

Final Thoughts

This Assembly was exactly what I needed. It reminded me why I keep showing →

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# HELP WANTED

## -Group Events/Calendar Team

WE'RE LOOKING FOR VOLUNTEERS TO KEEP OUR FELLOWSHIP CONNECTED AND THRIVING. IF YOU ENJOY ORGANIZING DETAILS OR BRINGING PEOPLE TOGETHER, WE HAVE A PLACE FOR YOU!

### -Calendar Coordinator

LOVE KEEPING THINGS ORGANIZED? WE NEED SOMEONE TO HELP MAINTAIN THE DISTRICT 5 CALENDAR AND HELP COMMUNICATE WITH LOCAL GROUPS TO KEEP EVERYONE INFORMED ABOUT UPCOMING EVENTS. THIS ROLE ENSURES THAT MEETINGS, WORKSHOPS, AND GATHERINGS ARE WELL-COORDINATED AND ACCESSIBLE TO ALL.

### -Event & Activities Volunteers

WANT TO BE PART OF SOMETHING BIGGER? HELP PLAN AND ORGANIZE DISTRICT 5 EVENTS!

- ANNUAL EVENTS: THE SOUP & SPEAKER WORKSHOP (WINTER) AND THE FELLOWSHIP HARVEST FESTIVAL (OCTOBER) ARE GREAT OPPORTUNITIES TO SERVE.
- 2026 STATE ROUND-UP & FALL ASSEMBLY (FARGO): WE NEED A STRONG TEAM TO HELP HOST THIS MAJOR STATEWIDE EVENT!

**No experience? No problem! If you're willing, we'll support you. Step into service and make a difference!**



Interested? Reach out today! [Events@ndd5aa.org](mailto:Events@ndd5aa.org)

## Hope After Prison

When I first went to prison at 20, I didn't understand the obsession of the mind. I spent my time behind bars planning my next use. So, it's no surprise I failed almost immediately after getting out. By 30, I was back in again—this time, I swore I'd never drink. But halfway through the sentence, the same old thinking crept back in. I told myself I was older, smarter, different. But within a year of release, I was right back where I started, and everything fell apart again.

The third time I landed in jail, my brother said something I'll never forget: "The best your life is ever going to get is lying on that cement floor unless you do something about it."

up. The unity, the service, the spiritual principles—they all came together in a way that recharged my commitment to this program. Whether you're just starting out or have been around for decades, I hope you'll find ways to connect with the service structure. It's not just about business—it's about carrying the message and keeping AA strong for the next person who walks through the door. —*Ryan D.*

*DCM District 5*

## Plain Language Big Book Study

**Olivet Lutheran Church**

**Thursday April 3rd**

**Will last about 3 months**

**Questions contact Jim S. at 7013069101**



**Talk to Lynn R to get a Plain Language Big Book!**

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That truth shook me. For the first time, I asked for help. I requested treatment. I started going to AA meetings—even though I felt like I didn't belong. Someone told me, "If it doesn't feel right, you're probably doing something right." That gave me just enough courage to keep coming back.

I got a sponsor. I started hanging around women in recovery—something that used to scare me. But they lifted me up. They showed me what real support looks like. I faced my charges with the strength of 45 letters written on my behalf by people who believed in me. My last time in prison was the shortest—but it was also the most painful. I didn't fit in anymore, and that's how I knew I was changing. I stayed grounded, read the Big Book daily, and kept fighting for my life.



When I got out, people from AA showed up. A friend gave me a job. Another gave me rides to work. That first month out could've broken me, but this time—I wasn't alone.

Today, I've been sober 16 months and 17 days. I live in my own place—sober, for the first time, and on my own. I take it one day at a time. I still mess up, I still learn, but I keep showing up.

Recovery gave me more than just sobriety—it gave me purpose. It gave me a future. It gave me hope. If you're struggling, please hear this:

It is never too late. You are not too broken. If you're breathing, there's a chance. And if you're willing, there's a way. There's a whole life waiting for you—and people who will walk with you every step of the way.

You don't have to do it alone. I didn't. *-Alysia*

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# Saturday Morning Men's Picnic/Fish Fry

August 9<sup>th</sup> 2025 Trollwood park- 3664 Elm St. N. Fargo Tickets: \$10 and sell out fast!

## CREATE THE FELLOWSHIP YOU CRAVE

I HAVE BEEN TO MEETINGS ALL OVER THE WORLD AND I'M DRAWN TO BEACH MEETINGS AND MEETINGS THAT ARE OUTDOORS. I WENT TO A BEACH MEETING ON AN ISLAND IN PUERTO RICO, WE TOOK A 3AM FERRY RIDE AND GOT A TAXI TO DROP US OFF ON GRINGO BEACH. IT WAS PITCH BLACK AND WE STARTED TO EXPLORE, IT WAS RAINING, ACTUALLY A TORRENTIAL DOWNPOUR, BUT IT WAS WARM. I WALKED THE BEACH AND FELT THE SAND IN MY TOES AND THE WARM WATER LAPPING ONTO MY FEET AND UP MY LEG. SOON, HINTS OF LIGHT STARTED PEAKING IN OVER THE WATER, I WAS SO GRATEFUL FOR THE ABILITY TO SHOW UP AND BE PRESENT IN THAT MOMENT, AND THE FACT THAT I WOULD GO TO THOSE LENGTHS JUST TO BE AT THAT MEETING ON THE BEACH AT SUNRISE. PEOPLE STARTED ENTERING THE BEACH WITH CHAIRS, BLANKETS AND TOWELS. SOMEONE OFFERED ME A BLANKET AND SAID IT WAS A TRADITION TO ASK A VISITOR TO SHARE THEIR STORY. I WAS BROUGHT TO TEARS AND HONORED THAT ANYONE WOULD WANT TO HEAR MY STORY. IT WAS MAGICAL!! AFTER THE MEETING, EVERYONE WAS TO PICK UP TRASH AS A CONTRIBUTION TO THAT MEETING INSTEAD OF PUTTING OUR \$\$\$ DOLLARS IN THE BASKET. I FOUND THE MOST BEAUTIFUL SHELL, TO THIS DAY, STILL A MOST PRIZED POSSESSION. AFTER THE MEETING MY NEW FRIENDS MADE ME FEEL SO LOVED AND TOOK MY HUSBAND AND I AROUND TO TOUR THE ISLAND AND FIND THE BEST FOOD AND BEACHES.

I LOVE HOW AMAZING IT IS TO CREATE THE FELLOWSHIP THAT YOU CRAVE. I'VE BEEN PART OF AN ENTHUSIASTIC GROUP THAT KEEPS MY CURIOSITY ALIVE AND MY RECOVERY CONTINUES TO GROW. I STARTED A MEETING AT A LOCAL CLUBHOUSE, WE NAMED IT WIND AT MY BACK TO HONOR AN OLD TIMER FROM MY 1ST HOME GROUP, VIE-TALITY. IT WAS ON A ROOFTOP BALCONY WITH CANDLES LIGHTING OUR CIRCLE. TODAY, THAT MEETING STILL HAPPENS, BUT THEY'VE MOVED IT INDOORS. I STARTED ANOTHER MEETING CALLED HOWLING AT THE MOON ABOUT 15 YEARS AGO. THIS MEETING TAKES PLACE AT SOMEONE'S HOUSE FOR 1 YEAR AND THEN JUMPS TO A NEW LOCATION. WE HAVE A POTLUCK AND MEETING OUTSIDE EVEN IN THE SNOW.

IF WE EVER MEET, LET'S SWAP COOL MEETING STORIES.

*-Amy M 11.18.96 Aurora, Colorado  
Southlands Serenity is my home group*

## The Plain Language Big Book A Tool, Not a Threat

By now it should be plain to nearly everyone that the release of the Plain Language Big Book has stirred deep emotion and spirited conversation in the AA community. I have listened to some concerning questions from those opposed to this new piece of literature. Are we changing something sacred? Are we preserving the message or are we compromising it? Will this new Big Book fragment AA? But at the heart of the

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discussion should lie a question that is the primary purpose of AA, how do we remain true to our message while making recovery accessible to the newcomer.

When the book, Alcoholics Anonymous, known affectionately as "the Big Book" was first published it was a revolutionary document. The number of recovered alcoholics being few, the book was created to carry the message of hope and recovery to those who had little or no contact with the fellowship itself. It was written so that isolated alcoholics could read the book and find a way out.

Although I love the original Big Book I can not deny that its language can be difficult to read. I remember struggling through its passages without my sponsor before our meetings only to have light cast upon the words later when we did sit down together. The cadence of 1930s speech, the metaphors and cultural references, and the complex sentence structures are very challenging. For someone reading alone or in isolation, without access to a sponsor or group, attempting to understand the big book could be discouraging. The Plain Language Big Book was created to address that challenge, not to replace the original. Its goal is not to modernize the program, but to clarify it. The Twelve Steps remain unchanged, not watered down. The message of recovery is intact. What has changed is the phrasing, with shorter

sentences, clearer wording, and a simpler vocabulary. The essence is the same, the delivery is different.

For some members, myself included, reading the Plain Language Big Book is painful. The words of the original Big Book are more than literature, they are deeply personal. They remind me of moments of clarity, transformation, and connection. Letting go of the poetry in the original language that I love so much can feel like letting go of something sacred. But when I read the Plain Language Big Book the message still rings true if I let go of my attachments. And it is worth remembering that the Big Book has been translated faithfully into dozens of languages over the years. The fellowship did not require people to learn English to receive the message. In each case, translators sought to preserve the original meaning if not the original phrasing. The Plain Language Big Book-

**2025 Dry Open Golf Event**

Registration \$90(Golfers) \$20(meal)  
 Must register by July 24<sup>th</sup>  
 18 hole 4 person scramble starts:  
 11:00am August 1st

**Hawley Golf Club**  
 Speaker Meeting and Meal 5:00pm



LINK TO LOCAL FARGO AA WEBSITE (DISTRICT 5)



LINK TO STATE OF NORTH DAKOTA AA WEBSITE (AREA 52)



LINK TO NATIONAL AA WEBSITE (AA.ORG)

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follows in this tradition. It is a translation into the everyday easy to understand language of today. AA has countless meeting formats, discussion groups, speaker meetings, literature studies, and even Big Book studies that vary in structure and emphasis. Far from fragmenting the fellowship, this variety enriches it. In my time in AA I have had several sponsors each of whom emphasize different phrases when leading me through the book. It was not a particular phrase or passage that got me sober, it was a common solution to a common problem. The 12 Steps are the program. They are the heart of recovery, and they are clearly presented in the Plain Language Big Book. This edition neither changes the steps, nor does it offer an alternative program. It is a tool for those who would otherwise feel lost when reading alone.

The Plain Language Big Book may not be for everyone, and that's okay. It is not meant to replace the original. It is meant to serve those who need it, just as the original did. As we continue to carry the message to the alcoholic who still suffers, we can hopefully do so with this new tools, open hearts, and the humility to remember that what matters most is not how WE say it, but that THEY hear it. -N

**20TH ANNUAL MENS  
AA WEEKEND**

**AUGUST 8, 9, 10TH**



**Registration: \$130**

-Includes lodging, meals, activities,  
-Rope's course (\$15) Fishing (extra)

**Wilderness Boy Scout Camp**  
**29984 Journey Trail, Park**  
**Rapids, MN 56470**

## Tradition Six: The Foundation of Everything

*The Sixth Tradition of Alcoholics Anonymous states: "An A.A. group ought never endorse, finance, or lend the A.A. name to any related facility or outside enterprise, lest problems of money, property, and prestige divert us from our primary purpose." This tradition was forged from the founder's experience of seeing social reform groups come in go in the early 20 the century claiming to be able to solve all of society's problems, only to watch them implode under the weight of their own crusades. History also illustrated that if a group, focused on sobriety, took on other campaigns, the multifaced focus would cause the group to rip itself apart. This is exactly what happened to the Washingtonians.*

*Alcoholics Anonymous has adopted the mantra of corporate poverty. That does not mean that we are to be anti-money, and that we need to purge the ideas from any member's head about how we can do things that involve money. What it does mean is that we are to make sure that we stay focused on the still suffering alcoholic, and that our money needs to go to that. And once that goal is achieved, we need to make sure that the excess money goes down the inverted triangle of service in AA to fund those entities in their work.*

*It would be easy for a group to come up with a small-scale social push in their community to acquire property. The motivations for this could be well intentioned. But as soon as a group owns property, then all of the issues that come up from property ownership would threaten a group. For those of you that own*

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own property, you know that it is like having a part-time job taking care of it. That is why groups, when the legitimate need for property ownership arises, will form a second entity outside of the AA group that takes care of the property. When this occurs, there are now two entities in existence. One is an AA group, and the other is not. The non-AA one can spend its' energies on the needs of the property, and the AA group can focus on the still suffering Alcoholic.

Prestige is a tricky one, because it is often cloaked in good intentions. Who does not think it would feel good to get the public accolades that come from doing the altruistic work of Alcoholics Anonymous? However, as soon as a sober drunk gets those emotional highs of public applause for doing twelve step work, the twelve-step work has lost its' spiritual energy and the drunk is then only left with their ego keeping them sober, and that never works. The altruism of Alcoholics Anonymous is the foundation of twelve-step work. It keeps the one doing the twelve stepping in the right frame of mind and allows them to form the needed connection with the still suffering alcoholic.

The primary purpose of AA is helping the still suffering alcoholic. Tradition six is the corner stone of this work, however to fully build the house of service work in Alcoholics Anonymous, we need to have all of the Traditions and Concepts. Because of this needed knowledge base, every member of AA should read the Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions and AA World Service Manual combined with The Twelve Concepts for-

World Service. These two books lay out how AA as a society is to do twelve step work, and also the rights and responsibilities of each level of service. *-Anonymous*

District 7 Campout Committee Presents:

## WOODCUTTING PARTY

Join us as we chop wood for the Campout!  
Stay for a Fellowship Potluck after!  
**August 10<sup>th</sup> 12:00pm**  
**2251 158<sup>th</sup> St. NE Menoken, ND**

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**2025**  
**AUGUST 15,16,17**

# DISTRICT 7

# CAMPOUT

**Gate Prices**  
\$10-One day pass  
\$20-weekend not camping  
\$35-camping for weekend

Meal tickets will be available for purchase again this year

**For the avid reader of the Big Book, you might find this interesting.**

A question about changes made to the Foreword to the Fourth edition has been noticed since its first writing and this is the response provided by a GSO staff member. The name of the person asking the question and responding has been left out intentionally. →

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District 7 Presents:

# The Heart Of Service:

*Etiquette. Traditions. Service*

Learn about service and how to get involved!

Come spend an afternoon with past and current Area 52 Delegates: Scott M. And Jessie W.

Snacks and Drinks Provided

OCT 11

515 N 5<sup>th</sup> St  
Bismarck  
Veterans  
Memorial  
Library  
Room A

11AM-2PM

Great question, thank you. There may always be adjustments based upon group conscience decisions, but I believe that this information is factually sound without personal interpretation.

The sentence you provided from the original printing of the Foreword to the Fourth Edition was removed by an Advisory Action in 2002. With previous editions, the Conference has recognized that G.S.O. editors would prepare or coordinate new materials such as Forewords. Once approved and printed, this editorial purview passes to the General Service Conference. Within the specific example you provided, because the sentence was removed by an Advisory Action, it would take an additional Advisory Action to restore it to the Foreword to the Fourth Edition.

There were two PAIs submitted for the 75th General Service Conference "that the following text be restored to the Foreword of the Fourth Edition of Alcoholics Anonymous, which was excised at the third and all subsequent printings, but which appeared in the first and second printings of Alcoholics Anonymous, our 'Big Book': 'Fundamentally, though, the difference between an electronic meeting and the home group around the corner is only one of format. "The trustees" Literature Committee received this and decided to take no action, with an additional note that there would be greater benefit by focusing upon the upcoming Foreword to the Fifth Edition of Alcoholics Anonymous.

If drinking too much alcohol makes me an alcoholic,  
Does drinking too much Fanta make me Fantastic?



The Fifth Edition of Alcoholics Anonymous is being in accordance with two Advisory Actions:

- A Fifth Edition of the Big Book, Alcoholics Anonymous, be developed, including an update of stories to better reflect current membership, keeping in mind the 1995 Advisory Action that: "The first 164 pages of the Big Book, Alcoholics Anonymous, the Preface, the Forewords, 'The Doctor's Opinion,' 'Dr. Bob's Nightmare,' and the Appendices remain as is," and that a progress report be brought back to the 2022 Conference Committee on Literature.

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**JULY 2025**

THE 65TH

# ICYPAA

International Conference of Young People in Alcoholics Anonymous

## Hilton Minneapolis

1001 S Marquette Ave, Minneapolis, MN 55403

**August 28<sup>th</sup>-31<sup>st</sup> 2025**



Grab Your Room Before the Game Begins




WILL TAKE ON NEW MEANING

Ready to Play? Pre-Register Below




August 16 2025

# RALLY IN THE VALLEY!

FARGO, ND

Olivet Lutheran Church  
1330 S. University Drive

2:30 p.m. Registration  
3:00 p.m. Ask it Basket - 200 years of sobriety on mixed panel  
Gail N: BYOB Holly M: Monday Women's Group  
Kirsten H: NPG Norm B: Tuesday Men's Group  
Dan M: NPG Lee J: Saturday Morning Men's  
4:00 p.m. Service with Charlie H - West Central Region Trustee  
5:00 p.m. BBQ, Corn on the Cob, Corn Bread, & Dessert!  
6:15 p.m. - 6:45 p.m. Entertainment  
7:00 p.m. Speaker, Charlie H. - West Central Regional Trustee

Tickets: \$10.00, or at the door  
Sponsored by: FargoWednesdayNightGroup@gmail.com

701-404-0247- Matt J, 218-280-7923 Ted S

- Pending its development, the draft Fifth Edition of the Big Book would include a new foreword, an updated preface and updates to expand on existing ideas in Appendices III and V.

This offers an additional statement which reinforces the continuity of the Foreword to the Fourth Edition as currently printed.

There is an undefined element regarding the new Foreword to the Fifth Edition. Updating the Preface (with statistical information) and writing the new Foreword are the final stages of developing a draft manuscript. We cannot speculate on the potential content of the new Foreword, but there may be language which addresses the Fellowship's experience with online groups.

We hope this information is helpful in offering a clear response to the Area 52 membership. Please let us know if you, or they, have additional questions. Thank you for offering such a positive example of clear communication. *-Anonymous*



# AREA 52

## 2025 STATE ROUND-UP



**SEPTEMBER 12TH-14TH**  
**MINOT, ND**

**ROUND-UP REGISTRATION**

**Your announcement**  
**HERE!**

**HAVE SOMETHING YOU WANT THE COMMUNITY TO HEAR ABOUT? SUBMIT YOUR FLYER TO THE INFORMATION DOWN BELOW!**

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