

The Daily Brew

District 55 AA Newsletter

Sep/Oct '25

Carrying the Message Behind the Walls: The Impact of AA Corrections Work

- INTERVIEW WITH VASS

For many alcoholics, service work is a vital part of their recovery journey. For those involved in AA's Corrections Committee, it's an opportunity to bring hope and sobriety to a population that cannot easily attend outside meetings: incarcerated individuals.

The mission of the Corrections Committee is straightforward: bring the message of recovery to those who need it most. "We are like-minded alcoholics seeking ways to carry the message of recovery to the less fortunate," Vass, the District 55 Corrections Chair explains. "Incarcerated individuals don't have the luxury of attending outside AA meetings, so we bring the meetings to them. We provide literature, Grapevine subscriptions, and AA events inside the facilities. Our committee creates the opportunities to make this possible."

With over 20 years of service, Vass has witnessed countless inspiring stories. One stands out in particular: a young man, "Chuck," they met at a correctional institution in 2012. After his release, Chuck found the committee member and gave him a coin inscribed with the words, "You hold out your hand, and changed my life." Later, Chuck invited them to his wedding and eventually started his own men's-only DOTR (Dog On The Roof) group.

"That story literally brings tears of joy to my eyes," Vass said.

"You will see and feel that our Creator entered our lives and lives of others in a way I think miraculous." Vass

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Yet, the work is not without challenges. “The biggest challenge is always a shortage of volunteers willing to make a 200-mile round trip to bring meetings to incarcerated individuals,” he explains. “Sometimes we have plenty of volunteers; other times, we don’t. When there are fewer people, those who remain have to go 2-3 times a month, because without us, the meetings can’t happen.”

He wishes more AA members understood the importance of this work: “Corrections service is incredibly important and rewarding for achieving permanent, high-quality sobriety. It becomes even more inspiring when you see the results of this work firsthand.”

Through dedication and compassion, AA members bring the light of recovery to those who need it most—showing that even behind bars, hope and sobriety are possible.

How You Can Help

No Commitment Trial

Join us for a one-time entry before starting training

- Volunteers complete online classes
- Attend an orientation with DOC officials.
- Must also have a clean record with no outstanding warrants.

To sign up or learn more about this great opportunity - See Vass . or Keith M. or email: dist55corrections@area72aa.org

Scan QR code to send an inquiry





Activities

Volunteer Opportunities

Come and show your "Gratitude" by being a volunteer

We need your help! We're looking for Volunteers for the Gratitude Dinner, Saturday November 1st.

Together, we can create lasting memories for our sober community.

No minimum sobriety required.

Attend the next meeting to find out more:


Tuesday September 2nd

Additional Meeting Schedule:

Sept: 2nd, 16th, 30th; Oct 14th, 21st

Contact Jenniffer M. to join in!

Scan this QR code to see upcoming events



Next Event : Halloween Party
Sat, Oct 25th

Meetings take place Tuesdays at 6pm in the American Legion Hall in Sequim.

Corner

Finding Color in the Journey

- INTERVIEW WITH GARRET D.

“Without alcohol, I look for free moments to do art. That’s the gift.” – Garrett

When you first meet Garret, you quickly learn two things: he has an unstoppable love for color, and he has lived a life that proves the resilience of the human spirit. In September, Garret is the featured artist at Harbor Art, a co-op gallery in Port Angeles, where his vivid paintings catch the eye and stir the imagination. But his road back to art was anything but straight.



Garret’s creative spark began early—fourth grade, in fact—when a book report on *Where the Red Fern Grows* turned into a drawing that left his teacher stunned. The praise planted a seed that would keep him sketching and exploring art throughout school. While other kids were at football games and having lunches with their friends, Garret could be found in the art room, surrounded by others who found refuge in creativity.

He went on to earn a Bachelor of Fine Arts in Sculpture, with a minor in Biology—drawn equally to building and to studying nature. Life, however, had other plans. Marriage, children, and a career in the building trades kept him from art for more than two decades. “If I could go back,” he says, “I would have just stayed in art and starved my way through it. It’s where I find the most joy.”

His return to art was sparked by his wife, Amy, who encouraged him to simply “do something every day.” He set up a butcher-paper-covered drawing table and committed to one drawing every morning for a year. By the end, he had 365 sketches—some drawings, some poems, some whimsical musings. A friend insisted they deserved a show. The response was overwhelming, and Garret realized he could make art central to his life again.



Artist Feature continued...

Nature plays a starring role in Garret's work. Whether it's the mountains of the Tetons or the drama of a cloud-filled sky, his camera is always ready to capture the light, color, and shape that will inspire his next piece. He loves pushing color beyond the real, giving landscapes a surreal vibrancy that makes them unmistakably his.

Garret's creativity isn't limited to painting—he's also a skilled woodworker, printmaker, and sculptor. His mixed-media pieces combine carving and painting, blending textures and colors in ways that invite viewers to look closer.

But perhaps the most profound chapter of Garret's journey is his sobriety. "When I was drinking, I thought it was enhancing my creativity," he reflects. "It wasn't. It was keeping me from my art." Now more than two years sober, Garret says his clarity, focus, and courage to try new things—like plein air painting—have only grown.

Today, Garret is not just creating art—he's creating a life that revolves around it. With retirement just a couple of years away, he plans to dedicate himself full-time to his craft.

His upcoming feature at Harbor Art will showcase new acrylic works, many inspired by his recent trip to the Tetons, where he experimented with painting directly in nature. For Garret, art is more than a skill—it's a lifeline, a way to transform hardship into beauty, and a reminder that it's never too late to return to what you love.



Celebrate Garret's Art Work
The Harbor Art Gallery
114 N. Laurel St. PA
Saturday, Sept 13th
5-8pm

Home Group Focus BY THE BOOK – Jim W.

The By The Book Group group has been active for about a year, meeting three mornings a week at Calvary Chapel in Sequim, WA. We chose our name because **we believe the book holds the answers to all our problems**, and our meetings are centered around both Book Study and open discussion.

What makes our group unique is that cross talk is encouraged, as long as it is positive and respectful, which creates a lively, friendly, and fun atmosphere. We support newcomers by sharing what the Big Book says along with our own experience, strength, and hope, helping members gain a deeper understanding of the steps, traditions, and principles of the program.

Our group values staying focused on the current reading, with the secretary gently guiding members back if the discussion drifts off topic. Although we haven't yet been involved in outside service work, the most rewarding part of our group has been seeing people grow in their recovery through in-depth study. While we've faced challenges, such as misconceptions about politics or loyalty to other meetings, we remain committed to creating a welcoming, focused, and supportive space for recovery.

This closed meeting runs Monday, Wednesday, and Friday from 7-8am and are held in a handicap-accessible location.



Steps & Traditions



Step 9 - Made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others.

This step is about taking action—it's not just apologizing but making amends, which means repairing the damage caused. This could be financial (repaying debts), emotional (acknowledging harm done), or practical (restoring trust through changed behavior).

Tradition 9: AA, as such, ought never be organized; but we may create service boards or committees directly responsible to those they serve.

Concept 9 - Good service leadership at all levels is indispensable for our future functioning and safety. Primary world service leadership, once exercised by the founders, must necessarily be assumed by the Trustees of the General Service Board of Alcoholics Anonymous.”

STEP 9 (AA)

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|-------------|----------------|
| AMENDS | RECONCILE |
| FORGIVENESS | INTEGRITY |
| REPAIR | COURAGE |
| APOLOGY | HEALING |
| RECONCILE | TRUST |
| INTEGRITY | ACCOUNTABILITY |
| COURAGE | HONESTY |
| HEALING | RESPONSIBILITY |
| TRUST | COMPASSION |

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|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| A | M | E | N | D | S | F | O | R | G | I | V |
| E | N | E | S | S | R | A | P | O | L | O | G |
| A | M | E | N | D | C | I | L | T | U | C | C |
| R | E | C | O | N | C | I | L | A | T | I | O |
| R | E | C | O | N | C | I | L | I | T | Y | H |
| C | O | M | P | A | S | S | I | O | N | A | N |
| C | O | M | P | A | S | S | I | O | N | C | E |
| R | E | S | T | T | U | T | I | O | N | A | C |
| C | O | M | P | A | S | S | I | O | N | C | E |
| R | E | S | T | I | T | U | T | I | O | N | A |
| C | O | M | P | A | S | S | I | O | N | I | E |

Steps & Traditions

10

Step 10: Continued to take personal inventory and when we were wrong promptly admitted it.

What it means in some simple actionable terms:

- Step 10 is about daily maintenance – keeping your spiritual house clean.
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- It's like doing a “mini Step 4” each day: checking in with yourself to see where you might have been selfish, dishonest, fearful, or hurtful.
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- If you mess up, you admit it quickly and make it right.

Tradition 10: Alcoholics Anonymous has no opinion on outside issues; hence the AA name ought never be drawn into public controversy.

Concept 10: Every service responsibility should be matched by an equal service authority, with the scope of such authority well defined.

In simple terms, according to internet summaries, which I found helpful: **Matching authority to responsibility** – Those with responsibility must have clear authority to act.

Note from the Newsletter Chair

Welcome to the District 55 Newsletter. This is the first edition we have had in awhile so please provide constructive feedback, article idea's, personal stories, poems or what you would like to see in future editions to the following email address:
newsletter.district55@gmail.com - or scan the QR code

**all photo's and interviews are published with consent

Scan QR code to
send idea's or
questions

