

First Things First

NEWSLETTER FOR WESTERN MARYLAND INTERGROUP OF ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS

[Western Maryland AA website](#)

January 2022

IN MEMORY OF BARRY THOMAS

29 January 1939 – 28 December 2021

I first met Barry years ago when I first came to the Massie Unit in Cumberland. We went to a night meeting at the Fort Cumberland Group and Barry was sitting outside greeting everyone and introducing himself to the newcomers. He spoke often at meetings and after I moved to Cumberland, I was fortunate to talk to Barry a lot and meet his beloved wife, Lil. Barry was a huge believer in the Big Book and the writings of Bill Wilson. The Barry I knew was a very spiritual man and when I had a problem with my life, he always said, "Go and pray to your Higher Power about it." It took me a while, but I finally realized that he was telling me don't just read the 3rd step, WORK the 3rd step. He always said faith without works is dead and that AA is a program of action. He talked of being from Uniontown, PA and often going to Pirates games with his dad as a boy. He loved his Pirates and his Steelers. He helped innumerable people in the Western Maryland AA community and carried with him a degree of humility that was respected by all who knew him. Barry had a lot of sobriety but once told me you must always remain teachable. He lived the AA way of life.

God bless you Barry. You shall surely be missed by all of us who knew you. You're reunited with Lil now and I am glad you two are together again.

–Anonymous

EXPERIENCE, STRENGTH, AND HOPE

I never dreamed I would move back home. I left at 20 after almost a year in rehab to get out of this place, and I never looked back. But because I'm working the 12 steps and practicing the principles, I know myself a little better now. I hear that quiet voice deep inside and listen to it. It kept saying, "Family, family, family, I miss my family." I used to ignore that voice. However, in the past few years, I tried to dig deeper, working the steps again, and going through them one word at a time with my sponsor. One thing I learned was to listen to that little voice. So, when it kept saying, "You should move back home," I eventually did.






You know I thought I wouldn't like it. My husband and I gave ourselves two years to decide if we wanted to stay, but in a couple of months, we both realized we loved it here. I have a solution that works in any situation, so I fit anywhere. If I stay in close contact with my Higher Power (talking to him throughout the day), working the steps in my daily life, I'm able to handle whatever difficulty comes my way. The most important thing is that I know I'm not making it happen. I'm just a passenger. I learned from this program that I can be happy anywhere. Now, I'm just happy.

–Lora B.

If you have suggestions, or you want to write an article for the newsletter, please email impidh@gmail.com for Lora B.

JANUARY JUMBLE



Find the following words in the puzzle.
Words are hidden     and .

ALCOHOLISM
HIGHER POWER
MEETINGS

MUSTARD SEED
PEACE
SERENITY

SERVICE
SOBRIETY

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Anniversaries

We want to update the anniversary list. If you would like your anniversary in the newsletter, anyone can collect anniversaries and submit them through the website. Western Maryland Intergroup address is <http://www.westernmarylandaa.org/>. Or submit them to impidh@gmail.com for Lora B.

12-Step Hotline

Volunteers are needed for the 12-step hotline. You can volunteer to answer the phone or go on 12-step calls. Your phone number is not given out. Call Dan B. for more information at 650-642-1235.

DECEMBER CONTRIBUTIONS

Frostburg Monday Group \$55.69
Frostburg Friday Group \$63.00
Lake Group \$95.75
Friendsville Group \$20.00
New Hope Group \$100.00
New Year's winner of 50/50 donated back \$94.00

Intergroup Treasurer's report as of 12-31-2021
Regular savings \$23.02
Classic checking \$2,617.40