

# First Things First

Newsletter of the Western Maryland Intergroup

## Today I'm grateful for.....

- A new year to grow in sobriety, day by day
- My morning coffee!
- The shapes of the bare trees in winter
- Having people check on me when I miss a meeting I usually go to
- A hopeful heart in a hurting world
- Pink evening sky over the mountains last night

*Want a chance to include your gratitudes in First Things First? Send your thoughts to [westernmarylandaa@gmail.com](mailto:westernmarylandaa@gmail.com)*



## Monthly Open Mic Nights a chance to socialize sober

Who will be next to step up to the microphone at Fort Recovery and sing a tune, karaoke-style? Or jam on the guitar? Or offer some other performance — a poem, a dance — all while sober?

It could be you. Just show up between 6 and 8 p.m. on the last Saturday of every month for Open Mic Night.

About a dozen people mingled and chatted in small groups at November's event, while one-by-one participants took a turn on stage.

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Sponsored by Western Maryland Intergroup, Open Mic Night first took place about a year ago to give area AAs an opportunity to socialize and have fun.

“People can do whatever they want,” said Karen M., one of the organizers. “Somebody came and did magic tricks....It’s whatever talent people want to share. We dance sometimes, too.”

Open mic nights take place from 6 to 8 p.m. on the last Saturday of each month at Fort Recovery, 418 N. Centre St., Cumberland. All are welcome. Coffee and refreshments are served.

An open meeting follows from 8 to 9 p.m., hosted by the Sisters of Sobriety group.

December’s Open Mic Night will be from 6-8 p.m. on Christmas Eve, Saturday, Dec. 24.



# AA Slogans: “First Things First”

## What’s It Mean to You?

“First Things First means to me that when the whole world is whirling around us and we have all kinds of things going on with ourselves, our families, our occupations, we need to be reminded that sobriety is No. 1.

Some people say God is first, but I think without sobriety you can’t even really relate to a Higher Power. So I need to pay attention to my sobriety. And in life, when we’re faced with the daunting pileup of things we need to do, it just helps to use that as a tool — First Things First. What has the highest priority? What needs to be done to help me stay in the day and stay sober?”



—Alan A.

**WESTERN MARYLAND INTERGROUP  
NEW YEAR'S EVE  
PARTY!**

**31 DEC | 2022 | 8PM**

First Presbyterian Church  
11 Washington St, Cumberland, MD 21502

FIREWORKS AT MIDNIGHT

FOLLOWED BY FIRST MEETING OF THE NEW YEAR

**Got a sobriety anniversary coming up?**

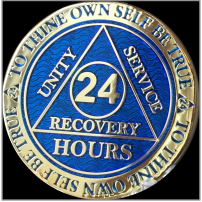
Let us help you celebrate! Send your first name and last initial, along with your sobriety date and home group, to [westernmarylandaa@gmail.com](mailto:westernmarylandaa@gmail.com), and we will print it during the month you got sober.

Article ideas or submissions for ‘First Things First’ may also be sent to [westernmarylandaa@gmail.com](mailto:westernmarylandaa@gmail.com).



## What is the Western Maryland Intergroup?

The primary purpose of the Western Maryland Intergroup is to assist the Alcoholics Anonymous groups of Allegany and Garrett counties, and Ridgeley, W. Va., carry the message to the still-suffering alcoholic. As a courtesy, our Where-n-Whens include meetings in Salisbury, Pa., and various locations in West Virginia. Western Maryland Intergroup is responsible for the phone lines, the Where-n-When and newsletter publications, institutional 12th-step work, the website, the annual Gratitude Breakfast, and more, so that AA members and their families can hear the message of recovery. In all its activities, policies and proceedings, Intergroup observes the practice and spirit of AA's Twelve Traditions and Twelve concepts for World Service, as well as its three legacies of Recovery, Unity and Service.



Western Maryland Intergroup carries the AA message through the following committees:

**Cooperation with the Professional Community (CPC)** — Works to establish better communication with professionals who work with alcoholics, explaining clearly what AA does and does not do.

**Literature** — Makes sure that AA literature is available to AA groups, service meetings, AA events, and the general public.

**Corrections/Treatment (Institutions)** — Works to carry the AA message of recovery to alcoholics who are incarcerated or in treatment settings.

**Activities** — Plans and coordinates activities for AA groups in the area, including picnics, bicycle rides, Open Mic Nights, and the annual Gratitude Breakfast.

## We Need You!

Every AA group in the area is entitled to elect a representative to Intergroup. Intergroup representatives attend monthly meetings, contributing ideas and skills, and help to form the collective group conscience for AA in the area.

Meetings are at **6 p.m.** the third Friday of each month at various locations in Allegany and Garrett counties. **The next meeting is Jan. 20** at Emmanuel Episcopal Church, 16 Washington St., Cumberland.

Come check it out and let your AA group's voice be part of the conversation. Need more information? Email us at [westernmarylandaa@gmail.com](mailto:westernmarylandaa@gmail.com), or ask your sponsor!



# What happened at the meeting?

## Western Maryland Intergroup, Oct. 20, 2022 meeting minutes

### Attendance

Les, Kristin, Cody, Wendell, Ed, Lora, Kristin, Farren, Woody

Call to Order at 6:12 p.m. Serenity prayer Traditions  
Minutes approved

### Treasurer

Bi-annual audit completed on 10/21 by Secretary (Kristin T) \$50 donation from the HOW group  
Intergroup collected \$50 mustard seed  
Paper statement fee 3 \$1854.97 Checking \$23.02 Savings \$2187.73 Reserve

### Institutions

Cody will be taking meetings into both Allegany and Garrett County detention centers. Massie, Halfway house and Harvest house have not reached back out about literature. Massie is still on lock down.

### Activities

Bike ride, open mic & activities committee meeting is at 7

### Newsletter

### Website

Ed recruited Alex to help out, and the Where and When page now has a more searchable format. Thinking about how to best solve the wix search engine banner ad on the top of the page.

### CPC

Woody gave Garrett County professor a stack of Where and When's for those who will be released from incarceration so they can find meetings when they get out. Is looking to see where things can be posted on campus and is also reaching out to the local law enforcement and hospital

### Where & When's

Not here, Ed will get into contact with Tom "Duck"  
  
One of the Liberty Club meetings might want to be added to the Where and When.

### Literature

Nothing going on, Chapel Hill still has a deal on books, HOW group donated big books to the halfway house.

### Hotline

It's being answered, a couple of calls have come in

## Western Maryland Intergroup Officers for 2023

**Chair:** Cody B.

**Co-Chair:** Les W.

**Secretary:** Lora B.

**Treasurer:** Farren S.

### Old Business

Motion made to make Woody our new CPC voted unanimously! Cody- passes unanimously  
Les- passes unanimously  
Lora- passes unanimously  
Farren- passes unanimously

Grantsville church has not reached back out thus far. Meeting attendance fluctuates

### New Business

Intergroup used to take meetings to individuals who were either sick or homebound Or maybe have a committee that would send cards to people who are struggling Motion to close at 7:20.

# AA History

## Why do we call it the “Big Book”?

“There was one last question to be discussed and argued before the presses began rolling: What would be the list price? They finally decided on \$3.50, rather high for 1939. To compensate for the price, they chose the thickest paper in Blackwell's plant. "The original volume proved to be so bulky that it became known as the 'Big Book,'" Bill recalled. "Of course the idea was to convince the alcoholic purchaser that he was indeed getting his money's worth!" The first printing was a half inch thicker than the current edition - although the latter has 14 more personal stories, plus other additional copy.”

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**TJ J.**

Jan. 15, 1952 - July 8, 2021

**Angelo C.**

June 12, 1964 - Aug. 15, 2021

**Glenn J.**

Jan. 18, 1952 - Oct. 12, 2021

**Barry T.**

Jan. 29, 1939 - Dec. 28, 2021

**Karl G.**

Feb. 14, 1976 - July 16, 2022

**David B.**

Oct. 8 1957 - Sept. 2, 2022



A framed print of “The Man in the Bed” sits on a bottom shelf at Fort Recovery in Cumberland. Bill D., the man in the bed, was AA No. 3 and had 19 years of sobriety when he he died in 1954.

## I am responsible....

“Whenever anyone, anywhere reaches out for help, I want the hand of AA to always be there. And for that: I am responsible.”