

ROOM 502

BROWARD COUNTY INTERGROUP, INC.

305 South Andrews Avenue, Room 502, Fort Lauderdale, FL 33301 Phone 954-462-0265, 954-462-7202; www.aabroward.org

> VOLUME 3 MARCH, 2015

3rd Step "Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God as we understood Him."

Step Three: From Sight To Insight

An AA learns to see

Step three continues to be the most important Step for me. Al though the other Steps are important, accepting God and giving up my will makes my life more manageable. I've experienced some bumps along the way, but I have many joys for which I am grateful. If my life was all joy, I'd probably be bored. Challenging times have helped me grow the most. As bad as things may sometimes get, I feel peace inside because I have a history and relationship with my Higher Power, God.

One major challenge has been the loss of my sight. After seventeen surgeries, I've been declared legally blind in my left eye, with half my field of vision. In my right eye I have no vision at all. I never asked, "God, why me?" Instead, I prayed, "God, please be with me and help me get through this." I also asked him not to take all of my sight. It's been quite a journey.

We come to AA to get sober, but within AA we find tools to help us live life. We find a Fellowship that gives love and support. It's up to us what we do with the tools.

Although I've had many growing pains, I've also had far more joy than I ever imagined possible. God loves me and supports me. When I'm weak, he either carries me or, as I've said many times, walks directly behind me, kicking me in the butt to keep me moving. Sometimes I feel like a toddler learning to walk. I take a few steps and fall on my backside. Sometimes I have to sit there for a while. But then I get up and walk again. My legs feel wobbly at times, but the more I do it, the stronger I feel.

Living sober is different from living dry. I choose to turn my will and life over to the care of God today, but God won't hand things to me if I stay in bed and cover my head. I still need to do the legwork. Now, I do things that I never would have dreamed of doing and I see things I've never seen before. I've lost my sight, but I've learned to see more. My life is full because my spirit is filled with God. When I feel bad, it's because I allow myself to do

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Concept III

To insure effective leadership, we should endow each element of A.A.—the Conference, the General Service Board and its service corporations, staffs, committees, and executives—with a traditional "Right of Decision."

SO. Continued on Page 3

Tradition Three — "The only requirement for A.A. membership is a desire to stop drinking."

Tradition Three: An Anchor Of AA

Embracing the spirit of the Tradition

I often hear discussions among members that address the question: "Is AA different today from what it used to be?" Of course, the answer is, "In some ways, yes, and in other ways, no."

I came to AA in 1959 and have watched the evolution of our Fellowship over four decades. The basis of our program remains the same. The details are in the Big Book, the "Twelve and Twelve," and AA Comes of Age. But yes, there have been subtle changes in members' attitudes and commitment and in the application of established and proven approaches.

I believe this is most evident in the practice and application of the Traditions. In the past, members sought to determine the spirit of each Tradition; today, I frequently encounter members and groups seeking to debate the "legal" interpretation of a Tradition, and arriving at an interpretation that is usually slanted in a way that supports their particular point of view.

Members stay away from Tradition meetings in droves and attend discussion meetings in hordes. This says to me, "I do not care to know what the spirit of AA is all about; all I want to do is vent my feelings." I would remind these folks of a chapter in the Big Book entitled "Into Action." There is no chapter entitled "Into Feelings." It is this I-want-it-to-be-my-way approach to the Traditions that may someday destroy our Fellowship from within.

For those not familiar with the spirit of the Traditions, I would certainly advise reading both the long and short form of the first three Traditions printed in the back of the Big Book, and the first three Traditions in the "Twelve and Twelve." These Traditions form the spiritual approach required to keep AA vibrant and alive--the spirit of AA, so to speak.

Tradition One says: Hey, buddy, you aren't the most important thing here, the group is. Whatever you do or say should be in the best interests of the membership of AA as a whole, not you. "Selfishness, self-centeredness, that, we think, is the root of our problem." Tradition One deals with the root of our problem.

Tradition Two says: Hey, buddy, you aren't in charge here, God is. Understanding God's will requires time for prayer and meditation before a major decision is made. In a group, any and all decisions can be major. Tradition Two deals with the development of trust in God, and patience.

Tradition Three says: Hey, buddy, if you agree with points one and two and are willing to embrace the spirit of these Traditions, you can be a member if you have a desire to stop drinking. Tradition Three deals with our need to serve others in a meaningful way to acquire and maintain long-term sobriety. It should be noted that the member comes third after the group and after God.

The May 2004 edition of the Grapevine is dedicated to the topic "Singleness of Purpose." Sit very quietly and think of all the AA groups throughout the world, about God's will for AA, about our historical roots, and about how you are less important than your group or God. If you do, you should have no difficulty understanding the cofounders' intentions regarding the spirit and meaning of "singleness of purpose."

Continued from Page 1

God waits for me to let him in and lifts me up. So, for those who still struggle with negative "tapes" playing in their heads, keep on living the Steps and let your Higher Power fill your spirit. The echoes of those words get lighter and lighter--it works, but we have to live it.

I've recently been diagnosed with a disease that will take away my central vision. Since I have no peripheral vision, the impending loss of my central vision is devastating news. It's frightening, but I know I'll be okay. I hate having to accept it, but if I don't, I'm just making my life more difficult. I've cried and will probably do so again.

I'm planning a "scream date" with some AA friends who also have some medical and physical challenges going on. Some people might think we are crazy, but AA taught me to feel my feelings, release them, and then let them go. So, we're going to scream!

Other people ask, how do you let go and let God? Does it mean throwing caution to the wind? No, I tell them, but I've learned that worrying about a situation won't change it. I do all that I can and then give the rest to God. And the way I do that is to practice, practice, practice.

For me, the AA program is positive repetition. Each time I live the Steps and allow my Higher Power to help, life is less of a struggle.



Before I came to AA, I knew the meaning of dread. Today, I look at life through the eyes of a child. A leaf, a rock, a handful of dirt, a flower, or a bird is new and exciting. I can't see birds anymore, but I can enjoy their sounds. I can't see the stars, but I know they are there. I can't see snow-flakes, but I can feel them on my face.

Although I don't know what tomorrow will bring, I know that there will be AA and I know that there will be God. I may not have a choice in whether I lose my sight or not, but I can choose how to handle it.

—Cheryl Lynn F. Wallkill, New York—

Reprinted from *Grapevine March 2007 Vol. 63 Issue 10.*

BROWARD COUNTY INTERGROUP

Invites you to our

52nd Annual Intergroup Appreciation Dinner

Saturday, April 25th, 2015 6:00 pm to 11:00 pm

TROPICAL ACRES RESTAURANT

2500 Griffin Road Ft. Lauderdale, FL 33312

An Evening of appreciation for our Intergroup volunteers & staff Coffee Hour – 6:00 p.m., Dinner – 7:00 p.m.

Introduction & Speaker - 8:00 p.m.

Advance ticket purchase offers pre-selection of chicken, beef or vegetarian for \$40.00 p/p.

<u>Tickets are all sold in advance, they will not be sold at the door.</u>

For more information call, Intergroup Office: 954-462-0265

A "Narrowback" (Hivven Help Him) Speaks for the Irish

YOU don't have to look at me through green-colored glasses to see that I'm Irish. By name and by features I bear the unmistakable stamp of the Emerald Isle. But to the people of the Ould Sod, I am what they call a 'Narrowback'--one who is born of Irish parentage in this country and considered by them to be Irish in name only. Consequently, I expect to get my come-uppance for my presumption in acting as their self-appointed spokesman.

The Irish, God love 'em, are first in many things. At times it almost seems that they are first, numerically speaking, in Alcoholics Anonymous. Oh, the legions of Reardons, O'Briens, Flynns, Murphys, O'Reillys, etc., who perforce seek the sanctuary of AA sobriety! God must really watch over the Irish--because he puts so many of them in touch with our wonderful organization.

March 17th celebrates St. Patrick's Day. He, so the legend goes, chased the snakes out of Ireland. But great as was his achievement, AA goes him one better--and covers a lot more territory in the process. It chases the snakes out of the lives of many alcoholics in the United States, Australia, Sweden and in every other country where there is an AA group--even in the self-same Ireland!

Speaking for myself, snakes never bothered me. It was those alcoholic leprechauns--those little 'green men' (not Irishmen) who used to stand outside my door and dare me to come out and fight. D.T.'s, you know! Sure and it wasn't a great day for me to hear those little 'green men' taunting me between hiccoughs (theirs and mine.) But eventually the great day did come! Call it the luck of an Irishman (once removed)--but AA and I found each other.

When I say I found AA, I mean just that. I pounced on the Program as if I had made a great discovery.

I drank in the words of the members (my first constructive 'drinking,' I might add.) I looked upon each speaker as if he were a football coach saying: 'Come on boys, get in there and fight!' And fight I did. I fought hard against taking the first drink. Pugnacious was the word for me. And I noticed something. I noticed that the Reardons, O'Briens and Murphys--and many of the other Irish who joined AA-gave that first drink one whale of a fight, and generally won out.

Being of Irish descent and belligerent by extraction, I am proud of the success of the Irish with this Program--and their increasing numbers. Once they accept AA, they are forthright and unequivocal, honest and declarative in how it works for them.

That's the Irish way of doing things. If they have an opinion, they express it unmistakably. If they believe in God, they call him God and don't temporize with vague references to a Higher Power.

It's so characteristic of them. When an Irishman gets drunk, he doesn't hide timidly at home behind the curtains or Venetian blinds, or remain speechless at a bar. Brother, he's drunk--and what of it! His behavior is uninhibited and his positive opinions on life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness are outspoken. Naturally, he's the same person in AA. . .only sober!

There are so many Irish in this organization, it reminds me of an old wisecrack (and here's where a shillelagh bounces off my head again): "You don't have to be Irish to join AA--but it helps!"

—Anonymous—

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General Service Office, NY

P.O. Box 459 Grand Central Station New York, NY 10164-0371 212.870.3127

> Bridging The Gap 877.207.2242

Broward Co. Intergroup, Inc.

305 S. Andrews Ave. Room 502 Ft. Lauderdale, FL 33301 954.462.0265

P.O. Box 22701 Ft. Lauderdale, FL 33335 **Area 15 General Service**

Treasurer, P.O. Box 690275 Vero Beach, FL 32969-0275 (772)360-7949

<u>District 9 General Service</u> P.O. Box 100126

P.O. Box 100126 Ft. Lauderdale, FL 33310

March Celebrants

Men in Recovery

Pat M. ~ 32yrs. Chris E. ~ 11yrs. Warren L. ~ 5yr.

Saturday AM Awareness

Lisa M. ~ 8yrs.

East Naples Men's

Armando L. ~ 19yrs. Gary G. ~ 21yrs. Tony C. ~ 15yrs. Will F. ~ 14yrs. Bob P. ~ 12yrs. Steve H. ~ 10yrs. Mike R. ~ 10yrs. Mark M. ~ 8yrs. David M. ~ 6yrs. Robert G. ~ 7yrs.

Ft. Lauderdale Women's

Jackie R. ~ 25yrs. Kristina K. ~ 10yrs.

Louie V. ~ 6yrs.

John S. ~ 6yrs.

Live Laugh Love Group

Jane ~ 4yrs.

One Day At A Time

Roger S. ~ 23yrs. Jim R. ~ 58yrs.

You Are Not Alone

Daniel G. ~ 9yrs. Edward A. ~ 17yrs. Nancy ~ 12yrs. Mitch B. ~ 6yrs. Elaine ~ 7yrs. Jessica ~ 6yrs.

Oakland Park

Ken P. ~ 9yrs. Bob H. ~ 25yrs.

New Leaf

Wendy O. ~ 15yrs. Gia M. ~ 15yrs.

Focus on Sobriety

Donna C. ~ 14yrs. Suzanne ~ 4yrs. Karin P. ~ 5yrs.

Meeting In Print

Bill S. ~ 20yrs. Nancy C. ~ 25yrs.

WBC Lunch Bunch

Franz ~ 4yrs. Meko ~ 4yrs. Steve ~ 5yrs. Greg ~ 24yrs. Art ~ 32yrs.

Serenity All Together

David S. ~ 35yrs. Ed T. ~ 38yrs. Patrick M. ~ 4yrs. Dave J. ~ 32yrs.

Each Day A New Beginning

John L. ~ 26yrs. Marcus ~ 4yrs. Claude R. ~ 4yrs.

Mountain Group

Sarah O. ~ 25yrs.

Free and Easy Group

Maureen P. ~ 32yrs. Bonnie B. ~ 18yrs. Harold B. ~ 12yrs.

February Celebrants (Misprint)

Ft. Lauderdale Men's Whitey H. ~ 35yrs.



It's your Birthday! Many AA members across the country share

their Anniversary by giving a dollar or two, for

each year of their sobriety to their Intergroup

Office. This insures that the same help that

they received will be available to others who

are new to the fellowship.

important. It's thinking of others on your spe-

cial day, that makes it so special. This is a

wonderful way to express your gratitude by

helping others receive the blessings of

sobriety.

Group Contributions and individual

contributions are the life support of

Alcoholic Anonymous. There is no such

thing as a small contribution.

Broward County Intergroup, Inc.

305 S. Andrews Ave., Suite 502,

Ft. Lauderdale, FL 33301

Make checks payable to:

Start today. It is not how much you give that's

Why AA's are always so happy

BCIC Broward County **Institutions Committee** Next Meeting: March 14th 10:00 a.m. at the Twelve Step House,

205 SW 23rd St., Ft. Lauderdale.

Intergroup Meetings will be now held at The Twelve Step House, 205 S.W. 23rd, Ft. Lauderdale, at 1:00 p.m.

Steering Committee meets at 11:00 a.m. **Upcoming Meetings**

March 15th —April12th



Word Scramble Step Three

1.	sourdn	edot

- 2. fiverataimf
- 3. nodsicei
- 4. tontenyin
- najugguter
- peeeenndcd
- 7. manceciurtcs
- 8. youristems
- 9. nooptrtice
- 10. ginsillnews

(answers on page 7)

A Thinking Problem

AA helped him with more than his drinking and he learned how to be happy

I've been clean and sober for just over nine years now and have grown a lot during that time. The most important thing I learned was how to be happy. When I first got sober in 2005, one of the first things I heard was that I didn't have a drinking problem. I had a thinking problem.

I was unsatisfied and unhappy with my life and who I was and didn't know how to fix that. I had thought that by drinking I could become happy. It worked at the beginning but of course, after awhile that solution became another problem.

First I had to put the proverbial plug in the jug and start to change. Learning what I could and could not change was a huge step in finding happiness. There's a reason that most 12-Step meetings use the Serenity Prayer.

I cannot change another person, institution, policy, etc. I may have some influence but I cannot change them. The only thing I have power over changing is myself and my reactions to people, places and things.

Once I accepted this, I took a big step towards happiness. What I understood about that at first was that I couldn't change the fact that I was an alcoholic. I can't predict what will happen if I take that first drink. That's pretty straightforward and simple.

Don't get me wrong. It wasn't an easy lesson to learn. I had to hurt myself, and others, along the way to this enlightenment. It took a lot of emotional and spiritual pain to come to this conclusion.

The last line of Big Book is, "We shall be with you in the Fellowship of the Spirit as you trudge the Road of Happy Destiny." This says many things to me. One is that there is a happy destiny in my future as long as I stay sober and continue to change for the better.

It also says to me that this journey will not be smooth gliding. Like everyone else—alcoholic or not—I will face bumps along this road. Health problems, deaths, relationships issues, and many others. But as long as I can accept that I must face whatever life throws at me without self-medicating I'll be okay.

Another thing I learned was that I had to look inward to be happy rather than outward. If I am unhappy with myself than no amount of wealth, material things or another person will change that.

This was a hard lesson to learn. By the time I sobered up at 35, I didn't even know who I was. I had learned from an early age to wear different masks for different people. I wore one mask for family, another for work, as well as different ones for different sets of friends.

I once thought that I would be happy if I identified myself with my job. I began to hate that job and so I hated myself as well. People use to ask me when I was going to stop partying and I would answer when I get a girlfriend. I got a girlfriend but the only thing that changed was I took a hostage and made her life miserable. In sobriety, I saw that it was unfair to depend on someone else to make me happy. I had to learn to love the person I was before I could begin to love others.

Once I came to a place where I knew who I was and could love others, I had to be aware of my motives when dealing with them. If my motives were ones of selfishness then that relationship would not work out. If I am to enter into a relationship with another human being I have to be clear up front and not manipulate or use that person for my own gains. It has to be an equal, open and honest relationship. I had to make sure that I wasn't being used either. Not to say I won't make sacrifices for the people I love. That is part of happiness as well. Being able to give and accept unconditional love.

The last change towards happiness I had to make was to stop having to be right all the time. I learned a valuable lesson from Alcoholics Anonymous: I can be right or I can be happy. When I first got into sobriety I kept trying to be right, particularly in my intimate relationships.

Trying to always be right led to constant bickering. This was not good for my emotional sobriety. After I sobered up, I had to manage my emotions because unmanageability in that area of my life was one reason I drank.

Only one of the Steps deals directly with drinking. I came to AA not to just stop drinking, but to to learn how to be happy, joyous and free.

Today I am free from my addiction. I do not have a mental obsession to drink. I face life on life's terms. I choose happiness over having to be right. I accept that I must change and not expect others to. Most importantly if my acceptance is higher than my expectations than things will turn out just fine.

—Dave M., Oshawa, Ontario —

—Grapevine Online Exclusive

Definition of Broward County Intergroup, Inc.

Your Intergroup office services all groups in the Broward County area. It is not a governing body and does not attempt to, nor can it, rule any AA Group. Its sole purpose is to act as a clearinghouse for the convenience of members and groups desiring assistance, and to extend the Twelve Step Work "carrying the message" to the sick alcoholic. The Intergroup office is supported entirely by contributions from groups, usually a specified amount each month or at intervals throughout the year.

Faithful Fivers are fellow A.A. members who donate five dollars (\$5) a month to Intergroup as an act of gratitude. Their generosity helps us to carry the message of A.A. to the still sick and suffering alcoholic throughout the year.

Thank you to our Faithful Fivers. Your contributions are so appreciated!

Tom & Liz J., Gregory C., Sherri D., Suzanne B., June C., Ron J. Bob H., Anonymous I, Bobby V., Janet M., Dan C., Elizabeth B., Happiness Is Group, Lillian M., Fran C., Milinda B., Barbara S., Lois O., Richard H., Gay M., Richard S., Sam B., Mark S. Howard S., Douglas C., Jennifer S., the other Bob H., Carol B., the original Bob H., Leslie R.

and maybe YOU next time?

Please consider becoming a "Faithful Fiver." Your commitment of \$5.00 a month to your Intergroup Office will go a long way toward helping carry the message to the still sick and suffering alcoholic who reaches out. Fill out this form and mail it in with your contribution today! It is the still suffering alcoholic who ultimately benefits from your generous spirit!
Name:
Address:
Email:

Broward County Intergroup, Inc. 305 S. Andrews Ave., Suite 502, Ft. Lauderdale, FL 33301

Answers from page 5:

Sobriety Date and Home Group

Make checks payable to:

1.understood

2.affirmative

3.decision

4.nonentity

5.juggernaut

6.dependence

7.circumstance

8.mysterious

9.protection

10.willingness

Groups we need your help!

We are looking for groups that would like to contribute a gift basket for our

52nd Annual

Volunteer Appreciation Dinner April 25th

Tropical Acres Restaurant 2500 Griffin Road, Ft. Lauderdale, FL For information contact: 954-462-0265

Room 502 is a monthly publication of Broward County Intergroup, Inc. (BCI).

The opinions expressed here are not necessarily those of BCI or AA as a whole.

We welcome your stories, news and comments. The deadline for submission is the 15th of each month.

Material may be edited for space and content and cannot be returned.

Please send your submissions to will@aabroward.org or help@aabroward.org.

MEETING CHANGES

Monday

<u>Lighthouse Point Trinity</u>, 6:30 p.m., Will no longer meet Thursdays., and has moved to Dixon Ahl Hall, 2200 NE 38th Street, Pompano 33064.

NEW MEETING Along Spiritual Lines, St. Francis Mission, 208 SE 8 St, FtL 33301, Mon. 7:30 p.m. OBBSS Monday Night at the Fourth Dimension in Hollywood 7 p.m. is now a Men's CD, **Monday Night Men's**

Closer Conscious Contact, 7:00 p.m., St. Frances & Clare, 101 NE 3rd Street, Ft. Lauderdale. No longer meets.

Tuesday

NEW MEETING <u>Keep it In the Day,</u> Temple Beth Emet, 4807 S. Flamingo Rd., Cooper City, Tues. 6 p.m., CSP **Wednesday**

NEW MEETING Young and Free, 8:45 p.m. 12 Step House, 205 SW 23rd St., Fort Lauderdale, 33315. OCC. Oakland Park Big Book Step Study, 7:30 p.m. 4312 N.E. 5th Avenue, Oakland Park. No longer meets. Downtown Dry Dock, 5:30 p.m. Closed Discussion Men's Meeting, will now be an Open Literature Meeting.

Thursday

<u>Living Young And Sober</u>, 7:30 p.m. Oakland Park, has moved to St. Francis Mission, 208 SE 8 St, FtL 33301 **NEW MEETING <u>Our Charge</u>**, Luther Memorial Lutheran 1925 N. SR 7, Hollywood, Thurs. 8:30 p.m., CD **Friday**

NEW MEETING Coffee Pot Group, 8:00 p.m. Pro-Am Building, 1915 NE 45th St., (Florinada) Ft. Lauderdale.

NEW MEETING AA Late Night, 10 p.m. Faith Christian Church, 7676 Davie Rd. Ext. @ 77th Ave., Davie, 33024

NEW MEETING Easier Softer Way, now meets Friday OM, All Saints Episcopal, 331 Tarpon Dr., Ft. Lauderdale.

NEW MEETING Women's Hope in Recovery, First Presby, 2331 NE 26 Ave., Pompano, CSTw 11-st Meditation.

Central Fact Group, 7:30 p.m. Deerfield, has moved to St. Ambrose Church, 380 S. Federal Hwy. Deerfield 33441

Saturday

NEW MEETING <u>Lives on the Line</u>, 7:00 p.m., OD. Meets at 721 E. Atlantic Blvd., Pompano.

Sunday

NEW MEETING 11th Step Conscious Contact. 7:00 p.m., meets at St. Benedicts, 7801 5th Street, Plantation. **Sunrise Beginners**, 9:30 a.m. Sunrise, has moved to Sun Village Plaza, 4577 N. University Dr. Lauderhill 33351 **Sunday Morning Pembroke Park**, 9:00 a.m. Hallandale, has moved to Mary Saunders Park, 4750 SW 21st Street, Hallandale 33023. And changed their name to **West Park Sunday Morning Group**.

Daily

Good Morning God, 10:00 a.m. Sunrise, has moved to Sun Village Plaza, 4577 N. University Dr. Lauderhill 33351 **441 Group**, All 10 p.m. meetings now open, Sat. 2:30 BBSS no longer meets. New meeting Friday 7:00 p.m.

FRENCH MEETINGS

Sunday

NEW MEETING <u>Dimanche Matin</u>, 10:00 a.m., Sunrise Lakes Phase 2, 8315 Sunrise Lakes Blvd., Closed.

Upcoming Events

- **Feb. 28 & 2nd Annual French Florida Convention** \$25 includes workshops, banquet and speakers.
- March 1 Universal Palms Hotel, 4900 Powerline Rd., Fort Lauderdale
- March 7 Annual Women's Day in Ft. Myers, 8:30 a.m.—3:30 p.m. Info bcparfait@comcast.net
- March 7 District 9's Spring Fling, NSU Campus, 3200 S. University Dr., Davie, Terry Bldg, Karaoke & Chili Dinner 6:00 p.m., Speaker 8:00 p.m. Tickets \$8 advance, \$10 at door.
- **Mar. 14-16** SoberStock 2015, Camp Brorein, 16901 Boy Scout Rd., Odessa, FL. Weekend \$40.00 per person, \$50.00 at the gate. For more info. Visit www.soberstock.com.
- **Mar. 11-15** Florida Roundup 2015, The Deauville Beach Resort, 6701 Collins Avenue, Miami 33141. Registration \$70.00, For more info, or to register, go to: floridaroundup.org.
- **April 18** District 9 Archives Old Timers Meeting, Dessert, 3 speakers with 35+ years sobriety, full archives display, NSU, 3200 University Drive, Davie
- **April 25 52nd Annual Intergroup Appreciation Banquet**, Tropical Acres Steak House, 2500 Griffin Rd., Ft. Lauderdale. 6:00 p.m. to 11:00 p.m. Dinner, Speaker meeting, Raffles \$40.00. Save the date! Tickets available.