

AA District 18 Newsletter

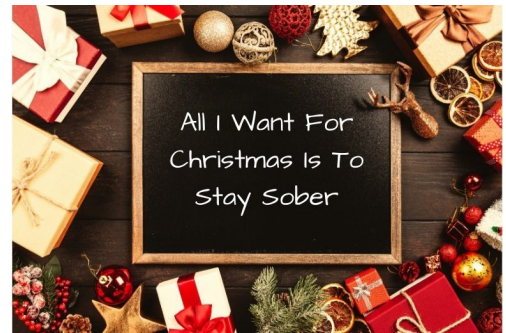
Volume 5, Issue 12

December 2024



We have some late breaking news for District 18.

- District 18 is looking for volunteers to help with the Area 21 Assembly, hosted by District 18, Dec. 15th, 2024. There are various shifts available, morning and/or afternoon. Tasks include setting up and cleaning up. Send your info to info@aa-district18.org if you would like to be of service.
- **Grapevine** has FREE SHIPPING on all products except subscriptions and gift certificates, through Dec. 31 2024. www.aagrapevine.org/store



AA Grapevine Discussion: Navigating the Holidays

This month, we continue with AA Grapevine discussion questions. We highly encourage our readers to read the AA grapevine article relevant to the discussion, but it is not necessary to have read it or to be familiar with it. We are answering the questions based on our own experience with the hope that our answers will be helpful to our readers.

This month's discussion questions are from December's AA Grapevine issue, and are related to Navigating the Holidays!

'What was your first sober holiday season like? What are some things that help you stay sober at holiday gatherings? Do you go to alkathons? How are they helpful? What are some ways you do service during the season? How do you reach out to others?'

I had my last drink sometime in the beginning of July 2019. I don't remember when I took my last drink, I only know I didn't drink the day I was admitted to the hospital ER, so that is my sober date. I was two months sober when I came into AA the following September, and the holidays were fast approaching. For me, I believe fear was a natural response for wanting to remain sober during the holidays, and not really knowing how to do it. I remembered my previous holidays while I was an active drinker. I took full advantage of my time off work (vacation days) and drank all

continued on page 2

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

1	D18 News, Holidays
2	Holidays (cont'd) / Tradition 12
3	Tradition 12 (cont'd) / Interesting Dates
4	Events / Birthdays / Grapevine Announcement
5	Holiday Tips / D18 Elections / It's a Wrap
6	Fliers and such

Holidays (cont'd from pg. 1)

day, becoming a recluse. I only went out to stock up. Then there were the family gatherings. Since I didn't openly drink in front everyone, thoughts of my sneakiness were present. I really wanted to stay sober during the holidays, but needed guidance.

The Saturday before Thanksgiving at my home group meeting, a large crowd had gathered. When it was asked if anyone had a topic for discussion, I immediately spoke up and asked those in attendance how they kept sober during the holidays. I talked about what my past drinking holidays looked like, that I was fearful, then I listened. A lot of good advice was shared and everyone liked the topic as a reminder of how to get through the holidays sober.

So my first sober Thanksgiving was at the in-laws. I remember everyone looking at me like I had a disease. They all knew what had happened, but didn't know how to approach me. I suppose the reactions were warranted, because they never saw me drink either. But I stayed sober and enjoyed the day.

Christmas with the in-laws was down at my wife's uncles home. This gathering went better, as the initial shock from Thanksgiving had worn off. But something interesting happen. My wife's uncle asked me if I wanted to join him and my brother-in-law James in the garage. In the garage, her uncle asked if it was ok for he and James to have a beer. I was surprised by the question and said I didn't mind. I also said that I don't expect everyone to adjust their lives because I have a problem, but I appreciated him asking. I found that them having a beer didn't bother me. I can only attribute my attitude to starting my day off with my readings and prayer.

I had a lot of fear going into the holidays in my first year of sobriety. There were a lot of firsts that year. Simply doing what my sponsor and AA suggested kept me sober through all the holidays. In the past when I was drinking, I treated everyday as a holiday, and holidays were just an excuse to drink. So I am vulnerable every day I do not keep spiritually fit. AA is a program of action, which means I need to do the small things that are suggested. As I do those things, I am taking out an insurance policy today against taking that first drink. I used to work with a guy who would say "Everyday's a holiday," when you asked how he was. Well, everyday is a holiday when I don't want to take a drink. It just keeps getting 'gooder and gooder,' as I've heard in meetings. John G



Tradition 12 Checklist

These questions were originally published in the AA Grapevine in conjunction with a series on the Twelve Traditions that began in November 1969 and ran through September 1971. The D18 newsletter committee felt that republishing these questions related to each tradition would help further the growth of individuals and groups in their understandings of the traditions, and might stimulate some dialogue. This month's questions reflect questions related to Tradition 12.

We continue in providing answers to some of the questions posed, to show how these traditions, which are some of AA's principles, can be practiced in all our affairs.

Anonymity is the spiritual foundation of all our traditions, ever reminding us to place principles before personalities.

1. Why is it a good idea for me to place the common welfare of all AA members before individual welfare? What would happen to me if AA as a whole disappeared?
2. When I do not trust or agree with AA's current servants, who do I wish had the authority to straighten them out?
3. In my opinions of and remarks about other AAs, do I imply that membership requirements go beyond the desire to stay sober?
4. Have I a personal responsibility to help an AA group fulfill its primary purpose? What is my part?
5. Do I do all I can do to support AA financially?
6. Should I keep my AA membership a secret, or reveal it in private conversation when that may help another alcoholic (and therefore me)? Is my brand of AA attractive so that other drunks might want it?
7. What does anonymity mean to me?
8. In light of increased awareness of alcoholism and AA's program of recovery among the general public, why is the principle of anonymity still important?

continued on page 3

Tradition 12 (cont'd from pg. 2)

9. Am I mindful to respect the anonymity of other AA members who may work in my place of employment or my industry? How about AA members who live in my area or neighborhood?

10. What does "principles before personalities" mean to me?

Answer to #10

From *The Twelve Traditions Illustrated*, "Anonymity, as we observe it in A.A., is at root a simple expression of humility." One of my problems prior to coming into A.A. was I thought I was better than everyone else. It didn't matter what it was. I associated with other drinkers who drank more than me, so I couldn't be an alcoholic. I stopped going to church because all I saw in there were hypocrites. All the bad drivers out there, those who run red lights, stop signs, speeding, I would never do those things. The list could go on. Humility was something I severely lacked. I found that out by working the steps.

I learned through the program that I am not a bad person. I'm just a person whose character defects had run amok. There are people in A.A. who have skills that I don't possess, just like I may have skills that others don't. There are those who have better social skills than I have. When I humbly recognize we are all different, and stop putting myself on a pedestal, I am moving towards humility. My goal in A.A. is not be the best A.A. member, but to contribute what I can offer to make A.A. better.

One way to accomplish this is to put 'principles before personalities.' I probably will not agree with everything that happens in A.A., but when I put principles first, I am helping A.A. carry the message to the still suffering alcoholic. To me this just doesn't mean the newcomer, but even those members who have some years of sobriety.

When I apply principles before personalities to everyday life, I can maintain a sense of serenity. I recently tried something new. When I see someone do something that I would have immediately objected to, I do a quick reflection of myself in that situation, and realize I've done the same thing. So who am I to judge? When I live the principles of A.A., my ego doesn't control my thoughts and life is so much better.
JJG

INTERESTING DATES IN DECEMBER AA HISTORY

DEC 27 1893: Rev. Sam Shoemaker was born. He was head of the U.S. Oxford Group movement & minister of Calvery Church in NYC, where Ebby took Bill W. to the mission on 23rd St. in NYC.

DEC 11 1934: Bill W. takes his last drink & enters Towns Hospital. Bill has a spiritual experience there & the obsession with alcohol is removed.

DEC 1937: Bill meets with Rockefeller Foundation in an attempt to raise money. Rockland State Hospital takes alcoholic patients to an AA meeting in South Orange, NJ.

DEC 1938: Bill began writing the 12 Steps using Oxford Group principles & the idea of "plugging the holes an alcoholic might 'riggle' through."

DEC 1940: St. Louis MO AA group is founded.

DEC 1941: The Dallas Morning News reports formation of the 1st AA group in Dallas.

DEC 1943: San Quentin News reports "Mr. Bill" speaks to 300 inmates at their AA meeting.

DEC 1949 (CHRISTMAS DAY): Dr. Bob's last visit to St. Thomas Hospital's alcoholic ward where he helped thousands of drunks.

DEC 1950: Paramount Pictures changed the name of its movie "Mr. & Mrs. Anonymous" to "Something to Live For" at AA's request. Released in 1945, it "dealt with the wonderful work being done by AA" Editor Note: This movie is available on DVD.

DEC 1966: Ebby T, the man who really made the 1st 12th Step call, dies. The newspaper obituary contains no mention of AA.

Upcoming Events for December

GSR MEETING AND HYBRID

- DATE: SUNDAY, DEC 8TH, 2024
- TIME: 2:00 PM – 3:00 PM
- PLACE: AT CSO AND ON ZOOM
- MEETING ID: 860 0054 3107
PASSCODE: 093088

TRIANGLE GROUP POTLUCK & SPEAKER MEETING

- DATE: DEC 12TH, 2024
- TIME: 5:30PM – 8:00PM
- LOCATION: 1ST BAPTIST CHURCH LITCHFIELD
608 N VAN BUREN STREET, LITCHFIELD, IL
- DOORS OPEN AT: 5:30 PM, DINNER: 6 PM, SPEAKER: 7
PM
- SPEAKER: WC FROM EDWARDSVILLE

AA ILLINOIS DISTRICT 18 ACTIVITIES COMMITTEE "CHRISTMAS FOR KIDS"

- DATE: DECEMBER 14TH, 2024
- TIME: 2:00PM – 4:00PM
- LOCATION: CSO
409 BROADWAY UNIT C-1, SOUTH ROXANA, IL
- SEE ATTACHED FLYER

SOUTHERN IL AREA 21 PRE-ASSEMBLY POTLUCK

- DATE: DEC 14TH, 2024
- TIME: 6:00AM – 8:00PM
- LOCATION: LECLAIRE CHRISTIAN CHURCH
1914 ESIC DRIVE, EDWARDSVILLE, IL
- HOSTED BY SATURDAY NIGHT LIBRARY GROUP

SOUTHERN ILLINOIS AREA 21 ASSEMBLY

- DATE: DECEMBER 15TH, 2024
- TIME: 8:00AM – 5:00PM
- LOCATION: EDWARDSVILLE MOOSE LODGE 1561
7371 MARINE ROAD, EDWARDSVILLE, IL
- SEE ATTACHED FLYER

AA DISTRICT 18 FUN ACTIVITIES COMMITTEE NEW YEARS' EVE GAME NIGHT

- DATE: TUESDAY, DECEMBER 31ST, 2024
- TIME: 8:00 PM – 1:00 AM (JAN 1ST)
- PLACE: CSO
409 BROADWAY UNIT C-1, SOUTH ROXANA, IL
- WE'LL HAVE SOME FOOD AND DRINKS, BUT PLEASE
BRING SOMETHING TO SHARE IF YOU CAN.

Mark Your Calendars

GSR MEETING AND HYBRID

- DATE: SUNDAY, JAN 19TH, 2024
- TIME: 2:00 PM – 3:00 PM
- PLACE: AT CSO AND ON ZOOM
- MEETING ID: 860 0054 3107
PASSCODE: 093088

DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS



GRAPEVINE SUBSCRIPTIONS

If you've thought of subscribing the Grapevine and have been putting it off, please consider subscribing and adding it to your sobriety tool kit. It's basically a meeting in a pocket, easy to carry with you and can provide inspiration when you need it. I've attached subscription forms at the end of this newsletter, and you can even gift a subscription to a friend.

Thank you,
John G.

DO YOU HAVE AN UPCOMING EVENT OR A BIRTHDAY IN JANUARY, or are you interested in contributing to the newsletter? Please send any of the above to info@aa-district18.org by 12/31/24, being mindful of our steps and traditions. Any suggestions or comments are always appreciated and can be sent to info@aa-district18.org.

THANK YOU for subscribing to our newsletter!

The holiday season is upon us. The following are some tips published in the AA newsletter, BOX 459, 2016, that might be helpful in enjoying the holiday.

1. Line up extra A.A. activities for the holiday season.

Arrange to take newcomers to meetings, answer the phones at a clubhouse or central office, speak, help with dishes, or visit the alcoholic ward at a hospital.

2. Be host to A.A. friends, especially newcomers.

If you don't have a place where you can throw a formal party, take one person to a diner and spring for the coffee.

3. Keep your A.A. telephone list with you all the time.

If a drinking urge or panic comes—postpone everything else until you've called an A.A.

4. Find out about the special holiday parties, meetings, or other celebrations given by groups in your area, and go.

If you're timid, take someone newer than you are.

5. Skip any drinking occasion you are nervous about.

Remember how clever you were at excuses when drinking? Now put the talent to good use. No office party is as important as saving your life.

6. If you have to go to a drinking party and can't take an A.A. with you, keep some candy handy.

7. Don't think you have to stay late.

Plan in advance an "important date" you have to keep.

8. Worship in your own way.

9. Don't sit around brooding.

Catch up on those books, museums, walks, and letters.

10. Don't start now getting worked up about all those holiday temptations.

Remember—"one day at a time."

11. Enjoy the true beauty of holiday love and joy.

Maybe you cannot give material gifts—but this year, you can give love.

12. "Having had a . . ."

No need to spell out the Twelfth Step here, since you already know it.

Source: AA. Box 4-5-9. Winter 2016

New District 18 Officers

Officer elections were held at the November 2024 GSR meeting. We would like to congratulate each member and wish them success and our support in their new positions.

DCM – John G.

Alternate DCM – Joe V.

Secretary – Paul B.

Treasurer – Rob C.



It's hard for me to believe how time has flown by. I started my journey contributing to the D18 newsletter when Karin S. asked at a GSR meeting if anyone wanted to join the newsletter committee. That was back in October 2020. Karin and I worked on the newsletter through Sept. 2022, when I took over. Karin has been an appreciated mentor who helped me throughout my tenure.

When I started this journey, I knew one of the ways I was to grow in this fellowship, was to do things I was uncomfortable doing. All along the way, the newsletter covered different topics as well as the Steps and Traditions. As I thought about those topics and what I was going to write, writing for the newsletter has helped me grow in ways I could have never imagined.

I really appreciate all the our readers of the newsletter and those who commented to me about my articles. I would also like to thank all those who contributed articles to the newsletter. And I'd wish the next newsletter chair much success.

As I start my next adventure in service, I hope to cross paths with you soon.

Thank you,
John G



the 3rd Annual Christmas for Kids Holiday Event

**Saturday,
December
14th
2:00~4:00 pm**

**Central Service
Office (CSO)**
409 Broadway Unit C-1
South Roxana,
IL 62084

- Toy gift-bags for the kids!
- Get your picture taken with Santa.
- Craft booth!
- Hot Cocoa and more!

**Bring a
Dessert or
candy to
share**

**Families,
and anyone in
recovery are
welcome!**

FYI

The Activities Committee is a self-supported group. We are not given a budget from AA District 18. Please have your home-group donate to this year's Christmas for Kids Holiday Event before Saturday, December 14th. Be sure it's marked for the Activities Committee.

Toys are being purchased for kids!

JOIN US

**PRE-ASSEMBLY POTLUCK
SPEAKER MEETING**

SATURDAY DECEMBER 14TH, 2024



**SPEAKER
HAROLD L.
ST. LOUIS, MO**

**FOOD AND DOORS OPEN AT 6P
SPEAKER AT 7P**

**LECLAIRE CHRISTIAN CHURCH
HEARTH ROOM
1914 ESIC DR, EDWARDSVILLE, IL 62025**

PLEASE BRING A COVERED DISH OR DESSERT

Hosted by
Saturday Night Library Group



SOUTHERN ILLINOIS

AREA 21 ASSEMBLY

Hosted by District 18

Sunday, December 15th 2024

**Edwardsville Moose Lodge
7371 Marine Rd, Edwardsville, IL**

Pre-Assembly Potluck Meeting

Saturday, December 14th, 2024

Food and doors open at 6p

Meeting at 7p

**Leclaire Christian Church
1914 Esic Dr, Edwardsville, IL 62025**

**Hosted by Saturday Night Library
Group**

REGISTRATION

From 8a-9a, \$5

ASSEMBLY

Begins at 9a

LUNCH

**\$12 for all you can
eat chicken dinner
buffet**

ZOOM

Meeting ID: 889

89494288

Passcode: 177777

LODGING

**Country Hearth Inn
and Suites**

**1013 Plummer Dr,
Edwardsville, IL
62025**

Please call (618)

656-7829 for

**special rate of
\$107+tax**

AA Illinois District 18 **Activities Committee** Presents



**Tuesday,
December 31st**

8:00 pm~? Not too late,
we're old.

**Central Service Office
(CSO)** 409 Broadway
South Roxana, IL 62084

**Tired of watching somebody
else having fun in Times Square?**
We're getting together because we
don't have anything better to do,
and thought this would be good for
anyone who might be struggling or
just plain bored on what we like to
call "amateur night". **We'll have some
food and drinks, but please bring
something to share if you can.**

Families, and anyone in recovery
are welcome!

**Just
FYI**

The Activities Committee is a self-supported group. We are not given a budget from AA or District 18. Please have your home-group occasionally pass a basket for our group, so we can continue to have events like these, for those wanting to be a part-of, in recovery. Be sure it's marked for the Activities Committee. Thanks!

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