



Volume 12, Number 3, September, 2013

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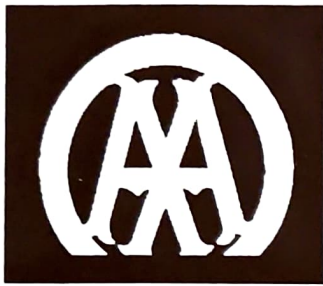


'Tis the season ... or it will be very shortly and it can be a tricky and fearful time for many of us trying to get sober or wanting to hold onto the precious sobriety that we have.

This is the time to take advantage of all that AA has to offer ! Get involved. Up your meetings and, above all, play the old tapes back. You know the ones ... the Christmas morning when you were too hung over to watch the kids open their gifts ... the 3 am phone call that your Dad remembers, but you don't ... the aftermath of the office party, where you lost your dignity as well as your job,...etc., etc.

Just remember, your AA friends are rooting for you. Join in the festivities ... and make this the best HOLIDAY SEASON of your life !

HISTORICAL FACTS of A. A.



70 PLUS YEARS An A.A. Timeline

(Our History of AA editor has compiled a list of significant events that have come together to create the amazing program of AA as we know it today.)

Most of us in Alcoholics Anonymous know that in late 1934 Bill W. experienced a spiritual experience at Towns Hospital and began his journey in sobriety. In 1935 he met Dr. Robert S. and after spending hours sharing his story with Dr. Bob, Bill realized the power of one alcoholic talking to another. Dr. Bob did have one relapse after that meeting, but quickly recovered and the date of his last drink, June 10, 1935 became the founding date of Alcoholics Anonymous.

Dr. Bob and Bill spent hours together daily trying to figure out how best to bring this message to alcoholics. It was during this period that the 24-hour concept was born.

From 1936 through 1939 the

basic text "The Big Book" was written. It was during the writing of the Big Book that Bill realized that he needed to outline an actual program for the alcoholic to follow. Borrowing from the Oxford Group, their 6 steps grew to 12 and were included in the text. In 1939 the first woman, Marty M. started attending meetings after reading the Big Book while being treated in a sanitarium.

In 1941 Ruth Hock received a newspaper clipping of the Serenity Prayer that had been printed in the New York Herald Tribune. Ruth and many other A.A. members felt that this prayer reflected the A.A.'s principles so well that it began to be printed on cards and passed around to members everywhere. We all know this prayer as it has become a central part of A.A. and is heard at meetings all around the world.

In 1944 the Grapevine found its way to stardom. What began as an eight-page bulletin bringing news to members, including soldiers overseas, expanded to become the magazine it is today. In 1946 A.A.'s 12 Traditions began to be developed by Bill W. and The Grapevine was the medium used to distribute them.

In the June, 1947 edition of the A.A. Grapevine, a statement defining the Fellowship and its mission appears for the first time. The statement, known as

the A.A. Preamble, is quickly adopted by A.A. groups and has become a standard inclusion in A.A. literature.

In July 1950 A.A.'s 15th anniversary is marked with an international convention in Cleveland with some 3,000 people in attendance. One of the most significant events was the adoption of the Twelve Traditions. The convention was held at the Cleveland Public Auditorium.

The AA Way of Life, a collection of Bill's writings, is published in 1967 as a daily source of comfort and inspiration. The title of the book will be changed in 1971 to *As Bill Sees It*.

In 1975 A.A. published *Living Sober*, a book of member experiences that describes methods of living without drinking. The material for the book was gathered in the early 1970s from group and individual input. The material was compiled into a book and this book became a popular addition to A.A. literature.

In November, 1986, for the first time, the Big Book is published as a paperback. The soft-cover book makes it easier for A.A. members to carry the message into correctional facilities, where hardcover books are often not permitted

In 1989 at the yearly A.A. General Service Conference the golden anniversary of the publication of *Alcoholics Anonymous* was celebrated. The birthday cakes were replicas of the covers of the First and Third Editions of the book, of which more than eight million copies had been sold or distributed by this time.

In 2001, a woman is elected to chair the General Service Board for the first time: Elaine McDowell, Ph.D. She had served as a trustee for nine years and although a nonalcoholic, Dr. McDowell brought more than 28 years of experience in the prevention and treatment fields as well as her knowledge and abiding faith in A.A.'s basic principles.

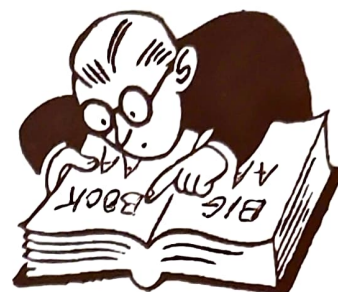
Also, in November 2001, a new edition of the Big Book — the culmination of four years of development and 25-plus committee meetings — rolled off the presses. This was the Fourth Edition and, while the first 164 pages remained unchanged, the new edition featured the stories from 41 sober alcoholics. Of these 17 were “keepers” from the third edition but the remaining 24 were new stories reflecting a wider cross section of membership, encompassing the breadth of A.A. beliefs, experiences, ages, and ethnicities.

That same year the twenty-five millionth copy of the book, *Alcoholics Anonymous*, was presented to the warden of San Quentin prison, at the International Convention in Toronto. The gift of the book was A.A.'s way of expressing gratitude to that institution's long history of supporting A.A. as a resource for alcoholic inmates. The first A.A. meeting in San Quentin was held in 1941.

April 2009 is marked as the 70th publication anniversary of *Alcoholics Anonymous*, or the Big Book, as our AA members fondly call it. It was expected that the 30 millionth copy would be published sometime that year. A.A.'s literature is available in 58 languages, including American Sign Language and Braille, multiple prints and audio formats. A.A.'s basic text has carried the message of hope and recovery around the world.

Although there are many more events that have helped shape this wonderful fellowship I hope that these highlights will give everyone a greater understanding of the journey that AA, as a whole, has undergone, giving us the tools we need to start and to continue our own journey in recovery.

Marilyn R, Vass Group
Intergroup Hx. of AA editor



When all else fails
_____ the _____!

BLAFE



INLOOT



SMADEK



WRABN



Unscramble the words and use circled letters to solve the puzzle.

(Answer on Pg. 6)

SPOTLIGHT on our **GROUPS**



The West End Group was formed in 1979. It meets at the Senior Citizen Bldg. in West End every Sunday evening at 7 and is in great need of new members to keep it going. Jan G has written the following in hopes that it will entice more people to attend. The group has committed to keep it going until after Christmas.

If you are looking for a small, intimate Home Group this could be just the place for you !

Here is a list of old-timers that are no longer with us. I met every one of them at the West

End Group of AA. They were old, they were funny, they had wild stories, they were a group of friends that took to the roads together meeting in Aberdeen, Vass, West End, Biscoe. They had A LOT of sobriety, solid sobriety, and it meant a lot when they would share their stories. I wanted to be like them! K.A., Randall, Robert McC., David, Louie, Douglas, Jack and Doris S.

I also didn't want to miss KA's lady, Miss Eleanor and her homemade cookies. We've lost her too.

I have interviewed some of the "younger" West End meeting makers to share their stories and hopefully inspire some readers to attend our meeting. West End is a logical central meeting place for people from both the western parts of Moore County and the east end. It is a pleasant drive (with a new 4-lane almost completed). 7:00 p.m. Sunday nights, not too late.

Jim S. has been sober for 25 year. His first Moore Co. meeting was the West End group in 2001. This meeting is important to Jim because of his complicated circumstances. He's so busy now that a longer drive makes it difficult to have steady attendance anywhere else. Jim thinks of K.A. and David M. often. He wants this meeting to be here for other people and makes the point that it is the most convenient meeting for the outlying areas.

Lloyd E. came into AA in 2002. He has a funny story to start his journey. Lloyds first AA mtg. was the Women's Group at the Aberdeen building on a Sat. morning where he was gently kicked out! Lloyd says he was awed by his early meetings. People seemed happy. He kept coming back because he was supposed to, and now because he wants to. He says "We're lucky to be Alcoholics so that we're a part of this Program. The Program has helped me live a more productive, enjoyable, ethical life. It is helping me live life on life's terms". Another story he has to tell is at an early West End meeting, Jack S. nudged his wife Doris and said "look who's here". Jack later told Lloyd "I've been saving this chair for you for a couple of years now."

MaryLou came to the West End group in 2012, with 20 prior years in Al-Anon. Being an open meeting is important to her. It is her way to share the program with her significant other. She says it is such an essential part of each of their lives and helps define their relationship. She has also learned more from the women recovering in AA than at any other time or other place. It is wonderful to spend time with recovering women she says.

Virgie S. moved to Moore Co. and, since she lived far out in the country, she was happy to find a meeting close to home

She remembers that K.A. would open the meeting, which at that time was filled to the end of the room. She felt that everyone was close together while sharing and that you'd always feel better than when you arrived. She feels that this group has a feeling of the spirit – something to take home. It is not a quick fix.

The West End group was Debbie F's home group from 1989-1992 until she moved. Because she still has family here we see Debbie's smiling face several times a year. She says the Biscoe people (the old-timers) were extremely welcoming to her.

Candy D. grew up in Montgomery County. She started her sober journey in Florida 25 years ago, but has always made the W.E. meeting a priority when she came to N.C. It seems to her that it is a unique meeting where AA and Al-Anon co-exist so well.

Andre says just to have that AA door open when it is supposed to be open has made a difference to someone when they needed us. And from there one can go on. That little place, the West End meeting place, has a lot of serenity, sobriety and history. It has been a "Safe Haven" for so many. He feels like it is an oasis in the wilderness.

Jan G. remembers her first West

End meeting. (surprise!) Drunk, dozing in one of the rockers, leaving early. She left early a number of times, not wanting to talk to anyone. One of her best moments came when Miss Eleanor told her that she and K.A. had been watching her for quite a long time and that they could definitely see that she had changed (for the better!)

If you need a new home group, we would love to have you. If you're having trouble sharing in a bigger meeting, we will listen. If you need a place to work out problems, West End is a small, caring group still working on improving our own stories.

Recovery requires constant vigilance, honest sharing with trusted fellow sufferers, and rigorous introspection. AA meetings are the best and the cheapest form of therapy for our disease. If you can't continue to live the way you've been living and yet you can't stop living that way, try our group.

When all your choices seem impossible, when you're baffled and bewildered and incomprehensibly demoralized so that you can't fight anymore, try out group.

The West End meeting has been a starting place for many new people in AA and is a good place to start.

AA member Jan G.
West End Home Group

MEMBER MUSINGS



"IGGY"

My spiritual foundation really started unfolding, unbeknownst to me, right after the 6 pm Tuesday meeting in Aberdeen. I can't remember the exact date but burned in my memory is that it was right around Thanksgiving 2010.

My sponsor, my mother and I were right outside the kitchen door, it was cold, drizzly and just plain nasty. All of a sudden I saw movement coming from the woods into the parking lot. I pointed this out to the others present who, at first, did not notice the little scrap of some living thing trying to make his way.

All my life I have connected with animals. I was an active 4-H'er with my horses, dog obedience and small livestock. I found solace and hope with my animal friends when it seemed that I was misunderstood or not wanted.

Getting back to that evening in Aberdeen ...
I approached what seemed to be

a baby possum. Well I scooped him up, much to my mothers dismay and her mutterings of "here we go again" and my sponsor suddenly had a ham in the oven she had to run home to attend to.

Thankfully the vet office was on the way home and it was still open. The kind doctor said it was a ferret and instructed us on what to feed it until the stores opened in the morning. The ferret was blind, deaf, starved, with little hair & he had a large tumor growing out of his ear. I knew I would be willing to do anything to make sure he had everything he needed to recover from this terrible condition. We named the ferret Honorable Theodore Ignatz "Iggy" III and he was adopted into our household full of cats and dogs and accepted by all immediately.

And thus began my tangible belief and unraveling of the Second Step. My journey in AA had been marred by countless vain attempts to stay sober by knowledge and willpower alone. Frustration, belligerent denial that I was different., "you would drink too if you had my circumstances" ... plagued me. I'd stay sober for a while, listening to my sponsor and being willing to take her suggestions. We even started on the grosser of my resentments but then life got in the way. I just wasn't getting it. I was still intellectualizing it all. Sure enough, twice since 2010 I

drank over resentments and anger.

My sponsor never talked down to me or "fired" me and God bless her she kept on being my angel. Throughout this time we would discuss the Steps & Iggy. It started occurring to me that to fully recover from this death sentence & hopeless state of mind and body I only had to be WILLING to go to any length each day ! Just like the starved, blind & deaf ferret I found in the parking lot ! I only had to make the decision to turn my existence over to something because I had no power over anything in my life.

Now I really had something tangible. I started relating more to what I was reading in the Big Book. I started identifying in meetings and hearing things I never heard before. Something had changed inside me where I started to see what I could add to life and to be in the present moment so I could actively listen to my husband and my friends in AA.

Iggy passed in April of last year but his willingness to trudge blindly through the woods in the cold and rain lives on in my deepest recesses. Through sheer persistence against any circumstances, I set aside my prejudices every morning.

I do have a new employer, God. He holds me in the palm of his hand, just like I did my little

ferret. He hears my heart beating and knows my fears. He helps me to see and helps me to hear, filling me with wonder and gratitude. I wake up each day thanking Him for not needing a drink !

AA member Ruth K
KISG home group



Scramble Puzzle answer:

Fable
Lotion
Masked
Brawn

"When all else fails READ the BOOK".

TRAVELING HIGHLIGHTS



A. A. in LONDON

On January 29, 2000, I left the US to live in London, England. Since I picked up my 13 year AA medallion this past January you can assume that this is one geographical that worked. New location, plus daily meetings, plus getting a sponsor and finally getting on my knees each morning equals successful relocation.

London is special. To give you a sense of the scale, there are 13 professional football (soccer) teams in London. There are also an astounding 7,000 pubs in London. It might be a good idea to stay away from these ! AA is special in London too; there are over 700 meetings a week so if you have a chance to travel London is a **must** & AA meetings there are wonderful.

All the meetings have booklets

available called the "Where to Find". In it you will find the time, location & description of all the AA meetings. The booklet is easy to use as it breaks the city down by areas and days of the week.

In the West End, where most tourists visit, there is a day long meeting place called Hinde Street. This very special place is located in the basement of a Methodist Church about two blocks behind Oxford St., near the famous Selfridge's Dept. store. Tea, coffee, biscuits (cookies), and a warm welcome are served all day long as well as a full schedule of meetings. The 1:00 pm lunchtime is a classic gathering...a giant mix of alcoholics from all over London and the world, from men in pinstripe suits to the homeless. Catch it if you can.

London meetings almost invariably begin with a speaker, the "Chair". So at every mtg. you get to know at least one person pretty well. He or she has from 15 to 30 minutes to tell their story or a chosen topic. Then the meeting is open for sharing. Also, there is always a "meeting after the meeting" where AAs go for more coffee or tea and visitors are welcome.

My first job in London was teamaker at the Thursday noon meeting at St James Church in Piccadilly, and where I first got a handle on responsibility. Mtgs. are run by the "secretary"

which is a revolving elected position held by one with good sobriety. Helena, a stern red head, was the current one at St James. I mentioned to her that I needed help for the following week to get the fresh milk and make the tea because of a scheduling conflict. She made it clear that getting a substitute was MY responsibility, not hers. A good lesson and a resentment !

Lastly, & probably the best reason that London AA is so special, is the great cast of unforgettable characters you will meet. Ian S. founded my home group, "Venice Beach" in the neighborhood known as Marylebone. This Englishman got sober in California where he was living in a dumpster. In 14 years his HP evolved from the Jaws of a Great White Shark to a loving God. My sponsor, John the Plumber, never left his neighborhood, Paddington, 'til he was 30 yrs. old and only because he was banned by every single pub there.

And then there was Rosie, from Glasgow. She was 30 years sober when I heard her story. She said her bottom was hit when "I woke on a park bench & looked for my half filled can of "Special Export". A dog ran up, lifted his leg and pissed on it. I had to drink it anyway!" I will never forget her....

AA member John H
Brownson Big Book Group

DISTRICT 52 **NEWS**

District 52 AA **workshops** **open to everyone**

GSR's from 27 groups in 5 counties, Hoke, Scotland, Lee, Moore & Richmond, make up NC District 52.

Business meetings are held every other month on the first Sunday of the month & everyone is welcome.

This past year members of Alanon and professionals, as well as AA members all helped to make the workshops a success.

These workshops were varied as to topic. In April the focus was on "How Anonymous Are We", in which we were reminded that anonymity is the "spiritual foundation" of AA, helping us avoid problems of ego and personalities.

In June "AA History Revealed" was the topic and the focus in August

was "So What's the GSR Thng, Anyway?"

Following the success of these workshops two more are already planned for next year.

If you have any ideas for a workshop you'd like contact our DCM, Wilder R. at 910-639-0000

IMPORTANT DATES **to** **REMEMBER**

UNITY DAY

Sept. 14th
Aberdeen Building

District 52 **Business Meetings**

October 6th
December 1st
Aberdeen Building

Fall Area Assembly

November 15-17
Raleigh Hilton

Sandhills Intergroup

A central office established to aid all the groups and meetings in Moore County in the common purpose of carrying the AA message to the alcoholic who still suffers.

We are funded solely by the AA groups in our county and we need and ask for your input.

- 1) 24 hr. Answering Serv.
- 2) A Website
- 3) Moore Co. Meeting List
- 4) Publish a Newsletter
- 5) P. I. Committee

Published & distributed by

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Southern Pines, NC 28388
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