



Illinois Area 21

District 12

Alcoholics Anonymous

NEWSLETTER

June, 2013

www.aa-eci.org

SO THAT'S A SPIRITUAL EXPERIENCE!

Not always a flash of light, but being capable of doing what we couldn't do before.

I can remember, early in my sobriety, feeling depressed because I had not had a spiritual experience. I was sure that I alone had not undergone a sudden change of heart.

This impression came from listening to some other members describe their spiritual awakenings. They described them simply and honestly. There had been, they said, no flashing lights, no burning bushes. But there had been a moment when they experienced total surrender, a sudden change of attitude. It was, they said, an experience that immediately changed their lives.

I assumed (erroneously, I later found) that all AA members had undergone a similar experience. I was sure that those who did not speak of their moment of truth were too modest to describe it. And I was also sure that I was the only one, even among the new members, who had not experienced an instantaneous change.

I believed that my entry into AA had been different. I had come in reluctantly, and had stayed reluctant for as long as possible. Only gradually, over a period of months, did I realize that I had no place else to go. There was never any sudden, joyful acceptance of recovery. There was, instead, a gradual, sad admission that I could choose AA or die. Not what I would have called a "spiritual" experience.

Fortunately, there was a small group of us who were all new to the program and very close. It was among them that I made a series of discoveries.

First, I discovered that I was not alone. All of us agreed that, whatever a spiritual experience might be, we certainly hadn't had one. We had all been waiting for it to happen, and by now, most of us were convinced that it probably never would. We were different. Unlike the older members, we had been too "sinful" in the past and were too secular in the present to be worthy of anything "spiritual."

Our second discovery was more exciting. We discovered that most of the other members had not undergone an instantaneous change, either. We learned, by listening at meetings and talking to our sponsors, that the majority of those we admired had undergone, like us, a gradual change. We still didn't know what a spiritual experience was, and we were still pretty sure that we hadn't undergone one

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<i>District 12 Officers and Committee Chairs</i>	
DCM	Gary S.
Alternate DCM	VACANT
Secretary	VACANT
Treasurer	Steve B.
Corrections	Mike K.
Treatment Facilities	Tim C. & Creighton
Meeting List	Mona M.
Answering Service	Sam E.
Newsletter	VACANT
Grapevine	VACANT
PI-CPC	Tom D.
Website	Rosemary T.
Archives	Doris A. & Mike W.
<i>District 12 holds its meetings on the 3rd Sunday of every month at 2pm in the Fellowship Circle Hall at 718 South Randolph, Champaign.</i>	
<i>If you would like to submit something for publication, or just send comments or questions to the Committee, please email newsletter@aa-eci.org. Deadline for submissions is the 20th of each month.</i>	

Our second discovery was more exciting. We discovered that most of the other members had not undergone an instantaneous change, either. We learned, by listening at meetings and talking to our sponsors, that the majority of those we admired had undergone, like us, a gradual change. We still didn't know what a spiritual experience was, and we were still pretty sure that we hadn't undergone one. But we had all experienced gradual change. So we weren't inferior. We were with the majority.

The third discovery was a blockbuster. One of us read Bill W.'s discussion of the Twelfth Step in *Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions*. There, he explains that there are many kinds of spiritual experience. Some are like the conversions of the great religious leaders of the past; others seem purely psychological. Some are sudden or instantaneous; others are a gradual learning experience. But all of them, whatever form they take, have one effect: They make a person capable of doing something he could not do before.

As Bill puts it, "When a man or a woman has a spiritual awakening, the most important meaning of it is that he has now become able to do, feel, and believe that which he could not do before on his unaided strength and resources alone."

For all of us, this was an important discovery. I was now capable of doing things that had been impossible for me before; I could not deny it. The obvious example was staying sober – by this time, I had been dry for several consecutive months. Before AA, several consecutive days had been impossible.

But there were other important changes, which were harder to describe. My feelings of fear and guilt were slowly being replaced by feelings of hope and self-respect. And most important, that which had been impossible before – a trust in something or Someone other than myself – had now become possible.

In other words, I had been undergoing a spiritual experience without knowing it. My confused questioning about a Higher Power, my changed mental attitude, and even my physical recovery had all been part of a

spiritual awakening. Without knowing it, I had been in contact with the source of life, whatever or Whoever that might be.

Paradoxically, the realization that even I had experienced something spiritual was in itself a spiritual experience, and I am only slowly understanding its implications. What happened in the past, without my knowledge, is probably continuing now. And in the future, when tomorrow becomes today, it can go on and on. All that is required is a desire to stop drinking, and to stay stopped.

*Ed O., York, PA
Grapevine 1977*

AA TRIVIA

May's question:

In AA, we make much use of The Serenity Prayer. The history of this prayer is long and varied, and therefore often wrongly attributed to several infamous people. So who really wrote the prayer?

Answer: D) Reinhold Niebuhr

June's Challenge:

On the top of page 3, Bill makes a comment about himself and Lois having once worked on a farm for a month. Where was that farm?

DISTRICT HIGHLIGHTS

Gary S. (DCM) reported that the old website has been shut down. A new site (with the same web address) will be up and running in a few weeks. The Newsletter and Archives committees are still looking for new chairpersons.

The Corrections Committee will hold a meeting on Wednesday evening, May 29th at 7pm at Mike K.'s house (for his address and more info email him at kirbo67@gmail.com). Cheryl E. is stepping down as Corrections co-chair, so the committee is looking for a replacement and will discuss this at the meeting.

There is a new closed meeting in Charleston that has been in existence for a little over three months. It is called Defense Against the First Drink and meets Thursdays at 7 pm at 412 14th Street.

A GSR training workshop is in the planning stages for October. For more information contact Mona Lee H. (217-343-2595).

Michael G. (Area 21 Treasurer and Tilton BBS GSR) reported that Area 21 is exploring the possibility of forming a Literature Committee. It would buy literature from GSO in bulk to save on shipping costs and sell it at cost to groups with the District. Because the Little Bookstore is closing, this would be useful here in District 12. If you're A.A. group would be interested purchasing from the Area rather than the GSO, or if you would like to work on this project, contact Michael G. (mgast2025@yahoo.com, 217-443-2642)

The Slate Committee met following the District meeting and slated the following candidates for election at the District meeting next month (June 16):

Alternate DCM: Mona Lee H.

Secretary: Erin Y.

All GSRs should attend next month's meeting in order to vote for the candidates supported by their groups.

ANNIVERSARIES

To submit an anniversary to the newsletter, please email newsletter@aa-eci.org. (Be sure to get consent!)

Mona Lee H.	April 21	46 years
Scott S.	April 28	20 years
David B.	May 5	22 years
Mike S.	May 7	1 year
Tamara K.	May 9	4 years
Linda Z.	May 12	11 years
Rich B.	May 13	5 years
Tammy M.	May 14	4 years
Pat K.	May 15	9 years
Don B.	May 18	1 year

All anniversaries are published after they have passed in the following month's newsletter.

SPEAKER MEETINGS

Sunday, June 2nd, 12pm

SWAT Group, Speaker: Jillanna M.

718 S. Randolph Street (hall), Champaign

(NOTE: This is also SWAT's quarterly potluck, please bring a dish to share)

Saturday, June 8th, 8pm

As Bill Sees It, Speaker: Amy D.

718 S. Randolph Street (hall), Champaign

Monday, June 10th, 8pm

Cellar Dwellers, Speaker: Cathy G.

602 W. Green, Urbana

Saturday, June 15th, 6:30pm

Bottoms Up, Speaker: Judy S.

Serenity Shack, 117 N. Ohio Street, Rantoul

Wednesday, June 19th, 7:30pm

Nuts and Bolts, Speaker: TBA

Camel Club, 508 E. Fairchild, Danville

Saturday, June 22nd, 6pm

Working with Others, Speaker: TBA

718 S. Randolph Street (hall), Champaign

Saturday, June 22nd, 5pm

Shoulder to Shoulder Group, Speaker: TBA

First Christian Church, 16th & Wabash, Mattoon

Monday, June 24th, 8pm

Monday Meeting, Speaker: TBA

109 E. Van Allen, Tuscola

Thursday, June 27th, 7pm

H.O.W. Group, Speaker: Lynelle L.

718 S. Randolph Street (hall), Champaign

Friday, June 28th, 8pm

Friday Night Meeting, Speaker: TBA

Madison & 7th, Charleston

Sunday, June 30th, 8pm

Grapevine Group, Speaker: Curtis T.

Prairie Center, 122 W. Hill Street, Champaign

SOBERFEST 2013

The Soberfest Organizing Committee will meet on June 8 at 7 pm at the House. Anyone interested in helping to make Soberfest happen again this year is welcome to attend!

UPCOMING EVENTS

East Central Regional Conference July 19-21

Paper Valley Radisson
Appleton, WI
333 W. College Avenue
Appleton, WI 54911
920-733-8000

Conference Room Rate \$95 plus tax

**BANQUET – ICE CREAM SOCIALS – DANCE – PANELS –
SPEAKERS – ARCHIVES – DELEGATE MEETING WITH THE EAST
CENTRAL TRUSTEE**

Conference Contacts:

Bob M.: 414-690-4991
Steve H.: 920-739-1977

Registration Fees:

Registration Only - \$27
Box Lunches - \$14
Banquet - \$22

A Message from The Little Book Store

Dear Fellow AAs,

We regret to inform you that the "The Little Book Store" is in the process of closing their service. There are several reasons for this decision: 1) the change in our life style; 2) I have knee surgery scheduled for June 12, 2013 which will limit my mobility by about 80% and time dedicated to rehabilitation; 3) less personal income to keep items in stock.

However, the process of closing the store may take a while due to the left over inventory. We hope we can encourage you to check with us before you make any purchases at or from other distributors.

We have a lot of Big Books hard and soft back and soft back large print, Daily Reflections soft back, 12 & 12 hard back, 12 & 12 pocket, As Bill Sees hard back and soft back, Came to Believe soft back, Staying Sober soft back, Experience Strength and Hope hard back, several Spanish language Big Books-The first 164 pages, and smaller quantities of other books which we will list later.

In pamphlets, we have P-1 thru P-49 and other items listed in the catalogue. In coins, we have a large selection of monthly coins along with yearly Bronze coins.

We are in the process of taking a full in house inventory and hopefully we will have it completed by the July District meeting.

Please remember to pass this information along to your groups GSR or Literature Representative. We will also send a mailing out to those whose e-mail address we do not have or has changed.

We appreciate your time and understanding! We look forward to hearing from you.

Best Regards,
TJ & Joan Lund

217-377-5840 – please leave a message if I don't answer the phone as it is very hard to get around.

N9PFC@comcast.net

Area 21 Assembly

June 9

(Hosted by District 18)

Moose Lodge, Edwardsville, IL 618-656-5051

Registration Opens at 8am

Assembly Begins at 9am

Lodging available at Red Roof Inn

Intersection of 162 and 55/70

2030 Formosa Road, Troy IL

618-667-6122 or toll-free 866-307-2222

Mention Southern Illinois Area 21 for \$71.92

rate (tax included)

Saturday Night Meeting

7:30 pm – Library Group

St. Mary's School Cafeteria

1802 Madison Ave. and Notre Dame

For more information call Becky V. 618-709-3738 or

Pat K. 619-520-4114

2013 Illinois State Conference

"Our Solution in Action"

August 23-25

(Hosted by Northern IL Area, Districts 22 & 23)

Hyatt Regency, Schaumburg, IL

1800 East Golf Road

Schaumburg, IL 60173

1-888-421-1442

Conference Room Rate \$89

Mention IL State AA Conference

<https://resweb.passkey.com/go/ILStateAA>

AA Speakers

Friday: Debra B. (Madison, WI)

Saturday: Jack G. (Huntington Beach, CA)

Sunday: Mary D. (GSO Staff)

Al-Anon Speakers

Friday: Eric S. (South Elgin, IL)

Saturday: Beverly B. (Lewisville, TX)

Alateen: Kathie R. (Elgin, IL)

ALCATHON – AL-ANON – ALATEEN – DANCE

Groups that wish to sit together must register together (8 per table).

Conference Contacts:

Larry S. 847-702-1952

Allen J. 630-830-6145

Colleen H., Al-Anon Contact 224-629-6453

Fees: AA/Al-Anon –

Conference only: \$20, Conference and Banquet: \$53

Alateen –

Conference only: \$5, Conference and Banquet: \$38

Call the conference Special Needs Chairperson at 847-271-4417
no later than 2 weeks before the conference
if an interpreter is needed.