



Illinois Area 21

District 12

# Alcoholics Anonymous

## NEWSLETTER

March, 2012

[www.aa-eci.org](http://www.aa-eci.org)

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Visit <http://www.aa-eci.org/newsletter.php>.

### The Ideal Group

we lie back and compare

Grapevine, April 1951, Vol. 7 No. 11

MANY of us who arrive at some degree of sobriety are inclined to set up in our minds an ideal picture of the AA group or movement. We roll this morsel over our tongues while we lie back and compare this perfect picture with our own group.

We think what a fine thing it would be if the meetings started on time and closed the same way. And wouldn't it be swell if the women in the group didn't gossip about each other. And while we warm up to the subject, why didn't anybody visit me or telephone while I was sick? In the Ideal Group, there would be a committee for that sort of thing. Yes, and for greeting newcomers too! It's a shame the way a new man stands around after the meeting and nobody talks to him or invites him to the Tap for coffee with the gang. And another thing--isn't it a shame that so many fine good-hearted fellows have been "kicking the Program around" lately? They certainly don't set a very good example for the newcomers when they spoil three or four years sobriety with a week's drunk. Also it's too bad that the group falls down on its pledge to Intergroup and the General Service Office. And let's do something about having some decent coffee and cake instead of the lousy doughnuts our social secretary provides. Yakkety, yakkety, blah blah blah!!!

Why don't we get wise to ourselves? What on earth do we expect? Here is a band of ex-drunks with most of their life-long habits turned inside out, most of them highly neurotic, prejudiced and egotistical, yet trying to focus a beam of light on their own character defects, trying in short, to change their lives. Trying to turn their lives and wills over to God as each one understands him. Trying, that's all.

Let's be tolerant of each other. We must expect a great deal of irrational thinking and screwy behavior. It's all part of the act. And it isn't nearly as important or serious as we imagine. The most impossible situation seldom causes any real or lasting harm to the group. The most unlikely new secretary turns out after a few weeks to be doing a fairly good job, perhaps a shade better than the last one.

We do our best to make our group grow and expand and then when it does grow, it's very size irritates us. Then we compare the big group with what it used to be when it was small and compact. Every member used to have a real and constant interest in the other members. Now the group has grown and a bunch of newcomers are in the drivers seat. Why, when we go to a meeting, we don't even know half the people present! Well, what of it? You say we don't seem to get as much out of it as we used to. Maybe we don't need as much help now. We have our sobriety now. Perhaps what we need now is to help others. Are we doing it? Are we attending open and closed meetings regularly? How few of us after three or four years of sobriety are putting one tenth as much into AA as we did at first. It shouldn't be necessary to repeat that we get out of AA just what we put into it, but we forget it. So basically the fault lies in the very people who are the most critical. They are the ones who are unconsciously hurting the morale of the group with their constant criticism and their inconstant attendance at meetings, their feeble help to others.

Let's forget this Ideal Group and get back with our own group, first attending the meetings, second, speaking when asked, third, doing 12th Step work. If we hope to see the meetings start on time, let's set an example by being there on time. If we dislike gossip, let's avoid it like the plague ourselves. If we like to be visited when sick, let's keep a list of the sick in our group and do a little calling and visiting ourselves. And so on down the list.

*Continued on page 2*

All any of us can do is to try to be the sort of a member we would expect to find in the Ideal Group, shaking hands with the newcomer and introducing him around, speaking at other groups, making our own group a pleasure and our own lives a little more perfect.

C.C., from Bronxville, New York

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## LUCKY 8

### District 12 Officers and Committee Chairs

DCM	John C.
Alternate DCM	Melanie G.
Secretary	Kate M.
Treasurer	Steve B.
Corrections	Jay S.
Treatment Facilities	Bill B.
Meeting List	Mona M.
Answering Service	Scott S.
Newsletter	Tammy M.
Grapevine	Andy C.
PI-CPC	Linda B.
Website	Joe P.
Archives	Doris A.

*District 12 holds its meetings on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of every month at 2pm in the Fellowship Circle Hall at 718 South Randolph, Champaign.*

*If you would like to submit something for publication, or just send comments or questions to the Committee, please email [newsletter@aa-eci.org](mailto:newsletter@aa-eci.org).*

*Deadline for submissions is the 20<sup>th</sup> of each month.*

I am adding some fantasy to a realistic setting. Sitting in an Alcoholics Anonymous meeting that I regularly attend, made up of 7 regular members that work together as a group to each share duties in the work that it takes to have a meeting on a regular basis. Mutual respect has been gained and friendship is extensive. Our common goal is keep one another sober and to carry the message to other alcoholics that suffer. A new person comes in and sits at the table at the beginning of the meeting.

I am thinking of how and if, to communicate with this person. By saying the wrong things could possibly offend him and he will never come back to another AA meeting in his life and possibly drink himself to death, or I could have something to share with him from my own experience that attracts him to continue to try the way of AA and see him develop into a clean and mature man that fits into society, contributing and developing in a manner that others never would think possible.

According to Myers-Briggs, I am an ESTJ \*. (Focused externally, deal with things rationally and logically). I see a man dressed in ragged yet clean clothes; his eyes are blood-shot, his hands trembling as if he hasn't had a drink in awhile, but needs one. I look for a sign of any kind of smile or gleam of gratitude that he is content about where he is. What brought him to us? Why would he want to stay?

The meeting begins with a reading about *HOW it WORKS*. Beginning with the words of "Rarely have we seen a person fail that has thoroughly followed our path... I see a gleam in his eye, or perhaps a glimmer of hope that indicates that he is desperate to find a pathway to a better life. What is his motive to coming to our meeting? I wonder, as other group members do, if sharing our stories of our defeat and agony from our past is worth it. I look desperately for signs all through the meeting, as to how to approach this man after the meeting. What style of communication is going to speak to him? I didn't see him show any signs of disbelief when we read about "turning our lives over to the care of God". He seemed fascinated when a fellow member shared about how his life used to be as a drunk and how he found this meeting and that by following the simple program, and now his life is tremendously better, which continues to look bright. (Hope)

After the meeting we all took turns talking to the man and he agreed to keep coming back. As I observed the communication of each man toward the new-comer, I found that he had a scientific form of looking at things. From then on I tried to communicate to him in a fashion that was more explanatory, using symbolic terms being relatively simple

about a spiritual program that not only turns our life but our will over to God that we can not see. The group membership has now grown to 8.

by Jeff R.

### WHY AREN'T YOU WRITING?



*Everyone knows that AA harbors some of the most intelligent and talented people on earth! We know that writers abound in the rooms. So why not show off your stuff? The Newsletter Committee is always looking for fresh ideas, stories, and articles to print. If you've always dreamed of being published,*

*why not begin with your District Newsletter? To submit a piece for review, send an email to [newsletter@aa-eci.org](mailto:newsletter@aa-eci.org).*

### AA TRIVIA

*From February:*

What was Dr. Bob's sobriety date?

*Answer:* June 10th, 1935 (Big Book, 4th ed., page 180)

*March's Challenge:*

Who is "Alcoholics Anonymous Number Three"?

## DISTRICT 12 MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

The Civic Center in Urbana has been secured for the June 2012 Area Assembly by the committee. There will be a speaker at the Saturday 8pm meeting on June 16<sup>th</sup> to kick off the Assembly which will be held June 17<sup>th</sup>. Registration will start at 7:30am and the Assembly will be 9am – 3pm. To be involved with the committee contact John C. at 217-721-7929 or johnc@dndcillinois.com.

GSRs and District 12 AA members are encouraged to attend the March Area Assembly. (See the EVENT on the back)

Corrections – there is a need for women especially for the 4<sup>th</sup> Monday. Women meet at the downtown location at 7pm on Mondays. Men meet at the satellite location only now at 7pm on Tuesdays. There are also opportunities in Danville. Contact Jay S. at 217-417-6837.

Treatment Facilities – there are still openings to fill. Contact Rodney R. for the Prairie Center meetings at 217-898-7012 and Bill B. for the Pavillion meetings at 217-621-9269.

Meeting Lists – note: meetings must be in existence for 6 months to be added to the meeting list.

Archives – looking for committee members. Contact Doris A. at 217-714-4425 or [dorisandrechak@yahoo.com](mailto:dorisandrechak@yahoo.com).

**EXTRA EVENTS** (not enough room on back)

**ISCYPAA** is having a conference **March 9 - 11, 2012** at the Holiday Inn in **Rock Island, IL**. Members from District 12 will be putting in a bid to have the conference here next year. For more info and registration Chris R. 563-505-6475 or James Y. 309-373-3396 or go to <http://iscypaa.org/docs/registrationflyer.pdf>

**2012 GSR (General Service Representative) School** sponsored by Southern Illinois Area 21. Saturday, April 14 10am – 2pm. Location is Ansar Temple, 630 South Sixth St., Springfield, IL. Registration for GSR School is free. Please call ahead to register. Becky B. at 309-319-0839 .

## IN MEMORIAM

**Fred R.** passed away Friday, February 17<sup>th</sup> of lung cancer at 71 years of age. He came to Taylorville in the mid 1990's, selling advertising in a real estate publication. He then joined the former Christian County Journal shopper, and later became the president and C-E-O of the Greater Taylorville Chamber of Commerce, a position which he held for some 10 years.

Fred recently was presented with an award for 26 years of sobriety from an organization he was a long-time member of, Alcoholics Anonymous. He was serving as Area 21's Treasurer. He was also a member and publicity co-chair of the Taylorville Kiwanis Club, and a member of the Ansar Shrine of Springfield.

## ANNIVERSARIES

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

Laura F.	February 11	3 years
John Q.	February 18	12 years
Tony B.	February 20	4 years

*Missed anniversary from February edition:*

Eugene	January 25th	20 years
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## SPEAKER MEETINGS

*Sunday March 4th, 12pm noon*

S.W.A.T., Potluck and Speaker: Ray from Chicago  
718 S. Randolph Street (hall), Champaign

*Saturday, March 10th, 8pm*

As Bill Sees It, Speaker: Matthew J.  
718 S. Randolph Street (hall), Champaign

*Monday, March 12th, 8pm*

Cellar Dwellers, Speaker: TBA  
602 W. Green Street, Urbana

*Saturday, March 17th, 6:30pm*

Bottoms Up, Speaker: Sharon K.  
Serenity Shack, 117 N. Ohio Street, Rantoul

*Tuesday, March 20th, 8pm*

Tolono Closed Group, (Open) Speaker: Shawn W.  
104 E. Vine Street, Tolono

*Wednesday, March 21st, 7:30pm*

Nuts and Bolts, Speaker: TBA  
Camel Club, 508 E. Fairchild, Danville

*Thursday, March 22nd, 7pm*

H.O.W. Group, Speaker: TBA  
718 S. Randolph Street (hall), Champaign

*Saturday, March 24th, 6pm*

Working with Others, Speaker: TBA  
718 S. Randolph Street (hall), Champaign

*Sunday, March 25th, 8pm*

Grapevine Group, Speaker: Andy C.  
Prairie Center, 122 West Hill Street, Champaign

*Monday, March 26th, 8pm*

Monday Meeting, Speaker: TBA  
109 E. Van Allen, Tuscola

*Friday, March 30th, 8pm*

Friday Night Meeting, Speaker: TBA  
Madison & 7th Avenues, Charleston

## UPCOMING EVENTS

**Southern Illinois Area 21  
March 2012 Area Assembly  
March 11**

Hosted by District 7  
**MT. VERNON HOLIDAY INN**  
**222 POTOMAC BOULEVARD**  
**(I-57 & IL Rt. 15)**  
**MT. VERNON, IL 62864**  
Rooms: \$79.00 + tax  
618-244-7100

Registration begins @ 7:30 a.m.  
Assembly meeting begins @ 9 a.m.  
Registration + Lunch: \$15.00

**Saturday Night Speaker Meeting  
@ 8 p.m.**

**Primary Purpose Group**

Prince of Peace Lutheran Church  
3205 Broadway  
(32nd & Broadway)  
Mt. Vernon, IL 62864

**For More Information Contact Mike O.  
618-315-7661**

**Announcing Saturday Night AA Fun**

Sponsored by Sunday Manhattan Group

WHAT: Board and Card Games

WHEN: First & Third Saturdays of each month Starting at 6pm,  
lasting as late as we stay

WHAT ELSE: Movies

WHEN: Second, Fourth & Fifth Saturday

WHERE: Terry M's House in Urbana at 2108 E. Pennsylvania Ave.  
(East of Philo Road between Florida & Washington, off Kinch)

QUESTIONS: Call Terry at 384-1852 or email her at  
[tsmoreau@comcast.net](mailto:tsmoreau@comcast.net)

HOW: Show up or Get on call/email list to be notified of what's  
showing (Contact Terry)

**Great River Roundup 2012  
Friday, March 2 – Saturday, March 3**

**PERE MARQUETTE LODGE & CONFERENCE CENTER**  
**ROUTE 100, GRAFTON IL 62037**

*Room Reservations:* 618-786-2331

**EVENTS INCLUDE 4 SPEAKER MEETINGS, STICK  
MEETING, RED BALL MEETING, BANQUET AND DANCE**

*Roundup Registration:*

All events (including all meetings, banquet &  
dance): \$40 per person

Conference events only: \$20 per person

Dance only: \$5 per person; \$8 per couple

Banquet seating is assigned and limited to  
300, so advanced registration is strongly  
suggested.

Send registration information (name, address,  
zip) and check payment to:

Great River Roundup  
P.O. Box 522, Wood River, IL 62095

**FOR MORE INFORMATION ON SPECIFIC CONFERENCE  
EVENTS AND OTHER LODGING IN  
THE AREA CONTACT:**



**BRUCE 618-304-5273**

**DON 618-910-2248**

**JOHN 618-931-0159**

**KIM 618-917-6719**

**ROUNDUP!!**