

Illinois Area 21

District 12



Alcoholics Anonymous NEWSLETTER

May 2014

www.aa-eci.org/newsletter

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Newsletter Staff

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CALENDAR Sarah H.
DISTRICT
NOTES Rosemary T.
EVENTS Sarah H.
DISTRIBUTION Bonnie

A NEW FREEDOM

Moving to Arizona from the bitterly cold Midwest is not as easy as it seems. I have endured icy Northern winters with their brutally cold temperatures and sweltering humid summers. This is where I drank and, thank God, received the gift of sobriety. The Southwest Sonoran desert is inviting when on vacation. The exotic palm trees and mysterious cacti flaunt their charms and I was entranced. My partner and I have left Chicago and are now enjoying ourselves year-round in Phoenix. Talk about new beginnings!

Surprisingly, our first day in Phoenix, July 1, 2013, sizzled at 119 degrees. Even though extra hands were hired to unpack the temperature-controlled moving van, I pitched in. Unwilling to spend yet more money on renting just a loading ramp, I thought, "how hard can it be to pick up a few boxes from the truck bed and place them on the sidewalk? I'll be a human ramp". This is truly alcoholic thinking. Heat exhaustion nearly did me in that day. When a new neighbor asked my former city of residence, I couldn't even pull up "Oak Park" from my addled, sun-fried brain. Fortunately after gallons of water and liberal air-conditioning, I revived.

Finding new AA meetings has been an adventure. From years of Chicago area meetings, I had become comfortable with a familiar routine and didn't think much about the short walk or drive to a nearby church meeting or club. I quickly formed my "opinion" that Phoenix AA meetings were different. Long drives, scattered locations, unfocused attentions, interrupted endings, open-meeting status, new faces, coming out (yet again) and worrying about reactions; new everything! All was different. Where was my familiar AA where everything was comfortable? And yet, something inside me remained connected to the thought: I have to change. What was true at the end of my drinking remains true to this day. My best thoughts in the old days got me drunk. I was hard-wired to drink; it was my default setting. Feeling scared - drink. Feeling happy or shameful - drink.

It wasn't until October, when finally in a Tuesday evening AA meeting that I knew for sure I was "home". The secure feelings washed over me that I had finally arrived safely to Phoenix AA. Someone much wiser than me mentioned upon my departure from Illinois that it might take my soul longer to make the journey than my body. He was right. The solid bedrock foundation of AA is everywhere I look. Much like the beauty of the desert, all I have to do is stay still long enough to see it. My addiction doesn't like to sit still. There is always another diversion to try. Sweet foods are a problem for me and I am aware of a pattern of switching addictions, only if I stop and listen. And absolutely resolve to fact that surrendering my will is the key to health and happiness.

District 12 Officers and Committee Chairs

DCM	Gary S. (dcm@aa-eci.org)
Alternate DCM	Mona Lee H.
Secretary	Steph M. (secretary@aa-eci.org)
Treasurer	Steve B. (treasurer@aa-eci.org)
Corrections	Mike K.
Treatment Facilities	Don D. & Joe M.
Meeting List	Liza W. & Mona M. (meeting-list@aa-eci.org)
Answering Service	Randy G. (answering-service@aa-eci.org)
Newsletter	VACANT (newsletter@aa-eci.org)
Grapevine	Mark G. (grapevine@aa-eci.org)
PI-CPC	Tom D. (picpc@aa-eci.org)
Website	Rosemary T. (webmaster@aa-eci.org)
Archives	Mike W.

District 12 holds its meetings on the 3rd 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. Deadline for submissions is the 20th of each month.

Step 11 is my challenge today. If I sit still long enough with my higher power, asking for his will for me and the power to carry it out, a new perspective washes over me. And a new freedom. Yet I resist sitting quietly by myself, almost as if a man dying of thirst will resist a glass of water. My addiction speaks so loudly that I sometimes might still believe it knows what it's talking about. An AA meeting usually clears these thoughts from my brain and resets the inner compass to True North. Recovery. 34 years sober and yet, I'm still one drink away from a drunk just like any other recovering alcoholic trudging the road to happy destiny.

~Stephen H., Phoenix, AZ

(reprinted from "The Filing Cabinet" Scottsdale, AZ newsletter Volume 24, Issue 2, February 2014)

**LOCAL AREA MEETINGS:
CHANGES AND NEWS**

New Meeting - 'A Vision For You':
Closed meeting
Meets on Monday evenings at 6:30pm
Room 402, Windsor Road Christian Church
2501 Windsor Road, Champaign

Thursday Night Step Study:
Open meeting
Rachel H. will be giving the lead through the 12 steps May 1, 2014 through July 17th, 2014
Meets on Thursday evenings at 8pm
805 S. 6th Street, Champaign (Community UCC Church)

Wednesday Night Step Study:

Now meeting at 7pm!
Also, the group will be working the steps via listening to and discussing the Scott R. speaker tapes, beginning May 7th!
Meets on Wednesday evenings, Good Shepherd Lutheran Church, 2101 S. Prospect Avenue (Devonshire & Prospect)

BIG BOOK TRIVIA

April's question:
On page 163, 3rd paragraph, who was the "Chief Psychiatrist of a large public hospital?"

Answer:
Dr. Russel E. Blaisdell, Rockland State Hospital near Orangeburg, New York

May's Challenge:
On page XXIX, 3rd paragraph, who "had hidden in a deserted barn determined to die?"

ANNIVERSARIES

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

Sarah H.	8 years	April 7
Rachel H.	2 years	April 12
John P.	20 years	April 12
Randy G.	1 year	April 14
Sherri G.	5 years	April 19
Caroline	1 year	April 24
Gary S.	5 years	April 27

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

DISTRICT HIGHLIGHTS

A motion was made and accepted that District 12 will move locations with Fellowship Circle when the new site is ready. Gary S. (DCM) described the new location as including: three entrances that will be handicap accommodated which lead directly to meeting rooms; plenty of parking; and a kitchen. Gary S. (DCM) will keep GSR's updated via email as to timing of the move and other pertinent information. The exact timing of the move has not yet been settled. GSR's can also call Gary at (217)384-1732.

Some GSR's expressed concern that they were not receiving district communications / updates via email Gary S. reaffirmed that he is available at (217) 384-1732.

Katrina will be the new District Secretary, as Steph B. resigned due to new professional responsibilities. Steph was applauded for her excellent work.

Committee News:

Meeting List - Liza W. The meeting list was updated and circulated in April. As the committee receives information on meeting time / content changes, they are posted immediately on the web. The web is the most up to date version of meeting information. Information on meeting changes can be sent to meeting-list@aa-eci.org

Website - Linda Z (for Rosemary) reported an increase in website traffic; and noted there are many interesting links / information on the website (aa-eci.org). Information to be updated can be sent to webmaster@aa-eci.org.

Answering Service - Randy G. - Anyone wanting to volunteer (or have their name taken off the list) can contact him directly or at answering-service@aa-eci.org.

Newsletter - Sarah H (for Rosemary) The committee chair is still vacant. The May newsletter included a new section "Local Area Meetings: Changes and News". Two methods to insure the names for monthly speakers are included in the newsletter are (1) to have someone designated from your group tell or write sarah h at beewrites@gmail.com by the 26th of the month or send the information via webmaster@aa-eci.org. Also, the newsletter is always looking for story contributions. Should you have an interest in being part of a series "How I Came To Believe" talk to or write to sarah H.

Group News:

The GSR training originally scheduled for May 31st (Shoulder to Shoulder) has been canceled.

The Danville meeting at the Salvation Army has a small but very solid core home group; their next book discussion series is "Living Sober".

The Manhattan Meeting (Sunday nights, 8 pm, Urbana) changes service positions annually; the next change is in July.

Loony Tunes (Saturday mornings, 9 am, Urbana) is holding its annual pancake breakfast on Saturday May 10 - breakfast starts at 8; speaker meeting at 9 am.

The Noonbird Meeting is still considering where it will meet.

SPEAKER MEETINGS

Sunday, May 4th, 12pm

SWAT, Speaker: Mike S.

718 S. Randolph Street (hall), Champaign

Saturday, May 10th, 8pm

As Bill Sees It, Speaker: TBA

718 S. Randolph Street (hall), Champaign

Saturday, May 10th, 10am

Attitude of Gratitude, Speaker: TBA

2055 E. Harrison, Charleston

Monday, May 12th, 8pm

Cellar Dwellers, Speaker: Caroline

602 W. Green, Urbana

Wednesday, May 14th, 7:30pm

Nuts and Bolts, Speaker: TBA

Camel Club, 508 E. Fairchild, Danville

Saturday, May 17th, 6:30pm

Bottoms Up, Speaker: Bill B.

Serenity Shack, 117 N. Ohio Street, Rantoul

Saturday, May 24th, 6pm

Working with Others, Speaker: TBA

718 S. Randolph Street (hall), Champaign

**location to be announced*

Sunday, May 25th, 8pm

Grapevine Group, Speaker: TBA

Prairie Center, 122 W. Hill Street, Champaign

Monday, May 26th, 8pm

Monday Meeting, Speaker: TBA

109 E. Van Allen, Tuscola

Thursday, May 29th, 7pm

HOW Group, Speaker: TBA

718 S. Randolph Street (hall), Champaign

Thursday, May 29th, 7pm

Our Common Journey, Speaker: Everett I.

Common Grounds, 1612 Charleston, Mattoon

**Please bring a snack to share after the speaker*

Friday, May 30th, 8pm

Friday Night Meeting, Speaker: TBA

Madison & 7th, Charleston

Saturday, May 31st, 5pm

Shoulder to Shoulder, Speaker: Penny R.

First Christian Church, Mattoon

UPCOMING EVENTS & NOTICES

LOONEY TUNES ANNIVERSARY BREAKFAST

May 10

*Breakfast at 8am, meeting at 9am
Come join us!*

Unity Church - 1206 E. Main Street, Urbana

WWW.AA.ORG

Have YOU ever checked out the official AA website?

There are lots of interesting materials to read and explore on the alcoholics anonymous website [<http://www.aa.org>]

among the documents available are:

* 'the 'daily reflections' at

<http://www.aa.org/lang/en/aareflections.cfm>

* the entire 'big book' (4th edition) at

<http://www.aa.org/bigbookonline/>

* the AA service Manual combined with Twelve Concepts for World Service by Bill W. at

http://www.aa.org/pdf/products/en_bm-31.pdf

30TH ANNUAL RANTOUL AREA AA CAMPOUT May 30 – June 1

*Middlefork River Forest Preserve
Burr Oak Group Area*

Great Fun and Fellowship for the entire family

Friday May 30th

3 – 6pm: Set up camp and fellowship

6pm: Grilled Chicken Potluck (meat, drinks & table service provided)

8pm: Open campfire meeting

Saturday May 31st

All Day: Fun, fellowship, volleyball, fishing, biking, swimming, relaxation

11am: Kids activities

4 pm: CODA meeting

5pm: Barbecued Pork & Beef Potluck (meet, drinks & table service provided)

6pm: Al-Anon meeting

Evening: Campfire Music

8pm: Open campfire meeting

Sunday June 1st

10am: Open AA Speaker meeting (TBA)

12-2pm: Clean up & depart

\$3 per person, over the age of 16, per night

For more information contact:
Don R. (217) 637-0119
Bill B. (217) 621-9269

CELEBRATING YOUR SOBRIETY

AA anniversaries are special birthdays. A neat way to 'extend a thanks' is to make a contribution to the General Service Office.

Contributions support GSO's services to members and groups throughout Canada and the US, and help insure that the AA message is carried around the world.

Some members contribute per year of sobriety; some per day of sobriety.

You can make your 'birthday celebration' contribution online at www.aa.org, by clicking on 'AA member contributions' or ask your GSR for an envelope!

To read how 'the birthday plan' got started back in 1954, go to:

http://www.aa.org/en_pdfs/en_box459_june61.pdf

ILLINOIS AREA 21 ASSEMBLY hosted by Springfield District 19 June 8

*Ansar Shrine Center
630 South 6th Street
Springfield, IL*

Registration: 7:30am
Program: 9:00am

Costs: Assembly \$6.00 Luncheon \$10.00

Pre-Assembly Event: Ansar Shrine Center June 7, 2014
Saturday Night: Potluck, 6:30pm - Speaker, 7:30pm

Lodging:

Route 66 Hotel - St. Joseph & South 6th Street
217-529-6626

Please mention "SIA 21" when making reservations for a rate of \$59.00 + tax

For additional information contact: Leo S. 217-652-8370
or Gary W 217-553-9737