

# District 12 Area 21 Newsletter

## November 2015

### INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

Big Book Trivia	2
History of Young People in A.A.	2
Irma L	3
Chruch?	4
Announcements	5
District Summary	5 6

## Disruptive Behavior

*The following is correspondence from GSO concerning disruptive behavior.*

Tradition One (Long Form) in Alcoholics Anonymous' Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions: "Each member of Alcoholics Anonymous is but a small part of a great whole. A.A. must continue to live or most of us will surely die. Hence our common welfare comes first. But individual welfare follows close afterward"

The first consideration is the good of the Fellowship and its survival. While each member has the freedom to work the program as he or she chooses, it does not come at the expense of the AA group. If a member's actions are disruptive or dangerous, the AA group needs to protect itself. If it doesn't, the meeting may fold, and

everyone will lose the opportunity for recovery. How a meeting protects itself can cause conflict and controversy. Each situation is unique and should be evaluated individually. Discussing it at your group conscience meeting will help. If possible, begin informally on a one-to-one level. One member of the meeting may approach the disruptive individual to discuss the problem and look for solutions. Let the Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions guide you, always striving to place principles before personalities and to treat others with kindness, patience, tolerance and love. A person is welcome at our meetings, but his or her disruptive behavior is not. Remember, we are dealing with sick behavior. You might need

to ask yourself how you would treat a sick person in this situation. You may need to approach the disruptive person by phone. However you decide to approach the disruptive person, it is often helpful to have another member present to ensure your own safety. If a one-to-one approach is not possible, it may be necessary to hold a group conscience with the whole meeting or to form a steering committee. Be sure to provide an equal hearing for all. Ask everyone to pray for God's will and to come to the meeting with healthy, tolerant and supportive attitudes. Blame and accusations help no one. The meeting may decide that this individual should be asked to leave for the good of the group.

*Continued on page 4*

## Young In Sobriety: A Dream Coming True

From Anonymous.

I've always dreamt of living a "normal" life growing up in my teens. Drinking at a very young age prevented me from a lot of opportunities in life. My mindset was that the police, and world was out to get me before entering the Fellowship of A.A. I had the desire to stay out of prison, however reservations were deep down that one day, I could successfully limit and control

my alcohol without any consequences. As time went by, these reservations slowly faded along with the obsession being lifted. The temptation can occur at times, as my disease can attempt to catch me off guard. My tools offered by A.A. taught me to divert any self-made reservations from thoughts and cravings.

At a young age, learning to reach new spiritual heights through meditation and practicing spiritual princi-

ples is occurring in my life. Instantly going from atheist, to agnostic, and now having faith for a Higher Power plays greatly into all affairs. Prayer and constant self examination of daily and nightly inventories is incorporated into daily activities, as life or death is my mindset I developed about my disease. Rather than just survival out in the streets from old behaviors and thinking. All the suggestions offered from old-timers are becoming engrained into my head. *Continued on page 2*

The word Sponsorship first appeared in A.A. in Cleveland about 1944

The word is believed to have been first used by Clarence S. (Home Brew-miester in the First, Second and Third Editions). The first pamphlet using the word Sponsorship was printed in Cleveland in 1944 although a in 1940 Little Rock printed a detailed pamphlet describing Sponsorship, but did not refer to it by

## Big Book Trivia

### October Answers:

The to the First Three Printings Forward to 4th edition page xxiv "Fundamentally, though, the difference between an electronic meeting and the home group around the corner is only one of format."

**Extra Credit:** After further discussion this was deleted nothing replacement it.

### November Question:

At the World Conference in July 2015 a Big Book was presented. This was XXX number Big Book ever printed?

**Extra Credit:** What is the average number of Big Book that are printed per year?

**Did you know?** In the 1938 Websters Unabridged Dictionary the word Sponsor was defined as: One who bides himself to an-

swer for another and is responsible for his default, a surety. The alternate definition was a Godparent.

By 2000 this had a third alternative: A business that assumes the cost for a radio or television show to promote their product. A very dramatic cheapening of the word. From an Honor... to just another sales pitch. As in "Now a word from our sponsor."

When I left rehab and followed a suggestion of 90 meetings in 90 days, I have found myself developing better emotional sobriety. Even to this day, my commitment to meetings is still heavy as being apart of the Fellowship is vital to my recovery. The passing of a recent friend from alcoholism has played part towards my spiritual awakening, seeing as this person did not make it past 17 years of age. That one drink leading to that one funeral is reminded from time to time. My mentality about life has greatly changed, due to a personality shift from working the steps and traditions with a sponsor.

Being introduced to service work after finding a home group, and also becoming

involved with ISCYPAA (Illinois State Conference of Young People in A.A.) is helping me slowly break out of my shell of darkness. These people involved within the group, along with many others in A.A. have been teaching me how to get out of myself by sticking their necks out for me. The activities ISCYPAA offers teaches me unity within the fellowship. Being around others who encourage me to participate in the dances, fun and games are inspirations to continue staying sober. There is a chance to meet other alcoholics nationwide, and a chance for A.A. is spread across the United States. For the first time ever I am learning to enjoy

these fun activities sober, which keeps my sobriety "fresh." Money that is raised in these events are recycled, under the 7th tradition to continue such fun filled events. Along with the fact to meet alcoholics nationwide and expand friendships within the Fellowship. The symptoms of the disease WILL NOT discriminate on how old or young anybody is. Once the disease is full on, I am living in another dimension of pain, agony, and misery. ISCYPAA and the Fellowship of A.A. as a whole is preparing myself as a younger member to be the next generation of what A.A. can potentially be, only if my sobriety is continued, one day at a time.

## Brief History of Young Peoples Groups

This first Young Peoples Group began in the early 1940's in Cleveland Ohio. At the time the definition of a Young Person was anyone under the age of 40. With World War II coming to a close Bill realized that A.A. needed to be ready for the returning soldiers. From his own experiences after returning from World War I and almost immediately slipping into chronic alcoholism he knew first

Hand what to expect. New York and Los Angles both being significant young people meetings and from there they began spring up through the US and Canada. When A.A. first started it's bi-annual surveys in 1968 young people comprised approximately 4% if all A.A. membership. Between 1974 and 1976 the number of Young People in A.A. jumped to 10% and the definition of Young People was dropped to under

age 30. A review of the 2014 A.A. Membership showed that 1% of A.A. membership is under 21 and 11% are under 30. Many in A.A. talk about drinking alcoholically well before the age of 21 and resent research is showing that the average age for the onset of alcohol dependency is under the age of 25. [Pediatrics](#). 2006 Sep;118(3):e755-63.

## The Story of Irma L:

Irma L. was one of the first women members of A.A. in the Los Angeles area. There are numerous urban legends floating around concerning Irma being kicked out of A.A. All of which seem to end tragically with Irma dying drunk or committing suicide on December 8, 1941 after receiving a letter that stated. *"At a meeting of the Executive Committee of the Los Angeles Group of Alcoholics Anonymous, held Dec. 4th, 1941, it was decided that your attendance at group meetings was no longer desired until certain explanations and plans for the future were made to the satisfaction of this committee. This action has been taken for reasons which should be most apparent to yourself."*

It is important to note that in 1941 Los Angeles the A.A. meeting was a family meeting. The pre meeting family get together and then the men (and later co-ed alcoholics) splitting off to a different room to have the A.A. meetings. This routine was such a ritual that when the first woman alcoholic (Sybil C.) in Los Angeles showed up to her first meeting she was pushed into the room with the wives. During the next week the truth was brought to light and she was welcomed into her first A.A. meetings, with the men. Women in A.A. was a sore spot for many early A.A. wives. Akron, Cleveland and New York all had had problems. Little Rock Arkansas had a specific rule, NO WOMAN.

Irma was married at 27, divorced by age 30 and had been a patient at the Stockton State Hospital in 1940 at age 33. It appears shortly after her release she found the newly formed A.A. Sybil C. her sponsor talked about how she progressed very quickly. She found a job (and not at 10 cent a dance joint as were her previous jobs). Found an apartment of her own, started to dress nice and was, although not very lady like, talkative at meetings. Things were going well.

The letter came as much of a shock to Sybil as it did to Irma. Although no formal explanation was given to better define *"reasons which should be most apparent to yourself"* the consensus is that the wives did not want a 34 year old divorcee around their husbands and mistook her behavior for flirting.

The letter did provide Irma the opportunity to defend her actions. There is no record of a response from Irma.

Irma's story takes three paths. One urban legend tells of Irma jumping to her death from the roof of her apartment the day after Pearl Harbor in a blacked out Los Angeles on December 8, 1941. The second story presented by her sponsor Sybil C states that Irma never went back to A.A. and died drunk. Research done by a former Central Southern Area 9 Archivist leads to a less grim story.

California marriage records show that Irma remarried, bought a house and passed away with no recorded next of kin in 1974 at age 67 of heart failure.

There is no record of Irma ever attending another A.A. meeting.

Irma's sponsor wrote to Bill and informed him of everything that had unfolded. It has to be remembered that this was 1941 more than a decade before A.A. formally accepted the Traditions and years before work was even begun on the Traditions. Irma's story is but one of countless many. As history has shown she did not die drunk. How many of those that were turned away or booted out from A.A. in the early days were not so lucky. Today there are great processes and procedures in place to assure that no one is randomly asked to leave.

### Young People in A. A. From the History of A.A. in South Eastern New York (New York City Area)

#### YOUNG PEOPLE IN ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS

South Eastern New York's (SENY's) history of younger AA members extends back to the pioneering days of Alcoholics Anonymous. The first AA groups specifically intended for young sober alcoholics were named "thirty-five and under groups," and first appeared in the AA directory in 1947. Currently these groups are referred to as "young people's groups." The term "young" has taken on a broader meaning so as not to exclude those aged above thirty-five from attending the meetings. Today, "young" is defined as "young at heart" or "room to grow." At present, there are Young People's groups meeting every day of the week in Manhattan alone. Young People's groups are also in the other four boroughs of New York City and scattered throughout SENY. These meetings can be easily found in local AA directories.

**Have you ever wondered what happened to the Four Absolutes and why they seemed to have disappeared from A.A. This is from the November 1943 Cleveland Central Bulletin**

#### THE FOUR ABSOLUTES

Some one raised the question of why the **F**our Absolutes are not in the book "Alcoholics Anonymous." We referred the question to AA's founder in Sew York. He replied: "The Four Absolutes never did appear in any printing of the book. They were left out because they are expressed or implied in the Twelve Steps."

**Disruptive Behavior Continued from Page 1.**

If the disruption is significant, it may be necessary to state clear consequences, including registering a formal complaint with the police. Our Tradition of anonymity should not be used to cover up unsafe behavior of any kind. A chairperson or any other member can interrupt a disruptive person's share or outburst by calling for a five-minute break and using the Serenity Prayer to address the disruption and refocus the meeting. If the behavior occurs before the meeting in the room the disruptive member could be asked not to stay for the meeting. If the behavior is subtle and primarily attention seeking, take the person aside, listen to his or her concerns and ask how you can help. Share some of your own experience on how you got well, so the person may identify and find his or her own solutions.

If you are considering addressing this concern below are two examples that can be added to your script.

For this group's purpose -- we desire to maintain an environment that is safe and sane and healthy and conducive to recovery. So, the group-conscience decision is: that disruptive behavior is NOT allowed in our meeting. If you cannot control your behavior -- we ask that you leave now -- before we formally start our meeting, but if we must we may ask you to leave during the meeting if you do become disruptive.

You can also use humor: "Would those who have brought sledgehammers, mobile phones, chainsaws or toddlers please maintain them in the 'off' position during the meeting?"

**Is A.A. a Church or Religion?**

This is a question that seems to be beaten into the ground and arises from the ashes to be rehashed. The most recent "rumor" is that the IRS has determined A.A. to be a religion. Despite the fact that A.A. says it is not a religion many still insist that the IRS Tax Codes have defined A.A. as a religion. A.A. is a 501 C (3) Not For Profit Fellowship. Here is the IRS Definition of a Church / Religion. A.A. does not fit this, even in a very liberally construed model A.A. simply does not meet this definition. <https://www.irs.gov/Charities-&-Non-Profits/Churches-&-Religious-Organizations/Churches--Defined>

**"Churches" Defined**

The term *church* is found, but not specifically defined, in the Internal Revenue Code. With the exception of the special rules for church audits, the use of the term *church* also includes conventions and associations of churches as well as [integrated auxiliaries](#) of a church.

Certain characteristics are generally attributed to churches. These attributes of a church have been developed by the IRS and by court decisions. They include:

- Distinct legal existence
- Recognized creed and form of worship
- Definite and distinct ecclesiastical government
- Formal code of doctrine and discipline
- Distinct religious history
- Membership not associated with any other church or denomination
- Organization of ordained ministers
- Ordained ministers selected after completing prescribed courses of study
- Literature of its own
- Established places of worship
- Regular congregations
- Regular religious services
- Sunday schools for the religious instruction of the young
- Schools for the preparation of its members

The IRS generally uses a combination of these characteristics, together with other facts and circumstances, to determine whether an organization is considered a church for federal tax purposes.

In Bill's words:

"Neither does AA exert the slightest religious authority over its members. No one is compelled to believe anything. No one is compelled to meet membership conditions. No one is obliged to pay anything. Therefore we have no system of authority, spiritual or temporal, that is comparable to or in the least competitive with the Church." (Amer. J. Psych., Vol. 106, 1949)

**EDITORS NOTE**

To drive home a point A.A. has never had to legally defend that it is or is not a religion in court, the IRS has never sued A.A. to demand that they prove that it is or is not a religion and Congress has passed no laws mandating that A.A. is a religion or that it must be governed as religion.

# Prairie Center Meetings Need Support



Prairie Center is asking for support for it A.A. Meetings.

These meetings are for many the first time they

have ever seen A.A. in action and for others provide the critical bridge between treatment and the real world waiting just outside of the treatment centers doors.

Ideally a core few would get together to insure that there are members from the A.A. community in attendance at 8:00 pm Saturday Night meeting. I remember during the 90's there were three of us that made Prairie

Center our home group which insured that there was always one person on hand to answer questions about A.A. and to keep the meeting going on topic.

So mark Saturday night 8:00 pm on your calendar and start making Prairie Center a regular stop on Saturday Night.

*To learn about service opportunities contact any District Chair or use the web sites contact page <http://aa-eci.org/contact/>*

## September District Highlights

DCM — Mona lee H. AIT-DCM — Mike G. There was discussion about moving the date of the November meeting so as not to conflict with the GSR workshop on November 14 -so it was agreed that November's meeting will be on November 22 at 2:00PM. Michael G. reported that the District's bid for an Area Assembly in 2016 had been accepted. The District now needs to have a proposal for catering by the November meeting to present at the December 2015 Assembly. Mark G. agreed to research catering options (\$8 - \$10 a head).

Treasurer-Cheri P. donations totaled \$1665, expenses totaled \$1348, leaving a working cash balance of \$826.17.

Answering Service- Antonia D. Always need more people to give rides especially outside of Champaign-Urbana area;

Archives- Mike W.NO REPORT

Corrections-Mike K. NO REPORT

Grapevine -Terry M.NO REPORT

Meeting list -liza W. NO REPORT

Newsletter-Martin B. NO REPORT

PI-CPC -Russ S NO REPORT

## Announcements

The Wednesday Night Rantoul Three Guys group has changed it name to The Love and Tolerance Group. Still meeting at 6:30 pm on Wednesday Night. They want to send out the message that they are no a Men's Only group and that all are welcome.

Mattoon is sponsoring The GSR Workshop Experience November 21, 2015 at Fist Christian Church 16th & Wa-bash Mattoon, IL from 1 pm ~ 4 PM Topics include. The importance of a group having a GSR. What is a GSR's Responsibilities. How important is it to my group and to AA as a Whole. There will be an openspeakers following the Workshop. The Speaker is Steve O. from Decatur.

Directions: Exit 190 A or B To

Mattoon Stay on 16 until your reach 16th St. Turn Left Red Doors on the Right. Rte 121 follow signs Rte 16 until 16th St. Turn Right Red Doors on the right.

The November District Meeting will be November 22 (The fourth Sunday) to allow people to attend the Regional Forum

**YOUTH TAKES A HAND**

Age is no barrier if you wish to participate in the meetings of one of the newest groups, organized in October. The group calls itself **the Young People's Group**, and it was formed by several of the younger **AAs** who felt there was a great field for them in helping others of their age to come to their senses before they had lost all. They felt that prospects would be more impressed with the success of the program if they saw a majority of people their own age (the twenties and thirties) at their first attendance at meetings.

But they stress the fact that they do not exclude "oldsters" from their meetings-in fact, they welcome any visitors from other groups, for they value and solicit their advice and suggestions.

They meet on Wednesday evenings at **8:30** in West Side Evangelical Hall, W. 38th and Bridge. The entrance is at the rear of the building on W. 38th Street.

**District 12 Meeting Reports**

- **DCM** – Mona Lee H
- **ALT-DCM** – Mike G.
- **Treasurer** – Cheri P.      Treasurer was absent.

**Committee Reports**

- **Answering Service** – Antonia D: To continue to grow lists and try to spread outside of Champaign-Urbana – especially in Mattoon;
- **Archives** – Mike W. Looking at scanning and digital storage; Local AA history stuff wanted;
- **Corrections** – Mike K. NO REPORT
- **Grapevine** – Terry M.  
Take an issue to your group;
- **Meeting List** – Liza W. Change in Area 21 address to P.O. Box 9168, Peoria, IL 61614 and change in Happy Hour address
- **Newsletter** – Martin B. NO REPORT
- **PI-CPC** – Russ S. NO REPORT

**District 12 Officers and Committee Chairs**

DCM                      Mona Lee H. ([dcm@aa-eci.org](mailto:dcm@aa-eci.org))  
 Alt. DCM                Michael G.    ([alt-dcm@aa-eci.org](mailto:alt-dcm@aa-eci.org))  
 Secretary              Katrina R. ([secretary@aa-eci.org](mailto:secretary@aa-eci.org))  
 Treasurer                Cheri P. ([treasurer@aa-eci.org](mailto:treasurer@aa-eci.org))  
 Corrections            Mike K. ([corrections@aa-eci.org](mailto:corrections@aa-eci.org))  
 Treatment Facilities    Mark G. & Sheri G.  
                                  ([treatment-centers@aa-eci.org](mailto:treatment-centers@aa-eci.org))  
 Meeting List            Liza W. & Mona M.  
                                  ([meeting-list@aa-eci.org](mailto:meeting-list@aa-eci.org))  
 Answering Service    Antonia D. and Jake T.  
                                  ([answering-service@aa-eci.org](mailto:answering-service@aa-eci.org))  
 Newsletter             Martin B ([newsletter@aa-eci.org](mailto:newsletter@aa-eci.org))  
 Grapevine                Terry S. ([grapevine@aa-eci.org](mailto:grapevine@aa-eci.org))

PI-CPC                      Russ S. ([picpc@aa-eci.org](mailto:picpc@aa-eci.org))  
 Website                      Rosemary T. ([webmaster@aa-eci.org](mailto:webmaster@aa-eci.org))  
 Archives                      Mike W.            ([archives@aa-eci.org](mailto:archives@aa-eci.org))

District 12 holds its meetings on the 3rd Sunday of every month at 2pm in the New Fellowship Corner at 1714 Springfield Ave, Champaign.

If you would like to submit something for publication, or just send comments or questions to the for a Committee, please email [newsletter@aa-eci.org](mailto:newsletter@aa-eci.org). Deadline for submissions is the 20th of each month.

**NURSES LIKE  
'YOUNG' PAMPHLET**

“Our group uses a lot of literature for its size,” writes T.M., La Crosse, Wis. “We have found this to be a wonderful way to do 12th Step work.

“And I have to repeat that we think the new ‘Young People and A.A.’ pamphlet is among the greatest of all A.A. literature, and the response has been accordingly, as you can see by our order.

“I’m a nurse and the young girls I work with are really impressed with this pamphlet.”