

District 12 Newsletter

January, 2015

Step One

“We admitted we were powerless over alcohol—that our lives had become unmanageable.”



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It Works if you Work it!

One Day at a Time!

Let Go and Let God!

Get a Sponsor don't go it alone....



Rare and Elusive

Until he takes the First Step, a collector misses the real value of the Big Book

I had seen the book in many different places during my travels as an antiquarian book collector, in used book-stores, thrift stores, yard sales and swap meets. It seemed as though I came across it more times than other books I saw on a repeated basis. Maybe I just noticed it more because of this odd feeling that swept over me each time I saw it, and those mysterious words on its cover: Alcoholics Anonymous.

I remember thinking, I'll never have a use for that book. I always looked at it as something that was written for those "skid row hobos" I so often pictured in my mind, those hopeless men who lived beneath bridges and in back alleys, standing around a burning drum of fiery trash, passing a bottle, trying to keep warm and drunk.

That wasn't me. I wasn't an alcoholic. Sure, I drank on a daily basis—a bit too much most of the time—and I did have the occasional blackout, but I was no worse off than a lot of my friends. I was inured to my hangovers—they were just a part of every-day life. I was at most just a "problem" drinker, not one of "those" alcoholics, and I knew I could stop whenever I wanted. I just didn't want to stop right then.

The book piqued my interest for another reason. I collected first editions of books, and had found through my research that an early copy of the Big Book could possibly make me some real money. I knew, in my materialistic, egotistical, greed-driven world, that I would be the envy of the book-collecting world if I could just find one for a cheap price and sell it at a big profit to someone who would value such a thing.

I collected first editions of books, and had found that an early copy of the Big Book could possibly make me some money.

I pulled the book from shelves, out of bags and boxes, off endless tables and dirty blankets lying on the ground for 20 years, searching for that one first edition. I had no interest in anything past that first page that showed what edition it was. I never turned past that page because I told myself I didn't need what was in it—or maybe it was just the fear that it would surely define me.

I finally gave up the search for that elusive book when I was about 51 years old. By then, I had amassed quite a collection of rare books, dealing mostly with subjects like art, architecture, psychology, magic and death. I thought a lot about death. My drinking had increased over those years, and I would often wake up from a drunk surrounded by several of these valuable books lying haphazardly around me, or on my lap. But no matter how many books like these I collected, I was still empty inside. Something was always missing.

(Continued on next page)

I flew to Tucson, Ariz., later that year to visit a friend who had been sober for four years. It was Thanksgiving, and she asked me one night if I wanted to go along with her to attend an AA meeting the following day. Out of curiosity, I said I would. I wanted to finally find out what AA was all about and how it had helped her stay sober for so long. I was doing my best, but was having a hard time controlling my drinking around her. She suggested to me that it might be a good idea if I didn't drink before we went to the meeting. I told her that I would give it my best shot.

We arrived at the meeting place the next morning and she introduced me to her friends. I was always so uncomfortable in situations where I was around a bunch of strangers who I knew would never understand how utterly "different and unique" I was. As the meeting progressed, I listened to the stories coming out of these people's mouths, and I was deeply moved. I wasn't so different and unique after all.

I stared at a big framed board with the Twelve Steps of Alcoholics Anonymous on it, particularly at Step One: "We admitted we were power less over alcohol--that our lives had become unmanageable."

I came to a startling revelation. That was me. I was powerless over alcohol, and my life had become unmanageable.

One month later, I put the bottle down and drove to the nearest bookstore. I bought my first copy of that book I had so many times denied I needed.

Now, as I approach my first full year of sobriety and look around my house at all these "valuable" books sitting on their shelves, I know that there is only one book in my collection that has any real value to me. It is a fourth edition paper-back copy of the Big Book of Alcoholics Anonymous. It is a bit beat up, written in, highlighted, and has a few dog-eared pages. But, where I thought I would only find profit from it in a materialistic way, I instead have profited from it in a new spirituality and freedom, daily using the information and suggestions contained in it as a guide for how to live a more useful, productive, sober life.

I will always remember the times I thought I would never need it, and never turned past the copyright page.

Joe H.
Tucson, AZ
AA Grapevine, January 2010

Tradition One

“Our common welfare should come first; personal recovery depends upon AA unity.”

Without unity, AA dies. Individual liberty, yet great unity. Key to paradox: each AA's life depends on obedience to spiritual principles. The group must survive or the individual will not. Common welfare comes first. How best to live and work together as groups.



A.A.'s Responsibility Statement

“I am responsible. When anyone, anywhere, reaches out for help, I want the hand of A.A. always to be there. And for that: I am responsible.”

EVENTS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

Holiday Dinners

Christmas Eve at the ZB Alano Club
Call for Details (847) 746-9842
228 Sheridan Road
Winthrop Harbor, IL 60096

Christmas Day at the Waukegan Alano Club
2419 Washington St. Waukegan, IL 60085
Time: 3:00
Potluck Bring a Dish to Pass

ALCATHON ***Waukegan Alano Club***

Starting Friday, December 26 at 11:45
Thru
Sunday, December 28 at 5:45
Meetings, Speakers, and Fellowship
Come Join Us

NEW SPANISH SPEAKING AA MEETING

Where: Alano Club of Waukegan
2419 Washington St. Waukegan, IL 60085
When: Every Thursday Night 8PM
Format: OPEN AA Meeting

This is a brand new Spanish Speaking group of the Alano Club of Waukegan. Please let's do our part by reaching out to the Large Latino Community and help carry the message to them.

Questions: Call Pete O. at 1-224-381-9992 or Jaime G. at 1-815-861-3189

District 12 Meeting

Third Sunday of every month at 4:00PM at Vista Medical Center West, 2615 Washington Street, Waukegan, Illinois 60085. All alcoholics are welcome and group GSRs are strongly encouraged to attend.

VOLUNTEERS WE NEED A COMMITMENT!!!

Lake County Work Release
Tuesday and/or Thursday
Once or twice a month
7:15 pm

Both men and women needed
For more info contact: Pete 224-381-9992 or
Les 224-237-4269

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED **12 STEP WORK**

St. Therese Psych Unit Meeting

Sunday 10 am Tues 7 pm

Sponsor Panel - ATP

1st and 3rd Saturdays 12:45 til 2 pm

Drug Court

1:30 pm Fridays Court 201

Mental Health Court

9:00 am Mondays Court 220

Veterans Court

1st and 3rd Friday at 9:00 am Court 201

SAP

SAP Bldg. 1:00 pm Thursdays

Detox

ATP 7:30 pm Wednesday

For Info Contact: Frank M.@ 847-336-2775

The District 12 Open Speaker Breakfast

Victory Hospital
(also known as Vista Medical Center East)

Cost: \$7.00

Start time is 8:30 AM
1st Sunday of every month

LADIES PLEASE VOLUNTEER FOR 12 STEP WORK- YOUR HELP IS NEEDED!!

Answering Service
Sponsor/Sponsee
12 Step Calls

**Clean Air Club
555 Roger Williams Ave
Highland Park, IL**

11th Step Meditation Meeting

Come see what meditation can do for your serenity and your conscious contact with your Higher Power. Join us Wednesdays at 6 pm at the Clean Air Club for an 11th Step Meeting. Read from the 11th Step in the 12 x 12, meditate for 20 minutes and share with the fellowship.

It's an excellent way to learn and bring meditation into your on-going recovery.



A.A. Contacts

General Service Office: <http://www.aa.org>
 Northern Illinois Area 20: <http://www.aa-nia.org>
 District 12 Website: <http://www.aadistrict12.com>
 District 12 Answering Service: 847-623-9660
 Northern Illinois Area 20 - District 12: P.O. Box 8882 - Waukegan, Illinois 60079-8882

District 12 Officers (Confidential – this information is for A.A. Use only)

If you are interested in one of the positions listed as OPEN, please contact an officer.

| Position | Chair | Phone | Email | Alternate | Phone | Email |
|--------------------|------------|--------------|-------------------------------------|-------------|--------------|------------------------------|
| DCM | Mike H. | 847-848-4855 | Mike.henneberry@gmail.com | Paul P. | 224-280-0356 | paulperini@att.net |
| Secretary | Bonnie P. | 224-440-3620 | bonnieloripink@gmail.com | OPEN | | |
| Treasurer | Ron K. | 847-623-0953 | ronkdist12@att.net | OPEN | | |
| Answering Service | Berto G. | 224-280-5235 | | OPEN | | |
| CPC / Treatment | Francis K. | 847-744-0793 | | Frank M. | 847-336-2775 | |
| Corrections | Pete O. | 847-662-8737 | Peter.choa73@yahoo.com | Lavonne G. | 224-440-2834 | lavonnegreen60@gmail.com |
| Grapevine | Jeff F. | | Jord732@comcast.net | OPEN | | |
| Public Information | Karen F. | 847-609-7354 | k.finkel@comcast.net | Marlene G. | 224-545-1495 | grubbsmarlene@gmail.com |
| Literature | Tom B. | 847-363-4363 | tomhat@juno.com | OPEN | | |
| Newsletter | Felicia H. | 224-717-2424 | felicia2657@gmail.com | Nick P. | 847-872-6727 | nicholas_prins@sbcglobal.net |
| Directory | Martin C. | 773-870-4010 | claussenmartin@aol.com | OPEN | | |
| Archive | John M. | | Contact through District 12 Website | OPEN | | |
| Special Events | Terry V. | 847-650-2251 | enchantedattic@hotmail.com | OPEN | | |
| District Breakfast | Jimmy F | 847-609-7354 | | Aaron F. | 224-627-8816 | 4aaronmf@gmail.com |
| Webmaster | Beth B. | 224.522-1676 | pollockburke@gmail.com | Brian M. | 847-736-0403 | brianm959@yahoo.com |