

District 12 Newsletter

January 2014

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.
Tuscon, 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.

-ATTENTION-

GSR'S WANTED

You Know How it Works!

Come find out Why it Works!

Join us at the District Meeting

The Third Sunday of Every Month

4pm @ Vista West



God Grant me the Serenity to accept the things I cannot change, the courage to change the things I can, and the wisdom to know the difference

BUNCH O NUTS

ST MARKS LUTHERN CHURCH

***YORKHOUSE
AND
DELANY***

***7 PM
TUESDAYS***

SEE YOU THERE!

EVENTS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

2014 NIA SPRING ASSEMBLY CONFERENCE

Hosted by Northern Illinois Area Districts 10, 11 & 12

Living in Ten, Eleven & Twelve

MARCH 28th, 29th & 30th

**HOLIDAY INN GURNEE
CONVENTION CENTER
6161 W. GRAND AVE.
GURNEE, IL 60031**

Located 1/2 mile west of 94 on south side of Grand Ave.
Rt. 132

**AA Speakers * Al-Anon Speakers * Alateen Speaker
* Alcathon * Workshops/Panels * Literature * Archives**

*** Banquet * Dance * Ice Cream Social**
(must be registered for Conference to attend dance)

**More Information and online registration (PayPal only)
is available at: www.niaspringconference.com**

Women's A.A. Meeting

Monday 6:00 pm
Alano Club of Waukegan
2419 Washington St.
Waukegan, IL

Come Share Your Experience, Strength & Hope

Looking for a Sponsor/Sponsee?

Join us at the
ATP Sponsorship Panel
1st and 3rd Saturday of each month 12:45pm
Female sponsors needed!
Addictions Treatment Program
3002 Grand Avenue
Waukegan, IL 60085

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

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 202

Mental Health Court

9:00 am Mondays Court 220

Veterans Court

3rd Friday at 9:00 am Court 220

SAP

SAP Bldg. 1:00 pm Thursdays

Detox

ATP 7:30 pm Wednesday

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

Step Study

Wednesdays @ 7 pm
St. Mark's Church
Yorkhouse & Delany Rd., Wkgn.

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

“Most folks are about as happy as they make up their minds to be.”

Abraham Lincoln

Is Happiness The Goal?

“A happy person is not a person in a certain set of circumstances, but rather a person with a certain set of attitudes.”

“I don’t think happiness or unhappiness is the point. How do we meet the problems we face? How do we best learn from them and transmit what we have learned to others, if they would receive the knowledge?”

In my view, we of this world are pupils in a great school of life. It is intended that we try to grow, and that we try to help our fellow travelers to grow in the kind of love that makes no demands. In short, we try to move toward the image and likeness of God as we understand him.

When pain comes, we are expected to learn from it willingly, and help others to learn.

When happiness comes, we accept it as a gift, and thank God for it”

Bill W.— Letter, 1950

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	OPEN		
Secretary	Terry V.	847-650-2251	enchantedattic@hotmail.com	OPEN		
Treasurer	Ron K.	847-623-0953	crkytasaari@att.net	Sue D,	847-502-1007	susie12956@aol.com
Answering Service	Berto G.	224-280-5235		Bonnie P.	224-440-3620	bonniepetterec@gmail.com
CPC / Treatment	Frank M.	847-336-2775		Francis K.	847-744-0793	
Corrections	Pete O.	847-662-8737	Peter.ochoa73@yahoo.com	Lavonne G.	224-538-0228	lavonnegreen60@gmail.com
Grapevine	James T.	224-730-2681	JamesT1956@yahoo.com	OPEN		
Public Information	OPEN			OPEN		
Literature	John M.		Contact through District 12 Website	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	Marlene	224-545-1495	grubbsmarlene@gmail.com	OPEN		
Special Events	Karen F.	847-609-7354	k.finkel@comcast.net	OPEN		
District Breakfast	Jimmy F.	847-609-7354		Jimmy P.	224-538-1689	jimipinkstaff@yahoo.com
Webmaster	Beth B.	224.522-1676	pollockburke@gmail.com	Brian M.	847-736-0403	brianm959@yahoo.com