

C.R. SOBER TIMES

Archive Nugget

In the spring of 1944, six New York A.A. members (four women, two men) decided to start a newsletter for New York City A.A.s. They took their idea to Bill W., who had noted that someday A.A. would need a national magazine, and they suggested that perhaps that day had come. He encouraged them to give it a try. Collecting articles, borrowing money to pay for paper and printing, and working out of their apartments, these "six ink-stained wretches," as Bill liked to call them, brought out the first issue of the Grapevine in **June 1944** with a print run of 1,200 copies priced at 15 cents.

Bill considered Grapevine one of his most important methods of communication with A.A. members. Between 1945 and 1970, he would publish about 150 articles in the magazine, later collected in the volume *The Language of the Heart*.

In addition to the monthly print magazine and a Spanish-language edition (La Vina), currently Grapevine's website carries the message to alcoholics digitally, offering the complete Grapevine online, audio stories, audio shares recorded by members, the Grapevine Story Archive (with thousands of stories dating back to 1944), a sobriety counter, a calendar of events and even the Grapevine Daily Quote. In's no wonder Bill called Grapevine a "mirror of the fellowship."

Pages 41, 42 & 43 - A Visual History of A.A.
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Today, approximately 86,000 AA members subscribe to Grapevine, and 9,500 subscribe to La Vina

June 2022

To The Newcomer

Never the Same Again

It was discovered that when one alcoholic had planted in the mind of another the true nature of his malady, that person could never be the same again. Following every spree, he would say to himself, "Maybe those A.A.'s were right." After a few such experiences, often before the onset of extreme difficulties, he would return to us convinced.

<< << << >> >> >>

In the first years, those of us who sobered up in A.A. had been grim and utterly hopeless cases. But then we began to have success with milder alcoholics and even some potential alcoholics. Younger folks appeared. Lots of people turned up who still had jobs, homes, health, and even good social standing.

Of course, it was necessary for these newcomers to hit bottom emotionally. But they did not have to hit bottom in order to admit that they were licked.

As Bill Sees It (Page 209)

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Iowa District 8 serves:

Anamosa
 Cedar Rapids
 Center Point
 Central City
 Coggon
 Garrison
 Grinnell
 Hale
 Keystone
 Lisbon
 Marion
 Monticello
 Mount Vernon
 Tama
 Urbana
 Vinton
 Walford

Crossroads Meeting

Sunday Nights at 7:00 PM

St. Mary's Church
 401 Ash Ave
 Urbana, IA



Knee to Knee - Part One

In our Big Book in the chapter, Working with Others, the first statement/promise that is made is:

"Practical experience shows that nothing will so much insure immunity from drinking as intensive work with other alcoholics.

This is just one of the promises of the Big Book. But one that I hold near and dear to my heart. This statement is true for me and it's true for you reading this. I floundered in and out of AA and have watched others do the same. On this side of the bottle and with some recovered time behind me I have a perspective on this that may be useful to other alcoholics. That perspective is really quite simple, get busy helping drunks.

I am sponsored and I sponsor other people. This doesn't happen by accident. We have to take the actions and time to be sponsored and to sponsor. Sponsorship isn't the only way to work with others but it's the most effective way I've found through my experience to be useful to others. Going to meetings, to workshops, to service events and plain old whoopie parties is also useful to others but I like to get right to where the rubber meets the road. And that, my friend, is sponsorship. I've gone to the Fellowship Club many times to meet someone and it's usually right after I get off of work. My mind is busy spinning and racing and I'm thinking about this and that and what I got accomplished today and what I'm planning on for tomorrow and did I forget anything and so on and so on. You get the picture. I have a very busy mind. We sit down and have a few words about the day then we get down to business. It doesn't matter where I am in the Big Book it seems that I'm right where I need to be. God works like that. We open with the Set Aside Prayer, we're knee to knee and we're on cue. We have an experience for the next hour or so with whatever God leads us to.

Knee to Knee

Part One of a Two Part Series

Bill H. AKA Big Book Bill
 Crossroads Meeting Contributor

How do I
subscribe to
the
FREE
C.R. Sober
Times?

Email the editor at:

newsletter@aa-cedarrapids.org

**Our A.A. Group wants
to elect a
Grapevine Representative.**



**What does our new GVR
need to know?**

**Online Grapevine
Representative Handbook
[CLICK HERE](#)**

**Hybrid
Kenwood Meeting
Tuesdays at 8:00PM**

**Kenwood United Methodist
Church, 175 34th St. NE,
Cedar Rapids**

Or join us on Zoom



C.R. Sober Times

An A.A. Group Shares...

THE KENWOOD GROUP - TODAY

The Kenwood Group will celebrate its 62nd anniversary this August. Our tradition is to recognize our anniversaries with a celebration every five years. We remain at the Kenwood Park Methodist Church 175 34th St. NE, meeting on Tuesday evenings at 8:00 PM, and have an excellent relationship with the church. We are registered with GSO and actively contribute to District 8, the Area and GSO. Our homegroup consists of approximately 10-15 diverse, active AA members who reach out and welcome newcomers and visitors. We've experienced some change over the years. Unfortunately we no longer host our summer campout; after needing help in keeping it going we collaborated for a time with The Foxhall Group and it has now evolved into "Foxhall in the Forest". With the Pandemic in early 2020 and then Derecho in August our group was displaced. We were notified on Tuesday March 17th, 2020 that we could no longer meet in the church and that Kenwood Park Methodist was closing for an undetermined time. We immediately reached out to our home group members and set up a Zoom meeting that day, and held our first virtual meeting that evening. Like other virtual meetings we've had our hiccups, however this group will truly go to any lengths to share the message, keep Kenwood Group going and maintain their sobriety. We usually had 20-25 attendees, with regulars representing both coasts and the Chicago area. In July of 2021 we were able to return in person to the church however due to damages to the building from the Derecho we are now meeting in the upstairs fellowship area. We continue a hybrid format with Zoom for the time being.

Submitted by Tom K., Kenwood Group



Join the Kenwood Group in person or on zoom

GRAPEVINE EDITORIAL CALENDAR 2022

December Remote Communities Experiences (& Staying Sober through the Holidays!)

Stories due June 15, 2022

Do you live far from AA meetings? Are you a loner?
Stationed far away?

Do you have a language or cultural barrier?
Are you homebound?

Do you use online meetings?
Is it difficult to find AA meetings where you live?
Tell us how you stay sober.

Are you involved in Remote Community service?

Also, December is a great time of year to reach out to alcoholics and help others.

What are the ways you stay sane and grateful during the holidays and New Year's?

How do you navigate holiday parties and family gatherings?

Share your best sober holiday stories!

**SUBMIT A STORY, PHOTO, OR ART
TO THE GRAPEVINE**

Guidelines & Upload Instructions:
[CLICK HERE](#)



2022 Carry The Message Project

Grapevine and La Viña are Great Twelfth Step Tools!

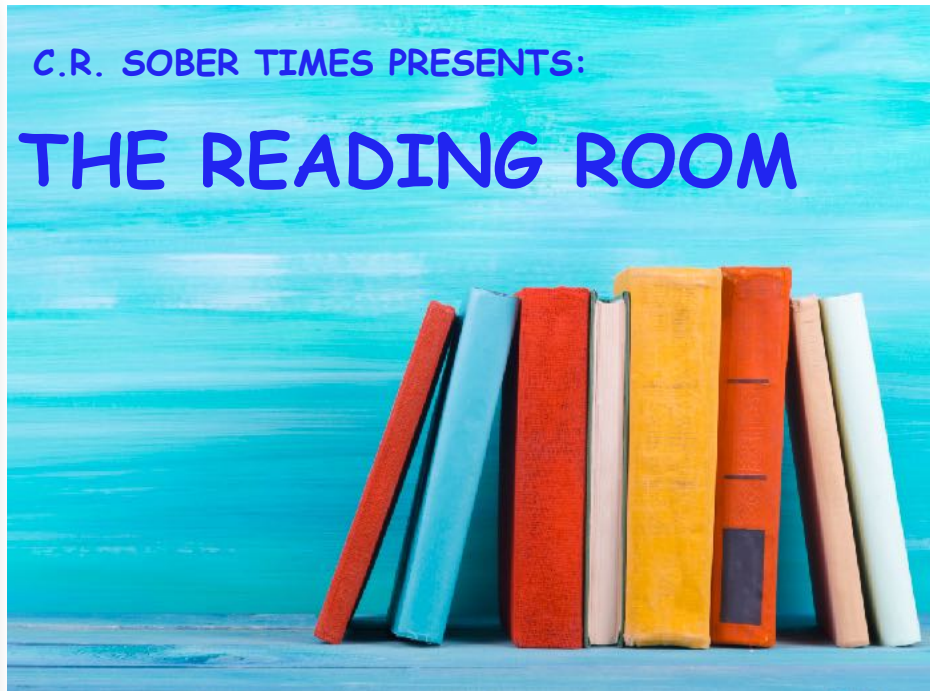
Get your group, district, area or AA friends to join in. Carry the Message, it's easy!

To learn more visit

aagrapevine.org/carry-the-message

C.R. SOBER TIMES PRESENTS:

THE READING ROOM



Grapevine Story – Sponsor Shopping / YOUNG & SOBER

After an exhausting trip down every aisle, a newcomer finds the right guy

I remember when I hadn't had a drink for a whole week. Wow, that was quite an accomplishment for someone who for 25 years only drank on days ending with the letter Y. And all I kept hearing at every AA meeting was, "Get a sponsor!" Every time someone shared, they mentioned this sponsor thing. I couldn't stand it anymore. Enough already! I figured I had better do what they said, just to get people off my back.

What did these people know, anyway? Certainly not as much as I did. So I started my big plan to get a sponsor. And there she was, 25 years old and pretty. What was she doing in AA? How could she be an alcoholic? But I didn't care. I just knew that she'd be the perfect sponsor for such a brilliant, sophisticated 48-year-old guy like me.

So what if my wife and kids wouldn't speak to me and I was \$200,000 in debt and I had high blood pressure, headaches, anxiety attacks, suicidal thoughts and insomnia. Aside from all that, I was in great shape.

But "men with the men, women with the women," they told me. Oh. You mean I couldn't have a female sponsor? That was ridiculous. I never heard of such a thing. I was certainly not going to tell another man that I was anything other than a tough guy and that I was going through a midlife crisis. So I did what any good alcoholic would do. I put off getting a sponsor. But people at meetings were relentless and continued to annoy the hell out of me.

Finally, I figured I'd better develop a Plan B. I always had a plan, of course, but most of my plans never left the barstool. This time, I started checking out the parking lot. Yes, the parking lot. After all, anyone "lucky" enough to be my sponsor had to drive an expensive foreign car, live in a ritzy neighborhood and have a degree after their name. But it was dark after those night meetings. Tough to see who got into a BMW. So forget about that plan.

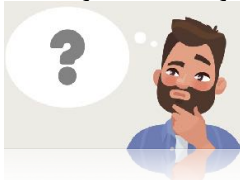
On to Plan C. Maybe it would be best to ask an old-timer to sponsor me. So I set out and found one.

Grapevine Story Continues on page 5

How do I
subscribe to
the
FREE
C.R. Sober
Times?

Email the editor at:
newsletter@aa-cedarrapids.org

What is
A.A. Sponsorship?



Questions
and
Answers
on Sponsorship

[Click Here](#)



Origin of the Serenity Prayer:

A Historical Paper

[CLICK HERE !!!](#)

C.R. SOBER TIMES PRESENTS:

THE READING ROOM



Grapevine Story - - Sponsor Shopping / YOUNG & SOBER

After an exhausting trip down every aisle, a newcomer finds the right guy

This guy had been around forever, so I knew I'd better test him out first. "Excuse me, George," I said. "If I don't drink all week, can I have a glass of wine on Saturday nights? I promise I'll only have one."

Without missing a beat, George blurted out, "You know what? You may not be ready for AA. Best if I drive you to your favorite restaurant. I'll even pick you up." I fired him before I even hired him.

Now only Plan D was left. If that failed, I didn't know what I would do. My last hope was to find an Irish-Catholic sponsor. That way, I would get someone who really knows about drinking and had this Higher Power thing all figured out.

"John, will you be my sponsor?" I asked. "Sure," he said, "but I have two rules. First, I'll never tell you what to do, just what worked or didn't work for me."

And the second? "I'll never call you," he replied. "I call my sponsor. He calls his. You call me." Then he added, "And by the way, my Higher Power is not God but the rooms of AA."

What in the world was wrong with these people? What good is a sponsor if he doesn't call me every day and tell me what to do about a wife who's causing all my problems? And he doesn't even believe in God? This place was filled with nutcases, I decided.

So, John it was. He still doesn't call me, still won't tell me what to do, and his Higher Power still speaks through the people in AA. John forced me to swallow my pride and start asking for help. He also taught me never to tell an alcoholic what to do, that we should only make suggestions. And for the first time in my life, I, by myself, had to find the God of my understanding.

Oh yeah, that George never drove me to dinner and he taught me that I didn't have to change much to get sober—just change everything!

That's enough from me now. I have to give John a call. In 28 years, he still hasn't called me.

BY: DEFINITELY STEVE | NASHVILLE, TENNESSEE

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What can I learn about
being a GSR (General Service Rep)
in A.A.?
Here is a list of the contents of the
GSR Welcome Kit
[Click Here](#)



Books:
The A.A. Service Manual/Twelve
Concepts for World Service
[Click Here](#)

Pamphlets:
Twelve Concepts Illustrated
[Click Here](#)

The A.A. Group
[Click Here](#)

Inside A.A.
[Click Here](#)

G.S.R. General Service Representative
[Click Here](#)

Twelve Traditions Illustrated
[Click Here](#)

Circles of Love and Service
[Click Here](#)

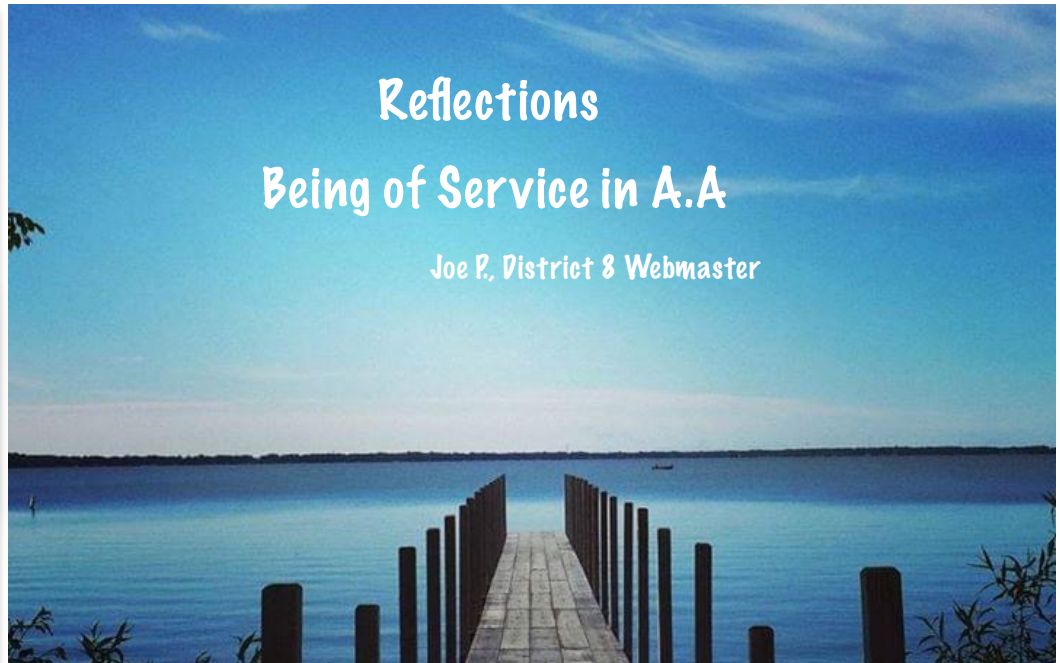


HERE'S AN IDEA !!!

If your home group already has a
GSR, ask to be the alternate GSR
at your next business meeting!

Reflections Being of Service in A.A.

Joe P., District 8 Webmaster



Being of Service In A.A.

Area 24, District 8

Why Service?

The circle and triangle symbol of Alcoholics Anonymous tells us that there are three essential elements to any successful recovery, Service, Recovery and Unity. We often hear the story of the three-legged stool in A.A. talks – try sitting on a one or two-legged stool, and see what happens. It was very early in my recovery that service was stressed to me – and “service” meant work in the organized service structure of A.A.. That work has greatly strengthened and stabilized the seating of my sobriety, introducing me to literally hundreds of people across this state, this country and the world. It has taught me the value, and allowed me to practice, the virtue of working well in a group – starting with the early lessons of disagreement without disagreeable behavior. But the service that I learned in “service” has grown and I’ve realized that none of the three legs can well-exist without the others – these elements of Service, Recovery and Unity are all one large idea of selflessness. Turns out the stool had one leg the whole time: selflessness.

In the “real” world, outside of meetings of Alcoholics Anonymous, I find that I am unable to live very successfully without the selflessness that these three important legs teach me. I cannot hold a job if I am unable to work well with others or put aside my selfish desires, or simply engage in the sloth that my sickness loves so much.

Service in A.A., which starts with organized “service” in the service structure, but grows to all the work I do in A.A., is where I learn and practice these lessons of selflessness. And it’s where my fellow A.A.’s learn, too. I’ve learned that every time I find myself sighing during a long service debate about a point I think is clear (and why can’t we move on for God’s sake?), what I’m really seeing is God working to reach an informed group conscience. That what I am seeing is God teaching a group of what Bill described as “outright mental defectives” patience, tolerance and kindness – teaching us about selfless service. What a miracle.

Because of this, and because I know that *we* are responsible for the work of A.A. to keep the doors open, the coffee hot and ready, and literature on the tables, I have continued to maintain a hand in organized service along the entire length of my recovery. I still have things to learn, and there is work left to be done. I must respect the informal tradition of rotating out of service position (clutching to ownership of a job in A.A. for years is not selfless – it’s selfish) – but I need, for me, to continue to do the work of A.A. in meetings, as a sponsor, and in organized service in A.A. If you have not taken the step into organized A.A. service, I encourage you to do so – it’s changed my life, and helped me build a solid recovery.

Joe P., District 8 Webmaster



The Fellowship Club

**An AA Group 10th Anniversary
Celebration**

Thursday, June 30th

Breakfast from 7:30 am - 8:30 am

Speaker at 8:30 am

(Chad W. from Alburnett, Iowa)

At the Fellowship Club downstairs

**Come join us for food, fellowship,
experience, strength and hope**

See another event on the next page !!!

Summer Events !!!



LET'S GO CAMPING FOXHALL IN THE FOREST

Anniversary

JUNE 17, 18, 19



Friday: 8:00pm fireside meeting

Saturday: Hiking, tubing, kayaking
7:30pm Double speaker, AA & Al-Anon
Smores and cake provided.

Pinicon Ridge Group Camp #1



**Bring chairs, food, drinks, bug spray, sunblock,
tubes, kayaks, hiking shoes, serenity, and
anything to make being in a campsite more
enjoyable!**

**Concession area has rentals for canoes, kayaks
and paddle boats.**

Family and pet friendly (leashes required, for the dogs!)

P.I. WORKSHOP!

Saturday June 25th 2022, 12 Noon-3pm

Help carry the A.A. message to the alcoholic who still suffers.

Join us for fellowship! Come listen to the experience, strength, and hope of those passionate about Public Information.

Speakers

- **Margaret F.** - Area 24 P.I. Chair
- **Bill H.** - Former Area 24 P.I. Chair
- **Paige B.** - Former District 8 P.I. Chair
- **Jeff F.** - District 4 P.I. Chair
- **Brian W.** - District 3 P.I. Chair
- **Lynn M.** - Former District 8 P.I. Chair
- **Ask-It-Basket**

Join us for lunch @ 12 Noon

St. Mary's Church

402 Ash Ave, Urbana, IA 52345

* Loose meat sandwiches and beverages provided.

* Please bring a side dish to share.

