

SOBER TIMES

Iowa District 8 AA Newsletter



UPCOMING EVENTS

(all underlined titles are clickable links to more information)

Sunday Morning Breakfast Meeting 46th Anniversary – Sunday, Jan 7th at the Marion Industrial Club. FREE breakfast at 7:30am, meeting at 8:30am. Click [here](#) for flyer.

Area 24 January Service Weekend (Held at a new location). January 13th at 8:30 am - January 14th @ 5:00pm MACC (Marshalltown Arts & Civic Center) 709 S Center St. Marshalltown, IA 50158.

25th Annual Winter Rally - Jan 20th & 21st at the Starlite Village Best Western in Fort Dodge, IA

Heart to Heart Women's Retreat, Feb 9th - 11th in Elkhorn, WI

30th Annual Cedar River Roundup - Feb 16th - 18th at the Cedar Rapids Radisson Hotel in Cedar Rapids.

West Central Regional Service Conference 2024 - March 1st-3rd, 2024. Registration info found [here](#).

Non AA related announcements

Christmas Dinner at the Fellowship Club at Noon. Meat, mashed potatoes, gravy and rolls provided. Other sides and desserts welcomed.

Fellowship Club Pajama Dance Party New Year's Eve Dance Dec 31st from 7p-10p. Free drinks and snacks.

CRG will be open all day on New Year's Eve & New Year's Day (12p-12a). Meetings, Fellowship & Food.

Operation Book Drive. Drop off your recovery related books at the Fellowship Club.

Areas We

Serve

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



Area Clubs

In District 8 there are three clubs which provide space for A.A. meetings, groups, and events. These are not to be considered "A.A. Clubs", but rather "secondary aids" to the A.A. community. We mention them for the sole purpose of providing addresses for these locations. This is not to be considered an endorsement or affiliation, but indicate a relationship of cooperation.

CR GRATITUDE CLUB

212 Edgewood Rd NW, Suite K
Cedar Rapids, IA 52405

FELLOWSHIP CLUB

3224 1st Ave NE
Cedar Rapids, IA 52402
319-364-0314

INDUSTRIAL CLUB

225 South 35th St
Marion, IA 52302

Iowa District 8 of Alcoholics
Anonymous Website

<https://www.aa-cedarrapids.org/>

HOLY ORDER OF DOORKNOBS

There is a phenomenal story from the Sept 2012 Grapevine issue that was read in a recent AA meeting. Below is the first half of that story, next month will have the rest of the story, but if you'd like to read it in its entirety go to [Holy Order of Doorknobs](#). (Part 2)

After work I went to the local supermarket. As I stood outside the sliding doors it occurred to me that here there was no doorknob, so as far as this was concerned, there was no Higher Power here. Unless the floor mat that opens the door ...

As I stood there staring at the floor mat in front of the grocery store wondering whether God existed or not, a lady came out with her grocery cart and said hello. I said hello and immediately walked in. Ha! I thought. Didn't need God for that door. But then another thought crossed my mind: What if God had sent that lady to open the door for me so I could go inside? Was I sure that wasn't the case? Could God send helpers? I didn't know. Why not?

I decided right then to surrender. God either is or he isn't. What is our choice to be? It didn't matter whether you believed in my doorknob or not. My life is easier if I use doorknobs. Otherwise I'm trapped behind walls, just like drinking again.

The day before my prayer, I had used doorknobs without a thought or care and they still worked. I had been using my Higher Power throughout my life, but had never realized it. I never made the connection. Once I realized that a Higher Power was indeed working in my life I started to try to re-connect back to that power, to complete the circuit. That's when the magic started happening, the fourth dimension spoken of in the Big Book, when life suddenly becomes open and exciting! The rest of the Steps helped me find my way and clear the wreckage of my past.

So the doorknob has become a powerful symbol for me in my recovery. I was trapped when I was out there drinking. A power greater than myself for me turned out to be a doorknob. It set me free. And it wasn't even locked.

CROSSROADS CORNER

I know I talk an awful lot about God and Jesus in the groups of AA. It is probably annoying. I know it is. How? I used to be the one that got annoyed. There was this fella that I used to kind of know. We drank a couple times together, but mostly he was friends with some of my friends. I remember seeing him hung over back in 2013 and he looked rough. I had recently met God and got sober. He soon followed. However, he surrendered to God, I didn't find that part important, I was sober and knew I wasn't alone. Good enough for me. I didn't need to attend AA regularly and I didn't need to scream it from the mountains. He did, every day, all over Facebook, Snap, etc. "JUST GIVE IT A REST MAN!" I would scream at my phone. Annoying!

Besides, I knew this dude, he wasn't anything like he was saying he was in his posts. At least I was still the real me. Perhaps I was just jealous that he was able to jump in both feet first into thoughts of an eternal future and I wasn't willing to take the one foot out of the temporary things of this world. I will never know why it upset me so much. However, I think I thought that this transformation wasn't available to me. And then this crazy thing happened... I fell off the wagon.

I had so much more time than that guy sober. How could this be possible? How could this new (fake) person that he had become be sober yet? I had been humbled to the dust, or at least I thought. I was so angry.

I continued my path of utter ruin and debauchery. Even after getting busted, I continue to get high and drunk. And then I found myself in jail facing a felony. I was so glad to have been arrested. I remember sitting in jail truly humbled to the dust this time. I was so sure that I was where I was supposed to be that my mother, the worry wart, couldn't even figure out how to feel upset. She tried, but she knew that I knew that God knew. There's that peace

His timing is perfect. That's the point.

If you are still waiting for God to do something in your life, don't give up. When it happens, you will know why it was at that time. After surrendering I felt as if I was catapulted on a rocket ship into the cosmos with the most exhilarating breeze on my face and light shining down. And it wasn't easy. But it was peaceful because I knew that I didn't have to worry about the outcome. God was in control of that. He always had been, and he always will be.

I have since changed my position and today I feel it necessary to scream the name of my higher power, Jesus from the mountain tops.

As God would have it, I bumped into this gentleman at my daughter-in-law's baptism. Guess what? HE WAS THE ONE THAT BAPTIZED HER! How amazing for God to bring that dude back into my life in that way!

I was able to speak with him after that service and thank him for all his annoying posts on Facebook and the like. He was very instrumental in listening to God in a way that helped me along growing in my faith.

That's all I hope for each of you and if I'm annoying, it's out of straight love. Because I love you, you matter, and all of this is available free of charge for us, for you. The debt has been paid. It is a gift. Thanks be to Jesus Christ for redeeming us while enemies of God. Horrible sinners deserving death and death alone. The groups of AA helped me understand what it means to be open and honest. The groups of AA helped me be ok with surrendering to a higher power and stop worshipping myself. There are many differences between God and myself, but the largest one is God has never thought that he was me. I'll be praying for you.

~Submitted by Matt O, Vinton, IA

JAN 2024 PG 2

STEP 1

I drank for 17 years. During that time, it never once crossed my mind that alcohol was a problem; even though I drank alcoholically every time I drank.

We admitted we were powerless over alcohol – that our lives had become unmanageable.

I started drinking when I was 15 years old. My best friend and I spent two weeks planning and prepping for this event. We lived in a small town in West Texas, and this was the most exciting thing I had experienced in the three years I had been living there.

Three seniors picked us up and brought 4 bottles of MadDog 20/20, 1 for each of them and 1 for me and my friend to share. She had one sip out of our "shared" bottle, I drank the rest. She had to share with the guys. When we got home, I tucked her in and started drinking my parent's 151 Rum. The next day, I was at the gas station stealing energy pills. From my very first drink until the day I walked into AA, I always had something in my system.

I drank every weekend and was a daily drinker by the time I turned 17. I began blacking out. I had to rely on friends to take care of me and tell me what happened. Fortunately, I went to high school in a ridiculously small town. This meant that everyone knew what I was doing but it also meant that nothing harmful happened to me. I somehow managed to graduate. I got pregnant at 19 and married at 20. My former husband moved us to Iowa where I had another child at 21. I could no longer drink every day, but I found that I could not stay sober for more than a day, so I began using other substances to put space between drinking. The physical allergy was too strong.

The mental obsession was even stronger. I spent my entire drinking career trying to fit drinking into my life and my life into my drinking. I did not know this is what I was doing at the time. Reading step one in the Big Book helped me to see how much of my mental energy was going towards managing my drinking. I was also able to see that even when I got sober, I was still obsessed with alcohol. Only now I was thinking about not drinking and condemning myself for wanting to drink. It was pure mental torture.

But the hardest thing to come to terms with was that I had a spiritual malady. I thought so highly of myself regardless of how messy my life was. I did not think of the horrors my daughters faced growing up in active alcoholism nor did I think of the sleepless nights my parents endured worrying about their daughter. There are countless more examples of the destruction that was my life. AA has given me the opportunity to make amends for all of it. That, in and of itself is enough of a reason for me to continue to walk the AA way of life but I have found so much more. I have a deep sense of peace and meaningful connections with a Higher Power and other people. And the best part is that this is available to anyone. This is what AA has to offer.

~Submitted by Tina L, Cedar Rapids, IA

First Step Prayer

Dear Lord,

I admit that I am powerless over my addiction.

I admit that my life is unmanageable when I try to control it.

Help me this day to understand
The true meaning of powerlessness.

Remove from me all denial of my addiction.

DON'T TAKE YOURSELF TOO DAMN SERIOUSLY!!

Have you ever heard of Rule 62? AA History says that when considering a multi-faceted facility a group of people came up with 61 rules of how it'd be run. The office in NY responded with Rule 62 & a new direction.



You can read more in an article [here](#).

DISTRICT SERVICE OPPORTUNITIES

Women needed to attend the Shoulder-to-Shoulder meeting at the Anchor Center,
Tues at 7pm.

Contact Jeremy M at 319-415-6216

Also need women to take a meeting to the Linn County Jail, Saturdays at 9am. Required 2 years sobriety, been through all 12 steps with a sponsor and will be on a monthly rotation, so typically will only serve 1x/month.

Contact Carla B at 319-241-1881

Our current District Treasurer needs to resign due to a work conflict, which means this is an open position. To find more information about this position, read the [Guidelines here](#) and/or reach out the DCM at dcm@aa-cedarrapids.org

Getting Through The Holidays

Please know that there are so many resources available to assist you with sobriety through the holidays. Below are just a few ideas, of course you can always ask your sponsor or someone in a meeting:

1. Call AA Helpline at (319) 365-5955
2. Phone a friend -names on the latest meeting list you received
3. Attend a local meeting.
4. Zoom into a meeting across the globe
5. Read the BB
6. Listen to inspiring stories on AA Grapevine (search holidays)
7. Hang out with your fellows at 1 of the 3 clubs in the surrounding area

District 8 would like to extend the merriest season's greetings to you and your family!

HAPPY

new year

AA GRAPEVINE

It's that time of year!!!

FREE Shipping plus 20% savings on all products and Grapevine Books from November 1st - December 31st, 2023
Go to <http://AAGrapevine.org> for more info.

The AA Grapevine Holiday Gift Subscription Sale is still on till the end of December 2023. You or your AA Home group can give a gift of an AA Grapevine magazine subscription and add additional gift subscriptions for only \$13... a savings of 55% off the regular price! To participate, you may go to the following link: <https://www.aagrapevine.org/2gifts> Or Order by phone

This month's feature section of the Grapevine is "Emotional Sobriety." Members share hopeful stories about how much better their lives are now that they have lived in the AA program for a while. Check it out online at aagrapevine.org

**2024 Cedar River
Roundup SPECIAL
REQUEST for
VOLUNTEERS and
DONATIONS!! Click
[here](#) for details.**



**NEXT DISTRICT MEETING
JANUARY 15, 2024 @ 7 PM
UNITY CENTER OF CEDAR
RAPIDS 3791 BLAIRS FERRY
RD NE CEDAR RAPIDS, IA
52402**

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Disclaimer: The District 8 Newsletter is edited and published by and for people in recovery. Its articles reflect the full diversity of experience and opinion found within the Fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous. None of its contributors (or even the Newsletter Editor) speaks for A.A. or District 8 as a whole. In determining the editorial content, the Chair relies on the principles of the Twelve Traditions. However, we respect everyone's right to have their say and to pursue their recovery in their own way. Yet what works for one individual or A.A. Group may not work for another. The Newsletter tries to embody the widest possible view of the A.A. Fellowship. It is solely provided by District 8 of Alcoholics Anonymous as part of 12 Step work in reaching out to the alcoholic who still suffers. To learn about the A.A. program, the best source of accurate information is our text Alcoholics Anonymous (the Big Book), and other A.A. conference approved literature, much of which can be found at www.aa.org.