

SOBER TIMES

Iowa District 8 AA Newsletter



UPCOMING EVENTS

Bonfire meetings at Wanatee Park – off of HWY 100 in Marion, Iowa. See flyer for details [HERE](#)

Sister's in Sobriety Group is moving – effective July 3rd they will be meeting at Cedar Hills Community Church 6455 E Ave NW Cedar Rapids, IA – Join them for a Potluck party before the 1st meeting at the new location on the 3rd of July at 5pm. Child care available [see flyer here](#)

Happy Hour Group Annual Picnic 2025 – Saturday, August 9th, 2025 – 10:30 am-3pm – Yellow Pavilion at Tucker Park – 101 B Ave, Hiawatha, IA – Lunch at 11:30 am, Speaker TBD at 1pm – [See flyer here](#)

Foxhall in the Forest 2.0 – August 15-17, 2025 – Pinicon Ridge Park Group Camp Ground #1 – Central City, Iowa [flyer here](#)

District 8 Annual Delegate Picnic- Saturday, August 16th, 2025 – Ellis Park Manhattan Pavilion – [Click here for directions](#) – 10 am- 4pm – Eat at Noon -bring a dish to pass [Click here for flyer](#)

Last Call Group Annual Picnic – Saturday, September 13th, 2025 from 1:30pm – 4:30pm at the Beaver Park Grandview Pavilion – 2700 Beaver Avenue SE Cedar Rapids, IA – [see flyer for details](#)

The BIG Meeting – Saturday, September 13th, 2025 at Westminster Presbyterian Church 1285 3rd Avenue SE Cedar Rapids (lower level) from 4:30pm -7:00 pm- Quarterly Speaker Meeting and Dinner sponsored by over a dozen District 8 Groups [see flyer for details](#)

District 8 Business Meetings – District 8 holds a business meeting on the 3rd Monday of each month at 7:00 pm; Unity Center of Cedar Rapids, 3791 Blairs Ferry Rd NE, Cedar Rapids, IA 52402

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

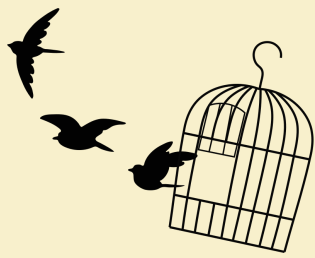
3224 1st Ave NE
Cedar Rapids, IA 52402
319-364-0314

INDUSTRIAL CLUB

225 South 35th St
Marion, IA 52302

Iowa District 8 of Alcoholics
Anonymous Website

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



Freedom

When I was asked to write about the freedom I have in sobriety, the first thing that came to mind was the bottom of page 83 in the Big Book of Alcoholics Anonymous. “If we are painstaking about this phase of our development, we will be amazed before we are halfway through. We are going to know a new freedom and a new happiness”. This rings so true for me. In my active drinking days, the definition of freedom was much different. I had been to so many jails and to prison so many times, it was all I knew. I had resigned myself to the fact that those places would be where I spent the rest of my life. I felt like I would never get off parole. I would never get out of the cycle I had found myself stuck in. Freedom, to me, just meant I wasn’t locked up. I struggled for so long, in and out of the doors of AA and every treatment center in Iowa, that in my mind, I had tried everything, and there was no hope. I had hit so many “rock bottoms” that I didn’t believe that there would be a bottom low enough to save me.

Through many years of learning to survive in chaos, I had trained my mind to believe that fighting everything and everyone was the only way to survive. Who would have thought that surrender was the path to freedom? The irony of my story is that my freedom began in jail. I had found myself, once again, laying in a jail cell, all alone, cursing myself for every decision that had landed me back in that place. Only this time, I was pregnant and terrified. I had already lost two children to my addiction and to the system. The heaviness I felt in that moment was overwhelming. The outcome for my future seemed inescapable. By law, there was no way that I wouldn’t be going back to prison. If I gave birth while in prison, I would have to hand my baby over to the system with no way to get him back. My heart could not take another loss like that. With tears streaming down my face, I closed my eyes and I prayed. I had no fight left in the game. I prayed to whatever was out there to take the reins and allow me to be a parent. I prayed for guidance and I prayed for relief. I finally surrendered to the fact that I could not do this alone. I went to court without hope and listened as my parole officer laid out the reasons that my parole should be revoked and I couldn’t disagree with any of the facts she was armed with. When it was my turn I pleaded with the judge. I told him I knew I could do this and begged for “freedom”. That day a miracle happened, I was granted a freedom I had never known, but not just freedom from prison. I was given a chance to create a life I no longer wanted to escape from.

Today my child is 14 months old and thriving. I have gained so many things in my sobriety. I got my license back, I have my own place, I have a job at a recovery center helping others in their journey to sobriety, and I have my 14-year-old daughter back in my life. But the most important thing that I have gained is my freedom. Freedom from the pain I carried every day alone. Freedom from the fear I felt every day when I woke up. Freedom from the shame I added to every time I took a drink. Freedom from the never-ending thoughts of drinking and hiding my drinking. My freedom is internal. I no longer have to fight everything and everyone. With the help of my higher power, I live a life beyond anything I could have ever imagined. Freedom to me is peace and hope, and I find every day in the small things I have been gifted through my sobriety.

Amber S



A Journey Back to Myself- Katie O.

For years, I lived in denial about my drinking. I told myself I was fun, normal, and even deserved to let loose. After all, I met society's standards for success—I had a family, a home, a career, two cars in the driveway. From outside, everything looked fine. That image became my shield. I wore many masks to support and justify the growing role alcohol played in my life. But slowly, and then all at once, things started falling apart.

As my drinking increased, I began to lose not just the things around me, but the sense of who I was. I couldn't think straight. Anxiety shook me. Simple decisions sent me spiraling. I literally couldn't stand to be in my own skin. I hated the things I had done, and I hated what was coming next. Every day was a cycle of pretending, numbing, putting on fake smiles and trying to hold it all together. I attempted to quit on my own more times than I can count, but alcohol had become a part of everything I did. I couldn't imagine life without it—and yet, I couldn't survive with it either. My denial wasn't ignorance; it was an active attempt to fool myself, to avoid facing the truth that deep down, I already knew.

The turning point came when I walked into an Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) meeting. I had 71 days of sobriety under my belt, but I was consumed with emotions that I had no idea what to do with or how to handle on my own. I remember the woman who opened the door for me like it was yesterday. More than that, I remember the woman who threw her arm around me and said, "Sit here." Those simple act of kindness, what I now know to be "service", cracked something open in me. It didn't fix everything, but it made me feel like maybe I wasn't alone anymore, and I could do this. It took time—more than I expected—to fully admit that I was an alcoholic. Even to this day, I look for an easier, softer way while I do the hard work. Yet inside our rooms, with people who speak truths that are still sometimes hard for me to admit to myself, I know I belong. Your stories sound like mine, your pain mirrors my own. If I allow myself to be vulnerable (which trust me is a HUGE work-in-progress) I truly understand what it means to be seen, not judged.

Since I walked into my first AA meeting, I've been working the Twelve Steps. I have a sponsor and a home group. It's not easy. I've had to learn recovery is not a straight line, and some days are harder than others. I can get distracted living life and quickly forget what gave me a life; AA. Nowadays though, I can look in the mirror and not flinch, sometimes I even smile. I'm learning to trust my own judgment again—something I had completely lost during active addiction. Where I once second-guessed everything or drowned out my instincts with another drink, I now pause, pray, and listen to my intuition. That voice inside me, the one that was silenced by the alcohol, has become a guide I can rely on. I'm no longer paralyzed by indecision or fear of being found out. Through recovery, I've gained the confidence to make decisions rooted in clarity and self-respect, not shame or avoidance. The promises I once heard others talk about—peace, clarity, a new freedom—I'm beginning to see them come true in my own life.

Alcohol once defined me. I have twenty years of photos and home décor to emphasize the point, but more importantly, today, it doesn't. What defines me now is my willingness to try something new, to grow, to change, to show up for life as it is—not as I want to drink it into existence. I still have a family, a home, and a life—but now, I also have serenity, honesty, and the fellowship that helped me rediscover them. I'm no longer trying to escape myself. I'm learning, every day, how to live with myself—and that's the greatest recovery of all.





Service is a means of maintaining sobriety.

Service means getting involved in those functions which directly carry the A.A. message or allow others to carry it.

“Practical experience shows that nothing will so much insure immunity from drinking as intensive work with other alcoholics. It works when other activities fail. This is our twelfth suggestion : Carry this message to other alcoholics! You can help when no one else can. You can secure their confidence when others fail. Remember they are very ill.

Life will take on new meaning. To watch people recover, to see them help others, to watch loneliness vanish, to see a fellowship grow up about you, to have a host of friends – this is an experience you must not miss. We know you will not want to miss it. Frequent contact with newcomers and with each other is the bright spot of our lives.”

–The Big Book of Alcoholics Anonymous (page 89)

Service Opportunities!!!!!!

Archives Committee – Digital demo – Monday June 2nd at 7PM.

<https://zoom.us/j/8007716078#success> EBUZ zoom link- 807716078 – no password

Corrections Committee will be holding a committee meeting monthly on the Saturday following the District 8 committee meeting TV Room in the lower level of the Fellowship club 3224 1st Ave NE Cedar Rapids, Iowa 52402. 5/24, 6/21, 7/26 at 1pm

CPC(Cooperation with Professional Community) Committee Next Meeting – Tuesday, July 15th at 6pm via zoom Click [here for the zoom link](#) Passcode – CPC25

IAYPAA IX Conference Host Committee

Meets monthly in person and via zoom check back for the date of the July meeting! – Cedar Rapids Fellowship Club 3224 1st Ave NE Cedar Rapids
Public Information Committee Next Meeting – Tuesday, July 15th at 6pm via zoom Click [here for the zoom link](#) Passcode – CPC25

Technology Committee Meetings will be held the 1st Mondays of every other month beginning June- – Via Zoom at 7pm. Next meeting will be August 4th!! Click [HERE](#) to join via zoom or come by and get a tour of the website on the big screen in the Fellowship Club Basement- 3224 1st Ave NE, Cedar Rapids

Treatment Committee Meeting – Sunday, July 13th, 2025 – Noon – Cedar Rapids Fellowship Club 3224 1st Ave NE Cedar Rapids, Iowa

AA World Services, Inc. (AAWS) has started it's search for a nontrustee director. This Voluntary position will commence following the 2026 General Service Conference. Interested AA Members are encouraged to submit a resume. More information [here](#)



ARCHIVE CORNER



Click here for the original working manuscript of the Big Book of Alcoholics Anonymous

Saturday Night Live

Saturdays at 10pm

CR Gratitude Club

July 26 - Marty H

August 2nd - Alan G

August 16th - Megan M

August 23rd - Josh S

August 30th - Chaim B

September 6th - Dana G

UPCOMING SPEAKERS

Foxhall

Wednesdays at 7pm

July 23rd - Betty K

July 30th - JP G

EBUZ Super Sunday

Speaker

July 27th - Rozana G

August 3rd - Caleb S

August 10th - Tom C

August 17th - Kyle T

August 24th - Dan P

August 31st - Nancy C

AA GRAPEVINE

Each month, Grapevine publishes stories on special topics. The editors are always looking for innovative material, as long as it relates to AA experience and reflects an awareness of AA's singleness of purpose. Grapevine Editorial Calendar for 2025 has been issued and you can find the yearly topics [here](#). The next few months are listed below for your convenience. Click [here](#) for the guidelines on contributing articles.

FEBRUARY

Getting Through Tough Times (stories due July 1, 2025)

A serious illness, divorce, the death of a loved one, a house fire, loss of a job, bankruptcy... How have you stayed sober through adversity? Tell us how the program and fellowship helped you.

March

Families and AA (stories due Aug. 1, 2025)

Are any other members of your family alcoholic? Are any of them in AA? Did you find out about the program through a family member? Do you go to meetings together? Are your children heavy drinkers? How do you cope? Share your family recovery stories.



DISTRICT RESOURCES

Are you interested in keeping up with what's happening at the District meetings? Our district website has all the District Business Documents (Minutes, Treasurer's Report, Group Change Form, etc.) posted on it [here](#).

Monthly meetings are held the 3rd Mondays of each month at 7:00 pm; Unity Center of Cedar Rapids, 3791 Blairs Ferry Rd NE, Cedar Rapids, IA 52402. All are welcome to attend!

Resources

Updated District 8 Printable Meeting List available [here](#)
GSRs - is your group's information accurate?

Area 24 Iowa

[Home](#) [Meetings](#) [Events](#) [Newsletter](#) [Contact](#) [Web Guidelines](#)

You can sign up for the Area 24 Newsletter [here](#).

Read the most recent box 459 issue and sign up for future issues [here](#).



EBUZ And Friends

If you're on Facebook and would like to find AA related events, funny meme's meeting information and just be part of fellowship, you can join the EBUZ & Friends page. All are welcome. It can be found [here](#).

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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.

**LAST CALL'S
ANNUAL PICNIC**
SEPTEMBER 13, 2025
1:30-4:30PM
BEVER PARK
2700 BEVER AVENUE SE
CEDAR RAPIDS, IA 52403
**GRAND VIEW
PAVILION**



**CALL SAIGE FOR DIRECTIONS:
319-423-9046**

[illegible]

**COMING
SOON**

to a Church Basement Near
You.....

THE BIG MEETING

WESTMINSTER PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
1205 3RD AVE SE CEDAR RAPIDS, IOWA 52403

DOORS OPEN - 4:30PM
POTLUCK DINNER - 5:00 PM
SPEAKER - 5:45PM
SETH C. FROM DES MOINES, IA
BRING A SMILING OR BAKERY TO SHARE

SERVICE OPPORTUNITIES AVAILABLE

SAVE THE DATE!!

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 13TH, 2025

[illegible]

**Happy Hour Group
Annual Picnic 2025**

Yellow Pavilion at Tucker Park
101 B Ave., Hiawatha.

Saturday August 9th from 10:30 am to 3:00 PM
Burgers, Brats, Chips, Iced
Tea and Lemonade Provided
Side Dishes & Desserts are Greatly Appreciated
Lunch Begins at 11:30 AM

Speaker:
TBD @ 1:00

Games:
BAGS
Crush Pad For The Kids
And The Vandal at Heart



The Greater Cedar Rapids Area Events Committee
We need help!



Help with the Thanksgiving Dinner and the Greater Cedar Rapids Area Anniversary!

Committee Meetings occur monthly on Sundays at 1 PM
downstairs at the Fellowship club

- No prior service experience required -

**NEXT MEETING - JULY 27TH 1:00 PM
DOWNSTAIRS FELLOWSHIP CLUB!**

Available Service Positions Include:

- Kitchen chair
- Set up
- Clean up
- AND MORE!

For more information contact Amie B. 603-400-0206



SAVE THE DATE

AREA 24

Fall Conference

October 17, 18, 19,
2025



STARLITE BEST WESTERN, 1118 1ST AVENUE NW, JUNCTION HWY85 160 & 7, FORT DODGE, IOWA

The PLANNING COMMITTEE
for this event is held every 2nd
Saturday of each month at 1:15PM

1408 5th Avenue South
Fort Dodge

CHAIR: Jim C.

BOMB FIRE!

MON SAT 17, 2025

YUM!!

Wanatee Park
May 14, 31
June 14, 28
July 12, 26
Aug 9, 23
Sept 6, 20
Oct 4, 18

PLS COME