



# LIFELINE



*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.*

**life-line** | \ 'lif-, līn : 1. A rope or line used for life-saving, typically one thrown to rescue someone in difficulties in water. 2. A thing on which someone depends for a means of escape from a difficult situation. <https://en.oxforddictionaries.com>

Chapter 11 of the Big Book (A Vision For You) starts by reminiscing about the early days of an alcoholic's drinking and how it gave the feeling that life was good. But not so in the last days of heavy drinking and facing the hideous Four Horsemen - Terror, Bewilderment, Frustration, and Despair. The next line is, "Unhappy drinkers who read this page will understand!"

When I read that chapter I knew I qualified, as it was the blueprint of my life, up to that moment. What I didn't understand was that drinking was but a symptom of a much more deeply rooted emotional problem. After many years of sobriety, I still had trouble articulating how one caused the other.

In the first paragraph of Step Twelve in the *Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions*, it talks about finding emotional sobriety. What emotions are we talking about? That's what I wanted to know.

As a child, I had very little supervision, and I grew up in a dysfunctional environment. I did a lot of things that I was ashamed of, but I never knew how these things would come back to haunt me later in life. When I started drinking, it immediately relieved me of the guilt and shame. And it even gave me license to continue acting badly as long as I could rationalize and lie about my behavior. The only thing that I hadn't considered was that I couldn't hide from my conscience, and it plagued me until I couldn't sleep at night without drinking myself into oblivion.

I had been a taker all my life. I never got enough of what I thought I needed. I was insecure. I had no self-esteem. No one



## THE IMPORTANCE OF STEP TWELVE

### Freedom From Unresolved Mental Issues

had any respect for me except for the (want to be) losers like myself. Guilt and shame, brought on by a hundred forms of fear, ruled my mind. Not a happy way to live!

When they ask me what freedom I cherish the most as the result of practicing the program of Alcoholics Anonymous, most of my fellow members would expect me to say freedom from alcohol. But they would be mistaken. I would reply that it is the freedom from all of those unresolved mental issues that plagued me to the point that only a drink would quiet my mind.

The hope that I experienced the minute I embraced this program—at the level of my innermost self— removed the obsession to drink alcohol, and it has never returned. I no longer have any fear of alcohol.

Having cleaned up the wreckage of the past by thoroughly taking the 12 Steps and ridding myself of the selfish

motives, my conscience is clear. My self-esteem is high, and the feeling of wellbeing is my constant companion.

I'm so glad that I didn't become complacent and think that I could rest on my laurels (as the Big Book says) at any point as I came to understand the meaning of Step Twelve: to practice these principles in all our affairs.

I try always to be an asset and never a liability. I am neither a victim nor a perpetrator. I am always willing to make things right as best I can. I can be trusted and relied upon. I feel that I am on the positive side of the ledger.

Peace of mind and a quiet heart have been my goals ever since I entered AA, and I am happy to say that I haven't been disappointed. One of my favorite prayers is: "Thank You God." It's everything You promised it would be.

<https://www.aacle.org/the-importance-of-step-twelve/>

**HOLIDAY ALKATHONS: An Alkathon is a safe and supporting environment offering food, fellowship and marathon A.A. meetings. Alkathons are open to everyone, whether A.A. members or not.**

## CHRISTMAS ALKATHON 2023

December 24th 9:00pm.

NonStop To 9:00pm.

December 25

Location:

The Hollywood Rescue Squad  
23469 Rescue Lane, Hollywood, Md.

This is a Potluck Event  
Food, refreshments, snacks, desserts,  
side dishes, and or Christmas candy  
Are Always Welcome

Hourly meetings until the  
Christmas Dinner fellowship Social  
starting at 5:00pm. until 7:00pm.  
with the final two meetings starting  
after the in-house dinner  
fellowship break ends at 7:00pm.

**Help District 36 Carry  
The Message of Recovery  
This Christmas**

Please sign up to lead a meeting  
by contacting Mary F. 240-237-2954  
and or for more information  
or any Questions

Sponsored By District 36

## 2023 New Years Alkathon

**Come To The 2023-24  
New Year's Alkathon  
Sponsored by District 36!  
The Event will run from  
6:00 pm. December 31st**

**To 6:00 pm. January 1st 2024**

**Location: Hollywood Rescue Squad  
23469 Rescue Lane, Hollywood, Md.**

**With non-stop meetings every hour!**

**Food will be available  
this is a potluck event  
so please bring your  
favorite dish to share.**

**So come out one and all  
to help carry and share the  
message of recovery at this New Year's  
To sign up to chair a meeting or for more  
information Call Pete D. 240-309-5182**

**So help District 36 carry the message  
of recovery by attending  
The New Year's Alkathon**

## Staying Sober and Happy Through the Holidays

- **Keep your expectations realistic, so you don't set yourself up for an emotional letdown.** Just because you're sober doesn't mean life will suddenly become a bowl of cherries. Other people in your life probably haven't changed, and many of the conflicts and rivalries that customarily crop up at family reunions will doubtless crop up again. Accept that this is so, roll with the punches, and rein in the urge to manipulate everything and everyone. It will be enough for you to just take

care of and control yourself.

- **Limit the amount of time you spend with relatives who make you crazy.** If all of the clan is gathering for the holiday, including your brother who drinks like a fish, plan on an overlap of just a day or two while he's there. (If he's arriving on Christmas Day and staying the week, you can arrive a couple of days before Christmas, help your hosts prepare, enjoy a quiet Christmas Eve, and then leave the next morning.)
- **If the holidays mean being away from home and your home group, be sure to attend meetings wherever you are.** Locate a meeting even before you get there. This will give you the booster support shot you'll almost certainly need at this difficult time—the chance to say,

“Sure, I love my family, but sometimes they drive me up the wall,” or to talk about whatever else it is that almost drives you to drink at the old homestead.

- **Plan activities other than just sitting around and gabbing—which in many families means sitting around and drinking.** Movies, museums, holiday concerts, skating, long walks, sledding with the kids, snowball fights, sports events and religious services can all help fill the time pleasantly and limit stress. If the weather keeps you indoors and you want to keep the conversation from getting out of hand, suggest some activities that will keep everyone busy and focused, such as cooking, board games, video games, or watching favorite old movies..

*(continued on page 3)*

(continued)

- Get plenty of rest, watch what you eat, get your usual exercise, and take time for meditation. Maintain your recovery routine as much as possible
- If the holiday celebration includes the use of alcoholic beverages, such as wine at Passover, make sure in advance that there is an adequate supply of a substitute, such as grape juice, for you and anyone else who doesn't want to drink alcohol.
- If you aren't going home for the holidays, plan to celebrate with AA friends. If you haven't been invited, do the inviting yourself. Follow old family traditions or start some of your own.
- Particularly during winter holidays, be sure there is plenty of light in your life. Keep the lights bright at home, try to get out when the sun is shining, light a cheery fire in the fireplace. Winter solstice

darkness and drabness can be psychologically and physiologically depressing.

[https://therecoverybook.com/holidays/?utm\\_source=rss&utm\\_medium=rss&utm\\_campaign=holidays](https://therecoverybook.com/holidays/?utm_source=rss&utm_medium=rss&utm_campaign=holidays)



### New Grapevine Mobile Apps are available!

For more info, follow <https://www.aagrapevine.org/apps>

## Bridging the Gap Information

[District 1](#) looking for AA members who are willing to be a *Bridging the Gap* Temporary Contact.

### What is a Temporary Contact?

- A TEMPORARY CONTACT is an AA member in the Bridging the Gap Program who helps a newcomer make the successful transition from a treatment or correctional facility into AA.
- A TEMPORARY CONTACT is not committed to help with every case; he or she simply assists when he or she can.
- This is basic 12<sup>th</sup> Step work, and the initial contact is like a 12<sup>th</sup> Step call.
- Being a TEMPORARY CONTACT is not the same type or level of commitment as being a sponsor. It is simply helping a newcomer to get started in AA.
- A TEMPORARY CONTACT does not provide lodging, money, or other social services.

### What is a Temporary Contact expected to do?

- Meet or make contact with the newcomer before or soon after the newcomer leaves the facility.
- To avoid any misunderstandings, explain clearly that this is a temporary arrangement.
- Try to do the things outlined in the AA pamphlet; [Bridging the Gap](#).
- Take the newcomer to a meeting and introduce him or her to other AA members.
- Explain group membership and the value of having a home group.
- Explain sponsorship to the newcomer, referring to the pamphlet; [Questions and Answers about Sponsorship](#) and perhaps help the newcomer find a sponsor.
- Review the many different meeting formats – open, closed, speakers, etc.
- Ensure the newcomer knows how to obtain a listing of meetings or provide a list to him or her.
- Introduce the newcomer to AA conference-approved literature and the *AA Grapevine*.

### How to become a TEMPORARY CONTACT:

Speak to your Intergroup rep or DCM, or if you want more information feel free to email [btg@calvertaa.org](mailto:btg@calvertaa.org).

The 11 recovering alcoholics stood in a circle on Christmas morning in a church hall in Woodbridge. Squeezing tight to one another's hands, they chanted: "Keep on coming. It works if you work it," and then reached out and hugged the person standing next to them. They had just finished a 45-minute Alcoholics Anonymous meeting, one of more than 150 held on Christmas Day throughout the Washington area, and now many of them were ready to go home and face the holiday. Other participants stayed on, for AA's Woodbridge group was in the middle of its third annual 72-hour "Alkathon," an event aimed at helping alcoholics cope with what is often their most stressful and depressing time of year. "It's a really lonely time of year for many alcoholics", said a 42-year-old accountant who attends the AA's Woodbridge meeting. About 700 people were expected to attend the Alkathon, she said. Participants asked to be identified by only their first name, and in some cases by only a description, to protect their identities. "Christmas dredges up all those issues we haven't dealt with," said Cliff, a Springfield businessman. "There's all that guilt. Closets full of guilt." Participants drifted in and out of Bethel United Methodist Church's Fellowship Hall. They drank lots of coffee, smoked lots of cigarettes, and talked about their experiences, their fears, their hopes. "This is the best Christmas I've had, because I'm sober. I don't care if I don't get anything," said a 26-year-old Prince William man. Several factors combine to make the holiday season difficult for people in recovery, said Michael Stoil, director of information and referral for the Washington Area Council on Alcoholism and Drug Abuse. The council hot line receives 200

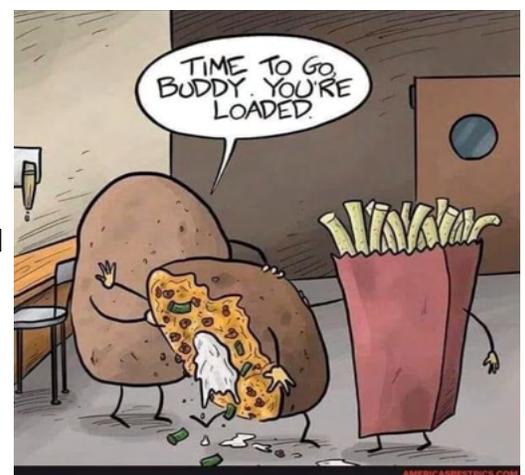
to 250 calls a day during the holidays, versus about 50 calls a day at other times of the year, Stoil said. Biologically, many people are susceptible to depression during the end of December because of the reduced daylight and the holiday season makes them emotionally vulnerable as well. "This is a period of time in which we raise expectations that you're supposed to be enjoying yourself," Stoil said. "When you get people who are depressed they remember the good times they had under the influence." "I'm grateful for the fact that I'm alive after two DWIs. There's a lot of reasons I shouldn't be," said Becky, 22. A student at George Mason University, she is recovering from alcoholism and drug abuse. "It's incredible how much my life has changed. This time I didn't have to claw for good grades." Some participants, such as Mike, 40, stopped drinking just five weeks ago; others, such as Stephen, a 48-year-old program analyst, have been clean for five years. But the holiday period is tough for all of them. A 35-year-old Stafford woman told the group that when she was on her way to a party, "I wished I could have a couple of drinks to make me more sociable. But it wasn't good for me. I wasn't a social drinker. I always blacked out." Many support groups do not meet during the holidays, and returning home can be difficult because many people come from alcoholic families. In addition, many holiday parties and events involve alcohol, presenting constant temptations ranging from cocktails to rum-laced cookies. For many in AA, the holidays bring back memories of family problems caused by their drinking. "I can remember my grandson saying 'I'd love to go hug grandpa but he's so angry all the time.' I don't want to be that type of person," Stephen

# 'ALKATHON' KEEPS SPIRITS FROM GETTING OUT OF HAND

said. "Now my grandchildren aren't afraid of me anymore.

Founded in 1935, AA estimates that it has more than 1.5 million members worldwide, with 12,000 to 15,000 in the Washington area. More than 1,400 meetings a week are held in the metropolitan area, said Lee, manager of the local AA office. The organization's 12-step recovery program has become the model for many addiction support groups. The meetings stress acceptance and compassion. When AA members speak, they introduce themselves as "Hi, I'm ----, and I'm an alcoholic," and the entire group responds, "Hi, ----." For some participants, AA fills a void. "I stayed till 2:30 a.m. the other night," said Margaret, 63. "If I didn't have AA, I wouldn't have a family."

<https://www.washingtonpost.com/archive/local/1989/12/26/alkathon-keeps-spirits-from-getting-out-of-hand/776bb614-6bd8-4bce-ab4a-0820c2d430fc/>



## **Step 12: Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these steps, we tried to carry this message to alcoholics and practice these principles in all our affairs.**

The Spiritual Principle of step 12 is Service: Spirituality requires a connection with a higher power. But the 12-step program isn't one of quiet self-reflection. Instead, it stands on principles that should be shared with those in need. As we apply spirituality to our lives, our journey is not complete until we help others do the same. The 12-steps work because they help us live a more fulfilling spiritual life. By the time you are done with the steps, you will have revitalized your inner spiritual life, connection to a Higher Power, and bonds with those around you. All of those outcomes are intentional and highly beneficial. So, as you work the steps, pay attention to the spiritual principles behind each step. It will improve your life immeasurably.

<https://12steppers.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/05/Spiritual-Principles-of-AA-PDF.pdf>

### **Service Work Helps To Keep Us Sober**

If nobody was doing any service work, the Alcoholics Anonymous program would simply cease to exist. Without the service work of those who came before us, none of us would be here now!

**Service Work In Recovery:** One of the more common sayings you will hear at an Alcoholics Anonymous meeting is that, "you have to give it away in order to keep it". What this is referring to is the idea that service in recovery can help the giver as much as the receiver. This giving should not be done in the hope of a reward or praise. Instead the individual does it because they know that it is helping to keep them connected. Numerous studies have provided evidence that helping others in recovery provides great benefit to the helper.

**Service in Recovery Defined:** Service in recovery refers to work carried out for no financial reward or compensation. This may involve directly helping somebody else, or indirectly helping them by providing services. Some individual do go on to make a career out of helping others, but this is no longer considered service if they receive payment.

**The Importance of Service in Alcoholics Anonymous:** Groups like Alcoholics Anonymous could not function without the voluntary services provided by members. All these meetings around the world are organized and maintained by volunteers. There is usually a collection at the end of

each meeting, but (in the spirit of the seventh tradition) this money is used to pay for rent, coffee, donuts, literature, and other overheads. Almost every person at these meetings will provide some type of service, even if it is just sharing a bit of their story, or preparing the coffee.

#### **Other Types of Service in Recovery:**

There is no need for the individual to be a member of a particular A.A. group in order for them to become involved in service. There are plenty of official and unofficial ways that those in recovery can help others. Such work is highly rewarding, and it can strengthen the commitment of the individual to their own recovery.

**Types of Service in Recovery:** Anything that directly or indirectly helps others in recovery could be considered service. Examples of this type of work include:

- Sponsorship
- Intergroup Representative
- General Service Representative
- Volunteering with homeless AAs
- Visiting AAs in prison
- Making coffee or tea at a AA meeting
- Chairing or moderating at a A.A. meeting
- Giving out coins / tokens/ chips.
- Meeting set-up or clean-up
- Welcoming newcomers to recovery meetings
- Being supportive of those who are struggling in recovery
- Taking an official service role within a recovery group, for example treasurer or secretary
- Making time to speak to people who

are obviously struggling with problems

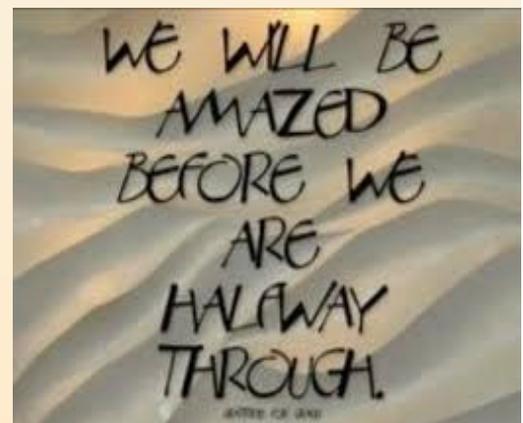
- Those individuals who do not hide their past can prove inspirational for those who are dealing with this type of problem.

#### **The Benefits of Service in Recovery:**

Service in recovery benefits both the giver and receiver. In a lot of instances it will actually be the giver who ends up benefiting the most. Such benefits include:

- Those people who devote some time to helping others are less likely to suffer with depression.
- Helping others with problems reminds the individual of where they have come from. This will keep the pain of dysfunction fresh in their minds so that they never forget it. This should keep them committed to the recovery path.
- The giver will feel that they are giving back and this will increase their confidence and self-esteem.
- Helping others takes the focus off the individual. This is important because a lot of problems in the recovering A.A.'s life will be due to self absorption.
- Providing service ensures that groups such as A.A. stay in business. If nobody volunteers their time these groups will disappear.

<https://toledoameetings.com/importance-aa-service-work/>



Many of us were sent to our first A.A. meeting by judges as a result of being arrested for drunk driving, family disputes or some other problem involving alcohol. Some of us were sent here by our employers. If you've come to AA for any of these reasons, you probably have some questions. We hope this article answers some of them.

Here's what AA has to say about AA:

**Alcoholics Anonymous is a fellowship of men and women who share their experience, strength and hope.** Millions of people have found recovery through AA, including many who were sent by the courts or their employers. There are meetings in virtually every country in the world from Australia to Zambia.

While some who are sent to AA attend the required meetings and never come back, others keep coming back because they find that AA helps them live without alcohol.

AA is not part of the court system. We do not work for the courts or the police department. We do not ask the courts to send people to us. And when people do show up with court cards, we are not responsible for making sure they are sober.

If a judge, court, school or employer has sent you to an AA meeting, it is because they believe there is evidence that you may have a drinking problem. We had nothing to do with their decision, but AA does provide information about recovery from alcoholism to interested parties. If

## Ordered to Attend AA? You're not alone and you're not the first.



you attend AA meetings... here are a few good points to remember:

- You are a welcomed guest.
- After the meeting is over, ask the chairperson to sign your card or form. While most meetings will sign court cards, some will not. It's up to each individual meeting to decide. Since AA is not allied with the court system, AA is not responsible for documenting your attendance, nor does AA provide the card or form you might need.
- If a meeting chairperson or group member offers to sign your court card, they will probably just sign their first name or initials. We are personally anonymous. We are not court employees.
- Many meetings are "open" where anyone is welcome to attend. Some meetings are "closed" which means it is for those

who have a desire to stop drinking or alcoholics only. Ask for a Where & When, the directory listing where and when all the meetings are – it's free.

- If you have any questions, please ask them before the meeting starts, during a break or when the meeting is over. You can always find someone willing to talk about AA and answer your questions.
- The men and women who voluntarily attend AA meetings are most likely alcoholics. They come from all walks of life. They learn to treat each other with respect.
- In AA we honor all members' anonymity. While you are free to take, talk about or use any ideas that you hear at a meeting, please do not ever identify anyone you heard or saw here.
- The only requirement for membership is a desire to stop drinking.
- There are no dues or fees for AA membership. We are self-supporting through our own voluntary contributions. We pass the basket at every meeting to pay our rent and expenses.
- Nobody in AA can tell you that you are an alcoholic. Some people may point out indications that you have symptoms of a drinking problem – loss of control, drunk driving, arrests, lost jobs, broken marriages or relationships. Blackouts, the shakes and so forth. But only you can decide if you are actually an alcoholic. If you determine that you are an alcoholic, we invite you to keep coming back.

<https://www.aacle.org/ordered-to-attend-aa/>

## My Experience With the Holidays Are Different

As bells ring out and carols echo everywhere, we should not be surprised if our spirits take a nosedive. It isn't that we don't understand the meaning of Christmas, or that we reject it, but rather that the idealized version of what Christmas should be has often times been denied us. We may come to resent the fact that all this good cheer seems to be for other people, not us. Our experiences may have had little to do

with family togetherness around a glowing fireplace, loving conversation, and delighted laughter. Such scenes feel like an affront if there has been no family closeness, perhaps no gifts, and little or no overt love. Of course it's wrenching when our own experience clashes so painfully with advertised reality! **But every day is a chance for new experience.** We can choose today to create the good cheer that wasn't created for us. It's too late to change yesterday's disappointment, but, if we choose, we can make this holiday season the one we'll remember. I have made a conscious decision to leave past Christmases in the past. Today, I will begin to plan a celebration.

<https://www.aacle.org/experience-holidays-different/>

## Twelfth Step Call Tips

When a Twelfth Step call is received, we begin with the assumption that another human being's life is at stake — literally. This means that, without delay, this call is to be answered at once.

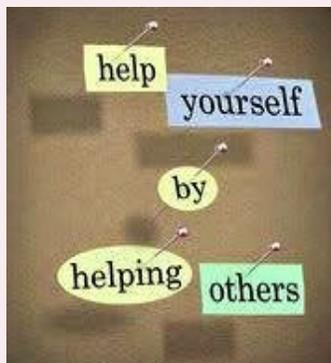
1. Arrange for another AA member to go with you.
2. Have a quiet time, read Chapter Seven in the Big Book.
3. Maintain anonymity.
4. Talk to the prospect alone, if possible. (That is, without his family and friends there.)
5. Congratulate him on wanting to do something about his drinking problem.
6. Give him some AA literature.
7. Note well what the Big Book says at the bottom of page 94: "On your first visit tell him about the Fellowship of Alcoholics Anony-

mous. If he shows interest, lend him your copy of this book."

8. Each of you tell him "what you used to be like, what happened, and what you are like now."

9. If he wants to talk, let him.

10. At the top of page 95, it advises, "Give him a chance to think it over... Sometimes a new man is anxious to proceed at once, and you may be tempted to let him do so. This is sometimes a mistake. If he has trouble later, he is likely to say you rushed him... If he is sincerely interested and wants to see you again, ask him to read this book in the interval (at least ask him to read the first 164 pages). After doing that (reading the book), he must decide for himself



if he wants to go on.

11. When you are ready to leave, tell him you will call on him the following day if he wants, and he will have had time to read the first 164 pages, or had time to think about your conversation. Note that the second paragraph on page 96 says, "Suppose you are now making your second visit to a man. He has read this volume, and he is prepared to go through with the Twelve Steps of the program of recovery." At this point you review the Twelve Steps with him, and arrange to bring him to your group meeting. If he does not want to go on, or feels that he can do it some other way, pick up your copy of the Big Book and invite him to call on you again if he changes his mind and decides that AA can be of help.

12. Finally, note how the Big Book, at the top of page 96 says, "We find it a waste of time to keep chasing a man who cannot, or will not, work with you. If you leave such a person alone, he may soon become convinced that he cannot recover by himself."

<https://www.aacle.org/twelfth-step-call-tips/>

# Service Opportunities!

Grapevine Meeting! 4th Tuesday of each month  
6:30 pm

Did you know that The Area 29 Grapevine Committee is a traveling literature store? We have a large variety of AA Grapevine books for sale. Please reach back out if your group, District, or intergroup is hosting an event or workshop and would like us to come and sell literature.

Join Zoom Meeting:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85217774704?pwd=TVhEdFpKdmxSRINvNnJHU1pYWdVaQT09>

Meeting ID: 852 1777 4704 Passcode: 019347

Brandi D., Area 29 Grapevine Committee Chair

For more info: [grapevine@marylandaa.org](mailto:grapevine@marylandaa.org)

Group and District GVR's encouraged to attend, all are welcome!

**Are you looking for a fun service position?**

Please join us and find out more! All are welcome to attend!

2023 Calendar for Area 29 Maryland General Service, Inc.

*All Committee and Assembly meetings will continue to be offered via Hybrid for foreseeable future.*

December 16 Area Assembly, **hosted by District 40** Trinity United Methodist Church, 703 West Patrick St., Frederick, MD 21701

**IMPORTANT: NOTE DATE CHANGE FOR DECEMBER MEETING!!**

- Zoom link for Hybrid option will be included in emailed meeting invitation each month
- 8 a.m. to 9 a.m. Coffee, donuts, and fellowship-ping
- 8:20 a.m. Orientation for new GSRs and DCMs
- Attendees will be asked to provide your own lunch.
- 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Business Meeting (meeting ends when business is concluded).
- Meetings may be subject to COVID restrictions as determined by the facility. These will be communicated via email prior to that meeting

# DECEMBER 2023

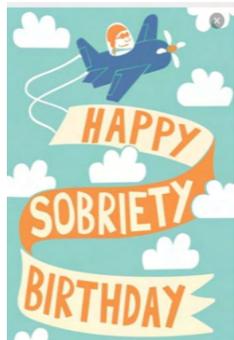
| SUN  | MON  | TUE                           | WED  | THU                         | FRI                          | SAT  |
|--|--|-------------------------------|--|-----------------------------|------------------------------|--|
| <b>CONGRATULATIONS WELL DONE!</b>                                |  |                               |  |                             |                              | 1<br>2 JD M., 3 yrs and Luke R., 1 yr, Saturday AM 12 & 12<br><br>Casey M., 32 yrs, Kingston Creek |
| 3  | 4  | 5                             | 6  | 7                           | 8                            | 9  |
|  |  | Ken S., 12 yrs, Happy Destiny | Ellen C., 16 yrs, D0 Drop In - (Zoom Only) |                             |                              | Sam O., 16 yrs, North Beach  |
| 10   | 11   | 12                            | 13   | 14                          | 15                           | 16   |
| Phil T., 40 yrs, Never Too Late<br><br>Kevin 1 yr, Bedouin Group | Anne M., 47 yrs, Warner<br><br>Willie A., 15 yrs, Monday Nite Traditions |                               |  |                             |                              | Paige D., 12 yrs, Early Risers   |
| 17   | 18   | 19                            | 20   | 21                          | 22                           | 23   |
|  | Billy P., 50 yrs, Roads End  |                               | Mary Jo, 4 yrs, Step Sisters               | Sean H., 4 yrs, Harmony     | Crystal L., 4 yrs, Clean Air |  |
| 24   | 25   | 26                            | 27   | 28                          | 29                           | 30   |
|  |  |                               |  | Casey H., 1 yr, Poplar Hill |                              | Steve H., 33 yrs, Kingston Creek   |

31 Keith, 41 yrs, Tracy's Landing



# JANUARY 2024

SUN MON TUE WED THU FRI SAT



1  
2 Donna B., 7 yrs, Hollywood  
3  
4  
5  
6 Kaki B., 30 yrs and J.R. D., 5 yrs, Laurel Grove  
John W., 36 yrs, Kingston Creek

7 Tim I., 6 yrs, Never Too Late  
8  
9  
10  
11  
12  
13 Dennis B., 48 yrs, Kingston Creek

14 Francis R., 32 yrs, KISS  
15  
16  
17  
18  
19  
20 Claudia D., 13 yrs, Early Risers (ZOOM)

21  
22  
23 Al S., 35 yrs, Hollywood  
24  
25 Larry W., 1 yr, Poplar Hill  
26  
27 Eileen M., 24 yrs, Kingston Creek

28 David D., 15 yrs, KISS  
29  
30  
31



# NORTH BEACH GROUP

## 52nd Anniversary



Please bring a dish or dessert to share

### December 2nd, 2023

### 5:00 PM - 7:00 PM

### Meeting at 7:30 PM



Join us is celebrating 52 years of service!

DISTRICT 1 PRESENTS:

"Keep It Simple, Sweetheart!"

# 2023

## New Year's Eve Party

Dec. 31 | 7 pm to Midnight

Ticket Price:

# \$15

Includes:  
Buffet Dinner Main Course  
(Vegetarian option available)  
Drinks, Coffee



Crossroads Church  
150 Ball Road  
St. Leonard, MD. 20685

**ADULTS ONLY**  
Thank You!

Celebrate New Year's Eve  
with friends, fellowship, music and more!

Door Prizes - 50/50 Raffle

Buffet Dinner with speaker starts at 7:30 p.m.

Please bring a dish to share:  
Last Names (A-L) Side Dish (M-Z) Dessert

For questions, or to volunteer  
Contact: [Secretary@CalvertAA.org](mailto:Secretary@CalvertAA.org)

## Southern Maryland's 13<sup>th</sup> Annual Roundup

with Al-Anon participation

# 24 Hours a Day

DoubleTree by Hilton  
Annapolis, Maryland

## March 15-17, 2024



For conference and lodging information, please visit

[www.SouthernMarylandRoundup.org](http://www.SouthernMarylandRoundup.org)

or email: [Info@SoMdRoundup.com](mailto:Info@SoMdRoundup.com)

### SPEAKERS

Pam H. Amherst, OH  
Robert M. Stuart, FL  
Lisa L. Boyton Beach, FL  
Harold L. St. Louis, MO

Carole C. Columbus, OH  
Kelly C. Columbus, OH  
John E. Nashville, TN  
Al Anon: Teresa S. Clinton, MD

"FAITH HAS TO WORK TWENTY-FOUR HOURS A DAY IN AND THROUGH US, OR WE PERISH." -BB, PG. 16

# Fall 2023 **CONTRA** Study

September 14, 2023 through December 28, 2023  
Thursdays from 9:00 PM to 10:00 PM Eastern Time (US/Canada)

Moderated by Trusted Servants from Area 29 (Maryland) & Area 13 (DC)

**Zoom Meeting ID: 814 7038 7175**

**Passcode: 195173**

Dial-in number for phone callers: +1 (301) 715-8592

We invite all A.A. members to this virtual study of the  
**CON**cepts, **TRAD**itions & *The A.A. Service Manual*

Sep 14, 2023 – Registration & Orientation

Sep 21, 2023 – Traditions 1, 2 & 3

Sep 28, 2023 – Traditions 4, 5 & 6

Oct 5, 2023 – Traditions 7, 8 & 9

Oct 12, 2023 – Traditions 10, 11 & 12

Oct 19, 2023 – Service Manual, pp. I-VIII, 1-6, 85-104

Oct 26, 2023 – Svc Man Ch 1 2 3 & pp 105-14, 160-2

Nov 2, 2023 – Svc Man, Chapters 4 5 6 & pp 164-8

Nov 9, 2023 – Svc Man, Chapters 7 8 9 & pp 169-73

Nov 16, 2023 – Svc Man Ch 10 11 12 & pp 155-9, 163

Nov 23, 2023 – Service Manual, pp. 115-154

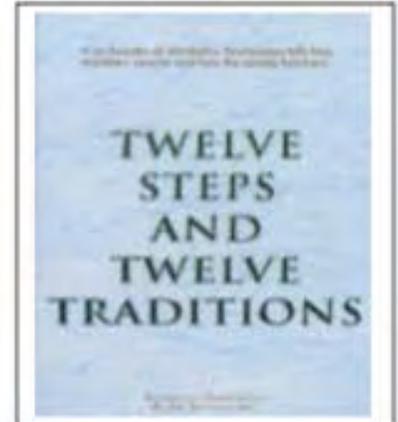
Nov 30, 2023 – Concepts pp I-VIII, C1-C2, Con 1 2 3

Dec 7, 2023 – Concepts 4, 5 & 6

Dec 14, 2023 – Concepts 7, 8 & 9

Dec 21, 2023 – Concepts 10 & 11

Dec 28, 2023 – Concept 12



## **CONTRA Study Materials (provided via email following registration):**

*Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions*, B-2 (free participant download at [www.aa.org](http://www.aa.org))

*The A.A. Service Manual combined with The Twelve Concepts for World Service*, BM-31, 2021-2023 edition

*AA Grapevine Traditions Checklist*, July 2018 revision

*Fall 2023 CONTRA Study Service Manual Questions*

*A.A.W.S. Concepts Checklist*, SMF-91, 08/18 edition

We will cover approximately three chapters of reading material per week, with associated questions. Only those who have read the assignment and have written answers to the weekly questions will be invited to read their answers to the group. All others are welcome to join the meeting and listen.

Presented by Districts 10 & 17, Area 29 (MD)

and District 2, Area 13 (DC)

For more information, contact:

[2023contrastudy@gmail.com](mailto:2023contrastudy@gmail.com)

# FORGIVENESS: A STEPPING STONE TO JOY

Forgiveness is critical in the creation of joy. When we do not forgive, we are harboring resentments and anger. Learning to forgive is an act of love for yourself. We have all heard that we don't forgive someone for them, we forgive for us. Holding onto grudges towards another will only tear you apart bit by bit.

Dr. Fred Luskin of the Stanford University Forgiveness Project defines forgiveness as "the feeling of peace that emerges as you take your hurt less personally, take responsibility for how you feel and become a hero instead of a victim in the story that you tell. Forgiveness is the experience of peacefulness in the present moment."

***"Holding on to anger is like grasping a hot coal with the intent of throwing it at someone else; you are the one getting burned."***

— ***Buddha***

I love this definition of forgiveness for a few reasons. First, it states that we need to take responsibility for how we feel. We are not responsible for what others do to us, but we can take responsibility for our reaction and for how we let it affect us. Second, I love the concept of being a hero rather than a victim. People who practice forgiveness are heroes. There is a story that comes to mind of a woman who was critically injured many years ago when a teenager threw a frozen turkey through her windshield. This happened near where I live. Everyone was shocked and upset by this incident. Every bone in her face was crushed. This woman, Victoria Ruvolo endured endless surgeries and horrible pain. Yet at the hearing for the young man who did this to her, she pleaded for his leniency. She forgave him. In an interview in the Daily News she stated, "If I hadn't let go of that anger, I'd be consumed by this need for revenge. Forgiving him helps me move on." She didn't ask to be a hero. She didn't want this horrible experience, but in many ways, it came to de-

fine the person that she is. She has woven this into her life and now she serves as an inspiration to others.

During the course of our lives, we are going to be hurt and we are going to inflict some hurt too. We aren't going to get out of this life completely unscathed. People are imperfect and will do things that affect others in a negative way. It is hard to be on the receiving end of these hurts. It is also hard to know you've hurt another. We want to know that we will be forgiven for what we've done wrong. If we don't learn how to forgive others and ourselves we will have a very hard time being happy or joyful.

We all have those stories of hurt that we can tell. The hurt can seem as fresh as if it just happened even if it was many years ago. We hold onto these stories and the hurt and resentment that go along with them. They can become part of our identity and they even affect our other relationships.

Learning to let go is an important step toward being a more joyful person. Forgiveness does not mean reconciling with someone who has wronged you. They don't even have to know about your forgiveness of them if you don't want to contact the person. When we forgive we make a decision to not let our feelings of anger dominate our thoughts. We choose to accept that whatever happened, happened. We can try to understand where the person was in their life that caused them to hurt us. In this way, we develop compassion for them. Compassion is required for forgiveness. As we understand the other person and why they did what they did, we are able to forgive the wounded part of them that caused us pain. And then we make a decision to let it go – to keep it in the past where it belongs. It is this decision, to forgive, which sets us free and allows us to live joyfully.

<https://www.recoveryconnection.com/forgiveness-stepping-stone-joy/>

***"The next time you feel hurt, outraged, bitter or resentful – the beginning of many a slip as attested to by AA speakers – try to remember quickly that you haven't been mortally harmed. In nearly all cases, it's just a pain in your feelings!"***

<https://www.aagrapevine.org/site-search?keys=&page=3011>

# SMIA Meeting

## Minutes

### November 11, 2023

**Opening:** Buddy F. opened with the Serenity Prayer.

**Board Members present:** Buddy F. - Chair, Rob A. – Parliamentarian and Kristi P. – Secretary

**Groups & Committees Represented:**  
Paul S. – Cove Point, Bill L – Sunderland/Bookstall, Bruce O. – Waldorf, Amanda W. – ODDAT, George W. – Inspiration, Roy B. – Solomons, Zee S. – Sunday Morning Sobriety, Mary F. – Leonardtown Group, Billy B. – There is a Solution, Kim K. – Solomons, Melissa W. – Basic Text/Phone, Pat P. – Where and When's, Linda B. – Waldorf, Andy S.

**SMIA Chair Report:** Buddy F. – There is General Assembly meeting in Smithburg, MD on 11/18. Intergroup Liaison zoom meetings on Monday evenings. Buddy has zoom information. Buddy hosted the meeting last month and it went well.

Next NERAASA will be held in Hershey Park, PA from 2/23-2/25. The 28th Southeast Woman to Woman Conference will be held in Charlotte, NC from 8/16-8/18. There is a CONTRA Study Online meeting every Thursday thru December from 9-10 pm on concepts and traditions (flyer in the Lifeline). Footprints in the Sand will be held from 2/2-2/4 in Ocean City, MD at Ashore Resort. Buddy attended the Intergroup Liaison Committee for Area 29 in Cincinnati Oct 12-15. Bookstall inventory has been completed.

**Vice-Chair Report:** Not available

**Secretary Report:** Read by Kristi P. –

October 2023 minutes were accepted as read.

**Treasurer Report:** Bill L. reported on Rebecca's behalf. 9/25/23 – 10/24/23 report provided was accepted as presented.

Total assets \$11,661.34. Please note that moving forward the prudent reserve and savings will be separated to avoid confusion.

#### Committee Reports

**Archives:** No report

**By-Laws Committee:** No report

**Lifeline:** Keith inquired about whether the reduced file size is saving on printing cost. All agreed it's good as is. Looking for a volunteer to write an article on Spotlight on Service and a volunteer to write an article about the Gratitude Dinner and what they enjoyed about it and it's importance to the local AA community.

**Phone Report:** Melissa W. – 9/9/23-10/14/23 – Total of 22 calls, 2 hours and 7 minutes total. St. Mary's – 12 calls, Charles -7 calls and Calvert - 3 calls. 10/14/23-11/11/23 – Total of 1 hour and 30 minutes. St. Mary's – 2 calls, Charles - 7 calls and Calvert – 4 calls. No choice, just calling in – 11 calls. Note – this is a different report than reported at the SMIA meeting. Melissa did more investigation and call the GOTO connect for clarification.

**Serenity Breakfast:** Mary F. and Melissa W. are looking into locations for breakfast in May 2024. Possibly St. Andrew's Church Hall. The Serenity Breakfast in October went well. Profit of \$2,066.

**Picnic:** SMIA will host a picnic this summer. Looking for volunteers for a committed. Possibility of selling tickets and giving money back when people show up so we have a good headcount, committee will

discuss.

**Gratitude Dinner:** Everything moving along, all tickets sold.

**Corrections and Treatment:** Charles County – no change. RCA every day except Sunday, Jude House – every Wednesday.

Calvert County-no report. St. Mary's – detention center every Wednesday at 7 pm. Has a good amount of volunteers.

**PI/CPC:** Mary F. placed an order for literature, she will be restocking. Where and When's out for the fall, but not the winter. Mary will be doing public information presentations on AA. Contacted the Garvey Center, St. Mary's County Health Department, and the Sheriff's Dept.

**Bookstall Report:** Bill L. - There were 653 visits to the On-Line Bookstall since the October meeting. There were 8 orders since the last meeting; 2 are processing and 8 were completed. Completed orders totaled \$232.75. Processing orders totaled \$48.95

**Web Report:** 10/14/23 – 11/11/23  
Total Visitors (initial visit) 2535– down 26%. 5 Most Frequently visited pages  
Home Page – 2513  
Where and When Calendar- 306  
Where and When Search -249  
Minutes - 215

Anniversary Calendar - 134

Referring Sites Direct

Others

Search Engines – Google, DuckDuckGo, Yahoo. Site Updates and Changes - No significant changes this month.

Meeting Change Information - New Meeting – Another Late Night, Charles County, at the Great Escape Recovery Lounge on Fridays at 10:00 PM. *(continued on page 14)*

(continued)

Temporarily suspended meeting,

Calvert County, Beach Beacon Friday Night. Suspended indefinitely. The group will make a decision soon on the permanent status.

**Where and When:** Pat P. – We still have some. Let Pat know when to reprint.

**Old Business** – SMIA will have a group conscience before next meeting to discuss contributions to Area 29 and GSO.

**New Business** – Looking for an Archives Chair, will post in the Lifeline and on the website.

**For the Good of the Order** – Zee S. will celebrate 10 yrs at Sunday Morning Sobri-

ety on 11/12. Thank you to John for donating books for the Gratitude Dinner. The Christmas Alkathon will be held at the Hollywood Volunteer Rescue Squad from 12/24-12/25 from 9 pm – 9 pm (flyer available)

Meeting adjourned with the Responsibility Pledge and the Lord's Prayer.

**We have an immediate opening available for an Archives Chair. This position maintains all archived records for SMIA. If interested, please join us at the next SMIA meeting (1/13/24, see p. 17 for time/location) or reach out to any of the SMIA team.**

*“There is both a need and an obligation to save the history of our Fellowship within our Area. To be preserved for present and future generations. It is highly important that the factual material be placed in our files in such a way that there can be no substantial distortion.” Bill W. 1957*

# Treatment Center Committee

**“The District 36 Treatment Center Committee” is looking for female fellowship members,**

**who are willing and have a year or more of sobriety to bring in-house A.A. meetings into the Jude House**

**Wednesday Evenings 7:00pm.**

**Please contact this committee at our email:**

**treatmentcommittee36@gmail.com**

**This is a very rewarding experience!**

**Come join up and try it out!**

**The Committee Contact:**

**treatmentcommittee36@gmail.com**



<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84124993206?pwd=OVBWNjJjeHg4eFFibkhNcDRyOXhUZz09>



**Does your Home Group have a GSR?**  
(General Service Representative)

**Does it have an alternate GSR?**  
Have your GSR & Alternate GSR contact  
Debbie P. (301)-825-2740

**Your group's voice needs to be heard.**  
*You could be the link between your Home Group and the General Service Organization*

2 year service commitment. Make a commitment to your group and your sobriety.

**Anyone is eligible.**

**When?**  
6:30PM on the 3rd Monday of every month

**Where?**  
Presbyterian Church  
115 W. 2nd St.  
Frederick, MD  
Or on zoom  
(Meeting ID:81101121309 Passcode:District)

# December 2023

## Southern Maryland Intergroup Association Inc Treasury Report

**Monthly Contributions:  
\$396.50**

[www.somdintergroup.org/contribute](http://www.somdintergroup.org/contribute)  
SMIA, PO Box 767, Charlotte Hall, MD 20622

**Southern Maryland Intergroup Association Inc  
Statement of Financial Position  
September 25, 2023 - October 24, 2023**

**Assets**

|                           |          |
|---------------------------|----------|
| Primary Business Checking | 8,348.20 |
| Primary Business Savings  | 3,000.79 |
| Prudent Reserve           | 3,300.00 |
| PayPal                    | 139.08   |
| Bookstall Cash on hand    | 100.00   |

**Total Assets** 14,888.07

**Expenses**

|                         |          |
|-------------------------|----------|
| Bookstall               | (155.10) |
| Liability Insurance     |          |
| Lifeline Printing       | (127.84) |
| Misc                    | (265.10) |
| Phone Answering Service | (25.10)  |
| PO Box Rental           |          |
| Rent                    | (150.00) |
| Webmaster               |          |
| Website Maintenance     | (45.05)  |
| Where and When          |          |

**Total Expenses** (\$768.19)

**Southern Maryland Intergroup Association Inc  
Yearly Statement of Activity  
May 1, 2023 - Apr 30, 2024**

**Revenue**

|                    |          |
|--------------------|----------|
| Contributions      | 3,375.11 |
| Bookstall          | 2,236.95 |
| Gratitude Dinner   | 1,197.00 |
| Serenity Breakfast | 2,066.00 |

**Total Revenue** 8,875.06

**Expenses**

|                         |            |
|-------------------------|------------|
| Bookstall               | (2,849.38) |
| Liability Insurance     | (273.00)   |
| Lifeline Printing       | (737.30)   |
| Misc                    | (645.10)   |
| Phone Answering Service | (175.05)   |
| PO Box Rental           | (114.00)   |
| Rent                    | (1,050.00) |
| Webmaster               | (930.00)   |
| Website Maintenance     | (344.91)   |
| Where and When          |            |

**Total Expenses** (\$7,118.74)

**Annual Net Assets** 1,756.32

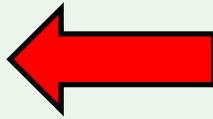
# WHERE DO WE SEND OUR CONTRIBUTIONS?

1) All contributions can be made online:  
[www.somdintergroup.org/donate.php](http://www.somdintergroup.org/donate.php)

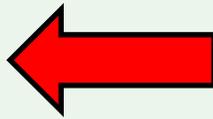
2) Or they can be mailed to the appropriate office location:

**\*\*\*PLEASE NOTE THAT GSO AND MARYLAND GENERAL SERVICE OFFICE ADDRESSES HAVE CHANGED\*\*\***

**General Service Office  
 Post Office Box 2407  
 James A Farley Station  
 New York, NY 10116-2407**



**Maryland General Service Inc.  
 P.O. Box 207  
 Benson, MD. 21018**



**Southern Maryland Intergroup (SMIA)  
 P.O. Box 767  
 Charlotte Hall, MD 20622**

**District 1 Trust Fund (Calvert)  
 P.O. Box 234  
 Barstow, MD 20610**

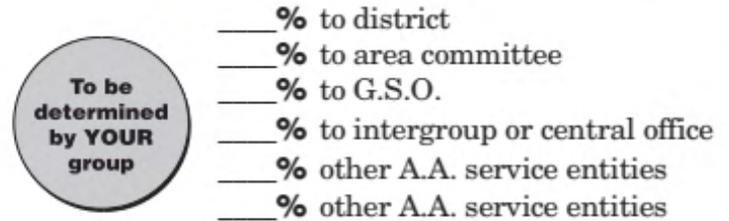
**District 35 (Charles)  
 P.O. Box 1981  
 La Plata, MD 20646**

**District 36 (St. Mary's)  
 P.O. Box 1334  
 California, MD 20619**

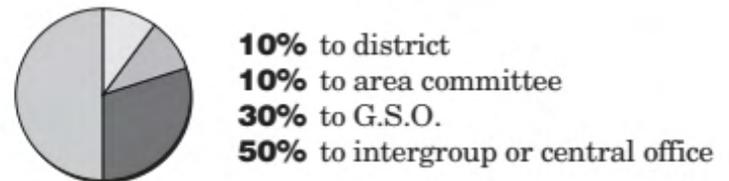
## Samples of Group Contributions to A.A. Service Entities\*

Distribution Plan of \_\_\_\_\_  
 (YOUR GROUP NAME)

Your Group Service # \_\_\_\_\_  
 (Be sure to write group name and service # on all contributions.)

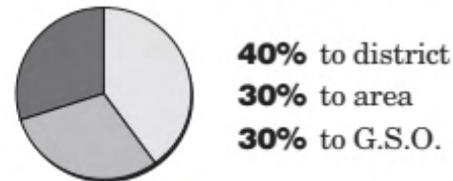


OR



OR

If you have no intergroup/central office.



## ATTENTION GROUP TREASURERS:

***\*Remember to include the 6-digit GSO Group Number on all correspondence to Maryland General Service.***

**DISTRICT 35 - CHARLES CO.**

**Please come out and join us  
at our next District Meeting -  
the first Thursday of the  
month @ 7pm**

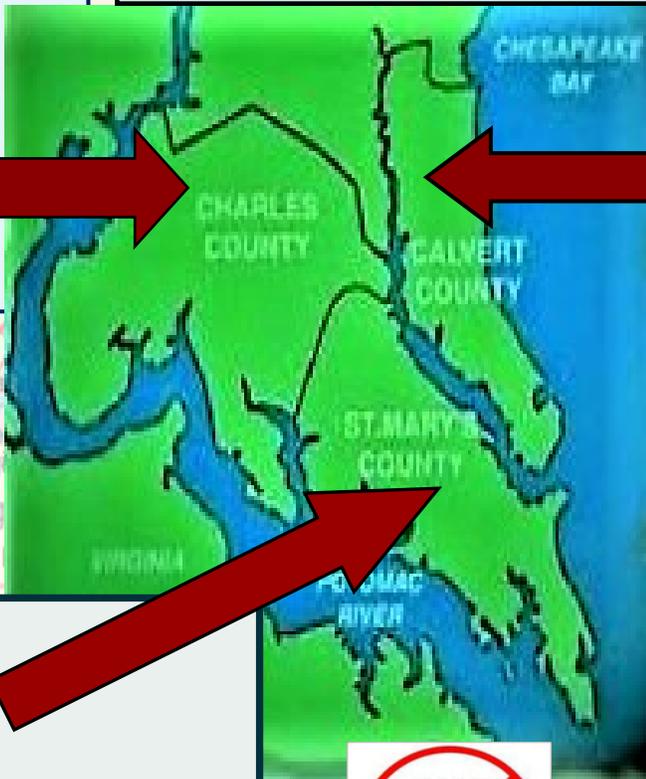
**Peace Lutheran Church  
11610 Rubina Place  
Waldorf MD 20602**

**Mailing address:  
PO Box 1981, La Plata,  
MD 20646**

**SERVICE KEEPS US  
SOBER**

**NEW BOOKSTALL HOURS:**

First and Third Thursday of the  
month 6:00pm - 6:45pm  
Second Saturday of the month 9am - 10am



**DISTRICT 1  
CALVERT COUNTY**

**SERVICE  
OPPORTUNITIES**

- **Accessibility Chair**
- **Grapevine Rep**

**District Meeting:**

**7 PM, 3rd Monday  
St. Paul's Episc.  
Church**

**Prince Frederick, MD  
District 1 Trust Fund**

**PO Box 234  
Barstow, MD 20610  
[www.calvertaa.org](http://www.calvertaa.org)**



**DISTRICT 36**

**ST. MARY'S COUNTY**

**PO Box 1334, California, MD 20619**

**[www.district36mdaa.com](http://www.district36mdaa.com)**



**DISTRICT NOTES**

**Please send any up-  
dates for the Where &  
When to:**

**[smia.whereandwhen@  
somdaa.org](mailto:smia.whereandwhen@somdaa.org)**

**Current meeting guides  
are available at the  
monthly SMIA meeting  
on a limited basis.**

**The next SMIA Meeting will be held on**

**Saturday, January 13 10:00 AM**

**Join us in person @**

**Immaculate Conception Church,  
28297 Old Village Road, Mechanicsville, MD  
20659**

**Or via Zoom @**

**[https://zoom.us/j/99982597908?  
pwd=QzVLcUZrVHdacFlrYUNZN21tdkluQT09](https://zoom.us/j/99982597908?pwd=QzVLcUZrVHdacFlrYUNZN21tdkluQT09)**

**“Alcoholics Anonymous has no opinion on outside issues; hence the AA name ought never be drawn into public controversy.”**

**THE DEADLINE FOR ALL LIFELINE SUBMISSIONS IS THE 27th OF EACH MONTH.**



The spiritual substance of anonymity is sacrifice. Because A.A.'s Twelve Traditions repeatedly ask us to give up personal desires for the common good, we realize that the sacrificial spirit - well symbolized by anonymity - is the foundation of them all. It is A.A.'s proved willingness to make these sacrifices that gives people their high confidence in our future. [https://](https://www.alcoholicsanonymous.ie/)

[www.alcoholicsanonymous.ie/](https://www.alcoholicsanonymous.ie/)

**“There is, however, a vast amount of fun about it all. I suppose some would be shocked at our seeming worldliness and levity.”**

### **RECOVERY COACH BARNEY FIFE**

**LET'S GO OVER OUR RELAPSE PREVENTION PLAN...**

**ARE YOU KEEPING SECRETS? NIP THAT IN THE BUD.**

**ARE YOU ISOLATING? NIP IT IN THE BUD.**

**ARE YOU SKIPPING MEETINGS? NIP IT! NIP IT IN THE BUD.**



LordofLaughs.com

**“Our leaders are but trusted servants, they do not govern.”**

**Our primary purpose is to help the still suffering alcoholic. SMIA is committed to this principle and provides a 24x7 Telephone Service. We need phone volunteers! Go to our website, [www.somdintergroup.org](http://www.somdintergroup.org). Click on the Phone List link, complete the online form - this is a secure method to add your name to the 12-Step Call List. This protected information is only shared with the Phone Committee Chair. You will be amazed before you're half way through.**



It must never be forgotten that the purpose of Alcoholics Anonymous is to sober up alcoholics. There is no religious or spiritual requirement for membership. No demands are made on anyone. An experience is offered which members may accept or reject. That is up to them.

— Bill W. —

QUOTES

# RECOVERY.

**You must be present to win.**

## SMIA SERVICE TEAM:

- Chair: Buddy F.
- Vice Chair: Katherine L.
- Secretary: Kristi P.
- Treasurer: Rebecca B.
- Parliamentarian: Rob A.
- Where & When: Pat P.
- Lifeline: Keith H.
- Telephone: Melissa W.
- Digital/Written Media: Bill L.
- Archives: VACANT

**The Lifeline** is an unofficial newsletter published by Southern Maryland Intergroup Association, Inc. Any opinions expressed are those of the writers. They are not endorsed by SMIA, any group or AA as a whole. Group secretaries and individuals are encouraged to send group news, anniversaries and events. Material may be edited for space and content. Please send all *Lifeline* correspondence to: [somdlife-line@gmail.com](mailto:somdlife-line@gmail.com)