

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 | \ 'līf-, 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>

6 Strategies for Sober Holidays with Family



I stopped drinking in June of 1997. I went to AA and counted days off of alcohol. As I endured a roller-coaster of emotions day to day, sometimes hour to hour, I pretended to (and sometimes, genuinely did) enjoy my first sober summer New York City. As the hot days transitioned into cooler ones, and as I was safely past my first 90 days sober and experiencing my first sober everything, I prepared for my first holiday season – and potentially visiting my family – without my buffer and crutch, alcohol. I say “prepared for” because at the time, I wasn’t sure what I would do when the time came to fly home to visit my family.

As many are, my family is complicated. I am the oldest of 5 children. So at the time, I wanted to get down to my hometown to visit my siblings because Christmas was still quite “fun” with family gatherings and the younger family members still excited by the Christmas morning surprises. However, my family is much

divided, and in spite of my excitement to see everyone, I didn’t have to think too far ahead to anticipate the feeling of dread when faced with the reality of the drama of my large, broken family.

“Alcoholism is a three-fold illness: Thanksgiving, Christmas, and New Year’s Eve,” so the saying goes in AA. Sometimes I roll my eyes at it. How dramatic to attribute so much negative discussion to these beautiful annual traditions. But sometimes I acknowledge just how difficult this time of year can be. That even though I relish the moment that Pumpkin Spice Lattes reappear in the Starbucks menu, and the evenings that I pass the Rockefeller Center Christmas Tree when I leave my office, when I take an honest appraisal of my experience in the days leading up to, and celebrating these auspicious holidays, I know that sadness and anxiety creep in when I think of unmet family expectations, addicted family members who turn up in frighteningly bad

shape, and the knowledge that one or both parents are sad that our family is divided and not the perfect picture we thought we should be.

“I know that sadness and anxiety creep in when I think of unmet family expectations and addicted family members who turn up in frighteningly bad shape”

When I set out for my first sober holiday trip home, I did so with hopeful, helpful preparation. For me, I had the relationship with my sponsor as well as meetings from which to draw support. Some recovering people might not go to AA but have therapists, trusted clergy people or friends with whom they can discuss anxious feelings or the idea of coming up with a Plan B if the family visit becomes too much. Here are some of the suggestions I took both at my first sober holiday with my family, and in the years after:

1. Have phone numbers of trusted people to call. In my early years we didn’t have cellphones from (continued on page 2)

(con't) which we could text or call a safe person right away. Nonetheless, I kept a list of phone numbers of people who said I could call them if I felt anxious or like I wanted to drink. And I did. And it helped me tremendously! Sometimes just the sound of a friendly, familiar person's voice calmed me to the extent that I could return to the dinner table where the crazy conversations were happening.

2. Rent a car, or make sure to have your own transportation.

There is nothing worse than feeling trapped at the family home or at the holiday party that's gotten out of control with no means of getting away. I try to always have my own means of transportation when I'm visiting family anyway.

3. Stay in a hotel, or with friends.

I have a good friend who always had "my room" ready for me at her house, which wasn't too far from my parents'. Sometimes I could afford a hotel, which was luxurious! It was kind of fun acting like a tourist in my own hometown. Other times I couldn't afford the plane fare, rental car, and a hotel, so I allowed my friend to house me.

Trust me, being able to stay on my own, away from my family, gave me the greatest peace during otherwise emotionally wrought visits home. There might be times when your family "insists" that you stay with them, but I've given them excuses such as needing a quiet place to be able to do work, having an allergy to a family pet, or even needing to catch up on my sleep – so that I don't have to tell them that staying with them breaks my sanity into little pieces.

4. Keep a journal.

Sometimes it helps me to be able to sneak off and just write out how I'm feeling. It's a simple act but it has given me moments of solace when

my mind races with wild emotion. Going off by myself to do a little writing is not a grand gesture, but it gives pause – however small it may be – during my time with the family.

5. Find a way to do service.

If I remember correctly, during my first Christmas vacation to see my family in sobriety, I cried a lot. I felt a lot of responsibility in



keeping my family happy and often times, I just broke down and cried. I went to Midnight Mass that year. I cried – Mass was in my childhood church, filled with bitter-sweet memories – but while there I discovered I could assist the elderly celebrants during services. Being with others took away the sad feelings that were overwhelming me. I was making new memories in that church. In late years, I volunteered

on Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Day and New Year's Eve and Day. I found many organizations outside of my church which gave opportunities to help others during the holidays. Not only did I feel a new usefulness when I volunteered, I met new, really cool people who were there doing the same thing!

6. Try to remember that you're not

alone.

You're not. You may experience loneliness or extremely difficult feelings which you once drank over. Holidays with or without the family can be difficult. The days and the feelings will pass. Call a friend, a sponsor, anyone you trust to speak to. You may even need to call a hotline. That is okay. I felt incredibly lonely in my early recovery, and I called those lines.

"I have learned to take care of myself in ways I didn't know were possible, but my learning started out slowly." Over the years I've learned new, better ways to cope with my feelings during the holidays. I'll tell you a little secret: this year, I'm not going home at all. I'm staying in New York and doing some of the things I mentioned above. I'll volunteer. I'll meet friends for dinner. I'll go to a meeting. I have learned to take care of myself in ways I didn't know were possible, but my learning started out slowly. Many things change if we give them time, ask for help, and try to be gentle and considerate of ourselves.

If this is your first sober holiday with family, I wish you well. My hope is that we all continue to grow and gain strength from each sober experience. For me, each experience has provided a bit more new perspective to be able to take on the next. We have come this far sober, and we can continue to do it. Happy Holidays, and Happy New Year to all.

<https://www.workithealth.com/blog/sober-holidays-with-family/>

STEP 12 IN ACTION

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

Only a few weeks sober, I marched into my favorite bar in Santa Monica, California, and announced that I was attending AA meetings. I also pointed out to my imbibing friends that they were probably alcoholics needed to join me. El pronto! Not only did my barroom popularity go south at that point, but so did our Eleventh Tradition of “attraction rather than promotion.”

Of course, I was ill prepared to carry the AA message. I had little notion what the Twelve Steps were, save from my own vague interpretations from the clubhouse pull-down shades. My AA honeymoon enthusiasm did not qualify me as having had a “spiritual experience (or awakening) as the result of these steps.” (The terms spiritual experience and spiritual awakening refer to “the personality change sufficient to bring about recovery from alcoholism.” Alcoholics Anonymous p. 567)

Eventually, after absorbing the clear-cut directions from the Big Book, I busily began sharing my newfound sobriety with other members. When some of them relapsed, I was disappointed. However, I took solace in that Step Twelve tells us only that: “we tried.” I believe it is vitally important that I continue to keep on trying regardless of results: “Practical experience shows that nothing will so much insure immunity from drinking as intensive work with other alcoholics.” (p. 89). Vital means lifesaving—that means me!

I have found it best not to dwell on the 12 Steps when making my first visit to a newcomer, but to casually let the conversation drift into some of my drinking experience—good and bad, happy and sad—and explain why I need to stay sober. Then, I explain

how the AA fellowship helped me to obtain my period of sobriety. Of course, I never mention that they are an alcoholic. This is best for them to ascertain!

I believe it is best to bring out the aspects of AA that will dispel any preconceived fear. I explain our principle of anonymity; that the only requirement for membership is a desire to stop drinking; that we have no dues or fees; that we have no rules or laws; that AA is not affiliated with any religion or outside organization. I also explain that we are not a treatment center, although we sometimes cooperate with treatment facilities.

I believe it is important to tell how we have grown to more than two million members around the world in the last eighty-plus years. The point is to replace newcomer doubt with hope!

Upon leaving this “first meeting” I believe it is paramount that the new person leaves with appropriate literature from the meeting rack, but not too much—just three or four pieces. The titles make it obvious what ones are appropriate. If the new person leaves with a Big Book, I never tell them to read the first 164 pages—maybe just The Doctors Opinion, along with some of the personal stories. A farmer once told me: “You don’t feed a newborn calf a bale of hay, but just a little milk.”

Of course, I point out from the meeting directory the next meeting that might be best and exchange phone numbers or email addresses. If time allows, I like to have a meeting-after-the-meeting to provide a welcome and happy atmosphere. First impressions are very important for a lost and lonesome new AA member.

<https://www.aacle.org/step-12-in-action/>

“When we sincerely took such a position, all sorts of remarkable things followed. We had a new Employer. Being all powerful, He provided what we needed, if we kept close to Him and performed His work well. Established on such a footing we became less and less interested in ourselves, our little plans and designs. More and more we became interested in seeing what we could contribute to life. As we felt new power flow in, as we enjoyed peace of mind, as we discovered we could face life successfully, as we became conscious of His presence, we began to lose our fear of today, tomorrow or the hereafter. We were reborn.”

Alcoholics Anonymous, p. 63

Holidays can be a trying time for alcoholics, particularly for those of us who are newly sober. The following messages of experience, strength and hope come from members in our Continental European Fellowship. No matter what holidays you may or may not celebrate this time of year, remember to carry the Message of AA with you all throughout the year—one twenty-four hour period at a time.

“My kids spent every other Christmas with their father and his new family in another country. I used to drink a lot while feeling lonely and sorry for myself during these holidays before I got sober.

My first sober Christmas Eve without the kids, was not better: me eating a soggy salmon in front of the TV crying over a Christmas movie about a family reunion, which I had even written myself (I am a screenwriter). To add insult to injury, my advent wreath caught fire in the middle of the film. Not wanting to bother my sponsor who was abroad, I came closest to a relapse I have ever been.

Luckily, I dared to open up at a meeting the next day and was able to see the humor in the situation. An old-timer reminded me that for a big part of the world this was just a normal working day where people don't even celebrate Christmas.

After this, during Christmas without the children, I made a big effort to apply the AA principle of service to help me escape the danger of self-pity. I experienced the real Christmas spirit by helping out at the Salvation Army or other organizations serving food to people in need in different countries. Instead of missing something I don't have on Christmas, I come up with ideas for new things I can do and new experiences that I can have.” -Anonymous

“The holidays have always been tough for me, even now I feel like maintaining my serenity is a little more challenging amidst all the holiday parties and family situations. I've found that staying as close to the program works for me. I plan to be of service at meetings, especially ones that take place on a holiday, and take special care to stay in daily contact with those in the program, like my sponsor. It really helps to find a newcomer who is perhaps sober for the first time for a holiday season and do regular check-ins, if they are interested and open to it. Overall, being of service helps smooth out some of the more challenging parts and each year gets a little easier.” -Katy L.

“As a queer person with strong trauma, my sobriety during holidays means not to grab that drink and punish myself for the family I have. Sobriety and the AA program showed me acceptance, self-esteem and surrender to what I can not change. It also showed me that many fellows in our Fellowship are a family. I can understand and relate to another alcoholic. As a parent, I am learning to love myself so I can offer true love and compassion to myself and others. I used to be terrified of people because in the past I was very hurt. Today I know I am protected, and that there are fellow humans who appreciate me. In sobriety, I have learned to let God's light in.” -Anonymous

“I was two years sober when I went to the annual big Christmas dinner with my extended family for the first time—my first sober Christmas I had spent in residential treatment. I was so anxious leading up to the holiday dinner, spinning in my head about all those years away, what people would think, how everyone knew (and had known for years) about my various embarrassing problems. I remember sharing in my home group, exasperated and with tears in my eyes, how I was ‘just going to put on a f***ing Christmas sweater and go.’ This made everyone roar with laughter, and they repeated this little line to me for years after that share. But turns out this is an excellent strategy for sober living! It works 365. ‘Just suit up and show up.’ I can just show up, hopefully on time and with a side dish to share, and one day at a time my relationships with people in the world will straighten out. Today I have a relationship with my extended family that is deeper than if I wasn't an alcoholic, because being first a down-and-out drunk, and now sobriety, has given me the gift of perspective about myself and my family. Merry Xmas, everyone!” -K

“Being sober during the end of year holidays makes for so much less anxiety than in the bad old days, and my expectations are much more easily met. None of the former pressure to be so jolly, to go to so many parties, to buy the perfect gifts, to be so ‘Christmassy’. No need to be perfect now, it just is what it is. A time to relax in my PJ's if I want to all day, to feel non-guilty about a carbohydrate overload, a time to catch up with old friends on the phone and really talk to my family and be present for them. I enjoy the lights of the season, the smells and spotting the small signs of goodwill and hope in the city streets. I can take time to go and sit in a church – and here in Germany they often have lovely huge trees in them bedecked in yellow or blue lights – and I remember what I have been given in the journey of recovery I've been on so far. Hangovers and regret are consigned to Christmases past.” -Fiona B.

“Holidays don't come easy. Feeling the feelings. It helps me to remember to ask God to take over. Whatever it is.”
-Anonymous

<https://alcoholics-anonymous.eu/general-post/sober-through-the-holidays/>

It Happened in December



December 2: 1943 – Bill speaks to 300 at meeting inside San Quentin

December 5: 1985 – Dave B, founder of Montreal Group dies weeks before 50th anniversary. Now his story is in the 4th Edition Big Book.
1979 – Akron Beacon reports death of Henrietta Sieberling

December 7: 1949 – Sister Ignatia accepts Poverello Medal of St Francis on AA's behalf

December 8: 1997 – "AsWeSeelt" emailing list started December 8, 1997

December 10: 1975 – "Birds of a Feather" AA group for pilots is formed
1934 – Bill admitted to Towns Hosp 4th/last time (fall '33, '34 in summer, midsummer and final admittance).

December 12: 1934 – Bill has Spiritual Experience at Towns Hospital. 1937 – Bill meets with Rockefeller Foundation and tries to get money

December 13: 1934 – Ebby visited Bill at hospital, brought William James's book, "Varieties of Religious Experience".

December 19: 1939 – Drunks in Los Angeles hold their 1st AA meeting there

December 20: 1945 – Rowland Hazard dies (he carried the Oxford Group message to Ebby)

December 27: 1893 – Rev Samuel Shoemaker is born

Other significant events in December for which we have no specific dates: 1934 – Bill & Lois start attending Oxford Group meetings.
1938 – Using Oxford Group principles, Bill closes the loopholes and changes the 6 steps to 12.
1939 – First AA group in mental institution, Rockland State Hospital, NY.

1939 – 1st home meeting in Los Angeles at Kaye M.'s house..

1940 – group started Ashtabula, Ohio due to Plain Dealer articles – Dates unknown. A.A. Cleveland has about 30 groups.

1948 – Dr. Bob's last major talk, in Detroit.

1955 – 'Man on the Bed' painting by Robert M. first appeared in Grapevine. Painting originally called 'Came to Believe'

1982 – Nell Wing retires from GSO after 35 years of service

<https://toledoameetings.com/important-dates-in-alcoholics-anonymous/>

Sponsorship: That Which We Give Away, We Keep

"Every sponsor is necessarily a leader," wrote Bill W. in The Language of the Heart (p. 292). "The stakes are huge," he continued. "A human life, and usually the happiness of a whole family, hangs in the balance. What the sponsor does and says, how well he estimates the reactions of his prospects, how well he times and makes his presentation, how well he handles criticisms, and how well he leads his prospect on by personal spiritual example — well, these attributes of leadership can make all the difference, often the difference between life and death."

The General Service Conference has focused on the timeless topic of sponsorship over the years, and the following excerpts from past Conference presentations provide a window into this enduring aspect of carrying the message from one alcoholic to another. Vera M. from southwest Ohio shared this about sponsorship: "When I came to A.A., nobody asked me to meet any specifications: they just accepted me as I was, with love. My first sponsor treated me with compassion, which, I believe, means with gratitude. She understood that sponsor and sponsee meet as equal people."

"Sponsorship is important to ensure that A.A. will continue," said Dorothy M. of southern Indiana. "My sponsor was there to suggest the things I needed to do to stay sober. She was there to answer the questions I had about the program. She was there to explain the Steps and to help me work through them. She was there when I had no mind to think with. She was there to think for me. She was there with the kind of quality sobriety that I wanted. She was there to show me how to achieve quality sobriety. She was responsible."

Herb M., who served as A.A.W.S. board member in the 1960s, put it this way: "That which we give away we keep. That which we keep we lose. Such is the basis of our responsibility — to pass on to another alcoholic the message of love and understanding that made our own sobriety possible.... There has been unanimous agreement among us that the very substance of our sobriety lies in our willingness and our readiness to share this recovery experience with another."

Describing the privilege and responsibility that goes along with sponsorship in A.A., Peter W., a past Eastern Canada regional trustee, highlighted the fundamental role sponsorship plays in the Fellowship:

"A.A. had its origin in the principle of sponsorship — the need we have for one another. This principle is equally as valid today as when Bill carried the message to Dr. Bob. The world of alcoholism has changed, will continue to change. But our need for one another remains as vital today as it was in Akron in 1935. The privilege of being a sponsor insures our sobriety. It also helps us function effectively in recovery by recognizing the needs of others. It enables us to find within ourselves a response to those needs...."

Sponsorship is woven intricately through our Legacies. To deny it could weaken our Fellowship.... Bill calls it 'the language of the heart.' It transcends the appearance and the personality of the individual and goes directly to the soul. Sponsorship is the silent legacy of our Fellowship, given to us by those who went before us. It can spell the difference between survival and stagnation."

In closing, Peter noted, "To love the lovable requires very little effort, but you and I are called upon to love the unlovable, to help that person become lovable. Can you think of any greater responsibility? Can you think of any better way to do it than sponsorship?"

<https://www.aacle.org/sponsorship-that-which-we-give-away-we-keep/>

“And finally, we of Alcoholics Anonymous believe that the principle of anonymity has an immense spiritual significance. It reminds us that we are to place principles before personalities; that we are actually to practice a genuine humility. This to the end that our great blessings may never spoil us; that we shall forever live in thankful contemplation of Him who presides over us all.”



Principles First – People Second

Why are we repeatedly asked in the Traditions to give up ourselves for the greater good? The answer is because any relationship we have that does not involve sacrifice is a relationship that likely will not endure. Each tradition straightens out a disastrous attitude we had about relationships. The twelfth tradition teaches us that a spirit of sacrifice (often times through anonymity) is vital to good relationships.

Giving up the expectation of rewards for doing good is difficult for most of us. It's easy for us to give and then think, "Well, I'll get a reward, even if I don't get public recognition for what I did." To remove that reward symbol from the back of our minds for whatever good we do is part of practicing anonymity. The next time you hear a

speaker in A.A. whose personality is exciting from the platform, see if you can hear the principles behind their words? To which step, tradition, or concept can you relate their pitch? Setting ourselves aside and focusing on the principles of our program is a crucial component in the foundation we need for studying the Traditions and learning how to be in healthier relationships with our fellow A.A.'s and with those in the world around us.

Step-Tradition Parallel

The twelfth step poses the question, "What is a spiritual awakening?" I believe that the evidences of a spiritual awakening are found in a person who practices the twelfth tradition in all their affairs. Such a person sacrifices self in order to practice

principles. Their motive in practicing all of the traditions is anonymity: they sacrifice to help others.



The twelfth tradition completes the twelfth step in the following way: I become spiritually awake when I carry the message by anonymously practicing sober principles. As it states at the top of this page, the 12 Traditions were created to help each A.A. group maintain unity and relate better to the world about us. With that in mind, they have been widely used in helping us learn how to be in better relationships with everyone in our life. ***Below is a snapshot inventory you can take to see how well you are honoring the spiritual principle found in this Tradition, both in and out of the rooms of A.A.:***

1. Why is it good idea for me to place the common welfare of all AA members before individual welfare? What would happen to me if AA as a whole disappeared?
2. When I do not trust AA's current servants, who do I wish had the authority to straighten them out?
3. In my opinions of and remarks about other AAs, am I implying membership requirements other than a desire to stay sober?
4. Do I ever try to get a certain AA group to conform to my standards, not its own?
5. Have I a personal responsibility in helping an AA group fulfill its primary purpose? What is my part?
6. Does my personal behavior reflect the Sixth Tradition—or belie it?
7. Do I do all I can do to support AA financially? When is the last time I anonymously gave away a Grapevine subscription?
8. Do I complain about certain AAs' behavior—especially if they are paid to work for AA? Who made me so smart?
9. Do I fulfill all AA responsibilities in such a way as to please privately even my own conscience? Really?
10. Do my utterances always reflect the Tenth Tradition, or do I give AA critics real ammunition?
11. Should I keep my AA membership a secret, or reveal it in private conversation when that may help another alcoholic (and therefore me)? Is my brand of AA so attractive that other drunks want it?
12. What is the real importance of me among more than a million AAs?

<https://takethe12.org/t12/>

“Anonymity is the spiritual foundation of all our Traditions, ever reminding us to place principles before personalities.”

DECEMBER 2025

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
	1 Ole Willy, 17 yrs, Monday Nite Tradi- tions	2 Rick K., 3 yrs, Laurel Grove	3 Robert R., 2 yrs, Patuxent River	4 Rene G., 36 yrs, Poplar Hill	5	6 Luke R., 3 yrs, Saturday AM Breakfast Peggy R., 39 yrs and Ken S., 14 yrs, We Wuz Wurz
7	8	9	10 Ellen C., 18 yrs, Do Drop In (Virtual)	11	12	13 Brad H., 15 yrs, Saturday AM Breakfast
14 Phil T., 42 yrs, Never Too Late	15	16	17	18	19	20 Paige D. 14yrs, Ear- ly Risers
21	22 Shawn H., 6 yrs, Harmony	23	24	25 Casey H. 3yrs., Poplar Hill	26	27 Steve H., 35 yrs, King- ston Creek Matt H. 1yr, We Wuz Wurz
28	29	30	31			

JANUARY 2026

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
 Congratulations!				1	2	3
4	5	6 Donna S., 9 yrs, Holly- wood	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15 Vance D., 1 yr, Basic Text	16	17 Claudia D., 15 yrs, Early Risers
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31 John W., 38 yrs, and Eileen M., 26 yrs, Kingston Creek



53 YEARS!

THE NORTH BEACH GROUP

Saturday December 13, 2025

4:00 – 6:00

8912 Chesapeake Avenue, North Beach

MEETING TO FOLLOW

Join us for food, fun and fellowship
as we celebrate our

53rd Group Anniversary!

Please feel welcome to bring a dish to share.



2025

Christmas Alco-Thon

Non-Stop Meetings !

(beginning at the top of every hour)

6 pm - Dec 24th

Christmas Eve

through

6 pm - Dec 25th

Christmas Day



Come Out and
Join Us for a
Meeting this
Holiday Season !!!

**Food
Welcome**

Hollywood Rescue Squad
43256 Rescue Lane
Hollywood, MD 20636

Contact Mary F.
pisccebaby82mf@gmail.com

2025
**New Year's
Alco-Thon**

Non-Stop Meetings !
(beginning at the top of every hour)

6 pm - Dec 31st 2025
New Year's Eve
through

6 pm - Jan 01st 2026
New Year's Day

!!! UPDATED LOCATION !!!
Leonardtown Knights of Columbus
41605 Fenwick Street
Leonardtown, MD 20650

Contact Mary F.
pisccebaby82mf@gmail.com

24 hours

Food welcome

FUN

FELLOWSHIP

DISTRICT 1 PRESENTS

**A Night in
HOLLYWOOD**

A New Years Eve Celebration!

December 31 @ 7pm
Crossroads Church
150 Ball Road
St. Leonard MD 20685

Tickets
\$20

This is a red carpet
event, dress to impress
or come as your
favorite celebrity!

Friends,
fellowship, music,
games and 50/50
raffle

Buffet Dinner 7:30pm
with speaker

Please bring a dish to share

Last Names A-L: side dish
Last Names M-Z: dessert

For questions or to volunteer
text: Jerry 240-882-7291

Adults Only



Scan for more info!

Southern States Alcoholics Anonymous Service Assembly

13 Areas are included in the Southern States!! Come and represent yours!!

What: SSAASA 8, hosted by Area 71

When: December 5-7, 2025

Where: Hyatt Regency Dulles 2300 Dulles Corner Blvd., Herndon, VA 20171

Go to: www.SSAASA.com to register, reserve your room, and then plan to have FUN!!

Who is SSAASA for? SSAASA is for anyone interested in or involved in A.A. service (GSRs, DCMs, District & Area Committee Members, Intergroup/Central Office representatives). All A.A. members are welcome to attend to learn more about our Third Legacy – Service!

What happens at an SSAASA event? A program is set up by the host committee where there are general sharing sessions, panels on specific topics, and workshops or roundtables where A.A. members holding the same jobs can share their experience with each other and learn more about each service opportunity.

Is there a cost? Yes, and it's only \$35.00! The SSAASA event is self-supporting through your registration fee. Home groups, districts, and areas can honor the 7th tradition by supporting your trusted servants so that they may attend.

Come experience Virginia hospitality and get to know some of your neighboring AA members - we'll be happy to have you!

Still have questions? Please email Chair@ssaasa.com



2025 FINAL
CONFERENCE
REPORT
REVIEW

Working Together,
Increasing Trust

THE 75TH ANNUAL MEETING OF THE
GENERAL SERVICE CONFERENCE OF
ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS

Sundays @ 7 pm EDT

STARTING 9/21/25 AND CONTINUING WEEKLY
WITH GUEST SPEAKERS FROM THE CONFERENCE

812 3740 8344
PW FCRR



Dial in 301-715-8592

MORE INFORMATION:
aa.fcrr@gmail.com or
finalconferencereportreview@gmail.com

Spanish
Interpretation
provided

NEW

AA Women's Group
Bedouin Women – Language of the Heart
Thursdays – Starting November 6, 2025
7:00 p.m.

Phillips House
37 Duke Street Prince Frederick

JOIN US



Fall 2025 CONTRA Study

September 11, 2025 through December 18, 2025

Thursdays from 9:00 PM to 10:00 PM Eastern Time (US/Canada)

Moderated by Past Delegates from

Areas 29 (Maryland), 44 (Northern New Jersey) & 45 (Southern New Jersey)

Zoom Meeting ID: 847 4641 4040

Passcode: 330331

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

We invite all A.A. members to this virtual study of the
CONcepts, TRAditions & The A.A. Service Manual.
No Registration Fees!

Sep 11, 2025 – Registration & Orientation

Sep 18, 2025 – Traditions 1, 2 & 3

Sep 25, 2025 – Traditions 4, 5 & 6

Oct 2, 2025 – Traditions 7, 8 & 9

Oct 9, 2025 – Traditions 10, 11 & 12

Oct 16, 2025 – Service Manual, pp. I-VIII, 1-6, 89-108

Oct 23, 2025 – Svc Man Ch 1 2 3 & pp 109-18, 166-69

Oct 30, 2025 – Svc Man, Chapters 4 5 6 & pp 171-75

Nov 6, 2025 – Svc Man, Chapters 7 8 9 & pp 176-180

Nov 13, 2025 – Svc Man Ch 10 11 12 & pp 161-5, 170

Nov 20, 2025 – Service Manual, pp. 119-159

Nov 27, 2025 – Concepts pp I-VII, C1-C2, Con 1, 2, 3

Dec 4, 2025 – Concepts 4, 5 & 6

Dec 11, 2025 – Concepts 7, 8 & 9

Dec 18, 2025 – Concepts 10, 11 & 12

CONTRA Study Materials

(provided via email following registration):

Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions, B-2 (free participant download at www.aa.org)

The A.A. Service Manual combined with The Twelve Concepts for World Service, BM-31, 2024-2026 edition

AA Grapevine Traditions Checklist, July 2018 revision

Fall 2025 Contra Study Service Manual Questions

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

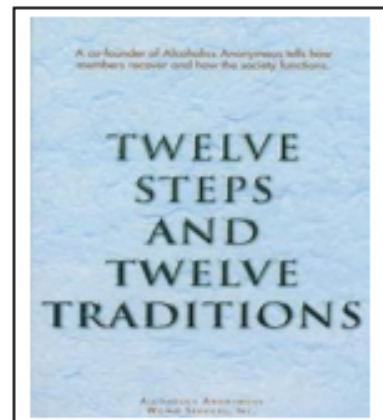
We will cover approximately three chapters of reading material per week, with associated questions. Only those who have read the assignment and have written answers to the weekly questions will be invited to read their answers to the group. All others are welcome to join the meeting and listen.

Presented by Past Delegates from

Areas 29 (Maryland), 44 (Northern New Jersey) & 45 (Southern New Jersey)

For more information, contact:

2025contrastudy@gmail.com



Service Opportunities!

Area 29

You Are Invited

GSR ORIENTATION

First Monday of Every Month
7:00 pm - 8:00 pm

Zoom ID: 845 5904 4220

Password: GSR

**New to General Service? Want to learn more
about it or get a refresher?**

**All new General Service Representatives
(GSRs) in Area 29—and any member of
Alcoholics Anonymous—is welcome to attend
our monthly orientation session!**

District 1 is looking for volunteers to lead meetings at the Avenues treatment center in Prince Frederick. Meetings are held at 7:00 pm each week on Mondays and Thursdays. The District 1 treatment coordinators are looking for people to either take an occasional evening or a dedicated monthly slot, whichever better suits your schedule. For the men's meetings, text David Y at 240-577-3424. For the women's meetings, text Peggy K at 305-582-9309.



**Maryland Deaf Access
Committee (MDAC)
Alcoholics Anonymous**

Visit our Website!
<http://mdacAA.org>

We organize the funding
and scheduling of in-
person / hybrid
AA meetings
interpreted in American
Sign Language (ASL)

PayPal QR code >>>



- ✓ We follow all of AA's 12 Traditions
- ✓ We provide language Access via ASL interpretation
- ✓ We rely on contributions from only AA members & AA entities
- ✓ Our focus is to make AA accessible to the Deaf and Hard of Hearing

Contributions accepted via PayPal@
MarylandDeafAccess@gmail.com

AREA 29 MARYLAND
PUBLIC INFORMATION &
COOPERATING WITH PROFESSIONALS



**Joint PI/CPC
meets
monthly
3rd Sunday**

**Oct 19th
@ 3pm EST
Rotation and
Professionals
Newsletter
Update**

**Sept 21st
@ 3pm EST
Jacque T.
Area 15 CPC
re AA and the
Workplace**

**ID
862 7457
8272
pw 199887**

a29cpcpi@gmail.com

"BLUE TOP @ NOON"

Lexington Park United Methodist Church

21760 Great Mills Road

12:00 noon

Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday

Tuesday will be the Daily Reflections

Wednesday will be the Big Book

Thursday will be a Step/Tradition meeting

Come check us out and join our group!



CLEAN AIR GROUP

The Clean Air Group

Is in need of support

And home group members

Come on out and check us out

Friday nights 6:30pm.

St. Andrews Episcopal Church

44078 St. Andrews Church Rd.



Support Your Local Groups!

THE WHAT'S THE POINT GROUP!!

COME OUT AND CHECK US OUT AT OUR

IMPROVED NEW LOCATION

THE CALLAWAY BAPTIST CHURCH

20960 POINT LOOKOUT RD.

THURSDAY EVENING 8:00PM.

WE NOW HAVE

AIR CONDITIONING.!!!



NOT QUITE RIGHT

The Not Quite Right Group

8:00pm. Friday Nights

Good Samaritan Lutheran Church

20850 Langley Rd. (Middle Building)

Lexington Park, Md.

Is in need of Support

and Home Group Members



SOUTHERN MARYLAND INTERGROUP ASSOCIATION

MEETING MINUTES 11/8/25

OPENING - The Serenity Prayer

Board Members Present: Todd M – Chair; Lorraine J - Vice-Chair; Bruce O – Treasurer; Shaara W - Secretary and Paul S – Parliamentarian.

New Member(s)/Visitor(s) Introduction: Cindy C, Awakenings; Rex, Area 29 visitor.

Groups & Committees Represented:

Buddy F – Archives Chair; Bill L– Web/Bookstall; Emme J – O.D.A.A.T; Roy B – Solomon's Group.

SMIA Chair Report: Briefly, Area Meeting on November 15th from 9 to 3. It can be accessed remotely; District 36 is hosting 2 Alkathons, one on Christmas Eve, starting at 6 p.m. at the Hollywood Rescue Squad and on New Year's Eve at the Leonardtown Knights of Columbus. NERI-SA is meeting the 20th through 23rd in Portland, Maine. All information can be found on the mdaa.org website.

Vice-Chair Report: Lorraine reported representing SMIA at the Intergroup Liaison Committee where she told them about SMIA's successes including our Lifeline Newsletter and Website. She thanked Keith H. and Bill L. for their stellar efforts as well as the Bookstall (Buddy F.), phone service (Melissa), and our events. She talked about our challenges including representation (130 groups with no representatives); getting volunteers to chair events and getting the word out on what we do. She also mentioned as one of our successes the reasonableness of our phone service, which was costing about \$200 more a month several years ago than now. Other group representatives emphasized reaching out on a personal level to

groups to let them know what SMIA is and does.

Rex stated the Intergroup Liaison Committee represents eleven intergroups across the State of Maryland, other than PG and Montgomery which are part of Virginia, and includes a Hispanic Intergroup out of DC. The Committee enables the intergroups to meet and compare notes on what is working and what is challenging for each of them. As for the Bookstall, it's called many different things such as Literature Committee.

Secretary Report (corrections/

additions): Motion to accept the October Minutes as posted on the Web and in the Lifeline. Second. All in favor.

Treasurer Report (corrections/

additions): Averaging about 5-6q00 a month in contributions and expenses average about \$1000 a month. We're still down. Less than 3 months' operating budget left. Received an unexpected refund of \$750 for liability insurance. YTD is now accurate. Motion to accept the November Treasurer's Report as posted on the Website and in the Lifeline. Second. All in favor. 2 3

COMMITTEE REPORTS: Corrections/

Treatment Calvert: Going well. **Charles:**

RCA meetings are filling up 6 days a week, if you want to go, let us know. **St. Mary's:** Looking for people with one year sober to bring meetings into the detention center. They have a literature library now, accepting paperbacks only. Roy B. reported the need for volunteers is great. Talks for a second weekly meeting are ongoing. Need at least four volunteers with good 12 Step experience. He also reported the following:

1. Meetings Every Wednesday 7pm -

Good participation 12 to 15 inmates

2. Actively Seeking New Volunteers - The call for volunteers for service is ongoing.

One new AA member has been approved and attended orientation.

3. Activities/Work - Talks with the Detention Center continues as we prepare for a second meeting per week for the males. We need at least four solid AAs with 12 step experience before we can start up a second meeting per week.

4. Women's Report (Brandi T.) - Big Books have been added to the library cart in the ladies' unit. 3 New women have been onboarded and starting to carry the message Still looking for more volunteers.

Public Information/PCP: Calvert- Kenny G. is doing an awesome job. He is extremely motivated in getting the word out. The most recent development is Dave Y. is getting literature into nursing homes and adult daycare which is a new outlet.

Charles- Andrea A will be new Committee Chair in January and Brenda M. will stay on as a member. Emme reported that QR plaques are being placed in place of pamphlets in Charles **St. Mary's-** No report.

Telephone: Melissa reported: Total Calls – 13; Calvert – 3; Charles – 0; St. Mary's – 1; Not Specified – 9; and Time 22 minutes.

Where & When: The Where & When is ready to be printed but they are still waiting for some changes to meetings in St. Mary's County. Pat feels it would be good to wait until the end of 4 November to get those changes in place. Motion to print Where & When the first week of December, or until all the St. Mary's changes have taken place. Second. All in favor. Motion to amend the motion to specify December 5th as the printing date, assuming all changes have been entered. Second. All in favor. In addition, Pat requested the email address of anyone who wants to be part of the Where & When review process.

Lifeline: Keith H. reported that things

(continued on page 15)

(con't) are going well. He welcomes any suggestions, feedback, etc. He is also looking for someone to draft a short article about getting into AA via the corrections or treatment center path.

Events: Serenity Breakfast - Needs a chairperson. **Picnic** - Still a long way away. **Gratitude Dinner** - Is tonight.

Workshops - Nothing to report.

Bookstall: No. of Visits 0 No. Orders 13 Total Collected \$408.50. Expenses need big books. Calvert and St. Mary's have exhausted their institutions budgets. Charles still has quite a bit remaining.

Website: Web and Bookstall Report 10/11/25 – 11/8/25 Web Report Main Site Total Visitors (initial visit) Bookstall Site 2549– up 4% 2397– down 10% 5 Most Frequently visited pages Home Page – 2740 Where and When Calendar- 265 Announcements – 239 Where and When Search - 184 Al-Anon Info - 161 5

Site Updates and Changes I added a DMARC to the e-mail server which will reduce or eliminate the phishing attempts. Additionally, the .htaccess file on both the SMIA main site and the Bookstall site was configured to prohibit nuisance bots by

user-agent, block common exploit/probe paths, and block noisy net rewrites. This will help prevent future cyberthreats.

Meeting Change Information A new group has been added at the Great Escape Recovery Lounge named Working It, Big Book Style. This group will meet at 5:00 PM on Monday, beginning November 10th. The Wednesday Noon Big Book Meeting, which meets at Lifestream Church in Waldorf, will be terminated, effective 11/30/25. We received information that the meetings held at the Beacon of Hope would have to move by December 1st. This is considered unofficial because the group change forms for these groups have not been submitted. I sent an e-mail to Melissa W. District 36 DCM to encourage these groups to complete the form. Rev sent me the address and suite number for the new location, but again, this is unofficial.

Meeting Status Currently there are 137 meetings in our service area; 128 meetings are in-person, six meetings are hybrid, eight meetings are on-line only.

Document Posts and Updates Lifeline posted – 10/31/25 Finance Page updated

– 10/31/25 SMIA Minutes posted – 10/11/25.

Phishing attempts - Phishing attempts have probably been reduced significantly, however if you do receive a message that appears to come from IONOS, do not open them, do not forward them, do not click on any content in them. Delete them. Typically, a genuine request from IONOS will only be sent to me. **Notes** - It is important to note that the SMIA is not responsible for the accuracy of on-line or physical meeting information. This is the responsibility of the groups or districts that provide the information. I will be travelling back to Maryland this afternoon and will return to WV on Tuesday. Updates and requests will be addressed then.

OLD BUSINESS: None

NEW BUSINESS: Buddy F. reported he is interested in setting up a 'Bookstall Bingo' game in the hallway the second or third week of January. 6

FOR THE GOOD OF THE ORDER: Motion to Adjourn. Second. All in favor.

CLOSING: Responsibility Pledge

NERAASA 2026

NorthEast Regional A.A. Service Assembly

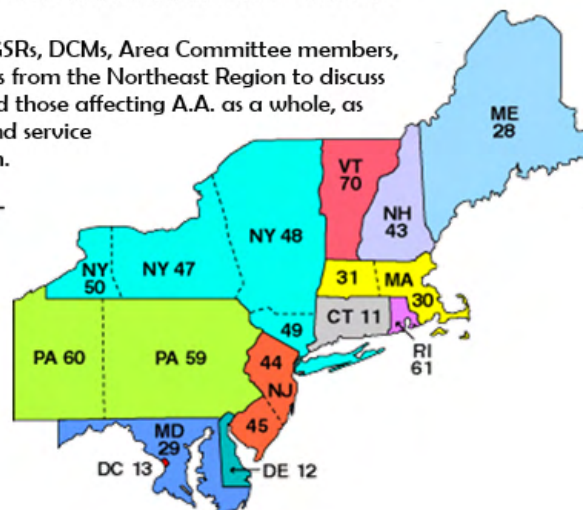
All A.A. members are welcome! #ComeMeetMaine! Area 28

PURPOSE: The purpose of NERAASA is for GSRs, DCMs, Area Committee members, and Intergroup/Central Office Representatives from the Northeast Region to discuss General Service Conference- related issues and those affecting A.A. as a whole, as well as pertinent aspects of recovery, unity, and service common to the Areas of the Northeast Region.

February 20-22, 2026

Holiday Inn By the Bay
88 Spring St
Portland, ME 04101

Deadline for hotel registrations 1/19/2026



Two alcoholics are out fishing, and while drinking, they don't notice they've drifted out to sea. Having lost the oars, they suddenly realize they're in terrible trouble. One pulls in his fishing rod, only to discover he's snagged a brass lamp, and while pulling it off the hook, a genie appears. "I'll grant you one wish, so make it good," says the genie. Before they can confer, the first drunk blurts out: "I wish the whole sea were made of Guinness!" And, poof: suddenly, they're still in the middle of nowhere, still no oars, and beer as far as the eye can see. The second drunk is furious: "You idiot! What were you thinking? We only had one wish..." — he pauses briefly — "and now we'll have to pee in the boat!"

December 2025

Southern Maryland Intergroup Association Inc

Treasury Report

Monthly Contributions:

\$1,091.40

www.somdintergroup.org/contribute

SMIA, PO Box 767, Charlotte Hall, MD 20622

Southern Maryland Intergroup Association Inc
Monthly Statement of Financial Position
October 25, 2025 - November 24, 2026

Assets

Primary Business Checking	\$ 3,560.06
Prudent Reserve	\$ 4,301.00
PayPal	\$ 764.98
Bookstall Cash on hand	\$ 100.00
Total Assets	8,726.04

This Month's Expenses

Bookstall Purchases	\$ (575.18)
Liability Insurance	\$ -
Lifeline Printing	\$ (140.95)
Misc	\$ -
Phone Answering Service/1-800#	\$ (61.63)
Post Office Box	\$ -
Rent	\$ (150.00)
Webmaster	\$ -
Website	\$ (61.33)
Where & When	\$ -
Picnic	\$ -
Travel	\$ -
Workshops	\$ -
SMIA Archives	\$ -
Office sup (coffee, postage & faxing)	\$ -
Bank Charges and Fees	\$ (16.00)
Other - Tax Filings	\$ -
Total Expenses	\$ (1,005.09)

Southern Maryland Intergroup Association Inc
Yearly Statement of Activity
April 25, 2025 - April 24, 2026

Year to Date Income

		BUDGET
		Shortfall
Contributions	\$4,731.93	47%
Bookstall Sales	\$ 1,303.95	63%
Gratitude Dinner	\$ -	100%
Serenity Breakfast	\$ -	100%
Total 2025 Income	6,035.88	58%

Year to Date Expenses

		BUDGET
		Left to Use
Bookstall Purchases	\$ (1,317.76)	67%
Liability Insurance	\$ (351.00)	-29%
Lifeline Printing	\$ (876.40)	9%
Misc	\$ (104.74)	0%
Phone Answering Service/1-800#	\$ (419.78)	-29%
Post Office Box	\$ (120.00)	0%
Rent	\$ (1,050.00)	42%
Webmaster	\$ (1,026.00)	67%
Website	\$ (572.17)	33%
Where & When	\$ -	100%
Picnic	\$ (773.22)	23%
Travel	\$ -	100%
Workshops	\$ -	100%
SMIA Archives	\$ -	100%
Office sup (coffee, postage & faxing)	\$ (148.00)	18%
Bank Charges and Fees	\$ (96.00)	4%
Other - Tax Filings	\$ -	0%
Total 2025 Expenses	\$ (6,855.07)	62%

Total of Checking and PayPal Allows us a financial Runway of
 Number of Months of Fiscal Year Remaining
 For our 2024-2025 planned expenses, we currently have a

2.91 Months
 5 Months
 Shortfall

		C&T	PI/CPC
Remaining Service Committee Budgets	Calvert	\$ 275.00	\$ 31.00
Budget Year 2024 (01May2025 - 30Apr2026)	Charles	\$ 375.00	\$ 250.00
As of 12JUL2025	St.Mary's	\$ 99.00	\$ 18.60

THANK YOU FOR YOUR CONTRIBUTIONS:

Awakenings

District 1 Committee

Grapevine Group

Today Group

Bedouin Group

We Are Not Saints

Living Sober

Waldorf Group

Cove Point

Please include your current group number when submitting correspondence or contributions to the SMIA. You can find your current group number at <https://somdintergroup.org/wwwsearch.html#gnlf>. If your group does not have a current group number, contact the Area 29 Registrar at registrar@marylandaa.org.

WHERE DO WE SEND OUR CONTRIBUTIONS?

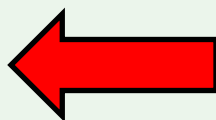
1) All contributions can be made online:

www.somdintergroup.org/donate.php

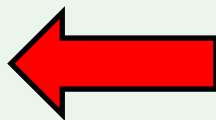
2) Or they can be mailed to the appropriate office location:

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
PO BOX 1834
Frederick, MD 21702**



**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**

ATTENTION GROUP TREASURERS:

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

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

Distribution Plan of _____
(YOUR GROUP NAME)

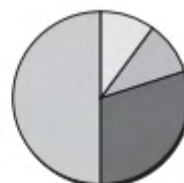
Your Group Service # _____

(Be sure to write group name and service # on all contributions.)



____% to district
____% to area committee
____% to G.S.O.
____% to intergroup or central office
____% other A.A. service entities
____% other A.A. service entities

OR



10% to district
10% to area committee
30% to G.S.O.
50% to intergroup or central office

OR

If you have no intergroup/central office.



40% to district
30% to area
30% to G.S.O.

SMIA SERVICE TEAM:

Chair: Todd M.
Vice Chair: Lorraine J.
Secretary: Shaara W.
Treasurer: Bruce O.
Parliamentarian: Paul S.
Web: Bill L.
Bookstall: Buddy F.
Lifeline/Archives: Keith H.
Telephone: Sheri R.
Where & When: Pat P.

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

DISTRICT 35 CHARLES COUNTY

Please join us at our next District Meeting
the first Thursday of the month @ 7pm

Peace Lutheran Church
401 Smallwood Drive
Waldorf, MD

Or via ZOOM

Meeting ID: 85795899259

Password: D35!2025

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

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

Accessibilities Chair

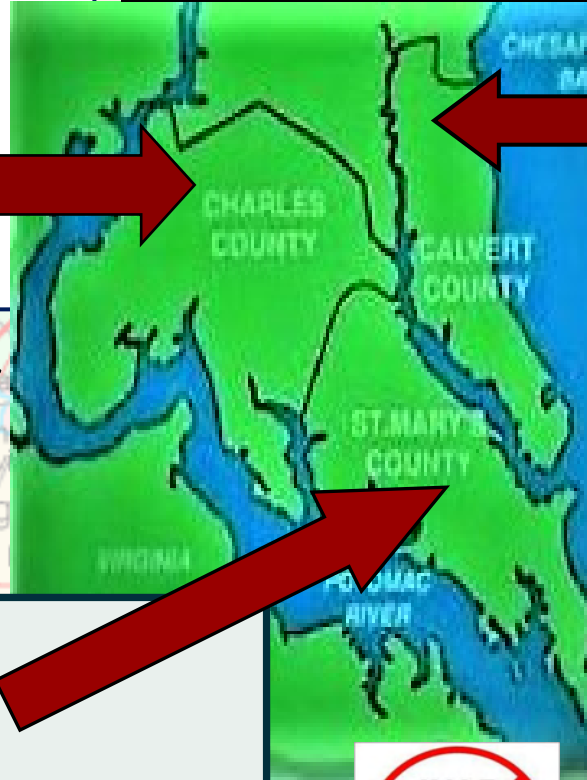
Men's Institutions Chair

Bridging the Gap Chair

District Meeting:
7 PM, 3rd Monday
St. Paul's Episc. Church
25 Church St.
Prince Frederick, MD
20678

District 1 Trust Fund
PO Box 234

Barstow, MD 20610
www.calvertaa.org



**SERVICE KEEPS
US SOBER**

DISTRICT 36

ST. MARY'S COUNTY

PO Box 1334, California, MD 20619

www.district36mdaa.org



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.

DISTRICT NOTES

The next SMIA Meeting will be held on

Saturday, January 10 at 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)