

# The DIALog

A PUBLICATION OF THE DALLAS Intergroup ASSOCIATION (est. 1947)



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## From the Director

Happy Holidays to our readers! All of us at the Dallas Central Office hope you have a safe and sober holiday.

### **No Exceptions: by Abbott T. (from the December 1945 Grapevine)**

"Many A.A. members create an unnecessary mental hazard for themselves over the approach of the Christmas and New Year holidays. The newcomer, in particular, who has joined an A.A. group since the last holiday season is prone to spend some unhappy moments worrying about how to refuse a drink, and thus avoid a bender, when family and friends are participating in the Yuletide celebration. The problem often seems very real to him despite all he may have heard or learned about the application of the 24-hour plan.

The difficulty of coming through the holidays unscathed can be intensified for the new recruit to A.A. ranks by lack of understanding of the alcoholic illness on the part of relatives or friends. Without realization of the catastrophe they may bring about and often acting from the most hospitable motives, sometimes augmented by the few snorts they have indulged in themselves, these good people occasionally don't accept the A.A. member's first statement that he is just not drinking. They proceed to give him the insidious argument that Christmas or New Year's only comes around once a year and certainly a drink or two on such an occasion can't possibly hurt anyone... In my personal experience in A.A., the argument of the special occasion has been trotted out several times, by people who, I am certain, wish me well and who, furthermore, have good reason to know I have not handled liquor successfully for a long time. (At other seasons of the year it doesn't occur to them to even offer me a drink, much less argue that I should take one.) I then have to quietly remind them that I am an

alcoholic and that the calendar date has no bearing on that fact. In my experience, this explanation suffices and, still a little puzzled perhaps, they at once become absorbed in their own drinking processes."

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**See you next year!**

*Janis R., Executive Director*

## This Newsletter Edition

Happy Holidays!! This is the final edition of 2016 and last in a series highlighting the 12 Steps, 12 Traditions and 12 Concepts. Beginning in January 2017, the DIALog will be published in digital format only. You may download a copy from the DIA website. I hope each and everyone of you a happy and SOBER holiday season. Thank you for allowing me to be of service.

*PJ HR, DIALog Editor*

## And now... a message from our Founders... 1950 Christmas Greeting

THIS is the fifteenth Christmas for Alcoholics Anonymous. Seldom has this tired world been more confused divided and distraught. Yet never has the Society of Alcoholics Anonymous been more alive, united and peaceable. God continues to bestow upon us--His long benighted ones--abiding joy and boundless freedom. What great gifts of Grace!

Do we listen, we can hear Him say "Freely ye have received, freely give--Merry Christmas to you all". We of AA shall take these words to heart as never before--For we, more than most are privileged to know their full meaning!

*Dr. Bob and Bill W. Reprinted with permission of the AA Grapevine.*

## Board Spotlight: Nightwatch

I finally arrived in the Fall of 1997 to the place where I would learn to stop making up excuses. My day of abstinence would be the day I accepted I was definitely an alcoholic, 12/25/1998. I knew I could not guarantee anything after taking a drink. I committed to going to the 7:00 AM meeting to make sure I had my signature for probation requirements. I was locked up 13 times, the majority were alcohol related. I was sent to AA for everyday for 2 years as part of my probation.

Before I knew it, one day at a time was six months and I hadn't had a drink. I didn't pick up a chip simply because I was court ordered and the podium said, "To Thine Own Self Be True" and I didn't feel it was real sobriety. When 9 months rolled around, I told the meeting chairman I hadn't had a drink in 9 months but I didn't want a chip since I was court ordered. He later said, "Open your hand" and he gave me all the chips together: 1 month, 2 months, 3 months, 6 months and 9 months. He closed my hand and said "You earned these, If you drink and live to talk about it, pick up another desire chip".

I eventually gave in and accepted a sponsor, I asked questions and followed through by trusting the process. I got a sponsor that volunteered when the question was asked "Is there someone that does not have a sponsor".

I had found out so much about myself, unconditional love, and the scary unrealistic expectations I had on my parents. I went to do my steps then realized a difference in abstinence, sobriety, and most important - my spiritual growth. I thank my Higher Power for grace at all the moments of my life. Prayer pushes me through imaginary boundaries and proves to me again and again that I am not in charge of diddly.

I started to give back to AA immediately after my 5th step, ready or not. I'm asked and I say "I will try". I have served on many committees in the Hispanic community, my district, my area (NETA 65) and now the DIA as Corrections Chair and Secretary.

Thank you all who share in AA meetings all around the world. You help me find a new perspective on my purpose on this universe. I will continue to remember my coming to-strapped in a chair, with a helmet on, in a cell within a cell. I live in an attitude of gratitude because I don't go to jail and call my family to get me out anymore. I go willingly and transmit my story in prisons and am very humble. I get to feel like a liberated prisoner when I walk out and go home.

*Florinda F., DIA Board Secretary and Corrections Chair*

## Step 11

Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God as we understood Him, praying only for knowledge of His will for us and the power to carry that out.

When I was newly sober the most I could do was ask God to keep me sober in the morning and thank Him at night. I did it because I had no better plan not because I believed it mattered. Over time, I have experienced God working in my life beginning with the moment I realized I hadn't had a drink after a few weeks, and I didn't want one. Even with the realization I had not caused that miracle, it still took me a couple of years before the discipline of morning and evening became a working part of my life.

The instructions in the Big Book are unpretentious and simple. I found that if I just read something in the morning then said a quick prayer, I had forgotten what I read in an hour. Prayer should never be slighted as there is no real change that can occur without it. The step does not say through reading and studying although the instructions on p. 87 refer to the use of spiritual books- after the directions on p. 86. I have been in many meetings discussing meditation with people lamenting they are unable to sit still or clear the mind. Those instructions are nowhere in the Big Book.

My thinking is what will cause difficulties in my day unless God is brought into all my activities and decisions. When these difficulties occur, my conscious contact with God is diminished and the likelihood of causing harm increases. I do enjoy formal meditation, and I read many spiritual books, but if I ignore the path outlined, I am in danger of "excitement, fear, anger, worry, self-pity or foolish decisions." I forget I am not running the show. As all our steps do, I am required to look inward and think (meditate) on my day and what specific deficiencies can cause harm. I ask God (prayer) for His guidance.

God has the power to effect change for good.

*Jo M., Clean Air North*

## Step 12

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

Step 12 takes you from a receiving mentality to a giving mentality. It is an opportunity to turn into the ultimate giver and enlighten others to a true and deep spiritual experience. When I look at my life today, I am amazed at how it has unfolded. For me, working with others is the true reward. It keeps me humble and grateful, and inspires me to help others who are still struggling. I know that everything that I went through in the throws of my disease and in getting sober, all happened for a reason. Because of all of this, I am able to help others who are stuck in their disease and who just need a helping hand at that moment. I hope to be an inspiration to others in recovery. I may not have a long list of sponsees or titles behind my name, but I am a familiar face at meetings each week and almost always with a smile on my face. I know today that it only gets better. You may still have bad days, but the longer you are in recovery, the more confidence you gain to get through all of this sober.

*Sarah M., Allen Group*

## Tradition 11

Our public relations policy is based on attraction rather than promotion; we need always maintain personal anonymity at the level of press, radio, and films.

What is the purpose of anonymity and why is it often referred to as the greatest single protection the Fellowship has to assure its continued existence and growth? Grab the closest Understanding Anonymity pamphlet. It answers the question simply, "If we look at the history of A.A., from its beginning in 1935 until now, it is clear that anonymity serves two different yet equally vital functions: 1) At the personal level, anonymity provides protection for all members from identification as alcoholics, a safeguard often of special importance to newcomers. 2) At the public level of press, radio, TV, films, and other media technologies such as the Internet, anonymity stresses the equality in the Fellowship of all members by putting the brake on those who might otherwise exploit their A.A. affiliation to achieve recognition, power, or personal gain."

It did not take long for AA Headquarters to realize overzealous and self-serving anonymity breakers could quickly jeopardize the Fellowship's hard-won reputation... to assure unity, effectiveness, and welfare of A.A., anonymity had to be universal. It was the Guardian of all that A.A. stood for.

*Nicole S., Allen Group*

## Tradition 12

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.

Most AA meetings read the Short Form of Tradition 12 because AA members need to remember the spiritual glue that holds us together. Anonymity is the spiritual foundation to our traditions and AA's principles take priority over individual personalities. It's difficult to find fault with this Short Form. But continuing to read through Tradition 12's Long Form can bring things to a screaming halt: "that we are actually to practice a genuine humility". Really? Actually practice? Like on a regular basis? "What an order! I can't go through with it." Fortunately, while we are people who might not normally mix, we can put spiritual principles before personalities precisely because of the contemplation of Him who presides over us all. Taking that action step of trusting in our Higher Power, as we understand Him, with the results secures our fellowship with one another so we can fit ourselves to be of maximum service to Him and those about us.

*Rick B., The Principles Group*

## Concepts XI & XII

It's my honor to share a just a little about these last two Concepts, which are a bit of a challenge to summarize.

Concept XI outlines the framework for the trusted servants who carry out world service activities on the Fellowship's behalf, discussed in two broad categories. Category one is the 11 standing committees of the General Service Board, whose focus is on finance, literature, public information, etc. These committees are made up of a few trustees (who serve on two or more committees), one or more non-trustees (often with particular expertise in a committee's functional area), and members of the General Service Office (GSO) staff. Category two is the boards of our two operating corporations, A.A. World Services, Inc. (AAWS) and A.A. Grapevine, Inc. (AAGV). AAWS is responsible for the publication of our A.A. literature and the management, staffing, and operation of the GSO, while AAGV is responsible for editing and publication of our



monthly magazine and related content.

In addition to the structural details in Concept XI, Bill also outlines four spiritual principles that apply to our world services, which can often be applied by analogy to service activities anywhere in AA. The first principle is we should avoid double-headed leadership; executive direction should come from one person with the necessary qualities to be an effective servant leader, who gets assistance as needed, and is not micromanaged. The second principle is that our staff should be paid as they would be if they did similar work in the commercial world (to prevent excessive turnover or a bitter workforce that feels under appreciated). As the adage goes, “the laborer is worthy of his hire.” The third principle is rotation; all GSO staff members rotate assignments every 2 years. The spirit of rotation is good for the Fellowship because it insulates us from any one trusted servant’s tendency to become entrenched, and it’s good for us as individuals by keeping our egos in check. The final principle participation is found in Concept IV, our experience has shown that our Fellowship is best served when we allow our paid staff members the same full participation that the volunteer members of the Conference enjoy.

Concept XII is actually six spiritual principles, the Warranties, combined as one. The Warranties are considered so important to our Fellowship’s future that they cannot be changed without written consent of three-fourths of the A.A. groups worldwide, just as with our 12 Steps and 12 Traditions.

Warranty 1 cautions against accumulation of perilous wealth or power. This Warranty may lead one to think about Tradition 7, we support ourselves and decline outside contributions. As for power, we may recall the reminder in Tradition 2 that our true ultimate authority is a loving God of our understanding, expressed through our group conscience. Warranty 2 is sometimes referred to as a vow of spiritual poverty. We do not keep money on hand that doesn’t have a stated A.A. purpose. Instead we limit ourselves to no more than a prudent reserve. Warranty 3 reminds us that no one trusted servant has unqualified authority over another, reminiscent of both Tradition 1, that we are all in this together and that no one member is more important than another, and Concept 4, that each trusted servant has an equal right of participation. Warranty 4 suggests that we make decisions carefully; we should give each important matter due consideration and

that everyone should be heard, to protect us from both the tyranny of the majority and the tyranny of the minority. What “substantial unanimity” usually looks like in A.A. service is a two-thirds vote; our experience has shown that when we agree on something by at least a 2-1 margin, we are more likely to accept it even if we disagree, in deference to the group conscience. Warranty 6 cautions us against trying to punish A.A. members for not doing things the way we think they should be done; the long form of Tradition 3 reminds us that A.A. membership ought never depend upon conformity. And finally, Warranty 6 suggests that we carry out our service activities in a spirit of love and respect for one another, rather than in an authoritative or controlling way. After all, Tradition 2 reminds us that our leaders don’t govern; they are entrusted to bring about the highest good for all those they serve.

*Tom M., Panel 65 Delegate, NE Texas Area 65*

## **From the Archives: Grapevine, December, 1952 (Volume 9 No.7)**

BETWEEN noon of Wednesday, December 24th, 1952 and midnight of Thursday, January 1st, 1953, some 120,000 members of AA will have seen their dreams of a dry Christmas and their hopes of a sane New Year’s come safely true.

It will be the 17th holiday season that AA has weathered in the mutual help of fellowship. And, based on past experiences, it will be a time of many new hands knocking on AA’s door. . .of persons whose holidays and lives have at long last proved unmanageable.

Intergroups and central offices have come to know that the first week of January means the year’s peak of phone calls and visits of inquiry.

The first Christmas for AA was the depression year of 1935. There were three old

timers to mark it. . .hardly a dozen newcomers to share it with them. In Akron, Dr. Bob and Bill D. were going on their second six months. Four recruits had from four months to two months. In New York, Bill W. had thirteen months since his last drink, seven months since his historic trip to Akron and the start of AA.

In Akron, the six gathered with their families at Dr. Bob’s. There was no ceremony...no exchange of presents.

The Twelve Steps had not yet been formulated. The Big Book was only a vague stirring that would not even be in manuscript until three more Christ-mases had been achieved. But there was joy that this most dangerous of times for the alcoholic had arrived. . .and twenty-four hours by twenty-four hours was being mastered.

“There were thanks,” remembers one of the two who survives that first Akron Christmas, “that we had come this far. However, I am certain that there was still considerable fear and trembling. . .not fear that this new way would not work, but doubt and uncertainty that we would be able to hold on to it. We remembered our many failures and thanked God for what He had already granted us and prayed sincerely for continued strength.

“The second Christmas was, of course, a lot more joyful and was celebrated with a lot more confidence. In those first few years we stuck close together. . .we were helped by each other’s presence, and we knew how much we needed one another.”

Bill W. recalls only a quiet day in New York that Yule of 1935. There were a very few . . .and who could know that in a mere 17 years perhaps 120,000 ex-drunks could want to know what happened the first AA Christmas?

Five years later, there was a place in New York for an AA Christmas party. . .the first AA clubhouse. And about the 24th Street Club there hangs a real Santa Claus story!

Or rather, it is a Saint Nicholas story. Just one hundred years before, in 1840, the building was erected at Number 334 1/2 West 24th Street. . .the property of a family named Moore who were large landowners in Manhattan Island’s Chelsea section. Driving across the snow-covered lawn, Dr. Clement Clarke Moore began to compose (some say just as his sled runners touched what is now the meeting room of AA’s first clubhouse!) his immortal gift to children of all ages. . .”Twas the night before Christmas.”

At first, the 24th Street property was occupied by a carpenter shop, with a stable built in the west end. . and then a tinsmithy. . and then a speakeasy. . .and then a birth place for many of those first AA groups that fanned out from New York while others fanned out from Akron.

Again, this Christmas of 1952, AAs will gather in the clubhouse, and there will be, some souls say, a tinkle just at midnight. No, not of ice cubes, they gravely assure you. No, not of glasses clinking together in a Yuletide toast. But listen carefully, they solemnly warn you. . .listen, for

at just the hour of twelve there are sleigh bells that tinkle especially over this old house where eight tiny reindeer took off from the gentle mind of a good doctor who loved Christmas and all people who can be, for even a moment, Christmas children. . .

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## **Upcoming Events: October & November**

### **BOOZER AWARDS: A NYE EXTRAVAGANZA BENEFITING THE DALLAS INTERGROUP ASSOCIATION**

**December 31, 2016 @ 7:30 pm - January 1, 2017 @ 2:00 am**

*Unity Church, 6525 Forest Lane, Dallas, United States*

Come ring in the sober New Year with dessert, entertainment, and fellowship at the Boozer Awards Saturday, December 31 at 7:30 p.m.- Until...? All proceeds benefit the Dallas Intergroup Association. You do not want to miss this! Seating is limited. Be sure to purchase tickets early. Cost is \$7 per person before 12/15 and \$10 at the door. For more information and ways to contribute, please see the attached flyer. 7:30 p.m. 90 min. Variety Show, 9-10 p.m. Dessert & Drinks, 10-11 p.m. Dance, 11-11:59 p.m., Call Up Meeting, 12 Midnight New Year, 12-? Dance.

### **70TH ANNUAL TYLER ANNIVERSARY**

**January 6, 2017 @ 5:00 pm - January 8, 2017 @ 12:00 pm**

*Harvey Convention Center, Tyler, TX 75703 United States*

“Happy, Joyous, and Free!” Tyler’s 70th Annual Anniversary, Jan. 6th-8th, 2017. Friday, January 6th: 5pm-9:30pm Saturday: January 7th, 8am-9:30pm Sunday: January 8th, 8am-11:15am Go to website to see full schedule- [www.tyleranniversary.com](http://www.tyleranniversary.com) Registration online as well as hotel information. Reservations by 12.16.17 \$20 registration, name badges required for all events.

### **SPACE COAST ROUNDUP 2017**

**January 19, 2017 @ 2:00 pm - January 22, 2017 @ 2:00 pm**

*Radisson Resort at the Port, 8701 Astronaut Blvd, Port*

*Canaveral, FL 32930 United States*

“Rocketed into a Fourth Dimension”. 2017 Roundup Space Coast Speakers include: Doug R., CA; Carla R, CA; Chris R. TX; Ralph W., CA, Ellen C., TX; Chris S, NJ See flyer for full details.

### **27TH ANNUAL RIVER ROUNDUP**

**January 19, 2017 @ 2:00 pm - January 22, 2017 @ 2:00 pm**

*Don Laughlin’s Riverside Resort, Bullhead, AZ 86442*

“From Chaos to Serenity” All proceeds go to support the River Cities Central Office. There will be plenty of fellowship and meetings as well as, a golf tournament, banquets, AA speakers, raffle and more, To get information go to their online site: [www.rcco-aa.org](http://www.rcco-aa.org) <http://www.rcco-aa.org> Early registration ends Nov. 18th, registration \$20. After the 18th, \$25.

# Group Contributions

November 2016

	<b>TOTAL</b>
A Vision for You	26.90
Addison Group	10.00
Aquarius Group	25.00
Belmont	50.00
Big Book Rockwall	1,000.00
Carrollton	200.00
Carry the Message	10.21
Casa Group	10.00
Cornerstone	250.00
Dallas North	270.00
Gray House Group	32.00
Irving	20.00
Lake Highlands	656.17
Lambda	150.00
Legacy	50.00
Little Elm Group	75.00
McKinney Miracle Group	146.01
New Freedom	489.45
ODAAT	664.00
Returned and Recovered	73.00
Rowlett	10.00
Shalom Today	30.00
Shivering Denizens	259.97
Simply AA	112.50
The Gift of Sobriety	30.00
Town North	100.00
We Agnostics	10.00
White House	50.00
Wylie Group	10.00
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>4,820.21</b>

## Find Us Online

At [www.aadallas.org](http://www.aadallas.org) you'll find group announcements, an events calendar, a searchable group directory, online bookstore & more.

## To Subscribe

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Please contact [carrie@aadallas.org](mailto:carrie@aadallas.org) or call the Dallas Intergroup Association at (214) 887-6699.

## Faithful Fivers: Would you like to be one?

Faithful Fivers are AA members who in gratitude pledge to contribute at least five dollars each month toward the support of Dallas Intergroup Association, DIA.

This contribution gives AA members the opportunity to practice the Seventh Tradition regularly and painlessly by pledging \$5 or more a month to the DIA. We can set up an automatic credit card deduction, or you can send in a check once a month or whenever you choose. Call, 214-887-6699, to set up monthly contributions.

DIA is totally supported by AA groups and individuals. Contributions are limited to \$3,000 per member per year and are tax deductible.

### Yes! Please enroll me as a Faithful Fiver.

Please complete the form below and mail in with your contribution to DIA, 6162 E. Mockinbird Ln., Suite 213, Dallas, TX 75214

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**“What do you mean your crystal ball can only see one day at a time?”**

*- Robert F. West Hartford Conn.*

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