

INTO ACTION

CONFIDENTIAL
Dec 10/Jan 2011

YOUR THIRD LEGACY

By Dr. Bob and Bill

(NOTE: This is a proposal to form "The General Service Conference of Alcoholics Anonymous" — a small body of State and Provincial AA Delegates meeting yearly, who could assume direct responsibility for the guidance of the AA General Service Headquarters at New York City — not to be confused with the 1950 Cleveland International Conference.)

WE, who are the older members of AA, bequeath to you who are younger, these three legacies — the "12 Steps of Recovery," the "12 Traditions" and now the "General Services of Alcoholics Anonymous."

Two of these legacies have long been in your keeping. By the 12 Steps we have recovered from alcoholism; by the 12 Traditions we are achieving a fine unity.

Being someday perishable, Dr. Bob and I now wish to deliver to the members of AA their third legacy. Since 1938 we and our friends have been holding it in trust. This legacy is the General Headquarters Services of Alcoholics Anonymous—the Alcoholic Foundation, the A.A. Book, The A.A. Grapevine and the A.A. General Office.

These are the principal Services which have enabled our Society to function and to grow.

Acting on behalf of all, Dr. Bob and I ask that you — the members of AA — now assume guidance of these Services and guard them well. The future growth, indeed the very survival of Alcoholics Anonymous may one day depend on how prudently these Arms of Service are administered in years to come.

May we share with you a fragment of history? Twelve years ago, warmly aided by great friends, Dr. Bob and I established a Headquarters for our then obscure Fellowship. Soon thereafter we transferred this function to The Alcoholic Foundation, which was organized as a small Board of Trustees dedicated to serve our cause. It's Board was formed of alcoholics and non-alcoholic friends, who today number fifteen. When in the Spring of 1938 our Foundation was born, AA was but three years old. We had only 50 members. The book Alcoholics Anonymous was just an idea. None could then guess the magnificence of the gift which Providence had begun to bestow.

In the twelve years since, those 50 early members have spawned 120,000 more. AA stretches worldwide. Religion and medicine have approvingly raised us out of that No Man's Land where we once foundered between them. We have no enemies, our friends are beyond count. Like gleaming coral islands our thousands of Groups build themselves upward out of the alcohol sea. What a God-given miraculous circumstance!

Through our rather feverish infancy, the Alcoholic Foundation Board, unseen by many, quietly played a great part in the formation and spread of our well-loved Society.

Acting through our General Office, the book Alcoholics Anonymous, and latterly the

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Grapevine, the Foundation became directly responsible for half our growth and effectiveness — both in quality and quantity. There can be no question of that.

Suppose then, all these years, we had been without those Services. Where would we be today minus the A.A. Book and our standard literature which now pours out of Headquarters at the rate of three tons a month? Suppose our public relations had been left to thoughtless chance? Suppose no one had been assigned to encourage good publicity and discourage the bad? Suppose no accurate information about AA had been available? Imagine our vital and delicate relations with medicine and religion left to pot luck. Then, too, where would thousands of AAs be today if the General Office hadn't answered their frantic letters and referred them to help? (Our New York Office received and answered 28,000 letters of all kinds last year.) Or in what shape would hundreds of distant AA Groups now be if that Office hadn't started them by mail or directed travelers to them? How could we have managed without a world Group Directory? What about those foreign Groups in 28 countries clamoring for translations, proved experience and encouragement? Would we be publishing the A.A. Book at Oslo, Norway and London, England? What of those lone members on high seas or in far corners of the earth, those prisoners, those asylum inmates, those veterans in service or in hospitals? Where might we one day be if we never had The A.A. Grapevine, our mirror of AA life and principal forum of written expression? Mow grateful we are for those Secretaries and those volunteer Editors and those friendly Trustees who have stood sentinel all these years over our principal affairs. Without all these things, where would we be? You must have guessed it. We'd be nowhere; that's sure.

So it is that by the "Steps" we have recovered, by the "Traditions" we have unified, and by our Headquarters Services we have been able to function as a Society, Yet some may still say — "Of course the Foundation should go on. Certainly we'll pay that small expense. But why can't we leave its conduct to Dr. Bob and Bill and their friends the Trustees? We always have.

Why do they now bother us with such business? Let's keep AA simple. "Good questions, these. But today the answers are quite different than they once were.

Let's face these facts:

First — Dr. Bob and Bill are perishable, they can't last forever.

Second — Their friends, the Trustees, are almost unknown to the AA movement.

Third — In future years our Trustees couldn't possibly function without direct guidance from AA itself. Somebody must advise them. Somebody, or something, must take the place of Dr. Bob and Bill.

Fourth — *Alcoholics Anonymous* is out of its infancy. Grown up, adult now, it has full right and the plain duty to take direct responsibility for its own Headquarters.

Fifth — Clearly then, unless the Foundation is firmly anchored, through State and Provincial representatives, to the movement it serves, a Headquarters breakdown will someday be inevitable. When its old-timers vanish, an isolated Foundation couldn't survive one grave mistake or serious controversy. Any storm could blow it down. Its revival wouldn't be simple. Possibly it could never be revived. Still isolated, there would be no means of doing that. Like a fine car without gasoline, it would be helpless.

Sixth — Another serious flaw:

As a whole, the AA movement has never faced a grave crisis. But someday it will have to. Human affairs being what they are, we can't expect to remain untouched by the hour of serious trouble. With direct support unavailable, with no reliable cross-section of AA opinion, how could our remote Trustees handle a hazardous emergency? (Continued on page 3)

CHRISTMAS GREETING 1950

from Doctor Bob and Bill

HIS 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!

(Continued from page 2)

This gaping "open end" in our present set-up could positively guarantee a debacle. Confidence in the Foundation would be lost.

AAs would everywhere say: "By whose authority do the Trustees speak for us? And how do they know they are right?"

With AA's Service life-lines jangled and severed, what then might happen to the "millions who don't know." Thousands would continue to suffer on or die because we had taken no forethought, because we had forgotten the virtue of Prudence. This should not come to pass.

That is why the Trustees, Dr. Bob and I now propose the "General Service Conference of Alcoholics Anonymous." That is why we urgently need your direct help. Our principal Services must go on living. We think the General Service Conference of Alcoholics Anonymous can be the agency to make that certain.

(Your group secretary has a few copies of the full "Conference" plan of which the foregoing is only Section I. As the Foundation couldn't afford a full mailing to all AA members, additional copies may be had at the Foundation for a nickel each.)

December Grapevine 1950

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Voices of District 11

One of our own shares on Step 11 -

Step Eleven: 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.

Let's consider this step in two parts. The first part is the seeking part. We are to seek to improve our conscious contact with God. This is important because it is through the maintenance of our spiritual condition that we are granted a daily reprieve from alcoholism. This is part of the spiritual portion of the three-part solution that is outlined in the first 164 pages of the Big Book. When I got here I knew first-hand about the physical and mental components of my alcoholism. A series of stays in a hospital, including their locked ward, proved to me⇒

conclusively that I was bodily and mentally sickened. What was less obvious (to me at least) was the spiritual malady that I suffered from. I had no idea how to go about improving my conscious contact with God. As is states on page 58, I balked at the concept that God loved me and was ready to remove not only the obsession to drink but all the stuff that I felt inside that drove to the gates of Insanity and Death. Alcohol was the solution I used to alleviate the pain caused by my lack of Power. My symptoms can be found in the middle of page 52:

"We were having trouble with personal relationships, we couldn't control our emotional natures, we were a prey to misery and depression, we couldn't make a living, we had a feeling of uselessness, we were full of fear, we were unhappy, we couldn't seem to be of real help to other people..."

Even though I'd "put the plug in the jug" many 24-hours before, I was still white-knuckling life. I had been told early on that there was a third component to true sobriety. I did not listen; I closed myself off from the sunlight of the Spirit. I attended many meetings. I was involved in service work. I had worked with a few men. I WAS NOT DRINKING. Yet, I was dying inside. Even though I had experienced a spiritual awakening of sorts, and was bolstering the spiritual part of me with service work and Fellowship, I was not enlarging my spiritual life.

Fortunately for me I found a man who had lived the same nightmare as I. He, too, had immersed himself in service work, made many meetings, sponsored many men. But he had also come to the same jumping-off place I was. He had been blessed by an opportunity to work with a man who knew that the answer to our problem is spiritual in nature. At the end of the day the spiritual malady is the only thing that the Big Book and Alcoholics Anonymous can treat.

I get my daily maintenance treatments by starting my day with prayer. I used to think that God only listened to those who were somehow "worthy". By that thinking I was totally disqualified by the actions and deeds I had done during my life both in and outside of recovery.

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INTO ACTION Editorial Policy

INTO ACTION News is a bimonthly newsletter of District 11; NIA 20 of Alcoholics Anonymous. It is about, by and for the Members of the Fellowship of AA. Opinions expressed herein are NOT to be attributed to AA as a whole, nor does publication of information imply any endorsement by AA. Quotations and artwork from AA literature are reprinted with permission from AA World Service, Inc. and/or The AA Grapevine; Inc. Submissions are edited for space and clarity ONLY. Contact information is required and anonymity is respected.

AUTOBIOGRAPHY IN FIVE SHORT CHAPTERS

(by Porsche Nelson)

1-I walk down the street.

There is a deep hole in the sidewalk.
I fall in
I am lost I am helpless
It isn't my fault.

It takes forever to find a way out.

2-I walk down the same street.

There is a deep hole in the sidewalk.
I pretend I don't see it.
I fall in again.

I can't believe I am in the same place but, it isn't my fault.

It still takes a long time to get out.

3-I walk down the same street.

There is a deep hole in the sidewalk.
I see it is there.

I still fall in. It's a habit.

My eyes are open.

I know where I am.

It is my fault.

I get out immediately.

4-I walk down the same street.

There is a deep hole in the sidewalk.
I walk around it.

5-I walk down another street.

**THE DEADLINE FOR THE NEXT ISSUE OF IA IS
JAN 22, 2011.**

**THE THEME FOR THE
FEB/MAR 2011 ISSUE OF
INTO ACTION IS: STEP 3; or anything you
wish to submit.**

INTO Action: District 11's Newsletter
Editor: David Gilbert 815-344-6523
E-mail: Soulsurgery@comcast.net

District 11 G.S.R.

Meetings Are Held
On 1st Thursday of
the Month at the
McHenry Alano Club;
409 Front Street-Unit D
(route 31) McHenry, IL



District Meeting 7:30 PM

DISTRICT 11's WEB SITE:

<http://www.aa-nia-dist11.org>

District 11 Secretary

aadistrict11sec@yahoo.com

SOBERFEST WEB SITE

<http://www.soberfest.org/>

NIA 20 EVENTS WEB SITE:

<http://www.aa-nia.org/events.html>

Live Links

A PROUD HISTORY

The **Burtons Bridge Group**, the second group to form in what is now District 11 or basically McHenry County, was founded in 1948 by Joe Cees. The meetings originally met in an insurance agency office on Main Street in Wauconda on Sunday mornings at 11:00 and on Thursday evening at 8:30.

Within 10 years, they had outgrown the insurance agency, and Joe and his wife, Irene, being home owners in Burtons Bridge, were able to acquire the use of the Burtons Bridge Community Center for the same meeting times.

Beginning in 1958, Joe's wife, Irene, also a member of AA, decided to form a day meeting on Tuesdays at 10:00 am. These 3 meetings were constituted as one group, "The Burtons Bridge Group". 62 years later all 3 meetings are still going strong and carrying the message to the alcoholics that are still suffering. Two more meetings,

Tuesdays and Friday evenings were formed a few years ago. I can't imagine all the lost souls that have been found and the ruined lives that have been rebuilt as a result of this group and its message for over 60 years.

A Friend of Bill W.

District 11 Monthly Meeting Minutes November 4th 2010

(Editor's Note: Dates and times contained in the following minutes are a reflection from the minutes taken on November 4th , not the date of this publication.)

Meeting Time: 7:30 PM*Attendance: 33

Committee Members 10*Groups Represented: 21

Anniversaries **Chuck – 17 years**

CONGRATULATIONS ON ALL ANNIVERSARIES!

Secretary's Report: Glen R (alt Mary F)

Written committee report forms must be submitted to the secretary to be included in the minutes. The new E-Mail for the secretary is aadistrict11sec@yahoo.com

Treasurer's Report: *Mark J*

Starting Balance		\$4637.76
Expenses		\$ 812.72)
Income		\$ 0
Ending Balance		\$3824.04

DCM Report Brandon L (alt Frank G),

I attended the fall committee meeting at LaFox in October and prepared a report for new business.

Public Information Report Nick (alt Brian B)

We received our literature purchased and are in the process of getting the information into circulation. We are in contact with McHenry county court services and youth probation and district 200 Woodstock and have AA contact numbers, literature and big books in their hands.

Young people posters are being distributed to school districts 12, 15, 156, 200 along with the village of Johnsburg, McHenry township,

Hospital & Treatment Report Mike R (alt Dave R)

No Report

Corrections Report: Chuck L, (alt Bob M)

Ordered Literature for a discharge package for inmates...

CPC Report: John S: (alt Nate P)

Letters were sent out to a handful of lawyers in the area. Started working on getting letters together for judges of McHenry county

Twelve Traditions an explanation

"The Twelve Traditions of Alcoholics Anonymous Are a distillate of our experience of living and working together. They apply the spirit of the Twelve recovery Steps To our group life and security. They deal with the world outside and with each other; they state our attitudes toward power and prestige, toward property and money. They would save us from tempting ⇒⇒

Answering Service Fred G chair (alt Mitch P)

Total calls 91-- 51 meeting info, 5 open meetings 4 out of district, ,14 wanted to talk to AA, 2- 12 step calls - 1 Al-non, , 1 NA/CA, , , 1 Spanish info 1 polish speaking 5 questions about AA, and 6 needed rides.
0-10 min 73, 11-20 min 14, 21-30 min 2 over 30 min 2

Archives Report: Clarence J, (alt open)

Started planning the 2011 old timers brunch, tentative date will be 2/13/2011

Grapevine Report: Steve L, (alt Brad B)

Plans to set up a display at Soberfest

Special Needs Report: Pat C, (alt chuck d)

Continued to meet with senior services in Johnsburg, Goal is to establish a regular meetings there and at their facility in Crystal Lake, They will stock AA literature at their sites. Ordered large print material and material on CD's aimed at the elderly GSO is preparing special needs pamphlets with stories of special needs and how they have overcome their obstacles.

The October grapevine is a special needs issue so I have ordered 20 from grapevine.

LCM Report: Steve S, (alt Justin K)

No report

Workshop Report: Craig C, (alt Sue C)

No report

UPDATED BY EDITOR:

Newsletter Report: Dave G ,

Dead line for FEB/MAR INTO ACTION newsletter is January 22, 2011., The theme is on Step 3 or anything you wish to submit. Share your groups and/or your experience, strength and hope or up-coming events.

Dave Gilbert <soulsurgery@comcast.net>

Webmaster Report: Chuck T

My report for November of 2010 is that I need the latest schedule from the schedule maker in order to put it up on the site. The current schedule posted is getting somewhat old. Other than that, all is well. Please continue to send any updates, events or flyers to be posted on the website.

Schedule Maker Report: Bill J. No report

⇐alliances and major controversies; they would elevate principles far above personal ambitions. And as a token of this last, they request that we Maintain personal anonymity before the open public As a protection to AA and as proof of the fact that Our society intends to practice true humility."

Bill W., The Language of the Heart, pg. 96

Old Business:

Still looking for an alternate DCM and alternate Treasure so go to your groups to see if anyone would like to step up.

New Business:

A motion was accepted to extend P.I. budget by \$650.00 . So they can get an ad into Wassup Magazine.

Upcoming Events

NIA Winter Assembly December 11, 2010

Hinsdale South High School
7401 South Clarendon Hills Road
Darien, IL 60559

Registration Begins @8:00 A.M.

Lunch Will Be: \$8.00

Other questions: Hugh K. 630-991-8690 or
gkelle9@sbcglobal.net

January 29, 2011

NIA Winter Committee Meeting; La Fox, IL

UPDATED BY EDITOR

**** The next district meeting will be held on
Thursday JANUARY 6th , 2011 *Respectfully Submitted,*
Glen Reid, Secretary, Mary F alternate secretary

**SOBERFEST**

**November
19th, 20th
, 21st**

**Grand Geneva
Resort
Lake Geneva,
WI**

SOBERFEST RECAP

Thanks to everyone who participated and/or attended this year's Soberfest. With the economy the way it is right now we know what a sacrifice you made to attend. Without you all it would not have been the

success it was again this year. →

THANKYOU THANKYOU THANKYOU THANK

SOBERFEST RECAP CONTINUES....

The 21st Annual McHenry Soberfest 2010 conference was once again held at the Grand Geneva Resort in Lake Geneva, Wisconsin on November 19th , 20th & 21st ; one week before Thanksgiving as it has been. The Soberfest committee worked very hard and long to bring this event to fruition and I'm extremely honored to have worked with them.

This year's conference sat approximately 1200 for dinner Saturday night and there was approximately 2300 guests registered this year and we drank 469 gallons of coffee – AA's unofficial beverage. This year's Al-anon, Alateen and AA speakers which always highlight this event were:

Friday, Nov. 19th : Al-Anon Speaker, Aaron J. - Charlotte, NC; A.A. Speaker, Julie C - Oakland, CA ;
Saturday, Nov. 20th : A.A. Speaker, Gary B - Indianapolis, IN; Al-Anon Speaker, Betty Ann Z. - Newbury Park, CA; Alateen Speaker, Nicole K - Burbank, CA; **Nov. 20th, Saturday night Banquet AA speaker** was Judith R - Norman, OK;
Sunday, Nov. 21st : 10:00am A.A. Speaker, Myers R - Lewisville, TX

A very heartfelt thank you to them for sharing their experience, strength and hope with us.

Father Lawrence Hanley opened our Saturday night banquet with an awesome prayer, then a dinner of chicken, sirloin, garlic mashed potatoes, mixed vegetables and a "yummy" apple dessert.

This year's conference once again featured Karaoke on Friday night and a huge dance on Saturday night with music brought to you by "George and Tina".

Our literature room , Alcahons, Al-Anonathons, Alateenathons, District 11 Workshops , two NIA 20 Panels plus an ISCYPAA workshop ,and "Every Step of the Way" Step Study saw high attendance. Archives hosted collections from Districts 10, 11 and 12, NIA 20 and a personal collection from one of our fellowship. Next year we hope to include Southern Wisconsin Area 75 and Chicago Area 19. **Amot Audio CD's & MP3's** worked tirelessly to provide set and individual CD's and full set Thumb-Drives of the speakers.
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(Soberfest recap continued from page 6)

The 22nd Annual McHenry Soberfest will be held again at the Grand Geneva Resort on November 18th, 19th and 20th of 2011.

The 2011 Soberfest committee elections will be held on January 12th, 7:30 pm at the McHenry Township Building; 409 Front Street in McHenry.

For more information please contact:
David G. – 815-344-6523 Chair 2010
Mike P. - 847-778-1527 Chair 2011

Voices of District 11

(Continued from page 3)

It was explained to me that none of us is really worthy of God's grace but, in one of the miracles of this program we are given Grace. We can be forgiven as we learn to forgive. Prayer is the opening of the channel to my Creator. By way of the 3rd Step prayer I offer myself to a Power that I am gradually coming to understand. My day is filled with opportunities to communicate with my Creator and ends with sincere thanks for another chance.

Now that the channel is open I need to listen for Creator's guidance. This is what meditation is; it's the listening part of our seeking God. Here is a place that many of us have gotten caught up. Many of us who grew up in the 60s learned a definition of meditation that is commonly associated with Hinduism and drug abuse. The Eastern religious experiences are certainly one form of meditation. It was not necessarily the definition that Bill Wilson had in mind when he wrote the Steps. In the context of the 1930s, meditation is the process of contemplating one's course of action or resources. It has been said that most generals, on the night before a great battle, would meditate on their troops; their positions, provisions and strategies. This was the context that Bill was thinking of. In meditation we can learn the strategy that God has for us each day. By meditating we can focus on the kit of spiritual tools which is ours for the asking. We select the tools we need for the day and focus on what we are to do for that day. ⇒

This is not to say that transcendental meditation is a bad thing.

It does provide a method for quieting the mind so that a person is more able to "hear" the message. If nothing else meditation provides a way to mentally walk down a quiet road and calm one's self during or after a stressful time.

The second half of the Step is that we pray for "knowledge of His will for us, and the power to carry that out". It is said that God wants us to be "happy, joyous and free". We are also tasked with a mission of sorts; we are to carry our message of recovery to the still-suffering alcoholic. This must include those within the rooms of Alcoholics Anonymous who still suffer from untreated alcoholism. That mission permits us to give away that which was so freely given to us. In this way we ensure our own daily reprieve from alcoholism.

The 1st step tells us we are powerless over alcohol. We learn, by doing the following 9 Steps to locate and tap into a Power which is not only greater than our own but is unlimited and is more than a sufficient substitute for those things we did to satisfy the soul-craving sickness we suffer from in untreated alcoholism. Step 11 gives us the tools we need to enter and continue to walk in the sunlight of the spirit. Being no longer cut off from our Creator we have tapped into a limitless resource for life; but only if we give away the instructions and help another suffering alcoholic on the journey. By practicing Step 11 we can really live without ever being alone again.

Respectfully Submitted by Doug W.

Heard around the Tables

❖ The process described is a guide for new members and old alike on how to start your day... survive what the day brings.. including what to do when things go awry... and an end of the day review on how well you did. **Big Book Page 86-88**

❖ My sponsor pointed out that I seemed to be looking at the sixth and seventh steps the same way that I look at the clothes in my closet . . .

"Even though those are too big, they're comfortable and from time to time when I'm feeling a little lazy, I like to just slip into them --- oh, and those? Well those are a little tight, but they might work for me some day, so I don't want to get rid of them right now."

Twelve Tips on Keeping Your Holiday Season Sober and Joyous

Holiday parties without liquid spirits may still seem a dreary prospect to new A.A.s. But many of us have enjoyed the happiest holidays of our lives sober—an idea we would never have dreamed of, wanted, or believed possible when drinking.

Here are some tips on having an all-round ball without a drop of alcohol.



- 1. Line up extra A.A. activities for the holiday season.** Arrange to take newcomers to meetings, answer the phones at a clubhouse or central office, speak, help with dishes, or visit the alcoholic ward at a hospital.
- 2. Be host to A.A. friends, especially newcomers.** If you don't have a place where you can throw a formal party, take one person to a diner and spring for the coffee

- 6. If you have to go to a drinking party and can't take an A.A. with you, keep some candy handy.**
- 7. Don't think you have to stay late.** Plan in advance an "important date" you have to keep.



- 3. Keep your A.A. telephone list with you all the time.** If a drinking urge or panic comes—postpone everything else until you've called an A.A.
- 4. Find out about the special holiday parties, meetings, or other celebrations** given by groups in your area, and go. If you're timid, take someone newer than you are.
- 5. Skip any drinking occasion you are nervous about.** Remember how clever you were at excuses when drinking? Now put the talent to good use. No office party is as important as saving your life

- 8. Worship in your own way.**
- 9. Don't sit around brooding.** Catch up on those books, museums, walks, and letters.
- 10. Don't start now getting worked up about all those holiday temptations.** Remember—"one day at a time."
- 11. Enjoy the true beauty of holiday love and joy.** Maybe you cannot give material gifts — but this year, you can give love.
- 12. "Having had a . . ."** No need to spell out the Twelfth Step here, since you already

Have a SAFE and SOBER Holiday Season