

Another Fragments of History

by *Bill W.*

February 1954
Vol. 10 No. 9

Because a tribute from all of Alcoholics Anonymous was due, Bill made a special trip to Cleveland to attend this particular meeting which he describes below. But he wishes us to say for him, with regret, that this does not mean he is once more available for general travel and speaking.

IT was December 13, 1953. The occasion was the first anniversary of the opening of Rosary Hall, the newly remodeled alcoholic ward at Cleveland's famed St. Vincent's Charity Hospital. It had been a great AA meeting. The small auditorium was crammed with alcoholics and their friends. So was the balcony. One thousand people now rose to their feet, clapping wildly.



The slight figure of a nun in a gray habit reluctantly approached the lectern's microphone. The uproar redoubled, then suddenly subsided as the little nun commenced to give her thanks. She was embarrassed, too. For had not the program she'd helped write for the occasion definitely stated that "The Sisters of Charity, and the members of Alcoholics Anonymous who have assisted, decline all individual

credit." Sister Ignatia's attempted anonymity was busted wide open, for no one there wanted to let her get away with it this time. And anyway, she was just about as anonymous in that part of our AA world as baseball's Cleveland Indians. This was a tribute to her which had been years in the making.

As I sat watching this scene, I vividly remembered Dr. Bob's struggles to start Akron's AA Group Number One and what this dear nun and her Sisters of Charity of St. Augustine had done to make that possible.

(Continued on page 2)

(Continued from page 1)

I tried to envision all the vast consequences which have since flowed from their early effort. Seeking hospitalization for his new-found prospects, Dr. Bob, I recalled, had begged one Akron institution after another to take them in. Two hospitals had tried for a time but finally gave up in favor of folks with broken legs, ailing gall bladders, etc--really sick people!

Then in desperation, the good Doctor bethought himself of Sister Ignatia, that shy but beaming nun who handled admissions at St. Thomas Hospital in Akron where he had occasionally operated. In an atmosphere of some secrecy he approached her with his proposal. In nothing flat, he got results. This rare pair immediately bootlegged a shaking alkie into a tiny two bed ward. Because the new customer kicked like a steer at this glaring lack of privacy for his delicate condition, Sister Ignatia moved him to the hospital's flower room. Here AA's co-founder Bob and Sister Ignatia ministered to this newcomer, who presently left his bed for the world outside, there to mend his ways and his broken life.

Through Sister Ignatia and Bob, God had wrought a divine conspiracy of medicine, religion and Alcoholics Anonymous which was to bring sobriety within reach of more than 5,000 alcoholics who were to pass through the alcoholic ward of St. Thomas up to the time of Dr. Bob's death in 1950. But when that first customer was shaking it out in the flower room way back there in 1939, the Trustees of the hospital little guessed that St. Thomas had become the first religious institution ever to open its doors to AA.

Not long before Dr. Bob passed out of our sight and hearing, I was asked to inscribe a plaque which could always be seen on the wall of the alcoholic ward and which would commemorate the great events which there took place.

Two years after Dr. Bob's death, Sister Ignatia was transferred by the Order to which she belongs to Charity Hospital at Cleveland.

But no account of the activity of church hospitals in this area would be complete without a recital of what happened at Charity Hospital over the years before her arrival there.

Old-time AAs will recall the wonderful publicity which the Cleveland Plain Dealer gave us in the fall of 1939. When these stories broke there was scarcely a score of AAs in the whole town. Because the pieces appearing on the Cleveland Plain Dealer's editorial page were accompanied by strong editorials and ran consecutively for about ten days, the ensuing excitement in the town was immense. The little band of alcoholics, some of them dry but months, were flooded by hundreds of telephone calls and frantic pleas for help. The Plain Dealer had said to the good people of Cleveland "Come and get it!" And they certainly did.

This startling development ushered in an entirely new phase of AA. Pioneering had gone on since 1935 and the AA book was already off the press. But growth in Akron and New York had been discouragingly slow. A handful of Clevelanders had dried up by contact with Akron but held no meeting of their own until early 1939. It was then commonly supposed that nobody but "grey-beards" could look after new people. The supply of seasoned AAs in Cleveland was of course painfully small. What could these few do with the hundreds of alcoholics who now descended on them like a landslide? Was mass production of sobriety possible?

Well, those early Clevelanders proved that it was. Cases were dumped into hospitals willy-nilly all over town. Whether their hospital bills would be paid, no one knew. An AA would appear at a new man's bedside, snatch him out and take him to a meeting. The new man would thereupon rush to another bedside with the glad tidings. Then and there it was discovered that very new people could drive the opening wedge into a fresh case almost as well as anybody. Out of this confused scramble there soon evolved the great idea of organized personal sponsorship for each and every new man and woman.

(Continued on page 7)



DISTRICT BEAT

District 11 G.S.R. Meetings Are Held On 1st Thursday of the Month at the First United Methodist Church, 236 W. Crystal Lake Avenue; Northeast Corner of Dole & Crystal Lake Avenue in Crystal Lake

District Meeting 7:30 PM

Committee Meeting(s), during (or TBA)

All are welcome. Get involved, join a committee, voice your groups opinion, spread the word, carry the message back to your group and get involved with a committee to carry the AA message to the alcoholic that is still suffering. Out of over 150 registered meetings in District 11, less than 30 G.S.R.'s have been attending the District Meeting. Was someone there for you?

Are your IN or AROUND A.A.?

Public Information, Corrections, Grapevine, Hospitals and Treatment, INTOACTION Newsletter, Answering Service, Archives, Workshops, LCM....

A G.S.R. Creed

"We are General Service Representatives. We are the link in the chain of communication for our groups with the General Service Conference and the world of A.A.

We realize the ultimate authority in A.A. is a loving God expressed in our group conscience. As trusted servants, our job is to bring information to our groups in order that they can reach an informed group conscience; we are helping to maintain the unity and strength so vital to our fellowship.

Let us therefore have the patience and tolerance to listen while others share the courage to speak up when we have something to share, and the wisdom to do what is right for our groups as a whole. "

12 Steps A Poem

I took one step, began to moan

I can't do this one on my own.

I took two steps, began to pray

Restore me God, please now, today.

I took three steps, gave up my will

Maybe God loves me still.

I took a fourth, I looked inside

Nothing more would I hide.

And on the fifth, I said aloud

I've done some wrong, and I'm not proud.

I took six steps, and got prepared

To lose the defects, I was scared.

Now I'm at seven, take them away

My God, for this I do pray.

And on eight, the list was long

Amends to make for all the wrong.

I took nine steps, put down my pride

Amends made, I will not hide.

Ten steps I take, each day I pray

I make amends along the way.

And on eleven I pray to know

Each day His will, which way to go.

I took twelve steps, I'm like a bird

To others now, I spread the word.....

(Author anonymous)

INTOAction: District 11's Newsletter

Co-Editor: Tim Boutin (815) 363-8348

E-mail: TimB95@aol.com

Co-Editor: David Gilbert 815-344-6523

E-mail: Soulsurgery@comcast.net

DISTRICT 11's WEB SITE:

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

****SCHEDULE INFO CHANGES MUST GO THROUGH DISTRICT 11'S SECRETARY***

INTOACTION Editorial Policy

INTOACTION 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.

Minutes for District 11

January 3rd, 2008

(Editors Note: Dates and times contained in the following are a reflection from the minutes taken on January 3rd, not the date of this publication.)

Meeting Time: 7:32 P.M.

Attendance: 35

Committee Members: 15

Groups Represented: 22

Anniversaries:

Jenks W. - 26 years,
Linda S. - 13 years, Carol H. – 9 years,
Steve G. – 8 years, Jeff R. – 3 years,
Eric S. – 6 months.

**CONGRATUALATIONS ON ALL
ANNIVERSARIES!!!!**

Secretary's Report: *Dan S.*

- Received corrected email address for Mark J. for district roster
- Received contact information for CPC committee members for the 2008 roster

Treasurer's Report: *Rich R.*

Beginning Balance	\$6,336.67
Expenses	\$1,811.59
Assets	<u>\$1,018.86</u>
Ending Balance	\$5,444.13



Old Business:

- Hospital & Treatment Chairperson: No one nominated, tabled until February

**PLEASE SPREAD THE WORD WE ARE
STILL IN NEED OF A CHAIRPERSON!!**

- Bridge the Gap Alternate Chairperson – Jesse J. stands unopposed and voted in.
- New meeting directories were printed and are available. McHenry Alano Club phone number is wrong under the meetings, but is right on the front cover. Also, the district 11 website address should read district11-aa-nia.org.

New Business:

- It was suggested that the district secretary keep a back up disc of all schedule changes.
- Dan M. suggested printing a booklet style directory that would cost fifty cents per copy and would compliment the single sheet directory.
- NIA service structure workshop will be held January 26th from 9am-12pm at the Huntley Park District building. Learn more about service and show up!!
- Appointed positions for the upcoming term are as follows:
 - Archivist – Steve G.
 - Workshop Coordinator – Craig C.
 - Assistant Workshop Coordinator – Sue C.
 - LCM – Russ M.
 - Webmaster – Frank S.
 - Schedule Maker – Rich V. & Linda S
 - Newsletter – David G.
- Russ M. agreed to continue with the LCM position; however he is looking for a replacement and additional support. Please let him know if you are interested.
- Motion to read the tradition and concept that correlate to the month in lieu of tradition two and nine. Passed
- Dan M. proposed a change to the format of the district meeting that would allow more time for committees to meet. Asked GSR's to bring their group conscience back next month.
- Sue C. suggested changing the business meeting to a new location to generate more interest from GSR's. It was stated we cannot move the meeting until 2009 and would need to notify the current location of our desire to change by June, 2008. Take this to your groups and please get their conscience. →

←

Public Information: *Jeff R.*

- Chairperson is looking into prices and good locations for getting a billboard in the district.
- Committee is working to supply local police and fire departments with knowledge.
- Searching for where literature racks are placed and keeping them stocked.
- The chairperson really needs committee members to help with these and more vital tasks.

**Corrections:** No report**Hospital & Treatment:** No report**Answering Service:** *Jim M.*

- Data for December. (118 calls total): 68 info, 10 hang-up, 6-no call back, 3-wrong number, 2 NA/CA, 5 need help, 3 Alanon, 1 intervention, 14 solicitor, 1 Spanish, 5 needed a ride.

Newsletter: *David G. Updated by editor:*

- Deadline for April/May 2008 issue is March 16th, 2008

Archives: *Steve G.*

- **Old Timer's Brunch is scheduled for Sunday February 17, 2008 at the American Legion Hall on Main St. in Wauconda, IL. Speakers will be Bud K. and Kathy B.**

Grapevine: No report

**District Information &
Current newsletter available@:
<http://www.dist11-aa-nia.org>**

Special Needs: No report**LCM:** *Russ M.*

- 12 meetings were updated in December; please take the most recent meeting lists to your group members so they can be updated on an on-going basis.
- If anyone is interested in being part of updating meetings in our district contact Russ M. (773) 343-5841 or call the answering service at (815) 455-3311. Thank You

Workshop: *Craig C.*

- "Lets Stroll Into Action" service orientation workshop is scheduled for January 26th from 9am-12pm at the Huntley Park District building. This is an NIA event for all GSR's, DCM's, area and district committee service chairs, etc.

Webmaster: *Frank S.*

- Send any updated event flyers to technical@dist11-aa-nia.org
- The new meeting schedule will be uploaded by weeks end.

**Bridge The Gap:** No report**Upcoming Events:**

- NIA committee meeting January 19th at Lord of Life Church located at 40w605 IL Route 38, La Fox IL
- NIA Service Structure Workshop January 26th at the Huntley Park District building
- NIA Spring Conference is March 7-9, 2008. Online registration available at <http://aa-nia-dist40.org/2008Spring/>.

→

←
Open Mic:

- *Eric:* On January 19th ISCYPAA will have their all people open at Holiday Inn in Elgin, IL. Doors open at 6pm, speakers at 7:30pm – Brandon L., Becky I. and Mark J.
- *Brandon:* ISCYPAA State Conference will be held February 22nd – 24th at Holiday Inn in Elgin, IL.
- *John:* NIA Spring Conference is March 7th – 9th. Registration is very low and they could really use your support.
- *Mark:* Greeters and hospitality room help is needed for the NIA Spring Conf. Please sign up at the district meeting.
- *Lynn:* January 26th Beginners and Winners will be having an anniversary party at Messiah Lutheran. Joe Z. will be speaking.
- *Rachael:* ISCYPAA Bowling adventure January 27th 12pm-5pm at West Lanes

(Up-dated by Ed:)

******The next district meeting will be held**
March 6th, 2008****

Respectfully Submitted Dan Smith - Recording Secretary

Sunday,
February 17, 2008
OLD TIMERS
BRUNCH

American Legion Hall, Wauconda
(on Main St., 2 Blocks South of Rte. 176)

Door Open: 9:00 A.M.
Brunch from: 9:30 – 11:00 A.M.
Speakers Start: 11:00 A.M.

Contribution: \$6.00

This Years Speakers:

Bud K
Kathy B.

Sponsored by District 11's Archives

2008 NIA
SPRING CONFERENCE

Hosted by District 40

MARCH 7th - 9th 2008

More will Be Revealed

Wyndham Lisle
3000 Warrenville Rd.
Lisle, IL 60532
Phone: 630-505-1000
SPEAKERS

- Friday Night:** AA - Mickey B., Santa Monica, CA
Al-Anon - Juanita M., New Mexico
Leonard Blumenthal, Chairman of the Board, friend of A.A.
- Saturday Morning:** Al-Anon - Linda L., Nashville, TN
- Saturday Noon:** AA - Tom I., Southern Pines, NC
- Saturday Evening:** AA - Eva S., General Service Office, NY, NY
- Sunday Morning:** AA - Eva S., General Service Office, NY, NY

WEB SITE:

<http://aa-nia-dist40.org/2008Spring/>

Let's Roll

INTO ACTION with NIA

Service Orientation
Workshop II

(NOTE: SERVICE ORIENTATION Workshop III- Will Be Held at the Spring Conf. Mar. 8th - See above)

Saturday February 16th

9:AM til NOON

Lord Of Life Church-40w605 IL. Rt.
38, La Fox IL.

Info: Dean G. 815-236-1362

(Continued from page 2)

Meanwhile Cleveland's membership soared to hundreds in a matter of months. There at Cleveland in the winter of 1939, they proved that mass production of sobriety was a glad fact. This is Cleveland's great and rightful claim to distinction as a pioneer group.

But this prodigious effort had to have help from the town's hospitals. Such amazing results could have been obtained in no other way. As in Akron, after the excitement died down, some of the hospitals got weary of drunks. But Cleveland's Charity Hospital never did. Since 1940 it has admitted alcoholics and has provided a ward for them. Though Cleveland was lacking a "Dr. Bob," the Charity ward did nevertheless prosper nobly under the guidance and devoted interest of Sister Victorine and Father Nagle, the hospital's Chaplain. Though work with the alcoholics could take up only a fraction of their time, and though Father Nagle suffered constantly from ill health, they continued to press on with such a result that their work will always stand a shining mark in our annals. St. John's Hospital in Cleveland, too, did provide a two bed ward for a time under the devoted Sister Merced, who was finally transferred to Akron where she became associated with Sister Ignatia and Dr. Bob.

With the arrival of Sister Ignatia at Cleveland's Charity Hospital in 1952, plenty more began to happen. Suddenly thousands of AAs from near and far who had sobered up in these wonderful institutions began to realize their long-standing debt of gratitude. Permission was obtained to modernize completely the battered old ward at Charity. Sister Ignatia, helped by the hospital authorities and the Sisters of her Order, and further buttressed by an enthusiastic committee of AAs, went to work. Money, and much more, flowed in. With special dispensations from their respective unions, AA carpenters, plumbers and electricians worked long nights. When they were done, the ward gleamed; it was possessed of every modern device. Neither were two indispensable adjuncts forgotten--the chapel and the coffee bar! A plumbing inspector summed it all up when, after looking at this astonishing result, he remarked:

"This was no professional job. The folks who worked on this thing had their hearts in it." More than \$60,000 in funds and night work was thus expended on this urgent labor of love.

In the one short year since Sister Ignatia came to Charity, one thousand alcoholics have there seen the light of their new day. Sister Ignatia, who has kept in touch with many of them, believes that about seven hundred are sober at this moment.

Is it any wonder, then, that the anniversary meeting of the opening of Rosary Hall was turned into a declaration of our personal love for Sister Ignatia and all her works? If the plumbing inspector had been present at this great meeting, he would have again exclaimed, "This is no professional job. It comes from the heart."

Bill W.

Reprinted with permission AA Grapevine, Inc.

**PRESENTED BY 2008 ISCYPAA
HOST COMMITTEE**



SUNDAY – FEBRUARY 17th

Doors Open @ 4: PM

Dinner @ 5: PM

Speakers @ 6: PM

FEATURING

Joe H.

Mike C.



**MAMMA
MIA**

3519 N. Richmond Rd.
½ mile north of Rt. 31 & Johnsborg Rd.
On the Left)

\$8.00 Suggest Donation

Contact: Dora B. 815-276-6078

District 11's Workshop Committee &
The Monday Nite Richmond Group

presents a
**"SPONSORSHIP
WORKSOP"**

Date, Time, Location –To Be Announced

Heard Around The Tables
District 11's Wisdom and Witticisms

- **BUTT ! SIT! PRAYER to PRAYER!**
- Time is nature's way of keeping everything from happening at once.
- When I walked into these rooms, I was too arrogant to realize how desperate I was. I didn't figure that out until later.
- Prayer is not a alternative to preparation, and faith is not a substitute for hard work.
- If you want to change who you are, change what you do.
- The Big Book is like a cookbook - you can read it all day long and starve. You have to take the action.
- Yesterday is a canceled check, tomorrow is a promissory note, today is cash in hand, spend it wisely.
- Call me before you drink and I can help you; Call me after you drink and you are helping me.
- "My sponsor suggested that I read the black words on the white page in the blue book."
- Weird things they tell you:
"How do you do this?"
"Hold on."
"How do you surrender?"
"Just let go."

2008 ILLINOIS STATE CONFERENCE OF YOUNG PEOPLE IN A.A.

*Brought to you by the Crystal
Lake Host Committee*

"We have to live it."

Pg. 83 Basic Text

FEBRUARY 22 – 24, 2008

SPEAKERS: Tina H. Waukesha, WI.
(4-19-1984)

Max M. Chicago, IL.
(8-17-1991)

Courtney B. Crystal Lk.
(11-2-2005)

To Be Held At:
**Holiday Inn &
Suites Northwest**
495 Airport Rd.
Elgin, IL. 60123
Room cost: \$71.00/night



Spaces are limited for:
**Saturday Night Banquet and the
Sunday Morning Breakfast**

See Prices Below



Pre-Registration (By 12/31/07) \$10.00
Registration (After 01/01/08) \$20.00
Banquet (By 12/31/07) \$25.00
Banquet (After 01/01/08) \$30.00
Sunday Morning Breakfast - \$10.00

*Make Checks Payable to 2008 Crystal Lake ISCYPAA
Mail Registration To: Crystal Lake ISCYPAA
P.O. Box 1111*

INFO: www.iscypaa.org or Call Mark: 630-742-5424