



# Carry the Message December 2008

The Huron Valley Area Intergroup Newsletter

Serving the Recovery Community since 1979

## Step Twelve

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.

### Tradition Twelve Long Form

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.

### Traditions Checklist—from the A.A. Grapevine

Why is it a 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?

When I do not trust AA's current servants, who do I wish had the authority to straighten them out?

In my opinions of and remarks about other AAs, am I implying membership requirements other than a desire to stay sober?

Do I ever try to get a certain AA group to conform to my standards, not its own?

Have I a personal responsibility in helping an AA group fulfill its primary purpose? What is my part?

- Does my personal behavior reflect the Sixth Tradition – or belie it?
- Do I do all I can to support AA financially? When is the last time I anonymously gave away a Grapevine subscription?
- Do I complain about certain AAs' behavior – especially if they are paid to work for AA? Who made me so smart?
- Do I fulfill all AA responsibilities in such a way as to please privately even my own conscience? Really?
- Do my utterances always reflect the Tenth Tradition, or do I give AA critics real ammunition?
- 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?
- What is the real importance of me among more than a million AAs?

## Christmas Alkathon!

## New Year's Alkathon!

Once again this year, HVAI is organizing Alkathons for the Holidays. This can be a difficult time for many. Your Group can help carry the message when we need it most. Come join us in the Fellowship of the season. Sponsor a 2-hour block for \$15.00. Contact Linda. at (734) 482-0707 to reserve your spot today...they're going fast! Check the HVAI website for updates on the Christmas and New Year's Alkathons.

Published by the Huron Valley Area Intergroup, 31 South Huron Street, Ypsilanti, MI 48197 (I-94 exit 183 "Ypsilanti, Huron Street", 0.9 miles north)

Hours: Tues–Fri, 1 p.m.– 6 p.m. Phone: (734) 482-0707 Website: [www.hvai.org](http://www.hvai.org) E-mail: [office@hvai.org](mailto:office@hvai.org) Help Line: (734) 482-5700 or [helpline@hvai.org](mailto:helpline@hvai.org)

## HVAI Contributions

Huron Valley Area Intergroup could not exist without the support of our many Groups and generous contributions from individual members. We rely on your contributions to keep our doors open to the still suffering alcoholics, and those who care for them. We wish to thank the following contributors:

Attitude Adjustment  
 Pinckney Solutions Group  
 Ypsilanti Candlelight  
 Bellville Keeping It Simple  
 Clean & Sober on Park  
 Dexter Group  
 Saline Last Chance Group  
 Stadium Big Book Group  
 Saline Woman's Group  
 WAC Sat. Morning Men's Group  
 Friendly Group  
 Flim Flam Breakfast Group  
 Any Length  
 Primary Purpose

## Meeting Updates

Our meeting updates are now available online at [www.hvai.org](http://www.hvai.org).

New to the HVAI website is a searchable meeting directory! heck it out, let us know what you think, and help us to spread the word. You can search by day, time, location, and type of meeting to name a few options.

The Spring 2008 meeting directory is now available. Get one at a local meeting or stop into the HVAI office at 31 South Huron Street, Ypsilanti MI.

## Frequently Asked Questions About A.A.'s History

Each year the G.S.O. Archives receives thousands of requests for research and historical information. The questions we receive range from very simple questions with easy answers to complex questions involving hours of research. If you have a question about AA's history or archives, we hope you will contact us (or one of the many other local and area AA archives) to try to find the answer. Below are some of the most frequently asked questions we receive here at the G.S.O. Archives, and some of our answers.

### Q. What is the history behind reading The Lord's Prayer at meetings?

A. It is mentioned in *Dr. Bob and the Good Oldtimers* that the prayer was used from the very beginning in the Fellowship, at least as early as 1938 and 1939. In those days there was no AA literature, so the early groups relied heavily on existing prayers, and on the Bible and Oxford Group literature, for inspiration and guidance.

Bill W. commented several times in his correspondence about the early use of the

Lord's Prayer. He wrote a letter to a member in 1959 in which he stated:

*"This practice probably came from the Oxford Groups who were influential in the early days of A.A. You have probably noted in A.A. Comes of Age what the connection of these people with A.A. really was. I think saying the Lord's Prayer was a custom of theirs following the close of each meeting. Therefore it quite easily got shifted into a general custom among us."*

Bill also wrote the following in a 1955 letter:

*"Of course there are always those who seem to be offended by the introduction of any prayer whatever into an ordinary A.A. gathering. Also it is sometimes complained that the Lord's Prayer is a Christian document. Nevertheless, this Prayer is of such widespread use and recognition that the argument of its Christian origin seems to be a little far-fetched. It is also true that most AA's believe in some kind of god and that communication and strength is obtainable through his grace. Since*

*(Continued on page 4)*

## Send Your Voluntary 7th Tradition Contributions To:

**Huron Valley Area Intergroup**  
 31 South Huron Street  
 Ypsilanti, MI 48197

**District 4**  
 Washtenaw County Treasurer  
 Box 971502  
 Ypsilanti, MI 48197

**Central Michigan Intra-Area 32**  
 C.M.I.A. Area 32 Treasurer  
 P. O. Box 283  
 Saline, MI 48176

**AA World Service**  
 Grand Central Station  
 P.O. Box 459  
 New York, NY 10164-0423

## Upcoming Events

### DECEMBER, 2008

**December 2008: 1st. Sun. Central MI CMIA ...Conference Service Structure Meeting:** Adrian : (District 2)

**December 25, 2008: CHRISTMAS ALKATHON** from 10pm Christmas Eve til Midnight Christmas Day. Area Groups are encouraged to donate \$15. to reserve a 2hr time slot and provide members to facilitate a meeting.

**December 31, 2008: NEW YEARS ALKATHON** from 10pm NEW YEARS EVE til Midnight. Area Groups are encouraged to donate \$15. to reserve a 2hr time slot and provide members to facilitate a meeting.

### Corrections Committee Needs Volunteers

We are losing our AA volunteers at the Forensic Center. Ron and Steve have been there ten years and need to move on...**Our heartfelt thanks to them for caring the message inside the walls for so long.**

Some alcoholics aren't lucky enough to be able to go to meetings when they want to. They are in prison. They have limited contact with the shared experience that our Fellowship offers through its meetings. From the pamphlet *Carrying the message into Correctional Facilities*:

"They need AA books and the sober AA messengers for one hour a week."

There about 12 regular coed attendees who need outside AA's to facilitate the AA meeting. A clearance and orientation are required. We will not be asked to carry anything in or out except the precious gift of sobriety. Please contact the HVAI office or your District 4 GSR for more information.

When we became alcoholics, crushed by a self-imposed crisis we could not postpone or evade, we had to fearlessly face the proposition that either God is everything or else He is nothing. God either is, or He isn't. What was our choice to be?

*this is the general consensus, it seems only right that at least the Serenity Prayer and the Lord's Prayer be used in connection with our meetings. It does not seem necessary to defer to the feelings of our agnostic and atheist newcomers to the extent of completely hiding 'our light under a bushel.'*

*However, around here, the leader of the meeting usually asks those to join him in the Lord's Prayer who feel that they would care to do so. The worst that happens to the objectors is that they have to listen to it. This is doubtless a salutary exercise in tolerance at their stage of progress."*

As Bill's 1955 letter indicates, recitation of the Lord's Prayer at meetings has clearly been controversial in some circles almost since the beginning. The GSO has responded to letters on this issue since the 1940s and 1950s. It is continually addressed in articles in Box 459 and the AA Grapevine, and has often been asked about at the General Service Conference. For example, at the 1962 Conference, in one of the Ask-It Basket questions, this subject was broached: "Question: What is the procedure for dealing with individuals who refuse to stand during recitation of the Lord's Prayer? Answer: Participation--or non-participation--in recitals of the Lord's Prayer should be considered a matter of personal conscience and decision."

**Q: What is the story behind the Circle and Triangle logo?**

**A:** The Circle and Triangle symbol has long been connected to the A.A. Fellowship. It was adopted as an official A.A. symbol at the International Convention in St. Louis in 1955, and from that point on was widely

## District 4 Corner

*The HVAI provides this space as a courtesy to District 4 in the spirit of cooperation in carrying the message. Please direct all questions and comments to your Home Group GSR or DCM or attend a District 4 meeting.*

**HVAI**, as well as district 4, need to elect and send a General Service Representative to the district various assignments necessary to 4 meetings. Meeting of district 4 put on a successful 64th Anniversary of A. A. In Washtenaw County to be held Saturday, April 18, 2009. The location will once again be held at Ann Arbor, Pioneer High School.

are currently held upstairs at the First Congregational Church 608 East William, A<sup>2</sup>. District meeting start at 7:00 PM and end at 8:00 PM on the third Monday of each month, twelve months a year.

**Each group meeting** in District 4/Washtenaw County, is encouraged

used in the Fellowship. For the Fellowship, the three legs of the triangle represented the Three Legacies of Recovery, Unity and Service, and the circle symbolized the world of A.A. In *Alcoholics Anonymous Comes of Age*, Bill W.'s 1955 speech, in which he describes the adoption of the symbol, is printed:

*"Above us floats a banner on which is inscribed the new symbol for A.A., a circle enclosing a triangle. The circle stands for the whole world of A.A., and the triangle stands for A.A.'s Three Legacies of Recovery, Unity, and Service. Within our wonderful new world, we have found freedom from our fatal obsession. That we have chose this particular symbol is perhaps no accident. The priests and seers of*

*antiquity regarded the circle enclosing the triangle as a means of warding off the spirits of evil, and A.A.'s circle and triangle of Recovery, Unity, and Service has certainly meant all of that to us and much more."* (p. 139)

Nevertheless, in the early 1990s, A.A.W.S. decided to phase out the use of the Circle and Triangle symbol on its literature, letterhead and other material. It was decided to phase out the "official" or "legal" use of the Circle and Triangle symbol, and in 1994 the General Service Conference resolved that the logo be discontinued on all Conference-approved literature. However, the symbol is still associated with Alcoholics Anonymous (and other kinds of 12-Step recovery fellowships) and has a special meaning for AA members all over the world.