

NNIG MONTHLY MEETING SPEAKER



December 13, 2025
Sully
Host group-
Pyramid Way
Discussion Group

Silver Legacy - 407 North Virginia St., Reno - Doors open at 6:30

DECEMBER 2025

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GENERAL WARRANTIES OF THE NORTHERN NEVADA INTERGROUP ASSOCIATION OF ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS

In all its proceedings, the Intergroup Association observes the spirit of AA Traditions, taking great care that the Intergroup Association never becomes the seat of perilous wealth or power; that sufficient operating funds, plus a reserve be its prudent financial principal; that none of the Intergroup Association members shall ever be placed in a position of unqualified authority over any of the others; that all important decision be reached by discussion, vote and whenever possible, substantial unanimity; that no Intergroup Association action ever be personally punitive or an incitement to public controversy; that though the Intergroup Association may act for the service of AA Groups in the Northern Nevada area and parts of Northern California, it shall never perform any acts of government; and that, like the Society of Alcoholics Anonymous, the Intergroup Association itself will always remain democratic in thought and action.

(The above is adapted and modified from "The AA Service Manual", and AA Co-Founder Bill W's. Twelve Concepts for World Service; Concept XII, as adopted by the General Service Conference on April 26, 1962. This adaptation of copyrighted AA material has been approved by the General Service Board)

CENTRAL OFFICE

436 S. Rock Blvd.,
Sparks, NV 89431
Monday thru Friday
9:00 AM to 5:00 PM

Saturday 9:00 AM to 1:00 PM

24 Hour Answering Service:

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Web Site/Meeting Schedule: nnig.org

The Bracer: nnigracer@gmail.com

THE BRACER



Elko NV 1948

NORTHERN NEVADA INTERGROUP

Happily Giving BY: BRENDA M. | BOISE, IDAHO

Before I came into the rooms of AA, I was absolutely clueless on what the word God meant. That's why I drank to oblivion. I had no answers to this thing called life, so I figured I might as well drink away the pain of "not knowing." I tried to find God in so many ways. I was raised Catholic. But growing into my teens, I would party with my friends on Friday and Saturday nights, then go to communion on Sunday, be forgiven and do it all again the next week. This didn't work for me.

I became a Christian and decided that Jesus was my savior and that I was born again. I studied the Bible with a beer in hand, then started questioning the treatment of the aboriginal people and their shamans. How could God send them all to hell just for not reading the Bible and for loving the earth? This didn't make sense to me. So I placed my Bible on the shelf.

I started studying Shamanism. I bought a medicine bag that I wore around my neck and decided I was going to "heal the world." What was really cool about being a shaman was that some used peyote in ceremony and if that was acceptable, surely alcohol was OK. I performed many ceremonies under the influence. Using crystals, I would dance naked around a map of the earth, imagining I was healing the world, only to wake up hungover and unable to remember taking my clothes off!

I then decided I'd be more practical. It was the year 1999 and I started preparing for Y2K and the end of the world. I packed buckets of food and stored gas. I waited for martial law but nothing happened. I was wrong. So I kept drinking. Having tried everything to find God, I finally ended up just turning to alcohol. I slept with cans of beer on my living room floor all through the night. When I couldn't stand the pain anymore, I walked into the rooms of AA.

It is here where I had my first real spiritual experience, when a woman gave her time to sit with me, listen to me and help me read and underline the Big Book. That experience of a human being giving time to this stinky drunk with DTs was how I found God. God loved me through her—my first sponsor.

Since then, I have found God in the rooms of AA. Some call God a "Group Of Drunks," and that is true to me. I see God in others. Christmas season is here and I'm reminded that some people have a Santa Claus God. They ask him for things and expect God to fulfill their expectations. I see this differently. I see it as giving service in AA. Giving our presence, or making coffee, or sponsoring others, or serving in a group position—all these are gifts that money can't buy. Santa Claus is a giver. That's why he's so happy all the time.

In the program, instead of asking for what we want, we learn to give what is needed of us. We become a Santa Claus God—giving the gift of sobriety to those we can help. What a bag of goodies we have to share. What miracles we get to watch as our gifts are opened and used by newcomers who attend their first meeting.

When we forget ourselves and make other people more important, we disappear into a giving that becomes selfless. In giving, we receive happiness and a very merry holiday season.

A A's

**Recovery
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.”

Three

**Unity
Tradition
Twelve:**

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

Legacies

**Service
Concept Twelve**

Good service leaders, together with sound and appropriate methods of choosing them, are at all levels indispensable for our future functioning and safety. The primary world service leadership once exercised by the founders of A.A. must necessarily be assumed by the Trustees of the General Service Board of Alcoholics Anonymous.”

Tradition Twelve : Anonymity is the spiritual foundation of our traditions, ever reminding us to place principles before personalities.

Twelve Steps to recover from alcoholism, we are each trying to achieve real humility, to put our self-respect on a solid base of truth, rather than on fantasies about ourselves. When we use the Twelve Traditions to work together in A.A., we are all trying to achieve humility; as individual members, by recognizing our true place in A.A.; as a fellowship, by recognizing A.A.'s true place in the world.

Tradition One reminds each of us that we are not recovering on our own, that we should control our personal desires and ambitions in order to guard the unity of our group and our Fellowship. We ought not (Tradition Two) fancy ourselves as big shots in A.A., no matter what office we hold.

All of us are just alcoholics together, and in our groups we are not entitled (Tradition Three) to rule on the qualifications of other alcoholics seeking the same help that we've had. Yes, a group needs humility too. It may make its name public, but in the spirit of anonymity it should see the Whatever Group as merely part of a bigger whole (Tradition Four), careful in every enterprise to consider the welfare of all the other groups that make up A.A. In both group and individual activities, we should remember what the full name of our Fellowship is. It does not represent any established religion, nor is it a new religion. We are not evangelists or gurus out to save humanity; we are anonymous alcoholics trying to help other alcoholics (Tradition Five). ur Fellowship with other agencies, in order to bid for a share in their power, prestige, and funds. If we keep Traditions Six and Seven in mind, we will instead direct all our efforts toward A.A.'s own unique purpose. When we go on Twelfth Step calls, we should not tell ourselves how noble we are for doing such valuable work without pay. The meaning of Twelfth Step work cannot be measured in money (Tradition Eight), and we have received advance pay for it, in coin of far greater worth — our very lives. In the same Tradition, it's suggested that a service center maintains A.A. humility by paying its employees decent wages — rather than considering A.A. so virtuous an outfit that employment there is a favor.

When we are given special responsibilities within A.A., Tradition Nine defines these as opportunities to serve, not titles to flaunt. The humility of the Fellowship itself is safeguarded by Tradition Ten, with the refusal to set ourselves up as general authorities, swinging our collective weight around in the public arena We do not want to sell our program as a “surefire remedy” in the extravagant terms of a promotional campaign (Tradition Eleven), or dramatize it by identifying noted people in A.A., thereby implying that recovery has been for each of us an individual accomplishment. As Tradition Twelve reminds us, we have something stronger than our human personalities to rely on. Our principles come first — and they are not our own invention. They reflect eternal spiritual values. With this Tradition, both as individuals and as a fellowship, we humbly acknowledge our dependence on a power higher than ourselves.

*Let us always remember
that anonymity —not taking credit
for our own or others' recovery—
is humility at work.*

NNIG & AREA EVENTS

NNIG Monthly Speaker Meetings
Meetings held 2nd Saturday of the month
Silver Legacy – 407 North Virginia Street, Reno 89501
Location- Silver Barron Room 1-6



Monthly Speaker Meeting
Doors open at 6:30 PM
Speaker at 7:00 PM



December 13, 2025
Sully- Las Vegas, NV

Host Group –
Pyramid Way Discussion Group

January 10, 2026
Bob D.- Las Vegas, NV
Host Group- TBD

February 14, 2026
Scott L.
Host Group - TBD

NNIG Speaker Chair: Robert S. - 775-247-9677
Need more info call: Central Office - (775) 355-1151
Join us for dinner at Café Central ~5 pm with the speaker.

OTHER A.A. EVENTS

The Bracer is a monthly publication intended for members of Alcoholics Anonymous and their families only. It is about, by and for members of the fellowship. Opinions expressed herein are not necessarily those of A.A. as a whole or NNIG. For article submissions or comments, email the Editor at nnigbracer@gmail.com



2026 NEW YEAR'S EVE CELEBRATION

NNIG

A New Year "One day at a time"
TALENT ~ NO TALENT SHOW!
Cash Prizes

SPEAKER

Grace P. ~ Redding, Ca

31 DEC 2025 | Sparks Christian Fellowship
510 Greenbrae Dr, Sparks, NV
6PM

Tickets
\$35
in
Advance

RAFFLE
Individual Charcuterie Boxes
and Desserts
Included

"DJ RISE"

Same Venue as Last Year District 16's 38th Annual Christmas Affair "Working Together, Increasing Trust"

Saturday December 20th 2025
12:00 to 5:00 PM

American Legion Darrell Dunkle Post 1
877 Ralston Street, Reno, NV.

Come for food, fun, and fellowship!
Please bring a dessert to share!!!

Service Panel Discussion: *12:15 PM
"Working Together, Increasing Trust"
(TBD)

Santa: *1:30 PM

Turkey Dinner with all the Extras: *2:00 PM
Speaker: *3:00 PM
(TBD)

Raffle: After Speaker
*All times are approximate

Door prize raffle ticket with
\$10.00 Suggested Contribution

For raffle prize contributions,
volunteer help, or information
please call: Stacy P. (775) 830-9840

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 for 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.
- 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.
- 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.
- 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 know it.

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Happy Holidays

MEETINGS AND MORE

Central office report from Ronda H. December, 2025

Book of the month "Reprint of the Original 1st edition Big Book" **FREE** (limit of 10) with any \$10 purchases.

Please come and support your Central office and the AA events going on in our area.

The office is for every member, if anyone needs anything to get 12 step work done and the office can help in some way, please let us know.

Volunteer Hours: 117 hrs.

Calls into Central Office: 160

- Calls for AA help - 10
- Calls for Alanon/Alateen - 0
- Meeting information - 29
- Retail / merchandise - 14
- Other 12-step programs - 3
- Events - 59
- New to AA/ Talked with - 3
- Business/Central office- 42
- **Visitors - 315 -Dogs- 4**

Texts - 4 Phone calls on the text Phone- 3

*Ronda H.
Central Office Manager*



Previous Birthdays

September

Angela-2 years
Mark H. 50 Years
Charyl - 57 Years
Dave - 40 Years
Phil - 49 Years

August

Linda G. 33 Years
Sue M. 30 Years
Jeff M. 30 Years

July

Jermery L. 4 Years
Joanne P. 13 Years
Ann G. 21 Years
Sandra G. 30 Years
Paul M. 54 Years

June 2025

Classic. 3 Years
Teri G. 12 Years
Paul E. 34 Years
May

Ron T. 14 Years
Tom H. 23 Years

March

Eryn W. 2 Years
Don D. 6 Years
Kent L. 43 Years
Kim D. 45 Years

January & February

Chip C. 41 Years
Jack 40 Years

December

Sean S. 35 Years
Cindy 56 Years
Mystery Person - 37 years

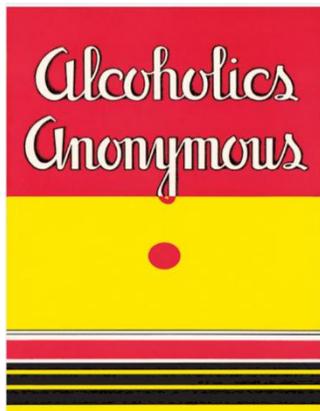
NOVEMBER

Sean L. 34 Years

"If we were to live, we had to be free of anger. The grouch and the sudden rage were not for us. Anger is the dubious luxury of normal men, but for alcoholics it is poison."



Did you know you can share your sobriety and gratitude in a practical way by joining the A.A. Birthday Club? Sign Up today and be featured in the Bracer Birthday Club section of the Bracer. Show your Support for your NNIG & Central Office, Join the Birthday Club. A contribution of only one dollar for every year of your sobriety. Envelopes available at Central Office, NNIG Business Meeting or Intergroup Representatives



The book of the month for December 2025

"Reproduction of the 1st edition of the Big Book"

FREE w/\$10

purchase

For more event information contact Central Office @ 355-1151 or nnig.org

Five N Live
Saturday 5:15 PM
Alano Club
680 River St.
Elko, NV

Southside
Monday-Friday
Noon
780 Del Monte Ln, Reno NV

Brown Baggers
Discussion
1036 N Main St.
Alturas, CA
Mon-Sat

SATURDAY NIGHT
FEVER 7PM
1631 ESERALDA
PL
GARDNERVILLE NV.

N.N.I.G. STEERING COMMITTEE

Last Tuesday of each month, 5:30 PM
 Central Office, 436 S. Rock Blvd., Sparks
N.N.I.G. BUSINESS MEETING
 First Tuesday of each month, 6:30 PM
 3835 Lakeside Dr. Reno NV 89509 or virtually
 ID: 831 8146 4811 PW: ZoomAA1
**N.N.I.G. MONTHLY
 SPEAKER MEETING**
 7:00 PM Silver Legacy - Silver Baron A
 2nd Saturday of the month
N.N.I.G. H&I
 Call Central Office
 775-355-1511

CENTRAL OFFICE

IS OPEN ON SATURDAY
 FROM 9:00 AM TO 1:00 PM!
 STOP IN FOR A CUP OF COFFEE
 AND FELLOWSHIP!

District Meetings

- DISTRICT-2** 2nd Thursday of each month, 6:30 Central Office
- DISTRICT 4** Fourth Thursday of every other even month, 6:00 pm
 Central Office OR Zoom ID: 819 5830 2884
 PW: bestdamnd4
- DISTRICT 6** 2nd Sunday of even numbered months-
 For information email district6@nevadaarea42.org
- DISTRICT 8** First Sunday, 3:30 p.m. on odd months
 Call (760) 937-8407
- DISTRICT 10A** Third Sunday of every other month, 1:30 PM
 680 River St. Elko, NV
- DISTRICT 10B** Dark since 2017
- DISTRICT 11** Only holds meetings 4 time a year, call DCM
- DISTRICT 12** 2nd Saturday of each Month at 5:00 PM- 457
 Esmeralda Street Wolf Center, Fallon NV
- DISTRICT 14** 3rd Wed of each "Odd" month at 6:00 PM -265
 Bear Street in Kings Beach CA
- DISTRICT 16** Meeting is held 3rd Tuesday of the month 424
 Greenbrae Blvd 6:45PM
- DISTRICT 18** DARK DISTRICT
- DISTRICT 20** Third Saturday of Jan, Mar, May, Aug & Oct
 10:30 AM- Contact DCM @
district20@nevadaarea42.org for location
- DISTRICT 22** 1st and 3rd Thursday of every month 6:30 PM @
 Central Office

AREA CLUBS

Reno / Sparks Clubs

Driars Club Reno 345 S. Wells Avenue (775) 324-9210
 Triangle Club Reno 635 S Wells Avenue (775) 324-7977
Clubs outside Reno/Sparks Area
 Alano Club Carson City, 1800 HWY 50 East (775) 882-0443
 Bishop Alano Club (760) 873-6700
 Elko Alano Club (775) 738-4747
 Las Vegas Triangle Club (702) 435-0597
 South Lake Tahoe (530) 541-1243

AA AREA 42 TRANSLATION & INTERPRETATION COMMITTEE

BECOME A VOLUNTEER



ALL AREA 42 MEMBERS ARE WELCOME TO HELP
 TRANSLATE MINUTES, EMAILS, GUIDELINES, ETC.
 PROFICIENCY IN SPANISH **NOT**
 REQUIRED! IN FACT, YOU DON'T EVEN
 NEED TO SPEAK SPANISH.

ZOOM
 MEETING
 THIRD
 THURSDAY OF
 EACH MONTH
 @ 5:30 PM PST

FOR MEETING ID & PASSCODE:
 please contact the email below

Questions? ... email
translator_interpreter@nevadaarea42.org
 Ask that someone from the translation
 committee contact you.

We Are The
 Sunshine Committee



Can You Help?

There are cases where sober AAs are unable to
 make it to meetings. They are in the hospital or
 physical rehabilitation hospital or are home-
 bound while they recuperate.

When you cannot attend meetings do you get
 'squirrely' or on edge? Be a part of carrying the
 message to those shut-ins by joining us as we
 trudge the road of happy destiny on the

Sunshine Committee!!

Sobriety requirement—1 year
 We will work with your schedule
 Call: Ann —650-290-4335
 Email: aschwenderlauf@gmail.com

Northern Nevada Intergroup

Bridging the Gap

Bridging the Gap is one of the many ways to get into
 service in Alcoholics Anonymous. Through 12th step work we
 aim to bridge the gap of time newcomers have between jails
 and institutions and their first days to the fellowship. The
 committee is always accepting people who want to be of
 service either with being a newcomer's contact or taking
 presentations into institutions to help share our message of
 hope. Please scan the QR code below.

Our committee is looking for a co-chair, to help assist
 the Chair with responsibilities, and a contact coordinator for
 the Carson/Gardnerville area. 2 years of sobriety required
 with knowledge of our 12 traditions. Please email Becky O.
 for more information at

btgnnig@gmail.com



12th Step Prayer

**Dear God, My spiritual awaking continues to unfold. The help I have
 received I shall pass on and give to others, both in and out of the
 Fellowship. For this opportunity I am grateful. I pray most humbly to
 continue walking day by day on the road of spiritual progress. I pray
 for the inner strength and wisdom to practice the principles of this
 way of life in all I do and say. I need You , my friends, and the
 Program every hour of each day. This is a better way to live.**

12th Tradition

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

WHY ARE Alcoholics Anonymous members anonymous alcoholics? Why are all those people who used to be so noisily unconcerned about making public fools of themselves so passionately interested in anonymity? ("Anonymity" is even hard to say.)

Is it so the members can hide their deep shame from public ridicule, as many believe? Or is it that AA people are afraid to admit they needed help to quit drinking?

In most cases, the truth is the precise opposite. Anonymity, often called "the spiritual foundation of AA," is its true genius. Anonymity protects the sobriety of individuals from corrupting fame or notoriety; it disciplines the Fellowship to govern itself by principles rather than personalities; it prevents the growth of self-appointed spokesmen; and it insures safe haven for newcomers.

Far from hiding in corners or skulking in church basements, most AA members, once safely sober and happily helping others, rightfully feel proud of AA, their fellow members, and themselves. They feel like telling the world about it.

So what would be wrong with that? AA could use some good publicity and some success stories, right?

Sure, AA can use some publicity. But Joe Jones or Mary Smith, recovered alcoholics, just can't handle the stuff, any more than they can handle alcohol. Fame can inflate the ego the same way wine inflates the head. The recovering alcoholic can find himself wallowing in the kind of egocentric orgy that got him in trouble originally.

The AA program calls for the admission of helplessness with booze, the immersion of self in a new way of life, the destruction of the alcoholic ego, and the gradual construction of a new and healthy ego. Anonymity teaches the AA member that sobriety is a deep spiritual blessing, best not accompanied by easy popularity.

Anonymity helps him (or her) to concentrate on the essentials--great gratitude to his Higher Power for his sobriety and appreciation of the AA Fellowship for helping him keep it.

If AA was to abandon anonymity, it would then be run by highly visible people, rather than being guided by strong principles. These people would publicly interpret AA in their own way to still-suffering alcoholics. The interpretation of even the best-intentioned leader may not be what is best for all.

AA is a deceptively simple program that simply works. Each member brings his or her own personal slant or perspective to the same truths, the same program. The fundamental concepts are best experienced firsthand, not absorbed through lectures.

If personalities were permitted to dominate AA, leaders, teachers, prophets, gurus, or oracles most certainly would arise to straighten us all out. AA is a fellowship in the truest sense; we get sober and stay sober with the help of the group. A leader in this intensely personal experience would tend to divide and polarize, rather than insure maximum

freedom. Anonymity keeps personalities out of the driver's seat.

AA is not a secret society, but each member respects the anonymity of the others. This is a comforting fact for newcomers, who may wish to feel that their "awful secret" is safe with us, until they come to realize themselves that it is not so awful.

We also are realistic enough to recognize that, in spite of widespread recognition of alcoholism as a disease and not a crime, there still is much residual stigma attached to it in the public mind. Anonymity shields us from that prejudice and permits us to go about our business of helping each other and other alcoholics.

Finally, the last two of AA's Twelve Traditions state the case simply and well.

Tradition Eleven: "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."

(Note that anonymity is insisted upon only at this public level. This is why your neighbor who is in AA breaks no AA Traditions by telling his friends, neighbors, and co-workers of his success with the AA program.)

Tradition Twelve: "Anonymity is the spiritual foundation of all our Traditions, ever reminding us to place principles before personalities."

(By sticking firmly to principles, AA has become one of the most successful disorganized organizations in history. It consists of people, but is ruled by principles.)

In the 1840's, an organization called the Washington Temperance Society flourished on the East Coast. While operating on many basic AA ideas, the Washingtonian movement omitted personal anonymity.

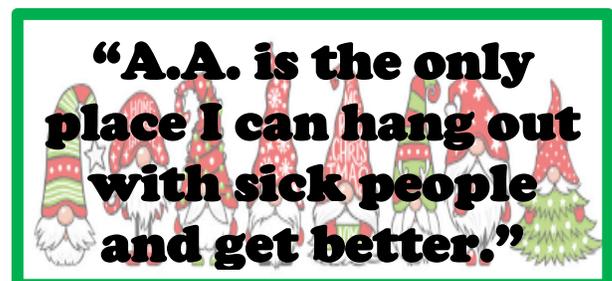
As a result, it became an organization with executives, lines of authority, and the beginnings of the bureaucratic paraphernalia that afflict big government.

The Washingtonian movement actually wound up with street-corner evangelists, even parades with bands, drum majors, and baton twirlers (sober ones, it is to be presumed).

If you can imagine the incongruity of an AA float in your local Fourth of July parade, you can appreciate the value of AA's Anonymity Traditions. No, AA is anything but a secret society; it is a happy, grateful fellowship where experience, strength, and hope are unselfishly shared.

Anonymity helps keep it that way.

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A Christmas Cynic

By: W. S. | Waterville, Ohio

A CYNIC, my dictionary informs me, is "a sneering fault-finder; one who doubts or denies the goodness of human motives, and who often displays his attitude by sneers, sarcasm, etc."

During my drinking years, I managed to develop a finely tuned cynicism about Christmas that was both illogical and disquieting. On one hand, I no longer believed in God; so what was all the fuss concerning this alleged birth, anyway? On the other hand, I looked down my Olympian nose at the crass way that merchants and advertisers sought to exploit something spiritual for profit.

Now that's genuine, grade-A, bottled-in-bond, U.S. Government-inspected alcoholic thinking. I felt contempt for a belief but also despised others who appeared not to honor it. And at frequent intervals, I would offer judgments about how dumb the human race got every December 15 or so.

Not content to be illogical, judgmental, contemptuous, and cynical, I had to throw in a little phony magnanimity, too. In other words, I saw through this baloney; but as a family member, I had to put my own feelings aside and see that all around me had a "good Christmas." This translated into my being surly, cranky, uncooperative, and withdrawn, and at the same time making sure that my loved ones had a Merry Christmas even if it killed them.

Naturally, my reward for "going along with Christmas" was that I expected a moratorium on complaints about my drinking. There's another example of illogical thinking. I didn't believe in any of this malarkey, but I could use Christmas as an excuse to get away with alcoholic drinking.

If you will, return with me now to those drunken days of yesteryear to have a look at a typical Christmas Eve before the gift of AA came to me. My wife and I have put the children to bed as early as possible, so we can get down to serious quarreling. A scrawny, lopsided tree, decorated with alcoholic slovenliness, leans in a corner. Parts of toys are strewn about the room, and a half-assembled dollhouse wobbles on its base. I am screaming about the lousy directions provided for putting toys together, insisting that I'm not going to church ("with the rest of those hypocrites"), and asking why we always have to visit relatives on Christmas. Is there to be no peace and quiet for me?

In a little while, I will be passed out on the sofa, probably to my wife's immense relief, and she will finish assembling the toys, easily understanding the directions that overwhelmed her befuddled mate. When the kids wake up in the morning, a couple of eye-openers will help distract me from the pile of unpaid bills on my desk and the cruddy Christmas

music that everybody else seems to enjoy. As long as I can drink, what difference does anything else make?

Sometimes, that scene changed from Christmas to Christmas over the twenty years of my drinking, but one ingredient--"self-will run riot"--remained constant as long as I was there. Other AAs have their memories of Christmas, memories equally charged with emotional dynamite, however different they may be from mine. That's why living one day at a time and staying close to the program have been especially important to me at Christmastime, and each holiday season finds me happier to be a part of it.

This year, I celebrate my tenth sober Christmas. The family that suffered my drunken days with me is blown away on the winds of alcoholism, but there is another family now, and there is another me--sober and glad to be part of life. Now, life seems even more full-blown and rich at Christmastime. Maybe that's why Christmas was so uncomfortable during my drinking years--although the other 364 days of the year are no bargain to a drinking alcoholic, either.

Since last Christmas, I have watched my daughter marry and my mother die; so, in one sense, there have been changes. Yet my constant companions--ego, self-pity, resentment--are still there and continue to skip about me like bad little boys. My character defects may be, thanks to AA, a little less noisy this Christmas. I hope so, and those close to me hope so.

One thing's for sure: If, this Christmas, you should happen to see a middle-aged man even more deeply grateful for sobriety, even more awe-struck by the miracle of God's love, and even more able to take genuine pleasure in the joy of others, it'll probably be me. Or it might be you, for "our whole attitude and outlook upon life will change," and "we will comprehend the word serenity and we will know peace." Isn't that what December 25 is all about?

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AA is more than a set of principles; it is a society of alcoholics in action. We must carry the message, else we ourselves can wither and those who haven't been given the truth may die.

As Bill sees it p.15



RULE 62

A guy walks into a bar, grabs a seat, and orders a whiskey double, neat.

The bartender prepares his drink with great delicacy and brings it right over. The gentleman reaches into his blazer, searching frantically. This catches the bartender's attention, so he monitors the patron out of the corner of his eye. Finally, the man finds what he's looking for and sighs a sigh of relief. He pulls out a straw and takes a sip of his whiskey. The perplexed bartender grabs his attention, "I'm terribly sorry sir, was your glass dirty?" To which the man replies surprised, "Oh no no everything's fine! I just promised my wife I'd never put my lips on another glass of whiskey again."

What do gingerbread men put on their beds?
Cookie sheets.

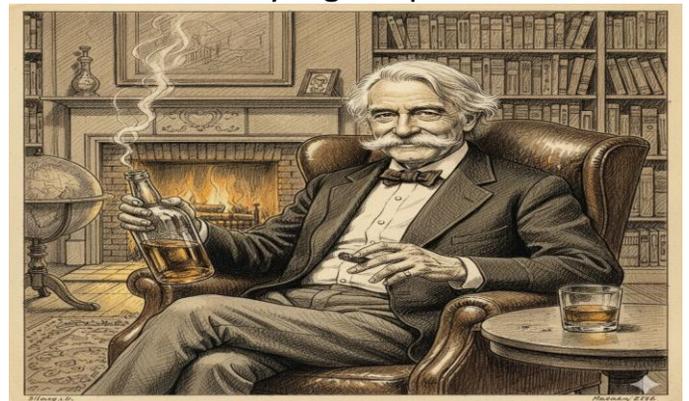


RETURNING from a trip to Europe, Mark Twain became annoyed as a customs official rummaged through his baggage. "My good friend," the author exclaimed, "you don't have to mix up all my things. There are only clothes in there--nothing but clothes."

But the official kept rooting around until he hit something hard. He pulled out a quart of bourbon.

"You call this 'just clothes'?" cried the official.

"Sure thing," Twain replied calmly. "That is my nightcap."



A man walks into a bar with a piece of asphalt under his arm and says, "A beer, please! And one for the road!"



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