

# Sobriety Sentinel

OCTOBER 2022 - REPRESENTING DISTRICTS 14, 19 and 20 of AREA 38 - TRICOUNTYAA.ORG



Tom B/Sobriety Sentinel

A runner skids to third base as another runner heads for home plate during a softball game at the Tri-County Picnic. Held on August 27 at Old Towne Park, the event attracted more than 200 sober AA and Al Anon members and their loved ones.

## Sunlight of the Spirit

by KATIE H  
Group 979

"Faith in a Power greater than ourselves, and miraculous demonstrations of that Power in human lives are facts as old as man himself."

-Big Book, pg 55

AA is teaching me of the significant defects at play in my spirit when I begin to feel like the "hole in the donut." Looking at my spiritual history, and speaking of donuts, I chuckle when I compare a donut to my baptism experience:

Like all good donuts, I've been "sprinkled and dunked." I don't remember my "sprinkling" as an infant, which is one reason I chose to be "dunked" as an adult. So, in my "donut hole" moments, I find consolation in knowing that God may think I'm an overachiever even if I am momentarily invisible. (Joke!)

My first baptism was a decision made by my parents, the second by me. Both were significant, but I don't believe either were necessary for me to possess the fundamental idea of God as expressed in the Big Book. God is available and will help each one of us when we become willing to let him.

Prior to finding my home in AA, my spiritual journey included lots of ups and downs. My quest was to

For more, please see  
SUNLIGHT, Page 2

## Fun in the Sun

Tri-County Picnic draws sober crowds for free fellowship, food and activities

by TOM B  
Group 113

On August 27th, Tri-County AA held its annual picnic at Old Towne Park in St. Peters. The day, though warm, was beautiful, and attendance was very good, estimated between 200 and 250 people. The park, which had been under three feet of water during flash flooding a month earlier, was in good condition. With the exception of some minor electrical glitches which are in the process of being addressed with the City of St. Peters, the event went very smoothly.

After the flood, the Parks Department relocated and downsized the barbecue pit at the pavilion. When I noticed this upon inspection the day before the picnic, I contacted Ken C from Group 340. Ken was kind enough to bring out a large pull-behind barbecue pit. He and the other cooks did a great job preparing the hamburgers, hotdogs and bratwursts for the picnic. Marcus T also provided and fried up some delicious catfish and crappie for

everyone to share. Many in attendance brought covered dishes and desserts so no one would leave hungry.

There were also plenty of activities at the picnic. People played horseshoes, washers and cornhole. Also, for the first time in several years, we had a great game of softball. The kids had fun with potato sack races, balloon tosses, face painting and sidewalk art, not to mention the on-site playground.

At 3 p.m., we had our AA and Al-Anon speakers, Al and Freda, who opened their hearts to share their experience, strength, and hope. Thanks to both.

After the speakers, we did our raffles and 50/50 drawing. I would like to thank all of the groups that donated baskets this year. We had a great number of raffle baskets, with much love put into their design. Several individuals went out of their way to handcraft items for the raffle, including a handmade quilt and hand-turned ink pens.

Group 132 also made a generous \$100 donation to help fund the picnic this year.

Everyone's generosity is greatly appreciated. We were able to cover the expenses of the picnic, which was free to all, and still have a little left over to put toward the upcoming New Year's Eve Alcathon, our other major activities event of the year and the costlier one.

Most of all, I would like to thank my co-chair, Sue S of Group 968, and the nearly 30 volunteers who made this picnic possible. Everyone worked seamlessly and humbly to do all the tasks required to make this event the success that it was. It never ceases to amaze me the special selfless people you meet doing service work. My first sponsor told me to hang out with the winners. From my experience, people in service work are the true winners. This is a "we" program, and this was a "we" event.

I attended an AA meeting the day after the picnic, and there was a young couple in attendance relatively new in recovery. The wife shared that, despite their fear of not knowing anyone, this couple and their kids had met a lot of great people and had

a wonderful time. Hearing her share that made my heart sing, for that is one of the major reasons we have a picnic - to give a safe place for newcomers to realize that sobriety is not the end of life but just the beginning. The AA literature says, "We are not a glum lot - we absolutely insist upon having fun."

I hope everyone had as much fun at the picnic this year as I did. Thanks again to all who supported this event through donations, volunteering, or by your attendance. If anyone has any suggestions or comments on how to improve the picnic or ideas for the upcoming Alcathon, please feel free to contact me at 636-248-4010.

*NOTE: One nice coffee mug and a pair of sunglasses were left at the picnic and taken to the AA office on Campus Drive. Also, a bean bag from the smaller of the two cornhole games was recovered and is in my possession. If you are the owner, please reach out to me at the number above.*

### DON'T MISS

**October meeting for IRS:**  
Sun. 10/16 at 12 pm, Campus Office, 2021 Campus Drive, St. Charles; or use Zoom ID: 874 7379 9414, no password required

**District 14 meeting for GSRs:**  
Thu. 10/27 at 6:30 pm, Chapel of the Cross Lutheran, 907 Jungermann, St. Peters

**District 19 meeting for GSRs:**  
Thu. 10/6 at 6:30 pm, 37 Elaine Dr, O'Fallon

**District 20 meeting for GSRs:**  
Mon. 10/3 at 7 pm, Lincoln County Council on Aging, 1389 Boone St, Troy

### AA ANNOUNCEMENTS

**Group 632, on Saturday mornings** at 10:15 at Chapel of the Cross Lutheran, is now an open meeting that encourages Al Anon participation. Formerly, it was only open on the first Saturday of each month.

**Districts 41 and 51** are hosting a Cooperation With the Professional Community workshop on Sunday, Oct. 2, at Central

Services at 14 Sun-nen Drive and on Zoom at ID: 876 5146 2966, Password: 4151.

Lunch is provided, and speakers include Brian A, Eastern Missouri's CPC chair, and Nancy McCarthy, a former Class A Trustee with 38 years in corrections.

**The next Area 38** assembly will be on Oct. 22 and 23. Visit [eamo.org](http://eamo.org) to register.

**THE ALCATHON IS COMING! NEW YEAR'S EVE AT STS. JOACHIM AND ANN! SAVE THE DATE!**

### BIRTHDAYS

Dana S	9/17	42 years	<b>GROUP 484</b>		
Jacque W	9/1	37 years	Tommi K	8/21	5 years
			Michelle F	9/11	17 years
<b>GROUP 4094</b>					
Anthony A	9/13	3 years	<b>GROUP 968</b>		
Nick C	9/18	10 years	Carol P	9/7	35 years
Ted K	9/24	19 years	Judy P	9/7	21 years
<b>GROUP 113</b>					
Tom B		30 years	<b>GROUP 228</b>		
<b>GROUP 340</b>					
Bob M		5 years	Kevin	8/23	6 years
			Terry A	9/8	40 years
<b>GROUP 77</b>					
Dana V	8/20	17 years	<b>GROUP 124</b>		
Michele C	8/28	6 years	Greg K	9/9	37 years
Janet O	9/1	7 years	Dennis S	9/10	33 years
Darren B	9/11	2 years	Thomas H	9/12	3 years

### RESPONSIBILITY STATEMENT

When anyone, anywhere, reaches out for help, I want the hand of A.A. always to be there. And for that: I am responsible.

### DECLARATION OF UNITY

This we owe to AA's future: to place our common welfare first; to keep our fellowship united. For on AA unity depends our lives, and the lives of those to come.

## When they simply can't believe you're sober...

I had some surgery last week, and the nurse was taking me through the routine questionnaire in pre-op. We cruised through until we came to, "Do you use alcohol?" and I said, "I don't drink."

I got the small but noticeable head tilt with the squinty eyes when she asked in succession, "Daily? Twice a week? Three times a week? Weekly? Monthly? Socially?"

To each question, I gave the same answer: "I don't drink."

She was not satisfied with my answers until she had gone through all the various ways one would use alcohol, and even then she begrudgingly accepted my answer with a sideways look.

Now I wonder what it was about my demeanor that would lead her to believe so fervently that I am a drinker:

Could she still smell the alcoholic fumes coming out of my pores from five years ago? Does my persona scream that I'm an alcoholic? Are my eyes still yellow from the jaundice? Do I have *alcoholic* tattooed on my forehead? Why could she not accept my answer?

In true alcoholic fashion, I have been overthinking this for about a week now. It's not exactly resentment that I feel but guilt, I suppose.

I was once so accustomed to lying when asked those questions that perhaps I felt offended that she would not readily accept my truth.

Anyway, it's all irrelevant because I know my truth. This mouth has not tasted alcohol in over five years. That's the truth. Believe it or don't. Either way, I'm still sober.

-Laura B

# Working through a workplace resentment

by **MISSY R  
Group 632**

I'm having a bad week. I haven't been sick, didn't wreck my car, didn't get divorced, didn't get married either. No, what happened was, my boss was a little bit mean to me during our monthly one-on-one meeting. Actually, she tried to be as gentle as she could; I'm just extremely sensitive. She told me she noticed I was getting behind in one area, so she was going to temporarily limit my other duties to help me get caught up.

I should be grateful, and I am. Sort of. But I'm also very insulted, humiliated and a bit shocked. *I know what I'm doing, and I get stuff done!* I hate the thought that I've

disappointed my superiors.

Between you and me, I have been concerned all summer that I was possibly getting in over my head, but my pride would not allow me to ask for help. Maybe someone would think I don't know what I'm doing. Instead, I let the problem get bigger until someone else pointed it out to me. Then I started nurturing a big old resentment.

*Great! My life is ruined. What am I going to do now? I need my job to get money to buy food so I can eat and not die. When am I going to learn not to create problems for myself?*

I think the Big Book says this is exactly what alcoholics do - we make our own problems. Yep, it does; I just checked.

Page 62:

"Sometimes they hurt us, seemingly without provocation, but we invariably find that at some time in the past we have made decisions based on self which later placed us in a position to be hurt. So, our troubles, we think, are basically of our own making."

That's exactly what I did. I needed help but refused to ask for it. I chose to look at it with eyes of suspicion, like a trap. Lack of trust in others has caused self-sabotage several times in my life.

Is this problem of my own making? Absolutely, it is! I don't think I can justify having a resentment against my employer over this incident. I know I can't afford it. The Big Book plainly states

"Resentment is the number one offender." I know I must get down to the roots and causes of the resentment to be rid of it.

Wikipedia defines resentment as "a complex, multilayered emotion that has been described as a mixture of disappointment, disgust, anger and fear. Other psychologists consider it a mood or as a secondary emotion that can be elicited in the face of insult and/or injury." I had a lot of anger and fear, and I thought my job was being threatened. The way I interpreted it says a lot about the downsizing program my ego still needs to go through.

Rather than looking at this as a reprimand of some kind, I should view it as my employer's gesture of appreciation for my service and their desire to keep me on

staff. Instead of harboring a resentment, I should show mutual respect by using this opportunity to the best of my ability. In the future, I should have enough faith in myself and my employer to tell them if I need assistance.

As this week has proven, resentments don't do me any good. It's so easy for me to forget about the gifts I have because of my sobriety, things like my job.

I try to use the last part of Step Twelve as a mantra and repeat it to myself several times a day to keep my focus on what is important: "practice these principles in all our affairs." It helps me remember that I'm an alcoholic and that I will always react to every situation like an alcoholic, and that's ok, as long as I remember that.

## Sunlight: learning to bear fruit

From Page 1

grow in the fruits of the Spirit as defined in the other Big Book - love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. For at least 25 years, I figured I was doing alright in all areas but self-control, and I was baffled about why I couldn't get a handle on that one issue.

Every morning, I'd wake up with overwhelming guilt, shame and fear related to my drinking the night before. With all the earnestness at my command, I'd resolve not to drink that night. Yet, by 5 pm, I'd have justified my reason to indulge despite the agony I'd felt 10 short hours before. So went the cycle I shouldered and catapulted upon my loved ones for decades.

Wow! Have my eyes been opened since attending my first AA meeting last November! Now I understand that my lack of control over drinking is due to my disease of alcoholism. Also, all the booze I consumed - and all the resulting calamity - blinded me to the fact that any spiritual fruit I did display was scant. In fact, I had been living in spiritual darkness, right there from my church pew. Talk about insanity!

I'm thankful to have known God before coming to AA, and my walk with Him has grown significantly in the program. The result is 299 days of sobriety and a stark increase in the spiritual fruit I've been chasing for so long.

Now that I can feel the depravity of spirit that grows when I run my own show, I work hard to follow God's lead, to recognize my shortcomings and to respond promptly with (daily!) amends when my character defects rise to the surface. This is what I consider living in the Sunlight of the Spirit.

Just one recent example - I'd been haunted for years by the terrible influence I'd had on my sweet, untarnished high school friend Val. I was willing but clueless about how to make amends. I hadn't seen Val for more than 30 years, and I don't engage in social media, so I didn't know how to find her.

Fast forward to the funeral of a prior neighbor's husband. It was no surprise that I was running late, and the traffic genie was not on my team. The receiving line extended into the parking lot. I waited for awhile before deciding I ought to find a seat, entered through the wrong door, turned the corner, and there was Val! I had no idea she knew the family, but I recognized without a doubt that God paved the way for this encounter.

I made amends, we went to lunch, and Val told me about her son, who struggles with this disease. Today, I have the privilege of praying for this young man, and a friendship has been restored.

Coincidence? I think not! God is alive and active! I am forever grateful to God, Bill W, my wise sponsor, the best home group ever, and all my new friends for making my sobriety journey possible. And yes, Steve, I'm gonna keep coming back.

*"Literature has played a major role in AA's growth..."*  
-Big Book, Foreword to the Fourth Edition



Jeff C/Sobriety Sentinel

Thanks to Tri-County committee members like Jeff C, our acting literature chair, the Tri-County literature closet is as clean and organized as we've seen it in quite some time. Did you know that one of the services Tri-County provides is selling conference-approved literature at cost? Tri-County supplies individuals and homegroups with Big Books,

Twelve and Twelves, and more. Simply email literature@tricountyaa.org and include your contact information to schedule pickups and, in some cases, deliveries. Also, Jeff is acting as literature chair currently because the position is vacant and needs a service-oriented individual to step up and fill it. Is that person you, perhaps?

### UPDATES IN BRIEF

#### 212 Club continues to rebuild from flood damage

After devastating flooding and temporary relocation of several regular 212 Club meetings, the rebuilding process has been steady, and it's been progressive.

Jamie E of 212 Club reports just ahead of press time: "Thanks to our volunteers, almost everything is done except for flooring and doors. We are currently in discussions with the owner as to what types of flooring to put down and where. Our hope is that we will begin laying down flooring next week."

One interesting effect of the short-term unavailability of some 212 meetings is that it has led AA members to replacement meetings they now keep coming back to. Group 968, which meets Mondays at noon, a five-minute drive from 212 Club, has seen an influx of new attendees that previously went to the 212 nooner.

On a recent Monday, homegroup member Sue S reports, meeting attendance at 968 was around 20 people, which are numbers that homegroup has not regularly achieved since before Covid.

#### Spring Fling Trivia Night sells out, includes AAs and AI Anons

The Spring Fling committee's Trivia Night, held on Aug. 20, was a sellout event attracting nearly 300 attendees, including Jeremy of Group 484, whose wife was the event's AI Anon speaker.

Says Jeremy, "I discovered, being the only AA at an AI-Anon table, that not all AI Anons carry a noose ready to hang their qualifiers! The best thing for me and mine is that we both found recovery through my disease of alcoholism. It was great to see so much joy and have fellowship with those who wake up each and every day, powerless but willing to be the best version of themselves... one day at a time."

#### Fall Classic, Group 967 potluck both well-attended

This year's Fall Classic, at the Airport Hilton over Labor Day - purported to be the last year of the event - drew upwards of 340 attendees, it is reported. The meeting on Sep. 11 to gauge interest to continue the Fall Classic into future years also drew a crowd, but this is very much still a developing story. More will be revealed.

On Aug. 13, Group 967, in conjunction with a partner AI Anon group, held its first annual potluck since 2019. Homegroup member Tom L reports that the event went well and attracted more than 100 attendees, that the speakers were excellent and that the event will continue next year.

*Did you attend the 212 Club Picnic on Saturday, Sep. 17? Tell me about it at sentinel@tricountyaa.org. If you have event photos to share, even better.*

*All opinions expressed are those of individuals and do not necessarily reflect the views of AA as a whole. To give feedback or report Tri-County AA news or events, please email [sentinel@tricountyaa.org](mailto:sentinel@tricountyaa.org)*

PRODUCED FOR ST. CHARLES COUNTY, LINCOLN COUNTY AND WARREN COUNTY IN EASTERN MISSOURI