



## FRIENDS of BILL W.

District #30

[www.aadistrict30va.org](http://www.aadistrict30va.org)

Hotline: (540) 752-2228 Español (540) 656-2882

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**Statement of Purpose:** "Friends of Bill W." is the newsletter for A.A. District #30 in Virginia. It provides a voice that will cultivate the spirit of our district's common welfare and A.A. unity.

### In The Spirit of Service

Dear Readers,

Hello out there to all friends of District 30 and beyond. My time as the newsletter editor was a 'sobering' experience. I want to thank all who contributed, especially XXX, who helped with editing each newsletter. And did I mention XXX will be taking over as the Newsletter editor starting in January 2019? Submissions, anniversaries, event notifications, comments, and ideas can be sent to the newsletter address: [newsletter@aadistrict30va.org](mailto:newsletter@aadistrict30va.org). XXX.

### SERVICE OPPORTUNITIES

**Alcathon:** Planning meetings occur every Tuesday at 7:00 pm, Salem Baptist Church on Rt. 3 (Misfits location).

**Hot-Line Volunteers Needed:** Call (540) 752-2228, email [hotline@aadistrict30va.org](mailto:hotline@aadistrict30va.org), or reach out to XXX.

**Jail Meetings:** If you are interested in joining a Rappahannock Regional Jail meeting please email [corrections@aadistrict30va.org](mailto:corrections@aadistrict30va.org), or reach out to XXX or XXX. Applications can be found on the District 30 Website.

### DISTRICT 30 CORNER

*June 2018* –Seed money for 4th of July picnic 2019 is fully funded.

*October 2018* - District 30 has voted to support SERCYPAA (Southeast Regional Conference of Young People in Alcoholics Anonymous) if Fredericksburg hosts the conference in 2019.

### ANNOUNCEMENTS

**Stafford Women's 12x12 meeting:** If schools are closed due to weather there will not be a meeting that day.

### EVENTS

**THANK-A-THONS** on November 22, 2018:

-**Early Birds** – St. George's Episcopal Church, Meal at 7am, meeting at 730am. Bring a breakfast dish.

-**Brooks Park** – Falmouth Firehouse on Butler Road. Meetings at 10am and 12pm with food served from 11am to 1pm. Bring a covered dish.

-**Chancellor Group** – Chancellor Community Center on Old Plank. 5pm to 10pm. Bring a covered dish.

**ALCATHON** - Dorothy Hart Community Center, 408 Canal Street in Fredericksburg. Starts December 24<sup>th</sup> at 10am going through December 26<sup>th</sup>.

**CRYSTAL COAST ROUNDUP** – March 22, 23 and 24, 2019, Double Tree by Hilton Atlantic Beach Oceanfront, 2717 West Fort Macon Road, Atlantic Beach, NC.

<http://www.crystalcoastroundup.org>

**LIVING SOBER** – presented by the Common Solution Group on January 11 (workshop at 7pm with speaker at 815pm) and 12, 2019 (workshop at 0930am, speakers at 1045am, 115pm, 230pm with lunch on your own) at the Celebration Center, 879 Research Road, Chesterfield, VA. Contact Ross B. at 804-794-8099 for more information. \$30 at the door. \$25 for pre-registration (checks payable to Living Sober and mailed to Living Sober, PO Box 832, Midlothian, VA 23113).

**SERENITY WEEKEND**, March 22-24, Clarion Hotel, 3032 Richmond Road, Williamsburg, VA.  
[www.serenityweekend.net](http://www.serenityweekend.net)

### REFLECTIONS

"My life was saved, sustained, and changed forever by a series of acts of kindness by people who were perfect strangers and had nothing material to gain by being kind to me. The people who helped me believed in kindness and were willing to do what they could to bring more of it into the world. The kindness they offered me had no strings attached, and I have spent every day since trying to bring kindness into the world as it was brought to me."

Submitted by XXX

## ANNIVERSARIES

### NOVEMBER

Names omitted for anonymity

### DECEMBER

Names omitted for anonymity

## EXPERIENCE STRENGTH AND HOPE

*Inspirational stories from District 30*

### The Holidays... Sobering

All through the Holidays I was always drinking. (Not really much different than any other day). I would carry my water bottle filled with Vodka around with me. No one suspected a thing. Going to The Christmas Eve Church Service buzzed. It's the Holidays, the season to be merry! No problem, it's much easier to conceal my constant drinking.

Spending the holidays with the family was uncomfortable for me. It was a stressful and miserably empty experience. I know everyone wasn't just happy because it was the holiday season, but doesn't it just seem that way? We all put on our happy faces. How am I supposed to tell who else is faking? We all talk about fellowship, comfort and joy; where do they live? I could never find them. Were they avoiding me?

I know I'm never alone in this. A lot of us are drowning in depression in the dead of winter, in the presumed Holiday Cheer. It feels like playing hide-and-seek when the seeker forgets to look for you.

God, it's so easy, isn't it? A few sips and you're alive, you can talk, laugh, and dance again. Everything that hurts feels so far away. Everything that scares you seems quiet. You can play nice again. Everyone loves you. Everyone laughs at your jokes. (I guess they do, I don't pay attention) You smile. You enthusiastically hug all the people. It's warm, safe, and you never want to live anywhere else. Until it wears off.

You are running out of your Holiday Cheer, but great news! There is always another bottle, even if you have to overdraw your bank account to get it. When you're running low, you'll find some kind of potion to drink. A couple of mini bottles you put into your coat pocket before going into the church, and the tumbler of wine you stashed in the car at the family gathering. You came prepared, and you will survive.

You vomit in the bathroom, you nurse a hangover in the guest bed that used to be yours. You scout for empty rooms to duck into to, um, "recharge." This is surviving. This is happy. This is Holiday Cheer. Isn't Christmas magical?

I got lucky. I met some people who cared about me as a person, an individual, a part of something whole, independent, and worthy of value.

They cared about me as a person, and wanted me to become better for myself. They made me want to heal. Really heal. Not

just survive. Not to play nice. They made me want to thrive, for them and for me. I am now two and half years sober, and this will be my third Holiday season without alcohol.

Sobriety hasn't "cured" my depression. Sometimes, I feel like it's made it worse. When I first got diagnosed with depression and anxiety my doctor told me, "Be careful not to drink too much." I nodded quietly, but inside I laughed. I thought, "Funny, drinking is the only thing that makes me feel better".

Sobriety isn't the "cure all," but it has shut off the noise and let me see clearly the work I have to do. I'm healing. However, I'm coping with my life issues which can be scary and hard. Sometimes I feel like I'm drowning, but guess what? I'm learning to swim.

So here's the question. If you aren't going to find your Holiday Cheer at the bottom of a bottle, where are you going to find it? I'm going to find it by spending time with my friends, helping the lost, confused, lonely and less fortunate than me. Enjoying the decorations and lights, especially the drive through Illuminated music and light show in Doswell (I'm not promoting, it doesn't need promoting)! And, Oh yes, watching Hallmark holiday movies. I have a lot of choices, so do you. Help with the Thank-a-thon and Christmas 24-hour-Alcathon. Do service work. Go to meetings. Find positive things to do. Pick up the phone and call others in recovery. If you go to a party where there is drinking, invite a friend, whatever it takes to keep you from being alone. I have an AA family that is always supportive and there for me. Look at me, I'm learning to swim! With AA you never have to do it alone! I'm not just going to survive this Holiday Season. I'm going to thrive. "It's simple, not necessarily easy but, the rewards are endless." (AA Osceda County Intergroup)

XXX