

No Booze News

Intergroup Council of West Central Arkansas

Volume LXLIV Number 4

October - November - December 2026

OUR DISTRICT 8 MEETING IN PRINT!

NEXT MEETING

The Intergroup Council's
next meeting is

October 25, 2026,

2:00 p.m.

**411 Sellers, Hot Springs,
Arkansas**

INTERGROUP COUNCIL

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Booze News"

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Book Study

Terry T., Rock House

Bob S., D.C.M., District 8

DISTRICT 8 COUNTIES

Saline, Garland,

Montgomery, Grant, Hot
Springs, Clark

John's Story...At the start of Alcoholics Anonymous women were not recognized as alcoholics and were excluded as participants in A.A. On the title page of the Big Book, it says "the membership had then reached about 100 men and women." There was one female member. Much has changed: Today, "Alcoholics Anonymous is a worldwide fellowship of more than one hundred thousand alcoholic men and women who are banded together..." "We alcoholics are men and women who have lost the ability to control our drinking." Up until his death in 1950, Dr. Bob S. carried the A.A. message to more than 5,000 alcoholic men and women..." "We, of A.A., know thousands of men and women who were once just as hopeless as Bill."

Today, 38% of today's members are women. Despite its 1930s origins with male-centered foundations, A.A. provides support for women to recover. In meetings vulnerability is understood without judgment; many women have found meaningful support and lasting sobriety.

Women in AA often face unique challenges that may not be fully addressed by the program since the book was originally written from a male perspective. Women generally feel safe and heard in all AA meetings but many women find participating in women-only meetings provide a supportive environment that acknowledges their specific experiences and needs in recovery.

AA's meetings can give many women a consistent anchor in their week. Meetings become a place to check in, feel seen, and be reassured that they're not alone in this sobriety journey. Having a sense of routine and belonging can be essential, especially early in sobriety when there's a lot of uncertainty. Women recognize the recovery program isn't just about quitting drinking, it is also about taking on the emotional load of healing.

Today women are succeeding beyond their wildest dreams because of their sobriety.

Free quarterly newsletter

The No Booze News

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members of AA.



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WHO WAS WHO IN A.A.? page 7
FIRST WOMEN IN A.A.

FIRST AA WOMEN IN ARKANSAS pg 9

SOBER 2003, RECOVERY IN 2019!

I grew up in a loving home with wonderful parents, three brothers, and a sister. Some of my happiest memories were being together as a family. Mom and dad made sure we spent time together, whether at my grandfather Rex's Arkansas ranch or on family vacations to Destin.

Around five o'clock, the beer began flowing. It seemed perfectly normal. By tenth grade, a few beers on the beach with family was fun. No one got out of control.

In 7th grade, my friend Kermit and I bought peppermint schnapps for a camping trip behind Howard Perrin. I got so sick I swore I'd never drink again. Of course, I did.

At 32, I received medical news I would never live to see 40. Five years later, my spouse died suddenly of a heart attack on our anniversary. He was 32. Those experiences didn't create my alcoholism, but they gave it room to grow.

One day, I reread a leather journal my friend Michael had given me for my travels. Every page asked the same question: "You know you can't drink. Why do you keep doing this?" Different cities and dates. The same shame.

In 2003, after losing almost everything, I walked 19 blocks to the Sober Room in Miami Beach with two broken toes. I stayed sober nearly 15 years before drifting away.

While living in Ecuador, I relapsed. Soon I was isolated, hiding alcohol, and in despair. We made it to the Village, and things got worse. I became an expert at hiding alcohol. I hid a bottle of tequila in the hollow of a tree near my home. I'd walk my dogs, slip into the woods, take a few swigs, and continue my walk. Before I was home, I was already telling myself, "You shouldn't have done that."

Shame was my pain.

In February 2019, Lincoln had left and eventually called and said he had found a rehab. When I asked for a few days, he simply said, "Wrong answer."

He was right.

Recovery, con't page 3

NOT BELONGING

My parents split up when I was 2 weeks old, and my mom and my sister Amanda and I moved to Little Rock, AR, so this is where I call home.

My father served in Vietnam and came home a heroin addict. I didn't meet him until I was 13 and he was in prison in Pine Bluff where he spent most of his teenage years and a lot of his adult life

My mother remarried my when I was 3 or 4 years old. They split up when I was 7 so I was reared by a single mother of 4 kids with no supervision. Mom worked 2 sometimes 3 jobs to take care of us and keep food on our table. I always had a feeling I never belonged in my family. I was the "black sheep" in the family from the time I was very young. I never felt like I "fit" in.

I took my first drink of alcohol when I was 7 years old. When I was 13 and my sister was 15, we got drunk. I even smoked my first cigarette That day changed my life. I

found something that made me feel like I could be myself.

The difference between my sister and me is I didn't want to stop drinking that day. I started drinking \every weekend, some days after school depending on how my day went.

I was caught with alcohol in my locker at school, consequences at a young age. My drinking continued and I was sent to live at a children's home in Monticello AR. Once again I didn't fit in. I would run away, return to Little Rock, get caught and sent back. This went on until the last semester of my junior year in high school when I was allowed to return home, which I didn't want.

The only good thing about those years is I was able to finally meet my biological father and develop a relationship with him. It was mainly a friendship, never a father daughter relationship because I already had a father.

All my life all I ever wanted a family of my own, that was normal. I met my first husband when I was 19. I got pregnant and moved to Florida with Brett. I thought I was starting over in a new

Belonging Con't page 3

On the drive to Baptist Detox, I called Tom F., who became my sponsor. He taught me the Big Book, service, and simplicity. He often reminded me, "Rod, if it's past the end of your long nose, it's none of your business."

The EastGate and the Rock House became my home. That's where I learned recovery. My fearless little pooch, Boozy, came to meetings with me and slept peacefully in my lap. It was our thing.

Those five years in the Village changed my life. The fellowship prepared me for a new chapter that eventually brought Lincoln and me to Washington, D.C.

Lincoln has stood beside me, and I'm deeply grateful for his love and support.

If sharing my story helps even one alcoholic find hope, every step has been worth it. Today, my greatest privilege is trying to give away what was so freely given to me.

Rod M.
February 15, 2019
East Gate, Hot Springs Village

state. Now this new life would help my drinking. We married when our son was 11 months old; our daughter was born 3 years later. I was 23.

Finally I had a family of my own and I wasn't drinking as much. I drank to get drunk. I was in the restaurant industry, so drinking after work was common. We left Florida moving to Huntsville AL. I was happy living in Huntsville. Brett decided to move to Birmingham and I didn't want to move. I was very resentful. Moving to and living in Birmingham, my drinking worsened. I was miserable in my marriage and I could feel my family slipping away.

The last thing I wanted to do was end up like my mother, a single mom with kids, but that is what happened. My husband left and my life spiraled totally out of control within 60 days of signing the divorce papers.

I went to treatment for the first time and stayed

I decided Alabama was not the best place to be so in January 2006 I returned to Little Rock.

I went to my first AA meeting at Reservoir Group and got a sponsor. I wish I could say that was the last time I drank, but it would be 6 years before I got sober. I thought I could control my drinking. I controlled it right to the point where my family wouldn't talk to me, I was in numerous unhealthy relationships. One of those nearly cost me my life. I got to where I was completely broken and didn't want to live. I tried to take my own life but for some reason God saw fit for me to still be on this earth.

After being in a psych ward for 9 days, living in sober living house, with my boyfriend, or just some friend of mine, I was finally done. I needed something different. After being in and out of the rooms of AA for 6 years, I decided to listen.

I got a sponsor and started working the Steps. My life slowly got better. I started really living the 12 steps and giving my will and my life over to the care of God of my understanding. Once I finally took step 3 wholeheartedly and became willing to listen to someone other than myself, life got much better.

The worst thing was losing my father in 2014. I was there with my sisters. It was my worse moment and I remembered how to make the pain go away. Because of my God, my sponsor, home group and friends in AA, it was only a thought. My Dad saw me sober for over 10 years and I won't give that up for any amount of alcohol.

Today I am sponsoring women, serving as District 8 secretary, and regularly attend treatment centers to share my experience strength and hope. This program gave me my life, my kids, my family, and a job I love. Finally bought my first home, I could go on and on, but the biggest blessing I have is helping others realize that there is a life outside of alcohol.

Elizabeth C.
December 21, 2012
Lamplighters, Benton

SILENCE WHERE WE MEET OUR HIGHER POWER

Without solitude it is virtually impossible to live a spiritual life. Why? Because our lives are busy, noisy, we do not stop and be still. Until we are still and listening we cannot, will not hear the voice of God. Prophets often retreated to silent and solitary places to meet with their Higher Power.

Ruth Haley Barton compares our interior lives to river water. When the river is flowing quickly, all of the sediment and muck stay evenly distributed from the surface down to the bottom, making the water unclear and frankly not very enjoyable to look at. But, if you take a glass and scoop out some of that water, allow it to sit for a few minutes, the sediment begins to sink to the bottom, leaving a glass of clear water.

Our interior lives with God are similar. We are constantly busy, moving from one thing to the next—so much so that our spiritual lives become cloudy and unenjoyable. Yet, when we allow ourselves to be still, to sit in the quiet with our Higher Power, with God, with One, with our Creative Intelligence, all of the muck in our lives begins to sink to the bottom and what is exposed is a beautiful, clear opportunity for communion with God.

Put more simply, **silence and solitude are the purposeful and repeated practice of putting aside noise and busyness to join God alone in the quiet.** Silence and solitude are an invitation to “enter more deeply into the intimacy of relationship with the One who waits just outside the noise and busyness of our lives. It is an invitation to communication and communion with the One who is always present even when our awareness has been dulled by distraction.”

The beauty of silence and solitude is that we are both **doing** and **achieving** nothing. For many of us this is extremely difficult and completely antithetical to the way we currently structure our lives and our time. Too often our days off, the days that are supposed to be the most restful and rejuvenating, are still filled with checking email, never-ending shopping lists, and a growing mound of laundry. We easily assume that if we are not being productive, then surely our world will collapse in on itself.

Even ten minutes of silence and solitude feels like too much because there are things that need to get done.

Con't bottom next column below Koala

NO DRINK BEAR

Across the continent, the koala's identity is woven into the ancient tapestry of Aboriginal languages. So much so that each offers its own name for this iconic animal. There are hundreds of distinct tongues spoken by First Nations peoples. As a result, the koala is



known by many local words. But, intriguingly, almost all carry a meaning akin to “no drink.”

This reflects a remarkable fact about koala biology. They seldom descend to sip water from streams or pools. Instead, their bodies have evolved to extract almost all the moisture they

need from eucalyptus leaves. Thus, they are able to thrive high in the canopy where free water is scarce.

Because Koalas are the “no drink” bear, alcoholics often collect pictures, stuffed animals, and small figurines.

How is that approach going for you? Do you have less anxiety, less stress, and less depression because of your busyness and your “go-go-go-spirituality”? Likely not... which shows just how much more we desperately need this practice in our lives.

“Solitude and silence are not, in the end, about success and failure. They are about showing up and letting God do the rest. They are not an end in themselves; they are merely a means through which we regularly make ourselves available to God for the intimacy of relationship.” Ruth Barton

The greatest gift you can give
someone is your time. When you give
your time, you are giving a portion of
your life that
You will never get back.



Celebrating his 21st birthday in Dublin, Englishman Danny Melody thought a quick snap with a leprechaun photo cut-out would be a great souvenir. After wedging his head into the cut-out, the combination of celebratory spirits and perhaps a bit of swelling left him literally unable to pull himself free. His mates, ever the supportive crew, filmed the whole fiasco, uploaded the footage, and turned the impromptu exhibit into a local attraction as passers-by gathered to snap pictures of the trapped tourist.

TIME TRAVELER

When the crowd eventually helped liberate him, Danny shrugged off the embarrassment, saying, "I was quite drunk at the time so I wasn't that embarrassed, but I am now looking back at it."

Bryant Johnson of Casper, Wyoming, was arrested for disorderly conduct after a night of heavy drinking. He claimed to be a time-traveler from the year 2048, sent to warn locals about an impending alien invasion scheduled for the following year.

His tale described extraterrestrials injecting booze into his bloodstream and using a transporter pad to fling him back through time. He insisted the intended destination was 2017, but a miscalculation landed him in 2018. He demanded meeting with the town's "president."

A breathalyzer later confirmed a .136 % blood-alcohol level, cementing his story as one of the most outlandish drunken delusions on record.

I'm not an alcoholic, but my sister is. So when she drinks, I do, too. I'm supportive like that.

I'm not an Alcoholic, I'm a Drunk!
Alcoholics go to Meetings!

"I want to divorce my wife."

Lawyer: "On what grounds?"

"She's out all night, every night, going from bar to bar."

Lawyer: "Is she an alcoholic or do you think she might be cheating?"

"No, she's looking for me."

WE ARE NOT A GLUM LOT

On a bus, a priest sat next to a drunk who was struggling to read a newspaper.

Suddenly, with a slurred voice, the drunk asked the priest, "Do you know what arthritis is?"

The priest thought of taking the opportunity to lecture the drunk and replied, "It's a disease caused by sinful and unruly life: excess, consumption of alcohol, drugs, marijuana, crack, and certainly lost women, prostitutes, promiscuity, sex, binges and other things I dare not say."

The drunk widened his eyes, shut up and returned to reading the newspaper.

A little later the priest, thinking that he had been too hard on the drunk, tried to soften, "How long have you had arthritis?"

"I don't have arthritis! It says here in the paper that the Pope has it."

DR. BOB & THE GOOD OLDTIMERS

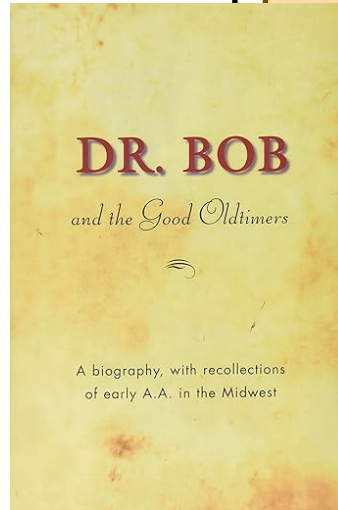
This book is an important contribution to the historical literature of Alcoholics Anonymous (A.A.). While its focus is on Dr. Robert Smith's contributions as co-founder of A.A., the book provides a picture of how a founding fellowship grew and prospered.

One of the book's strengths is its in-depth portrayal of Dr. Bob, a man whom the more flamboyant Bill W. overshadowed. Bill took a clear leadership role in growing the program, but the program would have faltered without Dr. Bob's practical and steady advice.

Filled with personal anecdotes, letters, and interviews, the book portrays Dr. Bob's quiet strength, dedication to simplicity, and his compassion for those struggling with alcoholism. Dr. Bob embodied humility, keeping his talks brief, downplaying his importance, and reminding members that they were drunks.

The book provides valuable insights into the evolution of A.A., from Dr. Bob's first meeting with Bill W. to its global reach. We get an understanding of the challenges and controversies that arose along the way.

"The Sober Curator," QUITLIT Book Review: Dr. Bob and the Good Oldtimers, by By Tony Harte March 18, 2025



CONTEMPLATE:

Trust God, Clean House, Work With Others — (part 1) the Big Book says that armed with the facts about yourself (if you have recovered) you can win the confidence of a prospect in a few short hours (page 18). The Book is laid out in that fashion. The Doctor's Opinion gives us the insights to begin to diagnose ourselves with a discussion of the mental obsession (can't not start) and the physiological phenomena of craving (the physical allergy that makes it so we can't stop when we start) which as a class differentiates us from the temperate drinkers in the rest of the world and that the only treatment for us is entire abstinence. Having examined us and talked about the malady, Dr Silkworth's prescription for us is to 1) read the Book through and 2) remain to pray.

Trust God, Clean House, Work With Others — (part 2) the Big Book says that armed with the facts about yourself (if you have recovered) you can win the confidence of a prospect in a few short hours (page 18). *There Is a Solution* — starts with the pronoun We (of Alcoholics Anonymous, who have recovered) and describes two parts to recovery, 1) a Fellowship, who would normally not mix and 2) the Program, a way out in which we can join in harmonious action. Describing alcoholism as an illness it tells us how to approach a prospect and win his confidence. If he really wants to get over it and asks what he has to do it expounds: That after a description of a real alcoholic (when he starts, he can't stop, and when he is stopped he can't not start), it assures us the real problem is in the mind (because he can't not alter his allergy to alcohol) and that the real alcoholic has lost the power of choice and has no defense against the first drink. So the only choice is to go on to the bitter end, or accept spiritual help. Then it assures us that a design for living that really works and that all of us are children of a living Creator with whom we can form a relationship with upon simple and

Trust God, Clean House, Work With Others — (part 2) continued.

understandable terms as soon as we are willing and honest enough to try. Those having religious affiliations will find nothing disturbing to their beliefs or ceremonies. Finally it assures us that further on he will find clear cut directions showing how we have recovered.

Conley B.

CONTINUED JAN-FEB-MAR 2027, VOLUME 1

Con't , bottom, first column (left)

WHO WAS WHO IN A.A.? FIRST WOMEN IN AA



Henrietta Sieberling was vital to the development of Alcoholics Anonymous. As we know, the business deal that brought Bill Wilson to Akron failed. He was barely 5-6 months sober. Instead of ordering a drink at the Mayflower bar, Bill began calling a list of ministers for help finding an alcoholic with whom he could work. Reverend Walter Tunks answered his phone and heard Bill's plea; he gave Bill Henrietta Sieberling's phone number. She answered and heard Bill say, *"I'm from the Oxford Group and I'm a rum hound from New York."* He asked if she knew any alcoholics in town he could call on.

There are at least two stories of how Bill Wilson and Bob Smith were brought together, but all agree Henrietta Seiberling was the catalyst. She led a small group of friends and acquaintances in a weekly Oxford Group meeting that included Dr. Bob and Anne Smith. While Bob attended the weekly meetings faithfully for over two years, he could not stop drinking.

When Henrietta learned of Bob's problem she told her group at one night's meeting that it had to be different. Each person shared something they'd never revealed to the group before. "No pussyfooting around," was how she put it. When it came Bob's turn, told his drinking secret and asked the group for help.

Two weeks later Bill made his call to Henrietta. "Manna from heaven," Henrietta exclaimed. Bill's first visit with Bob took place at Henrietta's home on Sunday Evening, May 12, 1935. Henrietta then arranged for Bill to stay in Akron for the next three months, meeting frequently with the two new friends and Anne. Together which alcoholics might respond.

When Bill suggested toning down the talk of God for fear of how alcoholics might respond, Henrietta shot back, "Well, we're not out to please the alcoholics. They have been pleasing themselves all these years. We are out to please God. And if you don't talk about what God does, and your faith, and your guidance, then you might as well be the Rotary Club or something like that. Because God is your only source of power."

While Henrietta was not an alcoholic she most certainly affected Alcoholics Anonymous and thereby women who would later attend.

Women were originally excluded from Alcoholics Anonymous due to societal norms that viewed alcoholism as primarily a white male issue. Further, the severe stigma surrounding female alcoholism was particularly harsh. Women were judged severely for neglecting their roles as wives, mothers and workers, more than were male alcoholics. Finally, some wives of alcoholics were concerned about possible interactions if women attended.

In the 1950s, 11 years after Alcoholics Anonymous was published, women-only meetings were established and focused on the unique issues women face in recovery, fostering a sense of community and empowerment. Eventually women's roles in AA evolved to active participation in meetings and the service structure.

the
13th
step

Lil was the first woman to seek help in A.A. Together, Victor and Lil illustrated the "thirteenth step" well before the first twelve were written.

While Dr. Bob was at the Akron City Club playing his Monday night bridge, Vic and Lil were in his office on the examination table. Victor decided it was time for him to go home, but Lil objected. She would not leave.

Victor called Ernie G., AA #4, for help. Lil grabbed some pills from Dr. Bob's medicine chest and was trying to gobble them down while the two men chased her around the table. Ernie recalled, "Then she made a dive for the window! I caught her halfway out. She was strong as a

Women, con't page 8

horse and used profanity I have never heard before or since. I got her quieted, and then Doc came. We took her out to the Smith home and put her in a room in the basement. She stayed there two or three days, until her people took her home."

Florence R. was the first woman to get sober in A.A., even though for a short time. She came to A.A. in New York in March 1937. She thought the cause of her drinking would be removed when she and her husband were divorced. It was her ex-husband, a man Bill W. Had known on Wall Street, who took Lois W. to visit Florence at Bellevue Hospital.

Florence Rankin was the first woman to achieve a considerable period of sobriety, and the only woman sober at that time. She had several slips, but was sober over a year when she wrote her story, "**A Feminine Victory**," for the Big Book's first edition.



Florence moved to Washington, D.C., where she tried to help Fitz Mayo ("**Our Southern Friend**") in getting A.A. off the ground in and around the Capitol. One of their prospects drew her romantic interest and they married. Unfortunately the bridegroom was unable to stay sober and eventually Florence got drunk and disappeared. Fitz finally found her in a morgue. She had committed suicide. Despite her relapse and death from alcoholism, Florence helped pave the way for the many women who followed.B

Sylvia K. was the first woman to achieve long term sobriety in AA, although that distinction is often erroneously conferred on Bill Wilson's close friend and sponsee Marty Mann. Sylvia arrived in the late summer of 1939, and the men of AA were tripping over themselves in their efforts to be helpful. By all accounts, the drunk divorcee and heiress from Chicago was stunningly beautiful; and in an era when

America was still feeling the effects of the Great Depression, Sylvia arrived was receiving \$700 a month in alimony. A comparison to Dr. William Silkworth's salary of \$40.00 a week as a psychiatrist at Towns Hospital provides some perspective on the size of this stipend.

Sylvia was using saccharine, but the "little white pills" were not a sugar substitute as she was claiming. A nurse was flown in from Chicago to take care of her. Some one suggested it would mean a great deal more if she returned to Chicago to help AA there.

This appealed to Sylvia. (Dr. Bob and the GOT, pg. 181). She sobered up and returned to Chicago, contacting earl T. Together they worked diligently to grow AA in Chicago. To this day both remain revered and legendary figures in Illinois AA. Sylvia's personal story, "**The Keys of the Kingdom**," appears in the 2nd, 3rd and 4th editions of the Big Book.



Marty Mann was, in her own words, "just a housewife" who struggled with alcoholism. In a time when alcoholism was shrouded in stigma and considered moral failing, Mann dared to speak openly about her struggles and, more importantly, her recovery. This act of vulnerability was revolutionary as it challenged societal perceptions and immediately paved the way for other women. Her story "**Women Suffer Too**" is in the second, third and fourth editions.



This act of vulnerability was revolutionary as it challenged societal perceptions and immediately paved the way for other women. Bill became Marty's sponsor and, later, heard her fifth step. Marty and Lois became close friends and she later stated, "Lois did as much for me as any alcoholic.

Wilson and Marty Mann were both visionaries,

Wilson and Marty Mann both were visionaries, charismatic, open-minded and entrepreneurial. One early member described her as "an attractive, intelligent young woman with tremendous charm . . . possessing a drive which Bill immediately spotted as equal to his own."

Two of Mann's most significant contributions was, first, her role in founding the National Council on Alcoholism (now the National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence, NCADD) in 1950. Second, she wrote New Primer on Alcoholism, considered a classic in its field. It has been translated into Spanish, Japanese, Finnish and Afrikaans.

Dr. LeClair Bissell was an M.D., an addiction researcher with an "inside knowledge" of the malady, and the coauthor of the 1987 book, Ethics for Addiction Professionals. Joining AA in 1953, at the age of 25 years, she stayed sober until her death in 2008. William L. White, who interviewed Dr. Bissell in 1997 described her as "an unabashed atheist, a vocal lesbian, and a visible woman in addiction recovery before such openness was in vogue.

These women and many more paved the way for every woman who attends AA today.

SOURCES: Dr. Bob and the Good Old Timers; Silkworth.net; Barefoot's World (<https://www.barefootsworld.org>); A.A. Newtown, AA UK group number: 2491; Kathleen C.. The Point, March 3, 2007, Intercounty Fellowship of AA; The Unsung Heroine of Recovery: Remembering Marty Mann. Marty Mann and the Early Women of AA by Bob K.; Alcoholics Anonymous Cleveland July newsletter.

**I have found that the process
of discovering who
I really am
begins with
knowing who I
really don't want to be.**

WHO WAS WHO IN ARKANSAS A.A.? THE FIRST WOMEN



As they celebrated four years in 1944, it was a time of "hectic activity" in Little Rock AA with each sober man sponsoring a number of prospects. "In addition, they had at least three women members, a complication the members had not solved and that appeared insolvable." Women in Arkansas AA were subjected "not only to the open shame of seeking help for their alcoholism" but also to a prejudice by men who sometimes barred the doors of meeting rooms. Too, wives of male alcoholics were suspicious.

The belief in the south, including Arkansas, was that Southern ladies did not drink. Therefore it was *impossible* for a Southern lady to be an alcoholic. Too, at the time it was believed alcoholism was *only* a white man's disease and that excluded women.

To be fair, male members "faced their own recovery, had to gradually overcome a lifetime of ingrained bias where women and alcohol were concerned." This was not solely an Arkansas problem. Dr. Bob had expressed concerns about women attending A.A. Bill W. remembered, "We trembled for A.A.'s reputation and for its survival" when there were some "out-of-bounds romance" with the arrival of women."

In the fall of 1943, Bill and Lois made a coast to coast speaking tour that included Little Rock, January 17 -20, 1944. Plans included a speech by Bill at Robinson Auditorium. For two weeks before their visit both the Arkansas Democrat and Arkansas Gazette printed case histories of some A.A. members. The publicity worked and 1500 people attended Bill's speech. **Frances P.** was one. (A local member had attended one of Bill's talks in LA and noted there only about 500 in attendance.)

Frances was 39 years old when she tried to attend the Little Rock Group. She was born in Little Rock in 1906. She was the eldest of two daughters; her father, from Mississippi, was a commercial flour salesman. Francis married Clarence P in Little Rock on New Years Eve 1938.

Arkansas, con't pg 10

CONSIDERATIONS FOR WOMEN'S RECOVERY

Both men and women experience alcoholism. Recovery from alcoholism is a deeply personal journey. While many aspects of this journey are universal, there are significant differences in how men and women experience and navigate alcoholism and recovery. For example, men have higher rates of alcoholism, but women become addicted faster. Various factors influence these differences, including biology, social roles, cultural expectations, and psychological needs.

Alcohol tends to be more concentrated in women's bodies, leading to higher blood alcohol levels even when consuming the same amount as men. This can contribute to quicker development of alcoholism and may require different considerations in detoxifying and withdrawal. Fluctuations in estrogen levels can affect how women respond to alcohol. Women actually experience stronger cravings or withdrawal symptoms at different points in their menstrual cycle.

Women are more likely to hide their drinking and they hide it better. Women often work full time, take care of children, and show up when and where they're expected. They may also volunteer and be active in church or politics. When they finally seek help, friends and family are often surprised.

Alcoholic women face a harsher stigma than men, primarily due to societal expectations of women in caregiving roles. Women can face severe judgements from family, friends and strangers. This perception can lead to significant shame and isolation. This can actually prevent women seeking help. Further, women are more susceptible to feelings of guilt, self-blame, and self-loathing. Often a women find themselves in the middle of a divorce and fighting for child custody.

Further, women alcoholics are more likely than men to experience mental health disorders. Problems can include depression, mania,

Consideration, Con't page 11

Women, con't from pg 9

Frances' desire for sobriety had not convinced the majority of voting members in Little Rock Group so she was still not allowed to attend the regular Thursday meetings.

Francis was told "under no uncertain terms" that they did not accept women. Frances later stated, they should have told me they didn't want me! I could have understood that." Three times the Big Book was left for her to read in a prescribed three day time period, but she continued to drink.

Harlan N. remembered, "There weren't any women in AA until Macie came along. Macie had a little problem, and Frances came in, and we couldn't run her off! We tried to run her off! We didn't want women in our group, because they caused too much trouble. You couldn't find a sincere woman alcoholic, so it was hard." Macie was the first to attend, but could not stay sober. Eventually she left Arkansas.

Ultimately Doyle W. was assigned to 'carry the message' to Frances who became the first woman to stay sober after completing the Little Rock Approach Plan. During this time in Little Rock, no one was given membership in AA or allowed to attend meetings without a certification by a sponsor that they had completed the Steps. Frances and Doyle were the first to challenge the no women rule.

Other women followed Frances. **Ruth P** was the only other one who was recognized. Frances sponsored **Vi D.** and **Myrtle T.** Macie H. returned to Little Rock and stayed sober and became active in service work. They held "squad meetings" weekly in Frances' home.

Frances P. recalled in her memoirs, *"It was during this period that they had their first woman members, Macie H., had one of her longest periods of her sobriety."*

Anna K., "a stocky five-foot-two-inch, cigar-smoking, straight-talking" with a "heart of gold" arrived in May 1953. **She became the first woman to become a delegate from the state of Arkansas. She served on Panel**

anxiety, and eating disorders. These conditions can exacerbate alcoholism and make recovery more difficult. Alcohol dependence can have more severe effects on women's mental health compared to men's, including a higher risk of developing anxiety, depression, and co-occurring disorders. Women may also experience more intense cravings and withdrawal symptoms, which can complicate their recovery process.

Whether male or female, each person in A.A. has a private, even unique, journey into and through recovery. But we use the same book, work the same Steps and attend meetings together. We seek a Power greater than



**Dr.
Bob
Smith**

23-1973-1974. She wrote in her memoirs, : *"At one time, for an indefinite -period of years, there were three women, each of whom claimed to have been the first woman in A.A. In Little Rock. Of course, there was only one, Frances P., who could claim continuous sobriety."*

Today, women in Arkansas A.A. owe an incredible debt to these "hardy women" who insisted they had alcoholism and they would attend AA meetings, and would get sober. There are no tests to past, and no certification of completing the Little Rock Plan. We simply attend meetings, read the Big Book, get sponsors, and stay sober. We also have women's only meetings.

Sources: Silkworth.net; "How A.A. Got Started in Arkansas" by Buddy S., 1983; "Little Rock Approach Plan;" MOTHER GROUP OF THE SOUTHWEST, ARKANSAS AA HISTORY BY THE AREA 04 ARCHIVES COMMITTEE; April Hefner, Special Collections Archivist, General Service Office of Alcoholics Anonymous.

MARBLES:

Charlie's Marbles — there was an AA member in Baton Rouge who went by that moniker who gave out two marbles to all newcomers. He told them that when they think about a drink "you should throw one of the marbles away. If you take a drink you should throw the second one away because by that time you've lost all your marbles anyway."

Conley B.

I think that the best way to keep sober is to help others." emphasized the importance of helping others as a key to recovery, He also described himself as "just another alcoholic trying to get along" not a saint or superhero.

"I don't believe I have any right to get cocky about getting sober," he said. "It's only through God's grace that I did it. I can feel very thankful that I was privileged to do it. . . ."

I get a big thrill out of looking over a vast sea of faces like this with a feeling that possibly some small thing that I did a number of years ago, played an infinitely small part in making this meeting possible. I also get quite a thrill when I think that we all had the same problem. We all did the same things. We all get the same results in proportion to our zeal and enthusiasm and stick-to-itiveness.

From Dr. Bob Smith's last talk, Sunday, July 30, 1950, at the First International A.A. Convention in Cleveland, Ohio.

UPCOMING BUSINESS

➡ **AREA 4 ASSEMBLY**, October 3 & 5, Saturday and Sunday; Holiday Inn Express & Suites-Russellville (Hotel [\(479\) 219-5152](tel:4792195152)), 300 East Harrell Drive, Russellville, Arkansas; Area 4 Assembly is a hybrid: Meeting ID: 931 0896 7121 Passcode: Box459. Area Assembly meets quarterly on the 1st weekend of January, April, July and October, unless a holiday weekend.

2027: Area Assembly meets quarterly on the 1st weekend of January, April, July and October, unless a holiday weekend: January 9 & 10 (January 1 holiday weekend); April 3 & 4; July 10 & 11 (July 4 is a holiday); October 2 & 3.

➡ **INTERGROUP COUNCIL OF WEST CENTRAL ARKANSAS**, Sunday, October 25, 2:00 P.M., 411 Sellers, Hot Springs. Intergroup meets quarterly on the last Sunday of the month January, April, July and October, unless a holiday weekend.

2027: Intergroup Council meets quarterly on the last Sunday of the month: January 31; April 25; July 25; and October 31.

➡ **DISTRICT 8 COMMITTEE**, Sunday, December 27, 2026; 411 Sellers, Hot Springs, AR; Committees meet at 1:30, District Committee starts at 1:30 p.m.]

2027: District 8 meets quarterly on the 1st Sunday of March, June, September and December, unless a holiday weekend: March 7; June 6; September 5; December 5.

UPCOMING EVENTS

SW Region Service Manual Study every other Thursday **STARTING** August 13, 6:30 - 7:30 pm CST. Zoom Meeting ID: 8617405 9702 Passcode: service. [9/10; 9/24; 10/8; 10/20; 10/22; 11/5; 11/19; 12/3; 12/17; 12/31; 1/14/2027; 1/28/2027; **CONTINUES INTO 2027**]

ARKANSAS TRAVELERS ROUNDUP 2026, September 17, 18, & 19, 252 Youth Facility (Across from First Baptist Church, 200 W Main St., El Dorado, AR 71730)

2026 DISTRICT 1 PICNIC, Sunday, September 27, 1:00 - 4:00 p.m.; Veterans Park, Fayetteville, AR.

SWRAASA, October 9 - 11, 2026, Houston, TX (Hyatt Regency Baytown-Houston). Pre-register by 9/25/2026.

3RD ANNUAL PICNIC IN STEPHENS PARK, October 17, 2026, 11:00-4:30 p.m., Mountain Pine, AR.

ROCK BOTTOM'S ANNUAL PICNIC, Saturday, October 18, 2026; Mary Kennely Park Haskell, AR; RB group provides hamburgers/hotdogs; **PLEASE** Bring a side dish, or dessert

Potluck, Speaker & Birthday Celebration, Rock House Group; Last Saturday of each month: potluck at 6:00 p.m.; speaker at 7:00 p.m.