



# Monroe Area A.A. *Embracing Sobriety*

**Free Take one , Pass it on**

**Volume 11 Issue 4 April 2024**



**MONCYPAA Game night Friday April 12th 2024**  
Door at 6:00 Games to follow. Everyone Welcome.  
554 Rambo Dr. Monroe Mi.



**Monroe Intergroup Spring Fling Sat. May 18th. 2024**  
Doors open @ 5pm Dinner @ 6pm Speaker to follow  
Grace Lutheran 630 N. Monroe St. Monroe,



**Bellringers 39th Anniversary Dinner May 6th 2024**  
Doors open @ 5pm Dinner @ 6pm Speaker to follow  
First Presbyterian Church 108 Washington St. Monroe.



**Monroe Happy Campers 2024 Campouts**  
The 4th weekend of June (Site 174), July & August  
Sterling State Park. Monroe MI.

**Sister Ignatia: The Catholic nun behind Alcoholics Anonymous. Patrick McNamara, PhD.**

One commentator said: "If the Catholic Church doesn't canonize her, the Protestants will make her a saint." In a 1951 article titled "A Catholic Looks at Alcoholics Anonymous," author Katherine Neuhaus Haffner wrote: What is Alcoholics Anonymous? AA is not, as is sometimes supposed, just another temperance movement, a new, fanatical reform crusade. It is a society, operating in groups, that is founded upon spiritual principles, and these principles closely parallel Catholic teaching. In its reliance on grace, moral inventory taking, its confessional aspect and its emphasis on outreach, Haffner argued, "A Catholic member of AA should be a better Catholic as the result of his affiliation with this society and vice versa."

Still, many are unaware of the role Catholics played in AA's early years, or that one of the key figures was a nun from Ohio named Sister Ignatia Gavin, S.C. (1889-1966). At St. Thomas Hospital in Akron, she helped Dr. Robert H. Smith, AA's co-founder, to dispel the notion that alcoholism was a moral defect, rather than a spiritual, mental and physical disease.

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**WWW.MONROEAA.ORG**



**AA HOTLINE 734-240-4844**

**4th Step** “ Made a Searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.”

**4th Tradition** “ Each group should be autonomous except in matters affecting other groups or A.A. as a whole..”

**4th Promise** “We will comprehend the word serenity and we will know peace.”

### **The 3 Stages of Alcoholism**

By SoberRecovery, Staff Writer Jan 16 2019

Alcoholism can be categorized into three stages: early stage, middle stage and end stage alcoholism or late stage alcoholism. These stages generally take years to develop. Alcoholism is a disease where alcoholic beverage consumption is at a level that interferes with physical or mental health, and negatively impacts social, family or occupational responsibilities.

Consuming no more than one or two drinks per day for healthy men and one drink per day for healthy non-pregnant women is generally considered acceptable alcohol consumption without health risks. However, as the amount or frequency of drinking increases, the earliest of the alcoholism stages can develop as a result.

#### **The Early Stage of Alcoholism**

In the early stage of alcoholism, a person begins to depend on alcohol to affect their mood. They drink for relief from problems, and they begin thinking more and more about alcohol. The person and others around them may not recognize that they are in the earliest of the stages of alcoholism. A gradual increase in tolerance happens, meaning, it takes increasing amounts of alcohol to achieve the desired mood-altering effects. Often, the person can consume large amounts of alcohol without appearing impaired.

At the early alcoholism stage, the body has adapted to increasing amounts of alcohol. In fact, how a person functions will likely be improved with drinking as blood alcohol levels rise. For example, they can think and talk normally or walk a straight line with no problem. However, with continued alcohol consumption over time, the body begins to lose its ability to cope with high alcohol levels. As early alcoholics progress to higher levels of alcohol, their thinking, talking or walking functions deteriorate as soon as they stop drinking and their blood alcohol level decreases. When this starts happening, they are now moving into the next of the stage of alcoholism.

#### **The Middle Stage of Alcoholism**

The need and desire to drink gradually becomes more intense. Drinking larger amounts and more often happens as well as drinking earlier in the day. The alcoholic is losing control over drinking, and the body is losing its ability to process alcohol like it did in the early stages of alcoholism. The alcoholic's tolerance decreases as he or she becomes intoxicated more easily. Withdrawal symptoms begin to become more severe if alcohol is reduced.

The person may now secretly recognize there is a drinking problem, and others may begin to notice as well. Unfortunately, the alcoholic no longer can judge how much alcohol his/her body can handle. Typically, the drinker denies to himself and others that alcohol is a problem so he won't have to deal with his inner turmoil. Hangovers, blackouts and stomach problems may now be physical symptoms that occur on a regular basis.

#### **The End Stage of Alcoholism**

As alcoholism progresses, the alcoholic becomes obsessed with drinking--sometimes to the exclusion of nearly everything else. Everyone can tell there's a major problem. During the late alcoholism stage, the mental and physical health of the alcoholic are seriously deteriorating. Many of the body's organs have been damaged, which lowers resistance to disease. Relationships at home or socially may have been severely damaged, and there can be mounting financial and legal problems due to the alcoholic's powerlessness over alcohol.

#### **Side Effects of Long-term Alcoholism**

Every alcoholic will suffer from malnutrition. Alcohol in large amounts interferes with the digestion process and the passage of nutrients from the intestines into the bloodstream. Liver function has been damaged, further limiting the conversion of nutrients into a usable form that the body can assimilate. The damaged cells are not receiving the needed nutrients, they cannot repair themselves and the damage continues. Nutritional deficiencies cause a host of related problems to become worse. For example, a vitamin B-1 deficiency common in alcoholics can result in loss of mental alertness and appetite, fatigue, confusion and emotional instability. And if the alcoholic continues drinking, alcohol will cause the death of the alcoholic in one way or another. From suicide, accidents and related injuries to direct damage to the body's organs and systems, death will likely be the final outcome of end stage alcoholism.

Are there warning signs of alcoholism? Yes! You can read related articles that help you understand the signs and symptoms that indicate when alcohol consumption is becoming or is already a problem. Remember, there are many resources availa-

Let's ask Bill W.

What is AA's relationship with the community?

Question & Answer # 37

Alcoholics Anonymous once stood in no-mans land between medicine and religion. Religionists thought we were unorthodox: medicine thought we were totally unscientific. The last decade brought a great change in this respect. Clerics of every denomination declare that, while A.A. contains no shred of dogma, it has an impeccable spiritual basis, quite acceptable to men of all creeds, even the agnostic himself. You gentlemen of medicine also observe that AA is psychiatrically sound so far as it goes and that A.A. refers all bodily ills of its membership to your profession. Therefore, it is now clear that Alcoholics Anonymous is a synthetic construct which draws upon three sources, namely, medical science, religion and its own particular experience. Withdraw one of these supports and its platform of stability falls to earth as a farmer's three-legged milk stool with one leg chopped off. That you have invited me, an A.A. member, to sit in your councils today is a happy token of that fact, for which our society is deeply grateful.

What, then, has Alcoholics Anonymous contributed as third partner of the recovery synthesis which promises so much to sufferers everywhere? Does Alcoholics Anonymous contain any new principles? Strictly speaking it does not. A.A. merely relates the alcoholic to the tested truths in a brand new way. He is now able to accept them where he couldn't before. Now he has a concrete program of action and the understanding support of a successful society of his fellows in which he carries that out. In all probability, these are the long-missing links in the recovery chain. (N.Y. State J. Med., Vol. 50, July 1950)



**“The essence of all growth is a willingness to make a change for the better and then an unremitting willingness to shoulder whatever responsibility this entails.”**

Bridget Della Mary Gavin was one of three children born to a farmer in County Mayo, Ireland. Even as a child, she had what her biographer calls a “raw compassion” for alcoholism: Whenever I would see anyone under the influence of alcoholism, it actually made my heart sick. I would try to offer everlasting reparation to the Sacred Heart of Our Lord to make up for the offense against His Divine Majesty.

In 1896, the Gavins emigrated to Cleveland, Ohio. In an industrial city with a large working-class population, alcoholism was a big problem. Parish priests started abstinence societies and young men took a “pledge” not to drink. Bridget graduated from Catholic schools, studied music, and taught music. Although she considered becoming a nun, her mother was opposed to it. She dated and was even briefly engaged, but the call to religious life prevailed. In 1914, she joined the Sisters of Charity of St. Augustine, a community that ran schools and hospitals statewide. At 25, she was considered a “late vocation,” and given the name Ignatia. (Taking a new name signifies that a deep change has occurred in the person entering religious life.)

For many years, Sister Ignatia taught music in Cleveland schools until she suffered a physical breakdown. When she recovered, she transferred to hospital ministry. As her community opened St. Thomas Hospital in Akron in 1928, she was appointed the admitting officer. There she got to know Dr. Robert Holbrook Smith, who, after a bout with alcoholism, had been removed from the rosters of Akron’s more prestigious hospitals.

Beginning in 1934, Sister Ignatia began privately ministering to alcoholics with the help of a young intern, Dr. Thomas Scuderi. She tried to treat alcoholics from both a medical and pastoral standpoint, then an unchartered field. Scuderi recalled: “She was a great influence on my life as a physician. She taught me about loving people.” However, other doctors (and nuns, too) were less than supportive. Sister Ignatia later wrote: “I recalled very distinctly coming to the chapel for prayer shortly after five one morning, only to be met by the night supervisor who told me in unmistakable terms that the next time I admitted a D.T. [Delirium Tremens] to the hospital, I had better stay up all night and run around the corridors after him. “At a time when chronic alcoholics were routinely sent to mental asylums, Sister Ignatia realized that they needed a healing beyond what medicine could provide. At the same time, she noted, hospitals had “little enthusiasm about admitting people who were imbibing too freely.”

On August 16, 1939, Dr. Smith persuaded her to officially admit an alcoholic patient to St. Thomas. Back in 1935, Smith and Bill Wilson, a New York stockbroker, had founded Alcoholics Anonymous as a program of moral and spiritual regeneration. Working with them, Ignatia began the first hospital treatment center for alcoholics, which one historian calls “a model for many chemical treatment programs in the United States.”

Although slight and frail in appearance, her biographer Mary Darrah notes, “A knowing intensity of expression all at once overcame her otherwise fragile features.” Darrah further adds: “Put briefly, AA’s angel was a strong, empathetic woman who extracted goodness from every situation and resolved to leave the world a little better than she found it. Ignatia had all the charisma of an Irish anamchara, or soul friend, so she easily folded the troubled into her heart.

One patient recalled: “She saved my life. I found God and sobriety through her. She loved me when there was nothing about me to love. She was AA’s angel.” But hers was a “tough love” that required total abstinence from alcohol and drugs, acknowledgement of one’s dependence on a higher power, commitment to the AA program, and outreach to those still suffering.

Ignatia had a great devotion to the spiritual teachings of St. Ignatius Loyola, founder of the Jesuits, particularly his notion of “love through action.” She found a strong parallel between the saint’s writings and AA’s Twelve Steps. She routinely carried around with her a compendium of Ignatius’s thoughts, along with the 14th-century classic *The Imitation of Christ*. She gave copies of both to patients in the program’s early days. But her spirituality was also ecumenical. To a Protestant patient, she said: “The importance of our religion lies in our making it heavenly to those around us. In its essentials Catholicism is not as far apart as you suppose, from the beliefs of our separated brethren ... love can surmount every obstacle.”

In 1952, Ignatia opened Rosary Hill Solarium in Cleveland, where she worked for 14 years. During her lifetime, an estimated 15,000 alcoholics came under her care. As a result of her ministry, one author notes, “the alcoholics’ world changed.” At the time of her death in 1966, one commentator said: “If the Catholic Church doesn’t canonize her, the Protestants will make her a saint.” The Sisters poured more than 6,000 cups of coffee at her wake.

### **3 Things More Rewarding Than Drinking.**

By Caitlin Thiede Updated on Sep 23 2019

For a long time, we’ve been fed the idea that drinking is a reward for many things. Having a hard day? Pop a cold one open and relax. Got a hot date? Order some wine for an impressive meal. Facing some big nerves before a big performance or social function? A little pre-game never hurt anyone. The problem is we aren’t ever really satisfied after drinking, are we? That’s probably because alcohol is a depressant—not quite the reward we’re going for on long work days, romantic outings, or nerve-rattling events, is it?

When I used to think about pleasure, I used to think it meant having whatever I desired. Even more accurately, I thought to have pleasure meant to have what my palette desired. The trouble is that after we “reward” our bodies with what we think it wants, we are left dissatisfied and the trickery of pleasure deceives us again. That’s why it’s so important to learn what we truly need when our bodies tell us it wants a drink.

Here are three things more rewarding than a drink, no matter what you think your body is saying:

**1. Being Outdoors:** Being in nature literally heals our bodies. Whether it’s listening to the rain, watching trees blow in the wind or walking barefoot, we are made to be in contact with Earth and all its beauty. The next time you’re craving pleasure from a drink, pause and find beauty in outdoor scenes around you, or even in pictures. Notice how your body feels—is it calm, peaceful, still? Unlike alcohol, nature actually grounds us and satisfies our body’s craving to be connected to the world around us.

**2. Bonding with a Furry Friend:** Sometimes we want a drink because we are lonely. Even around our fellow humans, we can often feel like we don’t belong. That’s why I highly recommend connecting with animals. Domesticated pets make great companions and can bring great relief to an alcohol craving. If you don’t have your own pet, volunteer at a shelter or pick up hours as a pet sitter.

**3. Getting Creative :** Want to know something really crazy? Colors and sounds emit energy. I didn’t believe it at first, either. Then, I began to take notice of how I felt when looking at certain paintings or photos and listening to certain types of music. Art and music communicate with our minds and bodies in ways we may not understand. But next time you want some source of pleasure, find a color to focus on—be it on a painting, a plant, a sunset, the sky. Pay attention to your body and how it responds to colors, imagery, and music, then create your own masterpieces.

## Ewan McGregor. Sober since 2000

While he's famous now for wielding a lightsaber as Obi-Wan Kenobi in Star Wars, the force wasn't always with Ewan McGregor. He's known to have played addicts in movies such as Trainspotting and, most recently, the Netflix special Halston, but some people don't realize he battled his own addiction with alcohol for several years. Recently McGregor sat down for a candid interview and discussed his 21 years of sobriety.

When he took on the role of a heroin addict in the 1996 film Trainspotting, he never imagined he'd have his own battle with addiction. While he didn't turn to hard drugs, he did turn to the antidepressant alcohol. According to McGregor, he started out as a happy drunk, but that quickly turned to misery and self-shame for the A-list actor.

McGregor, who has four children with his wife Eva Maurakis, was shocked that none of his coworkers confronted him about his growing problem. Looking back, he recalled showing up to sets reeking of alcohol and thus limiting his performance due to his addiction. According to McGregor, "When you work drunk, you find one way to play a scene, and that's it."

The Scottish star's alcoholism would follow him for several years until one day, he decided it was time to stop drinking. He explained that he feared losing everything he worked so hard to achieve if he continued down that dark path. McGregor knew he was lucky to make it as far as he had and somehow realized that he could lose everything from his family to his career if he didn't give up drinking.

Though he carries a certain amount of guilt that he allowed alcohol to consume his life for several years, he's gained a new outlook after over two decades of sobriety. For McGregor, seeing characters as addicts allows him to see through a "different lens of understanding," so it did help him gain perspective for playing such roles. An everyday part of his life is staying sober, so he can relate to these characters and understand why they turn to different addictions.

In fact, it's his past addiction that recently helped him take on the role of famous fashion designer Roy Halston in the Netflix special Halston. The designer was famous for frequenting Studio 54 every night and doing line after line of cocaine, all while his business was in serious trouble. Yet, Halston, in his mind, didn't have a problem and could stop the drugs whenever he wanted. However, Ewan knows that this isn't the case for all addicts.

With over 21 years of sobriety under his belt, McGregor has finally reached a point in his life where he feels good about his fame. He goes to work and does his best while never getting the urge to call in sick or dodge his responsibilities. He credits his sobriety with providing him joy, happiness, and peace in his life. There's no longer the need to lie when journalists ask him questions, and he literally feels like the force is with him each day!



## Jimi Hendrix (Johnny Allen Hendrix ) Born 11-27-42 Died 9- 18-70 (aged 27)

Hendrix entered a small club in Clarksville, Tennessee, in July 1962, drawn in by live music. He stopped for a drink and ended up spending most of the \$400 (equivalent to \$3,870 in 2022) that he had saved during his time in the Army. "I went in this jazz joint and had a drink," he explained. "I liked it and I stayed. People tell me I get foolish, good-natured sometimes. Anyway, I guess I felt real benevolent that day. I must have been handing out bills to anyone that asked me. I came out of that place with sixteen dollars left. Alcohol eventually became "the scourge of his existence, driving him to fits of pique, even rare bursts of atypical, physical violence".

When Hendrix drank to excess or mixed drugs with alcohol, often he became angry and violent. His friend Herbie Worthington said Hendrix "simply turned into a bastard" when he drank. According to friend Sharon Lawrence, liquor "set off a bottled-up anger, a destructive fury he almost never displayed otherwise".

In January 1968, the Experience travelled to Sweden to start a one-week tour of Europe. During the early morning hours of the first day, Hendrix got into a drunken brawl in the Hotel Opalen in Gothenburg, smashing a plate-glass window and injuring his right hand, for which he received medical treatment. The incident culminated in his arrest and release, pending a court appearance that resulted in a large fine.

In 1969, Hendrix rented a house in Benedict Canyon, California, that was burglarized. Later, while under the influence of drugs and alcohol, he accused his friend Paul Caruso of the theft, threw punches and stones at him, and chased him away from his house. A few days later Hendrix hit his girlfriend, Carmen Borrero, above her eye with a vodka bottle during a drunken, jealous rage, and gave her a cut that required stitches.

Details concerning Hendrix's last day and death are disputed. He spent much of September 17, 1970, in London with Monika Dannemann, the only witness to his final hours. Dannemann said that she prepared a meal for them at her apartment in the Samarkand Hotel around 11 p.m., when they shared a bottle of wine. She drove him to the residence of an acquaintance at approximately 1:45 a.m., where he remained for about an hour before she picked him up and drove them back to her flat at 3 a.m. She said that they talked until around 7 a.m., when they went to sleep. Dannemann awoke around 11 a.m. and found Hendrix breathing but unconscious and unresponsive. She called for an ambulance at 11:18 a.m., and it arrived nine minutes later. Paramedics transported Hendrix to St Mary Abbots Hospital where doctor John Bannister pronounced him dead at 12:45 p.m. on September 18.

Coroner Gavin Thurston completed the inquest on September 28 and concluded that Hendrix aspirated his own vomit and died of asphyxia while intoxicated with barbiturates. Family and friends traveled in 24 limousines, and more than 200 people attended the funeral, including Mitch Mitchell, Noel Redding, Miles Davis, John Hammond, and Johnny Winter.



lost relationships  
 self loathing  
 repetition  
 poor health  
 obsession  
 jitters  
 selfish  
 regret  
 confrontation  
 intervention  
 resistance  
 no sobriety  
 dependence  
 allergy  
 denial  
 waste  
 burning desire  
 controlling  
 counseling  
 treatment  
 addiction  
 relapse  
 rehab  
 malady  
 fear

## Alcohol Brings

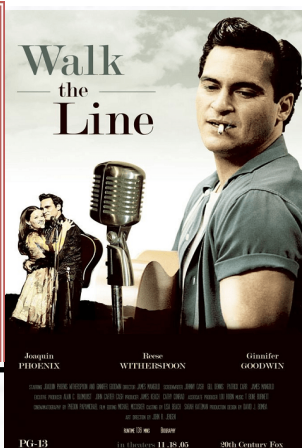
Puzzle by Leann A.

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 G Y Z G F C S Z D F H P Y F X A D O W H B E S E N U S B B T  
 Z C O N T R O L L I N G C F T D E X B E J T K L W O D Z Z X



Basically I got an insight into what it really was through Alcoholics Anonymous. One day the switchboard lit up and I saw where it was all going. I saw what alcohol could do to people and I saw that it wasn't a good thing anymore. Plus I wasn't a teenager anymore myself.

— Van Morrison —



### Walk the Line (2005)

**Walk the Line is a Johnny Cash biopic that stars Joaquin Phoenix as Cash and Reese Witherspoon as June Carter, Cash's wife.**

**Much of the film focuses on the destruction that Johnny's addiction to alcohol causes, not just in his life, but also in the life of those around him.**

**It also portrays how fame caused the singer's addiction issues to become even worse.**

### A.A. Timeline

1950 The NY office moved to 141 East 44th St. NY, NY.

Mar 29, a second Saturday Evening Post article was written by Jack Alexander titled The Drunkard's Best Friend .

July, AA's 15th anniversary and first International Convention at Cleveland, OH. Est. 3,000 attendees. Registration was \$1.50 per person (\$11 today). The published program (likely through the influence of Clarence S) called it "The First International Conference of Alcoholics Anonymous" and described Cleveland, OH as "the birthplace of our movement." The attendees adopted the Twelve Traditions unanimously by standing vote.



NO CAMERAS  
OR MOBILE PHONE  
CAMERAS

### Everything AA



A great All in One  
A.A. app for your phone.



Lois Wilson on Step 4.

Step 4. Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.

Here is where, when I tried to be really honest, I received a tremendous shock. Many of the things that I thought I did unselfishly were, when I tracked them down, pure rationalizations - rationalizations to get my own way about something. This disclosure doubled my need to live by the 12 Steps as completely as I could.

## Liver Disease Rising Among Young Adults who Abuse Alcohol

Think that alcohol-related liver disease only plagues older adults who have been drinking heavily for decades? Think again. Emerging research now shows a dramatic increase in fatalities caused by liver cirrhosis among young adults between the ages of 25-34. This research poses an alarming trend for both young adults and their loved ones. Why is alcohol-related liver disease on the rise? What can be done about it? And, at what point is the damage irreversible?

Between 1999 and 2016, the number of young deaths related to alcohol-related liver disease nearly tripled. This rise in deaths corresponds to the rising rates of binge drinking occurring throughout the United States.

To date, 1 in 6 adults reports drinking about four times a month. The average consumption during these binge periods is seven drinks.

Interestingly, one liver specialist, Dr. Neehar Parikh, found that binge drinking started spiking around 2009, a year associated with a ravaging recession plaguing the country. Parikh hypothesized that the loss of opportunity and emotional burden associated with it might have surged problematic drinking.

Today, many liver specialists report seeing more young adults on their caseloads than ever before. They associate it with the widespread socialization of binge drinking and other, prevalent risk factors like obesity- which can exacerbate liver problems. Fortunately, for young adults, most liver disease problems are reversible. The liver tends to be very resilient, and it can develop new cells.

Drinking large amounts of alcohol- even just over a few days- can lead to fat buildup in the liver. However, if you stop drinking for two weeks, the liver typically returns to normal functioning.

Cirrhosis occurs when the liver has severe scarring. While it is not inherently reversible, when someone stops drinking, it can pause and even prevent further damage. However, if the person does not stop drinking, they face serious complications including death. For most young adults, the most straightforward answer is to stop drinking. Since this is easier said than done, seeking professional treatment may be the best answer for recovery.

In treatment, individuals receive support, monitoring, and stabilization throughout the initial stages of recovery. They also learn the necessary life skills and relapse prevention techniques to manage triggers and cravings in the future.

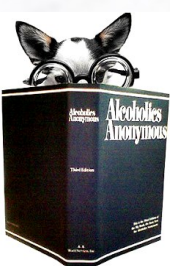
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**AA HOTLINE 734-240-4844**

**Thursday Night Open at Grace**



- 4-4 Sherri O.**
- 4-11 Lorenzo L. Jr**
- 4-18 Erin S.**
- 4-25 Holly S.**

Speaker Subject to Change. See Dave O.  
 About speaking on a Thursday Night.



Readings, Meditations, Sayings, Etc.  
 Some of these are spiritual in nature, some are historical and other's are just plain funny. Enjoy!



"What happened, Phil; you used to be such a functioning alcoholic."

**The Monroe Area Intergroup** currently meets on the second Thursday of each month at 6:00 pm at the United Way Building, 216 Monroe Street, Monroe, MI. **Upcoming Meetings April 11, May**

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