MONROE AREA AA

EMBRACING SOBRIETY

FREE TAKE ONE, PASS IT ON

VOLUME 13 ISSUE 11 NOVEMBER 2026

COMING SOON

Living sober in Ida 14th Anniversary Dinner

Sat. Nov. 14th, 5pm/ Dinner 6/ Speaker 7:02

Prince of Peace 1920 Lewis Ave. Ida Mi.

Thursday Nite 80th Anniversary

Thursday December 10th

Doors 630pm /Pizza 7pm / Speaker 8pm

Grace Lutheran Church 630 Monroe St.



Monroe Area Intergroup

Annual Holiday Party

Saturday December 19 2026

Doors 5pm / Dinner 6pm /Speaker 7pm

Grace Lutheran Church 630 N. Monroe St.

Raffles/ Santa/ Desserts Welcome

On a Thankful Heart: Bill W. wrote in *As Bill Sees It* that a thankful heart leaves no room for conceit and generates outgoing love.

11th Step " Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God *as we understand Him*, praying only for knowledge of His will for us, and the power to carry that out.

11th Tradition " Our public relations policy is based on attraction rather than promotion; we need always maintain personal anonymity at the level of press, radio and films."

11th Promise "We will intuitively know how to handle situations which used to baffle us.

Meeting Starters What's Needed for Staying Sober

MODERATOR: Every now and then, somebody warns us that we need to get back to basics. The basic issue for an a alcoholic is learning what's needed to stay sober. We should always talk about that when there's a new member at the meeting. It's also good to remind ourselves frequently of this basic question: What do I know or do to stay sober?

Most AA members will say immediately that we need to accept the first step and continue to believe it– that we are powerless over alcohol. It is very dangerous to enterain the idea that someday we might be able to drink safely. This just isn't in the cards for an alcoholic, but there is a danger that this idea might be lurking somewhere in our thinking. If it's there, it ought to be rooted out at all costs.

We also believe in taking certain actions, such as attending meetings, taking personal inventory, and staying out of "wet places" where alcohol or the pressure to drink might be present. It's true that some of us can hardly avoid such places due to our work. But if we spend some time in wet places, we must at least see to it that our thinking isn't wet. The Big Book does tell us that we can be in such places if we are on sound spiritual grounds.

We should be relieved to know that we don't need complicated psychological knowledge or other information in order to stay sober. The Big Book sums it up neatly: (a) That we were alcoholic and could not manage our lives; (b) That probably no human power could have relieved our alcoholism; (c) That God could and would if He were sought.

We can start the discussion by asking a volunteer to comment on how he or she came to a basic understanding of what's needed to stay sober.

12 Tips to Staying Clean and Sober during the Holidays

For those that have been in recovery from substance use disorder for a while, some of the greatest joy and inner freedom has come to you from staying clean and sober. It's important to protect yourself from relapse during this holiday season where the alcohol, excitement, and emotions flow more readily than usual.

If you are newly clean and sober, we want to extend you some hope. Feel confident that the best years of your life lie ahead of you. The 12-step program of Alcoholics Anonymous offers many promises. Life will take on a new meaning, and you will know happiness like you have never known before.

To help support your sobriety over the next few months, we feel it's important to share with you our "12 Tips to Staying Clean and Sober during the Holidays".

1 Plan Ahead. Always take your own vehicle to holiday parties so YOU can control your destiny. Also, take a sober companion with you for support and pay close attention to relapse triggers: H.A.L.T: Hungry. Angry. Lonely. Tired. Arrive early and leave early.

2 **Make Self Care a Priority.** Celebrate the holiday season by taking care of your body, mind, and soul. We cannot be our very best if we are depleted. Give yourself the gift of time for yourself: time for meditation, and prayer. Proper nutrition and plenty of healthy physical movement will make you feel stronger, both physically and emotionally. **Cont. on page 3**

12 Tips to Staying Clean and Sober during the Holidays

cont. from page 2

3 Increase Support. We can get overwhelmed with the erratic nature of the season, so as you plan each day in November and December, start with 12-step support as your first priority. This could mean bookending a holiday event with phone calls to someone in recovery before and after the event. Commit to attend a 12-step meeting (or two) each day and inviting a friend to attend with you. Also, if you're traveling to another city, plan ahead and make sure you attend meetings there as well, or pick up a phone meeting.

4 **Be mindful of time spent around your relatives – know your limits.** We all have our own version of crazy Aunt Mildred who is going to criticize your career choice and make you feel "less than" or Uncle Harry who will insist on you having his famous holiday drink. And even worse, we most likely have strained family relationships that have been simmering for years. This type of stress can lead us to rationalize and convince ourselves we are entitled to a drink. Instead, surround yourself with supportive loved ones that will help you follow the steps to staying clean and sober.

5 Have your props ready. When you arrive at a party, immediately get a non-alcoholic beverage and keep it in your hand. Whether it's Tea, water or soda, others won't be inclined to push drinks on you constantly. And, the truth of the matter is, people never really notice or pay attention to what's in your glass.

6 Celebrate relationships. As you consider holiday occasions, think about them as a way to make new friendships and perhaps rekindle old relationships with friends. Instead of making the event about drinking and eating as a priority, intentionally make it about "people" and building relationships; go into each party looking forward to establishing real connections.

7 Eat well. The holidays don't give us a green light to overindulge. There's nothing worse that stuffing ourselves with too much sugar, carbs, and fat-laden foods that make us feel bad. So be proactive and choose healthy foods that will make you want to celebrate, not feel guilty.

8 Service, not self. When we can focus on others, we find more joy and gratitude. So look for ways to think about and serve others. Make a special family recipe and deliver to friends. Donate your time at a homeless shelter, food pantry, or soup kitchen. Spend time with a neighbor who is confined. These spiritual opportunities allow us to spread happiness and cheer to others. Treat it as one of the benefits of staying clean and sober; being able to have a clear mind and body to help others.

9 Create new traditions. Celebrate the fact you are reestablishing your own life. As you affirm your new self on these festive days, you are choosing to celebrate the new, better, clean and sober life that you have created. This might mean hosting a sober, festive gathering with friends in recovery. It may mean volunteering to serve at local 12-Step support groups. Remember, giving is one of the best things you can do during the holidays.

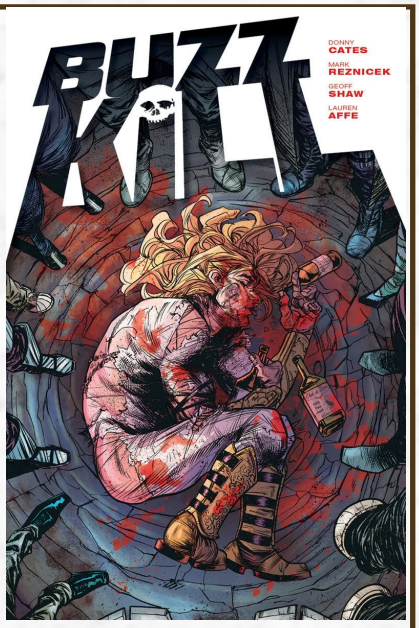
10 Avoid relapse triggers. Of all triggers, the most significant can be emotional triggers. No matter if you are in recovery or not, the holiday season is one of the most stressful times of the year. With so many activities squeezed into one month, our normal routines get disrupted and people get frustrated and anxious. Also, there's increased demands from your spouse, partner or other family members, and this can put serious stress on your sobriety. This can lead to feelings of shame, guilt, humiliation, embarrassment, anger and depression. The holidays don't have to be "perfect" and just like previous years. Saying yes when you should say no can leave you feeling resentful and overwhelmed. Saying "no" is perfectly acceptable and it will protect you.

11 Make sobriety your top priority. If you think about it, all holiday parties are optional. If you don't think the activity is going to be good for your recovery, it's okay not to go. You can politely decline the party invite, but make a lunch date with the host for another day.

12 Maintain your spirituality. Our commercial world wants us to believe that joy can come from tinsel, booze, and shopping. It sells us the lie that happiness can be found in these. Instead, focus on the true spirit of the season. Regardless of your faith or spiritual beliefs, the holidays are really about two things: giving and gratitude. When we focus on these, the other things such as resentment, disappointment, anger, worry, self-loathing show up far less often and cannot find a foothold in our hearts.

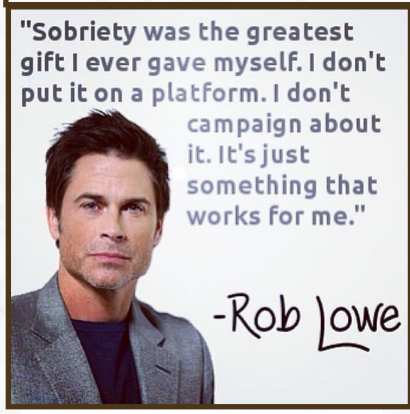
Staying clean and sober is possible during the holiday season. It can be quite fun if we direct our attention towards people and activities that can help strengthen us on our road to recovery. Go, have fun, and enjoy your sobriety with those that matter: your loved ones.





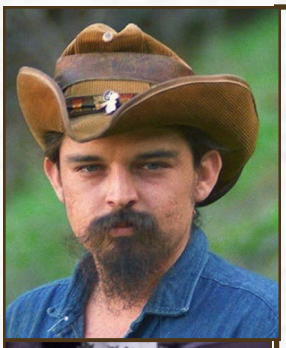
BUZZKILL follows Ruben, an unconventional superhero who gets his powers through the consumption of alcohol and illicit drugs. On one fateful day, facing a world-ending threat, Reuben drank so much that he blacked out. He saved the world...but he has no idea how or why. Now, he's in recovery, trying to get sober and piece together not only the events of the night in question, but the broken parts of his life as an alcoholic and an addict.

For Rob Lowe, the drug- and alcohol-fueled party came to an end on May 10, 1990.



Rob Lowe received the Spirit of Sobriety award in 2015 to celebrate 25 clean years.

"Being in recovery has given me everything of value that I have in my life," Lowe said when accepting the award. "Integrity, honesty, fearlessness, faith, a relationship with God, and most of all gratitude. It's given me a beautiful family and an amazing career. I'm under no illusions where I would be without the gift of alcoholism and the chance to recover from it."





Ronald Charles McKernan (September 8, 1945 – March 8, 1973), known as Pigpen, was an American musician. He was a founding member of the San Francisco band the Grateful Dead and played in the group from 1965 to 1972.

McKernan was close friends with American singer-songwriter Janis Joplin due to common musical influences and lifestyles, particularly a shared love of alcohol over other drugs. While his bandmates and friends were using cannabis, LSD, and other hallucinogenic drugs, McKernan preferred alcoholic beverages such as Thunderbird and Southern Comfort. McKernan's alcohol abuse had begun to affect his health by his mid twenties.[16] By the early 1970s, he also began to experience symptoms of congenital primary biliary cholangitis, a rare autoimmune disease which was unrelated to his use of alcohol. After he was hospitalized in August 1971, doctors requested that he stop touring indefinitely.

McKernan rejoined the band in December 1971. Manager Rock Scully alleged that McKernan passed out in front of his Hammond organ at one show during this period, However, his health soon deteriorated again to the point where he could no longer continue to perform. He made his final concert appearance on June 17, 1972, at the Hollywood Bowl in Los Angeles. He subsequently broke off all personal relationships with the band, explaining "I don't want you around when I die." On March 8, 1973, aged 27, he was found dead of a gastrointestinal hemorrhage at his home

11th Step " Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God *as we understand Him,* praying only for knowledge of His will for us, and the power to carry that out.

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

1. Alignment **2.** Awakening **3.** Calmness **4.** Clarity **5.** Communion **6.** Connection

7. Consciousness **8.** Daily **9.** Devotion **10.** Direction **11.** Faith **12.** Guidance

13. Harmony **14.** Power **15.** Insight **16.** Inventory **17.** Listening **18.** Meditation

19. Mindfulness **20.** Prayer **21.** Presence **22.** Quiet **23.** Receptive **24.** Restoration

25. Serenity **26.** Silence **27.** Stillness **28.** Surrender **29.** Understanding

30. Willingness

Puzzle by Leann

Lois Wilson on Step 11. Step 11. Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God as we understood Him, praying only for knowledge of His will for us and the power to carry that out.

I am just beginning to understand how to pray. Bargaining with God is not real prayer and asking him for what I want, even good things, I've had to learn is not the highest form of prayer. I used to think I knew what was good for me and I, the captain, would give my instructions to my Lieutenant, God, to carry out. That is very different from praying only for the knowledge of God's will and the power for me to carry it out.

Time for meditation is hard to find, I imagine, for most of us. Today's living is so involved. But I've set aside a few minutes night and morning. I am filled with gratitude to God these days. It is one of my principal subjects for meditation; gratitude for all the love and beauty and friends around me; gratitude even for the hard days of long ago that taught me so much. At least I've made a start and have improved to some small degree my conscious contact with God.





A.A. Timeline 1980

1980

Apr 20-26, Hotel Roosevelt in NYC. Theme: Participation: The Key to Recovery. The 30th GSC recommended that:

The unedited manuscript of Dr Bob and the Good Oldtimers be accepted.

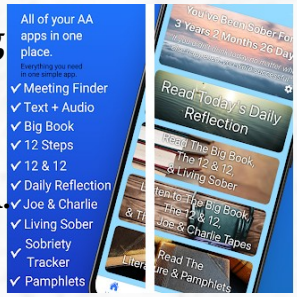
That the Archives film Strip "Markings on the Journey "be GSC-approved.

Jul, AA's 45th Anniversary and 7th Int'l Convention at New Orleans, LA. Est. attendance 22,500.

Keynote The Joy of Living. First showing of the film "Markings on the Journey"

First Archives Workshop.

Everything



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

www.monroeaa.org





Millions of Americans live in long-term recovery from addiction, yet social stigma and anonymity keep their voices hidden. Advocates—leaders, volunteers, executives, and celebrities—are laying it all on the line to save others like them. This passionate new public recovery movement is changing the conversation to help transform public opinion and shift policy toward lasting recovery solutions.

www.monroeaa.org



Ride into Thanksgiving Sober and Fabulous



The Monroe Area Intergroup currently meets on the second Thursday of each month at 6:00 pm at the United Way Building, 216 Mon-

PUBLISHED BY JEFF A. THE NEON CAT
3175 COMBONI WAY MONROE, MI. 48162
734-636-6545