



# ALKI-LINE



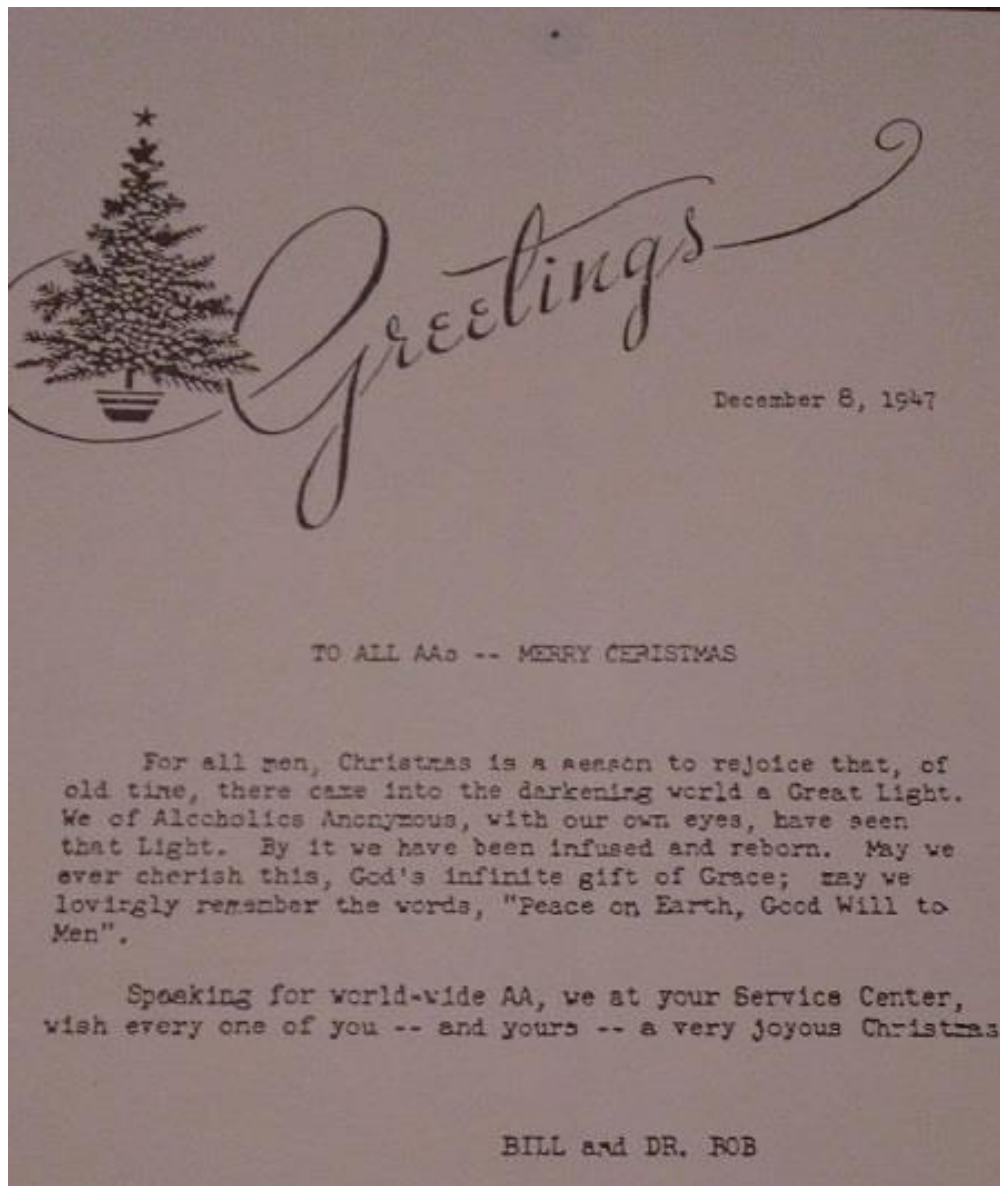
TAKE ONE, IT'S FREE

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The Area 11 A.A. Newsletter Vol. 27 No. 6 Dec. 2018 – Jan. 2019

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## A Season's Greeting Letter from Bill W. and Dr. Bob



## A Meditation on Grace

There came a time when I found myself washing the floor of a chapel on my hands and knees. It was thirteen years ago, although it often feels like it was just yesterday. I had been going through a long period of great darkness. In the desperation of my active alcoholism, I had committed myself to a rehab, where one of my duties was to wash the floor of the small chapel on the premises each morning. Every day for 21 days I would get up early and go to work as if my life depended upon it, because it did.

One particular morning I got up early and went to the chapel as usual. It was late winter in New England: bitter cold, damp, and dark. It was that time of day and year before the light has come. I gathered my bucket and scrub brush, filled the bucket with soap and water, and then went to work on my hands and knees. It was utterly silent in the chapel. The only sound was the scrub brush moving rhythmically back and forth across the floor where I was kneeling. All of a sudden, I heard myself singing—the song came through me as if it were breaking free. I sat back on my heels weeping, tears streaming from my face. Even though I knew I was alone in the chapel, I no longer felt alone — I felt as if I were being held.

I hadn't realized in my darkness that I had lost my voice. By doing the steady work of commitment, I had found the extraordinary in the ordinary. I found my voice in the simple action of washing the chapel floor and my sense of connection to Spirit in my song. By showing up for the daily commitment, I had created a container, and had opened myself up to grace.

Now I get up most mornings and do my spiritual practice, because I know that sobriety and the quality of my life depends upon my commitment to the practice. By doing so, I've found the simple joys in the most ordinary expressions of the day. Spiritual practice — meditation, prayer, service to and for others, and endless other ways of connection — gives us the sacred pause, the opportunity to breathe and be, to remember we don't know everything. We are part of something so much bigger, and we can see that life is not a problem to be solved or fixed, but rather, a joy to be lived.

—Laura Y.

## Una Meditación Sobre la Gracia

Llegó un momento en que me encontré lavando el piso de una capilla agachada sobre mis manos y rodillas. Hace ya trece años atrás, aunque seguido se siente como si acaba de ser ayer. Yo había estado pasando por un largo periodo de gran oscuridad. En la desesperación de mi alcoholismo acti-

vo, yo me había comprometido a un centro de rehabilitación, en donde uno de mis deberes era lavar el piso de una capilla pequeña de ese local cada mañana. Todos los días por 21 días yo me levantaba temprano y mi iba a trabajar como si mi vida dependiera de ello, porque así era.

Una mañana en particular yo me levanté temprano y me fui a la capilla como siempre. Era finales de invierno en Nueva Inglaterra: con un frío intenso, húmedo y oscuro. Era en esa hora del día en la época del año antes de que saliera la luz. Yo reuní mi balde y el cepillo de cerdas, llené el balde con agua y jabón, y luego me puse a trabajar arrodillada. Estaba totalmente silencioso en la capilla. El único sonido era el cepillo moviéndose rítmicamente de lado a lado a través del piso en donde yo estaba hincada. De repente, me escuché a mí misma cantando — la canción me atravesó como si estuviera liberándose. Me senté sobre mis talones llorando, derramando lágrimas de mi rostro. Aunque yo sabía que estaba sola en la capilla, ya no me sentía sola — me sentí como si me estuvieran sosteniendo.

No me había dado cuenta en mi oscuridad que había perdido mi voz. Haciendo el trabajo continuo del compromiso, había encontrado lo extraordinario en lo ordinario. Encontré mi voz en la simple acción de lavar el piso de la capilla y mi sentido de conexión con el Espíritu en mi canción. Presentándome para cumplir con el compromiso diario, había creado un recipiente, y me había abierto a mí misma para recibir la gracia.

Ahora yo me levanto la mayoría de las mañanas y hago mi práctica espiritual, porque yo sé que la sobriedad y la calidad de mi vida dependen de mi compromiso con la práctica. Haciéndolo, he encontrado las alegrías sencillas en la mayoría de las expresiones ordinarias del día. La práctica espiritual -- la meditación, la oración, el servicio hacia y para otros, y otras formas infinitas de conexión -- nos da la pausa sagrada, la oportunidad de respirar y solo ser, recordar que no lo sabemos todo. Somos una parte de algo tanto más grande, y podemos ver que la vida no es un problema que hay que resolver o arreglar, más bien, es una alegría que hay que vivir.

—Laura Y.

## Rompiendo Fronteras/Breaking Frontiers 2018 Celebration

Thank you to everyone who attended our 17<sup>th</sup> annual Rompiendo Fronteras/Breaking Frontiers celebration! We had a record breaking turnout this year: 36 Al-Anon & Alateen and 120 AAs=156 years of sobriety: 1040 years and 2 months. We had visitors from RI, MA, NJ, Montana and



New Mexico. This was our second year at our new location: Hamden Plains Methodist Church in Hamden. We had so much more room this year to spread out and have workshops in different rooms. The speakers, as always were great. The food was “muy bueno”. Our wrap up meeting was held on August 18<sup>th</sup>, where Felix T. was voted in as Chairperson 2019.

## Rompiendo Fronteras/Breaking Frontiers Celebración De 2018

¡Gracias a todos los que asistieron a nuestra 17<sup>a</sup> celebración anual de Rompiendo Fronteras/Breaking Frontiers! ¡Este año tuvimos una asistencia que batió records: 36 de Al-Anon & Alateen y 120 AA = **156!** Años de sobriedad: 1040 años y 2 meses. ¡Tuvimos visitantes de RI, MA, NJ, Montana y Nuevo México! Este fue nuestro segundo año en nuestro nuevo local: Hamden Plains Methodist Church en Hamden. Tuvimos mucho más espacio este año para esparcirnos y tener los talleres en cuartos diferentes. Los oradores, como siempre, fueron estupendos. La comida estuvo muy buena. Nuestra reunión de cierre del evento se llevó a cabo el 18 de agosto en donde Felix T. fue nominado como Coordinador para el 2019.

—Rompiendo Fronteras Committee

## Mentirosa-ry Beads

**M**an’s monument desperate for the fame of touching the sky.  
**E**scalating in shadow to peel back the hide.  
**S**hoves your head under at each  
shallow birth and greeted depth of the tide.  
**A**ims at beauty like prey fitting to deride.  
**G**rabs away joy with lips that are snide.  
**E**ngulfs faith in a single  
impulsive bite like the prince of the pride.  
**N**ose knows neither truth nor truly tried.  
**A**ngrily leers from the darkness,  
**b**elligerent as a defective spy.  
**O**scillates in the breast like the  
Tick-tocking tarrier’s crocodile terror.  
**T**ally not, weary tortoise, in rabbit’s foot grip.  
**L**anguage of the heart tongue-tied.  
**E**nemy evades light whence details are pried.

—*Slice of Pi*

## Full Circle

As an older alcoholic, I can easily reflect on my disease’s progression from my early youth to the present day.

I was born to a 54-year-old alcoholic mother; I was not a planned child! My closest sibling is eight years older than I. My dad died when I was four and a half years old, leaving my mother in charge of a family of six children. This was a task for which she was totally unqualified.

Ours was a dysfunctional alcoholic household. At the time, I actually thought the drinking, rages and abuse were normal! Mom eventually got a good job as a NYC school cafeteria lady. She was fine during the school year. Summers, when she was not working at school, were a different story. Her drinking and resulting abusive behaviors went to another, higher level. Often, to avoid her rages, I would sleep on the apartment house roof or in the adjacent park.

When I turned 14, my siblings convinced my mother to go to rehab, and, to insure her success, they sent me to Alateen. This was supposedly planned so I could help her remain sober. Neither my mom’s stint in rehab and its accompanying AA experience, nor my exposure to Alateen was successful. Soon, we were both back to our “normal” existence.

Later in my teen years, a friend of mine asked me for help. She knew my mom had attended AA, been in rehab and that I had been involved with Alateen. Her father was an alcoholic who also was in rehab, and she wanted some support and company at her Al-Anon meetings. I went with her to Al-Anon and as I listened to the older adult speakers, it dawned on me that they had come from a world similar to mine. They all had a past with an alcoholic or had recently gotten involved with one. It was definitely a vicious circle from which there seemed no escape! After the meetings, without thoughts to any consequences, we would hit the bars with our fellow Al-Anon members. It doesn’t take much imagination to figure out where this led us.

By the age of 22, while in the military, I became such a problem drinker that I too was sent to rehab. Since then, for 32-years, I have been in and out of AA’s rooms. After a 20-year hiatus, I have returned to AA full time. My reason for returning? Simple. Did I want to live, or face a certain, painful death? I ended my alcoholic run with a three-week bender and suffered a serious fall. While in the hospital, I learned I had severely damaged my kidneys and liver. If I continued drinking, I would surely die.

This is a deadly disease; it will kill you if you ignore it. I began life in an alcoholic family, attended Alateen, Al-Anon, rehab and finally AA. I have come full circle in the progression of my disease, and am relieved that I do not need to continue. The circle is broken. Life will be better.

—John S., South Windsor



## Plateaus

How should I measure progress in AA? When I was new, Step One was so exhilarating that I rocketed to Step Twelve. My emotions led me astray. Confusion and frustration always forced me back to Step One: no booze today.

Finally, I noticed that Steps Two and Three suggest prayer. I tried it and broke the two-step cycle. However, my tendency to grasp for lofty goals remained. When my sense of growth vanished, it seemed as though I was losing the ground I thought I had gained. I had the ridiculous notion that change for the better was going to be a straight line up to perfection. Grandiosity made it so. Eventually, I understood about plateaus along the way. Each bit of progress needed adjustment time. Sober living has been a series of plateaus preparing me for the next stint of growth. The slogans, "easy does it," "one day at a time," "first things first," should have warned me that this program is not a rocket ride to sanity, stability and beyond. I should know by now that progress in AA is simply another day sober.

—Philip T.

## Amen

Let go  
Head to toe  
Where'd it go?  
He will know  
—Anonymous

### We Want To Hear From You!

Share your stories, essays, articles, poetry, etc... with others through the Alki-Line. We are accepting submissions of one page or less:

Email: [alki-line@ct-aa.org](mailto:alki-line@ct-aa.org)

Mail: Alki-Line, P.O. Box 7060, Meriden, CT 06450

Hand material to a GSR

### ¡Queremos saber más de Usted!

Mándenos las historias personales, los ensayos, las opiniones, la poesía, etc... y entérenos más de usted en el Alki-Line. Se puede entregar una página o menos de las historias a una de los siguiente:

Por el correos electrónicos: [alki-line@ct-aa.org](mailto:alki-line@ct-aa.org)

Por el correos: Alki-Line, P.O. Box 7060, Meriden, CT 06450

O De mano: a su GSR or Representativo de Alki-Line

### Alki-Line

This newsletter is by and for alcoholics; however, we review submissions by all interested in the AA program of recovery. Material may be edited for clarity and length. This newsletter and earlier issues can be downloaded at [www.ct-aa.org](http://www.ct-aa.org).

*This is an honest fellowship; we presume all submissions are original or in the public domain. Following publication all copyright reverts to the owner.*

## SAVE THE DATE

### The Gathering

February 9, 2019 — 8:00 am - 8:00 pm

Second Congregational Church, 385 North Main Street,  
Manchester, CT 06042

A service event sponsored by District 2

### Came to Believe Recovery Retreat

February 22-24, 2019

Red Lion Hotel, 100 Berlin Road, Cromwell

Registration/information: [www.sobrietyandbeyondretreat.com](http://www.sobrietyandbeyondretreat.com)

## 2018 CHRISTMAS ALKATHONS

### Ansonia: Sahara Club, 309 Main Street

Mon., December 24 @ 5:00 pm – Tue., December 25 @ 5:00 pm

### Branford: Italian American Club, 40 Hamre Lane

Mon., December 24 @ 10:00 am – Tue., December 25 @ 10:00 am

### Bridgeport: St. George's Episcopal Church, 755 Clinton Avenue

Mon., December 24 @ 6:00 pm – Tue., December 25 @ 6:00 pm

### Cheshire: Cheshire Grange, 44 Wallingford Road

Mon., December 24 @ Noon – Tue., December 25 @ Noon

### Danbury: Fellowship Center, 15 Great Pasture Road

Mon., December 24 @ 4:00 pm – Tue., December 25 @ 4:00 pm

### Gales Ferry: Ledyard Senior Center, 12 Van Tassel Drive

Mon., December 24 @ 4:00 pm – Tue., December 25 @ 1:00 pm

### Litchfield: First Congregational Church, 21 Torrington Road

Mon., December 24 @ 6:00 pm – Tue., December 25 @ Noon

### Manchester: Pathfinders Club, 102 Norman Street

Mon., December 24 @ 6:00 pm – Tue., December 25 @ 6:00 pm

## 2018 NEW YEAR'S EVE ALKATHONS

### Ansonia: Sahara Club, 309 Main Street

Mon., December 31 @ 5:00 pm – Tue., January 1 @ 5:00 pm

### Bridgeport: St. George's Episcopal Church, 755 Clinton Avenue

Mon., December 31 @ 6:00 pm – Tue., January 1 @ 6:00 pm

### Cheshire: Cheshire Grange, 44 Wallingford Road

Mon., December 31 @ Noon – Tue., January 1 @ Noon

### Danbury: Fellowship Center, 15 Great Pasture Road

Mon., December 31 @ 4:00 pm – Tue., January 1 @ 4:00 pm

### East Hartford: New Covenant United Methodist Church, 16 Church Street

Mon., December 31 @ 6:00 pm – Tue., January 1 @ 6:00 pm

### Litchfield: First Congregational Church, 21 Torrington Road

Mon., December 31 @ 6:00 pm – Tue., January 1 @ Noon

### Putnam: St. Mary's Church, 280 Providence Street

Mon., December 31 @ 6:00 pm – Tue., January 1 @ 6:00 pm

### Westerly, RI: Westerly Senior Center, 39 State Street

Mon., December 31 @ 4:30 pm – Tue., January 1 @ 4:30 pm

