

---

---

# FELLOWSHIP CENTER NEWS

Vol. 2, Issue 1 18 Great Plain Rd., Danbury, CT / [www.danburyfellowshipcenter.org](http://www.danburyfellowshipcenter.org) Spring 2012

---

---



## The Best Known Secret in AA

*Pat K.*

*"...when all other measures failed, work with another alcoholic would save the day."*

I often think about the drama that played out in that hotel lobby in Akron, Ohio and how Bill W. crossed it past the cocktail lounge with all its seductive properties to make those phone calls that put Bill in touch with Dr. Bob. I am filled with gratitude because I know that I would be just another hopeless, helpless drunk if Bill's decision had been to slip into that bar. He knew that his only hope was to find another alcoholic to whom he could tell his story. With all of the rehabs ...

*(continued)*

## FOOD BANK



Fellowship Center now has a food bank. This is available to anybody who needs food. There are 2 shelves, one located in the front AA meeting room and the other is in the kitchen. Please help yourself. We also are accepting donations to keep the shelves stocked. Please leave donations on front meeting room shelves.

"Need Some? Take Some, If Not Bring Some"

1. Best Known Secret, Food Bank & Upcoming Events
2. Life is Fragile
3. History of the Fellowship Center
4. Signs You May Be Drinking Too Much
5. Surrender Poem
6. Rent-A-Sponsor; Directions to Recovery
7. Be Thankful; Anger is one letter away...
8. St. Patrick's Day Potluck Party
9. Movie Night "My Name is Bill W."
10. Second Saturday Coffeehouse; R&R
11. Meeting Schedule
12. Cartoons; Friendly Reminders

### *Upcoming Events...*

**Fellowship Center Members Meetings -Tuesday, April 3rd, May 1st & June 5th** at 8:15 pm.

**St. Patty's Day Potluck Dinner - Saturday, March 17th** at 8:00 (with live Irish music!)

**Movie Night - Saturday, March 24th** at 7:30 (candy & fresh hot popcorn)

**Second Saturday Coffeehouse - April 14th, May 12th & June 9th** 8:30 - 11:00pm (tons of fun!)

**Golf Outing in September (Fellowship Center Fundraiser)** -We need an idea of how many people would like to attend. Please contact Pat Johnston at [nojuck2101@aol.com](mailto:nojuck2101@aol.com) or call 203-788-5819.

and other interventions available to the still suffering alcoholic today, I've heard A.A.s bemoan the lack of opportunity to do 12<sup>th</sup> Step Work. Yes, qualifying or sharing at meetings, answering the phone when another alcoholic calls, making the coffee or helping to clean up our Fellowship Center are all valuable services that help keep us sober. But what about the classic scene (depicted in the print hanging outside our FC kitchen) where Dr. Bob and Bill call on Alcoholic #3? Has this work disappeared into the folklore of AA? Not at all!

There is an A.A. group of volunteers who make themselves available to visit our fellow sufferers to share our experience, strength and hope. Though there is no longer a detox unit at Danbury Hospital, there is a Detox Nurse who assists the doctors when there is evidence of excess drinking and other substances in an admitted patient. She will contact our Area 9 Liaison, Ben. Ben then contacts members who have completed the DH Volunteer Training. This opportunity is open to all A.A.s with one year of sobriety. I call it "light duty 12<sup>th</sup> Step Work" as there are only two or three calls on a busy week rotated amongst us.

We also have the opportunity to lead two meetings a week on 6West, the locked ward. Both a male and female volunteer take the lead on this outreach. We are scheduled once or twice each quarter. It is an effort that personally yields me greater benefit for my effort as I take out this insurance policy against the first drink.

With either an individual call or the group meeting, I always leave DH with gratitude, knowing that "there but for the grace of God go I." If this is something that you would like to be involved in to strengthen your program, please call Ben K @ 203-313-0013.

---



*"I'm not always as strong or tough-minded as I like to think I am."*

The shortest distance between a problem and a solution  
is the distance between your knees and the floor.  
The one who kneels to the Lord can stand up to anything.

***HISTORY OF THE FELLOWSHIP CENTER & SUCCESS RESIDENTIAL HOMES, INC.***  
*Anonymous*

In March of 2008 a young man named Bill (fake name) arrived in our lives and would change the lives of many people. He was picked up at Midwestern Connecticut Center for Alcoholism (MCCA), a drug and alcohol rehabilitation center in Danbury and went to an AA meeting. After the meeting Bill and another fellow from AA, Joe (fake name), went out to the Olive Garden for dinner. Bill started to reveal his situation, homeless, friendless, jobless, moneyless but not hopeless. He learned that one day at a time and with the help of the AA community, he too could live a clean and sober life.

After a couple of weeks Bill was discharged from the program at MCCA and set up in a sober living environment in Meridan, CT, forty five miles away from the support group he had developed in Danbury. He was given a cell phone by Joe and was suggested that he start calling and getting phone numbers of other sober AA members. Upon arrival in Meridan he phoned Joe and explained that he had found an AA meeting within walking distance and would be attending that evening.

The next day a rather distressing phone call was received from Bill. He said that he had been approached the night before by another resident of the "sober" house and asked if he wanted to get high. The other resident had explained that they had a system by which they could all use or drink and in theory not get caught.

Quickly his friend from AA called MCCA and asked "Why send Bill to Meridan. Why not keep him in Danbury where he has his support network already established". The response was simple, there were no sober houses in Danbury. Bill is no longer friendless.

That is when a third person, Sam (fake name) was called and had the situation explained to him. It just so happened that Sam had an empty clean home that would be available in about a week. It was decided that if Bill could stay sober for the week he could stay at that house.

Bill was told, "Don't use, go to meetings and pray".

Joe then picked him up the next morning and put him to work. The following day he was picked up again for work, sober. He was now not jobless any more. As he was working Joe tried to figure out where Bill could stay for the next week. Joe phoned his wife and suggested that maybe he could stay in the camper in his backyard. Joe's wife was not agreeable to this at all, although she did agree to meet them for dinner. After dinner she agreed to actually allow him to sleep in the guestroom, but only until the vacant house was available.

As anticipated the house became available. We scrounged up a mattress, dresser and a radio, purchased some toiletries, pulled out some old linens and towels and the first sober house was created. He was now not homeless.

After seeing this situation Sam and Joe agreed that there was a tremendous need for a sober house in Danbury. Funding was a major obstacle to this cause.

And then a miracle happened. A farmer in Danbury by the name of Don Taylor (real name) owned a home on the west side of town that had sat vacant for over ten years. In need of a fair amount of repair, Sam was able to assess the amount of work we would need to do. Joe approached Don Taylor with the idea of selling the house. Explaining the cause and how much we personally have been helped by AA and the people in it that we feel a need to give back. We are living such blessed lives. Don, also explaining what a blessed life he has, decided this: If he could donate the house into a 501(c)(3) he would do so. WOW!

Joe was on the phone to Sam in a heartbeat with the good news. And that being said, Success Residential Homes, Inc. was born, a not for profit Connecticut corporation.

Sam orchestrated the refurbishing of the new sober house.

Since then we have had a large number of people come through the doors of what affably has become known as "Taylor House", after our generous benefactor Don Taylor and his wife Karin. Some are raging success stories, others have not been so fortunate to have been touched with the grace of God.

After being up and running for some time we pondered where do we go next. It was brought up that a sober club was missing from the area. A group was gathered to evaluate the possibilities of this. After several months of evaluation, Fellowship Center was born. A subsidiary of Success Residential Homes, Inc., Fellowship Center at this time, only after 1 year of operation, has over 75 dues paying members who share a safe space to use internet, watch TV, meet friends and enjoy the many social functions of the club. We host the space for 27 AA meetings a week as well as Alkathons and other related events.

Oh, by the way, as far as Bill is concerned, he never ended up living at the Taylor House. By the grace of God and the Fellowship of A.A. he has stayed sober. Along the way he was adopted by Joe and his wife.

Sometimes we are taken aback by the incredible power of alcoholism and addiction and saddened by the consequences that are often seen in the community. But more so, we are overwhelmed by the great successes we have seen, the fine lives and tremendous gifts bestowed on those who are blessed with a life of sobriety.

---

### **SIGNS YOU MAY BE DRINKING TOO MUCH:**

You lose arguments with inanimate objects.

You have to hold onto the lawn to keep from falling off the earth.

Your job is interfering with your drinking.

People consider your spouse a Saint for reasons that totally escape you.

All of your old friends are now members of 12-step groups.

Your doctor finds traces of blood in your alcohol stream.

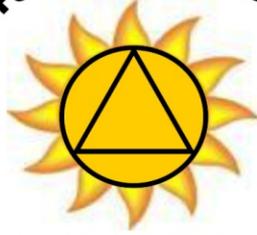
The back of your head keeps getting hit by the toilet seat.

The parking lot seems to have moved while you were in the bar.

Mosquitoes catch a buzz after attacking you.

"I'm as jobber as a sudge."

**Fellowship Center**



### **Surrender**

On a rickety white roller coaster  
I throw my hands up high above my head  
I'm going down.

Flushed. Scared. Restless  
I'm going down further than I ever have  
I'm going down, down, down.

Unrecognizable and in total disarray  
The wind keeps blowing  
And my demons keep screaming  
I'm going down, down, down.

I want to go back up  
I am out of control  
I need to surrender

Slowly hands down, I start to climb up  
Click, Click, Click  
Hope, Joy and Peace are waiting for me.

I start to feel again  
No longer going down  
I have surrendered.

*Mary-Margaret W.*

# RENT-A-SPONSOR

- Are you tired of being told like it is?
- Still looking for that easier, softer way?
- Had enough of that same old time-tested direction?

**No Reading! No Writing! No Deadlines!**

## STANDARD FEATURES INCLUDE:

- \*Listening to your sniveling without constant reference to the Big Book or Steps!
- \*Co-signing your excuses and rationalizations!
- \*Work only the Steps you want, in the order you choose!
- \*Learn the secret of giving it away before you even have it!
- \*Why "walk the walk" when you can just "talk the talk?"
- \*Remember, it's better to look good than to feel good!
- \*Why save your ass at the cost of losing your face?

**FOURTH STEP WRITING SERVICE NOW AVAILABLE  
YES, WE WILL WRITE YOUR INVENTORY FOR YOU**

**Yes, at Rent-A-Sponsor we know how  
unique you are and we do understand!**

**HALF MEASURES ARE OUR SPECIALTY!**

**Call 1-900-O-POOR-ME or 1-900-POUR-ME-1**

Call now and receive a free copy of  
"Staying Sober on War Stories Alone"!

---

***"Directions to recovery: Just go straight to hell and make a U-turn."***

When I was new to the program, I heard a word I didn't know the definition of. The word was perdition. As the fog began to clear my sponsor recommended I look it up, and when I read its meaning I knew it accurately described my state of being - perdition means complete spiritual bankruptcy.

During the final dark months and days of my drinking and using, one by one, I abandoned my self-respect, my self-care, and ultimately the light of my spirit. I was on the way to a private hell where hope and life itself would soon disappear forever. In a desperate moment a part of me reached out for help, and I made the u-turn that led me to recovery.

The miracle that I found in recovery is the miracle that awaits us all - no matter how far down we have fallen, no matter the state of perdition or the depths of hell into which we have descended, we will recover if we are willing to work the steps. And when we do, we will find that the very experience that nearly took our lives enables us, over time, to help and save another. This is the enduring miracle that is available to all who keep coming back.

***No matter what, don't leave before the miracle happens!***

[www.theWisdomoftheRooms.com](http://www.theWisdomoftheRooms.com)

## *Be Thankful*



**Be thankful that you don't already have everything you desire,  
If you did, what would there be to look forward to?  
Be thankful when you don't know something  
For it gives you the opportunity to learn.  
Be thankful for the difficult times.  
During those times you grow.  
Be thankful for your limitations  
Because they give you opportunities for improvement.  
Be thankful for each new challenge  
Because it will build your strength and character.  
Be thankful for your mistakes  
They will teach you valuable lessons.  
Be thankful when you're tired and weary  
Because it means you've made a difference.  
It is easy to be thankful for the good things.  
A life of rich fulfillment comes to those who are  
also thankful for the setbacks.  
GRATITUDE can turn a negative into a positive.  
Find a way to be thankful for your troubles  
and they can become your blessings.**

*Author Unknown*

---

### ***"Anger is one letter away from Danger."***

When I came into the program I was so angry, but I didn't realize how much. For years I had used drugs and alcohol to numb these feelings, to manage and hide them. When these were taken away, my anger quickly turned to rage, and I soon found that I had turned much of this rage inward. In fact today I still believe that a core characteristic of alcoholism is self-loathing.

Thank God for the Steps. By working the 12 Steps I learned to forgive others and myself, take responsibility for my part, and I learned how to surrender to a Higher Power. Slowly I began to release a lot of the shame and resentment that made up a lot of my rage.

But I still get angry sometimes. And these days I've learned that when I do get angry, I'm still in danger of turning it inward and acting in self-destructive ways. I'm quick to isolate and grow more depressed, to tell someone off and create resentments, or even to eat too much and go into self-loathing. Thankfully today I've learned to acknowledge and deal with my anger before it turns into rage.

*Today I realize that anger is one letter away from danger.*

[www.thewisdomoftherooms.com](http://www.thewisdomoftherooms.com)



**ST. PATRICK'S**  
**DAY POTLUCK**  
**PARTY**



**Saturday, March 17, 2012**

**at 8:00 p.m.**

**At the Fellowship Center**

18 Great Plain Road, Danbury, CT

Music by "*The Hip Replacements*"

with Sal, Michel & Bob

Food, Fun & Fellowship!!!!

Sign Up sheet for food donations on  
the Bulletin Board in the Kitchen at the  
Fellowship Center

Members \$5.00

Non-Members \$7.00

*(Please bring a non perishable food donation for our  
FOOD BANK at the Fellowship Center if you can)*

St. Patrick Day Party Committee: Sue Howe 203 241-5410,  
Judy Morris 203-792-7669



**MOVIE NIGHT**



## **"MY NAME IS BILL W."**

**Saturday, March 24, 2012**

**at 7:30 p.m.**

**At the Fellowship Center**

**18 Great Plain Road, Danbury, CT**

**Popcorn, Soda, Coffee & Fun!!!!**

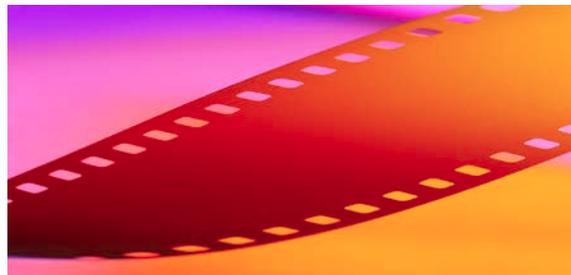
**Movie Theatre Candy For Sale**

**If you would like to bring dry goods for our new  
"Food Bank" it would be greatly appreciated to  
benefit those in need in our A.A. Community**

**Members \$2.00**

**Non-Members \$3.00**

**Children 12 and under are free**





**Yippie-i-o-Cayay! It's the Second Saturday  
Coffeehouse!**

**Saturday, March 10th from 8:30 – 11:00**

**Live musical entertainment by members and guests of the  
Fellowship Center**

PA, microphones and amplifiers will be set up.

**\$5.00 (\$3.00 members) includes: snacks, soda, coffee,  
tea and 10:00 Raffle Prize**

email Bryan at [hermansdorfer@att.net](mailto:hermansdorfer@att.net) or call (203) 740-0702

---

**"R&R stands for rest and relaxation, not rehearse and rehash!"**

"If only my mind would leave me alone," I often think. I have what I call a "digging mind." Like a dog at the beach, it digs and digs and digs in a problem, a worry, or in some other imagined potential problem area or scenario often without my approval or awareness. It loves to uncover negative thoughts, feelings and fears, and then rehearse ugly scenarios, or rehash old problems.

My digging mind is not only relentless, but it is consistently negative as well. I never find it digging in a positive or hopeful place. I can't recall it dwelling on or digging in the hole of getting that great job, or relationship, or winning the lotto, or of having things work out. No, driven by a hundred forms of self-centered fear, it searches the beaches of disappointment and failure, and digs away.

R&R always meant physical relaxation to me. It wasn't until I heard this saying that I thought to give my digging mind a break as well. In fact, before this saying I didn't realize how active my mind stayed when I did try to rest and relax. Today I realize the importance of reigning in my digging mind and allowing (sometimes forcing) it to rest and relax as well. Giving myself a break - a total break - provides me with the renewal and space I need to let the love and light of my Higher Power in. Today, I've learned how to truly rest and relax.

[TheWisdomoftheRooms.com](http://TheWisdomoftheRooms.com)

## **Fellowship Center Meeting Schedule** (revised 3/7/12)

### **MONDAY**

7:15 a.m. Morning Watch Group  
12:00 p.m. Speaker Discussion  
5:30 p.m. Dual Diagnosis (BACK ROOM)  
7:00 p.m. Beginner's Meeting 1, 2, 3  
7:30 p.m. Back Door Group – Big Book Study (BACK ROOM)  
8:15 p.m. We're All In – Beginners/Speaker

### **TUESDAY**

7:15 a.m. Morning Watch Group  
12:00 p.m. Living Sober Meeting  
7:00 p.m. A Way Out (Big Book)

### **WEDNESDAY**

7:15 a.m. Morning Watch Group  
12:00 p.m. Big Book Study  
7:00 p.m. Closed Step  
7:00 p.m. Spiritual Group (BACK ROOM)

### **THURSDAY**

7:15 a.m. Morning Watch Group  
12:00 p.m. 20 Questions Discussion (Are you an Alcoholic)  
7:00 p.m. First Things First Step Speaker/Discussion  
8:30 p.m. Complete Abandon Group

### **FRIDAY**

7:15 a.m. Morning Watch Group  
12:00 p.m. Grapevine Meeting  
7:00 p.m. Meeting Makers Make it – Beginners  
8:15 p.m. A Way Out – Beginners

### **SATURDAY**

7:15 a.m. Morning Watch Group  
11:00 a.m. Yoga for Recovery Class  
6:00 p.m. A Power Greater Than Ourselves (Spiritual)

### **SUNDAY**

9:00 a.m. The Promises – Morning Watch Group  
11:00 a.m. Narcotics Anonymous Literature Study Group 1½ hrs.  
6:00 p.m. 24 Hour Book



No place like home group



Step Nine

www.recoverycartoons.com

***The Fellowship Center offers room rentals to celebrate anniversaries or other events. The \$20 rental fee includes all coffee and paper products, not usually supplied by organizations. Contact a board member to schedule.***

Have Something to Share? (1 page more or less)

We need fun event ideas, tips for staying sober, recommended books, personal experiences, A.A. history, etc. Email your article to: [hermansdorfer@att.net](mailto:hermansdorfer@att.net) or call Bryan H: 203/940-0702

**FRIENDLY REMINDERS**

- *The Club Room is for Members only, except during open house events.*
- *Smoking is outside in the back only! Kindly clean up after your meeting.*
- *All children must be accompanied by an adult at all times for personal safety and insurance reasons.*



***"Resolve to keep happy  
and your joy and you shall form  
an invincible host against difficulties"***

*Helen Keller*