



FRIENDS of BILL W.

District #30

www.aadistrict30va.org

Hotline: (540) 752-2228 Español (540) 656-2882

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Statement of Purpose: "Friends of Bill W." is the newsletter for A.A. District #30 in Virginia. It provides a voice that will cultivate the spirit of our district's common welfare and A.A. unity.

In The Spirit of Service

Dear Readers, thanks for all the great newsletter input and suggestions! Please keep it coming! Submissions, anniversaries, event notifications, and ideas can be sent to: newsletter@aadistrict30va.org. XXX

SERVICE OPPORTUNITIES

Hot-Line Volunteers Needed: Call (540) 752-2228, email hotline@aadistrict30va.org, or reach out to XXX.

Jail Meetings: If interested in joining a Rappahannock Regl Jail meeting, e-mail corrections@aadistrict30va.org, or contact XXX or XXX. Applications are on the District 30 website.

Sunshine Lady House and Boxwood Facility meetings: Sunshine Tue/Thurs 7 pm; Boxwood Wed 8 pm. Contact XXX or email treatment@aadistrict30va.org.

DISTRICT 30 CORNER

April 2019 – A District 30 website committee convened on April 17th to discuss ideas for District 30 website protocols. The following motion was passed: "District 30 will adopt the website guidelines as stated in Section 20 of the VAC Service Manual until further notice." Updated District 30 website guidelines will be published in the District 30 Service Manual at a later date. The entire service manual is currently being reviewed and rewritten, with a completion date goal of December 2020. Continue to check back here for updates on this project in the coming months.

From the District 30 "Chippa" – Alcoholics Anonymous has released a new book! "Our Great Responsibility: A selection of Bill W's General Service Conference Talks 1951 - 1970." This book is available for \$10.00 per copy and the District Chippa has a limited supply on hand for sale. Also recently released is a new Grapevine joke and cartoon book: "Take Me To Your Sponsor; Best Jokes & Cartoons from AA Grapevine." This book is \$11.50 a copy. The District Chippa has two in stock and can get more. Hurry while supplies last.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Fresh Start Group (noon every day at Stafford Am. Legion)

– First Sunday of each month is a potluck lunch 'eating meeting' with a speaker.

Over the Hump Group (Wed 7 pm at Peace United Methodist Church) – Third Wednesday each month is a potluck 'eating meeting.'

EVENTS

4th of July Celebration – July 3rd and 4th 2019, Loriella Park, Pavilion B, 10910 Leavells Rd, Fredericksburg, VA 22485.

July 3rd Events

- 4pm: Fun and Fellowship pool for kids, games.
- 6pm: Pizza party (pizza and drinks provided).
- 7pm: Speaker meeting (two 30-minute speakers).

July 4th Events

*Note: Burgers and drinks provided.
Please bring a potluck dish to share.*

- 11 am: Burgers off the grill and potluck meal.
- 2 pm: 50/50 Raffle.
- 3 pm: Meeting with sobriety countdown and chips.
- 5 pm: Clean up.

Note: Need volunteers to help set up and grill on the 4th. If interested, meet at Loriella at 8 am.

2019 VSCYPAA (Virginia State Conference of young People in AA) – July 5-7, Hilton Alexandria Mark Center, 5000 Seminary Rd, Alexandria, VA. <https://vscypaa2019.com>.

2019 VAC Corrections Workshop – August 17th, 9:30 am to 2:30 pm. Hosted by Districts 15 and 30. Colonial Beach Methodist Church, 1 Washington Ave, Colonial Beach, VA 22443.

ANNIVERSARIES

JUNE

Names omitted for anonymity

JULY

Names omitted for anonymity

EXPERIENCE STRENGTH AND HOPE

Inspirational stories from District 30 and greater AA

Bill & Lois's "Stepping Stones" – a universe worth visiting!

A short quote helped me define why I love historic homes:
"Every house is a universe."

And a universe worth visiting for us AA's is the home of Bill and Lois Wilson, known as Stepping Stones. Located on 8.1 acres off of Oak Road in Katonah, NY, Stepping Stones was home for the Wilsons from 1941 until they died—Bill in 1971 and Lois in 1988. Today, it serves as a mecca for people in recovery and a quaint museum for history junkies (of which, some of us fall into both those categories).

Free tours of the property, conducted by incredibly knowledgeable guides, are about two hours long. You begin in the garage (seems a fitting location to enter into the universe of a raging alcoholic and his wife, eh?). Originally built by Bill and more recently repurposed to serve as a charming welcome center, visitors learn about Bill and Lois' relationship, their struggle with Bill's alcoholism, and the creation of AA. Also at the welcome center, visitors will find a small supply of books and gifts available for purchase, with all proceeds going back into the maintenance of the house. Think -- holiday gifts for friends in recovery!

Next stop, the house – a Colonial Revival-style hunting lodge built in 1920. Standing on the porch, where you can easily envision Bill and Lois sitting on a spring day, the guide shares the story of how after moving more than 50 times, fellowship member Mrs. Griffiths (no relation to Bill even though it is his middle name) helped them buy the house for \$40 a month (Sale price: \$6500). After raising the \$400 needed to get their furnishings out of storage, they moved in.

I'm so grateful they didn't lose their possessions when they made all those moves! There is so much to see, I don't even know where to begin. But it was a quote from Lois that the tour guide shared which made me understand the Wilson time capsule: "I know they will come."

Lois knew how important the creation of AA was to the members of the fellowship. She did her best to keep those things that are part of the AA lore, like the kitchen table where Ebby and Bill had the chat that started it all and the desk where Bill wrote the Big Book and the 12 & 12 (both of which I was able to sit at and have my picture taken!).

But Lois also shared items that aren't in all the books, that were a part of their universe – the sewing niche, the cradle, boomerangs, a wrought iron AA symbol, the out of fashion paint on the walls, pictures, letters, trinkets, kitsch souvenirs and hundreds of labels attached to precious personal possessions...many of which brought tears to my eyes.

Lois' efforts to keep our history alive is being maintained today by the Stepping Stones Foundation which preserves 15,000 historic objects, maintains six buildings, protects 100,000 archival items and educates the public about the Wilson's legacy through tours and programs.

For me, most importantly, it's the home – the universe -- of two very ordinary people who overcame the agony of alcoholism to lead incredibly extraordinary lives of service to those still suffering.

Think about making the trip! Even though it is about a six-hour drive, it is so worth it! Located in West Chester County, Katonah is a picturesque village with boutique stores, lovely art galleries and several scrumptious places to eat. Note: Stepping Stones is not open on Sundays and I strongly recommend you call ahead of time for details and to reserve your free tour (Email: info@steppingstones.org; Phone: (914) 232-4822); Website: www.steppingstones.org.

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