



**Happy New Year To All!**

Thanks to everyone who supported the Club during this Holiday Season. Our Holiday Dinners were a huge success as well as the Christmas Eve AlcoThon, our Food Drive and our annual Fund Raising. The Unity Club could not survive without all of your support. Our Sincere thanks.

**ANNUAL MEETING**

Unity Club will be having their annual members meeting Wednesday Jan. 24, 2018 at 6:40 PM in Room 1. All Unity Club Members are welcome and encouraged to attend. This is your club. Come hear how we are doing and how you can help.

**Fellowship and Community – by Doug L.**

I remember the day that I walked into my first AA meeting like it was yesterday. September 6, 2009 was a beautiful late summer day and I had been released from the Arlington County Detention Center earlier that morning. After visiting a lawyer, it was strongly recommended to me that I find an AA meeting. I had no idea how or where to do that, but the secretary at the lawyers’ office had a where and when and directed me to the Unity Club.

I walked into that beginner’s meeting broken, scared and completely unsure of myself. I tried to sit in the back so I could just observe and run away if I needed to. That is when the miracles started to occur in my life. A man sat down next to me and said hello. He said that he



had not seen me at the meeting before and wondered if I was new. I have no idea what came over me, but that day I opened up and just started talking with him. The meeting then started and when they asked if there were any newcomers I stood up and wanted to just tell my whole story right there. My new friend quietly grabbed me by the hand and

said I could sit and do that later. (Cont. on back)

**January 2018**

*Unity Club of Falls Church, Virginia is a meeting place for members of Alcoholics Anonymous and fifteen other recovery fellowships based on the 12-Steps of AA. It is a safe haven for people to come to while they work on a different way of life. It is a place of hope.*

**Breakfast is Back**

Best way to start your weekend. Join us for a full breakfast starting Saturday January 13 from 0830-0930. If you miss us then, we will be back again serving on January 27.



**Valentines Dance**

Join us Saturday Feb. 09 to celebrate Valentine’s Day early. Bring your Valentine and dance to our DJ from 9-12PM

**It’s Never Too late**

..... to provide financial support to the Unity Club. Go to [www.unityclub.com](http://www.unityclub.com) and click on Donate.

## Fellowship and Community – by Doug L. (cont.)

After the meeting we talked some more and he gave me his number to call if I needed anything and said he would be there the next day, and maybe I should meet him there. He introduced me to other people at the meeting and stuck around with me until I was on my way home.

That evening as I sat and thought about the last 24 hours, somehow the arrest and jail time were not on the top of my mind, rather my new acquaintance and the meeting I had been at. I decided to try the phone number and he answered which led to an hour-long conversation. Just as he said, he was at the meeting the next day. Today, I see him from time to time around meetings and we share a wonderful bond.

As far as I know, that is called fellowship. For the first time in my life I had found a person (and later a group of people) who thought, felt, talked and lived the way that I did. Over the years I grew into this fellowship and it slowly became my new community. Today I not only attend meetings with other people in recovery, I spend most of my day with them. We share a variety of interests and through our common bond we are able to enjoy life being sober.

The word *fellowship* can mean different things. In the context of recovery, it usually refers to a group of people who share similar goals. 12 Step groups are the most well-known of all the recovery fellowships. Any group where the focus is on working towards a life free of addiction can be considered a recovery fellowship. One of the other important ways that the word fellowship is defined is that it is a group of equals. It is not a situation where the leaders give orders and the rest of the members simply follow. Each member is considered important and so each will have their say.

One of the most enduring sayings in cultures across the world is “It takes a village.” While it’s a phrase used most commonly to describe raising children, it can also be said that it takes a village to be human. Since the earliest days, humans have operated in tribes. Being part of a community – a part of something larger than yourself – gives you a sense of purpose, belonging, and inclusion. In recovery, a community pro Alcoholics and addicts cannot rely on willpower alone. On the contrary, those suffering with substance abuse need the support of a community to stay clean. Seeking out the guidance of others who have been in your shoes is essential. Without this communal reinforcement, addicts tend to isolate, which can lead to depression and a greater chance of relapse. One popular saying we have in Alcoholics Anonymous is “I can’t stay sober, but we can.”



Although recovery from addiction is a personal journey, a sober community can be essential for successful recovery. Most addicts have tried a countless number of times to overcome their addiction by themselves, often with little success. A sober community provides the recovering addict with the necessary support to achieve success in both early and long-term sobriety. Sober communities allow the addict the opportunity to develop meaningful and lasting friendships. Being and staying sober doesn’t preclude ones ability to participate in life. The companionship one will find within the sober community allows the individual to enjoy the kinds of activities that most of us take for granted and often associate with drinking or partying (going to a Super Bowl party, going camping, going to dinner, etc.). Most importantly, individuals with support from a sober community are less likely to relapse.

Thank you for being a part of my fellowship and my community. For that I am eternally grateful!