The Wagon Wheel Idaho Area 18 Newsletter

August 2021

Editor, Margie P.



I can't believe we are so close to the end of the Area Committee rotation. I have not been able to print a physical edition of the Wagon Wheel due to Covid-19 during my rotation. Well, that will change for my last Wagon Wheel Edition in October at the Fall Assembly. We will meet live and in person at the Burley Inn and Convention Center, October 1–3, 2021. AA Comes of Age 2.0: Unified in Love and Service. Get your articles, flyers, and announcements in now, as it will be a packed edition. There will be stories from some folks on how they got sober on the Duck Valley Indian Reservation, stories of the struggles people had during Covid and much more. Enjoy the August edition and thanks again for the service opportunity.

Margie P. Idaho Area 18 A.A. Newsletter Editor



Workshop topics at the General Service Conference this year were: Inform -Communicate, Involve - Act, and Inspire - Attract. I would like to share a bit about "Involve - Act: How does ACTION (While working the program) through the Steps, Traditions, or Concepts relate to each other?"

To begin, let's talk STEPS. When I came into the rooms of A.A. back in 2006, I was stinky I wore an old, ragged black T-shirt most of the time, had blood-shot eyes and even had D.T.'s! I didn't even notice the coffee or the free snacks! If someone would have mentioned the word, "G.S.R." to me I would have asked, "What?", all blurry-eyed. Then I would have said, "Who cares? I'm dying here! I just need to know how NOT TO DRINK ALCOHOL, please!" Never once did I wonder where that money in the basket went - or who opened the doors that day, or who wrote the meeting script. I was so self-centered, all I wanted was to GET SOBER! After a few days I decided I wanted to STAY SOBER, so I did everything my sponsor suggested. The day she told me, "You need to make coffee", I looked at her with scrunched eyebrows, and asked, "What does making coffee have to do with staying sober?" (and thought to myself, "can't you see I'm having a nervous breakdown here?") She replied, "Brenda, it's not about asking questions, it's about following direction." I reluctantly said, "Okay," and I just DID IT. It was in that very first service position that my head started to lift-up, my eyes started to clear-up, and I noticed there were other people in the room! That action of showing-up for others gave me a reason to stay sober! I began to have meaning in my life. I was doing something that was needed.

Those first couple of years of the Action of Working the 12 Steps and following the direction of a sponsor – resulted in getting some sobriety under my belt. That was really needed before my eyes could really look around and start seeing more! Now, every day, I know, without a doubt that I am an alcoholic. This serves as the foundation of my program. Operating at any moment from any one of the steps... is where I live. Ultimately, every day, I ask, "Who can I help today?", for "Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these steps, we TRIED TO CARRY THIS MESSAGE TO ALCOHOLICS AND TO PRACTICE THESE PRINCIPLES IN ALL OUR AFFAIRS." So HOW do we do this? Carry the Message? Let's talk Traditions...

The 12 Traditions are read at every meeting I attend, at first I didn't understand them at all. They sounded kind of "Business-like" and I didn't need to know them or understand them! Those were for the "business people". It wasn't until I started attending my Home Group business meetings that the Traditions became important! Especially holding a position as a GSR, the role is known as "The Guardian of the Traditions". The Traditions were first published in 1946 and later officially confirmed at the first national AA Convention in Cleveland in 1950. The Traditions were created because Alcoholics Anonymous grew bigger and bigger and as a membership then, it needed a way to hold itself together – a "glue", let's say. With a fellowship continuing to grow today – how do we stay unified and operate as a whole? Most importantly, how can A.A. be here for the future, for the alcoholic not yet born? The Traditions give the groups direction for any foreseeable problem that may arise. There is no time here, today, to review all the Traditions, but a couple deserve attention:

Tradition 2: "For our Group purpose there is but one ultimate authority, a loving God as he may express himself in our Group Conscious. Our leaders are but trusted servants, they do not govern."

It is absolutely amazing to me to watch this Tradition in ACTION! Especially at Area Assemblies when 200 people gather and vote together, actually get a lot of work done in one day! When everyone places their EGO aside, goes into a Group Conscience meeting with an Open Mind - it is True - decisions are made easily based all the facts presented! Groups experience cohesiveness when everyone practices principles before personalities!

Tradition 3 states: "The only requirement for AA membership is a DESIRE to stop drinking". This is BIG. This means all that is needed to attend an AA meeting is a DESIRE to stop drinking. To truly practice this Tradition in Action is to KNOW what DESIRE itself is. DESIRE is WANTING something a lot, it's a passion for something – so like the DESIRE we used to have for Sex, Drugs, and

Rock-n-Roll (a Jim Morrison type DESIRE), that same DESIRE is now being directed towards the DESIRE to stop drinking... WANTING sobriety, Serenity, and a New Life without Alcohol!

As you can see, the Traditions are the cement that holds our program together - in Action. Now, how about the 12 Concepts of World Service?

As GSR, I started studying the AA Service Manual. I also served on a committee to re-write the Bylaws of our local Intergroup... this is when I fell head over heels in LOVE with the Concepts! We used Concept XII as the preamble for the bylaws. It says:

"The Conference shall observe the spirit of A.A. tradition, taking care that it never becomes the seat of perilous wealth or power; that sufficient operating funds and reserve be its prudent financial principle; that it place none of its members in a position of unqualified authority over others; that it reach all important decisions by discussion, vote, and whenever possible, substantial unanimity; that its actions never be personally punitive nor an incitement to public controversy; that it never perform acts of government; that, like the Society it serves, it will always remain democratic in thought and action."

The Concepts were written by Bill W. in 1962. We had the 12 Steps as a means of personal Recovery, the 12 Traditions as a way to keep UNITY amongst our fellowship, then finally the Concepts arrived as a way to give structure to our approach to service, especially since our fellowship began to grow around the world!

Again, no time to talk about each concept here today, still let's review Concept I: "Final responsibility and ultimate authority for A.A. world services should always reside in the collective conscience of our whole Fellowship". This means You and Me... we are the whole fellowship. It means all the groups who elect a GSR to represent them at Area Assemblies, so the Delegate can hear their voice and take it to the General Service Conference. This is when the ACTION of the GSR to attend District and Area Assemblies is essential to the continued existence of our society! Without the group's involvement – we would have no General Service Conference, and our fellowship would wither away and die! Each member of AA is important.

Bill W. says: "The life of each individual and of each group is built around our Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions. We very well know that the penalty for extensive disobedience to these principles is death for the individual and dissolution for the group. An even greater force for A.A.'s unity is the compelling love that we have for our fellow members and for the principles upon which our lives today are founded. Therefore we believe that we see in

our Fellowship a spiritualized society characterized by enough enlighenment, enough responsibility and enough love of man and of God to insure that our democracy of world service will work under all conditions."

I love Alcoholics Anonymous! It has saved my life. When I use the word, "it", I mean the spirit of the fellowship, the kindness, compassion, unconditional love I have experienced in these rooms. I have experienced a love I have never known just by sitting next to people who practice this program in their actions. I have experienced patience, tolerance, and laughter with people of like-minds and hearts. This, this here, now - even on "Virtual Reality", is where I get my medicine for my disease. The new technology of online meetings this past year has deepened my spiritual awakening as it has confirmed that true recovery, sobriety, and serenity is Inside... As the Big Book says on page 55, "We found The Great Reality deep down within us...". Even though we do not meet in person, I am in the presence (virtually) (on a screen) of my people, my tribe, and I know I am loved because you are a reflection of Divine Light! I used to get physically embraced with affection at meetings, and now, I close my eyes and I can FEEL the SPIRIT of A.A.. - the Sunlight of the Spirit, without the touch, because just like a Higher Power, "I can't see you, but I know you are there!".

This is why we need to keep Alcoholics Anonymous going... Right now, today, some hungover drunk is walking into the rooms of AA for the first time, just like I did, years ago, a lost soul. They have no fathom of a clue that we are all sitting here talking about Involvement and Action in AA – to find ways to help them attain and maintain sobriety! We are here today so that AA, as a society will be here for them when they are ready to SEE MORE! After they get some sobriety under their belt, they will see how this beautiful program sustains itself, they will see how important they are, and they too will want to Give to this program, what was given to them. They will want to keep the torch going that was given to us as a result of the involvement and actions of those that have gone before us!

This is a program of Action. We can't Think our way out, or Feel our way out, we must DO what needs to be done for the sake of our own sobriety, and for the alcoholic not yet born. For anything to last long, we need consistency. It is because of the consistency of the Steps, the Traditions, and the Concepts... the stuff that does NOT CHANGE, that we have been able to practice the Spiritual AA principles in a Changing world!

In Service,

Brenda M.

We Tread Innumerable Paths



By June L.

El Granada, California.

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Desperation, and insistence by my estranged husband forced me to call AA nearly twenty-six years ago. I had misgivings because I knew that AA's program included beliefs that might be incompatible with my own atheism. I felt sure I'd have to find another solution, or at least look for other atheists in AA, if there were any.

My fears turned out to be unwarranted, and my lack of belief in God didn't prevent my sobriety. Members tolerantly accepted my atheist views. Their support and advice overcame whatever limitations in working the program I might have from not believing in a God or Higher Power. I was encouraged to interpret the program to fit my needs. I got sober, developed a good life, and gained loving relationships with AA friends, without becoming a believer or finding other atheists to guide me. AA's Higher Power simply was little problem to me, and I never felt particularly excluded by believers nor in conflict with the Big Book. I never found it necessary to look for groups of other atheists.

And so I spent my first sixteen years in AA blindly naive to the fact that many people outside of the Fellowship see AA as a religious approach to alcoholism recovery. And in the past two years, I've noticed a trend to infuse AA with concepts from traditional western religions. My observations may be, in part, because I moved from home groups that encouraged varied spiritual viewpoints and found only a traditional God in the AA meetings where I now live.

After my long and mutually tolerant relationship with AA, I've been having increasing discomfort with a pervasive Christian influence and with Big Book fundamentalism. I've revised my earlier opinion that special groups for nonbelievers aren't needed. I now think a special group that encourages the atheist or agnostic is crucial in some areas. Such groups help to counteract the perception of AA as a recovery method suited only to people who share certain religious views.

In news articles about AA, the implication frequently is that AA is strongly religious. Just a few weeks ago there was a hot discussion going on before the meeting about a TV program several people had seen. Some lawyers are taking issue with drunk-driving sentences and jail-house regulations that include mandatory AA attendance. The lawyers claim the sentences are violations of individual freedom. Several members noted that AA specifically states that the program is nonreligious and they couldn't understand why anyone would

consider it so. However, I can understand why AA is perceived as religious—it meets the standard criteria associated with worship practices. There's a set of principles or tenets of belief (dogma). The members and the writings base much on belief in an omnipotent entity (God). Most meetings have a standard format, and prayers are said (ritual). There's a body of literature that's approved literature (sounds like catechism to me). AA sponsors and other trusted servants are not unlike the elders and frocked teachers of religions. Nearly any aspect of religion has an AA corollary. How can we in AA be surprised that many people outside equate us with religions?

Furthermore, a large number of people inside AA have lost touch with keeping AA nonreligious. Many must think that nondenominational is the same as nonreligious. Newcomers (and older) are admonished to get in touch with God and to pray for solutions to problems. So long as there is no specification to do it like the Protestants, Catholics, or Jews, then it is deemed nonreligious. If saying the Lord's Prayer at a meeting isn't religious, what is it?

The attitude within AA toward a Higher Power can foster the notion that AA is a religious group. I've noticed how much more frequently God is mentioned by members when sharing at meetings and how anthropomorphic the concept of God has become. God talks to members, tells them when they are making mistakes, shows them paths, takes their hands. Sometimes the statements members make sound more like testifying on salvation than sharing of experiences regarding alcoholism and recovery.

When I first got to AA, God was not often a discussion topic, as it is in many of today's meetings that I attend. We talked about easing physical discomfort of withdrawal. We talked about how to handle real-life situations when sober and how to confront family and friends with our commitment to abstinence. We talked about fear and anger, making amends, taking responsibility, trusting our decisions. We didn't discuss struggles with belief nor what God is really like nor how God works in our lives if we let him. If anyone wanted to mention God, they usually said "higher power" or "HP." Somewhere over the years those

references were reworded to "my higher power whom I choose to call God." And finally, simply, to "God" – a male, Judaeo-Christian God at that.

Dogmatism and "preaching" within the program perpetuates the image as religion. I see a far more dictatorial approach to sponsorship than greeted me. I am disturbed when I hear of incidents where sponsors have told their charges that they must do this or that to stay sober. Has suggesting techniques for recovery been replaced by telling others what to do? Is sharing what worked for one's own experience passé and the authority of the Big Book now the only authority?

Dictates from sponsors to do it exactly like the Big Book says and the strong Christian flavor of Higher Power concepts make AA less attractive to agnostics. AA is unacceptable as a program of recovery for many atheists if they must follow AA word for word. Fortunately there is no such requirement, either stated or practiced in most places.

Even so, I've witnessed AA's atheists being instructed to pray or pretend belief. I think that shows disrespect to the nonbeliever and is harmful to the individual and to AA as a whole. Instead, let's encourage them to find their own interpretations of Steps, Traditions, and other AA advisements. It's a more reasonable path for the recovering alcoholic and it adds strength to the Fellowship by maintaining its universal character. We like to say AA works for everyone. Then let's make it work for everyone, not just for Christians or Jews.

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Big Book Quiz #4

1. Name the four horsemen.

- a) Gene Autry, Roy Rogers, Tex Ritter, and John Wayne
- b) Bill W., Dr. Bob, Dr. William Silkworth, and Dr. E.M. Jellinek
- c) terror, bewilderment, frustration, despair

2. What is the baffling feature of alcoholism?

- a) it affects people of all ages and nationalities
- b) this utter inability to leave it alone, no matter how great the necessity or the wish
- c) we don't have a cure for it

3. What is the `number one' offender?

- a) Resentment
- b) Dishonesty
- c) Self-centeredness

4. Practical experience shows that nothing will so much insure immunity from drinking as what?

- a) intensive work with other alcoholics
- b) attending A.A. meetings
- c) socializing with members of the A.A. fellowship

5. If we are planning to stop drinking, there must be what?

- a) no alcohol in our apartment or homes
- b) no attendance at social events where alcohol is served.
- c) no reservation of any kind, nor any lurking notion, that someday we will be immune to alcohol.

6. What is the distinction between the alcoholic and the non-alcoholic?

- a) Social drinkers never experience negative consequences from drinking.
- b) If, when you honesty want to, you find you cannot quit entirely, or if when drinking, you have little control over the amount you take, you are probably alcoholic.
- c) non-alcoholics never become alcoholics

7. What are the essentials of recovery?

- a) recovery, unity, and service
- b) willingness, honesty, and open mindedness
- c) abstinence, service, and fellowship

8. What do we think is the root of our troubles?

- a) Alcoholism, of course!
- b) Shame above all else!
- c) Selfishness--self-centeredness!

9. The actual or potential alcoholic, with hardly an exception, will be absolutely unable to stop drinking on the basis of what?

- a) moral or religious conviction
- b) (s)elf-knowledge
- c) self-will

10. Step 10 advises that we continue to watch for what?

- a) selfishness, dishonesty, resentment, fear
- b) our relapse triggers
- c) a better sponsor or A.A. meeting

11. The alcoholic has a daily reprieve from drinking contingent upon what?

- a) going to meetings
- b) working with others
- c) the maintenance of our spiritual condition

12. What is the central fact of our lives today?

- a) we are not drinking
- b) the absolute certainly that Our Creator has entered into our hearts and lives in a way which is indeed miraculous.
- c) we are members of Alcoholics Anonymous

Answer Key Next Page



ANSWERS WITH REFERENCE (Big Book 4th edition)

- 1. c) page 151, paragraph 2, line 9
- 2. b) page 34, paragraph 2, line 11
- 3. a) page 64, paragraph 3
- 4. a) page 89, paragraph 1
- 5. c) page 33, paragraph 1, line 91
- 6. b) page 44, paragraph 1, line 4
- 7. b) page 568, paragraph 3, line 2
- 8. c) page 62, paragraph 1
- 9. b) page 39, paragraph 1, line 5
- 10. a) page 84, paragraph 2, line 9
- 11. c) page 85, paragraph 1, line 4
- 12. b) page 25, paragraph 2, line 5





Send Stories and announcements to : newsletter@idahoarea18aa.org

Upcoming 2021 Events

Because of the COVID-19 Virus, Please Check Area Website to Make Sure the Event is not cancelled

2021 Grapevine & La Vina Carry the Message Project

See new Carry the Message Video: www.youtube.com/c/AAGrapevine

(Link to Flyer)

District 6 Annual Green Canyon Campout

September 3 – 5, 2021

Green Canyon Hot Springs Campground, Newdale, ID

(Link to Flyer)

AA On the Rocks Monthly Speaker Meeting

Saturday, September 4, 2021 Dinner: 5:00 pm Speaker: 6:00 pm

Caldwell Church of Christ - 4012 S 10th Ave, Caldwell, ID

(Link to Flyer)

Districts 1, 6, and Utah 69 – Men's Spiritual Retreat

September 10 – 12, 2021

Lava Hot Springs, Lava, ID

(Link to Flyer)

Rexburg Upper Valley AA Sausage Fest

Saturday, September 18, 2021 – Begins at noon

Beaver Dick Park - Hwy 33 and 6000 W, Rexburg, ID

(Link to Flyer)

AA Pocatello 74th Anniversary Celebration

Saturday, September 18, 2021 – 4:00 – 8:30 pm

Central Christian Church – 918 E Center St, Pocatello, ID (Basement)

(Link to Flyer)

TSNAC Picnic & BBQ

Saturday, September 25, 2021 – 12:00 – 6:00 pm

Kleiner Park, A1 Pavilion – 1900 N Records Ave, Meridian, ID

(Link to Flyer)

Monthly Carry the Message – Literature Event

4th Tuesday of the month – Tuesday, September 28, 2021 / 6:30 pm

Zoom Meeting ID: 834 4239 4760 Password: 164

(Link to Flyer)

2021 Fall Assembly and Convention

Friday, October 1 - Sunday, October 3, 2021

Burley Inn and Convention Center, Burley, ID

Register online: From the website Home Page

Select: Area 18 Event Registration — 2021 Fall Assembly & Convention

OR Print and Mail a printed Registration: Click Here

How would you like to chair a meeting at the Alcathon?

Check out the sign-up sheet <u>here</u>

SAVE THE DATE: District 10 Old Timers Speaker Meeting

Saturday, October 16, 2021 Dinner: 5:00 pm - Speakers: 6:30 pm

Magic Valley Fellowship Hall, Twin Falls, ID

(Link to Flyer)

District 3 Fall Workshop – Service

Saturday, October 23, 2021 - 10:00 am - 1:00 pm

Zoom: Meeting ID: 82930314031 Passcode: 491308

(Link to Flyer)

2022

SAVE THE DATE

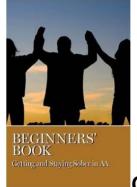
2022 Spring Assembly & Convention

May 6 - 8, 2022

Red Lion Inn, Pocatello ID

(Link to Flyer)

FLYERS BELOW





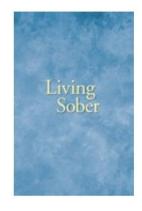
CARRY THE MESSAGE— LITERATURE EVENT FOR











Frequently Asked Questions About A.A.

Monthly events—4th Tuesday of the month at 6:30PM via ZOOM.

ZOOM Meeting ID 834 4239 4760 Password 164

Themed meetings ideal for:

- Those wanting to start literature centric meetings,
- Literature Reps to find out what 's new and what's in many of the AA publications,
- Anyone wanting to get more from their sobriety in service to others and Carry the Message

ANNUAL CAMPOUT

Labor Day Weekend, nights of September 3-5, 2021

Saturday September 4th-hamburgers, hotdogs & fries will be provided. Guest Speaker. Bring your favorite side dish to share©





Green Canyon Hot Springs Campground

RV Sites - \$25/nigh+.50 per person w/electric & water hookup Tent sites - \$20.00 + 0.50 per person

CONTACT Green Canyon Hot Springs to reserve a spot

208-458-4454



50/50 and RAFFLE -Must be present to win-

AA ON THE ROCKS' MONTHLY DINNER & A SPEAKER

Saturday: Sept 4th

Dinner 5:00 pm Speaker 6:00 pm

SPEAKER

ROSIE R

(from the AS BILL SEES IT group)

We provide the dinner, ...



 $$\dots$$ you provide the appetite so come and join us - with or without potluck items. held at

4012 S 10th Ave, Caldwell, Idaho

(Caldwell Church of Christ entrance in back, use 10th St driveway)

AA POCATELLO 74TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION

HOSTED BY DISTRICT 1

CENTRAL CHRISTIAN CHURCH, 918 E. CENTER STREET (BASEMENT)

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 18TH, 2021

BAKED POTATO BAR POTLUCK (BRING TOPPINGS, SALAD/DESSERT)

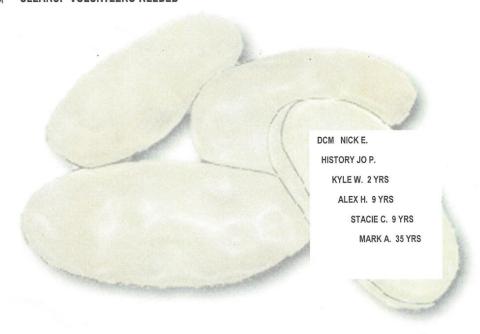
ROOM SETUP VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

5-6:30 PM POTATO BAR POTLUCK (BRING WHAT YOU WOULD LIKE ON YOUR POTATO)

5-7 PM VISIT GRAPEVINE AND ARCHIVES DISPLAY TABLES

7-8:15 PM SPEAKER MEETING

8:30 PM CLEANUP VOLUNTEERS NEEDED



Special Events Chairman Geri E.

If you have any questions or want to volunteer, let me know.

Rexburg Upper Valley AA



September 18 @ noon

Weekend Warriors will be doing the cooking!!
The speaker is Area 18 delegate Thad
There will be Tshirts for sale!!!

Any questions can be answered by the Rexburg GSR Jared @ 208-313-9609

TSNAC* Picnic & BBQ

Fundraiser

*Treatment Special Needs Accessibilities Correction

Sept. 25th

12:00-6:00 PM

Kleiner Park

A1 Pavilion

\$10

Ticket Donation

Includes food & raffle participation

Purchase online through the central office

www.tvico.net

1st Prize \$200 Visa Gift Card 2nd Prize \$100 Visa Gift Card 3rd Prize \$50 Visa Gift Card

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED:

For more Info contact

Bob: 208-870-2259 Janet: 208-713-8333

Idaho Area 18 Fall Assembly and Convention October 1 – 3, 2021

AA Comes of Age 2.0: Unified in Love and Service



Burley Inn and Convention Center Hosted by District 2 Burley, Idaho - Reservations 208-678-3501 For Information: **Ask for Area 18 Fall Convention Rates** David F. 208-720-1205 Earl M. 208-309-1594 Discounted Room Rates: Burley Inn \$94.00/2 Queens or 1 King/Up to 4 guests Steve B. 208-720-7498 Budget Inn \$64.00/Up to 4 guests First Name: _____ Last Name: ____ Address: _____ City: _____ State: ____ Zip Code: _____ Phone Number: _____ Email: _____ Name on Badge: _____ AA District: _____ Al-Anon District: _____ Home Group Name: _____ __ GSR __ DCM __ Delegate __ Past Delegate __ Area Committee __ Al-Anon Member __ AA Member Service Position: __ GSR **EVENT EARLY** LATE LAST DAY FOR PRE-REGISTRATION IS AUGUST 31ST Registration __ \$25 **EARLY REGISTRATION FUNDS MUST BE RECEIVED** __ \$25 __\$34 __\$40 Banquet Dinner **BEFORE SPEPTEMBER 1ST** Sunday Breakfast Buffet ___ \$20 __\$25 Please Mail Form and Payment To: Idaho Area 18, Inc. Total Amount: _____ P.O. Box 6033, Twin Falls, ID 83303-6033

SAVE THE DATE

OLD TIMERS SPEAKER MEETING

MAGIC VALLEY FELLOWSHIP HALL

801 2nd Ave N, Twin Falls, ID 83301



SATURDAY OCTOBER 16, 2021

DINNER: TRI-TIP 5:00 PM SPEAKERS: 6:30 PM BRING A SIDE DISH TO SHARE RAFFLE PRIZES 50/50 RAFFLE



Save the Date

Spring Assembly/Convention

Idaho Area 18

May 6, 7, & 8, 2022

Red Lion Inn, Pocatello

AA Comes of Age 2.0



For more info contact: Terri N. 208.251.1710 or Lisa J. 208.241.5895

See You in Burley October 2021!