

THIS DAY

www.nnjaa.org
News & Notes from NNJ General Service Area 44 and Northern New Jersey Intergroup

A message from your Area Delegate



Greetings, my fellow Area 44 AA members,

It's hard to believe that summer is almost over and I hope that you've had some time to enjoy the beautiful weather. We have accomplished much in the first half of the year including the Pre-conference reports of "March Madness", a Mini-conference Assembly to help prepare me for the General Service Conference, 7 Post-conference reports in June and two other Assemblies, one in January and one in June. It's time to look at what the rest of the year will bring.

At the June Assembly, the GSRs and the other voting members of the Area approved a resolution to send an item to the 70th General Service Conference in 2020 to create a PSA for the older alcoholic. Our timing is good. At the July board meeting, the General Service Board created a new sub-committee to address the needs of older alcoholics which will include our new NERT (North-east Regional Trustee) as one of its members. I will submit this item to the Conference Coordinator shortly and it will probably be sent to the Trustees' Public Information for consideration.

In July, the Area 44 Grapevine committee discussed and approved a recommendation to rename the Grapevine Conference committee to the Grapevine and La Vina committee. Over the past few years, several advisory actions have attempted to achieve parity between the Grapevine for the English community and La Vina for the Spanish community. This would be one more step in that direction. The next step will be to bring this to the Area, and we'll see where it goes from there. Hopefully, this item will come before my Grapevine Conference committee at next year's General Service Conference.

Another event that took place in early August that we have been talking about was the \$8.06 challenge. Many of us here in the Area contributed our \$8.06 on 8/6 using the newly released online contribution system rolled out by GSO as part of the new ERP (Enterprise Resource Planning) system which is being

used to consolidate various older computer systems at the General Service Office including the replacement for the FNV system used by Registrars which will be called MyPortal.

There are a few other items in the works that you may be hearing more about in the coming months. One of these relates to an item that we submitted last year to the Conference Coordinator to create a new pamphlet on Service Sponsorship. This item was sent to the Trustees' Literature Committee who took no action and did not send this on to the Literature Conference Committee for consideration. A few of us are considering another approach that would include utilizing existing literature so that we can provide the necessary information on service sponsorship which would be useful to the Fellowship in fulfilling their service obligations. Dr. Bob said it best that when you consider the essential elements of our Fellowship, it comes down to love and service.

I want to once again thank you for giving me the opportunity to be of service to the members of our Area and to this Fellowship that I love so much.

Yours truly in AA love and service,
Jeff B.
Area 49 Delegate
Grapevine committee

A message from your Area Chair



Came to Believe

As I reflect on the topic of Came to Believe for this edition of This Day, I think about coming to believe in various ways. Before AA, I believed in all the wrong things. I believed I needed a drink to do life. I believed I was unworthy, that I was unlovable. I believed in a lot of old ideas, especially when it came to the existence of a God. When I came to AA over 22 years ago, I had serious resentments against the idea and existence of a God. The phrase Came to Believe resonated with the religion of my childhood, and I wanted nothing to do with it. As I attended meetings, I began to come to believe in my sponsor and the AA program. I was beginning to feel better and see others like me who were living life without a drink and appeared to be somewhat happy. I was coming to be-

lieve that I no longer needed a drink to do life and that I could love myself and others, that faith could eliminate fear. As I went through the steps, I was stuck on Step Three. I was in a lot of pain and was told by my sponsor that I was unwilling to be willing to believe. I was so stuck on my old ideas that I was blocking myself from the opportunity to come to believe in other ideas. This caused me great pain until the one day I was finally willing to get down on my knees and say the Third Step Prayer. After that, I began to experience some relief. As the years have passed, I continue to pray for willingness to set aside my old ideas for new ones. As time has gone on, I have come to believe in the power of service to others. I have been given the gift of willingness to make myself available to the program of AA and to others. I have come to believe that God uses me to do his will, and in turn, I have been granted a daily reprieve from the obsession to drink. I came, came to, and came to believe.

Maureen R.
Area 44 Chair

A message from your Intergroup Chair



The 11% Goal

What's Intergroup? What's Area? What's a Service Committee? What's a Standing Service Committee? What's a Joint Service Committee? Both newcomers and journeymen in this program can ask themselves or fellow group members those five questions and there is a possibility that a clear-cut answer to all questions will not be found!

The service structure of Northern NJ as it extends from the NY border down to the shore can be a bit confusing to many of us, even those of us who serve as Intergroup Reps or GSRs! I, myself, serving as IG Delegates' Chair since May of this year, may be able to answer those questions better than some, but that comes from almost a decade of service at Intergroup, and even with that, I am still learning new things every day. So, while I could fill a volume on the varying levels and branches of service in our geographic footprint, I will try to focus more on a singular subject than the broad expanse.

To begin, let me first answer the first two questions informally. Area, or Area 44 to be specific,

is the official AA Service Structure that extends "up" to GSO in NYC, down to and through the Districts, and then to the home groups and individual AA members. Intergroup, on the other hand, acts as a Central Office specifically in the northern NJ area that responds to phone and email inquiries, maintains meeting lists, maintains group records, and supports the member groups in carrying the AA message. Alas, this is just a very brief synopsis of these two organizations, and if you want to learn more, I encourage you to check out the www.nnjaa.org website as there is a litany of information there at your fingertips!

But what I really want to write about is committees! Many of you reading this have served on some sort of committee at some point in your life, whether it was in school, at work, at a social club or with a community organization. Just like in our outside lives, AA is also full of committees! Intergroup has several of what we call "Standing Committees" that were formed to fulfill a specific function in support of the groups and members. IG has Standing Committees such as Nightwatch and Bookers, which most of you readers will be familiar with. These committees are made up exclusively of AA members. Similarly, Area 44 has Standing Committees that are also specific to the functioning of their organization. Examples such as Literature and Grapevine are just two of many (a full list can be found, once again, at nnjaa.org). Not only have many of these committees been born out of a specific need in our geographic area, but they also extend from the recommendations in our Service Manual.

Now we get to the good stuff- JOINT COMMITTEES! These are committees that are jointly chaired and jointly funded by Intergroup and Area 44! We
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NEXT ISSUE DEADLINE NOV 14TH
newsletter@nnjaa.org

Intergroup contd from page 1
have 7 of them: Public Information, CPC, Newsletter, Website, History & Archives, Corrections and Treatment. So, what do you know about these committees? Well, if you're reading this article, you already know about Newsletter! And if you've ever seen an AA sign while traveling NJ Transit, you know about Public Information! Was it a doctor, nurse, EMT, judge, lawyer, or judicial clerk who told you about AA? If so, you've experienced the hand of CPC! Ever used the online meeting finder? That's our website joint committee! Learned about our local AA history from a trifold at the Area Convention or AA event? Thank the History & Archives committee. Heard about AA from a group that spoke at your treatment center? I'll give you just one guess as to how that happened...

I began this article with some questions (and after re-reading it, it appears I filled the middle with a lot of questions too), so I may as well end this with some more questions. What service to AA are you doing outside of your home group? Service is one of our three legacies, so I ask you to ask yourself how you are fulfilling this leg of the legacy triangle. Or let me put this another way: when you picked up this copy of This Day, did you think about how it came to fruition? When you saw that NJ Transit poster, did you wonder who printed it and how it got there? When a member of the non-AA professional community mentioned AA to you, did you wonder how they knew about it? When you looked up your last meeting on our website, did you wonder who coded all that info? When you viewed the old documents from our AA past, did you ponder who made that possible? I'll stop there with the rhetorical questions as I think you already know the answer. All these things were accomplished by local AA members who have enriched their sobriety and their lives by doing service beyond the group level.

So, yet another question: how have you given back to the committees that have so freely given to you?

I've been known to belabor a point from time to time, and this article may be no exception to that, but I will begin to end it here. As I said before, I have spent almost 10 years attending IG Delegates meetings, and while the names and the faces have changed many times, one thing has always been a constant. Month to month, the plea from almost every committee has been the same: "We need help! No technological or specific expertise are necessary!" These joint com-

mittees need help in every way. Taking notes, making coffee, giving reports, handling finances, delivering literature, etc. I assure you, there is a role for you on these committees!

It's long been said, both inside and outside of AA, that on any committee, 10% of the people do 90% of the work. My hope is that this article can get us to at least 11%.

PLEASE EMAIL ME at Intergroup-Chair@nnjaa.org if this article has inspired or motivated you to do service beyond your home group in any way. I am more than happy to chat with you about immediate needs regarding the opportunity to give back and to help the still sick and suffering alcoholic through service on our joint committees.

Yours, in service,
Justin B.
Intergroup Delegates' Chair



Need a Service Opportunity?

The first time I heard about Nightwatch was in 1998 when our group was passing around the 12th Step Contact signup sheet. I had no idea what it was and how it worked, and I just could not understand the difference between that sheet and the sheet the group filled out to take a week of calls. It would be another ten years before I would take a commitment with Nightwatch, answering the phones as a fill-in for a person who could not take a shift. I have been involved on and off since then. Both taking calls and being a personal contact are very rewarding service opportunities. They do not require a car as you can do them from your home; you just simply need a phone. I have spoken to many wonderful people who have called in looking for help and am aware of a few success stories experienced by those of us who do answer the phones. I have been at many local, regional and national service events around the country and our Nightwatch Committee is one of the very few that operates as it does, ensuring someone is there to help the potential newcomer 24/7.

Our experiences through Nightwatch can be with us for a very long time. The one that comes to mind all the time happened one morning when I was leaving for work. Before turning the calls back over to the answering service, I answered one last call. It was a woman who was at the end of her drinking and just not sure what to do. I called her back on my cell phone and we talked the whole time I was driving to

work. I convinced her to get to a meeting that day – which she did. We stayed in touch and I was invited to attend her one-year anniversary, which was such a privilege and an honor. Five years later, she is still in the rooms and we keep in touch a couple of times a year. We on Nightwatch do not get a lot of those experiences, but when we do, we are grateful. If you and/or your group are interested in learning more about Nightwatch, please reach out to nightwatch@nnjaa.org and one of the coordinators will get back to you. We are more than willing to come out to your group to do a presentation and help you get a commitment.

With Gratitude,
Linda KK
Piscataway

Newsletter Committee

Greetings from the Newsletter Committee!

Our committee has been quite busy recently getting ready for our fall edition. We still need an Alternate Area Chair and an Intergroup Co-Chair, although there are a few interested AA members waiting in the wings. The Alternate Chair would fill in as needed, and the Intergroup Chair would deliver a report at the Intergroup Delegates' Meeting the first Thursday of every month. Our committee could use your help, as we are a very small group. New ideas and suggestions are always welcome, so please join us! We meet every third Thursday at 6:00 pm at the Area 44 Office in South Plainfield at 2325 Plainfield Avenue, 2nd floor, rear entrance.

Our winter edition is currently accepting articles. Our theme will be Holidays in Recovery, but all stories of experience, strength, and hope are welcome. In addition, Intergroup and Area Officers, Committee Chairs, DCM's, GSR's and Intergroup Delegates are asked to send your reports. Please submit your articles in WORD format and be sure they can be edited. We ask that you limit your writing to 800 words. Flyers can be in PDF format. Our winter deadline is Thursday, November 14.

We are excited to announce our Writing Workshop on Saturday, October 26 from 10 to 1 at the Area 44 Office. Continental breakfast and a light lunch will be served.

Our newsletter needs to be the voice of ALL AA members from Northern New Jersey Intergroup and Area 44. This Day is your newsletter – the voice of New

Jersey AA members!

This Day is your voice!
This Day is my voice!
From the farms of Sussex
To the cities of Essex!
From the hills of Watchung
To the shores of Belmar!
This Day was made for you and me!
YOU AND ME!!

PLEASE LET YOUR VOICE BE HEARD!! Write an article...or two!!

And...look for our "roving reporters" at our Area Convention!

Yours in fellowship and service,
Marybeth H.
Area 44 Newsletter Chair/Interim Intergroup Newsletter Chair for This Day

Cooperation with the Professional Community

Greetings from CPC!

It is an honor and a privilege to serve the Area as your CPC chair. Our Area CPC Committee informs professionals and future professionals about A.A. -- what we are, where we are, what we can do, and how we can attempt to find simple, effective ways of cooperating with professionals without affiliating. The CPC Committee is a joint committee between Area 44 and Intergroup, and we are pleased to announce Hugh A. as the new Intergroup CPC chair. Our committee is currently working on "Sponsor Your Doctor" pamphlets to continue to reach the medical and other professionals in Northern New Jersey. We have recently done presentations at several drug court programs in Northern New Jersey and look forward to giving presentations this coming fall to nursing students and other students about what AA does and does not do. We will be at several District Days of Sharing this Fall along with the Area Convention in September. CPC looks forward to growing our committee with new District CPC Chairs, along with interested AA's, to carry the message to professionals in and around Area 44.

Sincerely,
Mark D.
Area 44 CPC Chair



Heard It Through the Grapevine

As I sat down to put pen to paper (okay, okay - fingers to keyboard) I reflected on early sobriety. In early sobriety, I had some pretty decent health issues.
contd on page 3

Grapevine contd from page 2
 Some caused by my drinking and some just a part of life. All I could do was go to doctors, go to AA and fulfill my service obligations. Service and AA kept me busy to the point that I didn't have the time to think about a drink. I have some minor stuff going on right now where I need to push through much like I did seven years ago. This too shall pass.

The dog days of summer are here, and fall is approaching. That means it's almost Convention time! Convention time is a special time for the Grapevine Committee as the workshop we do is a play. The play this year is based on Mary Poppins. As of this "writing" we have started rehearsals and a fun time will be had indeed. If not by the audience, then definitely by the Grapevine Players! If you've made it this far in my article, well, bully for you!

This is where I get down to the usual. Grapevine is always looking for Grapevine Reps (GVRs) and Representantes de La Viña (RLVs) from your Homegroups and Districts. If Grapevine doesn't seem a right fit but you still want to get involved, then there are many other opportunities for service in AA. Did you know that this Newsletter is put out by a small number of people? The Newsletter Committee could use your help. Really, any committee could use your help - whatever your time and interests allow. I may go on about service a bit, but I want to share because what a benefit it has been to me and my sobriety!

We have a recommendation working its way down the triangle on creating spiritual parity with La Viña. You should be hearing more about this in the future. Our latest book, *Take Me to Your Sponsor*, is doing well. The new calendars and pocket planners have also arrived. 2020 is almost here. Yikes! If you have any questions, feel free to reach out: grapevine@nnjaa.org.

In love and Service,
 Jim O', Area 44 Grapevine Chair

RUS SERVICE CORP T/A NNJGS AREA 44

TREASURER'S REPORT

une

SUMMARY OF ACTIVITY FOR THE PERIOD (Per Checkbook)		Money Mkt	Checking	Totals
Opening Account Balances for Current Period	(May 30, 2019)	\$82,800.49	\$23,844.68	\$106,645.17
Revenue for the Period		\$5.44	\$25,440.76	\$25,446.20
Expenses for the Period		\$0.00	(\$17,536.42)	(\$17,536.42)
Transfer between Money Market and Checking				\$0.00
Ending Balance for All Accounts for Current Period	une	\$82,805.93	\$31,749.02	\$114,554.95

CURRENT BANK RECONCILIATION BY TREASURER FOR PERIOD		Money Mkt	Checking	Totals
Statement Balances	une	\$82,805.93	\$34,114.84	\$116,920.77
Outstanding Checks		\$0.00	(\$2,365.82)	(\$2,365.82)
Outstanding Deposits		\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Adjusted Bank Balances	une	\$82,805.93	\$31,749.02	\$114,554.95

Variance in Reconciliation				\$0.00
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Designated Funds at	une	
Jailbox Contributions		\$11,187.90
International Hospitality Suite		\$2,714.82
Total Designated Funds:		\$13,902.72

ANALYSIS OF CHECKING ACCOUNT (Balance should not exceed two months average total expenses)

Current Checking Account Balance	\$31,749.02
Less: Prior 12 Month's Average Monthly Expenses Times Two	(\$38,972.00)
Over / (Under)	(\$7,222.98)

ANALYSIS OF PRUDENT RESERVE

Total Cash in Bank (Not Including Convention Acct)	\$114,554.95
Less: Designated Funds (Jailbox, etc.)	(\$13,902.72)
Less: Checking Account Guidelines (2 month average expenses)	(\$38,972.00)
PRUDENT RESERVE FUNDS	\$61,680.23
Less: Calculated Prudent Reserve (50% of Prior Years Budgeted Expenses)	(\$48,960.00)
Over / (Under)	\$12,720.23

SUMMARY OF OFFICIAL APPROVALS / REVIEWS

Individual/Group	Action	Completed Through
Treasurer	Approved	May
Alternate Treasurer	Approved	May 2019
Finance Committee	Approved	May 2019
Officers	Reviewed	May 2019
ACM	Approved	Mar 2019
Assembly	Approved	Jan 2019



Greetings from your History & Archives Committee!

We are grateful for the opportunity to serve in advancing understanding about Northern New Jersey's important role in AA's history, and we encourage your group or district to participate as well.

We have many displays about various aspects of our history, which can be checked out by

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groups and districts for your event. We are also happy to come out and represent our committee, tell about what we do and share one of our many presentations, which you can now find on our portal on the Northern NJ Intergroup website: www.nnjaa.org/service/archives.

Speaking of our website, I want to tell a story about how my Higher Power always seems to put me in the right place at the right time when I'm willing to serve. Our website has an audio archives section, which features over a dozen recordings of AA meetings from the 1950s and

60s. Among them you can find recordings of Barry L., who wrote "Living Sober" and Bob L. from The Belmar Group, who was the Panel 13 Delegate from Northern New Jersey in 1964. But, you say, what about the Higher Power part?

Well, we've recently added 3 interviews of 3 long-time AA members, Bill D., Bill M. and Jim O'R., who got sober in the 40s and 50s, telling their stories of sobriety. We are still finding many members with 40 plus years of sobriety to interview, and recently I had the good fortune to interview *contd on page 4*



CONTRIBUTIONS

- 1) Randolph Saint Matthew's Wake Up and Smell the Coffee
- 2) Netcong Saint Matthew's Wake Up and Smell the Coffee

- 3) Dover Women's Group
- 4) Elizabeth Friday Night
- 5) New Brunswick Friday night
- 6) East Dover Toms River Monday Night
- 7) Raritan Valley Sommerville
- 8) Blood and Guts
- 9) LIATO Teaneck
- 10) Metuchen Speaker Meeting
- 11) Happy Destiny Group
- 12) New Brunswick Friday Night
- 13) North Arlington Round Table, Dist. 13

- 14) Bellville Thursday Night, Dist. 13
- 15) Lafayette Tuesday Night Women's Meeting, Sussex County
- 16) Wake Up and Smell the Coffee Group, Randolph
- 17) Recovery Hall, Dist. 13
- 18) Sparta Monday Night Beginners' Meeting, Group # 000109200
- 19) Franklin Guts Group
- 20) Friday Night Guts Group
- 21) Sparta NJ, Group # 647489
- 22) Monday Night Willing to

- Change Group
- 23) Men in Recovery Group # 719284
- 25) Tuesday Lafayette Women's Step Meeting Group
- 26) Group # 000109200
- 27) There is a Solution Wednesday 3:00 p.m., Group # 006689830....
- 28) Lakewood New Life Group

THANK YOU!!!

UPCOMING DISTRICT & AREA EVENTS...

NNJGS Area 44 - District 17

DAY OF SHARING 2019



Saturday, October 19, 2019
10:00 AM – 2:00 PM

The Alanon Association Club
384 – 7th Avenue
Newark, New Jersey

*“Our Journey to a New Freedom
and a New Happiness”*

Speakers:

Peggy S., Easy Does It
Anita C., Primary Purpose - Newark
Charles M., Easy Does It
Antonio T., Brick Church

STANDING COMMITTEES PRESENTATIONS

Continental Breakfast & Lunch Provided

Please join us for a day of fellowship and information. Thank you.

History contd from page 3

Gina C., who got sober in Bergen County in late 1973.

When I was recording her interview, I asked her how she found out about AA. She told me her college roommate, Robin, was a member of Al-a-Teen, and that Robin's mother was also a member of Al-Anon. She was invited to visit her friend at home and was introduced to Robin's father, Bill, who was a member of our fellowship and had been sober for 20 years. So, I figured, 'what are the chances', but asked her what Bill's last name was, and wouldn't you know it, it was the very same Bill D. mentioned above, who we interviewed back in 2002. What are the chances of that? Pretty good, I'd say because God seems to make his will very obvious to me when it comes to serving our committee. We also feature a talk from Bill, from January 1964. You can find these and many other recordings by going to the Northern NJ AA website and looking for our banner scrolling at the bottom of the page.

So, think about it. When you spend a little quiet time with yourself and your Higher Power, see if you're guided to serve your district in our committee. We would love to have you! You don't have to be an expert, just be willing to be in the right place at the right time. Our committee meets the second Wednesday of each month at the Intergroup Office in Union at 7:00 p.m.

Right now, we're busily preparing for our annual presentation at the Area 44 Convention next month. As you may know, this is the 80th Anniversary of our Big Book, which was born right here in New Jersey, so we have something really special planned. It's called "The Books Behind 'The Book' – Where Did the Big Book Come From?", and it will explore the many books the pioneers of our program were influenced by when they wrote our basic text.

See you at the convention!
Jim P.
History & Archives
Area 44 Chair

GSR Mid-Winter Luncheon Committee



Hello everyone,

My name is Frank F., and I am an alcoholic. In the service of Area 44, I wear two hats. I share my thoughts today as Alternate GSR/Mid-Winter Luncheon (MWL) Chair. I also have the honor of serving as Alternate History and Archives Chair. It was in the History and Archives Committee where I first met our current GSR Mid-Winter Luncheon Committee Chair, David E., who asked if I would be interested in being a member of the MWL Committee. Allow me to give you a little history of the GSR/MWL and our committee.

Save the Date!

Writing Workshop

Presented by the Newsletter Committee

Saturday, October 26, 2019, 10 am – 1 pm

Area 44 Office
2325 Plainfield Avenue, 2nd Floor, Rear Entrance
South Plainfield, New Jersey

Participation by Grapevine Committee Members

www.njaa.org
News & Notes from NNJ General Service Area 44 and Northern New Jersey Intergroup

The first Area Luncheon on record was held at the Sheraton Regal in Piscataway, New Jersey on April 5, 1981, and it has moved around to several locations since then. Although attendance was small at first, we now average about 320 AA's and their families.

The purpose of the luncheon is threefold: It focuses primarily on the GSR's commitment to the group and to A.A. as a whole. Considering the time that is put into being a GSR, the job often seems to go unnoticed and under-appreciated, so the luncheon is a way of showing gratitude for their efforts to keep the lifeblood of A.A., the home group, involved in A.A. worldwide. Secondly, the luncheon introduces the new GSR's to the entire area and the area officers. The GSR's participate in putting on the luncheon by contributing with their talks. Lastly, it allows our family members to join us in a social setting with our AA Service Family.

The topic of the fall issue of This Day is "Came to Believe." What I have come to believe is that the action of service enhances sobriety! Are you thinking about a service commitment? Please come join us on the 1st Monday of the month at 7 PM at the Area Office, 2325 Plainfield Ave., South Plainfield.

Frank F., GSR/Mid-Winter Luncheon Chair

Treatment Committee



Our Treatment Committee

Since its beginning in 1935, AA has cooperated with treatment facilities. Bill W. was a product of a treatment facility, Towns Hospital, in New York City. After having put together some sobriety, Bill returned to Towns Hospital to work with other alcoholics.

The purpose of the Treatment Committee is to coordinate the work of individual and group AA members interested in carrying our message of recovery. It attempts to reach alcoholics in treatment centers and is responsible for "bridging the gap" from the facility to an AA group in the individual's community. A Treatment Committee may function within the structure of a General Service Committee on the Area or District level, or it may serve within the structure of a Central Office/Intergroup. Before forming these committees, an individual group or member sometimes handles this Twelfth Step service.

As AA groups grow in number in a community, experience suggests that a committee works more effectively than groups or individual AAs alone. The principle of carrying the AA message to treatment facilities is foundational to helping alcoholics to recover. The pamphlet "AA

Treatment contd on page 5

Treatment contd from page 4 in Treatment Settings" describes different types of meetings in treatment centers.

Our Treatment Committee is composed of an Area Chair, Alternate Chair, Secretary, Intergroup Chair and a Bridging the Gap Coordinator. It is a joint committee that meets on the second Wednesday of every month at 7:30 pm at the Area office. During the meeting, the District chairpersons review the commitments we bring to treatment facilities and any openings that we have.

The Committee members also attend District and Area events to recruit more members and to fill commitments. The committee

My Service on the Corrections Committee

I was introduced to Alcoholics Anonymous in 1981 in Mexico, which is my country of origin as well as the place where I started this marvelous program where I have been able to stop drinking until today.

I would like you to know that the person who brought me to the program made me understand right away that the key to maintaining my sobriety is to bring the message to people who still don't know there is a program where they can stop drinking. For that reason, he invited me to bring this message to the prison near where I was living. Naturally, I refused to go, and it was then that he said this to me: "Look, if God wants you to return to the place where you left, only he will make the decision as to what will happen to you." With those words, I was so convinced I went despite my lack of willingness, and in truth, I felt the power to tell people that today I belong to A.A. I also told them I like to listen to the experiences that pour out of group members, and that I can identify with them. I realize that I suffer from this destructive disease of alcoholism and that there is no human power that can stop it. I then let them know that I continue to stop drinking only by daily attendance at different types of meetings where there is a good message, including corrections. In all honesty, I have discovered that I need to share what I have found with the groups within the correctional facilities.

Due to some economic problems I was facing, I realized I needed to come to this country, where it was recommended to me that I look for a home group in order to maintain my sobriety. In this home group, I got involved in

also works with treatment facilities to make sure they have AA brochures for their clients. Another important program is Bridging the Gap. When clients

"Service is a great way to get involved..."

are still in treatment facilities, their counselor can email the Bridging the Gap Coordinator. By doing so, they will be assigned another AA in recovery in their area to assist them when they get out of the treatment facility.

This service is a great way to get involved by signing up with the BTG Coordinator to support another AA coming out of a treatment facility. The email is btg@njjaa.org.

Rosemary B, Area Chair
A.C., Committee Member

the Corrections Committee and proceeded to bring the message of recovery to the correctional facility in North Brunswick. We succeeded, but after an administrative change, they could no longer let us come into the facility. But then we were informed that in Aveland they wanted information about the A.A. program. We formed the first institutional group; it was very interesting because the meeting was weekly and had a lot of members. With some help, we counted a minimum of seventy interns! This group survived and was registered with the Intergroup Office. Following this correctional service work, I found myself bringing the message to the jail in Kearny. Inmates from four pods attended: three for men and one for women, making eight sessions per week. The interesting thing about working with them was constantly receiving new participants and holding quite busy sessions.

It is interesting to find that, in all the institutions that I have visited where we hold meetings to help people learn about the program of Alcoholics Anonymous, there are people who have never heard of our marvelous program. They are grateful because we help them understand that they are not alone, and that the disease attacks in different ways and any type of person, whether man or woman, rich or poor, with money or without. But the most important thing they come to know is that there is a solution.

Happy 24 hours of sobriety.

Gustavo G.
Corrections Committee Member D30
Por la Gracia de Dios (But for the Grace of God)



SPEAK OUT! *This Day Newsletter provides this forum for individual AA's viewpoints and opinions. The opinions expressed here are individual opinions only and not necessarily the opinions of This Day, Area 44, North Jersey Intergroup, or AA as a whole. We welcome your comments, opinions or viewpoints on anything found in this newsletter. — The Editor*

Came to Believe

Came to believe! This phrase possesses much emotional meaning for me. First, in 2016, I had to cope with a cancer scare. There are no words to describe

how I felt as I parked my car in the cancer center. Fortunately, I was quite lucky. After enduring a dozen tests and scans and an operation to remove my infected gallbladder, my appendix, and a piece of my liver, all ended happily.

This experience made mortality a reality, and I realized that I needed help with my drinking. I was following in the footsteps of my older brother who died in 1987 from this disease. I did not want to die. Hence, on a follow-up visit with my doctor, I was - for the first time - honest when she [my doctor] asked if I had a problem with alcohol. I said, "I think I do." My doctor asked if I would mind her giving another one of her patients who was a long-time member of AA my phone number. I agreed.

contd on page 6

Committee on Corrections



This is my 5th year as an AA Volunteer to the Somerset County Jail. I have been the District 35 Corrections Chair since January 2018, with the responsibilities of scheduling the men's meetings twice a week and coordinating with the Social Services Office and the Corrections Officers who manage the jail. It is one of the most rewarding service commitments that I perform, and I share a special bond with the team of volunteers. Death, institutions or jail awaits the unrecovered alcoholic. We meet the fellow alcoholic where they are facing a severe consequence of their disease. Our reward is bringing them hope and news of a solution for their drinking problem. This is the biggest reward possible! Hope.

Yet, service in Treatment is not easy: if you are looking for an easy commitment, look elsewhere. The background check to be approved for the commitment can be long and frustrating; it must be thorough for security reasons. Former inmates are not automatically disqualified, but they must be at least a year removed for a minor infraction and up to five years for a more serious infraction. Each application is taken on a case by case basis. There are rules. We alcoholics hate rules! My sponsor reminds me of this constantly! We are not doing the staff at the jail any favors with our meetings;

they are running a correctional institution. It is a privilege to be granted permission to bring these meetings inside. And when meetings are canceled for various reasons or inmates decide to skip after we've arrived having been processed "in" and taken to the meeting area, I need to repeat this little mantra to myself over and over: "It's a privilege of my sobriety. I get to go into jail and leave the same day!"

Every now and then, an inmate who attended one of our jail meetings shows up at a local meeting after being released. The first time I experienced this, I was amazed: "What are you doing here!???" "Well, you told me my actions within the first hour of my release would determine if I would soon return. You said that inmates who get to a 12-step meeting within 24 hours of release have better than 80% chance of staying OUT of jail. And you said you wanted to see us again, but not in jail. So here I am!"

Kevin M.
Corrections Committee Member

I am responsible...

When anyone, anywhere, reaches out for help, I want the hand of A.A. always to be there.

And for that: I am responsible.

Voces Latinas

Mi servicio en el comité de correccionales

Me inicié dentro de Alcohólicos Anónimos en el año de 1981 en México que es mi país de origen y también el lugar en donde me inicié dentro de este maravilloso programa en donde deje de beber hasta este día.

Quiero decirles que la persona que me llevó al programa me hizo conocer rápidamente que la forma de mantenerme sin probar alcohol es llevar el mensaje a las personas que aún no conocen que hay un programa en donde si se deja de beber. Para ello me invitó a llevar este mensaje al reclusorio del lugar en donde vivía. Lógico es que me negué a ir y fue entonces que me dijo estas palabras, “Mira si Dios quiere que regreses del lugar de donde has salido solo él tomará esa decisión de lo sucederá contigo.” Con esas palabras tan convincentes fui en contra de mi voluntad y la verdad me sentí bien al poder decirles a las personas que hoy pertenezco al programa de A.A. y que me gusta escuchar las experiencias que dentro de los grupos que ahí se vierten, y que yo puedo identificarme y es entonces en donde yo me doy cuenta que padezco de esta enfermedad tan destructora que se llama alcoholismo, y que no hay poder humano que la pueda detener y que en realidad solo la estoy deteniendo con el hecho de asistir diariamente a las diferentes sesiones que tienen los grupos o lugares en donde hay que llevar el mensaje en este caso como en correccionales, en verdad es en donde he descubierto que tengo que compartir lo que encuentro en este caso lo que son los grupos que hay dentro de las correccionales.

Por los problemas económicos a los que enfrente me vi en la necesidad de venir a este país en donde se me recomendó que buscara un grupo para mantenerme sobrio y así lo hice. En este grupo me integré en el comité de correccionales y proseguí llevando el mensaje a la correccional a North Brunswick. Se logró que pasáramos el mensaje, y por situaciones de cambio de administración por un tiempo no dejaron sin poder asistir. Para entonces nos pidieron que en el reclusorio de Avel solicitaban la información del programa y fuimos compañeros de diferentes grupos para formar el primer grupo institucional. Fue muy interesante porque la reunión era semanal con compañeros y contábamos con asistencia de mínimo setenta internos. Este grupo sobrevivió y fue registrado ante la oficina de la O.S.G., y siguiendo el servicio del trabajo de correccionales actualmente me encuentro llevando el mensaje a la correccional de Kearny atendiendo a cuatro pods que son tres de hombres y uno de mujeres, hacienda 8 sesiones por semana. Lo interesante de trabajar con ellos es estar recibiendo constantemente a personas nuevas y teniendo sesiones bastante concurridas.

Es interesante encontrar que en todas las instituciones que me ha tocado visitar y que hacemos las reuniones de dar a conocer el programa de Alcohólicos Anónimos hay personas que no sabían de este maravilloso programa y que están agradecidas porque les dimos a conocer que no están solos y que la enfermedad ataca de diferentes formas y a cualquier persona sea hombre o mujer, rico o pobre, con dinero y sin él, y lo más importante que si hay solución.

Felices 24 horas de sobriedad.

Gustavo G.

D30

Por la Gracia de Dios

Speak Out Contd from page 5

Almost immediately I received a call from this gentleman and went to my first meeting, although by now I had changed my mind and decided I was not an alcoholic. Anyway, I did not dislike the meeting, nor did I dislike the gentleman who took me to

the meeting. He later became my sponsor and still is my sponsor and my support.

Although I did not have an aversion to the meeting, I could not understand how listening to other alcoholics' stories could get me to stop drinking. But I contin-

ued to persist by attending ninety meetings in ninety days. As I continued to take part at these meetings, something spiritual began to happen. Although I was brought up a Catholic and attended all Catholic schools, even teaching high school English in a Catholic institution, I never felt any spiritual connection to the religion. It was all rote ritual. However, the fellowship at the AA meetings allowed me to begin to understand that we all have a higher power that cares for us and wishes us to be happy. I commenced to think that meeting my sponsor was no coincidence. The spiritual connection among the participants - virtual strangers - at the meetings was magical. I started to feel that these AA members were life-long friends. Now many are!

This past Father's Day weekend I attended the Matt Talbot retreat at San Alfonso's Retreat House in Long Branch, New Jersey. There I got the opportunity to see photos of the devastation that Hurricane Sandy caused. The beach looked like a war zone. However, the only object left standing was the cross and the two stone tablets next to the cross. My sponsor, who happens to be a contractor and joined me on this retreat, said that there is no way that this cross should have withstood the hurricane winds.

I came to believe! And I will keep coming! God bless AA!

Tony P.
Branchburg
Bradley Gardens and North
Branch

Came to Believe

It was a long, winding road that I once traveled, filled with what I thought were the highest of highs, but ultimately leading to the lowest of lows. In the end, I lost everything but my life and, in retrospect, I tried damn hard to lose that too. Drinking every waking moment, I had over a 2-month bender - 6 self-detoxing periods not included. I felt that each time I could stop myself from the never-ending cycle of what had become my life would be the last time I would have to feel the effects of withdrawal. Feeling better after a few days, I'd tell myself: this time I can control it, this time will be different, I can drink like normal people, etcetera, etcetera, etcetera...

The psychological game of resisting the one thing that would remove the physical pain I was feeling was one of the hardest things - if not the hardest thing - I have ever done. I was tired of living what had become my "life"; I was done giving up everything for one thing.

I came to believe that if I wanted everything, I needed to give up one thing. Then, I came to know that if I wanted to keep everything I had attained, that one thing needed to stay gone.

Almost a hundred days later and I cannot believe, not in my wildest dreams, where I stand today. Instead, of maintaining what used to be my "life", I am now excelling in it. My journey, like with most of us, is still winding. Navigating life without my old mechanism for dealing with the wins and losses has not been easy, but in my humble opinion, nothing easy is worth having.

Chris R.

Seven Degrees of Listening

As a newcomer to AA in 1976, I was taught that unofficial slogan, "Just bring the mind, and the body will follow." After nearly 16,000 daily meetings, hindsight tells me, "It ain't necessarily so."

As I look around the rooms of my home group and other groups that I attend regularly, I can't help but notice that not everyone seems to be paying attention. Some have that look that tells me only their body is present; their mind is absent. Others have that unmistakable expression of doubt and skepticism that reflects the thought, "This is not for me."

Worst of all, some are not looking at the speaker, but are looking down at that awful I-phone, sometimes tapping away on its tiny keyboard. This causes me to wonder, "Why are they even here?" We long-timers know that osmosis just doesn't work in our rooms.

It seems to me that there is a seven-tiered hierarchy of listening:

1. Just listening and that's all.
2. Listening and actually hearing what is being said.
3. Hearing and also understanding what is being said.
4. Understanding and also comprehending the significance of what is being said.
5. Comprehending and also believing the truth of what is being said.
6. Believing and also accepting that this truth applies to them.
7. And finally, adopting the concept that this truth will

contd on page 7

contd from page 6
work for them if they apply it. There's probably an eighth degree of listening in this hierarchy, but it may take me another 16,000 meetings to discover it. You can bet that I'll be paying close attention to what is being said.

Chuck M.

I Came To

I had 30 years of sobriety. Active in my home group, district, and the Area, I attended and participated in meetings regularly, had a sponsor, went on commitments, and was very active in service. I had done several fourth and fifth steps, made amends, and sponsored others. I read and prayed in the morning, asked God for help with my sobriety, loved AA, and was happy being sober. And yet, somehow, something was missing...

There was a light that shone in the eyes of the newer members of my home group, a peace and serenity, that I lacked. Full of resentments and still playing the victim, I had difficulties, mostly with people, that I railed against. I knew I needed more growth. (I am grateful, at least, that I have always been willing to grow in this program.)

These newbies had gone through the Big Book in order with their sponsors – something that wasn't done much when I came in – and I knew, in my heart of hearts, that I needed to do that, too. Was it too late? Could this old dog learn some new tricks? I asked a member with seven years of solid sobriety to read the Big Book with me, and she agreed. We went through it line by line, page by page, supplementing it with the *Twelve and Twelve* and some other books.

Today, through a series of circumstances, this lovely woman is my sponsor. She taught me that, when it came to alcohol, I had surrendered completely to my Higher Power, but in other matters I lacked faith. I came to understand that without alcohol I am irritable, restless, and discontent if I am not practicing the steps in ALL my affairs. I am a slow

learner - I have what an AA buddy calls "SLOWBRIETY" – but I am learning to see things differently. Even sober, my perceptions can be off, and I forget that most things are not about me at all. What a relief that discovery has been! I am undergoing a spiritual, psychic change after all these years. The sunlight of the spirit is starting to shine through to this old dog, and for that I am grateful. My resentments are far fewer, and I am no longer a victim.

And the best part? I now have the privilege of taking others through the Big Book, supplemented by the *Twelve and Twelve* and some other books, and we go in order, skipping nothing, the way my sponsor did with me!

MH
Early Risers

An Old-timer's Lament

I am frequently annoyed by earth people who ignorantly ask, "Are you still going to those meetings?" As if, after 42 years, I should be cured by now. To which I reply (to myself), "Forgive them, HP, for they know not page 85." We are not cured of alcoholism. What we really have is a daily reprieve, contingent on the maintenance of our spiritual condition.

The truth is, I don't have to go to daily meetings. I don't need to go to daily meetings. I want to go to daily meetings. Why do I want to go to daily meetings? I go because I have grasped, I have accepted, and I have assimilated into my daily life what, to me, is the most fundamental and essential concept of Alcoholics Anonymous. It's first mentioned in Bill's Story (pp. 14-15): "For if an alcoholic failed to perfect and enlarge his spiritual life through work and self-sacrifice for others, he could not survive the certain trials and low spots ahead. If he did not work, he would surely drink again..."

Now, how am I going to practice this principle if I'm not at meetings (preferably on a daily basis)? How am I going to find and help a still-suffering alcoholic seeking a way

**INTERGROUP NEWS 'N NOTES
MEETING UPDATES AUG. AND
SEPT. 2019**

NEW MEETINGS & MEETING UPDATES!!!!

- CHATHAM** – Thurs. 7:30 pm O-D (women) Stanley Congregational Church, 94 Fairmount Avenue
- FLEMINGTON** – Mon. 7 pm O-D Calvary Episcopal Church, 44 Broad Street
- FORT LEE** – Mon. 8 pm O-D First Reformed Church, 2420 Lemoine Ave. (Russian Speaking)
- FREEHOLD** – Fri. 6 pm C-D New Attitudes Clubhouse, 45 Throckmorton Street
- MAHWAH** – Sat. 7:30 pm C-D Church of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, Parish Hall, 47 Island Road (formerly met at Immaculate Conception Church)
- NORTH CALDWELL** – Thurs. 8 pm C-ST Notre Dame Church, 359 Central Avenue (formerly met at St. Anthony's Church)
- OCEAN GROVE** – Sun. 12:30 pm O-S-D (Gay) The Q Spot, 66 S. Main Street
- OLD BRIDGE** – Thurs. 7 pm C-D (men) Club Serenity at St. Ambrose Parish Center, 83 Throckmorton Lane
- ROSELLE** – Sun. 10:45 am O-S-D CHEERS, 340 W. 1st Street
- SADDLE RIVER** – Sat. 10 am C-D (men) Zion Evangelical Church, 94 E. Allendale Road (formerly met in Mahwah)
- STIRLING** – Tues. 10 am O-BB Shrine of St. Joseph, 1050 Long Hill Drive, Community Room, Lower Level
- TOMS RIVER** – Tues. 7 pm – C-ST Redeemer Fellowship, 1644 North Bay Ave

CANCELLED MEETINGS!!!!!!!

- BOONTON** – Mon. 7:30 pm St. Clare's Hospital, 130 Powerville Road
- DOVER** – Fri. 8 pm St. Clare's Hospital, 400 W. Blackwell St. (Route 46)
- FAIRVIEW** – Sat. 1 pm Our Lady of Grace Church, 6th Street & Kamena
- FLEMINGTON** – Fri. 7 pm First Presbyterian Church, 31 N. Union Street
- MILLINGTON** – Wed. 8 pm (Young Peoples) All Saints Episcopal Church, 15 Basking Ridge Road
- MORRISTOWN** – Wed. 7 pm Villa Walsh Academy, Western Avenue
- NEW BRUNSWICK** – Wed. 8 pm O-S 7th Day Adventist Church, 339 Livingston Avenue
- NEW BRUNSWICK** – Sun. 11 am Robert Wood Johnson Hospital, Medical College Bldg., Little Albany Street
- PATERSON** – Sat. 7 pm Second Baptist Church, 72 Carroll Street
- ROSELLE** – Tues. 7:30 pm Heard AME Church, 310 8th Avenue
- SHREWSBURY** – Wed. 8:30 pm C-BB-ST Presbyterian Church, Sycamore Avenue
- TEANECK** – Sat. 9 pm United Methodist Church, 368 Hickory Street

to stop drinking? Should I stand on a street corner waiting for a likely prospect to come along who just happens to be looking for a way out of his trap, seize him by the collar, and start dishing out our life-saving concepts to him?

Self-sacrificial work with others is more than just a time-honored tradition of AA. It's the very heart and soul of this program of recovery. Dr. Silkworth and Dr. Karl Jung testified from long and deep experience to the hopelessness of curing alcoholics.

Then Bill W. stumbled across the missing link of one alcoholic working with another. Before their discovery, nothing had worked, except for "a profound psychic change." But that could not be induced by any professional methodology from psychiatrists, psychologists, social workers, clergypersons, et al. Their incantations had as much effect on alcoholics in treatment as lectures from Charley Brown's parents, heard only as the "wha-wha-wha" sound of a trombone.

The problem was, those therapists weren't alcoholics themselves. All they had to offer was book-learning (wha-wha-wha). But when one recovering alcoholic shared his experience, strength, and hope with another, still-suffering alcoholic who

had an honest desire to stop drinking, that, and only that, made sense to the patient.

The payoff to the sober alcoholic for his self-sacrificial work was that he got to keep the gift of sobriety for one more day. As the old-timer said, "I've worked with hundreds of newcomers, and every one was a success. Many of them got drunk again, but I didn't." And it's been working that way ever since.

Here's a practical test of the validity of this concept: ask a relapser who is fortunate enough to come back who he was working with self-sacrificially when he went out? More than likely you'll get either a blank look (from one who doesn't get it) or an angry glare (from one who knew but didn't practice it.)

So, earth-person, you ask me why I still go to AA meetings every day? The only answer you'll understand is, "That's what I like to do." To myself I say, "That's the only way I can stay sober." Case closed.

Chuck M.
Daily Reprieve, Freehold

**Topic for the Winter Issue:
Holidays in Recovery**

**Next Issue Deadline:
November 14, 2019**

**Send your articles of 800
words or less to:
newsletter@nnjaa.org**

On Making AA Coffee

I have heard "I would do it, but I don't know how" way too many times. So, here's everything you ever or never wanted to know about making coffee.

Since we can now no longer "entreat our wives to brew gallons of coffee", we need to know how to do it ourselves. It is truly amazing how many people do not or claim to not know how to make coffee. We must have been spoiled by the "venti half-caf dark mocha-mocha-jamoka with a shot of hazelnut" place. Or the K-machine.

Now on to actual coffee-making! First, you will need to assemble your tools. Coffee pot, coffee, measuring cup and water. Not too complicated so far. First, locate the coffee pot(s) and all their pieces. This is not a trivial task, as the people who "helped" clean up last week left the cord on the counter, threw the innards in a box with the signs and other paraphernalia, and shoved the pot in a corner minus the lid.

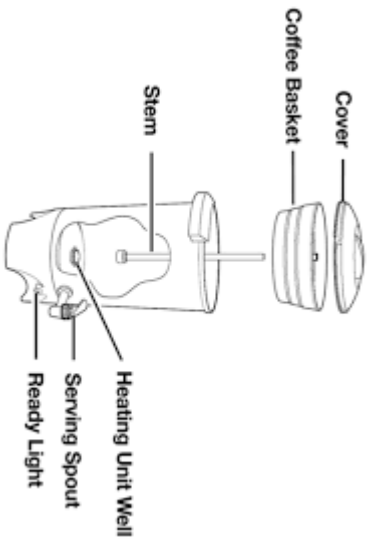
But the pot has many pieces, and in the rush to "help clean up" they can get scattered. The primary item is the pot itself. That's not bad, it's big and shiny. With luck its pieces will be within it: cord, stem, basket, and lid. If not, go a-hunting. Leave no stone unturned; you will be baffled at the places someone deemed suitable for their storage. You may find a piece from a pot that was discarded 3 years ago because that piece was missing. Now that you have the pieces, here's how they fit together (Fig 1):

Now on to making the coffee.

How much? Every AA pot that I've seen has a **stain ring around the pot** that indicates the amount made for that meeting over the ages. First, fill the pot with a little water and swish your finger around in the recess in the bottom. Things grow in there. Then, dump that dirty water! Start filling again and drain a little water through the spout; stuff gets stuck in there too. Now fill to the indicated level with cold water. Yes, **cold** water. Regardless of what the Good Idea Fairy says, trying to use hot water will not make the coffee quicker. It will also turn out weak because it doesn't brew long enough. Note the number on the pot at the water level. Insert the stem and basket. Make sure the stem is in the recess; if it isn't the pot will not pump water through the coffee and you will get hot water. If the sink is such that it is a pain to fill the pot, then remind yourself to get a suitable pitcher at the dollar store.

How much coffee to put in the basket? **One cup for sixteen indicated on the pot.** That is a measuring cup, not an extra-large coffee cup. If you don't have a measuring cup a 6 fl oz coffee cup will do. Look on the bottom of the cup; the size will be on there. So, 2 cups for 32 cups, 3 for 48 cups and so on.

How long is it going to take? According to the manuals for many pots, 1 minute per cup. Your mileage may vary. It is a good planning number to make sure your coffee-deprived friends will not get out the torches and pitchforks.



(Fig 1)

For hot water for tea and decaf, assemble the pot the same way as for coffee. The stem will mix the water and it will wind up being done quicker and hotter. In addition, the pot may scream like a Banshee without the stem inserted.

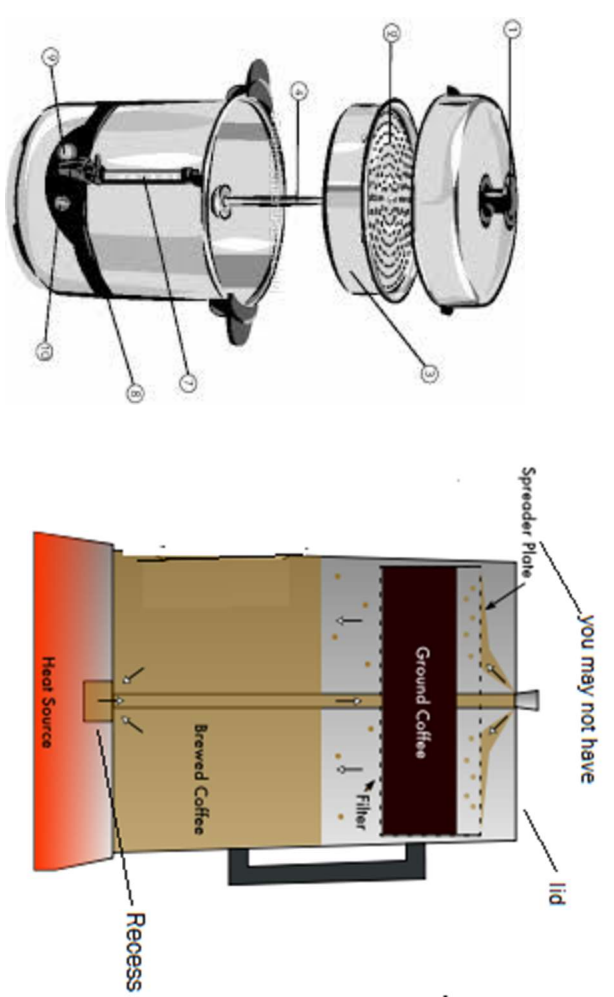
Putting it away: dump the grounds, (NOT in the sink) and rinse out the pot and its pieces. If your pot's stem has a little washer on it make sure it isn't stuck (see figure 2). Run a little water through the spout; it picks up grounds and they will make it leak. Using soap? If the pot and pieces are not triple rinsed, the next pot will taste like sewerage sludge. Rinsing with hot water works fine. Now that the pot is clean, reassemble it just like you are getting ready to brew. Just cramming the stuff in there will sooner or later break something. If the power cord is detachable wind it up and put it in the coffee basket; in this way you can find it for the next meeting.



(Fig 2)

NOTES:

Go out to the dollar store and buy a measuring cup and keep it in the coffee container. According to coffee pot makers and coffee merchants a standard cup of coffee is 6 oz. 1 tablespoon of coffee to 6 oz cup of water



Lee D.

63rd Annual Area 44 Convention Schedule Preview

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 20, 2019		SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 21, 2019		SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 22, 2019	
3:00PM	Hotel Check In (Main Lobby) Registration Opens (Terrace Lounge): Pick up your Registration Badges, Meal Tickets, and Banquet Tickets. Sign Big Book at Resource Table. Early Bird Discussion Meeting Dinner (Meal Plan Not Included) Young People's Speaker Meeting: <i>Josh K., Hoboken, NJ</i>	1:30PM-3:30PM	Old Timers' Meeting and Sobriety Countdown Workshop Panel: Area 44 Service Committees	4:00AM	Leader's Choice.....12
5:00PM	6:00PM-8:00PM	2:45PM-3:45PM	6:00AM	Leader's Choice.....10	
6:15PM-7:15PM	8:00PM	4:00PM-5:00PM	8:00AM	Leader's Choice.....16	
8:00PM	9:15PM	4:00PM	9:00AM	Leader's Choice.....17	
9:15PM	10:00PM	6:45PM	8:00AM	Leader's Choice.....4/6	
10:00PM	10:00PM	8:15PM-9:30PM	9:00AM	Big Book: We Agnostics.....26	
		Ice Breaker Speaker Meeting: <i>Butch M., Toronto, Canada</i>	10:00AM	Big Book: How It Works.....42	
		Alkathon Meetings Continues	11:00AM	Big Book: Into Action.....38	
		Alkathon Meetings Continues	12:00PM	Big Book: Working With Others...36	
		Alkathon Meetings Continues	1:00PM	Leader's Choice.....22	
		Alkathon Meetings Continues	2:00PM	Leader's Choice.....25	
		Alkathon Meetings Continues	3:00PM	Leader's Choice.....13	
		Alkathon Meetings Continues	4:00PM	Big Book: To Wives.....35	
		Alkathon Meetings Continues	5:00PM	Big Book: The Doctor's Opinion.....15/21	
		Alkathon Meetings Continues	6:00PM	Big Book: A Vision For You.....3	
		Alkathon Meetings Continues	7:00PM	Leader's Choice.....41	
		Alkathon Meetings Continues	8:00PM	Leader's Choice.....30	
		Alkathon Meetings Continues	9:00PM	Leader's Choice.....37	
		Alkathon Meetings Continues	10:00PM	Leader's Choice.....34	
		Alkathon Meetings Continues	11:00PM	Leader's Choice.....18	
		Alkathon Meetings Continues	12:00AM	Leader's Choice.....11/33	
		Alkathon Meetings Continues	1:00AM	Leader's Choice.....24	
		Alkathon Meetings Continues	2:00AM	Leader's Choice.....27/29	
		Alkathon Meetings Continues	3:00AM	Leader's Choice.....23	
		Alkathon Meetings Continues	4:00AM	Leader's Choice.....14	
		Alkathon Meetings Continues	5:00AM	Leader's Choice.....20	
		Alkathon Meetings Continues	6:00AM	Leader's Choice.....39	
		Alkathon Meetings Continues	7:00AM	Leader's Choice.....28	
		Alkathon Meetings Continues	8:00AM	Leader's Choice.....32	

Frequently Asked Questions:

- Q: I'd like to do service during the weekend; are there volunteer opportunities?**
A: Absolutely! There are many types of volunteer assignments needed throughout the weekend and we welcome all to participate! If you're interested in volunteering, contact us at Convention@njja.org or use the back of this form.
- Q: May I pay by credit card?**
A: Yes, you can use your credit card to register online at njja.org/Convention and pay for the hotel rooms and Convention meal plans. Credit cards will also be accepted on site at the Convention. There are additional merchant's fees for paying by credit card. To avoid these fees, feel free to submit your registration form via regular mail. If you submit your payment through the regular mail, a check or money order is required.
- Q: May I mail my registration in? MUST BE RECEIVED BY 9/10/19**
A: Yes, simply fill out the form on page 3 and mail it along with a check or money order to:
 PO Box 35, 1601 STATE ROUTE 35 MIDDLETOWN, NJ 07748
- Q: May I request a scholarship to the Convention?**
A: Yes, Requests for scholarships MUST be made by pre-registering by mail, online or by calling the Hotline at (908) 274-3146.
- Q: May I or my Home Group contribute to scholarships to help those who cannot afford to attend?**
A: Yes! However, scholarships are for weekend registration only; no meals. Scholarships can be contributed at the hotel the weekend of the Convention for this year, but will carry over to next year.
- Q: Who do I contact about my hotel room reservation?**
A: You should contact the hotel directly about your room reservation at (800)222-8733.
- Q: What if I still have questions?**
A: If you have any questions, or would like to volunteer, you may reach us via email at: Convention@njja.org or call the Convention Hotline: (908) 274-3146
- Use Code : A44 for discount on room rates!**

Convention Contact Information:
 (908) 274-3146 or Convention@njja.org

ASL Interpreters for the
 Hearing Impaired will be available

NORTHERN NEW JERSEY GENERAL SERVICE

63rd Annual Area 44 Convention



September 20, 21, & 22nd 2019

Plays • Young-People's Speaker Meeting • Friday Night Entertainment
 Saturday Night Banquet • Saturday Night DJ • Guided Meditation Meeting
 Alkathon • Young-Timer / Old-Timer Meeting

NEW! Scholarships are available
 Individuals and Home Groups can contribute to Scholarships!

THE DOUBLETREE HOTEL
 200 ATRIUM DRIVE, SOMERSET, NJ 08873

CONVENTION VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!

If you are interested in serving on the Convention Committee, meetings are held at 8:00PM on the 3rd Wednesday of every month at the Area Office: 2325 Plainfield Avenue, South Plainfield, NJ (entrance is in the back of the building).

If you are interested in helping out during the Convention, you can volunteer by adding your name and telephone number in the space provided below, or contact us at convention@nnja.org. Please mail this list to the attention of the "Convention Committee" no later than September 10th, 2019 to:

NNJGS Area 44 Convention Committee
2325 Plainfield Avenue
South Plainfield, NJ 07080

Questions? Call 908.274.3146

Name	# of Hours	Telephone
Name	# of Hours	Telephone
Name	# of Hours	Telephone
Name	# of Hours	Telephone
Name	# of Hours	Telephone
Name	# of Hours	Telephone

BANQUET REGISTRATION INFORMATION

Please complete the following and return it with your mail-in registration:

THE BANQUET IS LIMITED TO THE FIRST 500 REGISTERED!

Saturday's banquet will have pre-arranged seating based on the date of receipt of your registration form.

Tables can accommodate ten people. To reserve a full table, or to be seated with a group of people, your registration forms and deposits must be received together in one envelope. This will be the only way to assure seating together based on the availability of seats at the time your registrations are received. We will try our best to honor parties and keep you together, but such seating will be based on availability of tables...SO...get group registrations in as early as possible!

People purchasing banquet tickets at the convention will be assigned seating at that time, based on the availability of the remaining seats.

You MUST include the full names of attendees at your table. Please note the banquet is SMOKE FREE & VAPING FREE.

- _____
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SPECIAL DIETARY NEEDS: _____

Hotel Room Reservations:

ROOM RATES:

Single/Double: \$121.00* (Per Night)

Triple/Quad: \$131.00* (Per Night)

*Plus 15% Occupancy Tax

These special Convention room rates will only be available when identifying attendance at the "A44" group rate.

Reservations must be received on or before September 10, 2019 in order to guarantee availability and rate. Cancellations must be received 72 hours prior to your scheduled arrival, or you will be charged for the room.

PLEASE NOTE: Whether you use our website, or whether you book your hotel room through another vendor, please inform the hotel that you're participating in the Convention. The Area gets credit towards its minimum quota for all rooms booked during the Convention weekend. If you have any questions, please contact us at (908) 274-3146.

TWO WAYS TO MAKE HOTEL RESERVATIONS:

- 1) BY PHONE – Call the hotel at 1-800-222-8733 and make a reservation with a credit card. The conference name is "A44." You must mention this code when registering in order to get the special Convention room rate. It also helps us to reach our quota so please make sure that you use that code when you book your room.
- 2) BY THE INTERNET – Go to online to our web page at: www.nnja.org/Convention. When you book online, you will be able to purchase your meal packages in addition to your hotel room reservations. Don't forget to use the promotion/offer code "A44" when booking online.

Al-Anon Invites You!

The members of Al-Anon cordially invite you, the relatives and friends of those affected by the family disease of alcoholism, to Al-Anon's participation in the 63rd Annual Area 44 General Service Convention of Alcoholics Anonymous.

Please join us in sharing our experience, strength and hope in finding happiness, even contentment, whether the alcoholic is still drinking or not.

For more information call North Jersey Al-Anon Information Service at 973-744-8686.

Area 44 Convention Registration Packages

(*Banquet is limited to the first 500 registrants)

REGISTRATION PACKAGE #1:

\$144.00 x _____ = \$ _____ Minus \$ _____ = \$ _____
of People Deposit Balance Due
Includes Weekend Registration, Saturday breakfast, Saturday Lunch, Saturday Banquet, and Sunday breakfast.

REGISTRATION PACKAGE #2:

\$125.00 x _____ = \$ _____ Minus \$ _____ = \$ _____
of People Deposit Balance Due
Includes Weekend Registration, Saturday Lunch, *Saturday Banquet, and Sunday Breakfast (NO SATURDAY BREAKFAST).

REGISTRATION PACKAGE #3:

\$98.00 x _____ = \$ _____ Minus \$ _____ = \$ _____
of People Deposit Balance Due
Includes Weekend Registration, Saturday breakfast, Saturday Lunch, Sunday Breakfast and (NO SATURDAY BANQUET).

REGISTRATION PACKAGE #4:

\$77.00 x _____ = \$ _____ Minus \$ _____ = \$ _____
of People Deposit Balance Due
Includes Weekend Registration and *Saturday Banquet ONLY.

REGISTRATION PACKAGE # 5:

\$31.00 x _____ = \$ _____ Total Weekend Registration ONLY.
of People

SCHOLARSHIP CONTRIBUTION:

\$31.00 x _____ = \$ _____ Total Other Amount = \$ _____
of People

★ OLD TIMERS' ★

Pre-registration is required to attend the Old Timers' Luncheon. The Luncheon is included in the cost of your Convention registration if: • You have 25 or more years of sobriety (sobriety date prior to 9/20/1994 –AND • You purchase any meal or registration package (#1–#5) above or the NEW Old Timers' Registration Package #6 Below.

OLD TIMERS' REGISTRATION PACKAGE #6:

\$125.00 x _____ = \$ _____ Minus \$ _____ = \$ _____
of People Deposit Balance Due
Includes Weekend Registration, Old Timers' Registration or Lunch, *Saturday Banquet, and Sunday breakfast.

You must register your intention to attend the luncheon by providing your name, home group, and sobriety date below.

Seating is limited to the first 225 Old Timers' who register for the luncheon before the Convention registration deadline Sept. 10, 2019. Reserved seating is not permitted.

Name	Home Group	Sobriety Date
Name	Home Group	Sobriety Date
Name	Home Group	Sobriety Date

REGISTRATION BY MAIL:

1. If you prefer not to pay in full at this time for the meal packages, you can choose the deposit option of \$60.00 for each person in your party, and pay the balance at the event.

2. Make all checks or money orders payable to:

NNJGS Area 44 Convention
NNJGS Area 44 Convention
PO Box 35
1601 STATE ROUTE 35 MIDDLETOWN, NJ 07748

3. Fill out this page of the form and mail to:
Check here if you...
 AA Member Al-Anon Member Need ASL Interpreter OR

Sign Me Up For The Scholarship*

*The scholarship is for a free ticket for Weekend Registration Package #5. Please only select this option if you are unable to afford to pay for the Convention registration. Area 44 is pleased to offer scholarships to those who truly need it. Scholarship recipients are encouraged to provide a suggested 2 hours of volunteer service during the Convention. Scholarship awards will begin August 1, 2019. You will receive a phone call from a committee member if you have been awarded a scholarship and to discuss if you are willing and able to volunteer.

Last Name, First Name _____

E-Mail Address _____

Please check here if you would NOT like to receive future emails regarding the Area Convention ()

Send Confirmation to (choose one) Mail E-mail

(If you want your confirmation mailed to you, include a self-addressed, stamped envelope.)

Telephone _____

Street Address _____

City/State/Zip _____

ALL MAIL-IN PAYMENTS MUST BE POST-MARKED ON OR BEFORE SEPTEMBER 10, 2019
REGISTRATION ONLINE:

1. To register for a meal package online go to:
www.nnja.org/Convention

2. Follow the directions, answer the questions, and supply your credit card information.

3. Confirmation of your transaction will be emailed to you.

4. Upon completion of the payment for your meal package, you will be offered the option of reserving a hotel room by clicking on the button "Reserve a Room." This action will take you to the hotel's web page, which has been set up specifically for our Convention.

THE DEADLINE FOR REGISTRATION FOR THE OLD TIMERS' LUNCHEON IS SEPTEMBER 10, 2019
SEE BACK OF THIS FORM FOR BANQUET SEATING INFORMATION

District Service Meetings

District 1&2 - 2nd Tuesday, 7:30 pm, Sunrise House Cafeteria, 37 Sunset Inn Road, Lafayette

District 3 - 3rd Friday 7:00 pm; West Milford Library 2nd Floor, 1470 Union Valley Road, West Milford

District 4&6 - 3rd Thur. 7:30 pm, Upper Ridgewood Community Ch, Hillcrest & Fairmount, Ridgewood

District 5&7 - Last Thursday, 7:30 pm, St. Mary's Church, Roger Troy Hall School Building, (corner of High & Legion), Closter

District 8 - 2nd Tues. 7:30 pm, Panther Valley Ecumenical Ch, 1490 Route 517, Allamuchy

District 9 - 3rd Tues. 7:30 pm, United Methodist Ch, Rte 183, Netcong

District 10 - 2nd Tues. 7:00 pm, 1st Presbyterian Church, 513 Birch St, (corner of Church) Boonton

District 11/33 - 4th Wed. 7:00 pm, Clifton Library, 292 Piaget Ave Rm A, Clifton

District 12 - 2nd Thur. 7:00pm, St. Francis of Assisi Parish Center (basement), 124 Park St, Ridgefield Park

District 13 - 2nd Tue. 7:30 pm, Wesley Meth. Ch., 225 Washington Ave, Belleville

District 14 - Last Tue. 7:00 pm, Barrow Mansion, Upstairs, 83 Wayne St, Jersey City

District 15/21 - 3rd Mon. 7:30 pm, Hunterdon Medical Center, Employee Cafeteria, Rt. 31 South, Flemington

District 16 - 3rd Mon. 7:00 pm Good Shepherd Luth Church, 160 Ridgedale Ave. Florham Park

District 17 - 3rd Fri. 8:00pm, Alanon Assoc., 7th Avenue and 7th Street, Newark

District 18 - 2nd Mon. 7:30 pm, Union Village UMChurch, 1130 Mountain Ave., Berkeley Heights

District 19 - Last Mon. 7:30 pm, Friendship Hall, New Market Road, Piscataway

District 20 (with former District 29/30) - 1st Wednesday, 7:00pm, Presbyterian Church, 140 Mountain Ave., Westfield

District 22 - 3rd Wed. 7:30 pm, Cook College, College Farm Road, New Brunswick

District 23 - 2nd Thur. 7:30 pm, Saints Peter & Paul Orthodox Church, 9 Jefferie Ave, South River

District 24 - 3rd Mon. 8:00 pm, New Monmouth Baptist Church, 4 Cherry Tree Farm Rd, Middletown

District 25 - Last Wed. 7:30 pm, Hope Lutheran Church, 211 Elton-Adelphia Road., Freehold

District 26 - 3rd Thur. 7:00 pm, Christ United Meth Church, 300Ridge Rd, Fair Haven

District 27/29 - 3rd Mon. 7:00 pm, Ocean Christian Community (Parish House Basement) 405 Washington St., Toms River

District 28 - 1st Tue. 7:30 pm, St Margaret's Church, 3rd & Ludlow Avenue, Spring Lake

District 30 - 4th Sunday 12 Noon, 256 Mulberry Street, Newark

District 31 - 2nd Thur. 6:30 pm, Immaculate Heart Of Mary Chapel, 2nd Floor, 77th Street & Broadway, North Bergen

District 32 - 3rd Thur. 7:00 pm, Bayonne Public Library, 31st St. & Ave. C., Bayonne

District 34 - 3rd Sat. 9:30 am, Our Lady of Sorrows, 217 Prospect St, (Lower Church) South Orange

District 35 - 2nd Tue. 7:30 pm, Good Shepherd Lutheran. Church, North Richard Street and Union Avenue, Somerville.

District 36 - 3rd Fri. 7:30 pm, St. Luke's Church, 17 Oak Ave & Route 27, Metuchen

Districts 37 & 38 - 3rd Wed. 7:00 pm, First Evangelical Lutheran Church, 153 Park St, Montclair

District 41 - First Thurs 7:00 pm, St. Matthew's Trinity Church, 8th & Washington Sts, Hoboken

District 42 - 2nd Sunday 9:00am, 120 Jersey Ave. 2nd floor, New Brunswick



Member area
userid: alcoholic
password: onedayatatime

NNJGS Area 44 Office Calendar

SEPTEMBER 2019

3 Officer's Meeting 7:00 PM
4 Mailing Committee 6:30 PM
4 Translation Committee 7:00 PM
7 Grapevine 10:00 AM
8 Films Committee 9:00 AM
8 Area Committee Mtg 10:00 AM
9 Mid-winter Luncheon Com 7:00 PM
9 Computer/Tech Com 7:30 PM
10 Public Information Com 7:30 PM
11 History & Archives @ Interg 7:00 PM
11 Treatment Committee 7:30 PM
14 Corrections 10:00 AM
16 Literature Sales 6:30 PM
16 Literature Com (No Sales) 7:30 PM
17 CPC 7:00PM
18 Nightwatch @ Interg 7:00PM
18 Convention Com 8:00 PM
19 Newsletter Committee 6:00 PM
19 International Hospitality 7:00 PM
20-22 AREA 44 CONVENTION
23 Finance Committee 7:30PM
23 Remote Communities Com 7:30PM
25 Website Committee 7:30PM

OCTOBER 2019

1 Officer's & Standing Com 7:00 PM
2 Mailing Committee 6:30PM
2 Translation Committee 7:00 PM
5 Grapevine Committee 10:00 AM
7 Mid-winter Luncheon Com 7:00 PM
8 PI Committee 7:30PM
9 History & Archives @Interg 7:00PM
9 Treatment Committee 7:30 PM
12 Area Assembly 9:00 AM
14 Computer and Tech Com 7:30 PM
15 CPC 7:00 PM
16 Convention Committee 8:00 PM
17 Newsletter Committee 6:00PM
21 Literature Sales 6:30PM
21 Literature Com (No Sales) 7:30PM
23 Website Committee 7:30PM
24 P & A Committee 7:30PM
28 Finance Committee 7:00PM
28 Remote Communities 7:30PM

NOVEMBER 2019

2 Grapevine Committee 10:00AM
4 Mid-Winter Lunch Com 7:00PM
5 Officer's Meeting 7:00PM
6 Mailing Committee 6:30PM

**NEXT ISSUE DEADLINE: NOV 14
NEWSLETTER@NNJAA.ORG**

Statement Of Purpose:
This Day is published quarterly as a joint newsletter for Northern New Jersey General Service Area 44 and the Northern New Jersey Intergroup. This Day functions to promote communication between the groups in Northern New Jersey and to provide members with service-related information. This Day is also a forum for the diverse opinions of the Area 44 Fellowship through shared experience, strength, and hope in all three of AA's legacies: Unity, Service, and Recovery.

Editorial Policy:
Articles submitted from the Fellowship are encouraged, and should not exceed 800 words. The newsletter committee may edit submissions for grammar, readability, and content. Opinions expressed herein are not to be attributed to AA as a whole, nor does the publication of any article imply an endorsement by either AA General Services or Intergroup. Comments, questions, and articles may be mailed to the attention of the Newsletter Committee at NNJGS Area 44, Suite 2J, 2325 Plainfield Ave., South Plainfield 07080, or emailed to: newsletter@nnjaa.org.

Contributions are much needed, and always welcome! Make checks payable as indicated and always include your Area, District and Group ID number. Please send group and individual contributions to the addresses below:

NNJGS AREA 44
2325 Plainfield Avenue, Suite 2J
South Plainfield, NJ 07080
Payable to "NNJGS Area 44"

NORTHERN NEW JERSEY INTERGROUP
2400 Morris Avenue, Suite 106
Union, NJ 07083-5705
Payable to "Northern NJ Intergroup"

GENERAL SERVICE OFFICE
PO Box 459
Grand Central Station
New York, NY 10163
Payable to "General Service Board"

6 Translation Committee 7:00 PM
10 Films Committee 9:00 AM
10 Area Committee Mtg 10:00 AM
11 Computer Tech Com 7:30 PM
12 PI Committee 7:30 PM
13 History & Archives @Interg 7:00PM
13 Treatment Committee 7:30PM
16 Corrections 10:00 AM
18 Literature Sales 6:30PM
18 Literature Com (No Sales) 7:30PM
19 CPC Committee 7:00PM
20 Nightwatch @ Interg 7:00PM
20 Convention Committee 8:00PM
21 Newsletter 6:00PM
25 Finance Committee 7:00PM
25 Remote Communities 7:30PM
26 Joint Unity Meeting 7:30PM
27 Website Comm @ Area 7:30PM

DECEMBER 2019
2 Mid-winter Luncheon Com 7:00PM

Intergroup Calendar

SEPTEMBER 2019

2 Holiday -- Office Closed -- Labor Day
5 Intergroup Delegates Mtg -- Clark 8:30PM
8 Bookers Exchange -- Clark 6AM -- Mother Seton H.S.
11 Archives Committee 7PM -- Intergroup Office
18 Nightwatch Committee 7PM -- Intergroup Office
25 Joint Website Committee 7:30PM -- Area 44 Office

OCTOBER 2019

3 Intergroup Delegates Mtg -- Clark 8:30PM
9 Archives Committee 7PM -- Intergroup Office
14 Holiday -- Office Closed -- Columbus Day
23 Joint Website Committee 7:30PM -- Intergroup Office

NOVEMBER 2019

7 Intergroup Delegates Mtg -- Clark 8:30PM

13 Archives Committee 7PM -- Intergroup Office
20 Nightwatch Committee 7PM - Intergroup Office
24 Intergroup Gratitude Brunch 10:30AM Pantagis Scotch Plains
26 Joint Unity Meeting 7:30PM -- Area 44 Office
27 Joint Website Committee 7:30PM -- Area 44 Office
28 Holiday -- Office Closed -- Thanksgiving
29 Holiday -- Office Closed -- Thanksgiving

DECEMBER 2019

5 Intergroup Delegates Mtg - Clark 8:30PM
8 Bookers Exchange - Clark 6AM -- Mother Seton H.S.
11 Archives Committee 7PM -- Intergroup Office
25 Holiday -- Office Closed -- Christmas Observed



www.nnjaa.org

Try it on your Smartphone



Your Northern New Jersey A.A. Website

THIS DAY

Joint News of NNJGS Area 44
and Northern New Jersey Intergroup
2325 Plainfield Ave., Suite 2J
South Plainfield, NJ 07080

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Fall 2019

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One Day At A Time

- | | |
|-------------------|-------------------|
| Sobriety | Telephone |
| Twelve and Twelve | Traditions |
| Prayer | Character Defects |
| Concepts | How It Works |
| Big Book | Ask For Help |
| Promises | Came to Believe |
| Sponsor | Serenity |
| Living Sober | Doctor Bob |
| Grapevine | Bill Wilson |
| Steps | Lois |

Words to Look For

My Spiritual Awakening

I had my first drink at age 22 and for seven years, alcohol became my best friend, despite all the suffering it caused. It is a powerful substance that "gave me wings, and then took away the sky" (AA speaker). Unexpectedly, I came to believe in a power greater than my own thinking, emotions, or story during my first-ever hangover. This harrowing illness struck after my tenth (or so) bout of drinking and was the worst physical experience I had ever had, before or since.

I had gone out with my boyfriend to a house party on a Friday night. I could not wait to get there. I already knew that the magic elixir called Harvey Wallbanger (vodka, orange juice, and Galliano, an Italian herb - flavored liqueur) was going to wash away all troubles and replace them with peace, comfort, courage, sociability, talkativeness, sense of humor, freedom, ability to dance, and a feeling of wonderful belonging with all the other people there. Under the influence of Harvey Wallbanger, I was able to feel the greatest love I had ever known. Love was sorely missing in my life otherwise. In every way, I was a fish out of water, because of my own deepest character weakness (inability to be honest and say NO, if there is the slightest chance of offending or disappointing anyone).

I was 3,000 miles away from my original home, family, country, culture, all familiarity, all peace, following the dictates of an older and wiser uncle and Catholic priest. So, I was teaching English in a high school in New Jersey, in which some students seemed to intuit immediately that I was unassertive, afraid to confront, unwilling to disappoint anyone with bad grades, and guilty about every problem, especially the ones caused by them. "They are behaving badly or getting bad grades because I am a bad teacher." I was afraid and unhappy every day.

A fine young male teacher had taken a shine to me and begun to pursue me. He was a "NO" in my feelings from the start, but how to break his heart and reject him? "Just don't do it. Just suck it up. It makes you a better person, a better friend of Jesus, because you are willing to suffer along with him/Jesus." So, he and I

were together at this party.

When alcohol first hit my brain and body, all was changed for the better, and the first few drinking experiences were glorious, with no bad consequences, only perfect solutions for all that ailed me. My boyfriend was less than happy. He informed me immediately that alcohol had totally changed my personality, and he did not like the new, friendly, flirtatious girl that emerged.

We had arrived at the party at around 7 pm, and allegedly stayed until 11. I remembered very little after our arrival. So, on that Saturday morning, I awoke in hell. I did not remember much from the night before. I was so sick that I thought I was dying and could not understand what had happened. Soon, I realized that my boyfriend was not there. He had left a note on my kitchen counter, along with the key to my apartment. The note said, "Goodbye." I could barely stand for fear of fainting, so I could only crawl to the toilet bowl, vomit, groan, vomit more, crawl to the kitchen for water, crawl back to bed, swallow aspirin for the throbbing pain in my head, cry with pain and confusion, and repeat the cycle. I knew that my deathly illness was caused by Harvey Wallbanger because I vomited lots of it into the toilet bowl. I could taste and smell it and it was still its own yellow color coming up. Never having had a hangover, I didn't even know what to call it. I just knew I had been sickened by the well-loved and delicious substance.

All alone with my mind and my suffering body, a realization came to me that I had committed a mortal sin against my body. As it sweated, shook, vomited, and ached, I thought of it as a poor innocent animal that I had harmed. I wept for IT. A conscious separation happened between ME the personality and ME the body that was fighting for its life. And fight it did. Its heart pounded so hard, it thundered in the ears. Its head hurt so much its eyes were blinded. It needed water desperately but vomited it up as soon as it went down its throat. Its bowels emptied themselves with uncontrollable diarrhea. I the personality could only watch, feel, pray, and obey. I the personality was powerless. I the personality had no control, as the body lay there all day, half dead, doing all it could to heal itself.

Heretofore, the body had been a thing to ignore, criticize and decorate. It needed to be made to look better. It was wrong in many ways. It was compared to other bodies, and it often came up short. Today it was an organism with its own pain and its own methods to heal itself. I, in the ordinary sense, was my thinking, emotions, and judgments: in short, my personality. But not a single aspect of my personality had an ounce of power that day.

In time, hours later, I was astonished to feel health coming back. I wept with joy as if it were a cherished friend, which it was. More astonishingly, I felt appetite coming back and I felt the pleasure of the thought of some Irish comfort food - a baked potato and a glass of milk. As I sat at my kitchen table, eating my food, tears rolled down my face, and I did not feel alone. I was in the company of a body that I had abused, that forgave me, that rebounded, that came back to me with its treasures - appetite, taste, digestion, thirst, and satisfaction. I had always thought of God as a man in the sky, but today, God was the power in my body that knew exactly what to do to heal itself from the abuses done by me. Far from home and family, a stranger in a strange land, I have had a shift in thinking that has never left me. My body became a friend.

I wish I could say that I never drank again, but it is true that I never drank as much again. I attempted for 7 more years to drink just the right amount to get the pleasure and not the pain. I never quite succeeded. I learned in time that this body of mine, my best friend, has a requirement not to drink at all. It has a way of processing alcohol that causes the swift numbing of mental and emotional pain, followed by a phenomenon of craving, followed by desire for more alcohol, followed by crushing illness. This body requires sobriety. When I was finally ready to stop drinking altogether, my inner body must have been roaring with delight.

My concept that my Higher Power is in my body has been the centerpiece of my spiritual path ever since. I have educated myself about the treasures inside a body. A brain, for example, is a pharmacy of natural drugs, intending all the time to cause well-being, joy, and bliss. One such drug is called Oxytocin, also known as the love drug, the happy drug, the hugging

drug, the bliss drug, Oxytocin is caused to flow by sex, massage, exercise, nature, music, dancing, laughing, crying, the company of pets, development of a skill, genuine helping, overcoming character weaknesses, meaningful communication, prayer, and meditation. In fact, if we could access the natural brain drugs, other drugs such as alcohol would become irrelevant.

My own methods for releasing natural well-being are prayer, meditation and rigorous honesty regarding what I want to do and what I do not want to do. I live according to a guideline: "If it isn't a hell yes, it's a no." Giving myself the freedom to obey my natural inclinations rather than those of my people-pleasing training has turned my life into an experience worth living. Much guilt followed many of my no's, but guilt is a far lesser pain than any hangover. Being honest despite guilt has been a wonderful practice. This sort of pain (guilt) is a touchstone for growth. Drinking was a dishonest way of solving problems that did not solve any problem.

God/LIFE/Spirit/Power/The Universe touched earth at my conception and started the first cell of a human body. A galaxy of cells later, the same power is keeping the body alive and well. Why? Because a body is supposed to be a joyful machine, as it was when we were children. To abuse the body eliminates the possibility of joy, which is our nature, our birthright. In the womb, all was well. Outside the womb, all wellness is often so thwarted by the dictates of family, religion, and society that a drug is required to attempt to restore wellness which is always inside but abandoned. Alcohol was my drug of choice when wellness was gone. It gave me what I missed and cost a huge price. Today, I am back to what I was always intended to be, a divine body, operated by an invisible power, and a happy place for my personality to live.

Sarah M.