

# 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!

It seems as though “that time of year” is very close. You might ask, “What time of year is that?” Well, it’s Conference time!! I’m writing this article on the last day of February and I just returned from NERAASA (Northeast Regional AA Service Assembly) up in Cromwell, CT. What an awesome weekend it was! For the first time, I got to witness an entire Spanish speaking panel that was translated into English. Talk about the shoe being on the other foot! Well, anyone that knows me knows how I feel about smashing the language barriers in Alcoholics Anonymous. And that’s exactly what happened in this presentation. I felt honored to be present. I also spent quite a bit of time with our Northeast Regional Delegates talking about how we can make the Conference experience more comfortable for the new Panel 68’s. All in all, it was a most spiritual experience. I will also be going to Tarrytown, NY March 9-11 for NERD (Northeast Regional Delegates). It will be the last time we will have the opportunity to talk to our Northeast Regional Trustee, Rich P., face to face until the Conference. Everything from here until the end of April is preparation for the 68th General Service Conference. So I would ask everyone to help me in getting prepared. We have Pre-Conference Reports scheduled for March 12, 13, 14, 16, 18, 24 and 25th. I’m hoping that the attendance will substantially beat last year’s. We have some very interesting items to discuss this year, so this is an experience you don’t want to miss! All the agenda items are listed further on in this issue. This past weekend I was informed by our GSO General Manager, Greg T. that the Manuscript Litigation legal proceedings have ended as of February 21, 2018. This will allow me the opportunity to inform Area 44 of the complete history of what has taken place, from start to finish. I’ve set aside ample time at the Mini-Confer-

ence to fully inform you all. Again, please be sure to attend one of the Pre-Conference Reports and keep your group connected with the Conference Structure. Our Area 44 Mini-Conference will be held on Saturday, April 14th at Villa Walsh Academy in Morristown. GSR’s - - it is your responsibility to attend! Thank you all for allowing me to experience this precious journey! Love in Service,  
Lester G.  
Delegate Panel 67



## What is Nightwatch?

Nightwatch is an excellent opportunity for groups to take part in important Service Work. The Nightwatch Committee is the committee that organizes AA Volunteers to answer the Intergroup phone number (800 number on the cover of the meeting books) when the Intergroup Office is closed.

There are two ways that groups may participate in Nightwatch. **First:** A Group may take a one-week telephone commitment where members of the group volunteer to answer calls to the Intergroup Office when it is closed. This can be done in the comfort of your home. Actually, we prefer you do it at home. A meeting, public place, driving, or work are not appropriate places to take Nightwatch calls. We would forward the calls to the phone number you give us for the designated shift. In a Typical week there are 11 shifts. After 6pm until following morning Monday through Friday; Three Shifts on Sunday; and Three Shifts on Saturday. Ideally a group would have 11 to 13 volunteers to do this. A Group Coordinator to facilitate and organize at the group level, 11 Volunteers to man the 11 shifts, and it is a good idea to have someone as a backup to fill in just in case. If a single group does not have enough volunteers to cover a week, it is not uncommon for two or more groups to work together to cover a commitment. The Nightwatch Coordinator for the County your

group resides in would work with the group and the Group Coordinator to make sure everything runs smoothly. Most of the calls you will get are people looking for meetings. People also call looking for info on AA. Sometimes we get still suffering alcoholics looking for help. Most of the information you need is in the Nightwatch Manual you would be provided and on the Intergroup Website. [www.nnjaa.org/](http://www.nnjaa.org/)

The **Second Way** a group may participate is by having group members fill out the “12 Step Contacts” Sheet that Intergroup mails to your group once a year and mail it back to the office. Ideally this should be done at a group business meeting. The Twelfth-Step contact list is used by both the Intergroup office staff and Nightwatch Volunteers to contact AA Members who are willing to take Twelfth-Step referrals. Sometimes, when Nightwatch gets a call from a still suffering alcoholic who wants to talk to an AA in his area, the Nightwatch Volunteer would use the 12 Step Contacts List. The Volunteer would take the callers phone number and town and try to find an AA near the caller to talk to them. Volunteer would then call the person listed on the 12 Step Contacts List (only during the hours they specified we can call) and give them the callers phone number to call back. We DO NOT give out the phone numbers of the people who were kind enough to put their name and number down on the 12 Step Contacts sheet.

Nightwatch is a Great way for a group to do service work. You have to give it away to keep it.

If you have any questions about Nightwatch or if your group wants to do a one-week commitment, please feel free to contact me by E-mail at: [Nightwatch@nnjaa.org](mailto:Nightwatch@nnjaa.org). Please include what town your group is in.

Thank You for your Service,  
Bill N., Nightwatch Committee Chair.  
Homegroup: Tuesday Night Belford Clearview Group of Middletown, NJ

A message  
from your  
Area Chair



Hi Everyone, its hard to believe I’m in the second year of my rotation as the Area Chair. Thank you for electing me to this position. So much has gone on in such little time. Last January I wrote the first article I’ve ever written for anything. Though its not one of my favorite things to do, I have immense gratitude for being part of a structure thats sole aim is to help the alcoholic who still suffers and to be an active member in that primary purpose. Though we are early into 2018, the Area has done a lot so far. We already had our first Area Committee meeting of the year and our first Assembly. At the Assembly we passed our 2018 budget and had some great GSR presentations around the 2018 General Service Conference theme “A.A. - A Solution for All Generations”. The Area presented “A Morning of Love and Service” which was unique from anything we have done in the past. The day was a hugh success with presentations, interactions with the audience and great historical talks that we heard from Bill W., Dr. Bob and Class A Trustee Bern Smith. By the time you read this article we will have already been through the month of February. The DCM Orientation, a few GSR/DCM workshops, The GSR Mid-Winter luncheon and NERAASA will all be past us as we go full steam into our Pre-Conference season in March followed by our Mini Conference Assembly in April. For years now many have heard the call to serve and many of you have. Our “Morning Of Love and Service” was intended to hope-

*Continued on page 2*

## also inside

Area Treasurer’s Report .....	2
Standing and Special Committee Reports .....	2-5
Fourth Founding Moment .....	4
Speak Out .....	4-10
District Service Meetings .....	11
Intergroup and Area Calendars .....	11
We are Not a glum lot.....	11

**Next Issue Deadline**  
**May 18**  
[newsletter@nnjaa.org](mailto:newsletter@nnjaa.org)



Thank you, Area 44 for allowing me to serve! We are now into our “swan” year.

I want to Thank all the groups and individuals who have sent in contributions to the Area. It is always greatly appreciated.

We’re getting closer to having QuickBooks operational. I think this will be a great improvement to the readability of the financial report. If you have knowledge of QuickBooks, please contact me or the Finance Chair, Russ W. We will need your assistance when we start the implementation.

We have an outstanding team working for Area 44’s 12 step work. The Area needs more volunteers from the districts to continue our 12-step work. If you want something to do, join any of the Standing Committees or even one of the Special Committees.

If anyone has any questions about the finances of the Area, feel free to contact me @ treasurer@nnjaa.org.

Again, thank you for allowing me to be of service and keep the contributions coming.

Anita C.

Area Treasurer

RUS SERVICE CORP T/A NNJGS AREA 44 TREASURER'S REPORT For Period Ending Sep 30, 2017			
<b>SUMMARY OF ACTIVITY FOR THE PERIOD (Per Checkbook)</b>			
	<b>Money Mkt</b>	<b>Checking</b>	<b>Totals</b>
Opening Account Balances for Current Period (Aug 31, 2017)	\$92,678.87	\$41,478.66	\$134,157.53
Revenue for the Period	\$6.09	\$22,488.95	\$22,495.04
Expenses for the Period	\$0.00	(\$27,310.89)	(\$27,310.89)
Transfer between Money Market and Checking			\$0.00
Ending Balance for All Accounts for Current Period (Sep 30, 2017)	<u>\$92,684.96</u>	<u>\$36,656.72</u>	<u>\$129,341.68</u>
<b>CURRENT BANK RECONCILIATION BY TREASURER FOR PERIOD</b>			
	<b>Money Mkt</b>	<b>Checking</b>	<b>Totals</b>
Statement Balances (Sep 30, 2017)	\$92,684.96	\$47,289.20	\$139,974.16
Outstanding Checks	\$0.00	(\$10,632.48)	(\$10,632.48)
Outstanding Deposits	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Adjusted Bank Balances (Sep 30, 2017)	<u>\$92,684.96</u>	<u>\$36,656.72</u>	<u>\$129,341.68</u>
Variance in Reconciliation			\$0.00
<b>Designated Funds at (Sep 30, 2017)</b>			
Jailbox Contributions	\$6,819.44		
International Hospitality Suite	\$2,886.49		
Excess Prudent Reserve Approved Projects	\$4,844.00		
<b>Total Designated Funds:</b>	<u>\$14,549.93</u>		
<b>ANALYSIS OF CHECKING ACCOUNT (Balance should not exceed two months average total expenses)</b>			
Current Checking Account Balance			\$36,656.72
Less: Prior 12 Month's Average Monthly Expenses Times Two			<u>(\$34,768.00)</u>
Over / (Under)			<u>\$1,888.72</u>
<b>ANALYSIS OF PRUDENT RESERVE</b>			
Total Cash in Bank (Not Including Convention Acct)			\$129,341.68
Less: Designated Funds (Jailbox, etc.)			<u>(\$14,549.93)</u>
Less: Checking Account Guidelines (2 month average expenses)			<u>(\$34,768.00)</u>
<b>PRUDENT RESERVE FUNDS</b>			\$80,023.75
Less: Calculated Prudent Reserve (50% of Prior Years Budgeted Expenses)			<u>(\$48,320.00)</u>
Over / (Under)			<u>\$31,703.75</u>
<b>SUMMARY OF OFFICIAL APPROVALS / REVIEWS</b>			
<b>Individual/Group</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Completed Through</b>	
Treasurer	Approved	September 2017	
Alternate Treasurer	Approved	September 2017	
Finance Committee	Approved	September 2017	
Officers	Reviewed	September 2017	
<b>ACM</b>	<b>Approved</b>	<b>July 2017</b>	
<b>Assembly</b>	<b>Approved</b>	<b>July 2017</b>	

Area Continued from page 1 fully challenge a few to see and maybe investigate the service work we do, beyond our home groups, in our Districts and Area. In one of the historical talks that we listened to that day, Bill W., as he was turning the Fellowship over to us, made stern warnings to our inactivity and the results of our inactivity. He stated that if the individual and A.A., as a whole, did not function our society would wither and die. That we all need to assume responsibility for the future of A.A.. The survival of A.A. depends on the administration of our services. Well who administers these services its you and me. Many people in our Area like to mention the fact that we have a large prudent reserve in our budget at this moment. That prudent reserve can be driven down by 12 step work in our Area through our committees. Our committees have plenty of work to do but are limited by the number of people who are willing to serve and live up to the responsibility that Bill W. speaks about. Maybe as we enter this year some of us can inventory our life in A.A. and maybe draw a conclusion that we can do more. What we’re really asking is to see if

we can afford to give A.A. two or three hours a month and to live up to the challenge that our Co-Founder laid out at our feet. I’m extremely grateful for the life I’ve been given because of A.A.. When I entered the world of Service I had a lot of fear but as many of us know when we walk through that fear our Higher Power presents us with something we never expected. I can’t tell you what that is so come and find out for yourself.

Grateful to Serve,  
Jimmy A.  
Area Chair



**Why We Do What We Do – And What We Are Doing!**

As the weather begins to get warmer and hints of spring are in the air, the earth seems to rededicate itself to new life. Likewise, Area 44’s Grapevine Committee is rededicating itself to Bill W.’s mission for AA Grapevine: to be our meeting in print and “the voice of the Alcoholics Anonymous movement.” At a recent commit-

tee meeting we were urged by one of our members to remember the “why” of Grapevine, not just the “what” and “how.” The “what” are the magazines, digital subscriptions, and books, and the “how” is participation in Days of Sharing, Area Assemblies, the Area Convention, and our own events. But the “why” is most important: to bring the message of recovery to alcoholics in need, particularly those who may be incapable of attending a meeting. People in isolated areas, incarcerated members, and AA members in nursing homes are examples of individuals who can reach for a meeting in their pocket or on their tablet. We work with the Corrections Committee to get literature to inmates, and I plan to visit the Remote Communities committee to see if we can help spread the message of recovery to those who cannot get to meetings. In addition, we will be reaching out to the Treatment Committee to do the same thing. So, although we are a “joyous bunch of grapes,” our mission is very serious.

We have two major events coming up this spring. The first is our Writers’ Workshop that we are co-hosting with our Newsletter

Committee, This Day. It will be held on Saturday, April 21, from 9 am to noon at the Area 44 Office: 2325 Plainfield Avenue, South Plainfield Avenue (rear entrance, second floor). Dorothy S., our Alternate Grapevine Chair, will be hosting the event, and brunch will be served. This workshop is for those who would love to write an article for Grapevine or This Day but need help to get started. There will be opportunities to practice writing with a series of writing prompts. Dorothy and her team have a lot of experience with this, so the morning should be very informative and exciting. And... brunch will be served! And, of course, there is our famous annual GrapeFest on May 5, also at the Area 44 Office! Led by our GrapeFest Chair, Dan B., it will feature breakfast, lunch, wonderful speakers, prizes, decorations, and lots of fun! Hope to see you there!

As I tell our committee every month, they rock, and so does this service!

In love and fellowship,  
Marybeth H.  
Your Area 44 Grapevine Chair



The importance of having a prison commitment

To me taking a prison commitment is the most important way a person can live a life of service in any recovery program. My sobriety date is July 7, 2002 and since then when referring to the fate we will all meet if we continue on the journey of substance abuse it's "Jails, institutions and death."

Jail or prison is also an institution so the only other bottom left is death. That's two out of three fates already met. The last one is death or recidivism, the endless journey in and out of the penal system. Then there is the criminal record which makes almost everything harder for the ex-convict. Especially finding a good paying job. Unless self employment is a real option or the prisoner knows someone who can provide a wonderful opportunity, their chances are nil.

The meetings I take inside prisons are my favorite meetings. The inmates who are serious about changing their lives and getting clean and sober are eager to learn how the program works. Most participants are humble and grateful that we are there and when they share, they speak honestly, from the heart. The serious inmates who have knowingly hit their bottoms have an insatiable desire to be as close to god as possible and want what our recovery programs have to offer. The sincere population knows how bad they messed up and want a different life.

The good news is that learning

about the 12-Step program while in prison can give an inmate hope for when they are released. The program can give this population the much needed tools to handle life better when they are out on the street. It can help them deal with the highs and lows of life that are sure to come to a newly released ex-convict. It has helped us all in that way even without a prison sentence.

AA teaches us how to surrender to a God of our understanding which relieves stress enough for us to move forward. AA teaches us to clean house and look at our faults and character defects so we don't repeat the same mistakes over and over again. It also teaches us to live a life of service to others. I can't begin to tell you how this program has helped me deal with life when many times I wanted to give up in many different ways.

The program also indoctrinates an inmate into the workings of a recovery program, going to meetings and fellowshiping with other recovering people. This partly ensures that they will not be so lost when released. They will know where to go and what to do because they have an understanding of how it all works.

This is the population that needs our program the most. This population has lived the consequences of their actions when living the life of substance abuse. Those who want to recover will have a higher success rate when AA is a part of their entire sentence. I would even dare to say that the prison population is the future of our recovery program since people are being incarcerated with stiffer sentences for drug and alcohol related offenses.

It's no secret that AA as a whole is shrinking. Less and less is being done by a majority of our members. We are getting older and some of us are passing away. The legacy of unity, recovery and service seems like a thing of the past depending on where you go. A vast majority of us do just enough to be ok. I was one of them for a long time but no more, thank god I have seen the light. Vigilance is a word we seldom here anymore. The prison populations can come into our program and rejuvenate it. Who can share their experiences of what it was like, what happened and what it's like now, better than an ex-con on the road to recovery. I would dare to say not many and I challenge anyone to try and prove me wrong.

It's my opinion that Alcoholics Anonymous should dedicate a large portion of its resources to carrying the message to an ever increasing prison population. They are our fellowship in and outside the walls. Most institutions allow only one meeting per week. I also feel that this is ludicrous. AA as a whole should lobby politicians and these institutions for more meetings every week, a minimum of three per week. They should also allow volunteers to take inmates through the 12 steps of recovery while incarcerated. Let the change begin on the inside of the inmate on the inside of the facility so a different man or woman comes to us on the outside.

Kelly R



Experience Beyond My Knowledge  
Seven years ago my Sponsor and Service Sponsor (All-in-one) asked me if I would be interested in being a part of a committee (at the area level) in which she is involved in and would like my help "WHAT!" Now, she knows my fears of working with diverse groups of people but she still felt this to be a wonderful opportunity for me to face my fears in this area. Of course FEAR gripped me. I thought, "Is she serious! At the AREA LEVEL with the BIG DOGS!!" Yes, she was serious. Needless to say I got out of my head like I was taught and trusted the process.

With the support and encouragement of this committee, what a wonderful journey this has been in working with such beautiful, loving, caring and sharing people who taught me what the WE in this program is all about. I have learned that there is no such thing as a bogeyman. So if you have any fears or doubts, step up to the plate and face YOUR fears and come join us... We meet every first Monday of the month at the area office.

Again, Fear Knocked At The Door Faith Opened It And Nobody Was There.

Laverne L.

Chairperson

GSR Mid-Winter Luncheon 2018

## NORTHERN NEW JERSEY INTERGROUP & AREA 44 Treatment Committee Workshop



**Saturday, April 28th, 2018  
8:30am – 11:30am**

- ❖ **Speaker - Margaret M. from the Friday Morning Early Risers Group-Rumson, NJ**
- ❖ **Committee members sharing on carrying the message into treatment facilities and the Bridging the Gap Program**
- ❖ **Treatment Center professionals sharing on AA's vital impact at their facilities**

### WHO SHOULD ATTEND?

All AAs interested in carrying AA's message into Treatment Facilities and the professionals from the facilities we may serve.

**FREE CONTINENTAL BREAKFAST AND LUNCH WILL BE SERVED**  
2325 Plainfield Avenue, South Plainfield – 2nd Floor Suite 2J



K of C Sunday Morning Group Rocky Hill AA  
We Care Waretown Group District 34  
Sunrise, Sunset Group  
AA Eye Openers  
Forum Group  
Verona Tuesday Night Group Metuchen Monday Nite Morning Miracles  
Hill St Blues  
The Young at Heart Group  
By the Book Group  
AA Eye Openers

Daily Reflections  
Wantage Sat. Big Book  
Tell It Like It Is Group  
Sick As Your Secrets Meeting Monday 12:15  
Closed Discussion Sparta Beginners Meeting  
Lafayette Step Meeting  
Toms River Mon Night Dover Whiting Sober Group  
Upper Ridgewood Group  
Jailbox Contributions  
Verona Tuesday Night Group Port Reading  
Thursday Night Daily Reprieve Group  
AA Eye Openers  
Change & Grow Group  
New Beginning Group  
Ruby Slipper  
Verona Tues Night Group Morning Miracles  
As Bill Sees It  
Monday 12:15 Closed Discussion  
Okay Today Group  
Maplewood Thursday Night Group Union Hill  
Drop In Center 730AM Morning Meditation  
Woodbridge Big Book  
Woodbridge Wed nite Promises  
Stepping Stones  
Netcong

## From the GSR Mid-winter Luncheon Program Chair

I would like to take this opportunity to let everyone know what a great experience it has been serving on the G.S.R. Mid-Winter Luncheon committee. The gratitude for being able to be of service in this capacity could never be expressed in words. As with everything that happens in my life today, this is not me and I am amazed how I'm always exactly where I'm supposed to be.

I remember last year when I volunteered as a greeter and enjoyed it so much that this year I took on a committee role. I have grown to build wonderful relationships with old and new friends and look forward to the first Monday of the month to get together in the area office and be a part of this amazing committee. For example - I shared with my group (as we completed the mailing of flyers to all the groups in Area 44) how God worked in my life with a new job opportunity, with work of the program and help of a sponsor I walked through my fears, accepted God's grace (because at first I didn't think I could take the job) and for the first time in my life this new job did not take no for an answer, they actually saw my value and wanted me for this job, they really wanted me. As I was sharing, someone in the group mentioned how she needed to hear that and how she may need to take the steps for her job situation by not letting fear stop her. So even while doing service in a group of AA - God shows up in miraculous ways.

The G.S.R. Mid-Winter Luncheon committee worked on an execution phase for the event which included this message in the "This Day" newsletter, finalizing site details and speakers, the creation of the program, tickets availability, seating arrangements - just to name a few things.

To witness how the heart of AA works and came together for such a beautiful event never grows old to me. We truly hope you were able to attend the G.S.R. Mid-Winter Luncheon on Sunday, February 11, 2018 and shared more moments together in AA. As always feedback and ideas are always welcomed.

In Love and Service

Martha R.  
G.S.R. Mid-Winter Luncheon  
Committee  
Program Chairperson

## Computer and Technology Committee



### Greetings from the Area 44 Computer and Technology Committee.

The Computer Committee seeks to identify and implement technology to help Area 44 fulfill the primary purpose of helping the still suffering alcoholic achieve sobriety. For those of you involved in service as an Area 44 Officer, Standing/Special Committee member, DCM, or GSR, this article is for you. The Computer Committee is implementing a central document storage system for Area 44 Service members.

Currently, those involved with Area 44 service create documents, such as meeting agendas and minutes, and share those documents by email or printed copies. Documents and emails are saved on personal computers. This often leads to loss of information when a person rotates from service. Last summer, the Area 44 Office Committee asked the Computer Committee to identify and implement a solution for centrally storing and sharing documents. That solution has been identified as Microsoft Office 365 along with SharePoint. It is available to AA Area 44 without cost by Microsoft.

For those not familiar with SharePoint, it is a web-based, collaborative platform used for document management and storage system. It's used for storage, retrieval, searching, tracking, management, and reporting electronic documents and other files. SharePoint comes bundled with MS Office 365 applications such as Outlook, Word, Excel, PowerPoint, and OneNote. It also includes collaborative tools such as Yammer, Teams, and Skype. Users will be able to access the system with use of MS Internet Explorer, Safari, or Chrome on both personal computers and tablets.

SharePoint with MS Office 365 allows for collaborative real-time document editing. Read, write, and delete rights and privileges are assigned by roles, such as a committee chair. Once a person creates and stores a document in SharePoint, the document can be shared with selected committee members or the entire Area 44 group. The groups will be much like the present Area 44 group structure, comprised of Area Officer, Committees, and Districts. In case you missed the presentation at the Work Weekend last December, the future of document sharing and collaboration for Area 44 is following:

### New SharePoint and MS Office 365 System for AA Area 44



The next steps for the Computer Committee, are to establish needs for group structure and security and to configure the system based on these requirements. This is expected to be completed this March. During this time, members of the Computer Committee will be meeting with Area Officers and Committee members to finalize requirements for security, documents, and forms. Rollout of the system for Area 44 will be announced at the Area Assembly in June. Don't worry if you're not a computer wizard or have never used SharePoint. Lots of training and support is being planned.

However, if you have SharePoint administration experience, please contact the Computer group at [computer@nnjaa.org](mailto:computer@nnjaa.org), as your assistance is needed.

Finally, we need a name for the system besides SharePoint. Send your suggestions to [computer@nnjaa.org](mailto:computer@nnjaa.org).

Yours in service,

Bruce R.



**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*

## Looking back now,

I can see the many, many hands of AA that it took to help get me sober! My first meeting, I was hung over, angry, watchful, judgmental and needing to stop drinking. At the end of the meeting, we all joined hands and said a prayer. I remember saying to myself, 'here is another bunch of people ready to shove their God business at me'. At the time I had an inner voice talking to me and it said that these people might believe that god was Swiss cheese and lived on the moon, and some could not tie their shoes, but that they all knew how to live life without alcohol and that was why I was there! I started going to meetings and hearing suggestions. One suggestion I started to hear at every meeting I went to was, don't drink if your ass falls or if it turns to gold. The more I heard it, the angrier I got. Give me a break! Don't these aa people have something else to say? Then one meeting, someone said it again, and I heard it. I actually heard what they were saying! I never heard anyone say it again for a long, long time! Another time, I was at my home group and a fellow was asked to speak. He started to say how he did not like AA, nor the people in AA. He seemed very depressed. I wondered who had gotten this joker to speak. He was bringing me down! I walked out of the meeting - of course, I walked out with my own crazy self. Later in the week, I went to my therapist and shared this. He asked me a question, 'What if this was a good as it got for this fellow? What if this was where he was? I was only thinking about myself. This opened my eyes that other people had their own journey and struggles in getting sober. I needed to start developing some compassion and empathy. In the early days of meetings, I wanted to drink every day. I also wanted to punch people, especially at work. At my meetings, people told me that if I

wanted to drink or punch someone, do it tomorrow! It worked for me!

Lastly, that voice I had speaking to me started talking when I woke in the morning. It said, 'asshole, don't get out of bed! There are snakes on the floor!

It terrified me and caused no amount of anxiety. I shared this at my home group and a fellow asked if I had a 24 hr book? I said yes. He said to read pages 78, 79 and 80, and to put the book under my pillow. The next morning, that voice was there with the same message! I remembered the book and looked up the pages.

The first page was about the past, which was where I was! The past was gone and there was nothing I could do about it.

I turned the page and it talked about tomorrow, which was where I now was! It said that tomorrow was a dream and not here yet. I turned the page and it talked about today where I was not - except not in the present moment but later in the day! I read that book every morning and in a very short time that voice went away, never to come back. I got a sponsor, Dominic, because he raised his hand a meetings and said, 'I'm not having a good time today'. I said that my man! He and I would talk at the top of my street for 10 minutes or so, until those feelings other than anger or fear started to show up and I started running down the block to my apartment. Over time, those feelings became less frightening to me and I stopped running. Another thing Dominic shared with me was, 'John, if you are talking to yourself, you are talking to the wrong person!' Boy was he on target. I had a committee in my head that spoke to me. It said, get your jacket. I asked why? Need to know basis it said. Where are we going I said? Need to know. When will I come home? Need to know! I am so grateful for all those people in my early days of recovery who spoke to me, smiled at me, gave me a half cup of coffee, held my hand.

## Today I have 1,549 days

**sober.** Sounds pretty impressive. The next longest time I was ever sober was 4,957. That was from birth until 13 ½ years old but even during that time, I was slowly honing my drinking habit. I was allowed to have a beer on Friday nights with my father as sort of a bonding ritual

I spend the next 15,511 days being faithful to drugs, then drugs and alcohol then full time alcohol. Did I think I had a problem? NO. Did I think there was a way out of that life? Hell no.

I was living in the "why me world" Why did my father kill himself, why was my mother so far removed from us, why is life so hard, why do I have to pay my own way? Why do I feel so awful? Never did I think any of these feelings were alcohol related. As a child my parents drank heavily as did my aunt and uncle. I spent quality time on weekends in a bar with my dad. Dad was a liquor salesman so having bottles all over the house was normal. He never missed a day of work, he never gave me a reason to think he was drinking more than the rest of the world.

I was too young to understand why he did what he did. It was never discussed. We went on like broken pieces of a plate badly glued back together. It was never the same. So what else was there to do but hide behind a bottle in high school, I was passing so how could I think I had a problem. After high school I had an apartment, worked two job an put myself though college. So how could I had a problem? I was a bartender so drinking at work was expected, just normal job behavior

I married an alcoholic without even realizing it. I could drink him under the table most nights and we both made it to work the next day, so how could we be alcoholics?

I prided myself on being able to hold my own but the thought was staring to creep in. I lived on Alka seltzer, coca cola and black coffee in the daytime in order to keep it together and fend off the hangover until I was able to heal it with more liquor. I was a regular at several town bars. But I was a regular as a child with my dad so it was just like home. It was normal. I thought. So how could it be wrong?

As time progressed each job I had was becoming shorter lived. Same

job, different company. I was able to be productive most afternoons but the mornings were too much. And each morning I would say, I am definitely going to be good tonight. That rarely happened. After about a year at a job, I would be about two months behind and giving notice for another job. I cleaned up very well for interviews and convinced each new employer that I was looking for more challenge. Did I think that was a problem? Kinda.

I met my match when a new company was opened by someone one with a lot of money to invest but a serious drug problem. He barely showed up and so I was doing almost everything on my own. Luckily there wasn't a lot to do. I stayed for five years and left one day in a huff telling him that we never grew as a company because of him; but was I sober enough to grow this business? Hell no.

My next job lasted five months. I was so busy my head was spinning and the combination of the fast pace and my constant hangovers made it too much of a struggle. I left telling them I needed more opportunity. How they took that, I'll never know

My last job as an active alcoholic was in a very small office. It didn't appear to be very busy with I felt gave me a good amount of time to drink my cola/coffee combo and try to hold it together. Was I fooling anyone? Hardly. After 90 days I was called into what I thought was going to be a positive review. I walked in to see the managers looking a little somber and was told "we just don't feel you are able to do this job? Was a shocked? Actually no. Was I devastated? Somewhat.

After years of living underground in the world of addiction, no one had ever told me to my face that they thought I had a problem. Up to that point no one wanted to tell me what I myself was in denial about. My first thought was that I would quit drinking a for thirty days. That way I'd be all cleaned up and ready for another job. I decided to try AA for a few weeks much the same way I would go to Weight watchers for a few weeks when I thought I had a few pounds to lose it was going to be Sort of like a crash alcohol diet. I never dreamed of staying any longer because I didn't think I was like any of those people Was I wrong? Yes I was.

*Continued on page 6*

*Continued from page 5*

In those first thirty days I heard story after story from other alcoholics whose lives were so similar to mine that I was finally able to realize, it was not just me. I was not the only wounded warrior

After counting off those first 30 days I realized I was feeling better but nowhere near where I wanted to be, so I kept counting. After working on each step with a sponsor I realized how much resentments about my alcoholic family had taken a toll on me and what a relief it was to accept life on life's terms. I am now counting out the best days of my life, and learning to "not shut the door on the past

In the peak my drinking I used to tell people I perpetually felt I was at a table for one. Now I look at my home group and feel we are at a table of plenty. Plenty of support, plenty of people in my network and plenty of reasons to want to stay sober

I feel relief now which is one thing I never expected. Relief that I am in a world I barely knew existed and my gratitude list grows each day. And right now I am grateful for the past 1549 days. Thank you AA.

Eileen H

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### Listen to the Music

My earliest memories of music and drinking are long afternoons and weekend evenings lounging on bean bag chairs in my friend Tina's basement. Her record player spun the music of the Moody Blues, Joni Mitchell, Genesis, and the Doors while we chugged Pabst Blue Ribbon purchased by her older brother and held our noses doing shots of her dad's treasured Chivas Regal. If we drank enough, we'd surely crack the Beatles' code by playing "Strawberry Fields Forever" enough times to hear "I buried Paul." Four beers in, we swooned to Jefferson Airplane, certain that if we asked Alice, we too could be "ten feet tall." We suffered along with Janis Ian; convinced that drinking might help our chances when "choosing sides for basketball." Over and over, the piano man proclaimed: "I can see the sad surrender in my mother's eyes...it's either sadness or euphoria." I was more often sad than euphoric.

In that basement with my friends, perfectly inebriated, reviewing the

newest record from the Columbia Record Club, and plotting our next scheme to get booze, I felt surrounded, but alone. Hoping the alcohol would make me happy, at evening's end, I found myself with a crashing headache, a gassy stomach, and the soul sickness of alcoholism.

Drinking magnified my teenage experience with the music of the 70's. Stuck in self and with enough booze in me, I was certain that the musicians I listened to were speaking to ME. At the time, I heard what I wanted to hear. I wasn't prepared to see the lyrics as a path to set me free. Rather, the lyrics fueled my desire to drink. By the time I got to college, me and David Gilmour were "just two lost souls swimming in a fish bowl, year after year." I played Wish You Were Here so many times that the scratches on the album were like war wounds. The more I drank, the more I privately interpreted messages in the lyrics that likely were not there. But the songs were my friends. With or without company, I drowned my sorrows in jugs of cheap Tyrolia and leftover bottles of Mateus Rose or Cold Duck that had gathered dust in my parents' wine closet. I tried attending parties or bars where people danced along to the Police or Santana or Clapton. But when the evening was over, I was regularly left feeling more alone than ever.

Always feeling different, I appreciated the obscurity of the local used record store tucked between a host of bars on the streets of State College. I looked forward to days without classes when sufficiently intoxicated, I could enter one of several musty stores wreaking of incense. Boxes of worn record labels, filed alphabetically, revealed hints to the trials of the songwriters. Seeking solace in the music, a haunting lyric validated my desperation. Back in my dorm room, my personal connection to the music was fortified by my ingestion of alcohol. This attachment grew fierce as I memorized lyrics; searching for the deeper meaning. It would be years before I'd have more clarity. The attachment to alcohol that had brought me to darkness shifted. I finally found myself convinced that Stevie Nicks meant it when she sang: "for you, there will be no more crying, for you the sun will be shining."

Forty years later, I listen to and interpret lyrics in a new way. I find messages in music that speak to recovery. I hear lines from our

literature, our slogans, even the Promises. At my first concert sober, my best friend and I sat on the lawn at PNC Arts Center eager to embrace Dave Matthews Band. Squeezed between men and women holding enough beer and wine in each hand to last a lifetime, I listened:

"Celebrate we will, 'cause life is short, but sweet for certain," and I hear One Day at a Time. "Sometimes it's easy to be myself, sometimes it's better to be somebody else," and I know to Act As If. "What I want is what I've not got, and what I need is all around me," I'm reminded to be grateful.

I've had many spiritual hits from words spoken by men and women in the rooms of AA. But for me there's more. My long-standing love of music shows me how God speaks to me through the lines in a song. After all, "I've looked at life from both sides now."

I hear Don't Quit Before the Miracle when America sings: "don't give up until you drink from the silver cup, you never know until you try." I hear Self-Seeking Will Slip Away in Yes's masterful line: "don't surround yourself with yourself." I'm convinced that nothing improves with a drink when Fleetwood Mac reminds me: "been down one time, been down two times, never goin' back again." And I know, with absolute certainty, that "I'll get by with a little help from my friends."

Our beautiful program assures us, that in one form or another, we get the messages we need.

Debbie B.  
Wyckoff, NJ

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*Continued from page 12*

You Get Here?"; hearing Maureen R. share on "How Do We Add a Link in the Chain?"; Cathie F. introducing Bill W.'s "Three Legacies Talk in 1951"; our three dynamic speakers, Ed B., Sandra P., and Beau B.; hearing Jimmy A. share on "After Home Group – What's Next?"; Cathy S. talk about "Who Shows us the Way? Service Sponsors"; Bill E. sharing his "Twelve Thoughts on Service"; Charlie T. sharing on the "Reflections of the Day"; and the Bernard Smith 1953 audio recording on A.A.'s Future". We closed the program with Dr. Bob's Farewell Talk at the first International Convention in Cleveland in 1950. How could we have done anything else?

We received overwhelming feedback from the fellowship when the day was over, and I do want to thank the host district, our friends at District 24, for making it so easy for us to do something out of the ordinary. But certainly, our greatest hope was that the event would inspire folks to get involved in carrying the A.A. message of hope on a different level - beyond the home group. We hope we made a small difference, and that maybe a few left with a desire to ask questions and learn.

We had a dream, and our dream came true. Over my many years involved in service in Alcoholics Anonymous, I have attended and participated in countless A.A. events and workshops, including the General Service Conference in NY. The "Love & Service" committee was the best I have ever experienced, and to each of you, I can't thank you enough for your A.A. passion, your hearts, and your dedication. Jimmy, I humbly thank you again for giving me such an incredible honor. It turned out to be one of the greatest gifts of my life.

You all are my heroes and my inspiration! I feel so blessed to play a tiny part in keeping the doors of Alcoholics Anonymous open today, and hopefully for generations to come.

With a heart full of A.A. love & gratitude,  
Debbie T  
A Morning of Love & Service  
Chairperson  
Area 44 Past Delegate, Panel 55

# 2018 MINI-CONFERENCE TOPICS AND DISCUSSION ITEMS

## TOPIC 1: CORRECTIONS

### A. Should we Create a Pamphlet for Inmates Who Are to be Released After Long Term Incarceration?

Background:

The trustees Committee on Corrections received an email from the Panel 67 Delegate in Area 21, Southern Illinois, on behalf of their area assembly, proposing that a pamphlet be devised for inmates prior to being released after long term incarceration. They made reference to the previous 2009 pamphlet “It Sure Beats Sitting in a Cell”, and included as background material Pages 22-30 of that pamphlet. They are stating that the revised 2012 pamphlet gives very little information on inmates being released. Their hope is that a new pamphlet would be utilized by inmates in their last six months to a year of incarceration.

Added to the background material by GSO is the flyer “Prerelease Contact Information” for A.A.’s on the inside, which is available on GSO’s website, as well as two samples of GSO letters to inmates who are soon to be released.

PROS:

- What’s the harm in creating a new pamphlet? There can’t be too much information out there for our incarcerated brothers and sisters who are close to being released to help them connect into the fellowship on their first day out.
- The previous 2009 “It Sure Beats Sitting in a Cell” pamphlet offered plenty of information regarding inmate release. The first page of Area 21’s background material (Page 22 of that pamphlet) starts off with “Here are some tips about the first day out. They show the ways many of us have stayed sober and free.” It goes on to list the following suggestions, each with explanations. There are 9 pages of this prerelease information!
  - ▷ We remembered that release day is just one more 24-hour period
  - ▷ We made some plans
  - ▷ We set up A.A. contacts
  - ▷ We remembered H.A.L.T.
  - ▷ We put off the party, or tried a different kind
  - ▷ We went to A.A. to keep from drinking
  - ▷ We tried to tell the truth
  - ▷ We tried not to expect A.A. to do certain things.
- The revised 2012 version of the pamphlet only has 3 small paragraphs on Page 7, under “Prerelease and Re-Entry Suggestions.” All the rest of the information from 2009 was removed.
- The cost of producing a new pamphlet is minimal. Fortunately, group and individual contributions have been on the rise, and the General Service Board is financially sound.

CONS:

- GSO’s “Prerelease Contact Program” gives a lot of helpful information and guidance for an inmate to use. It even gives the inmate who is within six months of release a short form to fill out to get connected to an A.A. on the outside who will help transition him or her into the A.A. community with transportation to meetings and introduction to other A.A.’s.
- GSO’s sample letter to inmates who are soon to be released is very helpful.
- Is there really a need for another pamphlet? If an alcoholic has hit rock bottom and becomes willing to go to any lengths, what we currently have available should be more than enough.

## TOPIC II: Literature

### A. Should we consider proposed revisions to Alcoholics Anonymous?

1. Should we add an appendix reflecting recognition received from the Library of Congress?
2. Should we add the A.A. Preamble and Responsibility Statement?
3. Should we add an endnote to Bill W.’s story acknowledging co-founder, Bob S.?

These requests to make additions to the Big Book came from three different Areas, each requesting a single change, so the Trustees Literature Committee combined them into one Agenda item with three distinct parts.

1. Area 43 New Hampshire, approved with substantial unanimity that we add an appendix to the Big Book referencing our Library of Congress recognition. In 2012, the Library of Congress included the book Alcoholics Anonymous in their selection of the 88 “Books that Shaped America”. The background goes on to state that award and this appendix would help readers to understand that the language in the Big Book written in 1939, sometimes referred to as ‘dated language’, has not hindered its contemporary significance.

And like the Lasker Award appendix already in the Big Book, this will help convey to readers that the program, as outlined in the book, does indeed work as evidenced by its recognized influence on society.

The recommendation goes on to state that this is in keeping with our Traditions and is consistent with past A.A. practices.

Pros

This is a great idea and will help reinforce that our Big Book can carry a contemporary message even with language appropriate to the time it was written.

I’m for anything that may help convince readers that this program will work for them.

*Continued on page 8*

*Continued from page 7*

#### Cons

I understand what Area 43 is trying to say but I disagree that it's in keeping with our Traditions, it does sound like promotion. We already have one example of an award in the appendices, that's enough to show the reader our positive impact on society. We don't need an award story to convince readers that our program works. What does your group think?

2. District 29 in Texas has requested the A.A. Preamble and Responsibility Statement be added to the Big Book. They say that by including both it will reinforce the concept that our Big Book would then contain "all the necessary documents, text, et cetera, to initiate and conduct a meeting or found a new group". They state that both are A.A. approved and together clearly proclaim our mission. A little history – in 1993 the Conference literature committee considered a suggestion to add the Preamble to the Big Book and took no action. Then in 2011 the committee brought forward a recommendation to add the A.A. Preamble to the front inside pages but this did not result in a Conference Advisory Action. In 2012 the committee considered the same request and again took no action. The Conference reaffirmed to leave the Responsibility Declaration as originally published and since then, there have been no previous requests to add the Responsibility Declaration to the Big Book.

#### Pros

Great idea, let's put important documents where members may actually read them – right in the Big Book. Why not. How can it hurt to have these items easily accessible after all our basic text is a reference book? Having these widely used documents readily available in the Big Book is an asset for meetings large or small. The Conference has discussed this several times so perhaps now we recognize an expressed need from the fellowship for this addition.

#### Cons

If the Big Book becomes the 1-stop shop for all things AA, it may drive people away from our other important literature. Most of the Preamble is contained in the foreword to the first edition and therefore is already in the Big Book. This has already been discussed by several Conferences with no action taken – let's leave well enough alone. What about the Declaration of Unity? And where do we stop? What does your group think?

3. The Staten Island Service Assembly (Area 49) suggests we add an endnote to Bill's story acknowledging co-founder, Dr. Bob., that would read something like "The story of A.A.'s other co-founder, Dr. Bob S., is found on page 171; 'Dr. Bob's Nightmare.'" Their reasoning is having witnessed many members who stated they did not know that Dr. Bob's story is in the Big Book, this would help bring awareness to Dr. Bob as co-founder.

#### Pros

Great idea, sometimes groups don't read past the "first 164" and this will make readers aware very early in the text. It reinforces to the reader right up front that Bill and Dr. Bob were in this together.

#### Cons

Everyone knows that Dr. Bob is one of our co-founders and his story heads the story section. Dr. Bob is already acknowledged in the introduction "Part 1, Pioneers of A.A." as well as on page 171 in the preface to his story "A co-founder of Alcoholics Anonymous. The birth of our Society dates from his first day of permanent sobriety, June 10 1935..." A sponsor should be able to clarify that co-founder means more than one founder and that Dr. Bob along with Bill W. are A.A.'s co-founders. Will we then need an endnote to Dr. Bob's Nightmare acknowledging Bill W. as co-founder? What does your group think?

## Topic II: Literature – Agenda item B

### Question: Should we consider developing a pamphlet directed at the Atheist and Agnostic and/or adopt the recent pamphlet approved by the UK titled "The God Word."

#### Background

Historically AA has addressed our atheist and agnostic membership by referring them to the chapter "We Agnostics" in the Big Book. As this chapter indicates that the agnostic will ultimately find "God", many have felt this did not truly insure our traditions that indicate the only requirement for membership is a desire to stop drinking and that the primary purpose of every A. A. group is to carry its message to the alcoholic who still suffers. As the agnostic and atheist membership has grown over the years, there was an increasing request for more literature that addressed them. In response to that need, in 2014 the General Service Conference approved a pamphlet titled "Many Pathways to Spirituality" that included some excerpts from stories from atheists and agnostics, as well as from other beliefs as well. The intent was to show that AA is spiritual not religious, and welcomes all. While the pamphlet was a start, as this population continues to grow, especially through the millennial, the need for literature specifically addressing the atheist and agnostic has increased.

#### PROS

-Use of the UK Pamphlet or the development of a separate one that specifically addresses this population, would insure atheists and agnostics that they are welcome and that they too can find their sobriety in AA.  
-Having a pamphlet in the rack would insure the atheist or agnostic entering the rooms that their message is here as well. That even if they

hear the "GOD" word repeated over and over in the meetings, a pamphlet similar to the one the UK uses gives them numerous references in our literature that their version of a higher power will work as well.  
-While the intent of the "Many Pathways to Spirituality" was to show we in AA are spiritual not religious, while addressing some of the issues atheists and agnostics experience when first encountering A. A., it is felt that it still leaves a lot to be desired because to an atheist or an agnostic, "spirituality" and "religion" are the same thing. A new piece of literature would address the remaining issues.  
-Creating a pamphlet specifically for atheists and agnostics would go a long way to dispel the preconception that people who do not know A.A. have, that A.A. is a religious institution, and would increase the chances that an alcoholic atheist or agnostic will be able to find a path to sobriety.

#### CONS

-Over the years many did find God in the rooms, and that this would lessen the need to find a Higher Power as outlined in our programs literature.  
-Many believe pamphlets are divisive rather than inclusive and would continue to divide our membership.  
-Many feel strongly that there is a difference between religion and spirituality and that the separate literature would also lessen our spiritual message.



## Topic II: Literature – Agenda item C.

### Topic: Should we Consider a Request to Revise Living Sober?

#### Background

On June 3, 2017, GSO received a letter from the Panel 67 Delegate in Area 06 California Northern Coastal.

The letter read, “At the post conference assembly on May 13, we approved the following motion with substantial unanimity to replace the text that was removed from the book, Living Sober, when it is updated. CNCA moves to reintroduce the following section (from page 6 of the “AA Member – Medications and Other Drugs) Revised 2011, and also from the 1998 edition of Living Sober page 89 in Appendix in Living Sober (2012 edition). Placement of the below text will follow the current section “Note to Medical Professionals” (page 90):

“Some alcoholics require medications.

We recognize that alcoholics are not immune to other diseases. Some of us had to cope with depressions that can be suicidal, schizophrenia that sometimes requires hospitalization, Bi-Polar and other mental and biological illness, also among us are diabetics, epileptic members with heart trouble, cancer allergies, hypertension and many other serious physical conditions.

Because of the difficulties that many alcoholics have with drugs, some members have taken the position that no one in AA should take any medication. While this position has undoubtedly prevented relapses for some, it has meant disaster for others.

AA members and many of their physicians have described situations in which depressed return patients have been told by AA's to throw away the pills, only to have depression return with all its difficulties, sometimes resulting in suicide. We have heard, too, from members with other conditions, including schizophrenia, bi-polar disorder, epilepsy and others requiring medication, that well-meaning AA friends encourage them from taking prescribed medication. Unfortunately, by following a layperson's advice, the sufferers find that their condition can return with all their previous intensity. On top of that they feel guilty because they are convinced that “AA IS AGAINST PILLS.” It becomes clear that just as it is wrong to enable or support any alcoholics to become addicted to any drugs, it's equally wrong to deprive any alcoholic of medication which can alleviate or control other disabling physical and or emotional problems.”

The delegate writes, “I understand that this is quite a lengthy request. Our Area has been discussing this motion for over a year. Here is some of the sharing: “Since this book is often given to newcomers and the pamphlet is not, we want this text back in the book. Our group feels it is important because there have been personal opinions that can jeopardize people's sobriety and life. This would be helpful in dispelling misconceptions that exist. This text is as important for people giving advice on medications as to those who are receiving this advice. My group was in favor because it is important information. We do not diagnose people or treat medical conditions.”

History of Living Sober: The book was published in 1976. A few

changes have been made since then. In 1997 the conference committee on literature made several recommendations that the suggested changes to Living Sober be approved by modification. Recommendation was tabled and a floor action was submitted but failed. In 1998 several recommendations were made which did not result in Conference Advisory Actions, however, a floor action regarding the addition of sections from the pamphlet “The AA MEMBER: MEDICATIONS AND OTHER DRUGS” as an appendix to Living Sober was approved as a Conference Advisory Action. In 2009 a group from San Francisco wrote, “We believe that the relevance of the book Living Sober should be enhanced with some updates. For example, there is no reference to the internet or social networking sites. In 2010 there was a recommendation for the conference to consider a request to review the booklet Living Sober. It was recommended that the trustees committee on literature review the booklet and present a report to the 2012 Conference Committee on Literature. At the 2012 conference, final revisions of the Living Sober booklet with changes to outdated language or practices were approved. In 2014, there was a request from Area 27 Louisiana that a statement found in the book Living Sober on page 5 be deleted. “We have to keep away from the first dose of the drug we have become addicted to.” Under the Additional Committee Considerations, the literature committee agreed that the current text added to confusion regarding A.A.'s Singleness of Purpose.

#### THE PROS:

Tradition 10: We have no opinion on outside issues. Medication is an outside issue.

We have been speaking a lot about safety in the rooms, advising people who have other issues beside alcoholism i.e. physical or mental problems, to not take medications. This can cause a lot of harm to the person or others.

Our job is to carry the message to others who suffer from alcoholism. We are not doctors; we are alcoholics. It is very dangerous to give advice on matters we don't have any knowledge on. We are talking about human beings who may need medications.

Not everybody reads the pamphlet “The A.A. Member – Medications and Other Drugs”, but most A.A. members read Living Sober.

#### THE CONS

The book Living Sober is about helping the alcoholic to learn how to not drink and stay sober. Why do we need to be talking at all in A.A. literature about medication, which is an outside issue?

The text that is being suggested to be added back in to Living Sober would be below the section titled “Note to the Medical Professionals.” We already have conference approved pamphlets, service material and flyers with information regarding medication that is helpful to the professionals. Why do we need to put more information on medication in an A.A. recovery book for alcoholics?

What does your home group think?

## Topic II - Literature

### D. Should we create a pamphlet for the Spanish-speaking woman?

At their July 23rd, 2017 Assembly a proposal was presented to the Group of Area 05, Southern California, to send an item to the 68th Conference to create a pamphlet for the Spanish speaking woman. The proposal was brought back to the Groups and a vote was taken at the Area Committee meeting on August 20th, 2017 to send this item to their next Assembly for a vote. On October 22nd, 2017, the Assembly approved sending the item for creating a Spanish-speaking women to the Conference coordinator. The Trustee's Literature committee received this item and added it to the Final Conference agenda for consideration by the Conference Literature committee.

The Southern California Area felt that the Spanish woman alcoholic is an underrepresented group in our Fellowship. Currently, there is a pamphlet entitled A.A. for the Alcoholic Woman which could help these women but the Areas felt that there were a number of issues specific to Spanish woman that were not addressed by this pamphlet. What are some of those issues? Because there are very few women in Spanish-speaking groups and little or no family here in the U.S. to provide support, Spanish-women often feel isolated and alone. In addition, being a female in the Spanish community is often associated with a deep rooted cultural shame. Also, many Spanish-speaking women are first generation immigrants with little resources and few outside the Fellowship who can provide any help, increasing their feeling of hope-

lessness.

This pamphlet would address these issues and would join the ranks of other pamphlets like A.A. for the Native North American, A.A. and the Gay/Lesbian Alcoholic and Young People and A.A. intended to reach out to those newcomers to give them hope, to let them know that they are not alone and that there is a place for them in our Fellowship.

#### Pros

There are significant barriers for Spanish women entering our Fellowship. A pamphlet addressing the issues mentioned above could help reduce these barriers by identifying these issues and letting the Spanish woman know that the Fellowship understands their issues. The pamphlet could also serve to help educate the males in the Spanish community about the concerns of Spanish-speaking woman and help them address these concerns in their Groups, not as Spanish men and women, but as one alcoholic welcoming and helping another. The newcomer attending their first meeting or those in early sobriety are trying to decide whether to stay or turn back to alcohol and perhaps oblivion whether they are Spanish-speaking or not. A pamphlet in a literature rack has been known to encourage a newcomer to stay, especially if there is no one in the Group that they newcomer can identify with.

*Continued on page 10*

*Continued from page 9*

Cons

Don't we have enough pamphlets already? There are already some 9 different pamphlets targeted at different audiences including pamphlets for Young people and older alcoholics, the LGBTQ community, the Black and African American and several others. There are many others specialized populations that we could identify in various ethnic communities or different professions. Should we create pamphlets for each of these populations which seeks to identify and focus on our differences rather than our common problem, alcoholism? The focus should be on the Groups themselves and improving the way that they greet and help newcomers.

What does your Group think? Will this pamphlet address the concerns of Spanish-speaking women and help the newcomer feel welcome and encourage them to stay? Or is another pamphlet targeted at a specific population focusing on our differences?

**History  
and Archives  
Committee**



#### VOICES FROM OUR PAST

It all started when I saw my hand raised at my district meeting to bring a meeting to our Day of Sharing in 2015. Well, really, it all started the day I took my first drink and felt something I thought I wouldn't be able to replicate, until I found the rooms of Alcoholics Anonymous, but that story is better told in person!

I was fortunate to have a sponsor who not only took me through the twelve steps and helped me find a network of friends, but also got me involved in service from the beginning, so raising my hand was something I was accustomed to. But the chain of events that led up to my current involvement in the Area 44 History & Archives Committee is something I couldn't have made happen. The meeting I volunteered for at the Day of Sharing was to be on the History of AA, and since Northern New Jersey is one of the earliest places our fellowship grew, I wanted to keep the focus local. I knew Bill and Lois had spent a summer in Green Pond, which is close to my

district, so I did some research. My research led me to a post from 2006 by a fellow named Russ, who as coincidence would have it, (is there really coincidence?) I was on a separate email group with. While he didn't have the information I was looking for, he did have information about The Pyramid Club, a club that had existed in my district for almost 50 years. I ended up doing my presentation on that club and the history of AA in our district. But that's where things really got interesting. I was so excited about the research and how helpful the members of the Area 44 History & Archives Committee and the General Service Office were to me, I decided to attend one of the committee meetings. At my first meeting, one of the topics was a project involving digitizing audio tapes that were made from the 50's through the 70's at--of all places--The Pyramid Club! Coincidence? We think not! Just more of The Promises being fulfilled! As it turns out, hundreds of reel-to-reel tapes had been donated to Area 44 by some members of The Newton Group back in 2005, many of which were from groups visiting The Pyramid Club. The reels were to be preserved in a way that they would no longer deteriorate over

time, with the ultimate goal being to share them with the fellowship. I love to listen to speaker tapes to hear and identify with the experience of those who came before me and I love to learn about the history of our fellowship, so it sure looked like my Higher Power was at work in putting me in a place to be of love and service and use my strengths--or should I say His? Needless to say, I joined the committee representing my district! One of the members of the committee was assigned the task of getting these reels carefully and professionally transferred into digital format. As they were completed, members of our committee were offered the opportunity to listen to the recordings for quality of recording and to listen for anonymity breaks, since in those days it was common for speakers to use their last names. The goal was to offer these recordings for our fellowship to be able to listen to on our website or even to give groups the opportunity to hear meetings from the past from our area. I'm pleased to report that our website, [www.nnjaa.org](http://www.nnjaa.org), now has 3 of these recordings available for the fellowship to listen to and hundreds more waiting in the wings! Just visit the website and use the "Service" tab at the top of the home page, then click on "Service Committees" to find the History & Archives Committee. Click on "More Information" and you'll see the "Online Audio Archives" section. There are currently 3 recordings from the 50's and 60's, but more will be made available.

Also, if your group is interested in hearing one of these talks, maybe even one your home group presented, reach out to the committee at [archives@nnjaa.org](mailto:archives@nnjaa.org), and we'll be happy to come and bring a meeting "from the past to your future." We have a passion for sharing about the history of our fellowship, and we have many different presentations to offer. Recently, we have presented talks on "Landmarks in Northern NJ in the History of AA", as well as the "Four Founding Moments", which was presented in these pages over the past year.

It's great to hear that, even though times have changed, experience, strength and hope has not.

Jim P.  
District 1/2 History & Archives  
Chair

## The Three Legacies of A. A.

### Recovery Unity Service

Our disease, alcoholism, has three parts — physical, mental and spiritual. It affects our body, our mind, and our spirit.

The symbol of the triangle that A. A. has adopted stands for its three legacies — Recovery, Unity and Service. Each side of the triangle is equal to the other, and likewise, Recovery, Unity and Service are equal as well.

**Recovery** is the foundation of the A. A. program. Without Recovery, there can be neither Unity nor Service. It is achieved by following the A.A. program as outlined in the 12 Steps that are found in the Big Book, as well as using the tools that A. A. offers — sponsorship, literature and help in general.

**Unity** comes from the fellowship found in A. A. — its members, its groups and its meetings. After achieving Recovery, the Unity that is found in A.A. helps to reinforce and solidify the sobriety of the recovering alcoholic. We do together what we cannot do by ourselves.

**Service** is where A.A. members extend themselves to guide and support other alcoholics and the A.A. program. They give back to others what was so freely given to them. By practicing the 12th Step, members of A. A. not only help others by carrying the message, but they also help themselves to stay sober — one alcoholic helping another alcoholic one day at a time to achieve and sustain sobriety.

A life that is happy, joyous and free awaits.

John W.

**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** - 2nd Thursday, 7:30 pm, St. Mary's Church corner of High and Legion, Closter  
**District 8** - 2nd Tues. 7:30 pm, Panther Valley Ecumenical Ch, 1490 Route 517, Allamuchy  
**District 9** - 3rd Tues. 7:30 pm, Stanhope United Methodist Ch, Rte 183, Netcong  
**District 10** - 2nd Tues. 7:00 pm, 1st Presbyterian Church, 513 Birch St, (corner of Church & Birch) 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, 83 Wayne St, upstairs, Jersey City  
**District 15/21** - 3rd Mon. 7:30 pm, Hunterdon Medical Center, Employee Cafeteria, Rt. 31 South, Flemington  
**District 16** - 3rd Mon. 7:30 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 United Methodist Ch, Mountain Ave. & Hillcrest Rd., Berkeley Heights  
**District 19** - Last Mon. 7:30 pm, Friendship Hall, New Market Road, Piscataway  
**District 20** - 1st Wednesday, 7:00pm, Presbyterian Church 140 Mountain Ave. Westfield  
**District 22** - 3rd Wed. 7:30 pm, Cook College Extension Center, 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. 7:30 pm, St. Luke's Parish, 1674 Old Freehold Road, Toms River  
**District 28** - 1st Tue. 7:30 pm, St Margaret's Church, 3rd & Ludlow Avenue, Spring Lake  
**District 30** - 4th Sunday 12 Noon, 69 Green 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 Library, 31st St. & Ave. C., Bayonne  
**District 34** - 3rd Sat. 09:30 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, in Somerville.  
**District 36** - 3rd Fri. 7:30 pm, St. Luke's Church, 17 Oak Ave & Route 27, Metuchen  
**District 37** - 3rd Wed. 7:00 pm, First Evangelical Lutheran Church 153 Park St, Montclair  
**District 38** - 2nd Mon. 7:00 pm, St. Peter's Episcopal Church, 271 Roseland Avenue, Essex Fells  
**District 41** - First Thurs 7:00 pm, St. Matthew's Trinity Church, 8th & Washington Sts, Hoboken  
**District 42** - 2nd Sunday 9:00am, 103 Bayard Street, Suite B-12, New Brunswick

**NNJGS Area 44 Office Calendar**

<b>MARCH</b>				<b>JUNE</b>					
3	Grapevine Committee	10:00 AM	12	Public Information Comm	7:30 PM	21	Literature Committee	7:30 PM	
5	Mid-Winter Luncheon	7:00 PM	11	History & Archives @Interg	7:00 PM	22	Joint Unity Meeting	7:00PM	
6	Officer's Meeting	7:00 PM	14	Mini-Conference	8:00 AM	24	P&A Committee	7:30 PM	
7	Mailing Committee Meeting	6:30 PM	16	Literature Sales	6:30 PM	24	Website Comm@ Area	7:30 PM	
7	Translation Committee	7:00 PM	16	Literature Committee	7:30 PM	28	Remote Communities	7:30 PM	
11	Films Committee	9:00 AM	17	CPC Committee	7:00 PM	28	Finance Committee	7:00 PM	
11	Area Com Meeting	10:00 AM	19	Newsletter Committee	5:00 PM				
12	Computer Tech Comm	7:30 PM	23	Finance Committee	7:00 PM				
13	Public Information Comm	7:30 PM	23	Remote Communities Mtg	7:30 PM				
14	History & Archives@Interg	7:00 PM	28	P&A Committee	7:30 PM				
14	Treatment Committee	7:30 PM	28	Website Comm@ Intergroup	7:30 PM				
15	Newsletter Committee	5:00PM	<b>MAY</b>						
17	Committee on Corrections	10:00 AM	1	Officers Meeting	7:00 PM				
19	Literature Sales	6:30 PM	2	Mailing Committee	6:30 PM				
19	Literature Committee	7:30 PM	5	Grapefest	10:00 AM				
20	CPC Committee	7:00 PM	6	Area Committee Meeting	10:00 AM				
21	Convention Committee	8:00 PM	7	Mid-Winter Luncheon	7:00 PM				
22	Website Committee @ Area	7:30 PM	8	Public Information Comm	7:30 PM				
26	Remote Communities Mtg	7:30 PM	9	History & Archives	7:00 PM				
27	Finance Committee	7:00 PM	9	Treatment Committee	7:30 PM				
<b>APRIL</b>				12	Committee on Corrections	10:00 AM			
3	Officer's Meeting	7:00 PM	14	Computer Tech Comm	6:30 PM				
4	Mailing Committee	6:30 PM	15	CPC Committee	7:00 PM				
4	Translation Committee	7:00 PM	16	Convention Committee	8:00 PM				
7	Grapevine Committee	10:00 AM	17	Newsletter Committee	5:00 PM				
9	Computer Tech Comm	7:30 PM	19	Joint Unity Day of Sharing	9:00AM				
				21	Literature Sales	6:30 PM			

**Intergroup Calendar**

<b>MARCH 2018</b>	
1	Intergroup Delegates Meeting, Clark
11	Booker's Exchange, Cranford
21	Nightwatch Committee
22	Joint Website Committee
- Area 44 Office	
30	Holiday (Office Closed) Good Friday
<b>APRIL 2018</b>	
5	Intergroup Delegates Meeting, Clark
18	Nightwatch Committee
26	Joint Website Committee
- Intergroup Office	
<b>MAY 2018</b>	
3	Intergroup Delegates Meeting, Clark
16	Nightwatch Committee
26	Joint Unity Meeting
24	Joint Website Committee
- Area 44 Office	
<b>JUNE 2018</b>	
7	Intergroup Delegates Meeting, Clark
10	Booker's Exchange, Cranford
28	Joint Website Committee
- Intergroup Office	

**NEXT ISSUE MAY 18 NEWS - LETTER@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](mailto:newsletter@nnjaa.org).

*We are not a glum lot ...*  
 Send us your humorous stories and cartoons.

[www.nnjaa.org](http://www.nnjaa.org)

Try it on your Smartphone



Your Northern New Jersey A.A. Website

*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:*

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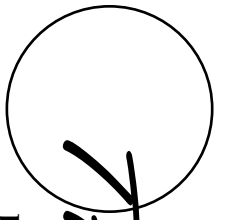
**NORTHERN NEW JERSEY INTERGROUP**  
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 Union, NJ 07083-5705  
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 userid: alcoholic  
 password: onedayatatime

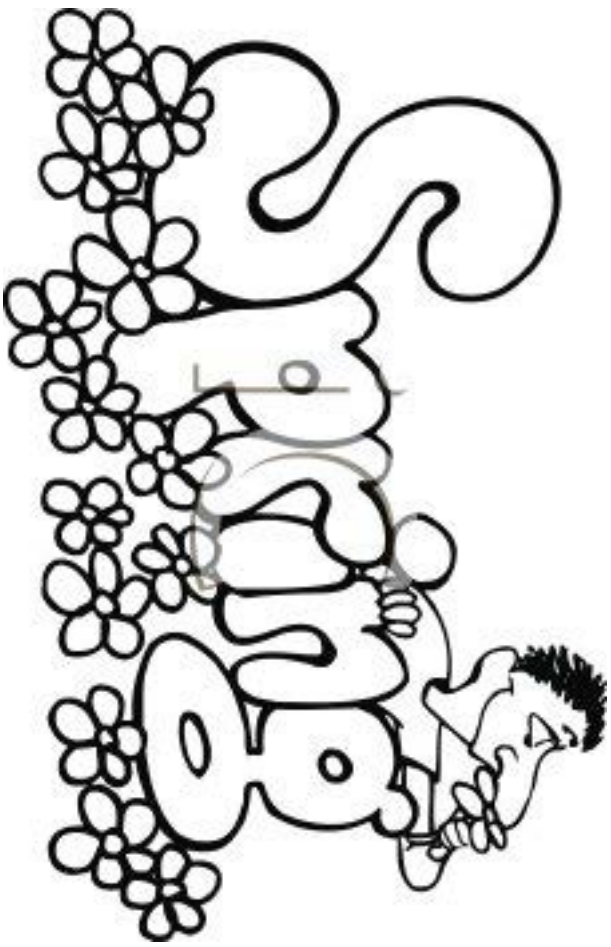


THIS DAY

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

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Spring 2018



## “We Had a Dream”

### *We had a dream.....”A Morning of Love & Service.”*

It all started back in July of 2017, when our Area 44 Ad Hoc Committee on Communication, Attendance & Involvement presented a recommendation to the area committee to hold workshop on introducing A.A. members to the Third Legacy of Service, which passed overwhelmingly.

Your Area Chair, Jimmy A., asked me if I would chair the workshop, and of course I said yes. I will forever be grateful for being entrusted with such a great honor. So I got a committee together of trusted servants who have the same passion for Alcoholics Anonymous as I do, and we held our first planning meeting on September 17th. Prior to that first meeting, I reflected on numerous meetings and workshops I have attended over the years in Area 44 to get people involved in service beyond the home group, most of which were not well attended and didn't seem to inspire. The thought came that maybe we should stay away from what many perceive as the dry, mundane,

business-type words that we often use for these events, like “service manual”, “workshop”, “traditions”, “conference”, etc., and make this event all about love.

At the very first planning meeting, we shared about love, about our gratitude for being sober, and about our love for our Higher Power and the fellowship. We shared about trying to inspire people through the “language of the heart” in Alcoholics Anonymous. It was a spiritual and moving experience, not just because of the emotion, but because we were all immediately on the same page. There were tears at that very first meeting, and I just knew that this was going to be something unique, and very special. We decided to call the event “A Morning of Love & Service.”

We got to work. We reviewed results of questionnaires that had been filled out by the fellowship. We decided to bring A.A. history into it, by sharing on the very beginning of love and service, through Ebby T., Bill W. and Dr. Bob. We took beautiful quotes from our literature. Your

Area Archivist, Lester G., visited GSO in NY a few times and read through hundreds of pages of A.A. history as it related to the beginnings of service. Lester and Jimmy searched for audio recordings of Bill W., and even found two rare recordings of Dr. Bob. We also included a recording of Bernard Smith, a past non-alcoholic Class A trustee, who had a love and understanding of carrying A.A.'s message that was profound. As a committee, we listened to these recordings and cried. The committee met on a monthly basis, and each one was more powerful and moving.

We put together what we thought was a beautiful program, with audio recordings, presentations, and three speakers who shared their personal experience with how they got involved in service and how it changed their lives. We decided that the room set up would be different – no podium for us to stand behind – that the tables would be in a more circular set up with space in the middle, from which we would share and be part of the fellowship, and walk around freely. I kept saying over and over again

that if the event turned out to be half as good as the committee, it would be a huge success. We only knew that we put our hearts and souls into trying to reach A.A. members in a different way, and we hoped for the best. We knew that it was in God's hands.

So we held our “Morning of Love & Service” on Saturday, January 13, 2018, at the New Monmouth Baptist Church in Middletown, NJ. We said that if we got 100 to 125 members to show up we would be happy. We were not prepared for what was to happen. Our last count was 231 people! But it wasn't just about the head count. It was that as we went through the program, the feeling in the room, at least for us, was being matched by the emotions experienced during our committee meetings! It seemed like everyone in the room felt the power of hearing our beloved Dr. Bob talk about his personal experience with service; listening to Bill E. share about “The Beginning of Love & Service”; watching George L. walk around the room with a microphone and asking the attendees, “How Did

*Continued on page 6*