

# THIS DAY

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

*A message from your Area Delegate*



There's a saying you'll hear as a Delegate that "in your first year you are a freshman, and in your second year you are a senior." I can really relate to that saying now. Last year, when I rotated in as your Delegate, I had my doubts that I could do the job. It's a great responsibility, and I was concerned that I would not be able to pull off the Pre-conference reports, bring my Area's group conscience to the General Service Conference, and then let you know what happened at the Post-conference. Then, I attended my first Conference last year. I had one of the most amazing spiritual experiences of my life, and I felt that I represented our Area and the Fellowship that I love so much well.

As my second year as Delegate began, I had the confidence of a senior. At last year's Conference, I was voted in as the chairman of the Grapevine committee and had the additional responsibilities of preparing my Conference committee for this year's Conference. As great as last year's Conference was, this year's Conference was shaping up to be even better with a number of items on the agenda like the translation of the Big Book to a simple-language translation, a 5th edition of the Big Book, potential changes to the Preamble, and several social media items, such as a Grapevine Instagram account. Then, the pandemic hit and all our worlds were turned upside down. Everything about my expectations for this year's Conference changed. My initial reaction was one of great disappointment. I was upset that I would not get to meet the

Panel 70 Delegates in person and have the same amazing experience that I had with the Panel 68 and 69 Delegates at my first General Service Conference.

Our first hurdle was to complete the Pre-conference reports virtually after having conducted four in-person reports. We were able to complete the remaining two Section Pre-conference reports via TEAMS where nearly 100 additional GSRs attended and one Spanish Pre-conference report via Zoom where both Spanish MCDs (DCMs) and over twenty RSGs (GSRs) heard the information on the nine items selected for our Mini-conference Assembly translated into Spanish. After an initial scare that the General Service Conference would be cancelled completely for this year, plans began for the first ever virtual General Service Conference via Zoom. The GSO

Staff, particularly the Conference Coordinator, Patrick C., and the General Service Board, have done an amazing job with the planning of a virtual Conference and the myriad other tasks that needed to be planned. The plan which was approved by the General Service Board was a four-day virtual Conference starting on May 16th. The challenge presented to each Conference committee, including my Grapevine committee, was that we would only have three hours instead of six to deliberate on our Committee's items and that we would be limited to forty five minutes to present our report to the rest of the Conference including time for discussion and voting! As a result, each committee was asked to take the unprecedented step of reducing the items on their agendas and moving as many items to next year's 71st

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*A message from your Area Chair*



Happy Spring! Just a short time ago, we were all physically together in meetings, greeting one another, giving hugs, holding hands at the closing... But now, with the COVID-19 pandemic, who would have thought our entire fellowship would be in the form of physical distancing: attending Zoom meetings, Zoom district meetings, and a Zoom mini conference? It amazes me how quickly we alcoholics can adapt to all the challenges that we have been faced with. I am very proud to be a member of this fellowship and all that we have accomplished since March. But our current situation does present certain challenges, and I am sure that we will overcome them all. Communication is the key.

Our registered AA groups that have replaced their regular meetings with Zoom meetings on the same date and time have been compiled into a list and are available on the Intergroup website. Our Intergroup has been extremely busy maintaining the list of groups that have canceled their meetings, as well as the groups that have replaced their meetings with Zoom meetings. The replacement of in-person meetings with Zoom meetings presents a com-

plication as it relates to our 7th Tradition basket. The General Service Office, Intergroup, the Area, your district, and groups rely on your group's 7th Tradition donations to facilitate our twelve-step services. Without the 7th tradition donations, the ability to perform that vital work can be affected. Some groups have started online payment systems, such as Venmo or PayPal, for use in collecting 7th Tradition contributions during their Zoom meetings. The Area has compiled a written summary of how to obtain a tax ID number and a group bank account, so that if groups choose an online payment system for their 7th Tradition donations, they can. Additionally, the Area is working on setting up a Venmo account and listing it on the Area website, so that groups can continue to make their 7th Tradition donations by way of Venmo. We expect this system to be completed and available to groups very shortly.

Our districts have adapted very quickly by using Teams through SharePoint or Zoom for their district meetings. Again, it is amazing to me how quickly we can adapt to changing circumstances and find a way to accomplish the work that is so important to us.

At a recent Area Committee Meeting, it was voted by the Area Committee members to establish a Social Media Special Commit-

tee for our Area. We are all very excited about expanding our twelve-step work through social media. The General Service Office has done a lot of work with how to take advantage of social media while keeping within the traditions. As a matter of fact, the General Service Office itself has already started using social media.

Keep in mind, by using Zoom and all the secret Facebook pages that are out there, we are already using social media. We will need people to help on this committee. So if you have an interest in social media and would like to participate, I ask that you please email me at Area-Chair@nnjaa.onmicrosoft.com.

Another challenge we are facing is how we are reaching out to the newcomer. Your ideas and creativity are desperately needed on our various committees. Although we are unable to go into the jails and the various institutions, there may be ways we can share our literature with those facilities. Please consider participating and sharing your thoughts and ideas.

Spring is in the air, and I am sure that everyone, including me, is itching to get out into the fresh air and sunshine, and even more, back to "normal." I pray that all of you and your families remain healthy and safe. I want to thank you all for continuing to keep AA alive in Area 44 and look forward

to seeing you all in person very soon.

Yours in love and service,  
Maureen R., Area Chairperson

*From your Newsletter Chair*

Greetings from the Newsletter Committee!

Welcome to our first completely online newsletter! Our committee was getting ready for the spring edition and distributing winter newsletters with the pre-conference report items, when... WHAM...the pandemic struck with a vengeance, and we were on lockdown. But AA is resilient, so here we are Zooming about Area 44 and other places and staying

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NEXT ISSUE DEADLINE August 6  
newsletter@nnjaa.org

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Conference as required while dealing with only “essential” items this year.

In preparation for this virtual Conference, there were two events that I had the responsibility for: conducting the Item Reduction meeting with my Grapevine Conference committee and the Area’s Mini-conference Assembly, both of which were conducted virtually using the Zoom platform. The Item Reduction meeting was held on Thursday, May 7th, and the Committee did an amazing job evaluating our eight items and sending three of them to next year’s Conference while retaining four items for discussion this year. This year’s Mini-conference Assembly required more planning, and I had the help of an awesome group of trusted servants. Our Mini-conference Assembly was held on May 9th and nearly 315 attendees listened to nine presentations, shared for twenty minutes on each topic and voted to provide me as the Delegate with the Area’s group conscience. Both events were great successes.

Now, it’s time for my final preparations for the Conference. I have already had an amazing spiritual experience leading up to the Conference, and I believe that this year’s first virtual Conference will be incredible. Different from last year, yes, but incredible, spiritual, and amazing, nonetheless. It is said that “Man plans, and God laughs.” While our Higher Power has given us much to handle this year, we will not only do what needs to be done, but we will flourish and grow in the process.

Jeff B., Area 44 Delegate

**Newsletter contd from page 1**  
sober! It is our sincere wish that you are healthy, happy, sober, and safe. Our in-person meetings will be there waiting for us when this situation has passed.

**This Day’s** fall edition is currently accepting articles. Our theme will be *Staying Sober No Matter What* and the deadline is Thursday, August 6. Our rather provocative topic should provide much food for thought for all of us, considering what we have been through. Of course, general stories of experience, strength, and hope are always welcome. In addition, Intergroup and Area Officers, Committee Chairs, DCMs, GSRs and Intergroup Delegates are asked to send your reports on what is going on in your “service world.”

Please submit your articles in WORD format and be sure they can be edited. We ask that you

limit your writing to 800 words - or FEWER. Please avoid sending the article in a text or email if possible. I have been busy re-typing articles, and I would rather spend that time proofreading and forwarding articles to our editor. Flyers can be in PDF format. Send your articles and flyers to newsletter@nnjaa.org in an attachment.

Of course, we could also use additional 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 on Zoom for now, and our next meeting will be on May 21 on Zoom. Email me at newsletter@nnjaa.org if you are interested in joining us. Once the pandemic has subsided and we get permission to return to the Area office, we plan to be back in South Plainfield at 2325 Plainfield Avenue, 2nd floor, rear entrance. Summer meetings will be on June 18, July 16, and August 20.

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!!**

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

Yours in fellowship and service,  
Marybeth H., Area 44 Newsletter Chair, **This Day**



I wish I could say that Grapefest was a roaring success. But alas, because of the state of emergency, it was canceled. Once we start up with regular physical meetings, we will discuss our plans for the future. On the committee front, nothing too much new is happening. AA *Grapevine* has opened up this year’s issues digitally for free. If you visit <http://www.aagrapevine.org> and click on “We’re Here to Help,” you will see the free issues. This is for a limited time. No end date had been announced. Remember, *Grapevine* is fully self-supported by magazine and book sales. If you are able to, please consider getting one. You

can also utilize the “Carry the Message” program to get a subscription to an alcoholic in need. Details are on the website.

Being that this issue of **This Day** is going to be entirely digital, I could probably push the envelope with my word count. I do not think I will subject you to that. Well, I’ll try my best. This quarter’s issue is about the current pandemic and how it has affected our sobriety. Well, I haven’t drunk and don’t plan to for at least the foreseeable future, one day at a time. I thought I would share a little about fear. I consider myself a pragmatic person. Sometimes to a fault. I can compartmental-

ize things very well. This is good for short term objectives. Long term, not so much.

I’m not fearful about the virus itself. It’s out of my control. I’m not old. I’m also not young. But I am “high-risk” because of some health issues. I can only do what I can do. I cannot live in fear of what I cannot control. My fear manifests in other ways. I only know this because of the Twelve Steps. In step four, I have learned a lot about myself. In step six and seven, I have learned how to let go (somewhat). As it’s said in “How it Works”: “We claim spiritual progress rather than spiritual perfection.” When in times of distress, I regress. My fears as a child come back. The fears that my drinking squelched. The fears that I’ve worked hard to address. I am that scared little boy who is afraid of being alone. Intellectually, I know this isn’t true. I have my parents, my sisters and a brother, many nephews and nieces. I have a loving family. Then, I have the Fellowship. There is my network who I care for deeply and they care deeply for me in return. A few of them have even told me so! I’m not going to mention my sponsor. I know he’ll read this. Have to keep his ego in check. Ok, ok. Love ya, Art. Then, there are the countless others, some of whom I know better than others. All who have my back and I have theirs. I need to remember this when I start to feel alone and fearful. I do so by going to meetings. I left out the word “virtual” there for a reason. A meeting is a meeting. I reach out to my network. I was always been horrible with the phone. During these times, I have gotten a lot better with that. Mostly out of necessity. I utilize “outside help.” I do what I did to get me where I am at. A routine of vigilance. Today, I will not drink “no matter what.” For sale by Grapevine for only \$11.50! Had to

get that shameless plug in towards the end. And just remember as the very old adage goes: “This too shall pass.”

Jim O., Area 44 Grapevine Chair

### *Cooperation with the Professional Community*

Greetings from the Cooperation with Professionals Committee,

It is an honor and a privilege to serve the Area as your CPC chair. Just because we can’t meet in public does not mean the CPC committee is still not doing its best to do vital 12 step work in working with professionals to carry the message to the still sick and suffering alcoholics.

Every member of Alcoholics Anonymous is a member of the CPC committee. We want to inform professionals about what A.A. is and what A.A. is not. It is as if you went back in your story and asked, “how did you first hear about A.A.?” The answer is usually from a professional, such as a therapist, doctor, judge, probation officer, clergy member, or social worker. The goal is to get these professionals information about A.A., so they can get the still sick and suffering out of the group of those that do not know A.A. exists to those that do know A.A. exists. We may not directly know who our outreach has helped but it inevitably will just as it did for us.

The CPC committee met in March using Microsoft Teams and discussed ways we can have outreaches during the current pandemic. We are working diligently to create databases of professionals during our time at home that we can use when we are able to communicate face to face again. I attended the District 8 virtual Day of Sharing along with many other committee chairs, and it was great to continue the spirit of service during this stay-at-home period. Some of our committee members have also done virtual sharing sessions with students through their professional contacts. We plan to meet again on Zoom the third Tuesday of the month at 7 p.m., and I will forward the information to the committee. All district CPC chairs and interested A.A.’s are welcome to attend our committee’s monthly zoom meeting along with bringing suggestions of professional groups to carry our message to.

In service,  
Mark D., Area 44 CPC Chair

**History and Archives Committee**



These are trying times. Adjusting to loss, learning how to cope with change, time on our hands and fears of the future are just some of the things that show us how much we need each other and the Power of good which can be found in each of us. It would feel wrong to write an article about how our history relates to today without acknowledging the suffering and loss some of us have borne and offering my sincere prayers for healing.

“...no society of men and women ever had a more urgent need for continuous effectiveness and permanent unity! We alcoholics see that we must work together, else most of us will probably die alone.” This quote from Bill Wilson is a timely reminder that though our world may change, the principles of our program stay the same.

In a very real way, each one of us is part of AA history by our presence in this time. It has been a season of firsts: first online AA groups, first virtual Area Committee Meeting and Mini-conference, and by the time of this article's publication, the History & Archives Committee will have held its first virtual event presenting The Four Founding Moments of AA on May 16th.

Bill Wilson referred to the period between 1935 and 1939 as a "flying blind" period. The pioneers of our society were learning, through trial and error, what worked and what didn't. We have been plunged, mid-flight, into a new time of flying blind. With us unable to attend meetings in person, our response has been beautiful and heartening. No matter what your thoughts about online meetings, we have been led into a world where to carry the message means to embrace change. Whether that change comes in the form of calling another alcoholic the "old-fashioned" way or looking at a group of friends, or strangers for that matter, in boxes, we work together to promote our unity.

It got me thinking about the

history of intergroups, and ours in particular. They were started due to an urgent need to pass on information, coordinate 12-step work, and make available the location and times of local meetings. This mirrors what happened here in mid-March. Some of our dedicated members organized a virtual AA meeting list. It was passed on by "digital word-of-mouth" through texts and emails.

Northern NJ Intergroup, being a clearinghouse for carrying the message, organized a list of its own, put the word out to the groups, and began creating its online meeting list around the time we were being told to shelter in place. Simultaneously, they were updating the list of in-person meetings that were being canceled. I am grateful to Northern NJ Intergroup, and those who maintain our website, for all the dedication and work they have put in over the past months to help move our fellowship into the virtual meeting era.

New Jersey's Intergroup grew out of The Alanon Association, which was started in 1944 by the Newark Roseville Group, in association with fifteen other groups in New Jersey to help organize and carry our message. Our first Intergroup Office was a small room in the building on 7th Avenue & 7th Street in Newark, which we now know as The Alanon Club.

In the 40s, Intergroups formed around the country. In our region, New York was the first, and was helpful in the creation of ours. Similarly, we have benefited from New York Intergroup, who has recently shared a list of best practices for setting up secure online meetings. Back then, new groups were encouraged to become part of the Intergroup Committee. As our groups and members have found out about our website's Online Meeting List, more groups have been added.

The first meetings I attended online were disorganized but, as we saw this format could work despite its limitations, we began to adapt to this environment. What started as skepticism for me quickly turned into a renewed

feeling of unity and belonging. I have also found a new freedom and a new happiness that I can experience the fellowship anywhere in the country and anywhere in the world, for that matter, just by seeking it out, pointing, and clicking.

Our committee is available to share our Area's rich history online during this time when it's not possible to meet in person. We meet the second Wednesday of each month at 7 p.m. If you are interested in working with us or joining us, please send an email to archives@nnjaa.org.

In AA Gratitude,  
Jim P., H&A Committee Chair

**Treatment Committee**



The Treatment Facility Committee (TFC) coordinates the work of individual AA members and groups who are interested in carrying the AA message of recovery to alcoholics in treatment and outpatient settings. Additionally, our committee helps people leaving treatment facilities to "bridge the gap" from the facility to an AA group in the individual's community. Now, more than ever, the alcoholic who still suffers and those who may not yet have identified that they are alcoholics need to hear the message of recovery. In the past months, life as we know it has changed completely. Even our method of carrying the message has changed from in-person meetings in facilities to virtual meetings. Yet the message itself has not changed. Our district chairs are working diligently with treatment facilities to carry the message virtually and overcome any obstacles in order to achieve this goal. We can use your help. You can help by contacting your district chair via email to ask how you can help bring meetings to treatment facilities. If you are unsure how to reach your district chair, please email treatment@nnjaa.org.

Another way you can help is by becoming a Bridging the Gap volunteer. Bridging the Gap is a

temporary contact program where you can be matched with an individual who is being discharged from a facility based on gender, age and geographical area. You can help the person become acquainted with meetings (virtual or face-to-face) and help them learn about sponsors, home groups, working AA's Twelve Steps, and service. Until face-to-face meetings are able to resume, this contact can all be done via telephone. Past experience has shown us that attending an AA meeting as soon as possible after discharge is vital to making a sober transition to life on the outside of a facility. To learn more about becoming a Bridging the Gap volunteer, visit [https://www.nnjaa.org/service/tf/tf\\_btg\\_signup.html](https://www.nnjaa.org/service/tf/tf_btg_signup.html) and click on the link below the words Bridging the Gap that says "Volunteer Online." If your homegroup would like to ask members to sign up as volunteers, please visit [https://www.nnjaa.org/service/tf/Bridging\\_the\\_Gap\\_Volunteer\\_Form.pdf](https://www.nnjaa.org/service/tf/Bridging_the_Gap_Volunteer_Form.pdf).

Last year, we conducted a TFC workshop and invited members of various facilities to participate on a panel. Someone who manages a recovery program at a facility explained the importance of what we do when we bring meetings into facilities. When an alcoholic is speaking in a facility and sharing his or her experience, strength and hope, sometimes there is a magical moment when a suffering alcoholic in treatment may identify with something the speaker says. That moment, one alcoholic speaking to another, can create a spark of hope that may inspire a willingness to begin the journey of recovery. Personally, I have experienced the joy of seeing peoples' eyes light up, seeing them nod their head in affirmation while listening to speakers at a treatment facility, and then watching those people become active members of AA. Service in my home group and at the area level have helped me not only maintain my sobriety in very challenging times in my life, but have also helped me remain grateful for being sober.

If you would like more information about guidelines for AA meetings in treatment facilities, please use this link from GSO: [https://www.aa.org/assets/en\\_US/mg-14\\_treatfacilcomm.pdf](https://www.aa.org/assets/en_US/mg-14_treatfacilcomm.pdf). The TFC currently meets on the 2nd Wednesday of the month at 7:00 PM (virtually), and when we're able to resume, at the Area 44 office on the 2nd Wednesday of the month at 7:30 PM. If you are interested in attending our

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**THANK YOU FOR YOUR GENEROSITY!**

1st Quarter 2020

1. Nuts and Bolts Group, Pomptain Plains
2. Pleasant Valley West Orange 10am
3. Daily Reflections
4. Give & Take Discussion Group
5. Metuchen Sat Morning Serenity Group
6. Sunrise Group
7. Freehold Saturday Sunday Group
8. Recovery Lifeline Group
9. Happy Destiny BB Study, Chatham
10. District 24

11. Pomptain Plains Thursday Night Group
12. Step by Step Group of Maplewood
13. Tell It Like It Is
14. Millburn Sunday BB
15. Rocky Hill AA
16. Ruby Slippers
17. As Bill Sees It
18. Women's Step to Grace and Dignity Meeting
19. The Way Out
20. West Keansburg AA Group
21. Safe Harbor Group
22. No Psychobabble 123 Stp Mtgs, W. Orange
23. Hill St. Blues
24. Dawn Patrol Group
25. AA Eye Openers
26. Daily Reprieve Group
27. Monday 12:15 Closed Discussion
28. East Brunswick Monday Night Group
29. Do It Yourself Group Kinnelon Tues Night

30. Sunrise Group
31. Sunday Keep It Simple, Somerville
32. Mountainside Group
33. Sober Fun and Promises Group
34. Church Lane Group Monday Night
35. Seven Emers c/o St. Gabriels Church
36. Belleville Thursday Night
37. Recovery Hall, Belleville
38. Nutley Unity Group
39. New Lifer's Group

\*\*\*If we've accidentally missed your group or made an error, please kindly let us know and we'll give you a shout out next time!

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next meeting or would like more information about the committee, please contact [treatment@nnjaa.org](mailto:treatment@nnjaa.org).

Thank you for the honor and privilege of serving you as the Alternate Treatment Chair for Area 44.

Yours in service,  
Elise B., Alternate Treatment Chair, Area 44



**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

**The Language of the Heart**

My AA buddy and I travelled to Peru in October of 2019. We had been there the year before with another woman in recovery, and had met our new friend, Noemi, whom we met in the Intergroup Office in Cusco. We all went out for lunch, and she took us on a tour of Cusco. She invited us that night to speak at her group. She explained there were not many women with long-term sobriety, and she called all the women she knew and told them about us. Two of us knew very little Spanish but our third friend translated for us. The rest of the meeting was in Spanish, and yet I could almost understand them.

When we left Peru that year, our new friend Noemi met us at the airport to see us off. We exchanged phone numbers and kept contact through WhatsApp and through (for me) Google translate. Noemi was all of 1 1/2 years sober when we met. She kept in contact with both my friend (whom she asked to sponsor her) and me. On Noemi's 2nd anniversary, the women's meeting sent her a video message in Spanish and sang to her.

Later that year, Noemi invited us back to Peru for their "Congreso." We decided to return to Peru to see what we couldn't see the first time and to attend their "Congreso." We were excited and started planning right away. We had brought some La Viñas the first time, and Noemi said they had used them during a PI presentation. I shipped her some more and she brought them into



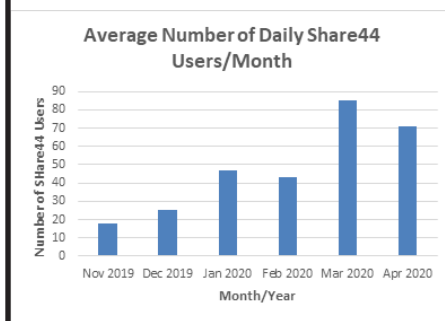
**Share44 Needed Now More Than Ever!**

Recently, in-person AA meetings in Area 44 suddenly turned dark. Many virtual AA meetings rapidly appeared by use of Zoom and other computer technologies to fill the meeting void. Area 44 Trusted Servants, which include Area Officers, Committee Members, District Officers and GSRs, stayed connected and informed by use of Share 44. This computer system is used by Area 44 service members for document storage and communication, and it became an important technology tool during this period of transition. Information regarding Area, District, Committee, the Pre-Conference Reports, and even the Area Mini-Conference was distributed to Area 44 Trusted Service by use of Share44 email. Requests for Share44 access and passwords were enormous. Average daily Share44 usage nearly tripled during this time.

**Share44 Teams Module**

Share44 includes a module called Teams. This module has many functions for collaborating and sharing and is free to use by Share44 users. One of these features includes online meetings, which is especially useful for Area, District, and Committee meetings. Teams training was conducted online by use of Teams last April. The [Share44 Teams Training Module](#) can be accessed from the [Share44 Welcome page](#). Although Teams is primarily intended for Share44 users, interested AA's can be invited and included in a Teams district or committee meeting. Just email the Teams meeting link to an interested AA's.

**Share44 Usage**

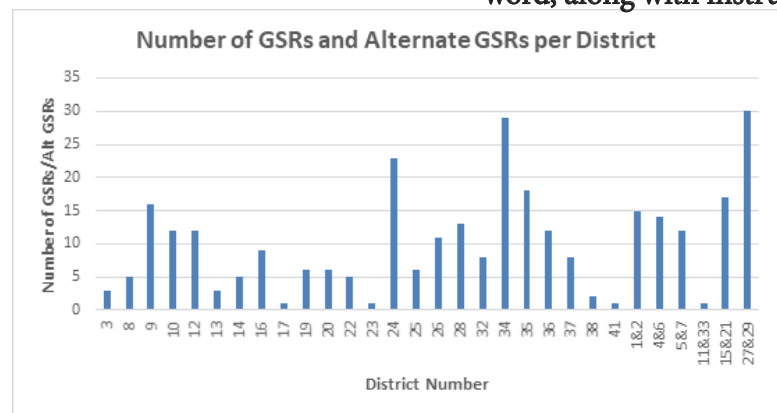


an institution where she was bringing a meeting.

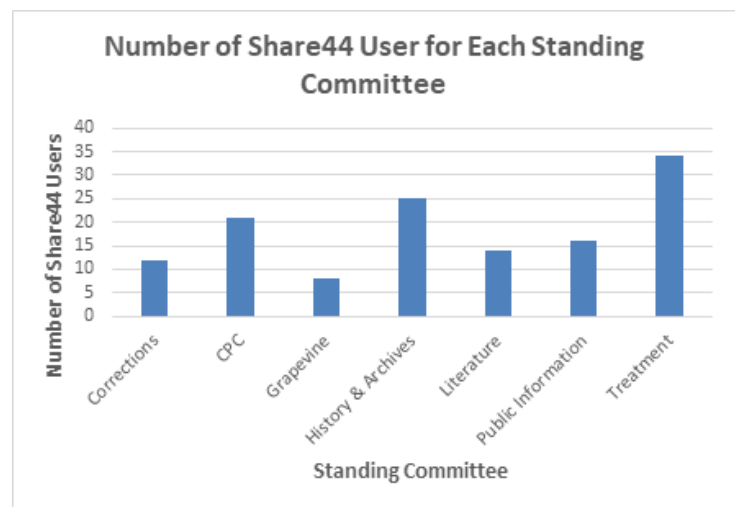
October 2019 came and off we went. We found a small meeting in the little town we stayed in our first week there in an area called "The Sacred Valley." We had brought with us all sorts of Span-

Presently, over 650 Share44 user IDs have been assigned, although many users do not use Share44 regularly. As previously mentioned, the usage of Share44 has increased substantially in the past few months. The average number of daily users increased from about 20 per day last November and December to approximately 75 people per day in March and April. This system is an important tool for keeping Area 44 connected.

The number GSR and Alternate GSRs with Share44 IDs varies greatly by district, from just a few to as many as 30 for some districts. If you are a GSR or Alternate GSR who does not have a Share44 ID, please contact your DCM.



Share44 users also include service members involved with committee work. The number of Share44 users in standing committees ranges from 10 to 35. If you are a standing or special committee member who does not have a Share44 ID, please contact your committee chair or co-chair.



**Accessing Share44**

Share44 is intended for the members of the Area 44 Office, Standing and Special Committees, District DCMs and GSR, Section Coordinators, Past-Delegates, and Intergroup members in joint committees and districts. It is intend-

ish literature and of course, lots of La Viñas (I say this of course because I am on the Grapevine committee). In the meetings, everyone tells their story. My traveling buddy is fluent in Spanish and again translated for me. Again, I could sit back and listen with my

ed for alcoholics who are involved in Area 44 service positions. Any Area 44 service member can obtain a Share44 ID. Ask your Committee Chair or DCM to request Share44 access for you or send an email to [Share44Help@nnjaa.onmicrosoft.com](mailto:Share44Help@nnjaa.onmicrosoft.com). In the email, include your:

- Name and personal email address
- Service role (e.g. committee, district, or GSR)
- District number or committee name
- GSR meeting name and town (e.g. District 99 GSR Any Town Big Book Group).

Once you submit a request for Share44 access, you will be sent an email with a user ID and password, along with instructions for

accessing the system.

**Helping with Share44**

If you have some computer skills and a desire to help Area 44 service members with using Share44, please consider joining the Computer & Technology committee. Interested AA's with experience using SharePoint or MS Office 365 are needed.

Contact the Computer Committee Chair at [computer@nnjaa.onmicrosoft.com](mailto:computer@nnjaa.onmicrosoft.com). Assistance is greatly appreciated!

Yours in service,  
Bruce R., Area 44 Computer & Technology Committee Chair

heart and was connected to our message of hope.

The second week we traveled to Cusco, Peru for the big "Congreso." We were welcomed in AA fashion with love and acceptance. We made friends quickly with

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*SPEAK OUT contd from page 4*

many wonderful people. Our friend Noemi came a little later after work. What a wonderful reunion! There were hundreds of people and the atmosphere was full of love and fellowship that did not require words - only open hearts where the heart speaks and the heart listens.

They asked my traveling partner and friend to carry the USA banner in the opening ceremony (Area 44 was represented). There were people from other countries from South America there, as well as Mexico. It was a very moving opening to an incredible three days of workshops and an incredible dinner that the committee served to all the attendees. I couldn't believe how hard these committee members worked that night. I was totally blown away.

Sunday was the last day and the speaker who was supposed to speak on women in AA did not show up, so we were asked to step in. My friend and I spoke and I became so overwhelmed at the podium I couldn't help getting emotional. They were my brothers and sisters; no language or cultural difference separated us. It was truly a spiritual experience for me.

At the end of the "Congreso," we found another person from the US (Texas to be exact) and everyone wanted to take pictures with the people from the USA. I love those pictures because those individuals so touched my heart.

The fun wasn't over. A group of us all went out to lunch and I made some more friends from Mexico, Lima and Cusco. We talked about service and some of the difficulties they have there regarding service (not much different than here). It was just like the "meeting after the meeting." We exchanged numbers and I have two new Peruvian friends and one more from Mexico City.

In all of this, I could feel the presence of God and the love of one alcoholic for another. Life doesn't get any better than this. I have been blessed with a connection to my brothers and sisters in America - both North and South - and around the world. Thank you, Alcoholics Anonymous!

Jass P., DCM, District 36

**Primary Purpose**

As I approach my 60th birthday, I find myself reflecting on my life experience. My sixty years are a tapestry divided in thirds. First is the period from birth through 13, the age at which I picked up my first drink. Second is 13-30, which includes my drinking years up to the age at which I walked into a church basement and admitted my powerlessness over alcohol. Third is 30-60, the years I've been blessed with long-term sobriety.

I suppose I'm one of the lucky

<b>RUS SERVICE CORP T/A NNJGS AREA 44</b>				
<b>TREASURER'S REPORT</b>				
<b>For Period Ending Mar 31, 2020</b>				
<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	(Feb 29, 2020)	\$82,842.53	\$65,553.73	\$148,396.26
Revenue for the Period		\$3.02	\$11,171.61	\$11,174.63
Expenses for the Period		\$0.00	(\$9,854.98)	(\$9,854.98)
Transfer between Money Market and Checking				\$0.00
Ending Balance for All Accounts for Current Period	(Mar 31, 2020)	\$82,845.55	\$66,870.36	\$149,715.91
<b>CURRENT BANK RECONCILIATION BY TREASURER FOR PERIOD</b>		<b>Money Mkt</b>	<b>Checking</b>	<b>Totals</b>
Statement Balances	(Mar 31, 2020)	\$82,845.55	\$66,870.36	\$149,715.91
Outstanding Checks		\$0.00	\$ -	\$0.00
Outstanding Deposits		\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Adjusted Bank Balances	(Mar 31, 2020)	\$82,845.55	\$66,870.36	\$149,715.91
Variance in Reconciliation				\$0.00
<b>Designated Funds at (Mar 31, 2020)</b>				
<b>Jailbox Contributions</b>		\$13,922.26		
<b>International Hospitality Suite</b>		\$11,834.84		
<b>Total Designated Funds:</b>		\$25,757.10		
<b>ANALYSIS OF CHECKING ACCOUNT (Balance should not exceed two months average total expenses)</b>				
Current Checking Account Balance			\$66,870.36	
Less: Prior 12 Month's Average Monthly Expenses Times Two			(\$37,783.00)	
Over / (Under)			\$29,087.36	
<b>ANALYSIS OF PRUDENT RESERVE</b>				
Total Cash in Bank (Not Including Convention Acct)			\$149,715.91	
Less: Designated Funds (Jailbox, etc.)			(\$25,757.10)	
Less: Checking Account Guidelines (2 month average expenses)			(\$37,783.00)	
<b>PRUDENT RESERVE FUNDS</b>			\$86,175.81	
Less: Calculated Prudent Reserve (50% of Prior Years Budgeted Expenses)			(\$48,038.00)	
Over / (Under)			\$38,137.81	
<b>SUMMARY OF OFFICIAL APPROVALS / REVIEWS</b>				
<b>Individual/Group</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Completed Through</b>		
Treasurer	Approved	Mar 2020		
Alternate Treasurer	Approved	Mar 2020		
Finance Committee	Approved	Mar 2020		
Officers	Reviewed	Feb 2020		
ACM	Approved	Nov2019		
<b>Assembly</b>	<b>Approved</b>	<b>Nov2019</b>		

ones who didn't suffer consequences like loss of license, loss of job, loss of spouse, loss of children, or loss of life – mine or another's. While I took many, many chances while under the influence and lost myself in the process, perhaps it was my destiny that I'd end up in the rooms of AA before the "yets" took place. Since living sober has comprised half my life and I've done the work necessary to reconcile my past, I choose to focus on the last third.

Unlike the bestseller, *All I Really Need to Know I Learned in Kindergarten*, I am certain I learned everything I need to know in the rooms of Alcoholics Anonymous. For my first 90 days, while shaky and emotional, I followed my sponsor around like a puppy dog. Always doing what she did, I took seriously the good orderly direction and suggestions of the men and women who had more experience, strength and hope than I. I learned to listen and listened to learn. I learned to be responsible for my commitments, whether making coffee, cleaning ashtrays, or offering rides to those without cars or licenses. Once I

felt steady enough to seek employment, I learned to demonstrate a strong work ethic and began to understand the value of humility in the workplace. I learned to have a relationship with a man that was honest and true and sought to experience intimacy without the need for a few drinks to loosen up. I learned that there was no such thing as liquid courage and that my insides would probably never match your outsides.

I learned to have kids and raise kids who never saw me drink, who could rely on me to suit up and show up, who've never worried I wouldn't keep my word. I learned that everyone experiences challenges and that I hadn't been dealt a bad hand. I learned to take care of my body, mind and spirit, when previously I had assumed that I was invincible. I learned to be the daughter and sister I hadn't been for the first 30 years of my life and to make the amends necessary to rebuild these essential relationships. I learned to smile and to laugh, to dance and to socialize without the need to cover with self-consciousness or be the life of the party. I learned what it

meant to be a woman of honor and dignity: to accept myself, despite my shortcomings.

While admittedly I am still most comfortable in a church basement surrounded by other alcoholics, my sponsor reminds me that "AA is a bridge back, not a cul-de-sac." What that means is there's a whole world out there that I can and should feel comfortable experiencing. Being sober opens doors that would otherwise have remained shut: personally, professionally, socially, spiritually.

Who am I? Have I reached the goals I'd set for myself? Are there things I'd hoped to do that I haven't, and if that's the case, what's gotten in the way? Am I content with who I am at this stage of my life? What fuels me? Too much to mention, but it comes down to my primary purpose. For without that, I don't have a husband, family, job, home, or peace of mind. I can't enjoy the gifts that being sober offers. Sobriety provides me with a daily lifeline. I've learned throughout the years that when I am think-

*SPEAK OUT contd from page 5*  
ing about others, I'm not thinking about "me." The freedom from bondage that's described in the 3rd step prayer is the release from the selfishness and self-seeking that ruled my life while drinking.

To quote Dr. Bob: "I spend a great deal of time passing on what I learned to others who want it and need it badly. I do it for four reasons:

1. Sense of duty.
2. It is a pleasure.
3. Because in so doing I am paying my debt to the man who took time to pass it to me.
4. Because every time I do it I take out a little more in surance for myself against a possible slip."

At 60, what better purpose could my life serve? What better gift could I give to myself than to stay sober and help another alcoholic? I can't think of one. For the changes I've made in myself, and the changes I've helped others make in themselves, I am eternally grateful.

Debbie B., Wyckoff, NJ

### Happy

Happy-Joyous-Free. Just a few gifts I have received in early sobriety. For years as an active alcoholic, I would rise each day filled with panic and pain, worry and misery. I would awake hungover and questioning why I ever existed. Seeing people stopping for coffee on the way to work, running in the park and performing normal, daily activities would lead me into a funk. It appeared as if everyone in the world was leading purposeful, productive lives—except me.

In many ways, I related to George Bailey in *It's A Wonderful Life*. Like him, my life was immersed in despair and hopelessness. And, like George, I drank excessively over it. When he "came to" after his time with Clarence in Martini's bar, he was overjoyed about his seemingly ordinary life. He looked with bright and grateful eyes at what he deemed a mundane existence. Suddenly, everything he touched and saw was seen through the lens of gratitude and appreciation.

Similarly, in my early sobriety (I have eighteen months) colors are more vivid, foods are more flavorful and music more beautiful. I am filled with awe and wonder at the miracles of nature. My relationship with my Higher Power, whom I call God, has never been stronger or more personal. I now speak to Him many times daily and meditate on His Word morning and night.

My life is and will continue to



**FRIDAY-SUNDAY • SEPTEMBER 11-13**  
Resorts Casino and Hotel • Atlantic City, NJ

The 13th Annual NJ Roundup Conference opens with a bang on Friday night with a two-speaker meeting and an ice cream social. Saturday night don't miss another two-speaker meeting followed by Sobriety Countdown, then surprise entertainment. Share the message of AA and Al-Anon recovery with the LGBT Community during three days of fun, love, and laughter. Join us and make memories to last a lifetime!

**REGISTER NOW & SAVE! Early Registration Before July 1, 2020**

**Full Package: \$100 Early Reg. . . . . \$120 After July 1**  
Includes 2 Continental Breakfasts, Friday Night Ice Cream Social & Saturday Dinner

**Registration Only: \$60 Early Reg. . . . . \$75 After July 1**  
Includes Workshops, Meetings and Entertainment.

**Banquet Only: \$45** No Refunds after 9/01/20

**Get A Room!**

Call Resorts Casino and Hotel  
for Reservations: 1.888.797.7700  
GROUP CODE: VNJR20  
You Must Call by 9/01/2020  
in order to get the group rate.

**Room Rates:**  
Friday, Sept. 11 - \$119.00  
Saturday, Sept. 12 - \$199.00

**WORKSHOPS**  
AA & Al-Anon  
Workshops begin early Saturday morning, all day and Sunday morning. If you would like to do service and volunteer to lead a workshop, contact the Program Chair at program@njroundup.org. We can only keep what we have by giving it away!

**AL-ANON & AA MEETINGS**  
There are several big AA meetings planned and all are welcome to attend!

**SOCIAL & ENTERTAINMENT EVENTS**  
Friday and Saturday Nights, meet new and old friends for fun & fellowship at our nightly social activities.

For more information or to register online: [www.njroundup.org](http://www.njroundup.org)

Workshop and meeting schedule will be posted. Schedule subject to change.

TO REGISTER BY MAIL: COMPLETE REGISTRATION FORM ON THE REVERSE SIDE & MAIL WITH PAYMENT TO NEW JERSEY ROUNDUP, PO BOX 43104, UPPER MONTCLAIR, NJ 07043-0104

be steeped in AA's Twelve Step program. At first, I felt awkward attending meetings, getting a sponsor and cultivating a network. Frankly, I was very uncomfortable. However, given time and God's grace, I have found a sponsor, developed a robust network that I am always looking to expand, and been a speaker at several meetings. My social contacts have increased immeasurably, and I cherish my new sober friends. I have resurrected hobbies I enjoyed prior to my drinking days and am now able to remember what I have read. Waking each morning ready to seize the day trumps a night of drinking, which resulted in a headache, sluggishness and empty bottles all over the kitchen.

My life is not Shangri-La and never will be. But, it is an honest, sober life with vicissitudes along the way. I am no longer numb. My life is full of great friends; I have shed my isolating tendencies and have a sense of purpose. Most importantly, I have a divine connection with my Higher Power, who makes all things possible. I could not be more thankful to AA for my "Wonderful Life."

Maureen R., Paramus, NJ

### Sobriety in the Coffee — and the Cups

My Tuesday-night beginners meeting made the decision to use ceramic coffee cups in place of our traditional foam cups. What started as a unique thing to do seems to be catching on. Each

person donated a coffee mug that they liked. Some are souvenirs from vacations, others have silly or quirky sayings on them. A few people donated full sets of matching mugs. The coffee mugs became a light-hearted source of conversation, before and after meetings. Members and visitors alike enjoyed the feel of a hefty mug or delicate coffee cup, and the group renamed itself "Cup of Sobriety."

My Wednesday-night home group has recently switched from foam to paper cups. Even though the paper is a bit more expensive, the reason for the switch is paper cups can be recycled, or if tossed into the trash, they will disintegrate in the landfills. Foam, however, is made by petroleum which is not renewable. Worse yet, it cannot be recycled, it does not break down, and it sits in landfills for thousands of years.

As I continue to grow in Sobriety through the fellowship and by living the 12 Steps, I know this is just another example of how I've learned to simply do the next right thing.

While AA does not involve itself in outside causes as reflected in our Tenth Tradition, our collective impact on our land and water is significant. Just in my little area of North Jersey, there are dozens of AA groups, each depositing foam into the trash each day. Together, we are depositing a sizeable amount of toxic, unrenovable waste into our landfills and waterways.

It is my hope that while we

always maintain our 10th Tradition and never enter into public controversy, we can all do small things to be responsible citizens and maintain a clean and healthy environment for generations to come.

Annie A., Serenity Seekers Group North Haledon

### Happy, Joyous, and Free? Or Restless, Irritable, and Discontent?

If there was one thing I "knew" when I came into AA, it was that being a part of AA meant my life was over. All of my fun times, laughter, and even love was in the past. I was here, but only because I was too afraid to kill myself. I'd try sobriety, but it was going to be AWFUL. I mean come on: alcohol was the only thing I had to look forward to! It's amazing that I told myself this even though I was emaciated, unemployable, and shaking like a leaf.

I can remember the first time reading the chapter "The Family Afterward" in the Big Book. Well, maybe not the first time reading it, but the first time absorbing it. Or as my great-grandsponsor says, the first time it made that long journey from my head to my heart. "We are sure that God wants us to be happy, joyous and free." Not God probably wants us to be happy, joyous and free, or under certain circumstances. It was a shock to realize that I finally believed this after all those years of believing my Higher Power wanted nothing to do with me! The next line hit hard, too. "We cannot subscribe to the belief that this life is a vale of tears, though it was just that for many of us." It didn't happen until well after my Fifth Step when I realized it had been a vale of tears that only alcohol could relieve. And the realization that my certainty that my life was over was false! After I completed my Fifth Step, I had a new attitude on my part in my own misery. That's what I call a spiritual experience! My Higher Power shows me when I'm wrong and I'm grateful for it.

The joy part of my sobriety started slowly: those first belly laughs with my sponsor or at a meeting. Going to that first sober dance with my sponsor and friends and being horrified that people actually danced at those things, and then of course jumping in and having a great time right along with them. Realizing that maybe, just maybe, I could live a happy life without alcohol. Slow, steady work on my steps

*continued on page 9*

Convention Contact Information:  
(908) 205-0006 or [Convention@ninja.org](mailto:Convention@ninja.org)

ASL Interpreters for the  
Hearing Impaired will be available

**NORTHERN NEW JERSEY GENERAL SERVICE**



**September 25, 26, 27 • 2020**

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

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

THE DOUBLETREE HOTEL  
200 ATRIUM DRIVE, SOMERSET, NJ 08873

**Frequently Asked Questions:**

- Q: I'd like to do service during the weekend; are there volunteer opportunities available?**  
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@ninja.org](mailto:convention@ninja.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 [ninja.org/](http://ninja.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 9/12/20**  
A: Yes, simply fill out the form on page 3 and mail it along with a check or money order to:  
PO Box 31, 1300 Main Street, Belmar, NJ 07719
- 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) 205-0006.
- 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: Is the Saturday banquet included in the meal plan?**  
A: The Saturday banquet is included in the price of Meal Packages 1, 2, 4, and 6.
- Q: I'd like to sit with my friends at the Saturday banquet is that possible?**  
A: Yes, list their names on the back of this form, and submit your registrations together in the same envelope. We will do our best to accommodate.
- Q: How do I sign up for the Old-Timers' Luncheon?**  
A: If you have 25 or more years of sobriety (sobriety date prior to 9/26/1995) AND you purchase any registration package (#1-#6) on the next page, then the Old-Timers' Luncheon is included in the cost of your registration. However, you MUST indicate your intention to attend the luncheon by providing your name, home group, and sobriety date in the OLD TIMERS' LUNCHEON REGISTRATION section of this form.
- 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@ninja.org](mailto:Convention@ninja.org) or call the Convention Hotline: (908) 205-0006
- Use Code : A44 for discount on room rates!**

**Hotel Room Reservations:**

**ROOM RATES:**  
Single/Double: \$127.00\* (Per Night)  
Triple: \$137.00\* (Per Night)  
Quad: \$147.00\* (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 4, 2020 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.

**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.ninja.org/convention](http://www.ninja.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.

*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) 205-0006*

**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 64th 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:**

\$146.00 x  $\frac{\text{\# OF PEOPLE}}{\text{DEPOSIT}} = \$$  \_\_\_\_\_ Minus \$  $\frac{\text{DEPOSIT}}{\text{BALANCE DUE}} = \$$  \_\_\_\_\_  
 Includes Weekend Registration, Saturday breakfast, Saturday lunch, \*Saturday Banquet, and Sunday breakfast.

**REGISTRATION PACKAGE #2:**

\$127.00 x  $\frac{\text{\# OF PEOPLE}}{\text{DEPOSIT}} = \$$  \_\_\_\_\_ Minus \$  $\frac{\text{DEPOSIT}}{\text{BALANCE DUE}} = \$$  \_\_\_\_\_  
 Includes Weekend Registration, Saturday lunch, \*Saturday Banquet, and Sunday Breakfast (NO SATURDAY BREAKFAST).

**REGISTRATION PACKAGE #3:**

\$100.00 x  $\frac{\text{\# OF PEOPLE}}{\text{DEPOSIT}} = \$$  \_\_\_\_\_ Minus \$  $\frac{\text{DEPOSIT}}{\text{BALANCE DUE}} = \$$  \_\_\_\_\_  
 Includes Weekend Registration, Saturday breakfast, Saturday lunch, Sunday Breakfast and (NO SATURDAY BANQUET).

**REGISTRATION PACKAGE #4:**

\$79.00 x  $\frac{\text{\# OF PEOPLE}}{\text{DEPOSIT}} = \$$  \_\_\_\_\_ Minus \$  $\frac{\text{DEPOSIT}}{\text{BALANCE DUE}} = \$$  \_\_\_\_\_  
 Includes Weekend Registration and \*Saturday Banquet ONLY.

**REGISTRATION PACKAGE # 5:**

\$33.00 x  $\frac{\text{\# OF PEOPLE}}{\text{TOTAL}} = \$$  \_\_\_\_\_  
 Weekend Registration ONLY.

**SCHOLARSHIP CONTRIBUTION:**

\$33.00 x  $\frac{\text{\# OF PEOPLE}}{\text{TOTAL}} = \$$  \_\_\_\_\_  
 Other Amount = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**★ 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 9/26/1995) - 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:**

\$127.00 x  $\frac{\text{\# OF PEOPLE}}{\text{DEPOSIT}} = \$$  \_\_\_\_\_ Minus \$  $\frac{\text{DEPOSIT}}{\text{BALANCE DUE}} = \$$  \_\_\_\_\_  
 Includes Weekend Registration, Old Timers' Luncheon, \*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. 12, 2020. 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
3. Fill out this page of the form and mail to:  
 NNJGS Area 44 Convention  
**PO Box 31, 1300 Main Street, Belmar, NJ 07719**

Check here if you're...

- AA Member  At-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, 2020. 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.

First Name, Last Name \_\_\_\_\_

E-Mail Address \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone \_\_\_\_\_

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.)

Street Address \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/Zip \_\_\_\_\_

**ALL MAIL-IN PAYMENTS MUST BE POST-MARKED ON OR BEFORE SEPTEMBER 12, 2020**  
**REGISTRATION ONLINE:**

1. To register for a meal package online go to:  
[www.nnjgs.org/convention](http://www.nnjgs.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 12, 2020**  
**SEE BACK OF THIS FORM FOR BANQUET SEATING INFORMATION**

**Group Secretary: Please Read the Following:**

If you're interested in serving on the Convention Committee, meetings are held at 7:30 P.M. on the third Wednesday of every month. Please email [convention@nnjgs.org](mailto:convention@nnjgs.org) to find out if the meeting will be virtual or held in person at the Area Office in South Plainfield, NJ.

If you're interested in helping out during the convention, you may volunteer by adding your name and telephone number to the space provided below, or contact us at [convention@nnjgs.org](mailto:convention@nnjgs.org). Please mail this list to the attention of the "Convention Committee," no later than September 12, 2020 to:

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

**Have Any Questions? Call (908) 205-0006**

*If you are interested in serving as a volunteer during the convention, please select the day you would like to serve (multiple days can be chosen)*

NAME	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY	ANYTIME	TELEPHONE
NAME	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY	ANYTIME	TELEPHONE
NAME	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY	ANYTIME	TELEPHONE
NAME	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY	ANYTIME	TELEPHONE
NAME	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY	ANYTIME	TELEPHONE

**Saturday Banquet Seating Request:**

*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 that the banquet is SMOKE FREE & VAPING FREE.

1. \_\_\_\_\_
  2. \_\_\_\_\_
  3. \_\_\_\_\_
  4. \_\_\_\_\_
  5. \_\_\_\_\_
  6. \_\_\_\_\_
  7. \_\_\_\_\_
  8. \_\_\_\_\_
  9. \_\_\_\_\_
  10. \_\_\_\_\_
- SPECIAL DIETARY NEEDS:** \_\_\_\_\_



*SPEAK OUT contd from 6* helped me replace that restless, irritable, and discontent feelings with freedom and joy.

Thirty years later, I'm still on the watch for those feelings of restlessness, irritability and discontent. They don't magically go away. My daily reprieve is not only from alcohol, but from myself! To me, those negative thoughts and feelings come long before thoughts of a drink. They remind me that my work is not over. I need to use the tools that I learned at the beginning on a daily basis. Reaching out to get and give help, prayer, and meditation are the first tools I use. I know I need to watch for "making my own misery" by talking to my Higher Power and the wonderful recovering alcoholic ladies who ALWAYS head me in the right direction. Even in these uncertain, even terrifying times, I have a faith that works. Whether it's keeping my head in a pandemic or sending in my writing, all of my fears, great and small, can be replaced by faith if I'm willing to reach out. Thank you, AA!

Anita

### Courage in the Face of COVID

Today, I am a grateful alcoholic. AA has kept me sober for over 15 years. Lots of work had to be done over time, including reading the literature provided: The Big Book, 12 & 12, Daily Reflections, As Bill Sees It, my monthly *Grapevine*, and much more. Yes, a meeting every day (sometimes, two), the fellowship of men and women, and a sponsor to guide me on this journey to a wonderful life have also been a part of the work. I was introduced to the value of a home group and service work in it and outside of it at the district level. Over the course of time, I had a good 2-year run as my home group's GSR and a 5-year run as the Public Information Chair for District 13, which were rewarding experiences for me.

Living the 12 Steps has changed me and my values. All the AA people. Bill and Bob reuniting me with a Higher Power of my understanding, who I had walked away from a long time ago. Taking suggestions. Living in the moment, one day at a time.

The biggest reward I have received is watching another AA member start his or her own journey and get well. Many people fail because they choose to do it their way. Seeing those who do not make it is the sad part of recovery. But the "proof is in the pudding":

do what we do, and you will get what we have.

Having said all that, however, I must tell you as I sit and write this that fear crept back into my life for a short time. Thanks to the members of the fellowship, however, it has been put to rest. During this pandemic, our meetings stopped—twelve a week in my home group. I wondered what was going to happen.

Well, to my shock, folks stepped up to the plate to save us. Zoom was introduced. I had never heard of Zoom until the meetings started to appear. Our group has cut back to four meetings a week on Zoom. But other groups have picked up the slack and there is no reason to miss a meeting. Now, in any state, province, or country... WOW! Who would have thought this would be possible?

I am still blessed to hear the message in all types of meetings: Big Book, speaker, step, discussion, and so on, as if nothing has changed. But of course, it has, and I believe we all miss the human touch of our fellowship—the handshakes and hugs, coffee and cookies. Of course, smoking is now allowed at all meetings; that is different. I have used the phone more than ever, making and receiving calls. I was able to re-read the Big Book and other helpful books that had been gathering dust. I do feel for the newcomers the most, but I see many at the Zoom meetings, which brings a smile to my face.

So, as life takes a swing at us, we are responding like the champs we are. With God's grace, life will settle down and hopefully we will be able to return to our meetings. Staying home is tough. Just the other day, I invited three friends to come to my yard ten feet apart to have a face-to-face type meeting. It was just what I needed and so much fun for all of us.

For now, Zoom is the way we stay sober, but soon, as it happened in our fellowship a long time ago, we will start meeting in church basements again. I like to stay sober. My friends and I use the phone, Zoom, my monthly *Grapevine*, and the Big Book as our tools. Thanks to all of you for helping me stay the path.

Johnny O., Recovery Hall

### Sober in the Time of Pandemic

What am I doing to stay sober during the pandemic? The same things I've been urged to do since I joined AA: don't drink, go to meetings, work the steps.

Am I oversimplifying things? I think not. "Keep it Simple" feels



especially applicable right now. Overcomplicating and awfulizing used to be my way of handling pretty much anything and the results were never good. Sticking to the basics is working for me right now and I intend to keep doing just that, one day at a time.

Every day I do my best to accept what I cannot change. I am powerless over many things, including the human suffering and devastating losses at the heart of this tragic time in history. But there are things I can do, things I can change.

I can start by changing my attitude. Instead of thinking that staying home is an inconvenience, I treat it as an opportunity. I now have time to do some things in the category of "One Day When I Have the Time": gluing a broken flowerpot instead of throwing it in the trash, mending that sweater I haven't worn for years, and finally completing my fourth step, which I began last year.

I go to meetings. Instead of bemoaning the fact that I can't meet face-to-face, I am grateful for everyone who quickly figured out how to host a Zoom meeting. I'm going to more meetings than ever, saving gas, and hoping that some of these online meetings will outlast the pandemic. Instead of feeling stuck in New Jersey, I've visited Zoom meetings in South Carolina, Sweden and Scotland.

I'm continuing to work the Steps. Last week, I completed my Fifth Step with my sponsor, and I am eager to take on the rest of the Steps. I've strengthened and expanded my network of sober sisters, enjoying the luxury of time to listen more fully and text more thoughtfully. I'm learning about gratitude and how to pray and meditate better.

I'm doing more service than ever, some of it outside the program. In early March, as the shutdown approached, I decided I would spend my days of isolation doing whatever service I could do. I've been baking for the local soup

kitchen and sewing masks for healthcare workers. And I've been doing my best to share joy, hope and cookies with my friends and family during this challenging and historic time.

Basically, I do what I can. There's always something I can do and it doesn't have to be momentous or heroic. For this alcoholic, it's best to keep it simple: don't drink, go to meetings, and work my program.

Hope this was helpful. Please stay safe everybody!

Sherry B.

### Sobriety and the Pandemic

Hi! I am Elizabeth, and I am an alcoholic. My sobriety date is October 15, 2019. I am so thankful for my sobriety during this Pandemic. I am so thankful that I am not drunk and able to be there for my family. Around this same time last year, I was extremely sickened by alcohol physically, mentally, emotionally, spiritually. Going through this Pandemic the way that I was last year would have been extremely difficult. For example, last year I lived in constant panic and anxiety because of the effects of alcohol in my life. Being sober in the Pandemic, I am able to cope with fear and anxiety in much healthier and effective ways. For instance, I can quiet myself and say a prayer when anxiety hits me. I also go to meetings every day online and talk with other A.A. members to find comfort and support. Sometimes, I still want to escape and run from my feelings. However, I was told that if I allow myself to feel my feelings that they will pass and they always do. I was also told that it's OK to not be OK. This advice has really helped me too because I don't always feel OK. It actually brings me some peace and comfort to know that it's OK if I am not OK. I am also very thankful for the advice that feelings will not kill me but alco-

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# Voces Latinas

## ¡Felices 24 horas!

Personas no alcohólicas y compañeros militantes dentro del programa de alcohólicos anónimos.

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 económi-

cos 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, haciendo 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, Grupo Por la Gracia de Dios

*SPEAK OUT contd from 9*  
hol will kill me. I have repeated that to myself several times when I was extremely uncomfortable with my feelings.

How am I coping with the Pandemic and staying sober? “It works if you work it.” This is an A.A. slogan that has true meaning in my life. This is my second time in A.A., and I am staying sober because I have been working the program. “Don’t Drink and Go to Meetings” (online meetings for the time being), “One Day at a Time”, say the Serenity Prayer, get a sponsor, get A.A. members’ phone numbers and call them, and read A.A. literature are all tools that I use to stay sober.

My faith in God, Jesus, also keeps me sober. When I am weak, I find my strength in Him. He is my refuge that I run to in times of trouble. I stand on Him and He is my rock. I also find great comfort, strength, and guidance in The Bible.

Lastly, I accept the truth that I am powerless over alcohol and that I am an alcoholic. I know the truth that I cannot and will never be able to safely drink alcohol. I truly fear and know that it could take my life and distinctly remember the prison and chains that I was bound in. I haven’t forgotten the pain, sickness, sorrow, and darkness that I lived in. A.A. gives me a constant reminder of what alcohol did to me and that it could take my life if I let my guard down. So, I focus on “One Day at a Time” because I can make it through the day. It’s too overwhelming to look in the future, so I need to constantly redirect my focus back to the present. “One Day at a Time”, I get better. “One Day at a Time”, I stay sober. So, I read a scripture that brings me comfort and keeps me in the present day.

“Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own.” (Matthew 6:34)

“But for the Grace of God.”

Elizabeth C.

## Happy, Joyous and Free? Or Restless, Irritable and Discontented?

This topic represents the epitome of my life. However, the two questions that comprise this topic would need to be reversed. Believe me or not, I was restless, irritable and discontented as far back as childhood. I believe that these negative traits were nurtured in the dysfunctional home in which I had been raised. For example, Mom and Dad were not drinkers, but they did manifest alcoholic behaviors. They always argued; Mom was the dominate winner of their altercations, which at times became physical on Mom’s part.

Mom was never happy and was always searching for some vision of contentment. She attempted to discover her missing happiness in material things. Therefore, we constantly moved (within the same town of Union, NJ) into nicer and bigger houses. Mom purchased a ton of jewelry and clothes, but these items never placed a smile on her face. In addition, she lived her entire life competing with her siblings. We continually lived above our means, and she expected Dad, who was no saint by any means, to find the money necessary to pay the bills. Hence, stressed reigned supreme in our house. This angst was passed on to me and made me restless, irritable, and discontented.

However, since I began my involvement in AA (almost four years now), I have discovered that material things bring only transient happiness. I have learned that other people are far more important than objects. More importantly, I have developed a spiritual dimension, one that had been lost for many, many years.

Now I listen to others when they speak and actually care about what they have to say. Previously, I had been selfish and narcissistic. Whenever I did something for someone else, it was done to place the spotlight on me. Insecurity

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# Mini-conference Results

Total In attendance: 314 Est. GSRs: 161	IA. Should the pie charts in the pamphlet "Self-Support: Where Money and Spirituality Mix" regarding contribution percentages to the service entities be revised?			IIA. Should the A.A. Preamble be modified to use gender neutral pronouns?		IIB. Should the AA Grapevine, Inc. establish an Instagram account in line with the Twelve Traditions?		IIIA. Should a plain, simple language translation of the Big Book of Alcoholics Anonymous be created for those individuals reading at a 5th grade level or lower?		IIIB. Should a Fifth Edition of the book Alcoholics Anonymous with updated stories be developed along with these considerations: 1. Revise App. III, Medical View., and App. V, Religious View 2. Add a proposed addendum, which is more inclusive & representative of current fellowship, to the 5th Edition forward.					IIIC. Should a Fourth Edition of the Spanish Big Book, Alcohólicos Anónimos, be developed?	
	YES Revise	YES Remove	NO	YES	NO	YES	NO	YES	NO	YES Stories Only	YES Stories & App	YES Stories & Add	YES All 3	NO	YES	NO
Counts	61	94	102	175	84	128	112	145	105	31	16	28	101	69	198	45
%	23.7%	38.6%	39.7%	67.6%	32.4%	52.9%	47.1%	58.0%	42.0%	12.8%	6.6%	10.7%	41.6%	28.4%	81.5%	18.5%
% Yes/No	60.3%		39.7%							71.6%			28.4%			
Tot Count			257			259	238						243			243

## Creative Corner

### One Day at a Time by Tom S.

I so much want to jump in my car and head to a meeting,  
 For I know to isolate would cause this alcoholic an emotional beating.  
 But meetings are now closed and I know as a society we need to keep our distance,  
 And in these difficult times I realize in order to remain sober I'll need some additional assistance.  
 But fortunately for me, as the Big Book states, I have a spiritual toolkit that's been laid at my feet,  
 And I'm reminded that the things that kept me sober in the past, are the things that I have to continue to repeat.  
 Such as meditation and prayer,  
 And reaching out to fellow alcoholics, to show them that I care.  
 And today I'm blessed as I can attend AA meetings via the internet,  
 And my sponsor reminds me that I need to continue to work the steps so that I have no regrets.  
 While I'm not physically attending meetings, I'm not alone,  
 And I'm staying more connected with my network by using the phone.  
 Thank God I'm no longer that drunk, negative person that I was in the past,  
 As I take comfort in our saying that "This too shall pass."  
 As a fellowship, we've been through World War II, 9/11 and other such difficult events,  
 And we've remained united, sober, grateful, fun-loving and content.  
 I look forward to the time when once again we can meet at the same location,  
 But, until then, I'll continue to work on myself and maintain a strong spiritual foundation.  
 Soon things will be back to normal and perhaps even finer,  
 And I'm so looking forward to the meeting after the meeting at the local diners.  
 But for now, we'll meet via laptop, iPad and PC,  
 And folks know that you are my lifeline and mean the world to me.  
 So, stay connected, pray, help others and cherish your sobriety,  
 Because no matter what's going on in life, it needs to remain your number one priority.

### THE GLINT IN GOD'S EYE By David C. © 2015

**Dedicated to  
 Billie Temple  
 Who first pointed the way out of the  
 dark to me.**

**And for  
 Elio  
 Who was waiting for me at the end  
 of a very long journey.**

In Italy there is a very old mosaic in front of an even older chapel that crowds from all over the world come to see. It's in a very small village about forty miles North of Rome called Scano. The picture depicts various scenes from The Bible. At the center is God, with his arms outstretched, looking at his handiwork. There is one lone gold, metallic tile in the center of His right pupil. When conditions are right the afternoon sun reflects off this one piece and a beam of light appears shooting from His eye. For decades tourists have flocked to the chapel and waited for that magical moment. It is known as The Glint in God's Eye.

Because the mosaic is hundreds of years old, it has to be restored and cleaned every few decades. During one such restoration, a new brown tile was put in to replace a damaged one that was part of the dirt that Adam and Eve are standing on in the Garden of Eden.

The studio where the tiles are made is not far from the chapel. Craftsmen have been taught traditional methods that have been handed down from generation to generation to create them. Artists from the studio take careful measurements and tracings of all the tiles that

need to be replaced. These tiles are made from the finest of raw materials and only half a dozen copies are made at a time. At the very end, they are all checked and only one is judged as being fine enough to be used.

The Little Brown Tile that had been chosen beamed with pride once he had been cemented in place. Since he was new, he introduced himself to the others who had come before him. "You're really full of yourself, aren't you?" said another brown tile next to him. "You think because you're fresh and part of something great you're important. You'll get over it."

"I'm just excited to be a part of this beautiful work," said the Little Brown Tile. "I could have ended up in something much less important like a coaster or a school art project or a coffee mug! Instead I'm part of THIS!"

The older piece rolled his eyes. "You have no idea how insignificant you are. You're just dirt in a scene in the left-hand corner. Nobody even knows you're here. You'll eventually wear out and be replaced. In the end you'll be discarded, and it will be like you were never here."

The new Little Brown Piece had never considered this. Suddenly, he felt very bad and small.

"If the tourists even notice this section they are looking at is Adam and Eve. Even the snake and the apples are more interesting than we are," continued the older tile. "They are made of brilliant colors. The apple that Eve is holding is red metallic tile, so it stands out. It's constantly upstaging the rest of the apples. They all get very jealous. It's funny to hear them fighting about how important they are. None of us are, you know, but especially us."

The Little Brown Tile was getting very sad.

"Of course, the only REALLY important piece is the one at the top, the one gold metallic piece they call The Glint in God's Eye. It's the only golden piece in this entire mosaic. The one they all come to see. The rest of us are only window dressing."

The Little Brown Tile felt smaller and smaller with each passing day. The older tile was right. He was nothing. Tourists would come and go, but always the crowds were largest when the sun shone bright. He felt bad for the people on the days when it would rain or it was overcast. When winter came and the sky was dark and the world was covered with snow there would be no visitors for days.

The more the tile thought about himself the sadder he got. He felt like he was being crushed into dust by the other stones around him. It was like falling down a long, dark well with no bottom. It was horrible.

"You really have to pull yourself out of this," a stone said to him one day. It was a very Wise Old Stone stuck in the wall next to him.

"I don't understand," moaned the Little Brown Tile. "What am I doing here? What's my PURPOSE?"

The Old Wise Stone thought about this for a long time. The Little Brown Tile was asking a question he had asked himself many times. "Well," he began slowly. "The truth is I don't know. I was brought here long ago from a quarry that isn't far from here. I have no recollection of anything until I found myself on the ground looking up at a great wall of stone. There was a lot of dust and noise. The other stones lying around me were just as confused. We were once part of the quarry but now we were indi-

vidual stones. None of it made sense. Then we were brought to this site and found ourselves cemented together as a wall."

What the Wise Old Stone had to say only confused the Little Brown Tile more. He asked the other tiles and stones around him what they thought. All felt obligated to throw in their opinion about the nature of reality, The Universe, and any number of deep subjects. They all had an opinion as to why they were there, but none of their answers gave the Little Brown Tile any satisfaction. Each had a pet theory as to what they were doing there. Some were very emphatic about what they believed, others were less sure, and many were even more confused than he was! All their answers shed very little light onto his question, and he was left more befuddled than before. Some said there was no purpose to anything. Others claimed Divine Intelligence was at work and that there was perfect order to everything.

The debate raged for days. Soon every piece of the chapel was engulfed in a running commentary. Most of the arguments would fall apart because of one contradiction or another. Among the tiles, frustrations lead to anger which lead to hate and finally intolerance. How could this be happening in a world that was supposed to be based on love and divinity?

The Wise Old Stone kept silent during all of this. He'd just listen and would chuckle now and again. "Do you realize they're asking questions that have been asked since the beginning of time? Nobody has been able to answer these things," he whispered to The Little Brown Tile (who had stopped talking altogether). "They have had this same talk many times before and they will have it again."

One day things got very heated. It seemed that everyone was talking at once. Nobody was listening. All you could here was noise.

Suddenly a storm came up and there was a blinding flash of light. There was a loud bang. Then dust and confusion. Then quiet.

When the Little Brown Tile came to he was looking up at the mosaic through some branches.

"We got hit by lightning," the Wise Old Stone called down to him. "The force loosened some of the roof tiles and some of the mosaic stones. You were one of them."

Sure enough, The Little Brown Tile could just make out some of the voids where pieces of mosaic had been shaken from their places. What he didn't know was that most had fallen straight down onto the steps in the front of the chapel. Because he was placed in the lower right corner, he'd fallen through some bushes and was surrounded by dirt.

As soon as everyone had gotten over the shock of the lightning strike the building got into a huge debate

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*Creative Corner contd from pg 11*  
as to why the disaster had happened. Some said it was Divine Retribution for everyone having questioned The Order of Things. Others claimed the roof and mosaic tiles that had fallen were the worst offenders and that is why they fell.

In a very short time, workers at the chapel were scurrying around gathering up the fallen tiles. Damage to the building was slight, the greatest damage being the mosaic and roof tiles. Miraculously none of the mosaic tiles shattered. The next day, scaffolding was erected in front of the building so that restoration technicians could put them in.

Soon everything was back to normal. Roof tiles that were kept in storage replaced ones that had been destroyed by the lightening. It was as if the event had never happened. Watching the repairs only added to the enjoyment of the summer tourists.

The lone exception was The Little Brown Tile. The workers had failed to find him. He was on the ground beneath the bushes and was almost the same shade as the dirt. To make matters worse, earth kept falling on top of him and it was slowly getting buried. Everyone looking for him had given up. They placed an order with the local studio for a new piece of brown ceramic tile.

"I suppose this is exactly what I deserve," The Little Brown Tile thought to himself. "It's rather fitting that I end up alone and lost and forsaken. The others were right. I'm being punished. I'm now just the waste that I was intended to be. Nobody will miss me. I might as well be invisible."

Suddenly the main attraction was no longer the little gold piece at the top. What all the visitors noticed im-

mediately was the empty space in the dirt in the Garden of Eden. It was like there was a spotlight on it. It stood out like a neon sign.

For months, the guides explained to the tourists about the lightning strike and how all the mosaic tiles had been recovered except for The Little Brown Tile. The tile that was lost forever.

Unaware of what he held in his hand the infant didn't protest in the least when his parents pried the dirty piece of tile from his hand. He just laughed as his parents took it away, afraid that he might cut himself on what they thought was a piece of glass. They handed him one of his toys and he happily surrendered The Little Brown Tile

An observant tour guide who was

---

*"He had been given a very rare gift. He knew who he was and what he was."*

---

One day, late in the summer, a baby was crawling on the grass in front of the chapel. His parents were tourists from America who had come to see the famous mosaic. The parents were busily taking pictures and had deposited their child on the grass where they figured he couldn't get into any trouble. Fearlessly the baby saw his chance and, quick as a flash, crawled towards the hedge where The Little Brown Tile was hidden.

His parents looked down and panicked when they noticed their baby was not where they had left him. They were just in time to see a wiggling white rear of a diaper and two very stout little legs scurrying into the bushes.

They ran and picked up their child. The baby was laughing and chewing on The Little Brown Tile, which he had discovered during his all too brief liberation.

watching the scene came rushing over. "It's a miracle!" he cried. "We thought that piece was lost forever!" The guide pointed up at the mosaic and explained that their child had just discovered the one piece they had been unable to find. Soon there was a crowd around them. Everyone marveled at the chain of events that had resulted in the discovery of The Little Brown Tile.

The Little Brown Tile had a hard time comprehending what was happening. One second he was in the dirt and the next he was surrounded by the crowd. He almost burst with pride as he was passed around. Each tourist held him up to superimpose him on the place where he lived. He felt quite important.

He was taken to a room in the chapel where he was washed and placed on a clean, white towel. They inspected him for damage then put

him into a white box. It was lined with white cotton and smelled very nice. Everyone that came to look at him remarked how special he was and what a miracle it had been to have a baby discover what teams of adults had failed to do. It went viral. Everyone in the world knew about him.

A special scaffold was erected in front of the chapel on the day he was to be returned. Reporters from all over the world were there to record the event. All cameras were trained on him as technicians put new cement on his back and inserted him into the hole that had been his home before the lightning struck. The crowd roared with delight as the last bits of cement were wiped from his edges and the mosaic was made whole again.

Soon the crowds were gone and all the excitement died down. Attention turned from the lost piece back to The Glint in God's Eye.

"I bet you thought you were pretty important," the brown piece next to him began. "All that fuss over an insignificant piece of lost brown tile. It is beyond my comprehension why everyone was so excited. It's not like you're metallic or shiny. You're just dirt, nothing remarkable about that. Such is fame. Important one second and forgotten the next."

The Little Brown Tile didn't say anything. He didn't need to. He had been given a very rare gift. He knew who he was and what he was. Experience had taught him that he was just a small piece of a much larger work. Size and color no longer mattered. The showier pieces might seem more important, but they weren't. The whole did not exist unless all the parts were there. He was happy and at peace. He just needed to be The Little Brown Piece of Tile that he was.

## Opinion

### Unity, Common Welfare... Combine Space

We of the Dover Group have come up with what is not a novel idea, but rather the reemergence of an idea that needs to be addressed when considering the recommendation to rent a space for the Area archives. It is our belief that our 7th Tradition contributions would be better utilized if there were a combined space for Area 44 and Intergroup, including a space for the archives. Renting three spaces for what is a common purpose seems to be an irresponsible waste of the fellowship's contributions. I write this article in advance of, hopefully, bringing a recommendation to our Area officers. We have already made the recommendation at the district level, which is being brought to the groups in District 9 for their consideration. It is our hope that this article will reach a wider range of people in

the fellowship, opening a dialogue in their respective groups. My desire, as well as that of the Dover Group, is to better utilize our 7th Tradition contributions to accomplish the important work of helping the individual alcoholic in AA stay sober and carrying the message to the alcoholic who still suffers. Combining spaces would show greater fiscal responsibility and create a greater ability to carry out this vital mission. I hope you will join me in voicing this important message to our Area 44 officers and Northern New Jersey Intergroup trustees.

Mike R., GSR, Dover Group

*SPEAK OUT contd from 10*  
had taken over my life ever since I am able to remember. The AA program has taught me that I have worth and can be a productive member of society. Charles Dickens once wrote, "No one is useless in this world who lightens the burdens of another" ("Dr. Mari-gold").

This is now my motto.

Today, I am delighted to do service work: commitments, make coffee, set up the room for meetings, call another alcoholic to see how they are feeling. I have learned to realize that service

work is a win-win situation because it brings joy to the server, maybe even more happiness, as it does to the served.

Therefore, presently, I can be described as happy, joyous and free. I have been released from the materialistic prison of my dysfunctional family and understand that true happiness and freedom are

achieved by helping others who need you to be there for them.

Tony P., Bradley Gardens and North Branch Groups

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*I have developed a spiritual dimension, one that had been lost for many, many years.*

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**District Service Meetings**

*(When in person meetings resume)*

- 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**

**Area Coordinators Report May 2020**

*May we miss from the joy of each other's company... stay close at a distance*

**HIGHLIGHTS – Next 4 Months**

- May 3<sup>rd</sup> Area Committee Meeting – Online – 10:00AM
- May 5<sup>th</sup> Officer's Meeting – Online – 7:00PM
- May 9<sup>th</sup> Mini-Conference – Online – Zoom Meeting Room Opens at 8:00AM, Instructions at 8:45AM, Conference begins at 9:00AM
- May 16<sup>th</sup>-18<sup>th</sup> General Service Conference - Online
- May 21<sup>st</sup> Ad-Hoc Committee for Quick Books – On-Line – 7:00PM
- May 20<sup>th</sup> Joint Unity Meeting – Online – 7:30PM
- June 00<sup>th</sup> Post-Conference Report #1 – Online – Time and Date TBD
- June 00<sup>th</sup> Post-Conference Report #2 – Online – Time and Date TBD
- June 2<sup>nd</sup> Officer's and Standing Committee Meeting – Online – 7:00PM
- June 13<sup>th</sup> Area Assembly – Online – 8:30AM
- June 14<sup>th</sup> Bookers Exchange – Mother Seton HS, Clark – 8:00AM – Format-TBD
- June 18<sup>th</sup> Ad-Hoc Committee for Quick Books – Online – 7:00PM
- July 7<sup>th</sup> Officer's Meeting – Alternate Month – 7:00PM – Format-TBD
- July 12<sup>th</sup> Area Committee Meeting – Alternate Month – 10:00AM – Format-TBD

Meetings are at the Area 44 Office (2325 Plainfield Ave S. Plainfield NJ 07080) unless otherwise noted

**2020 CALENDAR**

The updated 2020 calendar is available at [nnjaa.org](http://nnjaa.org); please review and advise on any updates or revisions that may be needed. Send information to:

[area-coordinator@nnjaa.org](mailto:area-coordinator@nnjaa.org)

**2020 ASSEMBLIES**

Oct-Election District 18+19

**2021 ASSEMBLIES**

January District 3  
Apr-Mini District 27/29  
June District 24  
October OPEN

**2022 ASSEMBLIES**

January OPEN  
Apr-Mini OPEN  
June OPEN  
Oct-Election OPEN

**In AA Love and Service,**

George Lunney

Alternate Chair/Area Coordinator

[area-coordinator@nnjaa.org](mailto:area-coordinator@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).

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

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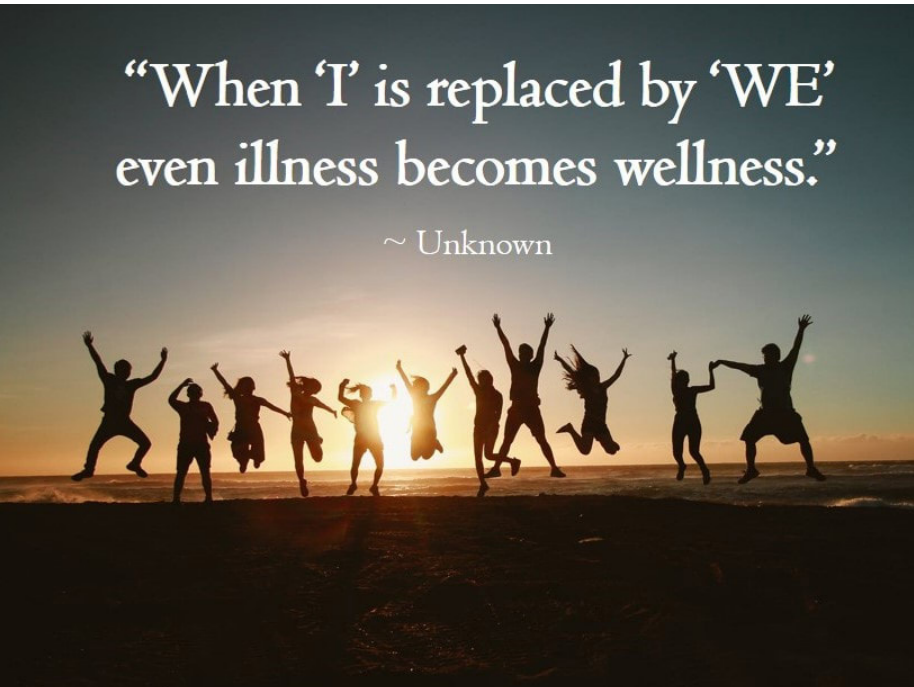
Your Northern New Jersey A.A. Website

**Upcoming Intergroup Calendar – COVID 19 Crisis – June 2020**

The Intergroup Office has been closed since March 23, 2020. Our Intergroup Staff continues to work from home answering the phones, responding to emails, and working to keep up with the needs of the fellowship. Additionally, our Intergroup Board of Trustees, aided by the Website Committee has also been busy keeping up with the ever-changing meeting information, from the cancelation and postponements of in-person meetings to the transition of those meetings to the virtual online platform.

- 4 Intergroup Delegates Meeting - Clark 8:30PM – A zoom meeting is being planned. email: [intergroup@nnjaa.org](mailto:intergroup@nnjaa.org)
- 10 Joint Archives Committee 7:00PM - Intergroup Office – TBD email: [archives@nnjaa.org](mailto:archives@nnjaa.org)
- 14 Bookers Exchange - Clark 6:00AM – A zoom meeting is being planned. email: [intergroup@nnjaa.org](mailto:intergroup@nnjaa.org)
- 24 Joint Website Committee 7:30PM – TBD. email: [website-chair@nnjaa.onmicrosoft.com](mailto:website-chair@nnjaa.onmicrosoft.com)

PLEASE CONSULT THE NEWS & EVENTS PAGE ON [WWW.NNJAA.ORG](http://WWW.NNJAA.ORG) FOR UPDATES



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"

**Topic for the Fall Issue:**  
Staying Sober  
No Matter What

**Next Issue Deadline:**  
August 6, 2020

Send your articles of 800 words or less to:  
[newsletter@nnjaa.org](mailto:newsletter@nnjaa.org)

# THIS DAY

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

Summer 2020

## THIS DAY

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

### Fall Issue Topic

### *Staying Sober No Matter What*

Submit your articles to [newsletter@nnjaa.org](mailto:newsletter@nnjaa.org)

👉 **Deadline August 6, 2020** 👈

Articles should be between 200-800 words.

Please use WORD format as a separate document that can be edited.

Posters can be in a PDF format.

Include your town, home group, or district. [newsletter@nnjaa.org](mailto:newsletter@nnjaa.org)

#### Thinking about a service commitment?

Join the Newsletter Committee meeting the 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday each month at 6 pm at the Area Office.

Contact the Area Committee Chair at: [newsletter@nnjaa.org](mailto:newsletter@nnjaa.org).

There's something for everyone to do!



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# Zoom Meeting

Audio only

With video

