

# THIS DAY

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

*A message  
from your  
Area Delegate*



As I sit at my desk and write this article, I've been reflecting on my first year as your delegate. The winter season is coming. We've turned back the clocks and you can feel the cold air start to usher in. The holidays will be here soon and we'll be in a new year and life moves forward. As I sit and think of this first year, the word that comes to me is gratitude. Grateful for your trust, grateful to serve, grateful for the men and women I've met along this journey, grateful for my sobriety, and, most importantly, grateful for Alcoholics Anonymous.

It seems that when I was early in sobriety a commitment felt like it lasted forever. This commitment is moving too fast. There will be many topics of discussion in the coming months as I prepare for next year's Pre-Conference, Mini Conference and General Service Conference. There will be great discussions and debates as we bring the agenda items to our groups, and conversations we will have amongst us.

There are a lot of things we do in service. There is a lot we need to do for our personal recovery and staying sober. And there is a lot we do in our Fellowship. If we took everything we do and put in into a funnel, when it came out at the bottom, everything we do is about one drunk talking to another, sharing experience, strength and hope. The most powerful thing I've witness is the communication we have with each other. So, while we can get caught up with a lot of things in AA, let's try to remember, with gratitude, those who took the time to help us, the rides to a meeting and maybe that cup of coffee and lunch we had as someone told us their story and gave us a little hope. I love to read Dr. Bob's farewell talk especially the part when he concludes his talk with these words:

"None of us would be here today if somebody hadn't taken time to explain things to us, to give us a little pat on the back, to take us to a meeting or two, to do numerous little kind and thoughtful acts in our behalf. So let us never get such a degree of smug complacency that we're not willing to extend, or attempt to extend, to our less fortunate brothers that help which has been so beneficial to us."

I look forward to the coming year and having those conversations with you. I hope to always share my story, to try and help another alcoholic, and to always remain grateful for this precious gift we all have called sobriety.

Grateful to Serve,  
Jimmy A.,  
Panel 71 Delegate

*A message  
from your  
Area Chair*



Dear Friends:

Greetings from your Area chair. I hope that everyone has enjoyed the love and fellowship that the holidays bring, and that many of you were able to attend AA-sponsored events such as the holiday Alkathons and the holiday parties that bring us together. Many of us found even more opportunities to partake in such happenings, and thanks to the inclusivity of online and hybrid events these past weeks and months, we visited AA friends all over Area 44 and the world during this holiday

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### NEXT ISSUE DEADLINE

February 4, 2022

newsletter@nnjaa.org

## AREA 44 COMMITTEE REPORTS & INFO

season.

Our new year delivers with it great promise and its share of challenges. We see our Area 44 committees ramping up and planning to carry the message with the same intensity as pre-pandemic levels. This is a terrific news! It comes with it many opportunities to serve. In other words, WE NEED YOUR HELP! You can find information about all of our committees at the Area 44 website at: [Northern New Jersey AA \(nnjaa.org\)](http://NorthernNewJerseyAA(nnjaa.org)) In addition, the committees attend many of the Area events such as the assemblies, days of sharing, and multiple District happenings, and are only too happy to share about the important work they do in carrying the message of recovery.

We also need to remember that the new year usually brings many potential AA members into our rooms, either for the first time or for “another try.” Let’s please continue to keep the newcomer as our focus in all our meetings and keep in mind that we now have expanded opportunities to support early sobriety either with in-person or online meetings and AA resources.

We will be experiencing our first in-person assembly in two years in Midland Park on January 15, 2022. We thank District 4/6 for stepping up to host. In addition, we welcome representatives from ALL our committees who will be manning tables and sharing about the activities of their respective committees. As mentioned earlier, there is a great need for help on the committees and for those who are looking for a “boost” in their AA program: serving the Fellowship as a committee member is a great way to enhance your AA experience.

We are also very happy to recognize the return of the in-person version of the GSR Mid-Winter Luncheon, scheduled for Sunday, February 20th at the Forsgate Country Club in Monroe Township. All are welcome at this annual event where we recognize the contributions of the GSRs in our service fellowship. Great speakers, great food, and great friends await. Tickets are available through your DCM, and for more information you can contact the committee chair, Laverne S @ [lunch-chair@njarea44.org](mailto:lunch-chair@njarea44.org).

Coming in the spring is one of the more exciting events of our AA year. It will be our Area 44 Mini-Conference, where our GSRs come together with the whole of Area 44 to share their group’s conscience with our delegate. This sharing is aligned with selected topics that will be on the agenda at this year’s General Service Conference. This allows our delegate, Jimmy A, to attend the Conference as an *informed* representative for Area 44. All AAs are welcome to take part in this important event on April 9, which will be hosted by District 5/7.

Regarding the winter topics for this issue, I am hopeful that my story has helped other alcoholics along my journey, as this was exactly *my* experience, beginning for me in a detox ward on the day of my last drink. My assigned roommate that day, Steve, was the very first person to share his drinking story with me, along with his successes and struggles in the program of Alcoholics Anonymous. Unbeknownst to me at the time, I was *identifying* with his experiences. And, I heard for the first time, what I’ve come to know as, “the language of the heart,” one alcoholic talking to another. Steve and I have kept in touch and, sadly, he is not always sober when we speak. He still struggles, while I have been gifted with, so far, continuous sobriety. I don’t believe I will ever understand why some folks “get it” while others struggle. What I *do* know is that sharing what’s been so freely given to me is part of what keeps me in fit spiritual condition and allows me to stay sober. So, yes, I share my experience, strength, and hope whenever I am asked, hoping that my experience can help another alcoholic.

Finally, as we return to our brick-and-mortar home groups, let’s please remember to recognize, work with, and utilize the many home groups that now offer both an online and in-person AA experience, and especially those online only groups that were created as a response to the pandemic and now find themselves as full-fledged members of the Area 44 community.

In AA love and service,  
George L.  
Area 44 Chair



## How Our Stories Help Other Alcoholics

*“When anyone, anywhere reaches out for help, I want the hand of AA always to be there. And for that I am responsible.”*

The above statement is at the heart of the AA program because the program is a “we” program; we help each other stay sober. Joining AA has been the best decision of my life. I entered AA five years ago. I had major health issues (I really thought that I was going to die); I was arrogant and self-centered, both of which were just covers for my deep-seated insecurity. I did not believe that I was an alcoholic, nor did I accept that my life was unmanageable.


I still remember attending my first AA meeting. I did not know what to expect. Well, this statement is not completely true. I thought that I was going to enter a room filled with downtrodden people, all unkempt and uneducated. However, what I found was a room of happy people, laughing and joking and acting like family. I was welcomed with open arms, and since I was the new person in the room, the meeting focused on me. But still, I could not understand how going to meetings and listening to people’s life experiences was going to keep me sober. But that is what happened. All I needed was the persistence to keep coming to meetings. I did not need a sponsor because I ironically entered AA with a sponsor, a gentleman to whom my primary-care physician introduced me. I did not think then that this was the hand of God (my Higher Power) working in my life. But AA, and its joyous and miraculous Fellowship, has taught me to comprehend this fact.

I continued to attend meetings: I go to a meeting every day, and some days I go to two meetings. What I have learned over five years’ time is that I am not so different from my other AA family. As people shared their experiences and struggles, I came to realize that I have the same defects as other people. The Fellowship, and the life stories have helped me peel away the guilt of the past. I now accept that my life was unmanageable. Every time I drove under the influence of alcohol, my life was disorderly. Thanks to the AA Fellowship, I have a God back in my life that not only helps me to stay sober but also strengthens my moral compass. I now think before I act. This God has placed people in my life who care about me and are there for me when life becomes tough. Without this Fellowship, I am sure that I would return to drinking.

My favorite meetings are speaker-discussion ones. Here, the Fellowship of AA is truly personified. First, I am always able to connect to what the speakers share because we AAs are all wired the same way. Second, the discussions afterward allow me to divulge more of myself: honesty is another important key to the success of the AA program. Without honesty, one is just living a pretense, a false existence.

Our stories help each other tremendously. They create an indelible, unbreakable link that gives us the tools to realize that life is always going to come with problems and hardships, but alcohol does not solve problems, it exacerbates them. Our stories allow our minds to think about the negative things that we have done in the past; they give our minds a hope to see that God works through other people, all of which give us the tools that we need to put down that first drink.

Tony P.  
Newsletter Chair

 <p><b>THANK YOU FOR YOUR GENEROSITY!</b></p>	<p>Daily Reprieve - Pompton Plains Bunnvale Group As Bill Sees It (Women’s Meeting) - Dover New Beginnings Women’s Group Sunday Sunrise Serenity Step Study The Bagel Group Maplewood Thursday Night Tuesday Morning Women’s Step Port Reading Thursday Night Sacrifice Group New Pair of Glasses Women Step By Step Group Maplewood Friends of Bill Group</p>	<p>Iselin Wednesday Night I Can’t We Can Parsippany There Is a Solution Group Westfield Clear the Air Saturday Nite Live Netcong Monday Big Book Study</p>	<p>Daily Reflections - Verona District 17 Friday Grapevine Group - Denville Three Legacies Group Cook College AA Monday Night Time to Share Group Area 44 District 22 Section 5</p>
	<p>Breakneck Group Morning Miracles Mountain Lakes Daily Reprieve - Freehold</p>	<p>Franklin Group Laura Winters Ruby Slippers Mark &amp; Evelyn Best West Milford Group</p>	



### Working with Others

The Three Legacies of Alcoholics Anonymous are recovery, unity, and service. My experience with service has been with my home group for many years: coffee maker, chairperson, secretary and, recently, booker. These were some of my commitments with service.

Then, my sponsor suggested getting active outside of my home group.

The G.S.R. Mid-Winter (“MWL”) Luncheon committee needed volunteers, and I became willing to participate. The MWL committee for February 2022 is led by the following: Laverne S., our MWL chairperson; Laverne L., the alternate chairperson; Barbara B-R, our secretary/ticket chairperson; Anita C., our treasurer/publicity chairperson; Pamela B., our hospitality chairperson; and yours truly, the alternate hospitality chairperson. I was welcomed with enthusiasm and patience.

Several meetings of planning, organizing and confirming information were checked off until the time came to meet in person at the area office in South Plainfield, NJ. I was so excited. We got to stuff approximately 1800 envelopes with the GSR flyer and information pertaining to the Luncheon. What an order!!!! Can I go through with this?

Stuffing envelopes is a great way to break the ice and meet people through service in the Fellowship. Sara, new Area 44 mailing chair; Jim, DCM for District 4/6; George, our Area 44 chairperson; Art, our Area 44 registrar; Juliette, Rachael as well as the MWL Committee were all in attendance. Their cheerful personalities made this goal achievable. We had a pizza party and great conversation about alkathons, skits, events and upcoming speaker marathons.

Overall, my experience has been fun, exciting and enjoyable. Working with others in Alcoholics Anonymous has been a rewarding adventure and experience.

In Love and Service,  
 Adrienne McL.  
 Alt. Hospitality Chair  
 MWL Committee

**N. N. J. G. S. Area 44**  
**Annual G.S.R. Mid-Winter Luncheon**

(Open to All A.A. Members, Family & Friends)  
**"A.A. Comes of Age 2.0:  
 Unified in Love and Service"**

**Sunday, February 20, 2022**  
**Forsgate Country Club**  
**375 Forsgate Drive**  
**Monroe Township, NJ 08831**  
**Price - \$35.00**

Tickets will be available through your D.C.M. Deadline for Tickets: Saturday, February 5, 2022  
 (NO TICKETS SOLD AT THE DOOR – Maximum Seating 360)

**SPEAKERS:** Molly Anderson, Class A General Service Trustee  
 Jeff W., General Service Office Staff Coordinator

**LEADER:** Laverne S., Area 44,  
 G.S.R. Mid-Winter Luncheon Committee Chair

**TIME:** 12:00 PM - Crudites, Dip, Coffee, Tea & Assorted Juices

**LUNCH:** 12:30 PM - Menu:  
 Tossed Salad, Chicken Parmesan, NY Style Cheese Cake  
 (Vegetable and Gluten Free available upon ADVANCE request)

For additional information, please contact:  
 Laverne S., Chairperson: [lunch-chair@nnjaa.onmicrosoft.com](mailto:lunch-chair@nnjaa.onmicrosoft.com)

Please Mail Ticket Stubs to:  
 NNJGS Area 44  
 G.S.R. Mid-Winter Luncheon  
 P. O. Box 1157  
 East Orange, NJ 07019-1157

\*\*Spanish interpreters will be provided

**ATTENTION!!!**  
 All Standing Committees

The G.S.R. Mid-Winter Luncheon Committee is reaching out to ALL standing committees to see if they want or need a table at the 2022 luncheon. Please join us to let the attendees know what your committee is all about!

Please email [lunch-chair@narea44.org](mailto:lunch-chair@narea44.org) asap but before February 5, 2022.



## Social Media Committee



Area 44's new secret Facebook group "NNJAA" was launched on November 14th. Emerging content will include posts about upcoming events, news and posts from the Area committees, delegate and chair, event reminders and weekly committee schedules. Get your invite! Contact [socialmedia@njarea44.org](mailto:socialmedia@njarea44.org) And, come celebrate at one of the launch parties planned for January 19th and February 12th!

Where did your AA service story begin?

Did your first sponsor encourage you get to meetings early to help set up chairs and greet newcomers?

Were you "voluntold" at your first business meeting to become your home group's new coffee maker? What got you inspired to take your service story beyond the home group?

With the idea of extending Area 44's information reach – and inspiring more AAs to continue growing their own service stories – formation of Area 44's Social Media Committee was approved in 2020 at the May 3rd ACM. The Committee's primary purpose is to carry the AA message by using social media platforms to focus on supporting 12th Step work by AA members in each Area 44 district. Learn more about our formation and our mission at [nnjaa.org/service/social-media](http://nnjaa.org/service/social-media).

On November 14th of 2021, members of the ACM began receiving emails from the Social Media chair with a link to join "NNJAA", the new Area 44 private and hidden Facebook Group. All new members were encouraged to invite their Area 44

AA Facebook friends, and one week later the Group had 367 members from all around Area 44! Posts, moderated by SMC members, have included schedules for five different Thanksgiving Alkathons, the Convention Committee election, the new AA Service Manual, the Gratitude Month letter from GSO, NERAASA & GSR Luncheon reminders, Grapevine & La Vina news for December, Area 12th Step committees' schedules and links, and a bunch of upcoming district and group events.

Two online parties are being planned by the SMC to celebrate the launch of "NNJAA". Each date, January 19th and February 12th will feature an AA speaker and provide a fun way to learn about and get connected with the new Facebook group. Times and login information will be announced in December. Get your invite to the Group and get your questions answered, anytime, by emailing us at [socialmedia@njarea44.org](mailto:socialmedia@njarea44.org)

Launch of "NNJAA" became a reality through the combined service stories of the SMC members and others who have assisted along the way. We have had the opportunity over the past year to research the ins and outs of Facebook, discuss ideas and concerns with members of the Fellowship, receive guidance from service sponsors and Area officers, and learn from the valuable input of district representatives and committee liaisons. The result? A new connection for AAs to learn about and engage with service opportunities in Area 44.

The SMC needs the support of representatives from each district and liaisons from all the Area committees. Our committee meets online on the 2nd Thursday of each month at 7:30pm. Please check us out, give us your feedback, enhance your service story, and help us develop plans for future Area 44 social media connections. Contact us at [socialmedia@njarea44.org](mailto:socialmedia@njarea44.org).

With Gratitude in Service,  
Heather S.  
SMC / Alt-Secretary

**What To Expect**

NNJGS Area 44 Private Facebook Group

- Event Posts
- Area Committee Posts
- The Delegate's Desk
- Word From Area Chair

**Much More!**

[socialmedia@njarea44.org](mailto:socialmedia@njarea44.org)



My name is Dennis D., and my sobriety date is May 10, 1984. I am grateful to all of the alcoholics who have been there to extend the hand of AA and to the God of my understanding. It was then that I became a member of the Woodbridge Thursday Night Group, which was one of the largest meetings in Middlesex County at the time. I was introduced to Frank F, who was the DCM, and for some reason he took a shine to me. He cornered me one night at my meeting and informed me that our group did not have a GSR and needed one. He suggested I bring it up at our group business meeting, and, if no one volunteered, he got face-to-face with me and told me, "You will do it." So, I became a GSR with 6 months of sobriety... Thus began my introduction to service, and after fulfilling my two-year commitment, I was through with it.

I continued my journey of sobriety for the next 36 years. During this time, I met a woman in AA, got married, had children, and became a productive member of society. We moved a few times, and I continued to work with newcomers and stayed involved in my home group. As time moved forward, my involvement in AA began to wane, and I was no longer in AA but going to AA, which is a big difference. As a result of being dry, I both experienced and caused a lot of suffering and pain within my family, which ultimately brought about the end of my marriage. Additionally, during this time, my son lost his own battle with his demons and this disease, resulting in his death. These traumatic experiences brought me to my knees and back into AA.

This brings me to the present. On April 2, 2020, I arrived at work as a nurse and was told that eight of my clients had fevers. It was then that I was infected with Covid-19 and struggled with the virus for ten weeks, which caused my subsequent retirement. While sick at home, a dear friend from my early days in AA, Billy N., told me about a History and Archives Virtual presentation of "The Books Before the Book." I tuned in, and shortly afterwards, I decided that I wanted to get involved. Right after the presentation, I talked to Billy, told him it was great, and asked how I could get involved. He gave me Jim P's phone number, who I called and spent about three hours talking with. And as you might have guessed, I am now a member at large of the History and Archives Committee in Area 44.

But this isn't the end of the story. I was attending the ABE virtual meeting of AA in the Lehigh Valley, PA when I was asked to attend a business meeting. During this meeting, it was decided that our meeting would transition into a group, which resulted in a need for officers. I was again volunteered for the GSR position, and, as I was taught to never say no, I accepted. At my first district meeting, I was again volunteered to be the Historian in District 37 Area 59.

What I can tell you now is that I am on a new journey of discovery as I was in the days of my early sobriety. Over the past ten years, my passion for AA and service has returned. In the past year and half, the fire has been reignited, and I've rocketed into the 4th dimension again. Due to being back in AA, working with others, and being involved in service, I'm more alive today than I have been in a long time. I owe a deep debt of gratitude to all those who were here when I came in, and for those who stayed involved while I drifted. I am especially grateful for those of you who are here now. Without all of you, I would be alone and without purpose, lost, and no doubt facing the gates of hell again. Today I have a purpose which is best stated as: "I am responsible. When anyone, anywhere reaches out for help, I want the hand of AA always to be there. And for that: I am responsible." I thank you all for your service and for my life.

Dennis D.



Greetings fellow AAs! Hope all is well with you today? On behalf of the Intergroup office staff and the Nightwatch committee, I'd like to thank you all for your support and service over the years, and report on what's happening with Nightwatch these days.

A Nightwatch commitment offers AA groups and members a valuable opportunity to be of service by providing local meeting information and valuable firsthand insights on alcoholism and the AA program of recovery. We serve as that friendly and helpful first point of contact when the Intergroup office is closed at night and on weekends. But Nightwatch is at its very best when we're called on to fulfill our

primary purpose and connect an alcoholic reaching out for help with a local 12th Step contact. How often have we heard an AA member share that their first contact with AA was by calling the AA phone number?

Having a reliable list of local 12th Step contacts is so important when Intergroup and Nightwatch phone volunteers get a call from someone who is at or near that “jumping off place” and reaching out for help with their alcohol problem. We depend on groups and individual AA members to complete and return the 12th Step contact sign-up sheets that are mailed to all groups each February. It is so important for each group to review and keep current their contact listings each year, so we can maintain a wide and reliable network of AA contacts committed to being available when someone reaches out for help in their local area. Often all it takes is a call back from one of us to renew hope, rekindle faith and open the door to recovery and a new sober way of life. And the miracle is it works both ways and back around again within our circle of love and service.

Now that the Intergroup office has transitioned to a less cumbersome and more robust database, it is possible to maintain group data and 12th Step contact information in a much more efficient and timely manner. Need to update your group’s contact list? Just contact the Intergroup office either by phone or via the website and they’ll make that happen. Still there are several counties and areas where we have few AA groups and members signed-up to serve as local 12th Step contacts, especially in Newark, Jersey City, Paterson and Elizabeth and Sussex County. Our Nightwatch phone volunteers often have difficulty finding a local 12th Step contact in these areas, so the need is most obvious there. But we continue to need groups and AAs throughout our Intergroup service area to step up and serve as 12th Step contacts in this important part of our outreach to the alcoholic in need.

The pandemic made it necessary to finally develop a pdf version of the Nightwatch manual. Thanks to the amazing efforts and expertise of our cyber security maven, nnjaa.org technical crew and our Intergroup office manager and database team, our Nightwatch volunteers have been gaining hands-on experience using a secure online manual accessed through the website. The online manual is here to stay, but we are still able to provide hard-copy versions as needed on request.

We have also rolled out an easy-to-use digital version of the Nightwatch Call Log that volunteers can complete online and submit directly at the end of their shift. We anticipate that as the use of the Call Log becomes more consistent and widespread the Intergroup office and Nightwatch committee will be better able to monitor call volume and number of 12th Step referrals, as well as keep track of nuisance callers and other hard to handle issues so we can better support our Nightwatch volunteers and 12th Step contacts. In many ways, this forced move online has been a blessing in disguise.

If you find yourself interested and want to know more about Nightwatch, you are welcome to join us at our bi-monthly virtual committee meeting on the 3rd Wednesday of every odd-numbered month at 7pm. Our next committee meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, January 19, 2022.

Thanks again to our extended Nightwatch family: from the AA groups and members who commit to covering a Nightwatch week year-in and year-out and the group leaders who coordinate and schedule the day-by-day shifts; to our on-call volunteers who are ready to step in and cover a shift on short notice; to all our reliable 12th Step contacts who are there to answer the call from the Intergroup office or Nightwatch volunteer and make that follow-up call that may be the start of something transformational for the alcoholic in need.

What we do is carry the message so God can deliver it to the alcoholic who still suffers. Because when he does there is no doubt that God can do for us what we could never do by and for ourselves. Take care and stay well my friends.

Your brother in service,  
Joe F.  
Nightwatch Committee

# REMEMBER: AREA 44 NEEDS YOU!

**The Finance Committee is currently looking for new members.** If anyone is interested in serving on this valuable committee, please contact me. A background in finance is a plus, but not necessary. We can use the help, and we are also without an alternate chair. I would very much like to help to groom someone for this position before I rotate out at the end of next year. Please email: [finance-chair@njarea44.org](mailto:finance-chair@njarea44.org).

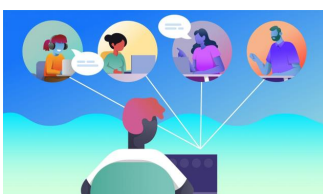


We meet on the 4th Monday of each month at 7:00 pm. We are currently meeting via Zoom. With the type of work we do, for now, it can be handled just as effectively without having to travel to South Plainfield for our meeting. Thank you in advance for your consideration.

Yours in service,  
Jon C.  
Finance Chair



**FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT OUR STANDING AND SPECIAL COMMITTEES, PLEASE CHECK OUT: WWW.NNJAA.ORG >> SERVICE >> SERVICE COMMITTEES**



## NORTHERN NJ COMMITTEE MEETINGS VIRTUAL AND HYBRID



\* Denotes Joint Committee of Area and Intergroup

Revised 11/23/2021

COMMITTEES	MEETING DAY	TIME	SERVER	MEETING ID	PASSWORD	CONTACT AND ADDITIONAL INFORMATION
<b>STANDING COMMITTEES</b>						
Cooperation w/ Professional Community*	3 <sup>rd</sup> Tuesday	7:00pm	ZOOM	831 67410763	(n/a)	Roe T-B – <a href="mailto:rpc-chair@nnjaa.onmicrosoft.com">rpc-chair@nnjaa.onmicrosoft.com</a> No password, Waiting Room Feature enabled by host
Corrections Facility Committee*	3 <sup>rd</sup> Saturday	10:00am	ZOOM	850 3466 8699		Susan P-C – <a href="mailto:cf-chair@nnjaa.onmicrosoft.com">cf-chair@nnjaa.onmicrosoft.com</a> ...Meeting on ODD number months only
Grapevine	1 <sup>st</sup> Saturday	10:00am	ZOOM	820 1459 9915	AAGV	Marcheta B – <a href="mailto:grapevine-chair@nnjaa.onmicrosoft.com">grapevine-chair@nnjaa.onmicrosoft.com</a> Rotating Hybrid and Virtual Only every other month, Please contact Chair if you plan on attending at the Area Office
History and Archives*	2 <sup>nd</sup> Wednesday	7:00pm	ZOOM	917 6976 2213	474109	Frank F – <a href="mailto:archives-chair@nnjaa.onmicrosoft.com">archives-chair@nnjaa.onmicrosoft.com</a>
Literature	3 <sup>rd</sup> Monday	7:00pm	ZOOM	672 0988037	889464	Mike R – <a href="mailto:literature-chair@nnjaa.onmicrosoft.com">literature-chair@nnjaa.onmicrosoft.com</a> ... This is a HYBRID meeting, with Social Distance observed at Area Office ; Literature Sales at 6:00pm
Public Information*	2 <sup>nd</sup> Tuesday	7:30pm	ZOOM	821 7687 5697	2945766	Sandra P – <a href="mailto:pi-chair@nnjaa.onmicrosoft.com">pi-chair@nnjaa.onmicrosoft.com</a> This is a HYBRID Meeting, with Social Distance observed at the Area Office
Treatment*	2 <sup>nd</sup> Wednesday	7:00pm	ZOOM	812 51569162	16273	Elise B – <a href="mailto:treatment-chair@nnjaa.onmicrosoft.com">treatment-chair@nnjaa.onmicrosoft.com</a>
<b>SPECIAL COMMITTEES</b>						
Computer and Technology Committee	2 <sup>nd</sup> Monday	7:00pm	Teams			Bruce R – <a href="mailto:computer@nnjaa.onmicrosoft.com">computer@nnjaa.onmicrosoft.com</a>
Convention Committee	3 <sup>rd</sup> Wednesday	7:30pm	ZOOM	833 2357 7907	197229	Chris L - <a href="mailto:convention-chair@nnjaa.onmicrosoft.com">convention-chair@nnjaa.onmicrosoft.com</a>
Films Committee	2 <sup>nd</sup> Sunday	9:00am	ZOOM	851 6081 2392	DVc6cm	Paul L – <a href="mailto:films-chair@nnjaa.onmicrosoft.com">films-chair@nnjaa.onmicrosoft.com</a>
Finance Committee	4 <sup>th</sup> Monday	7:00pm	ZOOM	591 535 5531	112590	John C – <a href="mailto:finance-chair@nnjaa.onmicrosoft.com">finance-chair@nnjaa.onmicrosoft.com</a>
GSR/DCM Workshops	N/A					Tim R – <a href="mailto:grr-workshop-chair@nnjaa.onmicrosoft.com">grr-workshop-chair@nnjaa.onmicrosoft.com</a>
Mailing Committee	1 <sup>st</sup> Wednesday	6:30pm	n/a			Sara G – <a href="mailto:mailchair@nnjaa.onmicrosoft.com">mailchair@nnjaa.onmicrosoft.com</a> Currently not meeting due to lack of mailing needs for the Area
GSR Mid-Winter Luncheon Committee	1 <sup>st</sup> Monday	6:30pm	ZOOM	891 0985 8973	077175	Laverne S. – <a href="mailto:lunch-chair@nnjaa.onmicrosoft.com">lunch-chair@nnjaa.onmicrosoft.com</a>
Newsletter*	3 <sup>rd</sup> Thursday	6:00pm	ZOOM	815 3922 8687	thisday	Tony P – <a href="mailto:newsletter-chair@nnjaa.onmicrosoft.com">newsletter-chair@nnjaa.onmicrosoft.com</a>
NYPAA	3 <sup>rd</sup> Sunday	10:30am	ZOOM	264 995 272	service	
Policy and Admissions Committee	4 <sup>th</sup> Thursday	7:30pm	ZOOM	532 271 5919	074811	Mark D – <a href="mailto:policy-chair@nnjaa.onmicrosoft.com">policy-chair@nnjaa.onmicrosoft.com</a> Virtual Only meeting. Meets on EVEN months
Remote Communities	4 <sup>th</sup> Monday	7:30pm	ZOOM	882 3015 7060	6054	Michael M – <a href="mailto:remote-chair@nnjaa.onmicrosoft.com">remote-chair@nnjaa.onmicrosoft.com</a>
Social Media Committee	2 <sup>nd</sup> Thursday	7:30pm	ZOOM	846 7849 8287	511520	Kristen A – <a href="mailto:sm-chair@nnjaa.onmicrosoft.com">sm-chair@nnjaa.onmicrosoft.com</a>
Translations Committee	1 <sup>st</sup> Wednesday	7:00pm	n/a	836 7972 7434	330508	Felix E – <a href="mailto:translation-chair@nnjaa.onmicrosoft.com">translation-chair@nnjaa.onmicrosoft.com</a>
Website Committee*	4 <sup>th</sup> Thursday	7:00pm	Teams	<a href="#">Click to Join</a>		Bonnie M – <a href="mailto:website-chair@nnjaa.onmicrosoft.com">website-chair@nnjaa.onmicrosoft.com</a>



# INTERGROUP NEWS & NOTES

INTERGROUP DELEGATES MEETING  
 THURSDAY, JANUARY 6, 2022 at 8:30 PM  
 MEETING WILL TAKE PLACE ON ZOOM – DETAILS BELOW



Our Monthly Meeting will be presented as an Online Video Conference



<http://zoom.us/j/81919081301>

Meeting ID: 819 1908 1301

Meeting Password: 121134

One tap mobile

+19292056099..81919081301#

Dial by your location

+1 929 205 6099 US (New York)

FOR MORE INFORMATION CALL INTERGROUP  
 908-687-8566  
 Monday – Friday 10:00 AM – 6:00 PM

For ALL information from Intergroup, please check out Intergroup's News & Notes on the [nnjaa.org](http://nnjaa.org) website!

## The Highlights?

1. Bookers is not ONLINE or IN-PERSON!!
2. Service committees are looking for more members to be of service!
3. 1358 meetings have reopened!! There are still 251 meetings whose status is still unknown.

## Is your group reopening?

Find reopening information here:

[https://www.nnjaa.org/covid-19\\_return.html](https://www.nnjaa.org/covid-19_return.html)

Fill out the reopening form here:

[https://www.nnjaa.org/intergroup/cgi-bin/virt\\_mtg\\_form.php](https://www.nnjaa.org/intergroup/cgi-bin/virt_mtg_form.php)

## Office Hours & Literature Sales

Call 10am to 6pm Monday through Friday

1-908-687-8566

For more information [Click Here](#)

# Area 44 District Happenings & Reflections

## District 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, PO Box 7270, Newark, NJ 07107
- District 18 - 2nd Mon. 7:30 pm, Union Village UM Church, 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



## District 23 Invites You to Our Annual OPEN SPEAKER MEETING AND SPAGHETTI DINNER



**SATURDAY JANUARY 29, 2022**

Doors open at 12:00 pm  
Speaker at 1:00pm - Dinner to Follow  
St Peters and Pauls Church Hall  
9 Jeffrie Ave, South River NJ

Leader -LENNY M. DCM DISTRICT 23

**SPEAKER: ALLISON R, AREA 44 SECRETARY FROM SOBERLY  
SPEAKING IN JERSEY CITY WITH 6 YEARS OF SOBRIETY.**

MEETING IS FREE AND THE COST OF THE DINNER IS \$8.00  
Limit of 140 Tickets

**ALL ARE WELCOME, BRING THE FAMILY**  
For tickets see your District 23 GSRs.  
**NO TICKETS SOLD AT THE DOOR.**

# CHRISTMAS ALKATHONS

Please Join District 1/2 for our Annual  
Holiday Alkathon  
Hosted at Sussex County Recovery  
Community Center  
65 Newton Sparta Rd, Newton NJ

December 25, 2021

Bring a dish, dessert and most importantly  
You  
10am to 10pm with meetings  
Every hour

NNJGS AREA 44  
DISTRICT 17 OF  
ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS  
ANNOUNCES THEIR

**VIRTUAL  
32<sup>nd</sup> ANNUAL HOLIDAY ALKATHON**

**ID: 892 9822 7181 - Password: 948020**

24 Hours of Meetings and More:

Topic Discussion, Speakers, Long-timers,  
Women's, Men's, Steps, Traditions &  
Big Book Meetings and a 4<sup>th</sup> Step Workshop

Friday, December 24, 2021 from 6:00pm to 2:00am  
Our Long-timers Meeting will start at 6:15pm  
and  
Saturday, December 25, 2021 from 8am to Midnight

Committee Meetings over Zoom ID: 813 0161 9536  
on Tuesdays at 5:00pm  
Oct. 26, Nov. 9, Dec. 7, 14 & 21 @ 5:00pm

GSR's and groups, please book your Group's Slot with  
Booker Roxanne L. and Alternate Booker: Cheryl F.

Chairperson: Berthine J.  
Alternate Chairperson: Roxanne L.

To send contributions to the District @aec-1951-opal (venmo.com)  
or  
District 17  
PO Box 7270  
Newark, NJ 07101-7270



# Christmas Eve Alkathon

Friday, December 24, 2021

## Clubhouse Meeting Schedule

- 7:00am Open Big Book (*Daily Reprieve Group*)
- 9:00am Open Beginner–Steps 1, 2, 3 (*Morning Miracles Group*)
- 12:30pm Closed Literature (*Throckmorton Street Group*)
- 2:00pm Open Discussion (*A Vision for You*)
- 4:00pm Open Beginner Discussion (*Throckmorton Street Group*)
- 6:00pm Open Literature-Emotional Sobriety (*Throckmorton Street Group*)
- 7:45pm CA Closed Discussion-Big Book (1-1/4 hr) (*Friday Night Recovery*)
- 9:15pm Open Discussion (*A Vision for You*)
- 10:30pm Open Discussion (*A Vision for You*)

Hosted by: A Vision for You



**32<sup>nd</sup> ANNIVERSARY**  
**2021**

**Sponsored by the Westfield Saturday**  
**Ruby Slippers Group**  
**Christmas Alka-Thon!**

Date: Friday, December 24, 2021 (Christmas Eve.)  
 Time: 12 Noon until 11 PM Midnight (Christmas eve)  
 Time: 9 AM until 10 PM (Christmas Day)  
 Where: St. Michaels School Cafeteria  
 40 Alden Street  
 Cranford, NJ

AA Meetings and Al-Anon Meetings Around the Clock  
 50/50!  
 Great Food!  
 Breakfast 9 AM Christmas Morning!  
 Great Fellowship!

Gifts for all the kids (7 PM Sharp from Santa Claus on Christmas Eve.)

CONTACTS:  
 Freddy C.  
 Jorge  
 Tom S.  
 Booker Liz  
 \*\*\*

**Special Events Include:**  
 Christmas Night 8 PM: AA Speaker and Alanon Speaker  
 Sobriety Countdown following the  
 Spiritual Meeting on Christmas Night  
 Do Something Nice - -  
 Get involved with the Christmas Alka-Thon!

# Extrava-Festa-Alkathon

*The District 22 alkathon will be virtual this year!*

**Where: Meeting ID 435-1749-367**

**Passcode: family**

[ZOOM MEETING LINK](#)

**December 24 6PM to 12AM**

One hour meetings starting at 6:00PM, 7:30PM, 9:00PM, 10:30PM

**On December 24 we will have special Caroleoke 11:30PM**

**December 25 9AM to 8:30PM**

One hour meetings starting at 9:00AM, 10:30AM, 12:00PM,  
1:30PM, 3:00PM, 4:30PM, 6:00PM, 7:30PM



**Kearny**  
**Live Easy But Think First**  
**32nd Annual Christmas Alcathon**  
**24 Hours of Fellowship**

Meetings will begin at 8 PM Christmas Eve December 24th, 2021, and run every even hour until the final meeting at 8PM Christmas Day December 25, 2021


*\*Join us for dinner at 1 PM on Christmas Day, December 25, 2021*

<b>December 24</b>	<b>8 PM</b>	<b>Open Speaker</b>	<b>Joe Q</b>
	<b>10 PM</b>	<b>Steps 1,2,3</b>	<b>John D</b>
<b>December 25</b>	<b>12 AM Midnight</b>	<b>Promises</b>	<b>Mike M</b>
	<b>2 AM</b>	<b>Reflections</b>	<b>JR</b>
	<b>4 AM</b>	<b>Ask It Basket</b>	<b>April A</b>
	<b>6 AM</b>	<b>Red Ball</b>	<b>Mike K</b>
	<b>8 AM</b>	<b>Speaker Discussion</b>	<b>Jackie</b>
	<b>10 AM</b>	<b>Big Book</b>	<b>Sherry</b>
	<b>12 PM</b>	<b>Gratitude</b>	<b>Ron</b>
	<b>1 PM</b>	<b>Buffet Dinner</b>	
	<b>2 PM</b>	<b>Open Speaker</b>	<b>Luis</b>
	<b>4 PM</b>	<b>Beginner</b>	<b>Bob R</b>
	<b>6 PM</b>	<b>Came to Believe</b>	<b>Jean P</b>
	<b>8 PM</b>	<b>Speaker Discussion</b>	<b>Brian</b>
	<b>9 PM</b>	<b>Closing Ceremony</b>	<b>John D &amp; Luis</b>

*First Presbyterian Church of Burlington*  
 663 Kearny Avenue  
 Kearny, NJ 07032

**The Thursday Night Pompton Plains Group Holiday Alc-a-thon**  
 (District 10)

First Reformed Church – 529 Newark Pompton Turnpike  
 Pompton Plains, N.J. 07444



Christmas Eve – Christmas Day  
 Dec. 24<sup>th</sup> 7pm through Dec. 25<sup>th</sup> 1pm (last meeting of the day) and  
 Dec. 31- 7pm through Jan. 1<sup>st</sup> 1pm (last meeting of the day)  
 New Years Eve – New Years Day

All meetings are "Open"  
**Meetings around the clock on the hour!**  
 Bring your favorite holiday snack, dessert or beverage to add to the festivities!

**Food and Fellowship**

**NEW YEARS ALKATHONS**

ATTENTION: NNJGSAREA 44 DISTRICT 17

**IT'S THAT TIME AGAIN!**

*In the spirit of the holiday District 17 will be having a virtual 13<sup>th</sup> Annual New Year's Alcathon!*

Friday, December 31, 2021 (New Year's Eve) 6:00pm thru  
 Saturday, January 1, 2022 (New Year's Day) 2:00am

**ID: 892 9822 7181 - Password: 948020**

Committee Meetings over Zoom: ID: 813-0161 9536 on Tuesdays at 6pm: November 30, December 14 & 28, 2021

Groups' support and contributions are greatly appreciated. To send contributions to the District (@bec-1951-opal (venmo.com) or District 17 PO Box 7270 Newark, NJ 07107-7270

Let's bring in the New Year right!

Any questions or anyone interested in participating contact:  
 Chairperson: Charlene D.-D.  
 Alternate Chairperson: Linda C.

DISTRICT 14 JERSEY CITY PRESENTS

**ANOTHER Very Virtual New Year's Alcathon!**

**12 PROMISES\* FOR A SOBER NEW YEAR**


Meeting Times and Hosts

<b>6:00 - 7:45pm</b>	<i>Live and Let Live</i>
<b>8:00 - 9:45pm</b>	<i>Soberly Speaking</i>
<b>10:00 - 11:45pm</b>	<i>West Side Story</i>
<b>Midnight - 1:45am</b>	<i>Candlelight</i>
<b>2:00 - 3:45am</b>	<i>Hudson Group</i>
<b>4:00 - 5:45am</b>	<i>Steps of the Big Book</i>
<b>6:00 - 7:45am</b>	<i>Primary Purpose</i>
<b>8:00 - 9:45am</b>	<i>Came to Believe</i>
<b>10:00 - 11:45am</b>	<i>JC Sober Pride</i>
<b>12:00 - 1:45pm</b>	<i>Mansion at 12:15</i>
<b>2:00 - 3:45pm</b>	<i>Gifts of Sobriety</i>
<b>4:00 - 6:00pm</b>	<i>Red Door</i>

Join us through Zoom  
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86537055516?pwd=TiRGMW44enpWdFEYlEVOeUJDNk0zdz09>  
**Meeting ID:** 865 3705 5516  
**Passcode:** 569302  
**Phone:** +1-646-558-8656

\* The 9th Step Promises can be found on pages 83-84 of the Big Book  
 Each meeting will cover one of the promises





**NNJAA District 37-38**  
 Celebrate With Us  
**New Year 2022**  
**Party, Live Music & Alkathon**

Friday, December 31, 2021, from 7pm  
 until 1am, January 1, 2022, yay!

**Glen Ridge Congregational Church**  
 195 Ridgewood Avenue (corner of Clark Street)  
 Glen Ridge, NJ 07028

**Live Music Played by Musicians in Recovery**  
 plus  
**Alkathon Meetings every Hour on the Hour**  
 plus  
**Food, Beverage, Cake and Coffee**

If you can, bring pastries, etc. to share.  
 Or just come as you are. All are Invited.  
 An open, sober, family-friendly AA event.  
 No charge. Donations Accepted.



**CHURCH OF THE GOOD SHEPHERD**  
**1576 PALISADE AVENUE**  
**FORT LEE, NJ**  
**12-31-2021**

DECEMBER CELEBRANTS  
 WILL CELEBRATE THEIR  
 ANNIVERSARY.  
 FAMILY AND FRIENDS  
 ARE WELCOME.  
 THEN TOGETHER WE  
 BRING IN THE  
 NEW YEAR.

**PLAY IT SAFE ON NEW YEARS EVE**  
**FRIDAY DECEMBER 31ST**  
**7:30 PM CELEBRATION MEETING**  
**FOLLOWED BY**  
**FOOD • FUN • FELLOWSHIP & RECOVERY**

## From our Area 44 Fellowship



**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

### Topics

*Discuss the pros and cons of meetings remaining virtual due to COVID-19.  
Comment on what this means to you: "to take hardship as a pathway to peace."*

What makes the book Alcoholics Anonymous a true "Big Book"?

The book Alcoholics Anonymous measures 8.5" x 5.5" x 1.5". It weighs 1.5lbs.

This alone, qualifies it as a True Big Book.

Joe H.

Sober Date; Jan 1, 2015

### A Story with Two Parts

My friend Marci just called. Somewhat frustrated she asked, "I have three different dates on my calendar that you celebrate. Which day is it?" Chuckling, I admitted I wasn't sure and that it didn't really matter. It mattered the first time: February 11, 1991. The second time, I was filled with so much shame, guilt and remorse walking into that Monday night meeting with my tail between my legs that checking the calendar for a new sober date was the last thing on my mind. After raising my hand that I was coming back, the leader passed around a phone list. After the meeting, a woman named Donna met me at the coffee pot. Grabbing the last three homemade cookies, she said, "It's Deb, right?" I told her yes. "Self-pity's not an option," she said, matter-of-factly. How did she know I was feeling sorry for myself? Pointing to her number on my list, she added, "If you're willing to kick it up a notch, you'll have that life beyond your wildest dreams." Before I had a chance to respond, she'd begun joking with someone else.

Still smarting from the experience of raising my hand as I had, I phoned a few friends to see who knew Donna. Sheila did. I trusted Sheila. "You'll like her," she said. "She's funny, and she'll tell you like it is." "You think she'd be a good sponsor?" My sponsor at the time was in the process of moving to North Carolina. I'd taken it upon myself to decide she had too much going on in her life to respond to me, so I stopped calling her. No longer accountable to her, I began slacking on meetings. My 3rd and 11th steps left something to be desired. After an unexpected surgery with multiple post-operative complications, I found myself isolating, making fewer phone calls, and living on the periphery of my recovery.

What happened next shouldn't have surprised me. When my three boys, all under the age of 10, began to fight with open bottles of blue Gatorade, I quietly descended the stairs to the basement, grabbed a bottle of champagne from the back of the cupboard, walked into the laundry room, cracked the bottle open on the deep sink and drank it, shards and all.

Recovery is my life, but my story has two parts. There was the first moment of sheer desperation, desolation, and disgust in Boston, MA that brought me to my knees, brought me to the phone, and brought me home at the age of thirty to live with my parents. Living on MA welfare and food stamps, cashing in my savings bonds and 401K money, eating whatever was cheap and left me enough money for alcohol, I'd neglected my physical and mental health and well-being. My hair had fallen out in clumps and I'd lost a significant amount of weight. Covering both with a floppy hat and an oversized coat from the thrift store, I arrived at my parents' home a mess. But because they were who they were, and because they loved me unconditionally, they helped save my life. They accompanied me to my first

meeting, staying to meet other parents, spouses, siblings, and kids of the scores of alcoholics who'd turned left upon entry when I'd turned right. Walking into that church basement on February 11, 1991 was the hardest thing I'd ever done. It was equally hard for my parents. The whole concept of recovery was so foreign to them. Their relief in seeing me get help overrode their initial discomfort. They came to my one year celebration and never forgot to acknowledge an annual anniversary.

The second moment of desperation came in a different form. It came after two weeks of drinking champagne from an IHOP coffee tumbler. While my brain and body may have experienced short spurts of that momentary numbness one feels after taking the first long sip or shot, my mind, heart and spirit were tethered to AA. Taking stock, I considered all I had to lose. I had sponsees. I had commitments. I had sober friends. I attended regular meetings. I counted on people and they counted on me. I was part of a fellowship of amazing people. I had a loving husband and three beautiful children who needed me. What had I done?

Donna was prepared for my call. "Are you ready to stop drinking?" she asked. "Yes," I replied sheepishly. Embarrassed, I noted my voice didn't even sound like mine. "What's your address? I'll come over in an hour." I was incredulous. "Do you have a notebook or a pad?" "Yes," I told her. "Start making a list of all your responsibilities. Include everything. Wife, mother, job, friends, school, extended family. Even the dry cleaning and the dog poop." Before I could resist, she hung up.

When Donna arrived, she plopped a bag on my kitchen table. In it were her careworn copy of her Big Book, her "Twelve and Twelve," some of her favorite speaker CDs and a wrapped gift. "This is for you," she said. "Should I open it now?" She nodded. I opened the gift to reveal a small hand mirror. I couldn't imagine why she had given me this. Was there a deeper meaning? Did she want me to actually take a look at myself? "Thank you," I told her. "Don't thank me yet. Turn it around." Turning the mirror around slowly, I read to myself what she'd scribbled in blue marker: "YOU ARE THE PROBLEM."

I was simultaneously hurt, but intrigued. "Why'd you drink?" she asked. "Did you drink at them?" Before I could reply, she continued. "It's not them, Deb. It was never them." My heart skipped a beat. "You know the spiritual axiom, right? Whenever we're disturbed, no matter what the cause, there's something wrong with us."

Attending daily meetings, it didn't take long to begin to reap, once again, the gifts of sobriety. But something gnawed at me. What was my new sober date? I certainly couldn't hold onto the old one. While walking out of the women's meeting, I got my answer. A woman I'd known for years stopped to welcome me back. "I'd suggest putting the bat down and replacing it with a feather," she offered. I feigned a smile. Determined to help shift my perspective, she looked at me and said something I've never forgotten: "You may have fallen off the beam, but you didn't lose any of your sober reference." It was then that I settled on my new sobriety date: November 18, 2005.

My story is important for a number of reasons. First, I've had the experience of being sober for half my life! I met my husband, got married, gave birth to and raised three boys. I've cared for a child with a life-threatening medical condition, buried two parents, and made lifelong sober friends. I've made myself available to countless people seeking recovery.

Second, my experience relapsing after building so much sober time has not only been powerfully transformative for me, but has lessened the stigma for others. Coming into AA at 30 was so painful I was willing to do whatever it took to seize that life preserver and hold on. Choosing to pick up a drink again and recognizing the senselessness of that choice so quickly was a lesson I had to learn firsthand. The humiliation I'd felt walking in the door in 1991 was surpassed by the humiliation I felt walking back in the door in 2005. Getting sober is much harder than staying sober.

Finally, I've learned to accept and embrace an important concept: IF NOTHING CHANGES, NOTHING CHANGES. My second chance at sobriety has put people and circumstances in my life that have provided an opportunity for extraordinary growth, understanding and change. And even though we're told to count days, not years, I believe my date is important. Contrary to what I'd thought previously, it matters because I matter.



## Sharing Experience Strength and Hope

\*\*\*\*\*

I'm Kathleen, and I'm an alcoholic. My first drink was at fourteen. My last drink was at fifty six, December 27, 1976, 5:36 p.m. AA describes alcoholism as being cunning, baffling, and insidious. My first recollection of alcoholism was in 1943. I was three. We had just finished Sunday dinner, and I thought my father and grandfather were playing. There were wrestling on the dining room floor. We children were only allowed to play like that outside. My brother of six years guided me to a safe spot (upstairs to bed) at my grandmother's direction. The next morning, my mother, father, grandmother and grandfather had bandages on their faces, and no one was talking to each other. I was told that my grandma's homemade wine caused the fight. It was then that I knew I didn't want her wine. Thus, at fourteen, so I could be like the other kids, I started drinking whisky. By twenty-three, as a young registered nurse, I drank socially on my days off from working in the hospital. In 1963, I was hospitalized for a "nervous breakdown." In 1964, I ran away from home and lived in NYC.

Fast forward, I married the best date I ever had in 1966. We met in August. In eight weeks, he asked me to marry him. He did not mind my drinking. I didn't notice his until we were married and he fell into the Christmas tree. I thought, "Oh, I should have been a nun!" By 1975, I found my way to treatment and received guidance from a friend's husband. I found my way into AA as a dry drunk. I was in the Dry Drunk Bar: bitter, angry, and resentful about my husband's drinking habits. AA taught me if you point a finger at someone that three come back at you. AA asked me what exactly bothered me about his drinking. My answer was, "He could drink, and I can't." The reason I could not in November of 1976 was because if I had one drink I hallucinated at some level, and my insides bled for three days. My gums would bruise, and I had spots on my inner arms indicating capillary fragility. This is still visible. At the present, I have trouble swallowing if any form of alcohol is in a salad or even in cooked food, such as Chicken Francese. This is a true allergy for me. I have this baffling disease. AA taught me to identify stories I identified with a lot, like three sailors who only drank when on dry land and detoxed back on the ship a few days later. In 1963, I was detoxing at work — experiencing blackouts, hallucinations, sweating, and shaking hands. In AA, in 1976, I began to realize my emotional growth stopped at fourteen. At thirty-six, my medicine for stress was alcohol. I was smart, attractive, and I could function as a wife, mother, friend, and nurse, but my feelings were hurt often, like a fourteen-year-old. I hid this emotional pain using alcohol until the physical pain became unbearable. My cure was worse than the disease. At an AA meeting, the leader said to me in front of the group, "You are one really weird dame; I have never seen anyone so happy to be an alcoholic." My response was, "Well, I learned here that all I have to do is put the cork in the bottle, not drink alcohol, go to meetings, get a sponsor, work the Steps, and live the Traditions, and I won't have to worry about blackouts or shock treatments."

Well, this is forty-five years later, and just last Thursday an old guy said to me, "You always seem so happy. What's your secret?" I answered him, "I am in AA, and I wake up each day grateful and happy to have another day with the help of God and the good orderly directions of AA on how to live without a drink."

Kathleen,  
New Jersey

\*\*\*\*\*

*A very nice man from my Tuesday night meeting asked me to write a little something for the Area 44 Newsletter. If this helps anyone, it would be well worth it.*

My name is Susan, and I am an Alcoholic. I became a member of Alcoholics Anonymous on December 2, 1999. I don't believe I'm anyone super special, but the fact that I found the rooms of AA is quite frankly a miracle.



I started drinking at the age of sixteen. I don't think I ever imagined becoming an alcoholic. I am what you might call your "average white girl." No real backstory. There was screaming and hitting in our house, but we were a large crowd of seven. We just assumed it was all quite regular. There was a very real feeling of love, so I am not placing blame, as I believe I was destined.

It was ugly from the get-go. I couldn't drink just one, and ten wasn't enough. Because I was a black out drinker, I have very little recollection of my past. Little memories come crawling back, out of the darkest of places and fear. I see glimpses of a girl I wish I had stayed, as compared to the woman who couldn't get through a day without a drink. Not one day. I stole and lied and cheated and would have done pretty much anything to get to my next drink. It was nasty to say the least. Having done many a geographical cure, having made a child in another country, having made a wreck of a life there, I proceeded to take more hostages and got married and had another child. Now, I had 3 people at the mercy of my disease. For years, I tormented them, I will always be sorrier than they can ever know. I am fortunate enough to have stayed married to a wonderful man, and my two sons talk to me.

I've been sober almost 22 years "one day at a time."

I live my life with a different fierceness these days. I'm older and wiser, and I see how amazingly fortunate I have been to have found sobriety. It saved my life without question. I owe everything to AA. Without it, I can't imagine where I would be.

Susan

## CREATIVE CORNER

### Square Peg

by Sherry B.

Sometimes I feel like a circle,  
all curves, nothing angled or square.  
I like the easy fit  
and I enjoy life  
hoping that if I change,  
I don't curve less.

Sometimes I feel less  
like a circle  
and I wonder when did I change.  
It can be fun to be square  
but it's not an easy life  
as a square peg that cannot fit.

There was a time when I saw fit  
to concern myself less  
about trying to live  
as if I were a circle,  
to enjoy being square  
until I would once again change.

Life as I know it does change.  
Each time I fear less the awkward fit.  
Sometimes I smooth my square,  
making my edges less  
angular, almost a circle,  
a less edgy life.

It's pretty amazing how this life  
I live can change.  
How I can hope to be a circle  
that does fit  
in, and fear less  
life as a square.

For happiness as a square,  
perhaps life  
is less  
about having to change  
and more about finding a way to fit  
my square peg in life's circle.

Or perhaps the secret of life is to focus on the circle,  
squaring the edges of the hole, curving less, until I fit.  
Change me or change my world? Is there time to change?

## The Never-Ending Story

**M**y life was a gray tunnel without a light at the end of it. Like so many alcoholics, I was unable to imagine life with or without alcohol. There was no hope, and things would never get better. I had no story. Nothing was ever going to change, and life would go on and on and on ...

And then I found AA, or rather, it found me. During the summer of the year when I got sober, I had decided that something had to give, although I was not yet ready to admit I was an alcoholic who desperately needed help. But somehow, I found the grace (through my Higher Power) to admit that my life was not working. Instantly, people came out of the woodwork to help me (synchronicity, anyone?), and I was introduced to ACA and Al-Anon. People started to tell me their stories, and I found myself being 12-stepped by someone one afternoon in late August. Still, I wasn't ready to surrender the drink problem. But then, suddenly, one Friday morning in October, I just KNEW, beyond the shadow of a doubt, that I was an alcoholic. I was not happy about it, but I admitted and surrendered. Whatever I had to do, I would do. And so, my story began.

Initially, I did not think there would be much of a future for me. I imagined the rest of my life would be happier, but I would be drinking too much coffee and people would be blowing smoke in my face all day (we smoked at meetings in those days). I had no idea of the adventure that would be in store for me. A lot of painful emotions, emotional healing, moving out of a crummy apartment into a few strange situations, losing both parents, getting fired twice, losing a house, making career and financial mistakes, getting married. The list goes on and on. Some of the situations were good, some were tough, some were due to outside circumstances, and some that were rough (actually, most) were my doing. But I was LIVING, not existing.

And then five years ago I took another foray into the Steps, this time from the Big Book, with the help of a new sponsor. This has led me to sponsor several other people in the same way, and it has been such a privilege to be able to take them through the book and watch them grow. One of my most beloved sponsees passed away in January, but she was able to live a beautiful life during her last years.

Since the pandemic I have had the opportunity to continue to grow in my sobriety by finally admitting and addressing problems other than alcohol. I am now out of debt for the first time in many years. I take better care of myself, eat the way I should be eating, and exercise. My service work in my live and internet meetings has helped me considerably, and I am grateful for all the opportunities for growth I have been given. However, I tend to overdo, so balance and boundaries (mostly with myself), as well as some childhood issues, are what I have been working on lately. I pray every day to be relieved of the bondage of self. This self-absorption was with me as a child, during my drinking years, and has influenced my thinking in sobriety when I have forgotten to rely on my Higher Power for everything. Recently, I was at an exercise class where I had the lowest skill set of any of the participants, and for the first time, it didn't matter. All I needed to do was improve, not compare myself to others. That freedom has taken a lot of growth in this program, but what a gift, and it is just beginning! I can live and enjoy my life now, one moment at a time, although I am still a work in progress in that department.

So, my life is now a never-ending story, at least for the time I have left. And what a life it is! We have been on five trips this year, and each one has been an adventure. I have everything I need and want what I have. Who knows what tomorrow will bring? But whatever happens, I have my Higher Power and my circle of trusted advisers and friends. Every day is a new chapter of my life. My story continues to change, thank God, and my sober life goes on and on and on...

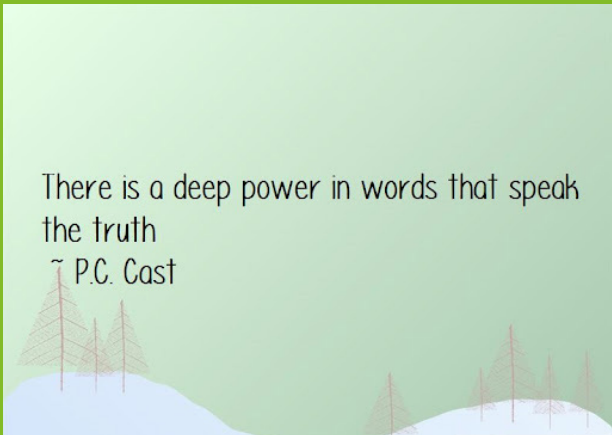
Marybeth H.

Early Risers, District 26

Many thanks to ALL of our writers for "This Day" Winter 2021 Edition.

Your words are beautiful and truly inspiring. We could not do this without you!!!

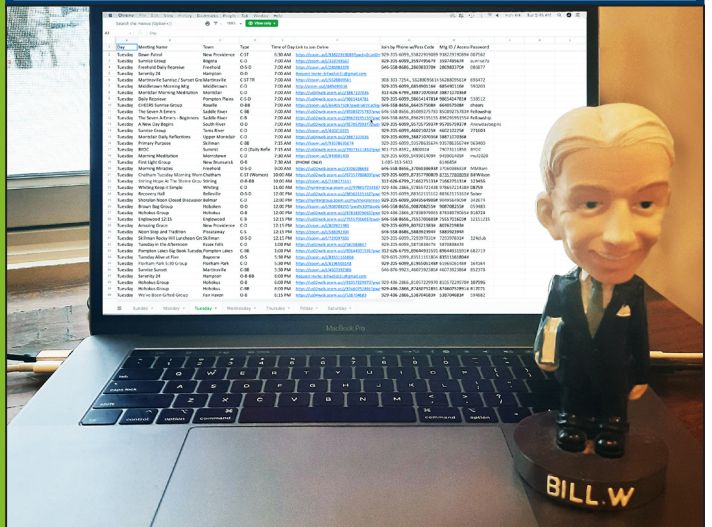
Megan D., Area 44 Newsletter Editor



# AREA 44 CALENDAR

To access Area 44's monthly calendars, please do the following:

1. Log on to [www.nnjaa.org](http://www.nnjaa.org)
2. Click the "NEWS & EVENTS" header
3. In the drop down menu, click "Calendar"



Interested in joining a Standing or Special Committee? Area 44 could use your help!

Check out our Area 44 Committee Virtual Meeting List on page 5!

**ALONE WE CAN DO SO LITTLE;  
TOGETHER WE CAN DO SO MUCH.**  
- HELEN KELLER



Member area  
userid: alcoholic  
password: onedayatime

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

Try it on your Smartphone



**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).

## Topics for the Spring 2021 Edition:

Choose one of the Twelve Traditions of AA and discuss why the tradition is an important one to the AA community.

OR

Discuss why sobriety works best when it has a spiritual aspect.

Next Edition Deadline:

February 4, 2022

Send your articles of 800 words or fewer in a Word doc to: [newsletter@nnjaa.org](mailto:newsletter@nnjaa.org)