



The Suffolk Intergroup

# BULLETIN

Volume 42, Number 5

SEPTEMBER 2015

## THE SHARE-A-THON: A HISTORY

The SIA Archives website gives this account of our first Share-a-Thon:

*"In May of 1973 a unanimous vote established full Intergroup status. With 85 groups throughout Suffolk County and with over 190 meetings a week, it was time for Suffolk County to declare its independence....To celebrate our newly founded independence, the first Share-A-Thon was held at the old Colonie Hill in Hauppauge in 1975 [actually 1976] hundreds attended. A huge banquet complete with a live orchestra topped off a day of workshops."*

A flyer from the Archives Committee enclosed in the 2005, 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary program puts it this way:

*"Some time around 1975, there was an idea born that Suffolk Intergroup sponsor a 'special meeting'.... The idea was that AAs in Suffolk meet for a 'festive social gathering'....It cost \$12.50 to attend and that included a whole day of workshops, a Traditions play and a dinner followed by dancing [until 2AM!]. Music was provided by a full orchestra [Joe Allen Orchestra]. For those who traveled a distance and wished to stay overnight, rooms were available at Colonie Hill for \$20.00. According to the November 1976 Bulletin, 1200 people attended the dinner! An additional 250 people attended the all day workshops."*

This format -- a day of workshops followed by dinner and dancing -- lasted 24 years, until 1999.

The workshops conducted at Share-a-Thons are a mighty demonstration of passing it on. They have grown in breadth and depth over the years. From the 20 workshops held in 1978, 40 to 50 were held through 1980s and 1990s. The average number of workshops has increased to 60-plus since 2000. To do a little alcoholic math, ("How much have you had to drink?" "Two beers."),

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## Share-A-Thon

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think about it: over the course of 40 years, 20,000 people and 2000 workshops run by 4000 volunteers. Think about all of the desire for an answer, all of the need to help another alcoholic, all of the education and inspiration passed on and all of the love for AA and AAs. Amazing.

A few words about entertainment at the Share-a-Thon:

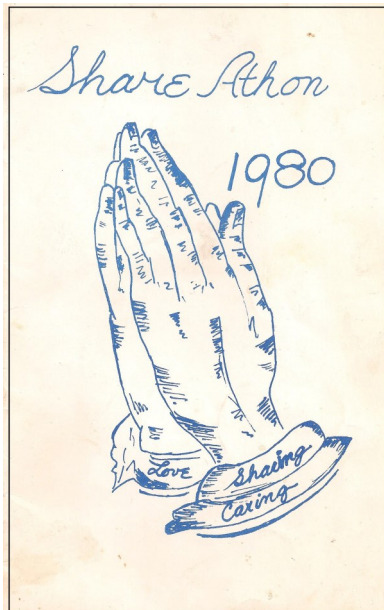


The Joe Allen Orchestra (a 10 piece band!) played at the first event and was a regular for many years. A burning issue in 1985 was the choice of live music versus a disco DJ. Live music won out and a band called Naked Truth performed. The live sounds of Incognito and the Skyline Orchestra have also graced the festivities.

Some banquets also featured a play. At the first Share-a-thon, a play, *My Way*, was performed,

directed by Fred H, current SIA Chair. In 1995, members of the Sayville Group authored (Mickey), directed (Frank K) and produced (Pamela) a play named *A Game Called Denial*. In 1996, the SIA Bulletin reported that 200 people did the Macarena at that year's Share-a-Thon.

The SIA By-Laws originally required the event to be self-supporting through its own ticket sales (although anyone who could not afford the price of a ticket was admitted to the workshops free) so there was always pressure to make ends meet. Prices rose over the first ten years (workshops and banquet from \$12.50 to \$30 in 1986, workshops only from \$3.00 to \$7.00 in 1986) but the event was generally attended by



between 600 and 800 people.

In the mid-1980's, the Share-a-Thon was generating considerable surpluses. The 1985 event generated about \$24,500 in revenue against costs of \$19,500 for a \$5,000 surplus. True to AA Tradition, the surplus was distributed across the service structure. In 1987, a \$5,200 surplus was shared as follows: SIA retained \$1800, GSO received \$1080, Suffolk General Service received \$360, SENY received \$360 and \$1600 was set aside as seed money for the 1988 Share-a-Thon.

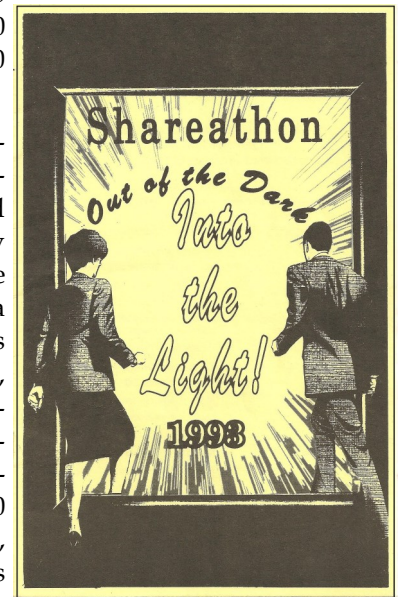
The event was held at Colonie Hill through 1986 when it was forced to move and found a place at the Stony Brook University Student Union for two years. Colonie Hill was being razed and replaced by what we know as the Wind-Watch. When the event moved to the new Radisson Islandia in 1989, banquet and workshop tickets jumped to \$40.00 and workshop only tickets to \$10.00 where they remained until 1998 when they rose to \$45.00 and \$12.50, and to \$50.00 and \$12.50 in 1999.

These increases were certainly a factor in the demise of the banquet and the dance. For the new millennium, in 2000 the Share-a-Thon, moved to a new venue, St. Joseph's College in Patchogue, and adopted a new format of a day of workshops only with an admission charge of \$10 including lunch. In 2004, the admission charge was dropped and SIA began

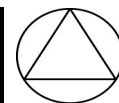
subsidizing the event. Admission to the Share-a-Thon has been free since 2004. Lunch has been available for purchase some years and free others. This year the SIA By-Laws were amended to authorize the subsidy by eliminating 'self-supporting through its own contributions' language.

Let's go back to 1986. You are on the Share-a-Thon Committee with Walter P (Sayville), Joe K (Sayville West), Art B (Smithtown Alanon), Pricilla B (Fort Salonga), Marie V (Smithtown Women's Lunch Break), Kathy C (Commack Love and Share), Anne P (Sayville), Dan N (Centereach) and Connie R (Holbrook Love & Share). Everything is looking good for the Share-a-Thon. A call comes in. One

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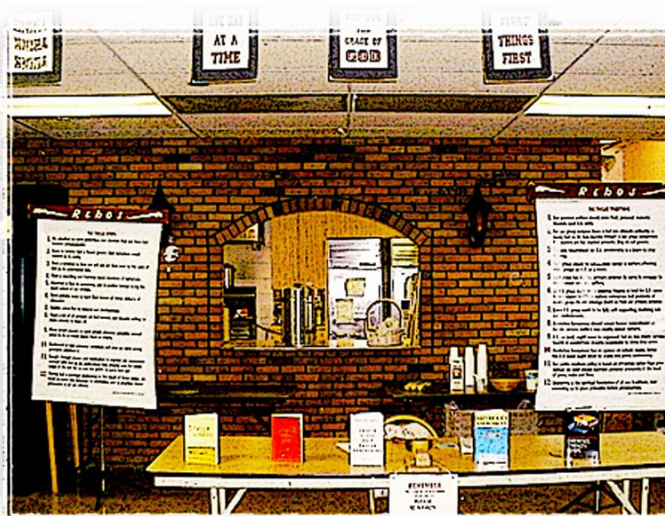
## Group History of the Month

### REBOS

St. Mary's Episcopal Church  
Ronkonkoma

The REBOS Group was started by Russ S. A notice announcing its birth was sent to AA World Services in January 1979 and by February of that same year it was listed for the first time in the Suffolk County meeting list. Its original meeting place was the 3rd Guy Clubhouse, a now legendary hangout located behind an auto parts store on Hawkins Avenue in Lake Ronkonkoma.

The 3rd Guy Clubhouse was the brainchild of Frank B, Danny K and Dave McD. To this day, old timers wax nostalgic about it. Not known for its décor or ambiance, it seemed to have all the charms of a hovel. According to Medium Jim of the Aquebogue Back to Basics Group, the floor was covered with "green mold carpeting". It was situated downstairs from a Chinese restaurant and at the end of the day when its floor was being washed above, gray ooze seeped through, which was collected in a bucket. Bugs and other assorted vermin were regular visitors as were assorted AAs. It was not unusual to have 100 people gathered there. In addition to REBOS, a women's discussion meeting and a men's discussion---which still exists to this day in Holbrook--- also met there. The Clubhouse may not have made the cover of Town and Country magazine but it did help many people stay sober.



The late Artie M of REBOS remembered Russ as "massive" with "broad shoulders". Like Artie, he was also a New York City fireman. His handiwork, the creation of REBOS, has become his legacy and has long since out-lived him.

For about two years the faithful, undaunted AAs braved the rigors of the Clubhouse - ooze and all - although some AA women flatly refused to set foot in the building. Then "some sissy ass complained to the County Health Department" and suddenly the doors were shut forever.

From the ooze, the group moved to Hidden Pond Park in Hauppauge, where they continued to meet with a slightly different schedule. Wednesday night's line up remained the same but Monday's was switched to Friday. There they skated along nicely until the town put in an ice rink and according to group member Santo, they once again had to pack up their belongings and move. They settled in to the Nesconset Church of Christ on Smithtown Boulevard---same nights, same schedule. This worked out well until another move was required. The final move brought them to St Mary's, where they have met since 1993. With this move the Friday meetings had to shift to Thursdays.

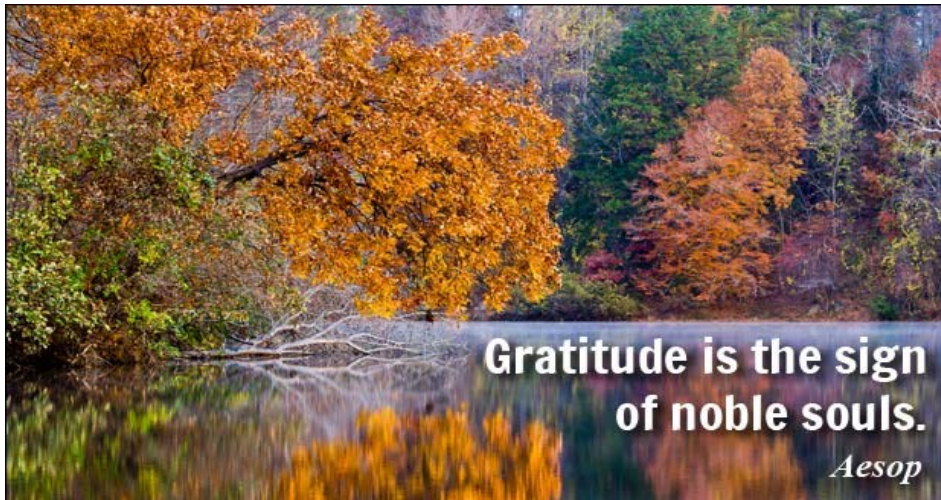
The name REBOS is the word sober spelled backwards. However you spell it, REBOS has weathered all sort of hassles and still has managed to bounce back time and again. As of this writing the group has been meeting for 33 years. Many of us, who have attended, know well this room with the divider, allowing two simultaneous meetings, both of which carry the same wonderful message of recovery that Russ S. carried from the very beginning.

The Archives Committee is always looking for volunteers to help save our Alcoholics Anonymous history.

Contact the SIA Office at 654-1150.







### Gratitude – What is it?

“Gratitude” - that word seems to be a topic of many “discussion” meetings. But how many, who claim to be “grateful” in these meetings, comprehend the meaning of this often used word? One Texas AA made this statement, “I don’t give a damn what you think or how you feel when you say you are “grateful”. Just tell me what it is that you are doing to show how much you appreciate what AA has done and is doing for you”.

Bill Wilson, in a letter written in 1959, wrote:

“Gratitude should go forward, rather than backward. In other words, if you carry the message to still others, you will be making the best possible repayment for the help given you.”

So “gratitude” is far more than an attitude, as is so often heard in our meetings. “Gratitude” is action! The first example we have of “gratitude” in our history is Ebby’s efforts to help Bill Wilson. Ebby, two months sober, had heard that Bill was in serious trouble with his drinking. The first thing he had to do was to find out where Bill was, take a subway and go to Bill’s residence with a single thought, “Can I help my old friend?” Ebby “sought out”, “went to” and “tried to carry” his message of hope to a suffering alcoholic.

The second example we are given of “gratitude” is Bill’s desperate search for an alcoholic he might try to carry his message to on the evening of May 11, 1935. True, his motive was a pretty selfish one. He knew that his only hope on that most disappointing day was to find a suffering serious drinker to whom he could tell his story. So, he decided to “search out”, “go to” and “try to carry his message of hope” to a problem drinker. To help insure the sobriety of his new found friend and to help insure his own sobriety, Bill most willingly stayed in Akron until the Fall of 1935. The end result was that a miraculous Solution for Alcoholism became a reality; Alcoholics Anonymous.

So it would appear that most folks who claim to be “grateful” are in reality just “thankful”. So, if you are “grateful”, what have you done to deserve this day of life and sobriety?

PASS IT ON!!!

## FREE OFFER!

We would like to email you your own copy of the Bulletin! Please send your email address to [bulletins@suffolkny-aa.org](mailto:bulletins@suffolkny-aa.org) and include “Send me my copy” in the body of the message.

## SIA By-Laws Committee Meetings:

Intergroup will be convening the By-Laws Committee for the purpose of the biennial review of the By-Laws. Group representation is needed. This is your group’s chance to influence the direction of Intergroup. Meetings will be held on Wednesday, August 5, August 12, August 26, September 2 and September 9. All meetings 7 pm at the SIA office.

### \* New AA Meeting \*



### SUNLIGHT OF THE SPIRIT

\*\*\* 11<sup>th</sup> step meditation meeting \*\*\*

Thursdays 8pm

@

L.I. Kula Yoga

146 S. Country Rd.  
Bellport





**113-8 Bay Ave. / P.O. Box 659, Patchogue, NY 11772 (631) 654-1150**

## **The Bulletin**

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## **Please note:**

Inclusion of articles and announcements in The Bulletin does not constitute endorsement by Alcoholics Anonymous or Suffolk Intergroup Association. Rather, members of Alcoholics Anonymous have been encouraged to share their experience, strength and hope through this publication. Opinions expressed are those of the writer unless otherwise noted. Suffolk Intergroup makes these articles and announcements available solely as a service to the reader.

Brian C., Editor

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Treasurer Linda C. [Treasurer@suffolkny-aa.org](mailto:Treasurer@suffolkny-aa.org)  
Corr. Sec Marie V. [Corsec@suffolkny-aa.org](mailto:Corsec@suffolkny-aa.org)  
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### **Committee Chairs**

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Webmaster Troy ..... [Websup@suffolkny-aa.org](mailto:Websup@suffolkny-aa.org)

## **HotLine September** **Commitments**

Sept 6-12 Area 70 Mike

Sept 13-19 Area 50 Ron

Sept 20-26 Area 100 Dave

Sept 27-Oct 3 Area 80 Woof

## **Thanks to August's Volunteers**

Aug 2-15 Area 30

John- East Northport Serenity

Aug 9-15 Area 40

Bob L- Bethany; Centerport

Aug 16-22 Area 110

Paul- Ronkonkoma New Beginnings

Aug 23-29 Area 240

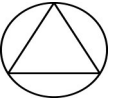
Dave S- Brookhaven Happy Hour

Aug 30 Area 210 Willie- various groups

## **October Meetings**

<b>Archives Committee:</b>	Check with SIA Office
<b>Institutions Committee:</b>	10/21/2015 7:00 PM SIA Office
<b>Public Information Committee:</b>	10/20/2015 7:00 PM SIA Office
<b>SIA Monthly Business Meeting:</b>	10/6/2015 Cornell Co-operative Extension Griffing Ave., Riverhead <b>7:00 PM</b> New Group Rep Orientation <b>7:00 PM</b> Share-a-Thon <b>8:00 PM</b> Intergroup Meeting
<b>SIA Officers &amp; Chairs:</b>	10/27/2015 7:00 PM SIA Office
<b>Suffolk General Service:</b>	10/16/2015 8:00 PM True North Community Church, Lakeland Ave., Bohemia
<b>Special Events:</b>	10/6/2015 7:00 PM Cornell Co-operative Extension Griffing Ave., Riverhead
<b>Third Legacy Committee:</b>	10/29/2014 7:30 PM SIA Office





# ANNOUNCEMENTS

## SEASONS GREETINGS!

(Group Update Season that is)

The accuracy of the Suffolk Intergroup Meeting List and Group Contact database depend upon each group submitting a Group Update Form once annually prior to October 1. To determine if your group needs to submit a form, please find your group in the online Meeting Directory located at [www.suffolkny-aa.org](http://www.suffolkny-aa.org). In the "Group and Location" column you will see one of the following messages for your group, either: "Updated: 2015" or "Not Updated". If the message is "Not Updated" click on the hyperlink to be redirected to an instruction page for submitting a Group Update Form. This is a great opportunity to do service and spread the word to groups that have not updated yet.

George D. — Meeting List Chair

## Subscriptions to Nassau Newsletter On-Line

Nassau Intergroup's Newsletter is now available via on-line subscription. While some of the content is only of local interest, several items may be of general interest to AA members considering AA's Three Legacies: Recovery, Unity and Service. They hope you may enjoy it, and share it with others.

Nassau Intergroup has introduced an e-subscription option for those who would like to receive their newsletter each month. All that's needed is an email address. If interested, please go to the subscription form on their website, [www.nassauny-aa.org](http://www.nassauny-aa.org). There you will also have access to back issues of the newsletter.



The Bulletin staff would like to know what you think of, well, pretty much anything A.A. related. We'd like to make the Bulletin the voice of the members of A.A. in Suffolk County. This means YOU! Tell us what we're doing right. Tell us what we're doing wrong. Share your experience with others.

You can contact the Bulletin via mail sent to the SIA office or by email sent to [bulletins@suffolkny-aa.org](mailto:bulletins@suffolkny-aa.org)

All submissions, written or artwork, are gratefully accepted. - the Editor

**THE ONLY THING  
YOU CAN REALLY  
CONTROL ...  
IS HOW YOU REACT  
TO THINGS  
OUT OF YOUR  
CONTROL**

-BASSAMI TAZARI





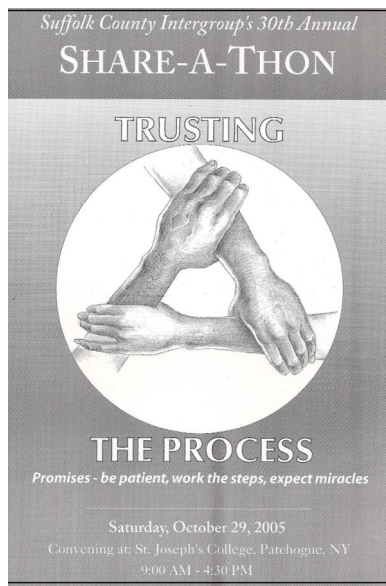
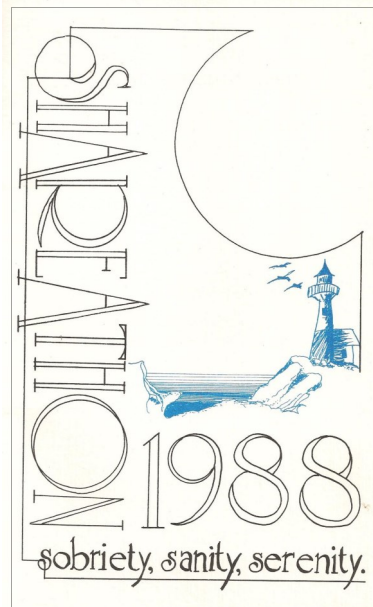
## Share-A-Thon

(Continued from page 2)

of the speakers for the workshop "I'm OK Gay" has to cancel. Oh dear, the programs have been printed. You go to the SIA Office, get a bottle of White-Out, and with a couple of friends, carefully blot out the speaker's name from hundreds of programs, you lovingly perform hundreds of small acts of service, you don't drink...

John J

(Smithtown Serenity)



*[This article is based on SIA Archive material on the Share-a-Thon. Any errors of fact or interpretation are the author's. There are gaps in the Archive for this event. For instance, we do not have programs for 1976, 1977 and 1985. Materials for recent Share-a-Thons (2008-2014) are limited. Please help us fill these gaps: visit the Archives display at this year's Share-a-thon or email [archives@suffolkny-aa.org](mailto:archives@suffolkny-aa.org).]*

## A NEW GROUP HISTORY

The Port Jefferson Station Gratitude Group will be celebrating its 37th year anniversary on September 16, 2015 at 10:00 A.M. The Group began in September, 1978 as an open discussion meeting at Mather Hospital. The group met at Mather for over 30 years until the hospital could no longer offer the group a room on Wednesday mornings. The search for a new home was on!

The group then secured a new meeting place at The Catch restaurant. It had been described as resembling an old schooner with planks and a nautical motif, fitting for a building located a stone's throw away from Port Jefferson Harbor. The group used the back room where the Sunday Brunch was offered, located behind a huge wooden sliding door. The door was difficult to open at times, and members joked that the door was as stubborn as defiant alcoholics! In December of 2010, the two year lease on the building was up and The Catch would be closing. The Gratitude Group found a new meeting place, at its current home, the Pax Christi Hospitality Center. Pax Christi provides hot meals and advocacy services for the homeless, as well as emergency shelter for men. A few of our attendees learned of the Gratitude meeting when they were homeless and sleeping in the back half of our meeting room.

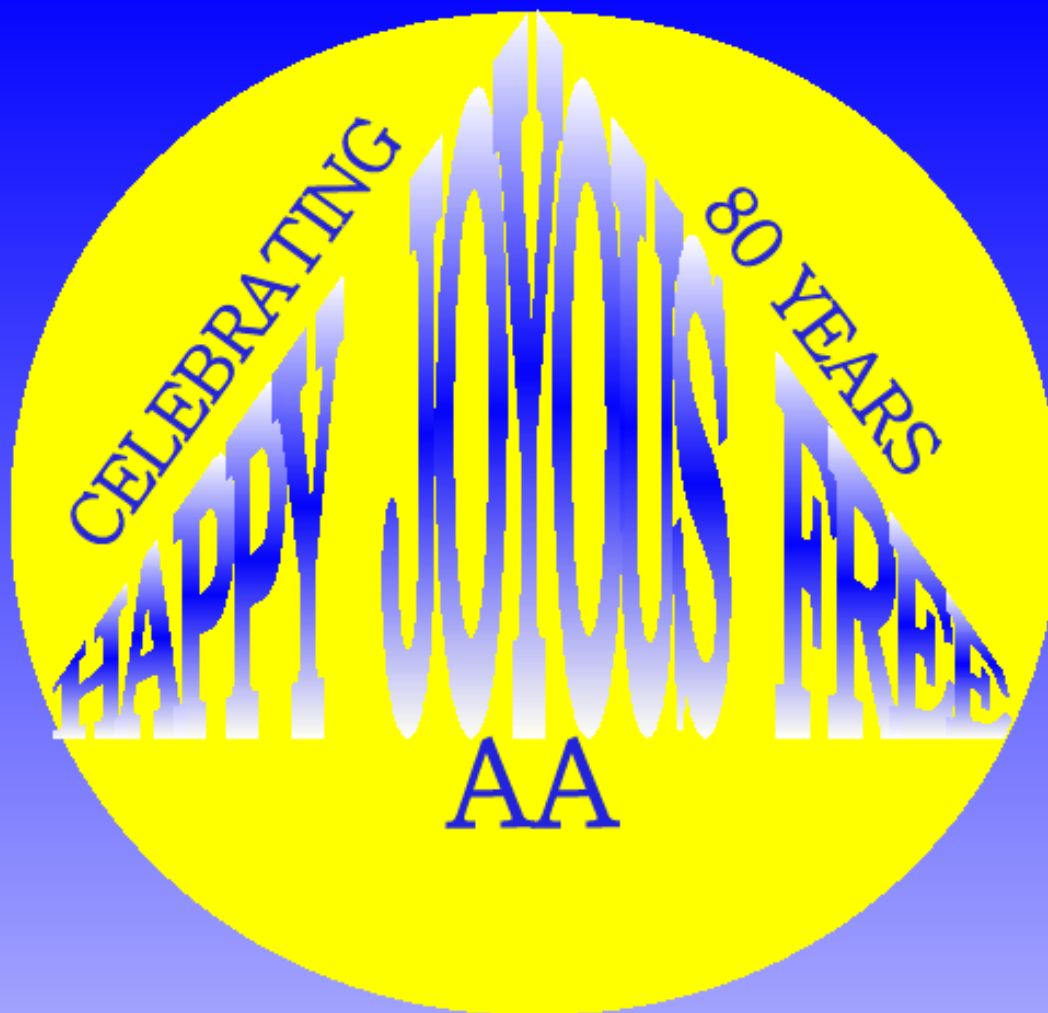
Our theme is gratitude, we share our experience, strength and hope with each other, as well as our gratitude and our experience of the solution offered by the 12 step program of Alcoholics Anonymous. Gratitude is a huge part of living a happy and contented life. For a newcomer, it is hard to feel grateful when the consequences of our drinking can cause every day, and sometimes every moment, to be a huge struggle. However, those of us with much gratitude are able to explain and share how even the simplest things in life can be considered great joy, and demonstrate how gratitude creates a level of serenity that survives all of life's surprises, both the good and the bad. We are truly blessed.

*(Does your group have a history? Contact the Archives.)*

**IT'S TIME TO CONFIRM YOUR GROUP'S MEETING SCHEDULE WITH THE INTERGROUP OFFICE. DON'T GET DROPPED FROM THE MEETING LIST.**

**CONFIRM NOW!**





**Suffolk County Intergroup Association**

## **Share-a-thon**

**Celebrating 80 Years of AA**

**Sunday, October 11 2015 9am – 4pm**

**St Joseph's College Patchogue NY**



- Lunch available for purchase (less than \$10)
- No smoking will be strictly enforced at the request of the College
- Volunteers needed: Please call the SIA Office at 631-654-1150 and leave your name and contact information (phone, email) or email [share@suffolkny-aa.org](mailto:share@suffolkny-aa.org)