



BULLETIN

Visit your Suffolk County AA Website at: <http://www.suffolkny-aa.org>



The Archives Big Book

In 2004, Bruce G. of Mount Sinai was the guest speaker at the Stony Brook Unity group anniversary. Afterwards, he donated an early copy Alcoholics Anonymous book to Suffolk Intergroup. Over the years, Bruce had asked certain people to sign that book. This seemed like such a great idea, the Archives Committee decided to continue the practice. It made no sense to lock the book away in a file cabinet. Why not make it a tradition. Since Suffolk Intergroup had celebrated its 30th Anniversary the year before, what a wonderful way to honor both SIA and this historic book. All Suffolk AAs with thirty or more years are invited to sign.

495 signatures later, our book is slowly filling up. Each written name carries with it a story of some kind. There is the story of the woman who met us down at the Intergroup office and after she signed it began to sob---tears of joy. She bubbled over with love for our fellowship. Early on, a group of AAs from Greenlawn and Huntington travelled as a group to sign it. There were seven of them in all. Another time, several from Free at Last in East Northport, who came into the rooms around the same time, insisted that they wouldn't sign the book until the newest of them reached the thirty year mark. When he did, they all signed. There was Fran from Bay Shore, who so wanted to sign the book. Fran ended up in a nursing home and the book was brought to her to sign. A week later she passed away.

As I thumb through the Book every now and then, I see the names of Bill T. and Ranny R., both of Kings Park, Slim, Kurt, Ted. Ollie the postman, So many, many more who are no longer with us -- yet they will always be thanks to this book and our great memories of them.. Their signatures are a reminder of their legacy, the lives they touched and the program of recovery they shared with those who came after. If you have thirty years, why not join the others. The book is available each month at the SIA monthly meeting. It can be found at the One and Only meeting in Smithtown each Saturday afternoon at 3:15 or the Share-a-thon and Unity Breakfast. You are already a big part of our history, just add your signature. — Archives Bob



"Let's Go Thank the Speaker"

Way back when, a much younger version of me was introduced to the art of thanking the speaker. There wasn't much training involved: at the end of one meeting my sponsor said to me, "Let's go thank the speaker." We got on line behind others who planned to do the same thing and when his turn came, my sponsor reached out and shook the speaker's hand. There was some talk, probably a "thanks for sharing" thrown in and then it was my turn. As an impressionable, eager to learn novice, I mimicked everything my sponsor did. Out went my hand and the speaker followed suit. Our hands joined together, went up and down in unison and then came apart.

At that moment I was taught that this simple act is one of the unifying rituals of Alcoholics Anonymous. Simultaneously it is both an act of humility as well as one of gratitude. If I am out of sorts, it is guaranteed for a moment or so to get me out of myself. It helps me bond with a fellow alcoholic. If the speaker was less than spellbinding, it helps me learn tolerance. Then I can look beyond the surface and learn to see a bigger picture. Maybe learn to be less selfish. That the content of one's drunk-a-log may not be as important as the very act of sharing it in front of a roomful of others. That takes courage and sacrifice—two commodities so in short supply these days.

Finally it brings back great memories of my first sponsor, now deceased, who taught me many things in A.A. I have tried to follow his example. Many times over the years, I have taken a newcomer under my wings and said "Let's go thank the speaker." I can thank my sponsor for that.

Bob R.

The One and Only

Smithtown

THIS BULLETIN NEEDS YOUR HELP!

We need YOUR participation!

Please help and send in

- your articles!
- your experiences!
- your announcements!
- your comments!
- your artwork, poems, photos, etc.!

Send to Brian at:

bulletins@suffolkny-aa.org

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WHERE HAVE ALL THE OPEN MEETINGS GONE ?

I have noticed over the time I have been in AA, now 27+ years, that there seems to have been a decline in the number of purely "open" meetings. These are meetings that welcome anyone and serve to reach out to the community at large to let them know there is a group in the area which seeks to bring recovery to those who may be suffering from alcoholism. At my last, admittedly rough, calculation, Suffolk County AA has approximately 250 groups that meet an average of three times per week for a total of 750 meetings per week of which 34 are listed as "open". This is less than 5%. I find this unacceptably low. And it is not just a Suffolk County trend, Nassau has 55 of 680 meetings as "open", a slightly higher percentage, but not high enough in my view. Some of my AA friends in other states report similar percentages: usually under 10 %.

Why has this decline occurred? Several factors, I believe: The increase in other types of meetings, Closed Discussion, Step, Big Book, Beginners, etc., which are all good and all necessary. Too, some may feel that their group's anniversary meetings are "open" and that fulfills the need for an "open" meeting.

However, those meetings are not "open" in the traditional AA format that "open" meetings have used, and they are usually not done on a weekly basis which is listed to the public as one where anyone, alcoholic or non-alcoholic, is welcome to attend. How can we reach more suffering alcoholics if we don't have a big "OPEN" sign on our door?

The big reason that I think "open" meetings are disappearing is that most of us would rather talk than listen, and isn't that a fundamental problem for people of all types? The thought of sitting at a meeting and not getting to "share" has become unthinkable, apparently, but sometimes I find it more beneficial to hear one story for 30 minutes, rather than ten shares of 3 minutes each. So we have mostly closed discussion type meetings and we don't get to hear the old AA "qualification" or what some would call a "drunk-a-log" that helped many new prospects questioning their alcoholic tendency find points of identification. I like the "open" meeting concept. New people are under no pressure to "share" anything but their time and attention. They can sit and listen, as can we all, and be a receiver for the message of experience, strength and hope.

Brian O., Grateful Member

ONE PERSON'S OPINION REGARDING STEP FIVE

Admitted to God, to ourselves, and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs.

When I refuse to come face to face with my past I cannot enjoy the present moment. My world is often colored by my thoughts of yesterday.

False pride can be turned into humility. Jealousy can become tolerance and confidence. Procrastination can be transmuted into diligence. Materialism can give way to generosity and spirituality. (Incidentally, it's been said that a materialist is someone who knows the cost of everything and the value of nothing.) Untruthfulness can become honesty. Anger, which eats at our souls, can be made into patience and understanding. Fear can be overcome, resulting in courage and fortitude.

The Delphic Oracle advised, "Know yourself." We could paraphrase this slightly by suggesting, "Make yourself known and you will then know yourself." Refusing to share with another results in isolation, which results in pain and can then result in drunkenness.

There are people in my life today who know me right down to my socks. Ego might suggest that this would enslave me to these people but precisely the opposite was the result. I've never been freer in my life. I've found that I cannot adequately live in the present nor effectively face the future if my thoughts are buried in the past. We hold the keys to our own jail cells.

My profession in life was firefighting and William Randolph Hearst referred to firefighting as the "most hazardous peacetime occupation pursued by man." In looking back to my drinking days, my attitude seems to have been that since I could take a physical risk this somehow justified the fact that I had never taken an emotional risk in my life.

English poet and dramatist W. H. Auden poignantly said, "*We'd rather be ruined than change. We'd rather die in our dread than climb the cross of the moment and let our illusions die.*"

Take the risk. Climb the cross of the moment. Do a Fourth Step inventory and then share with God and with another human being. **Freedom awaits.**

It's not the burden we carry that does us in; it's our unwillingness to share the burden.

Ed H.

Notice: SUBMISSION DUE DATE for June's Bulletin is May 20TH!

Send your submissions to Brian at: bulletins@suffolkny-aa.org



WORTH REPEATING: Intergroup Web Services

The following information was first printed in the April Bulletin. The future importance of this information to your group cannot be overstated. Please cut this page out of the Bulletin and save it. Discuss this information with your group. Make it a part of your group's records.

YOUR GROUP EMAIL ADDRESS

All groups have an email address thru SIA website. The ONE AND ONLY way to activate it is to send an email to WEBSUP@SUFFOLKNY-AA.ORG requesting the address and password. Please, only one request per group and expect for it to take about one week. If your group wants to participate in the online exchange you WILL need an Intergroup email address. While every group is autonomous, we have provided below some common sense guidelines to assist you. We will be sending info to all groups at their email address, including treasurer's report, meeting minutes, committee updates, special events, etc. Your group will be able to update meeting info, hotline list info, as well as share anniversaries and other group activities that you want to share. This can become a very effective way to communicate in a timely fashion: no more waiting for snail mail.

GROUP EMAIL GUIDELINES

All emails should be AA related. At least two group members should have the address and password. The password should also be recorded by the group secretary. It is recommended that your SIA rep have the address and password. Use your group email as a point of contact for any events that your group wants posted on the SIA website as personal contact information cannot be posted on the SIA website. Use caution when sharing any personal information and use the same caution if you receive any. Think before you forward any message that has any info such as phone numbers: make sure that the sender is ok with it.

THINGS YOU CAN DO WITH YOUR GROUP ADDRESS

Participate in the online speaker exchange. Share anniversaries and info with groups in your area. Receive the bulletin and other information from Intergroup officers and chairpersons. Reach out for information. Update your meeting list information.

ONLINE EXCHANGE

On Monday, February 27 the first online speaker exchange went live, with over 20 groups participating. This exchange is intended to give groups more options to get both incoming and outgoing speaking commitments. It is our hope that all areas of Suffolk County, especially the North and South forks, will be able to better serve their group needs with this easy to use and anonymous system. As of March 12th over 30 groups are involved and we expect that number to rise. Based on a free service provided at Signup.com and communicated thru your group email address at the SIA website, this exchange provides complete anonymity in the online world. The first step toward participation is to obtain a group email address at the SIA website. Use that address to send an email to ONLINESPEAKEREXCHANGE@SUFFOLKNY-AA.ORG requesting more information.

Tommy M., Alternate Chair

Group History

ORIGINAL DEER PARK BIG BOOK GROUP

Ascension Lutheran Church

33 Bay Shore Road

Deer Park



The Deer Park Group began on October 31, 1967 after members of the Wyandanch group disagreed on a change of meeting times, either 8:00PM to 7:30PM or vice versa. It is not certain which faction packed up and left but the Deer Park group started with a resentment and a coffee pot. It met at the Ascension Lutheran Church in Deer Park. The founding members were Agnes M., Al B., Don D., John B. and Wally Z. The names came from Joe S.

and Frank C. both members of the Wyandanch group when the split happened. Meetings were on Tuesday, Thursday and Friday. Tuesday was a step meeting in the kitchen and a large closed discussion in the adjoining gym. Thursday had a Big Book meeting in the kitchen and a closed meeting in the gym. Friday was for beginners followed by an open meeting. Once a month the open meeting celebrated anniversaries. It was a large group. Business meetings usually brought fifty members. One of the memorable members was called Popeye who was known for saying, "A.A. is the greatest thing ever invented by God or man."

One day the church announced a building project that required the group to temporarily move. Our new home became the Disabled American Veterans (DAV) building at the Phelps Lane pool complex in North Babylon. This fragmented the group immediately. The core members remained but the DAV building could not physically contain everyone and some drifted off. There was a long, concrete handicapped ramp with steel railings leading to the entrance where people congregated. Many newcomers never made it past this gauntlet having gotten trapped in conversations and missed the meeting. This became known as the 'Ramp Group.' Shortly before the return to Ascension Lutheran the group voted to stop carrying non AA literature which caused another splinter. George H. and Jerry armed with a new resentment and a coffee pot stayed in the DAV building and the North Babylon Just for Today Group was born.

Finally, after a number of years and much anticipation the group went home to Ascension Lutheran. It was anticlimactic and did not feel like home anymore. The church wound up building a new structure behind the church and subdividing the gym where we had met before. We no longer had use of the kitchen, but had a Murphy kitchen in the back corner of the meeting room. There were individual closets for the various groups that used the space to store supplies. It was a big enough room to hold the remaining members. It was clean, bright with wainscoted paneling and a hung ceiling with ample fluorescent lighting. Older members said it was great to be back but something was different. Many of our members joined while we were at the DAV so they had no connection to the old place except that they heard the older ones talking about returning home.

Dennis M. 2004 SIA Archives Committee

(NOTE - The Original Deer Park Big Book Group closed in December 2016. On March 4, 2017, the Peace of Mind Group held its first meeting at the same location, the same days, the same times.)

The Archives Committee is always looking for volunteers to help save our Alcoholics Anonymous history.
Contact the SIA Office at 654-1150.



June's Business Meetings

> Public Information Committee:

3RD TUESDAY OF MONTH

Tues. 6/20/17 **7:00 PM**

*SIA Office, 113-8 Bay Ave.
Patchogue*

> SIA Business Meeting:

1st TUESDAY OF MONTH

Tues. 6/6/17 **8:00pm**

*True North Community Church
Lakeland Ave.*

Bohemia

>7:00 PM Archives Committee meeting

>7:00 PM New Group Rep Orientation

>7:00 PM Share-a-Thon

> SIA Officers & Chairs:

LAST TUESDAY OF MONTH

Tues. 6/27/17 **7:00 PM**

*SIA Office, 113-8 Bay Ave.
Patchogue*

> Suffolk General Service:

3RD FRIDAY OF EVERY MONTH

Fri. 6/16/17 **8:00 PM**

>7:00 PM General Service new Rep meeting

*True North Community Church
Lakeland Ave.*

Bohemia

>Treatment Facilities Committee:

3RD TUESDAY OF MONTH

Tues. 6/20/17 **7:00 PM**

*SIA Office, 113-8 Bay Ave.
Patchogue*

>Big Meeting Committee:

3RD THURSDAY OF MONTH

Thurs. 6/15/17 **7:00 PM**

*SIA Office, 113-8 Bay Ave.
Patchogue*

Contact your Intergroup chairs!

Chair- Kevin chairman@suffolkny-aa.org

Alt Chair- Tom alt-chair@suffolkny-aa.org

Treasurer- Wayne treasurer@suffolkny-aa.org

Corr. Sec.- Dawn corsec@suffolkny-aa.org

Recording Sec.- Tara recsec@suffolkny-aa.org

Answering Service- Ron phones@suffolkny-aa.org

Archives- Bob archives@suffolkny-aa.org

Big Meeting - Jean Marie ... siaoffice@suffolkny-aa.org

Bulletin- Brian bulletins@suffolkny-aa.org

Corrections- Lee correct@suffolkny-aa.org

Grapevine- Lee grapevine@suffolkny-aa.org

Literature- Laurie books@suffolkny-aa.org

Meeting List- Brodey ...meetings@suffolkny-aa.org

Public Information- Jack pubinfo@suffolkny-aa.org

SIA Office Manager- Cheryl.siaoffice@suffolkny-aa.org

Schools—Jack schools@suffolkny-aa.org

Share A Thon- Rob share@suffolkny-aa.org

Special Events- Patrickspecevent@suffolkny-aa.org

Third Legacy OPEN!... thirdleg@suffolkny-aa.org

Treatment Facilities Jackie. ... treatment@suffolkny-aa.org

Webmaster- Troy..... websup@suffolkny-aa.org

See what it's about!

A THIRD LEGACY Chair is needed!

PLEASE HELP!

email:

chairman@suffolkny-aa.org

*****ANNOUNCEMENTS*****

THIS BULLETIN IS LOOKING FOR A NEW LAYOUT ARTIST/EDITOR!

TRAINING AND SOFTWARE PROVIDED

PLEASE CONTACT BRIAN AT bulletins@suffolkny-aa.org

NEED HELP...

I finished all 12 Steps with my Sponsor. I read, raise my hand, took the Speaker Exchange commitment for my group and for that, I am responsible. I actually want to do the right thing ...
... Suffolk County Community College has asked AA to begin our Speaker Exchange at 8:00 AM. In December, except for two cars, the lot had been emptied out at 8:00AM! I was disappointed, by being on time. In March I was disappointed again. Yes, I belong to the Online Speaker Exchange and use it, but I need to fill in my vacant spots which the website exchange did not fill. I am asking you to reach out your hand to another alcoholic (me) by being there at 8:00 AM on Saturday, June 10. Thanks, Rick

We need your old books you're not using!

Treatment facilities committee looking for AA members to donate any AA approved books for treatment facilities. You can drop them off at the SIA office at 113-8 Bay Ave., Patchogue Mon-Fri 9-3pm and Sat 9-1pm OR contact Jackie at:

treatment@suffolkny-aa.org



7 PM SATURDAY MAY 29TH

ROCK IN THE MEMORIAL DAY WEEK-END

WITH REBOS AT THE MOUNT SINAI

CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

233 NORTH COUNTRY ROAD

MOUNT SINAI NY 11766

CLASSIC ROCK AND ORIGINALS

POT LUCK PARTY

MORE INFO

SPECEVENT@SUFFOLKNY-AA.ORG

42nd Annual SIA Share-A-Thon

What is the Share-A-Thon?

The Share-a-Thon is a free open single day event that takes months of working together to plan. During the day, over 60 workshops created by groups across Suffolk County, with various topics are available to attend. Breakfast and lunch crews keep everyone fueled up while information tables are open for everything AA has to offer in service. The day is topped off in the auditorium with a new "best home group" competition! Then our sobriety countdown and spiritual speakers from AA and Al-Anon. As you can imagine help is needed at all different levels and times of the day, so sign up and be part of a wonderful event! Any questions, please email us at: Share@suffolkny-aa.org



DAMNABLE NEED TO BE RIGHT

*This is the grave of Michael O'Day who died maintaining his right of way.
His right was clear and his will was strong but he's just as dead as if he'd been wrong.
Anonymous*

For a good portion of my life, I seem to have been plagued with the need to be right. In light of some clearer thinking I see now that it was a simple case whereby my attitude was in need of adjustment and I had been failing to make the adjustment.

The notion that it was my duty to set the world right was egomaniacal. My insistence at having my own way has plagued me for a significant portion of my life. I was very much like the proverbial bull in the china shop when I was determined that I knew what was right for other people.

It was foolish of me to insist I was right all the time. An old saying suggests even a fool is right once in a while. For all I know it may be the other fool's turn to be right and not mine. I do a very healthy thing for myself when I let go of my need to be right.

One secret to gaining contentment is to not contribute to an argument. An amazing thing happens when I decide not to contribute to it – the argument gets shorter. Every human being I encounter has as much right as I have to be on this planet and every blessed one of us has the right to sometimes be wrong.

I must confess that my need to be right seems to have been inversely proportional to my age. The old timer who is writing this has mellowed quite a bit as of late (although my wife may very well disagree). At this time of my life I can sense when a discussion is getting heated and right smack in the middle of it I can pause long enough to think, "How important is this?" It is much easier on my system to simply curb this damnable need to be right.

It must have been a sage who suggested that we must not take ourselves too seriously. I don't have to live up to anyone's expectations, not even my own. Before dropping off to sleep at night I sometimes remember to think, "I forgive anyone and everyone who has ever harmed me at any time, in any manner, under any circumstances, in this lifetime or in any other." This improves my sleep pattern. A philosophical question seems to be: "Would you rather be right or happy?" Ideally I might answer, "Let others be right; if I forgive I sleep better." I do not always put this into practice, however. **Ed H.**