

# Bulletin

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



*It's a beautiful  
season to be sober*



Just for today, I will not worry

Just for today, I will not be angry

Just for today, I will give thanks for my many  
blessings

Just for today, I will do my work honestly

Just for today, I will be kind to every living thing

## ORIGIN OF THE SERENITY PRAYER

God, give us grace to accept with  
serenity the things that cannot be  
changed, courage to change the things  
which should be changed, and the  
wisdom to distinguish the one from  
the other.

The words above were written by  
theologian Dr. Reinhold Niebuhr in  
1934 as part of a service in the  
Congregational church of Heath,  
Massachusetts.

Dr. Niebuhr's authorship was  
acknowledged in the January 1950  
issue of Grapevine. The original words  
of the prayer were modified in AA and  
have become the most well known  
version.



## New Meetings and Groups

The Brentwood Ladies Group  
will be adding a  
Women's Beginner's Meeting  
Starting Sunday, April 7th  
at 5:00 PM

New group called Connect the Dots  
First meeting Monday May 6 at 7:00pm Christ  
Church 176 McGraw St., Shirley

## June Business Meetings

FIRST TUESDAY OF THE MONTH  
Tues. 6/4/19

SIA Business Meeting: 8:00 PM  
Archives Committee meeting: 7:00 PM  
New Group Rep Orientation: 7:00 PM

True North Community Church  
1101 Lakeland Ave. Bohemia

Public Information Committee:  
THIRD WEDNESDAY OF MONTH  
Wed. 6/19/19 7:00 PM  
SIA Office, 113-8 Bay Ave. Patchogue

SIA Officers & Chairs:  
LAST TUESDAY OF MONTH  
Tues. 6/25/19 7:00 PM  
SIA Office, 113-8 Bay Ave. Patchogue

Treatment Facilities Committee:  
THIRD TUESDAY OF MONTH  
Tues. 5/21/19 7:00 PM SIA Office, 113-8 Bay  
Ave. Patchogue

Suffolk General Service:  
THIRD FRIDAY OF MONTH  
Fri. 6/21/19 8:00 PM  
New GSR Orientation: 7:00 PM  
True North Community Church  
1101 Lakeland Ave. Bohemia

## The Email Addresses of your Intergroup Chairs

Chair - Tom ....chairman@suffolkny-aa.org  
Alt Chair - Jean Marie ....  
alt-chair@suffolkny-aa.org  
Treasurer - Lee....treasurer@suffolkny-aa.org  
Corr. Sec. - Zoe corsec@suffolkny-aa.org  
Recording Sec.  
Christy....recsec@suffolkny-aa.org  
Answering Service....phones@suffolkny-aa.org  
Archives - Jack....archives@suffolkny-aa.org  
Bulletin - Fran....bulletins@suffolkny-aa.org  
Corrections - Mary....correct@suffolkny-aa.org  
Grapevine-  
Ruthanne....grapevine@suffolkny-aa.org  
Hot Line - Benny.....phones@suffolkny-aa.org  
Institutions - Carolyn  
...institutions@suffolkny-aa.org  
Literature - Corey....books@suffolkny-aa.org  
Meeting List -  
VACANT....meetings@suffolkny-aa.org  
Public Info - Christie ..  
pubinfo@suffolkny-aa.org  
Office Manager -  
Michael....siaoffice@suffolkny-aa.org  
Schools - Mike... schools@suffolkny-aa.org  
Share A Thon Mary.... share@suffolkny-aa.org  
Special Events - Nick....  
specevent@suffolkny-aa.org  
Third Legacy - Dawn....  
thirdleg@suffolkny-aa.org  
Webmaster - Steven websup@suffolkny-aa.org

## Institutions and Treatment Facilities Open Commitments

ST. CHARLES REHAB UNIT PORT JEFF - WOMAN  
SUNDAYS @ 10:00 am

ST. CHARLES REHAB UNIT PORT JEFF - MEN

PHOENIX HOUSE (WAINSCOTT) MEN  
1ST, 3RD & 5TH SUNDAY OF MONTH @ 7:00 pm  
PHOENIX HOUSE (RONKONOKA)  
3rd & 5th WEDNESDAY OF MONTH @ 7:00 pm

CATHOLIC CHARITIES (COMMACK) Speakers  
2nd & 5th MONDAY @ 11:00 am

PILGRIM STATE MENTAL FACILITY  
(BRENTWOOD)  
3rd MONDAY OF MONTH @ 6:30 pm  
2nd and 3rd WEDNESDAY OF MONTH @ 6:30 pm

NEXT MEETING SIA OFFICE April 16th 7-8 pm  
SIA Office in Patchogue

INSTITUTIONS@SUFFOLKNY-AA.ORG  
Carolyn

**The Suffolk  
Intergroup Bulletin  
Invites you to share your  
experience, strength and hope in  
the bulletin.**

**Sharing our stories is an essential  
part of what keeps us sober. Share  
yours here in the bulletin where  
it will reach alcoholics  
throughout Suffolk County.**

Send to Fran at:

bulletins@suffolkny-aa.org  
The deadline for the June issue is May 20th.

## Corrections Committee Call for Volunteers

*"Practical experience shows that nothing  
will so much insure immunity from  
drinking as intensive work with other  
alcoholics. It works when other activities  
fail. ...You can help when no one else can."*

### Alcoholics Anonymous, page 181

The purpose of a corrections committee is to  
coordinate the work of individual A.A.  
members and groups who are interested in  
carrying our message of recovery to  
incarcerated alcoholics. Bringing meetings  
and literature into facilities, raising  
awareness of the Corrections  
Correspondence Service (C.C.S.) among  
"inside" and "outside" A.A. members, and  
helping inmates transition to a local A.A.  
Community through pre-release contacts are  
just some of the activities corrections  
committees support.

## Around the AA Campus

Dr. Bob and the Good Old Timers (Thursday  
7:00 P.M. Lake Ronkonkoma) has a new  
name: Bag of Beans. Stop by and visit

Peace of Mind in Deer Park has streamlined  
its schedule. From now on, they will only be  
meeting on Saturday at 7:30 P.M. Their  
Tuesday and Thursday meetings have been  
discontinued.

Brentwood Ladies has added a Sunday 5:00  
P.M. beginners meeting to its lineup.

The Freedom to Live Group in Smithtown  
celebrated its 6th anniversary in April.

Heard at a meeting: "A.A. is simplicity  
wrapped in mystery."

Last but not least. On May 12, 1935, Dr. Bob  
and Bill W. met for the first time. Makes  
you wonder where would be all be today if  
that hadn't happened.

# The Suffolk Intergroup Bulletin



## **Northport Trinity Group Trinity Episcopal Church 130 Main St., Northport**

In 1956, the first idea for an A.A. group in East Northport came from a member of the Wyandanch group who had been sober for two years. After consulting with Clint F. of Greenlawn, an A.A. elder, who explained that an unequivocal commitment by at least one person was necessary to ensure the success of a new group, no one was ready to make the commitment.

Three years later, in 1959, seven members from three groups - Huntington, Wyandanch, and Kings Park - met at the home of the Wyandanch member who now had five years of sobriety. All the members committed to do whatever it took to successfully carry the A.A. Message to the alcoholics in Northport, East Northport and vicinity.

Since the first meeting place was the Jewish Center, a store front in East Northport, it was called the East Northport Group of A.A. Six months into our stay at the store front a minority of the Center's members, who didn't want us in the first place, began booking social events on the groups meeting nights so a move was in order. We found temporary quarters in a barn owned by the Salvation Army. It was temporary because there weren't any toilet facilities on or near the premises and the group had grown from 7 to 25 members in less than one year. Therefore, finding a new location was critical.

A doctor friend of A.A. told us he would allow the group to use the basement of his new professional building provided they clean it up and install proper lighting. That was done and all went well until the Group's 1st Anniversary meeting which, eventually, caused the group to be dispossessed. The meeting drew so many people that cars were parked all over the residential area. The local citizens raised a fuss, and the Group had to vacate due to zoning laws limiting the use of the building to professionals.

A new home was found in the basement of the First Presbyterian Church of Northport so the "East" was dropped from the group's name. The group enjoyed a dozen or more years there until the group outgrew the limited space and once again had to move. Fortunately, the pastor of Trinity Episcopal Church on Main St. in the heart of Northport welcomed us, as well as Alanon, Alateen, and a newly formed Men's A.A. group. Many other A.A. groups in the area were started by alcoholics who found sobriety in the Northport group.

Perhaps the group's claim to anonymous fame is three members: 1) Clint F. who not only worked on Wall St. with Bill W., but also drank (excessively) with A.A.'s co-founder, 2) Jim S. who spoke for Bill W. at Bills Anniversary Dinner at the Astor Hotel in 1967, and 3) Joe C. who was one of three speakers at the Anniversary Dinner in 1990-91 at the NY Hilton.

The Northport Group has always been a "Step" group and consequently, has many members with long-term sobriety. Some who got sober in Northport are scattered around the country in California, Utah, Georgia, Florida, etc., but still keep in touch with the group.

S.I.A. Archives Committee – 2004

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

Contact the SIA Office at 654-1150.

## The Evolution of a Higher Power

Bill Wilson wrote the Twelve Steps in December 1938 in the space of one night. Bill reports, “I was greatly pleased with what I had written”<sup>1</sup>, and he was unprepared for the response he got when he read his steps to the young New York group. “The ‘liberals’ were appalled and said so.”<sup>2</sup> The ‘radicals,’ led by Hank P. and Jim B., pressed their concerns that there was ‘too much God’ in the Twelve Steps. The Christian “conservatives” loved it all, exactly as written.

The radicals and the liberals feared the aggressive evangelism would be off-putting for drunks. Dr. James Wainright Howard, who Bill credits with changing the “you musts” to “we oughts”,<sup>3</sup> declared the preachy nature of the manuscript to be “pure Oxford Group”. The evidence of experience was brought to bear: “Alcoholics who had tried the missions were forever complaining of this very thing.

The alcoholics’ unreasoning resistance against the specifically religious approach had severely handicapped the missions.”<sup>4</sup>

Bill resisted at first, but eventually conceded. The phrase ‘God as we understand Him’ was suggested by Jim B. “Weasel wording the ‘God stuff’ made it possible for people of widely varying beliefs – even nonbelievers – to embrace AA’s process of spiritual transformation.”<sup>5</sup> “At the center of the battle was the truculent and unapologetic atheist, Jim Burwell. Many years later, Susan Cheever, in a piece for The Fix, “The Angry Atheist Who Made AA Great,” wrote of her title character – “Without this nonbeliever, AA would never have thrived”. (The Fix, July 13, 2013)”<sup>6</sup>

There were others in the “radical” camp, albeit somewhat less militant. “There were agnostics in the Tuesday night group, and several hardcore atheists. These men essentially accepted the “strength of the group” as a higher power. Years later, Bill Wilson was obliged to acknowledge that the troublesome heathen horde had ‘widened the gateway’.<sup>7</sup> There are those who would argue that had every “God” reference” in AA’s literature been changed to a “higher power,” the gateway would be far wider still.

Burwell’s influence on Alcoholics Anonymous has been profound. As the world has become increasingly secular a more Christian AA would be unpalatable to a huge percentage of the current membership. For comparison, judge the relative success of Alcoholics Anonymous against the success of its purely Christian off-shoot Alcoholics Victorious, which was formed in 1948. It is not only the atheists of today’s AA who owe thanks to this stubborn advocate of “freethinking”.

Brian C.

Next month: The truth about Tradition Three.

1 “AA Comes of Age”, p.162

2 “Bill W.” Robert Thomsen, p. 263

3 “AA Comes of Age”, pp.167-168

4 “AA Comes of Age”, p. 163

5 “Bill W.”, Francis Hartigan, p. 124

6 “AA Agnostica: Key players in AA History – Jim Burwell”, Bob K.

7 “Bill W.”, Robert Thomsen, p. 230

The struggle ends  
When gratitude begins

## GRATEFUL HARRY

"When our perils are past, shall our gratitude sleep?"

George Canning was a British Tory statesman who lived in the 1800s but his words have as much meaning to me today as when he may have originally spoken or written them.

In my early sobriety I often met up with someone whom I sarcastically tagged with the epithet "Grateful Harry." He constantly spoke about gratitude and I hated the guy, probably because I wasn't feeling any gratitude and, in fact, I didn't even know what gratitude was.

One particular night I was working in a very busy firehouse in the Bronx; a night tour was from six o'clock at night until 9:00 a.m. the next morning.

This particular night tour turned out to be the busiest one I had experienced in my entire thirty-three year career. We could barely catch our breath and we couldn't stop long enough to have a cup of coffee. At 9:00 a.m. the next morning, I dragged myself to the Long Island railroad and I couldn't wait to arrive at my stop in Brentwood.

All I could do was lean my head against the window of the train and pray for my stop to come.

Finally arriving at Brentwood, I wearily disembarked and trudged my way to the stairway. At that moment I felt a human hand slap down on my shoulder and a male voice behind me said, "Hang in there, Buddy." I turned around and who

From that instant I immediately saw "Harry" in a different light. I recall thinking, "If Grateful Harry could take the time to encourage me to hang on, well then, Grateful Harry must be an okay guy."

And I did, in truth, learn something about gratitude. I know today that gratitude is more than just a feeling; gratitude is an action word. People who step up to fill the vacancies on the various committees in AA, such as making coffee, cleaning up after meetings, chairing meetings, taking speaking commitments, etc. – in short – people that do what must be done to keep a group actively ongoing – those people are demonstrating gratitude far more eloquently than it can be expressed in words.

There's an ancient story of a little boy who was very angry at his parents and he ran from the house screaming, "I hate you, I hate you." He returned immediately – visibly shaken and he told his parents that someone in the forest was yelling to him, "I hate you." His parents took him outside and told him to yell the words, "I love you" and this was precisely the echo that was returned to him.

Perhaps life is somewhat of an echo – we get back from the world what we send out to the world.

I've adopted a new slogan for myself – "Love life and it will love you back." Ed. H

gratitude  
changes  
everything

## Sobriety's Pantoum

The crackling ice betrayed fragility,  
every night began with a new bottle.  
Every evening had endless possibility,  
leading to the same debacle.

Every night began with a new bottle.  
I still hear the promise of its broken seal,  
leading to the same debacle;  
black eyes; empty pockets; dead deals.

I still hear the promise of its broken seal,  
fooling myself it would cause no harm.  
Black eyes; empty pockets; dead deals;  
such are the products of its deadly charm.

Fooling myself it would cause no harm,  
the rent transformed into shots and beer.  
Such are the products of its deadly charm.  
Tall tales mask tomorrow's fear.

The rent transformed into shots and beer.  
Smelling of piss, stumbling in the dark.  
Tall tales mask tomorrow's fear.  
This bench is good as any in this park.

Smelling of piss, stumbling in the dark,  
Distant dreams of what I thought I'd be.  
This bench is good as any in this park.  
Day breaks cold, forcing one good eye to see.

Distant dreams of what I thought I'd be.  
Coffee percolates, warming cellar rooms.  
Day breaks cold, forcing one good eye to see.  
When all have spoken, we sweep up with a broom.

Coffee percolates, warming cellar rooms,  
one by one they tell me my own tale.  
When all have spoken, we sweep up with a broom.  
Counting days is an easy test to fail.

One by one they tell me my own tale.  
My family think it strange that I won't drink.  
Counting days is an easy test to fail.  
I want to more than they could ever think.

One by one they tell me my own tale.  
My family think it strange that I won't drink.  
Counting days is an easy test to fail.  
I want to more than they could ever think.

My family think it strange that I won't drink;  
as I battle sweat, sleepless fear and shame.  
I want to more than they could ever think.  
If I pick up again I'll have myself to blame.

As I battle sweat, sleepless fear and shame,  
morning shows up right on time.  
If I pick up again I'll have myself to blame,  
each dawn eases the steady climb.

Morning shows up right on time.  
The ice pick no longer stabbing at my brain.  
Each dawn eases the steady climb.  
My skin begins to feel like mine again.

The ice pick no longer stabbing at my brain.  
Salt air and laughter, the newest drugs I've tried.  
My skin begins to feel like mine again,  
as returns stability and pride.

Salt air and laughter, the newest drugs I've tried.  
But I cannot run through each revealing step.  
As returns some stability and pride,  
strengthened as I learn truths I must accept.

But I cannot run through each revealing step.  
Steady forward one step at a time,  
strengthened as I learn truths I must accept.  
There is no such thing as a victimless crime.

Steady forward one step at a time,  
humbled by temptations ever lurking.  
There is no such thing as a victimless crime.  
So I focus on the program I am working.

Humbled by temptations ever lurking,  
the crackling betrays fragility.  
So I focus on the program I am working,  
every evening has endless possibility.  
Chris C.  
New Soil

## 2019 Northeast Regional Forum

**May 31 - June 2, 2019**

**For more information go to:**

[https://www.aa.org/assets/en\\_US/en\\_NE\\_informationflyer\\_2019.pdf](https://www.aa.org/assets/en_US/en_NE_informationflyer_2019.pdf)

2019 Northeast Regional Forum  
**Registration opens Monday, April 1, 2019**

To receive email notification when registration is open:

- **Click here** and fill out the form; **or**
- Contact Maria Morales-Lamm at [moralesm@aa.org](mailto:moralesm@aa.org) **or**
- Fill out the below and mail to G.S.O. to arrive by March 27, 2019.

General Service Office, P.O. Box 459,  
Grand Central Station, NY, NY 10163  
Attn: Maria Morales-Lamm

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

*Information provided is confidential and will only be used for this Regional Forum*

**For ASL Interpretation please contact G.S.O.: [regionalforums@aa.org](mailto:regionalforums@aa.org).**

## 2019 NORTHEAST REGIONAL FORUM

**May 31 - June 2, 2019**

**Westchester Marriott Hotel**

670 White Plains Road  
Tarrytown, New York 10591  
(800) 882-1042

Group Name: 2019 Northeast Regional Forum

### HOTEL RESERVATION INFORMATION 2019 NORTHEAST Regional Forum May 31 - June 2, 2019

**Westchester Marriott Hotel**

670 White Plains Road  
Tarrytown, NY 10591  
(800) 882-1042

**Rate cutoff date: May 3, 2019**

**Group Name:  
2019 Northeast  
Regional  
Forum**

**Hotel Reservations** can be made by one of the following methods:

- By phone: (800) 882-1042 no later than May 3, 2019
- Online: **Click here** and fill out the form.
- A credit card is required for all reservations. If paying by cash, a \$50.00 per day incidental deposit is requested.

#### Room rates:

Single/Double: \$152.00 plus taxes

**For special room rate use Group Name: 2019 Northeast Regional Forum**

### Sample SCHEDULE of Events

**Friday:** 6:30pm - 10pm      **Saturday:** 9am - 9:45pm      **Sunday:** 9am - 12pm

#### FRIDAY

12:00 - close      Registration  
6:30-6:45 pm      First Timer Orientation  
7:00-8:30 pm      Opening Session  
8:30-8:45 pm      Break  
8:45-9:15 pm      Video  
9:15-10:00 pm      General Sharing

#### SATURDAY

9:00am - close      Registration  
9:00-10:00 am      AA Grapevine  
10:00-10:15 am      Break  
10:15-11:00 am      General Sharing  
11:00-12:00 pm      Delegates' Presentations  
12:00-1:30 pm      Lunch\*  
1:30-2:30 pm      G.S.O. Presentations

#### SATURDAY (Continued)

2:30-3:15 pm      Ask-It Basket  
3:15-3:30 pm      Break  
3:30-4:00 pm      Finance Presentation  
4:00-5:00 pm      General Sharing  
5:00-7:00 pm      Dinner\*  
7:00-8:15 pm      Workshops  
8:15-8:30 pm      Break  
8:30-9:45 pm      Workshops

#### SUNDAY

9:00 - 10:00 am      General Sharing  
10:00-10:30 am      First Timer Sharing  
10:30-10:45 am      Break  
10:45-11:30 am      Past Trustees' Sharing  
11:30- Noon      Closing Remarks

\* Meals are on your own

### REGISTRATION Information

There is no charge to attend Regional Forums. Please pre-register to support GSO with event preparation. You can always register on-site. To pre-register online, go to [www.aa.org](http://www.aa.org). All who register will receive a Final Forum Report.