

**Volume 47
Number 4**

THE SUFFOLK INTERGROUP

August, 2019

Bulletin

Visit your Suffolk County Website at:

<http://www.suffolkny-aa.org>

*Wonderful Things Happen,
One Day At a Time*



New Groups and Meetings

Women's Way, a new women's meeting in Southampton, meets every Tuesday at 6:30 pm at St. Andrews. 11 St. Andrews Rd. Southampton, NY 11968
Enter basement from Nicholas Ct. Park north lot

September Business Meetings

FIRST TUESDAY OF THE MONTH
Tues. 9/6/19

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. 9/18/19 7:00 PM
SIA Office, 113-8 Bay Ave. Patchogue

SIA Officers & Chairs:
LAST TUESDAY OF MONTH
Tues. 9/24/19 7:00 PM
SIA Office, 113-8 Bay Ave. Patchogue

Treatment Facilities Committee:
THIRD TUESDAY OF MONTH
Tues. 9/17/19 7:00 PM
SIA Office, 113-8 Bay Ave. Patchogue

Suffolk General Service:
THIRD FRIDAY OF MONTH
Fri. 9/20/19 8:00 PM
New GSR Orientation: 7:00 PM
True North Community Church
1101 Lakeland Ave. Bohemia

The Brentwood Ladies Group has a **Women's Beginner Meeting** on Sunday, at 5 PM. BYOC (Bring Your Own Coffee)

True Friends women's group in Port Jefferson has added a Friday 6:30m

The Email Addresses of your Intergroup Chairs

Chair - Tomchairman@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. Lorraine - recsec@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 - VACANT 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

A Word from Our Outgoing Treatment Facilities Chair

I've been chairing the TREATMENT FACILITIES committee since last June and it has been a privilege to work at this group level. Although my life is leading me in a new and wonderful direction, I want to thank you all who I've met and worked with for definitely keeping me sober. If I can be of any help during this transition of waiting for someone to take over this commitment, it will help me also while I'm transitioning in a new town. Thank You all for your service,

Carolyn

If you are interested in taking over this commitment contact
institutions@suffolkny-aa.org

I will leave the Institutions book in the closet at the

SIA Office, 113-8 Bay Ave. Patchogue

Notice

**Grapevine books can now
be purchased at the SIA
office**

113-8 Bay Ave. Patchogue

The Special Events Committee

**will hold the September
Traditions workshop on
Saturday (09/14/2019)
@12pm. We will be going
over Traditions 7, 8 and 9.**

Around the AA Campus

Two group anniversaries recently celebrated: Kings Park and We Can Recover in Huntington Station. Good times had at both.

Additions to the Intergroup Archives: Ed C. of Bridge to Sobriety donated Mickey D's old Share-A-Thon material as well as some other items that mention Suffolk AAs. An anonymous AA sent us an old postcard featuring the Patio Restaurant where Westhampton Beach's Women's Discussion met in the 1960s. Maybe you have some old AA stuff tucked away gathering dust that needs a better home.

Several new long timers interviews: Howard (164 Group), Wayne and Don (Mount Sinai Sober Start), Ray (Melville Group) and Barry (Rocky Point at Shoreham) Thanks to Maureen from Fort Salonga Workshop for her help and as always to Huntington West Neck's John C. Maybe you know some AAs with more than 30 years sobriety who would like to share their memories with us. The

Montfort Seminary in Bay Shore is in the process of being sold and with it the Big Book meeting may be disbanding. You have time still to check out this unique meeting place every Wednesday at 7:00 PM.

The new women's meeting in Southampton is called Women's Way and meets every Tuesday at 6:30 PM at the Greek Church.

Last month we reported that Live Again in Brentwood stopped meeting. This month we report that Alive Again in Dix Hills is also now off the meeting list. If there are any former members of either group, please don't throw your stuff away. It may have some historic value to the Archives.

Signs of the times. Hanging at the Melville Group "It Just Keeps Getting Better and Better. Oh how true that is!

Know of something going on around the AA campus? (Please no personal anniversary notices). Send along to TheOneandOnly@SuffolkNY-AA.Org

The Suffolk Intergroup Bulletin



**Sayville Daily Reflections
St. John's Evangelical
Lutheran Church
48 Greene Avenue Sayville,
N.Y. 11782**

Some things take time. Take this meeting for example. According to those running it, it took three years to make the meeting list. John, who provided the information, claimed he kept getting the runaround. The long established Keep It Green Group ended in 2014. That left a void and an empty meeting spot. Ian took it upon himself to start this one in 2015 and it has been running ever since—solely by word of mouth---at least until late 2018. Once it did make the online meeting list, within a week, three new people showed up.

It took time to get listed and for the newcomer it may take time locating it.

Although they once met in a room

downstairs, there was no privacy and people were walking in and out. This prompted a move to a room off the basketball court and that has presented another problem. Not many can find it.

Once you do, that might mean scrambling across or around a basketball court while a ball is in play. The night the Archives Committee came to visit, there was basketball practice. So, for the first half of the meeting the constant bouncing of a ball was heard. But like anyone who lives near an airport will tell you, you quickly become accustomed to the noise.

The format is straightforward. The corresponding day is read from the Daily Reflections book, an invited speaker shares on it, and then sharing goes around the table. Everyone gets a chance to share. The meeting meets on Wednesday at 8:00 P.M. and runs for one hour.

Ian has moved away to attend dental school and John has taken over. People new to Alcoholics Anonymous will be checking it out. The conventional wisdom for them is try A.A. for 90 days. See if you like it. If not, we wish you luck. Maybe you'd rather play basketball instead.

S.I.A. Archives Committee

October 29, 2018

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

The Need for Freethought Groups In A.A.

When I was first asked to write a series of articles on the occasion of the 80th anniversary of the "third founder" of AA, Jimmy B, who put "God as we understand Him" in the Steps, I thought to end the trilogy with the story of Jim's sobriety as he recapped it on the occasion of his thirtieth anniversary. That bit of history first appeared in the Grapevine in 1969 and was reprinted in the Bulletin last month. Jim's original story appears as "The Vicious Cycle" in the 2nd, 3rd and 4th editions of the Big Book. Since the series of articles has appeared in the Bulletin, a number of people have asked me why I feel this is important enough to write about and important enough to have started a "Freethinkers" group, so I have decided to write one more article to answer those questions.

Burwell's crucial contribution at the founding of AA came from his atheism. He argued with the early group in New York to tone down what he called the "God bit". This resulted in the much more inclusive wording of "Higher Power" and "God as we understand Him" that are now so much a part of AA. Had this inclusivity not been present to expand AA's reach beyond the Oxford Group's Protestant worldview, AA might well not have survived at all, much less have achieved the success it has seen in the last 85 years. If we mean to extend the hand of AA to all who suffer, we must try, as Burwell did, to make that offer of help as free of conditions as possible. In this regard, AA as its members often practice it, has failed to live up to the Fellowship's own principles. Partly, this is because most of our founding documents were primarily written by Bill W. and, as he himself confessed, in the early days he could not separate his religious worldview from AA's. Partly, it is because AA members remain human beings, not saints, and often fail to fully investigate, much less comprehend, the effects of their actions on others and partly because we tend to unthinkingly perpetuate the familiar.

As an example, let us join a newcomer attending his first typical meeting. "The Sicker Than Most" group opens with the reading of the Preamble, which states that, "A.A. is not allied with any sect, denomination, politics, organization or institution; does not wish to engage in any controversy, neither endorses nor opposes any causes." Then, group conscience asks that someone read "How It Works", which contradicts the Preamble by saying (amongst many other things), "Without help it is too much for us. But there is One who has all power-that One is God. May you find Him now!" There are many who will not see the sectarian nature of these words because they have steeped in it since birth, but there are many sectarian assumptions in just those three sentences. Some newcomers might bolt at this point. Others will sit it out. A speaker commences to share. She concludes by stating that it is impossible to stay sober without finding God. This seems to contradict part of the Preamble: apparently, the only requirements for membership are a desire to stop drinking and a belief in God. But wait! This is a Higher Power of the newcomer's understanding, not the God of the priests and preachers! Hallelujah! "And we'll now close with the Lord's Prayer." What? What happened to a Higher Power of the newcomer's understanding? And these people don't even say the "Our Father" the right way, like the nuns taught him! He's out of here!

Is anyone interested in telling groups that are comfortable with the traditional Christian orientation of AA that they should change? Not that I'm aware of. Freethought groups have been around since the 1970s. Personally, I've been around long enough to realize that there are people doing things every day to stay sober that would get me drunk if I did them. More power to them, as long as they aren't hurting anyone else. I certainly don't give a damn about someone else's religion. My concern, like Jim B's concern, is that people with less traditional or non-Christian beliefs have an AA to go to where they can feel comfortable, especially newcomers who might otherwise turn away and be lost. The two freethought groups in Suffolk County are attempts to provide such places.

There have been rumors that speakers are not allowed to mention God at freethought meetings: not true. If your story involves a belief in God, that's your story to share. Many members at freethought meetings are believers, many aren't, they are all attending to talk about sobriety, not religion. If a speaker were to claim that sobriety requires a belief in a specific god, or any god at all, he or she would probably be informed that they are mistaken, but I, for one, would correct any speaker making that claim in front of newcomers no matter where I was. What we don't do at freethought meetings is recite prayers. Prayers are almost by definition sectarian and the "wrong ones" can make people uncomfortable. Many times, when I lead a meeting, I am asked to close with the prayer of my choice. I generally suggest the "Hail, Mary"; for some reason, no one has ever taken me up on it.

It was the concern for the newcomer that motivated Jim Burwell, I think it is a concern that we should all emulate today.

Brian C.

SHARE-A-THON 2019




Committee is looking for volunteers to help with work needed to be done during the event, i.e., breakfast, lunch, smoking police, clean up, greeters, set up etc. Volunteers will work in different shifts so they can also attend workshops and meals at the event.

We need groups in Suffolk County to send a representative to this year's SHARE-A-THON meetings on the first Tuesday of every month.

If your group wants to have a workshop but cannot participate in the monthly meetings email

Mary at:

share@suffolkny-aa.org

SUFFOLK INTERGROUP ASSOCIATION 44TH ANNUAL SHARE-A-THON "ATTITUDE OF GRATITUDE"	
WHEN Sunday Oct. 13, 2019 9am – 4pm	ALL ARE WELCOME FREE ADMISSION Light breakfast and lunch provided
WHERE St. Joseph's College <small>125 Mount Rose Road, Patchogue, NY 11772</small>	NO SMOKING ANYWHERE ON CAMPUS
SCHEDULE Breakfast: starts at 8am Workshops: 9:00am-3:00pm Lunch: 12:00pm-2:00pm Spiritual Speakers: 3:15pm-4:00pm	PLEASE EMAIL SHARE@suffolkny-aa.org <small>AA-693</small> With any questions, list of items needed for donation and all registration forms
 	

***Come and
Carry the
Message!***

Wee Mustard Seed

I hold in my hand
A wee mustard seed
The smallest of parcels
The weakest indeed
Yet, these tiny particles
Tightly bond with the soil
and so quickly they grow
Their lush bushes wind and they toil
Beautiful yellow flowers
Fill up the once empty fields
And each flower holds a pod
Within which each pod does yield
Brand new mustard seeds
That scatter and blow
Through wind, drought and rain
They flourish, bloom and grow
So today we each have a precious
Mustard seed planted in our heart
That smallest of parcels
From which the whole forest can start
Take faith in the smallest
Of beginnings you can muster
love it, nurture and honor it
watching your garden grow
with wonder
Joni F.

Learning to Quiet My Mind

I hear the murmur in my mind
telling me all that is wrong,
with me, with them, with everything
in my world.

The murmur speaks of what can go
wrong, what will go wrong. What
complications can arise. What
disasters can unfold.

Slowly I learn to quiet the murmur, to
turn it away, to accept what can
happen, to accept what has happened,
to let it go.

I learn to stop listening
to the murmur,
I learn to quiet my mind.

Fran H.



AA Takes Over...



Where: 2245 Broadhollow Rd.

Farmingdale, NY 11735

When: Saturday, 9/14/19

6:30 - 9:30 pm

Cost: \$26/person - tickets available at SIA meetings

and at the SIA office 113-8 Bay Ave. Patchogue

FIRST COME, FIRST SERVE BASIS

(Buy early)