

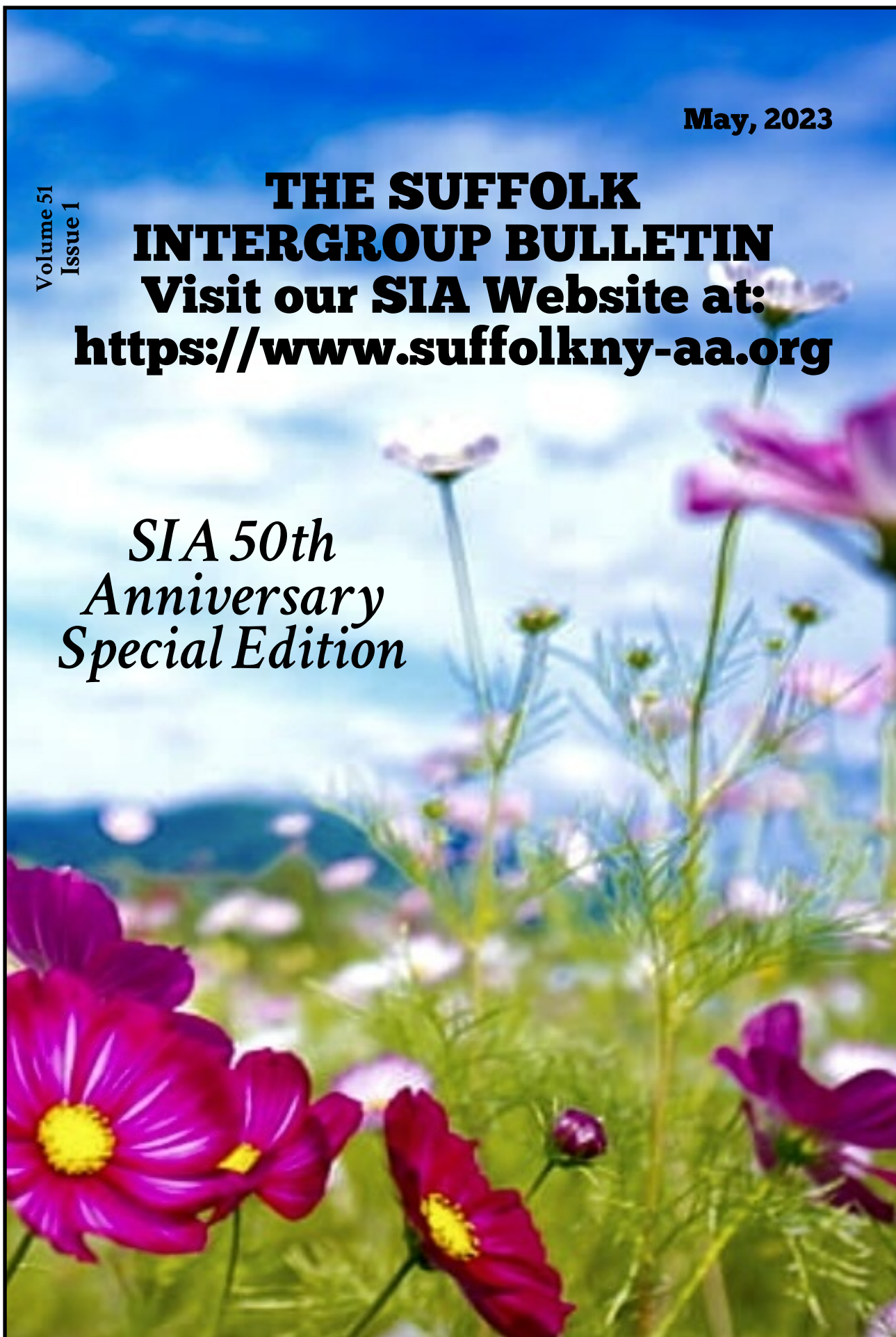
Volume 51
Issue 1

May, 2023

THE SUFFOLK INTERGROUP BULLETIN

**Visit our SIA Website at:
<https://www.suffolkny-aa.org>**

*SIA 50th
Anniversary
Special Edition*



The Suffolk Intergroup Bulletin

May Business Meetings

SIA Business Meeting

The SIA Business Meeting has gone
HYBRID both in person and online
Our new location is St. Joseph the Worker
Church 510 Narragansett Ave. East Patchogue,
NY 11772

Join via ZOOM
ID 9412170 5886 Passcode service
LAST TUESDAY OF THE MONTH
Tues. 5/30/ 23 8:00 PM
SIA Business Meeting 8:00 PM
New Rep Orientation:

7:00 PM IN PERSON ONLY

Corrections
FIRST TUESDAY OF THE MONTH
5/2/23 at 4:00PM at the SIA office
113-8 Bay Ave. Patchogue

Also via Zoom ID 941 2170 5886 Passcode
Service

Schools and Public Information
EVERY THIRD TUESDAY OF THE MONTH
5/16/23 at 6:00 PM at the SIA office
113-8 Bay Ave. Patchogue

Share-A-Thon

LAST TUESDAY OF THE MONTH
5/30/23

Just prior to the SIA meeting at
7:00 PM at St. Joseph the Worker Church
510 Narragansett Ave. Patchogue, NY
Also via Zoom ID 941 2170 5886, Passcode service

Treatment Facilities
Please check the SIA Calendar
(suffolkny-aa.org/calendar)"

Suffolk General Service
THIRD FRIDAY OF THE MONTH
FRIDAY 5/19/23
Join via ZOOM
Mtg ID 932 6450 5176 Passcode 713704
Vist SGS Website for more information:
<https://aasuffolk-ny.org>

Special Events Committee
FIRST TUESDAY OF THE MONTH
5/2/23 at 5:30 PM
via zoom
ID 9412170 5886 Passcode Service

Send your work to the Bulletin for publication!

Articles, Stories or Write-ups about your experiences in AA. Any topics, your
personal story, something you heard at a meeting. Photos, Drawings, Paintings and
Poems.

The bulletin editor will assist in writing any story.
They can be as short as 200 words or as long as 800 words.
You'll be sharing and reaching out to AAs throughout Suffolk County
and doing great service!
Send to bulletins@suffolkny-aa.org

Around the AA Campus

Group Updates

11th Step at 11 AM will now be known as Wednesday 11th Step Meditation. Still meets at the Laurel Lake Preserve on Route 25 in Laurel from April 1 to Oct 1. In the colder months they will head back to the George Young Community Center 446 South Jamesport Avenue in Jamesport.

Last Call in Riverhead has stopped meeting. Instead, SOS will continue to meet at 9:00 PM at St. John the Evangelist 536A St. John's Place Riverhead. The meeting is by candlelight.

Greenport Thursday Group has gone back to its original name the Greenport Group. It has been in existence since 1965 when it started out as the Greenport-Southold Group.

New Meetings

Sober Sisters on Main. Closed women's meeting Tuesday 6:45 PM. St Marks Episcopal Church 754 Montauk Highway Islip

Ray of Light 233 North Country Road Mount Sinai Wednesday 7:30 PM Meditation/Big Book/Speaker

Free by the Sea. Seasonal women's meeting. Monday 6:00 PM Sunken Meadow Beach Parking Lot #3 Go to start of boardwalk/down steps on beach. Starts May 1

The Things We Cannot Change

Our friend Kevin K who was always young at heart and helped so many. He will be missed tremendously.



Ray of Light Group
Riverhead

The Email Addresses of Intergroup Chairs

Chair - Lee B - chairperson@suffolkny-aa.org

Alt Chair - Jim S - alt-chair@suffolkny-aa.org

Treasurer - David V - treasurer@suffolkny-aa.org

Corresponding Sec. - Debbie - corsec@suffolkny-aa.org

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

Archivist - Bob - archives@suffolkny-aa.org

Bulletin - Fran - bulletins@suffolkny-aa.org

Corrections - Keith - correct@suffolkny-aa.org

Grapevine - Kevin - grapevine@suffolkny-aa.org

Hot Line - Zoie - phones@suffolkny-aa.org

Institutions - Dawn - institutions@suffolkny-aa.org

Literature - Bobby - books@suffolkny-aa.org

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

Public Info - Ed - pubinfo@suffolkny-aa.org

Office Manager - Kathie - siaoffice@suffolkny-aa.org

Schools - Jackie - schools@suffolkny-aa.org

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

Special Events - Jeffrey A - specialevents@suffolkny-aa.org

Third Legacy - Laurie - thirdleg@suffolkny-aa.org

Web Master - David P - webmaster@suffolkny-aa.org

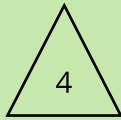
Spanish SIA Liason - Jose R.
SpanishRep@suffolkny-aa.org

Maureen P. Al-Anon Liason
AAliaison@al-anon-suffolk-ny.org

The Archives Committee meets the
second

Tuesday of every month at 7:00 PM on
Zoom

ID 996 096 9365. Password 799633



The Suffolk Intergroup

The History of Alcoholics Anonymous in Suffolk County

A copy of a 1947 letter exists in the Suffolk Intergroup Association Archives from Bill W., the co-founder of Alcoholics Anonymous to the Huntington Group congratulating it on its first anniversary. (See page 15) We can trace AA's beginnings in Suffolk County back even earlier. It was in March 1941 that the famous Jack Alexander story about Alcoholics Anonymous appeared in the Saturday Evening Post. Soon after that article A.A. headquarters in New York City tried to send one known A.A. on Long Island to a veteran's home on the grounds of the Kings Park State Hospital. How that Twelve Step call turned out we may never find out but along the way other alcoholics did sober up. We have copies of newspaper articles that document this. One article from the March 1, 1945 Huntington Times said "there are several members holding regular meetings at the home of a senior member" This is two years before the Bill W. letter was written!

By the end of the 1940s we had active and established groups in Huntington, Sayville, Bay Shore, Kings Park, Southampton, Amityville and East Hampton. For some reason the Riverhead group stopped meeting and its members moved over to Southampton but would reappear in the 1950s with renewed vigor. Such is the resiliency of Suffolk AAs. No matter what is thrown at us we bounce back, sober!

In the late 1940s, a meeting was started on a sleepy summer resort community called Fire Island. Some sources say it was started by the first lady to maintain continuous sobriety in Alcoholics Anonymous, Marty M. Around this time, according to information found at A.A.'s World Services Archives in Manhattan, a clubhouse called So So existed in Bridgehampton. Not much is known about it but this can end the debate whether or not any clubhouses ever existed in Suffolk County. At least two more clubhouses would pop up over the years. One behind an auto repair shop in Ronkonkoma and another above a saloon in Islip.

As Suffolk County grew in the 1950s, so did Alcoholics Anonymous. The newest additions to our rolls were Babylon Mid-Island, Brentwood, Northport, Patchogue, and Wyandanch as well as the newest incarnation of the Riverhead group. This time it flourished and still meets to this day. Notices about A.A. meetings that began in the 1940s in the East Hampton Star continued to appear in other newspapers from Huntington to Northport to Patchogue. All of these articles spoke of the miracle of recovery happening to alcoholics everywhere through A.A.

The 1960s were truly active and at least 20 groups joined the roster. Meetings sprouted from Copague to Greenport (then known as Southold-Greenport) with stops along the way in Port Jefferson, Stony Brook, Centereach, Dix Hills and Bohemia to name just a few. The East Moriches group was born in Center Moriches and would move back and forth from East to Center a couple of times before settling in the East version of Moriches.

In 1966, several groups on the east end of Long Island banded together and formed an answering service to better assist the suffering alcoholics. The eastern groups each committed to contribute a set amount of money to keep this service afloat. This was to eventually evolve into our present hotline. The service appears to have been headquartered in a motel out in Quogue. No doubt it saved many lives by providing service up close and personal. Previously all phone calls for help were handled out of New York City. By 1970 A.A. had grown considerably in Suffolk, and the need for a more centralized service was apparent.

The answering service was extended county wide with a majority of the groups contributing to the support of the service. In addition to answering calls for help and information, there were referrals for Twelve Step activity and meeting lists were compiled and distributed. In the phone directory the number for Suffolk Alcoholics Anonymous was still a New York City number and this caused trouble. Issues with phone calls to Manhattan became increasingly problematic. Phone calls were not being answered quickly enough. One old-timer advised the Archives that a phone call placed to New York would result in a post card being mailed to someone in Suffolk County days later! The A.A.s answering phone calls were unaware of the geography of Suffolk County and a Twelve Step call for help from someone in Montauk would be referred to someone in Queens. Many times the suffering alcoholic was reluctant to invest in the price of a long distance phone call. Efforts to resolve this ended in an impasse.

Bob R.

SIA Archivist

The Founding of Suffolk Intergroup Association

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. This was met with considerable resistance from Manhattan and among some staunch Suffolk loyalists. Problems with the phone listing being listed incorrectly in the phone directory continued for at least one more year with letters written back and forth to rectify it. Change is not something that is met all the time with open arms. In time, however, bruised egos gave way to the time honored Tradition of placing principles above personalities.

Suffolk Intergroup was on its own, blessed with enthusiasm but fraught with the expected growing pains. These growing pains still exist at times fifty years later. To celebrate our newly founded independence, the first Share-A-Thon was held at the old Colonie Hill in Hauppauge in 1975, Hundreds attended. A huge banquet complete with a live orchestra topped off a day of workshops. With the exception of one year, the Share-A-Thon has continued to be an annual event, although the banquet has long since been discontinued due to the increasing expense, but a light breakfast and lunch are served.

The Suffolk Intergroup Association continues to provide much needed services and outreach to the alcoholic both in and out of the rooms of Alcoholics Anonymous. Thanks to our membership, all positions are voluntary. None of the staff is a paid employee. This is Twelve Step work at its purest but as anyone will tell you service is what keeps us sober. We cannot keep it unless we give it away.

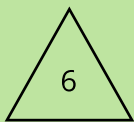
The Suffolk Intergroup office is kept open six days a week by an all volunteer staff of recovering alcoholics who handle incoming phone calls and provide meeting lists and literature. Our 24 hour a day hotline is also manned by AAs. Each incoming call is referred to another member of Alcoholics Anonymous. A Twelve Step list is maintained for that purpose and updated yearly.

Other SIA committees include Public Information which works to provide information about Alcoholics Anonymous to the public at large. Treatment Facilities organizes meetings in rehabs, hospitals and outpatient agencies and works to make sure that they have necessary literature and onsite meetings as requested. The Corrections Committee carries the A.A. message to those inside the Suffolk penal system, with literature and meetings. Third Legacy reaches out to those in Alcoholics Anonymous and reinforces the valuable necessity of doing service work. The Archives Committee works on preserving our wonderful history. The SIA Bulletin is issued each month with the express mission of keeping Suffolk A.A.s aware of pertinent news and events and it provides feature stories written by Suffolk A.A.s about their experience, strength and hope. The Schools Committee carries our message to students and teachers from grade school to college. The Webmaster sees to it that the SIA website is up to date and running smoothly so that easy access and quick information can be obtained from our website. Special Events coordinates various functions many of which are designed to show that sobriety can be fun. Our counterparts at General Services arrange for improved communications between the Suffolk A.A. groups and General Services in New York City. Although the Share-A-Thon is held in the fall every year, preparations for it are year long. All committees continue to need volunteers to continue.

In Suffolk Intergroup Association's 50th year, 2023, the number of groups has sky rocketed to 337 offering about 884 different meetings weekly. From the early morning to midnight there are meetings of all sorts throughout the day across the county. The meetings have been as diverse as the membership itself. We have held meetings on beaches, in parks and parking lots, in colleges, high schools and grade schools, hospitals, treatment centers, jails, yoga studios, coffee shops, sporting good stores, music halls, municipal buildings of all sorts, tire shops, recording studios, above saloons and below restaurants and of course, in synagogues, and churches of various denominations. Wherever we do meet we share our experience, strength and hope with each other as we have since June 10, 1935. We are bound together by our mutual recovery and this band of once hopeless alcoholics tries to live life happy, joyous and free, one day at a time.

Bob R.

SIA Archivist



The Suffolk Intergroup Bulletin

50 years on: A Conversation with a Suffolk County Pioneer

I had the pleasure recently of talking with one of our members who entered the program 56 years ago in June of 1966, Bob T. That was when, as a young man, he got into a car with two members of the Patchogue Group on his way to his first A.A. meeting, where he has been a member ever since. There was another newcomer on that 12th Step call that night. His name was Barry. Bob and Barry sized each other up that night and thought, if I ever get as bad as that guy I'll have to stop drinking. In June of 2016 Bob called Barry and they congratulated each other on their shared 50th anniversary

Bob and I talked about what he believes are the biggest differences in what A.A. in Suffolk County was like when he first came in and what it is now. Of course there are far more groups now. At that time there were probably no more than 35 groups in Suffolk County. They included Sayville, Blue Point and Patchogue. among others "Back in the day, Patchogue had one group. Today it has seven," Bob said.

He also said that groups were more active then. Because SIA had not yet been founded, Suffolk groups had to go through New York to book meetings. He said for example, "our first program chair, my sponsor Russ, had to go to Manhattan to book meetings where he would book 60 outgoing meetings for three months". These meetings were in upper and lower Manhattan as well as upstate and New Jersey "and we covered every one of them." And other members would go for support. The first meeting he covered was in Port Jeff and the second was in Jamaica. As a result, he said he got a good education about the program. He said that a bunch of people would pile into a car and go to a meeting whenever and wherever it might be. "We just got in the car. We didn't ask where we were going".

Because there was no Suffolk Intergroup there was no meeting list or hotline for Suffolk County. They had to contact the NY phones hotline for 12 step and other calls here on Long Island. "SIA phone services made it much easier".

Bob said he believes that the Suffolk and Nassau Intergroups were founded because they no longer wanted to have to rely on NY A.A. or be told what to do. "It was as simple as that". There were two members from his group, the Patchogue Group, as well as others who were instrumental in founding SIA. "It was an act of camaraderie, it's why I'm still sober".

When asked about handling newcomers back when he came in compared to now, Bob described vast differences. "It's harder for the newcomer now. Back then we grabbed them and tried not to let them go. We took them to as many meeting as we could and showed them how to identify with the speaker". There were several 12 step calls back then. "I use to get at least four a week. Now I barely get two a year. I'm a product of a 12 step call". He said that today many newcomers come from rehabs and they don't follow up with meetings after they leave. "They don't stay sober".

There were more planned activities county wide like trips to Stepping Stones. Bob is happy to see that Jeff, our special events chair, is "bringing it back to the old days" by planning these same kinds of activities. Bob was very proud to say that on one of his own visits to Stepping Stones with his wife and children they all met Bill and Lois.

To sum up this story about our friend Bob, he uses the scales of justice as a metaphor to describe his sobriety. His family and all that he loves are on one side while one drink is on the other. If he picks that one drink up everything that he holds near and dear on the other side is lost.

He still comes, he said, because he has more to learn and he must always remain teachable. "More will be revealed", he said. "I still sit up front and I listen. I can still identify with anybody. There's always something. Even if it's just one word".

"And I try to stay active and I still always do the coffee pots", as he has from the day he came in.

Fran H.

Bulletin Chair

dial AA **653 5353** for HELP



Announcing
AA ANSWERING SERVICE AND
INTERGROUP ASSOCIATION
OF SUFFOLK COUNTY
FOR ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS,
A CENTRALIZED SERVICE
FOR AA GROUPS IN SUFFOLK

- 1- 24 hr answering service to sick alcoholics
- 2- meeting information
- 3- meeting lists
- 4- AA information
- 5- public information
- 6- speakers bureau
- 7- program exchange meetings
- 8- hospital information
- 9- monthly bulletins
- 10- monthly business meetings

**WE
SERVE**

*You are responsible—
Will YOU volunteer?*
**come to our next business meeting
in Hauppauge — August 7, 1973**

The First SIA Bulletin May, 1973



(516) 653-5353

THE BULLETIN OF THE A.A. ANSWERING SERVICE AND INTERGROUP ASSOC. OF SUFFOLK CO.

P.O. Box 422, East Quogue, New York 11942

May, 1973

NEW OFFICERS - Your delegates have elected the following trusted servants for the next year---Dorothy P. Chairman---Greenlawn Huntington Group; Martin F. Co-Chairman---Comack Group; Carol C. Secretary, St. James Group; Ruth C.---Treasurer, Westhampton Group. They need and deserve all of your support!!!

S.E.N.Y. CONVENTION - Your editor attended his first convention and can only say that it was a very rewarding experience. There were so many fine speakers that to mention some by name would be an injustice to the rest. The message of the "Thank you for my Life" panel was especially inspiring. I must, however, mention Tom M's hypothetical phone call from a drunk with which he started the Friday evening session entitled "Dial A.A. for help" --- some of you comedy writers, move over.

EXCHANGE MEETING - The next exchange meeting of the Nassau/Suffolk area groups will take place at the Hauppauge group meeting place, Methodist Church Fellowship Hall, at the corner of Brookside drive and Nesconsett Highway, on Monday evening, June 4th at 6:30 P.M.

DELEGATES MEETING - The next meeting of the delegates to the Suffolk answering service will be held the following evening---same place as above June 5th at 7:30 P.M. All are invited.

NEW GROUPS - "GUYS AND DOLLS" closed meeting at 9:00 P.M. every Friday evening at Grace Presbyterian Church at 425 Hawkins Rd., Selden.

"LINCOLN AND LEE" open house meeting at 9 P.M. every Monday---Church on North side of Main Street, Wainscott.

"BLUE POINT" closed meeting at 8 P.M., Tuesday evening---open meeting at 8:30 P.M. Saturday---Our Lady of the Snow Church, Blue Point.

"EAST SETAUKET" closed meeting at 9 P.M. at Methodist Church, Route 25A and Old Field Road.

"LIVE AGAIN" 1 P.M. open afternoon meeting at St. Luke's Church, Wicks Road, Brentwood.

ANNIVERSARY---The 12th GROUP ANNIVERSARY of the Greenlawn Huntington Group will be held on Friday evening, June 8. A buffet will be served at 7:30; Meeting at 9:00; Dancing to live music from 10:00 P.M. ---MONEY TREE RAFFLE---Broadway and Pulaski Road---Greenlawn.

The Suffolk Intergroup Bulletin

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LETTER TO THE EDITOR:

"WHY ME?"

I never knew I was an alcoholic; in fact, I didn't know what an alcoholic was. I remember the army classifying me chronic alcoholic but, I just did not give it much thought. It was not until I wound up in an alcoholic rehab. unit that I found out what alcoholism was. Then, after awhile and a little self honesty, I admitted that alcohol played a major role in my life. My next question was "WHY ME".

Today, looking back over my drinking and sober life, I can come up with some sort of answer.

All during my drinking days, I thought I was having a good time. In reality, I was rationalizing away the difficulties I had or laughing them off. When others I drank with went home or to church and I remained glued to the seat, I said they were henpecked. As progression set in, I thought of myself as a god and blamed everything and everybody for mistakes or imperfections. It wasn't until I was laying on the floor of some cheap hotel, physically hurting, that I could rationalize no more. For you see, I had to quit running away from myself.

When I came to A.A., I found that I had to build a whole new life through sobriety. A life in which I could never again run to the bottle again. I immediately said "WHY ME".

Today, I think I have the answer. When I was Drinking, I had no human emotions. I was like an animal.

As my dependency on the bottle increased, I became more vicious. And, like a forest fire, it wasn't until I burnt myself out that I was willing to admit defeat.

Through A.A. I learned a little about myself both bad and good. I slowly regained my sense of values, self confidence and self respect. I learned that I was not unique, just a plain Indian and that my chief's days were over. I found a higher power who would guide me if I was willing to let him. I became a person who is willing to practice the principles in all my affairs. (Love of God and Love of Fellow Man) (Service to God and Fellow Man).

Today, with a life reclaimed from the hell of alcoholism, I can honestly say that I'm part of my community. I have a true relationship with people and that I no longer walk alone---due to the program. I've learned I'm human and from living in reality, I'm able to experience and grow and cherish all the joys and sorrows that life offers. Only, this time, I'm not alone and drugged.

Mike O'S---Islip

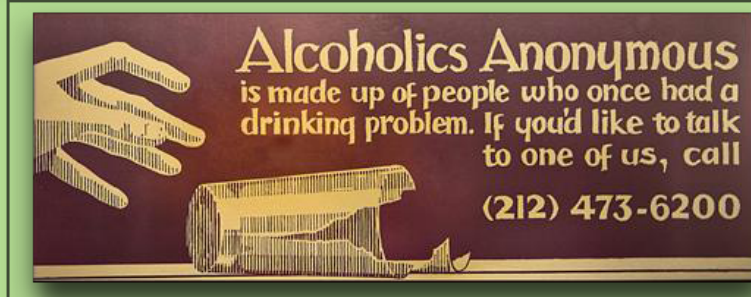
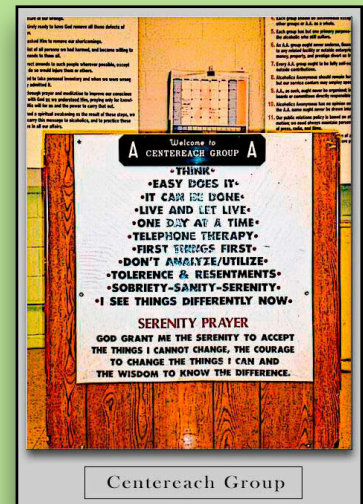
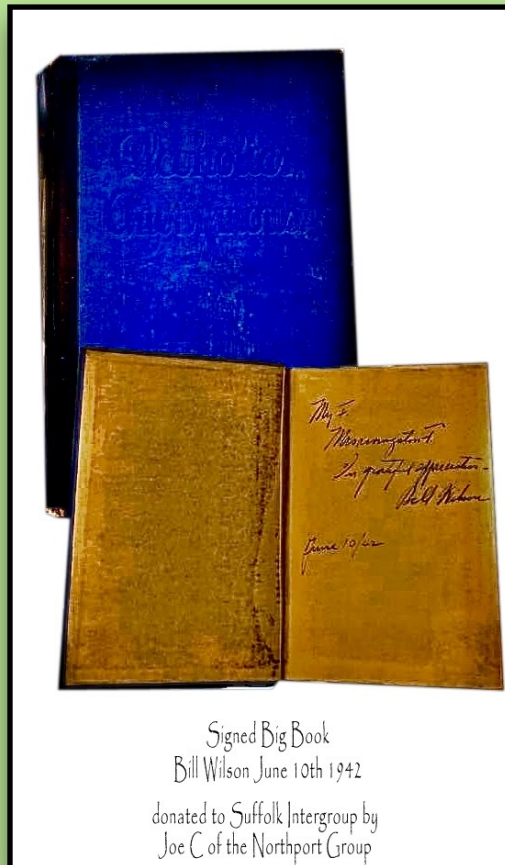
HELP! Your editor needs News. Please send anything of interest to:

BUTTONWOOD, 97 Wyandanch Blvd., Smithtown, N.Y. 11787

or call

(516) 543-4461

Suffolk County A.A. Artifacts



Original New York Subway Sign
Circa 1970.s
Gift of Jerry R. Staten Island

The Suffolk Intergroup

Looking into The Pit -
finding no greater love

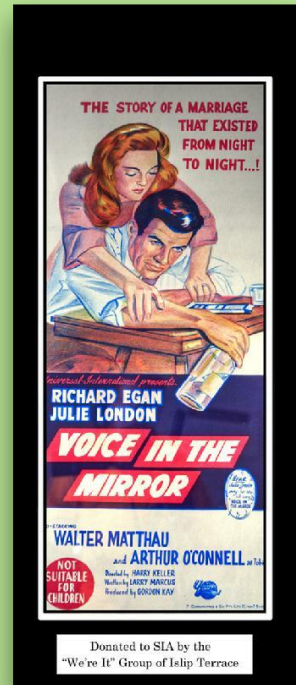
Bay Shore Love and Service "The Pit"



Daily Reminders
Found at
Brentwood Live Again



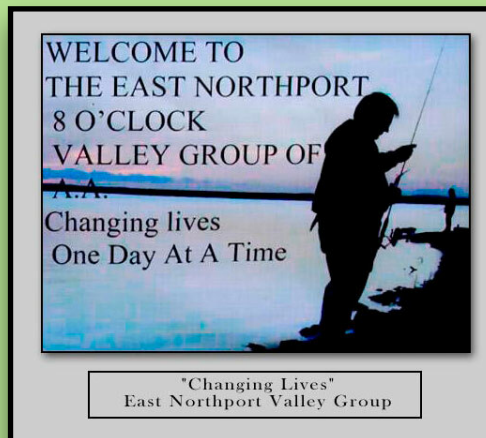
Riverhead "Live and Let Live"



Donated to SIA by the
"We're It" Group of Islip Terrace



Coram Serenity Meeting
Donated by Richard W.



"Changing Lives"
East Northport Valley Group



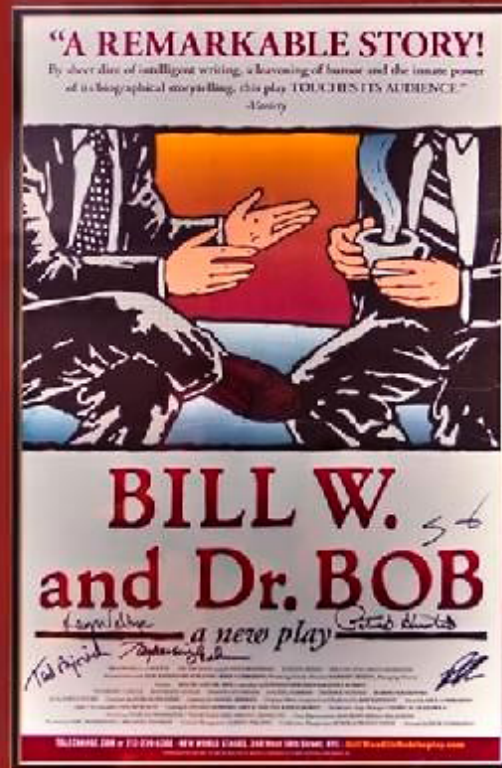
Hauptpaage Table Discussion

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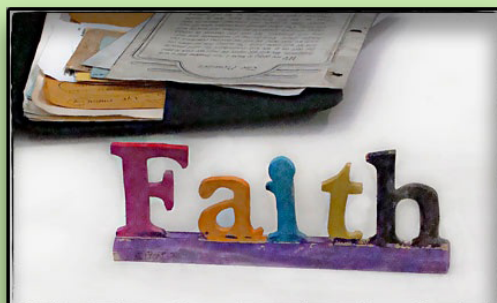
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Brentwood Group



Donated to Suffolk Intergroup
by
Vinny of the Mount Sinai Group



Patchogue Jane Ave.

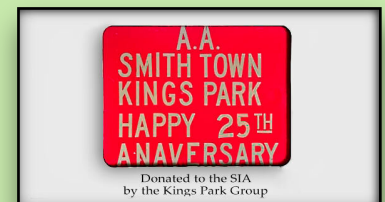
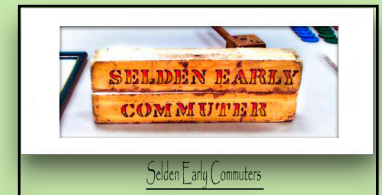


Riverhead Group

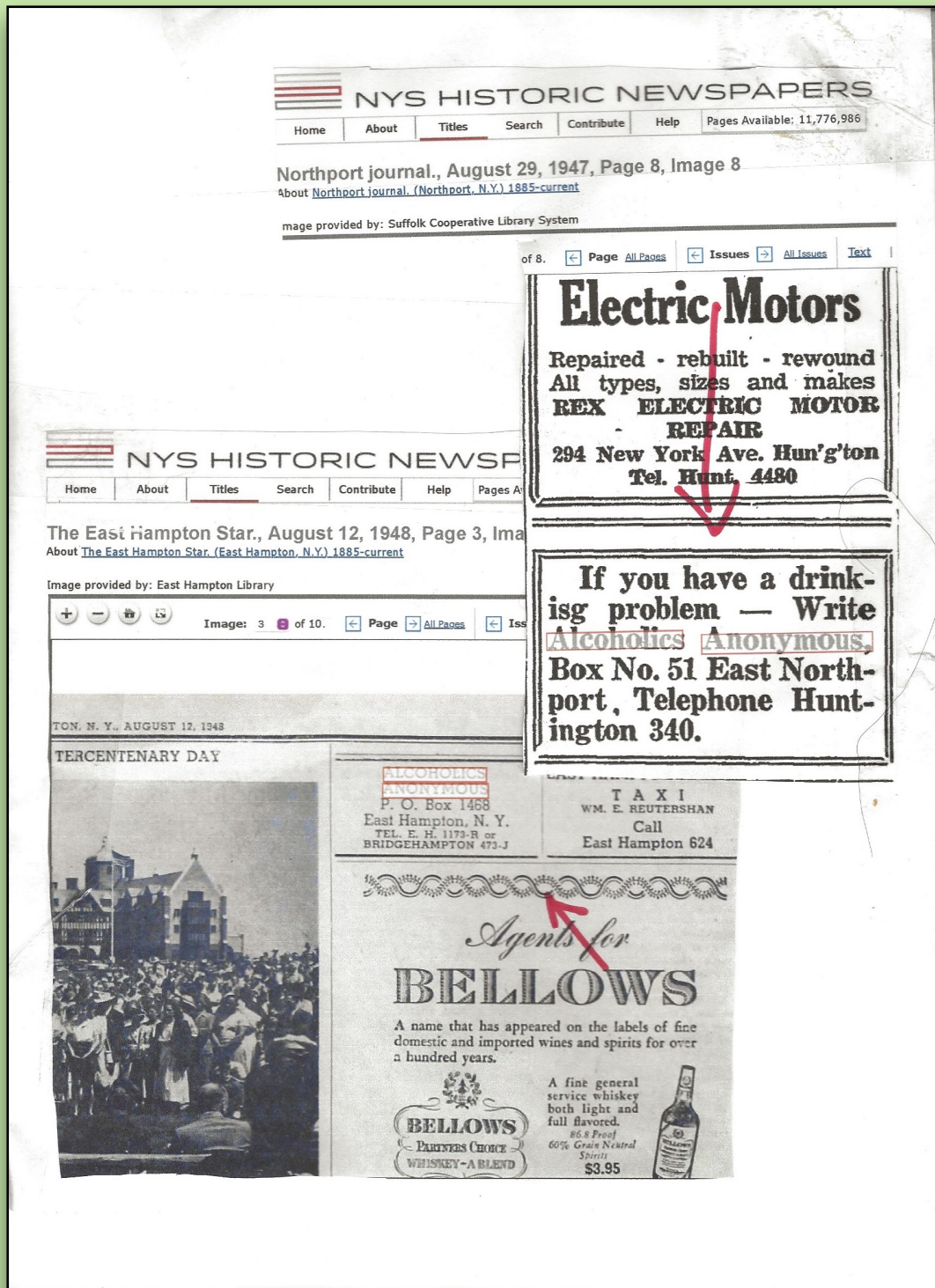
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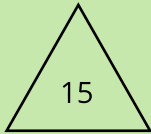


Donated to SIA Archives
by
Hampton Bays Sunday Night



Newspaper Notices for Alcoholics Anonymous in Suffolk County in the 1940's





The Suffolk Intergroup Bulletin

A 1947 Letter from Bill W. to the A.A. Group of Huntington

AA Group of Huntington, LI

Jan, 3, 1947

Dear AAs:

To every one of us, our AA anniversary is a reminder of those things which mean the most: gratitude for life itself and the opportunity to live it happily and usefully. Gratitude for friendships the likes of which we have never known and above all gratitude for the grace of God which so abundantly illuminates our AA high road to happy destiny---these are true feelings we treasure the most deeply on our anniversary day.

Please know that your happiness is shared by all of us here. Bobbie joins me in greetings and congratulations on your first anniversary this January 8th.

As ever

William G. Wilson

*NOTE: This is a copy of a letter in the **WoRLD** Services AA Archives in Manhattan. Visited by Suffolk Archives on November 16, 2004. The Bobbie mentioned in the letter was Bill's secretary*

The Suffolk Intergroup

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