

November, 2024

Vol. 52 - No. 07



SUFFOLK INTERGROUP ASSOCIATION

# Bulletin

**Celebrating 51 years of dedicated service to  
A.A. groups in Suffolk County.**



Visit us at  
[suffolkny-aa.org](http://suffolkny-aa.org)

**“Real change, enduring change,  
happens one step at a time”**

**- Ruth Bader Ginsburg**

# SIA Business Meeting

Held last Tuesday of every month

**November 26<sup>th</sup>, starting 8:00 p.m.**

New Rep Orientation 7:00 p.m.



## IN PERSON

True North Church  
1101 Lakeland Ave  
Bohemia, NY 11716



## VIRTUALLY

( see page 5 for zoom info )

## SIA Bylaws Committee

Please join us in our quadrennial assignment, to:

- ✓ Review the SIA Bylaws
- ✓ Propose desired changes
- ✓ Publish proposed amendments
- ✓ Report on the anticipated effects
- ✓ Present amendments to the body for approval by substantial unanimity

Your participation and input in this crucial process are highly valued.

The committee meets on the second Tuesday of the month - **Nov. 12th, 6:30 p.m.** at the **SIA Office**.

Email Allison, Alt-Chairperson with any questions [alt-chair@suffolkny-aa.org](mailto:alt-chair@suffolkny-aa.org)

View Bylaws via QR code or visiting:  
<https://suffolkny-aa.org/bylaws>

Scan or click



for SIA By-laws



## Bridging the Gap

**The Treatment Facilities Committee** is ramping up the county's BTG program. We need your help to be:

**Temporary Contacts** - bring prospects coming out of a Treatment facility to their first six meetings & get them connected with a sponsor, home group & commitment.

**BTG District Captains** - remember the SIA hotline district Captains who used to go around recruiting A.A. members for 12 step calls via the hotline? Same thing - only recruiting Temporary Contacts for Bridging the Gap instead. Must have working knowledge of A.A. traditions or be willing to learn.

**BTG Facilitators** - communicate with prospects before they leave an institution over the phone, and arrange for a Temporary Contact to call, & take the prospect to their first meeting on the outside. Follow up with the prospect to make sure the Temporary Contact completed the 12 step call a few times and the prospect got a sponsor.

To learn more about service opportunities w/ Treatment Facilities Committee scan or click QR code, or visit:

<https://suffolkny-aa.org/treatment>



## HOTLINE VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!!

*It's not difficult to work the Hotline*

- ✓ calls are automatically forwarded to your phone
- ✓ no one will see YOUR phone number
- ✓ most callers are looking for help finding a meeting or to be connected with a 12 Step Volunteer



We will show you how to take calls and provide you with all the necessary tools.

To sign up as a group or for any other inquiries, email [phones@suffolkny-aa.org](mailto:phones@suffolkny-aa.org)

To sign up as an individual, scan or click the QR code to the right :



To learn more about the hotline, scan or click the QR code to the right or visit :

<https://suffolkny-aa.org/hotline>



## The Challenge of Change

Hello, A.A. Friends. One of our SENY Past Delegates said something years ago that I continue to quote. "Alcoholics hate two things: the way things are, and change." That surely describes how I can be, even to this day! Change can be painful, beneficial, frightening, much needed, and a host of other adjectives. And sometimes, it's just plain necessary (and vital), as some of us have discovered on our individual journeys of recovery.

And when a rule or procedure has been institutionalized, it's even scarier to even talk about making a change. Consider that oh-so powerful and pervasive phrase: "because that's the way we've always done it." (Those words most likely go back to the Stone Age, when I'm certain that heated arguments arose as to whether it was better to go after saber-toothed tigers with rocks or with those new-fangled spear things.)

With that in mind, I'm proposing a significant change in the way our annual SIA budget has been prepared and presented. \*gulp\*

In past years, when calculating the annual Prudent Reserve, the budget has added up Committee Expenses, Office (or, Operating) expenses, and the cost of buying literature, and multiplied that total by 50% (6 months, as allowed by our By-Laws). This is to make sure that we will have enough in reserve to pay expenses and do Tradition 5 work, in case something catastrophic happens on the revenue side. Maintaining a Prudent Reserve is a time-honored principal of Alcoholics Anonymous, from the Board of Trustees up to individual Groups.

I agree whole-heartedly with the principal; I disagree completely with the calculation. The cost of buying literature (and Grapevine materials) is not an expense that should be part of that calculation. Why? We currently carry an inventory at the SIA office of around \$21,000. If sales stopped for, say, 3 months, we wouldn't have to buy more inventory during that time. If there was a run on Big Books and 12 & 12s, we would take the revenue from those sales and buy more Big Books and 12 & 12s.

Do you see my point? In either case, there is no need to create or touch a "reserve", because any revenue earned simply replenishes inventory. So our Prudent Reserve calculation drives a lot of unnecessary money into savings that could otherwise be used for Committee work, etc.

There is another (one-time) benefit that will occur in 2025: since we would lower the Prudent Reserve account significantly, that cash will become available to support the 2025 budget expenses, vs. asking the Groups to stretch themselves too thin with their contributions.

I invite all interested A.A. members to attend our October 29th SIA meeting (either in person or virtually), where I will make the full presentation, and answer any questions you may have. As I said last month: as a steward of your money, I will try to offer you the best options possible; but ultimately, it's the Groups of Suffolk County who must vote their decision. I look forward to seeing you all on the 29th.

In Service,

**Tom B., A.A. Member and SIA Treasurer**

## November Calendar

**Nov 5 @ 7:00 pm - 8:00 pm**  
Corrections Committee Meeting  
(virtual)

**Nov 5 @ 8:30 pm - 9:30 pm**  
Special Events Committee Mtg  
(virtual)

**Nov 8 @ 6:00 pm - 7:00 pm**  
Treatment Committee Meeting  
(virtual + SIA Office)

**Nov 12 @ 6:30 pm - 7:30 pm**  
Bylaws Committee Meeting  
(SIA Office)

**Nov 12 @ 7:00 pm - 8:00 pm**  
Archives Committee Meeting  
(virtual)

**Nov 14 @ 6:00 pm - 7:00 pm**  
Web Committee Meeting  
(virtual)

**Nov 15 @ 8:00 pm - 9:00 pm**  
Suffolk General Service Meeting  
(virtual + Emanuel Lutheran  
Church Patchogue NY)

**Nov 18 @ 5:30 pm - 6:30 pm**  
Schools Committee Meeting  
(virtual)

**Nov 19 @ 6:00 pm - 7:00 pm**  
Officers & Chairs Meeting  
(virtual + SIA Office)

**Nov 26 @ 7:00 pm - 8:00 pm**  
Treatment Committee Meeting  
(virtual + True North)

New Intergroup Rep Orientation  
(virtual + True North)

**Nov 26 @ 8:00 pm - 9:00 pm**  
SIA Business Meeting  
(virtual + True North)

### SAVE THE DATE

**SUFFOLK COUNTY GENERAL SERVICE  
UNITY BREAKFAST**

February 16th, 2025  
Sunday @ 9am

Huntington Hilton in Melville  
598 Broadhollow Rd

# Around the A.A. Campus

## Group Updates

### Old Time A.A.

Old Time A.A. in Ronkonkoma has ended its long run. Starting back in 1993, they held the fort down on Monday and Thursday for thirty-one years. That's an impressive record. (See photo below)

### Young at Heart in Islip

Young at Heart in Islip has chosen to discontinue its Wednesday online meeting. It will still meet on Friday at 8:30 PM in person at Crossroads Church 127 Country Lane East Islip

### Whitman Group

Melville's Whitman Group has moved to Sweet Hollow Presbyterian Church 95 Old Country Road. They will follow their same old schedule: Monday 7:30 PM (Step) and Friday 7:30 PM (Beginners). Come over and check out their new home.

### Let It Begin With Me

Let It Begin With Me has added a Saturday 6:00 PM (Closed Discussion) to its lineup. That will be in addition to its Monday 6:00 PM (Women's) and 7:15 PM (Big Book) and Thursday 6:00 PM (Beginners). All this is happening at Grace Presbyterian Church 425 Hawkins Road Selden

### Bees Knees

Things are buzzing at the Bees Knees in Port Jefferson. As of November 4, they will be adding another evening to their schedule. In addition to their Thursday 7:30 PM Mediation, there will be a Monday 7:30 PM Beginners. Come join them at the Hive Creative Studios 101 Main Street.

### Medford Miracle

Medford Miracle is on the move again. They still meet Monday 7:00 PM, but now do so at the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints 1 Cedar Avenue Medford

### New Life Sobriety

New Life Sobriety has lowered its starting time to 7:30 PM. This closed discussion meets every Monday at New Life Community Church 380 Lakeland Avenue Sayville. They can use some additional support so come check them out.

## The Things We Cannot Change

Michael B of the Heart of the Lake Group, described by one person as "the most gentle, kind soul I have ever seen." He helped many many people and his loss is deeply felt by his A.A. friends and family.

David N of East Moriches/Whitman was so loved by many. Recently, a group of his friends gathered together in remembrance. He will be missed so much.

Our friend Dennis H from Smithtown Serenity has left us. A kind, gentle man whose humble approach will so be missed.

Kenny K of Lindenhurst passed on in September. A giving, loving human who exemplified what our program is all about. He helped so many in both his professional life and his A.A. life.



# Bridge to Sobriety — Group History

Great South Bay YMCA | Captree State Park | Christ Episcopal Church  
 200 West Main Street | 3500 Ocean Parkway | 12 Prospect Street  
 Bay Shore, NY 11706 | Bay Shore, NY 11706 | Babylon, NY 11702

In the spring of 1996, a trip to the Jones Beach early morning Alcoholics Anonymous meeting inspired a Suffolk AA to create his own version out here. After getting together with a friend, who provided the name Bridge to Sobriety, the meeting got started. To stimulate interest, flyers were created and passed around at local meetings. The first year was slow, with only six or seven showing up each week. But the spirit was willing.

By 1997, they were back at the beach and the numbers grew. They would push their luck and hang out until November, simply because they had no other place to go in the winter. One member suggested they meet at a coffee shop that used to exist by the train station in Babylon called the Zen Den. That started the tradition of Bridge to Sobriety meeting inside during winter. After the coffee shop was sold, they met a beauty salon for a few years until they found refuge during the cold months at the YMCA in Bay Shore.

As time went on, the group also would be meeting at Christ Episcopal Church in Babylon. When COVID-19 hit us, the group went online until things cleared up. That meeting on Zoom still continues.

So, what started as a one day a week beach meeting during the warmer months, now meets, depending on the time of year, at



the YMCA in Bay Shore, Captree State Park, and Christ Episcopal Church in Babylon or, should you choose to stay home, online. They've covered all the bases. Now it's up to you to come and join them.

## S.I.A. Archives Committee

Original history written by co-founder 2007

Upd. August , 2023

## SIA Committee Meeting Schedule

**Archives** (virtual)  
2nd Tuesday 7:00 pm

**Bylaws** (SIA Office)  
2nd Tuesday 6:30 pm

**Corrections** (virtual)  
1st Tuesday 7:00 pm

**Schools** (virtual)  
3rd Monday 5:30 pm

**Share-A-Thon** (virtual + True North)  
last Tuesday 7:00 pm

**Special Events** (virtual)  
1st Tuesday 8:30 pm

**Treatment** (virtual + SIA Office)  
2nd Friday 6:00 pm

**Treatment** (virtual + True North)  
last Tuesday 7:00 pm

**Web** (virtual)  
2nd Thursday 6:00 pm

**SIA Business Meeting**  
(virtual + True North)  
last Tuesday 8:00 pm

## The Archives Committee

... is looking for volunteers to help save our Alcoholics Anonymous history.

Join Us on Zoom

November 12th, 7:00 PM

or

Contact the SIA Office at

(631) 654-1150

## SIA Virtual Meeting Space



**Zoom ID** 941 2170 5886

**Passcode** service

**Tel Dial-In** (929) 205-6099

# The Eleventh Step Without God

“Don’t let it keep you from the steps.” This was the speaker’s feedback, after I shared—in my very first Eleventh Step meeting—about how different and uncomfortable I felt, being a Buddhist and not having a higher power. I took what he said to heart, and I resolved not to let my different beliefs, or my feelings about being different, stop me from going full-on into the steps. I was desperate and afraid to drink, and I wasn’t going to let anything stop me from getting better.

I’ve encountered quite a few atheists in AA, as well as some Buddhists, Wiccans, and others whose belief systems either didn’t include a higher power, or whose higher power was very different from the Judeo-Christian creator referred to in the Big Book. Sadly, some of these folks, stymied by the differences, had not done the steps.

People would ask me how I worked the steps, and I would tell them that I translated the steps into Buddhist terms. For the 11th step, this meant only a slight change, since my religion (Nichiren Buddhism) does involve both prayer and meditation, in the form of chanting *nam myoho renge kyo*. So for me, the 11th step was, “Sought through prayer and meditation to improve my understanding of and compassion for myself, others, and the AA program.”

For other steps, I regarded the AA program and its practitioners as a higher power/higher wisdom. Some steps, such as the 9th, didn’t require any translation.

Nowadays, no translating is needed. There are many alternative twelve steps available on the internet. But during the first 15 years or so of my sobriety, these were hard to come by.

My eleventh step resulted in several important

changes in my Buddhist prayer.

First, I stopped chanting for “things that I wanted,” having had enough of the juggernaut of self will to last a lifetime. After I took the eleventh step, I began praying more to do the next right thing, and less to get what I wanted. Similarly, when praying for others, I no longer specified what I wanted to happen to them, but just chanted for their health and happiness.

Next, I realized that when I was out there, my chanting and other Buddhist actions had often been based on fear—e.g., “I’d better chant a lot so blah blah doesn’t happen.” So I shifted my focus, now intending to be faith-based. This actually helped me to be less fearful.

My sponsors have all been very understanding about my lack of a “capital-H-capital-P.” And although I often heard, in the beginning of sobriety, warnings that those who did not develop a relationship with a higher power would drink, I simply translated this to mean that I needed to be spiritually based, or I would drink.

For twenty years it never bothered me to be “different” in this way, but after my twentieth year of sobriety, it began to bother me. During a Big Book meeting, we read the Chapter to the Agnostics, and I suddenly found the tone insulting to my beliefs. (Before, I was probably in denial about feeling this way—afraid to acknowledge it and get angry, and maybe end up estranged from AA.)

Soon after that, a friend told me about the Stony Brook Freethinkers—an AA group that strives to stay true to AA’s message and welcoming to all alcoholics, regardless of their view on spiritual matters. I joined this wonderful group, where it is recognized that my lack of a higher power is no big deal.

- Anne W.



SIA Officers & Chairpersons		2024 – 2026
Chairperson	Jim S.	chairperson@suffolkny-aa.org
Alt Chairperson	Allison M.	alt-chair@suffolkny-aa.org
Treasurer	Tom B.	treasurer@suffolkny-aa.org
Corresponding Sec.	Nancy S.	corsec@suffolkny-aa.org
Recording Sec.	Tiffany W.	recsec@suffolkny-aa.org
Archives	Evan H.	archives@suffolkny-aa.org
Archivist	Bob R.	archives@suffolkny-aa.org
Bulletin	David V.	bulletins@suffolkny-aa.org
Corrections	Ashley O-W.	correct@suffolkny-aa.org
Grapevine	Mike A.	grapevine@suffolkny-aa.org
Hot Line	Howie L.	phones@suffolkny-aa.org
Literature	Charlie D.	literature@suffolkny-aa.org
Meeting List	Kit C.	meetings@suffolkny-aa.org
Office Manager	Meredith F.	siaoffice@suffolkny-aa.org
Printed Meeting List	Rob S.	printedmeetinglist@suffolkny-aa.org
Public Info	Laurie A.	pubinfo@suffolkny-aa.org
Schools	Matt G.	schools@suffolkny-aa.org
Share-A-Thon	Debbie P.	share@suffolkny-aa.org
Special Events	Heather W.	specialevents@suffolkny-aa.org
Third Legacy	Ed A.	thirdleg@suffolkny-aa.org
Treatment Facilities	Rob M.	treatment@suffolkny-aa.org
Web Master	David P.	webmaster@suffolkny-aa.org
SGS Liaison	Natalie S.	SGSLiaison@suffolkny-aa.org
Spanish Liaison	Jose R.	SpanishRep@suffolkny-aa.org
Al-Anon Liaison	Maureen P.	AAliaison@al-anon-suffolk-ny.org
Alateen Liaison	Ed O.	AlateenChair@al-anon-suffolk-ny.org
YPAA Liaison	Caroline N.	Info.eacypaaxx@gmail.com

## AA History

**November 1934** - Ebby T. carries message to Bill.

**November 1936** - Fitz M leaves Towns Hospital to become 'AA #3 in NY', with Bill W and Hank P.

**November 1937** - Bill and Dr. Bob compare notes in Akron. Count forty cases staying sober. Meeting of the Akron Group to consider Bill's ideas for how to expand the movement ... a book, AA hospitals, paid missionaries. Passed by a majority of 2.

**Nov / Dec 1939** - Akron group withdraws from association with Oxford Group. Meetings moved from T Henry & Clarence Williams to Dr Bob and other members homes.

**November 1945** - Bill's article called 'Those Goof Balls' published in the Grapevine.

**November 1986** - Big Book published in paperback.

**Nov 9, 1966** - President Johnson appoints Marty M to the 1st National Advisory Committee on Alcoholism.

**Nov 11, 1934** - Armistice Day; Bill started drinking after dry spell, beginning of Bill's last drunk.

**Nov 13, 1939** - Bill wants to go to work at Towns Hospital, NY drunks want him to stay on as head of the movement.

**Nov 14, 1940** - Alcoholic Foundation publishes 1st AA Bulletin.

**Nov 16, 1950** - Dr. Bob died.

**Nov 26, 1895** - Bill W born in East Dorsett, VT.

## Emotional Sobriety

To live a sober life it's essential to continually take personal inventory, recognize when we were wrong and promptly admit it, and make amends and corrections when necessary. This is our Tenth Step. Our "maintenance" step.

By practicing the Tenth Step and all of the Twelve Steps we learn that we can live free of emotional disturbances and emotional hangovers and achieve emotional and spiritual sobriety.

- Fran H.

## As Bill Sees It #228

"If we examine every disturbance we have, big or small, we will find at the root of it some unhealthy dependency and its consequent unhealthy demand. Let us, with God's help, continually surrender these hobbling liabilities.

Then we can be set free to live and love; we may then be able to twelfth step ourselves, as well as others, into emotional sobriety."

GRAPEVINE, JANUARY 1958

## SIA Announcements

view latest announcements by clicking or scanning the QR code or visiting:

<https://suffolkny-aa.org/announcements>



# Upcoming Events in the Area

SPONSORED BY SUFFOLK COUNTY INTERGROUP'S THIRD LEGACY CHAIR

## WHERE MONEY AND SPIRITUALITY MIX 7th Tradition Workshop

True North Church  
1101 Lakeland Ave  
Bohemia, NY 11716

10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.  
Saturday, November 23rd



Snacks and light lunch will be served.

\*In honor of the seven tradition the basket will be passed in the spirit of self-support!

## The Cleary Group's 51st Group Anniversary

Saturday, December 1st  
5:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.

St. Mary's Episcopal Church  
315 Lake Shore Rd in Lake Ronkonkoma.

Come help us and celebrate with a light dinner and dessert.  
The meeting and speaker will start at 7:00 p.m.

## We Stay Sober Together New Year's Marathon Meeting



Zoom Meeting 12/31 @ 6pm through 1/1 @ 5pm

Meeting ID: 989-7393-1417  
Password: 532292

755 Waverly Ave, 2<sup>nd</sup> Fl, Holtsville

SIA Presents you with the

## THANKSGIVING ALCATHON

Wednesday, 11/27 from 8 pm – 2 am

Thursday, 11/28 from 9 am – 3 pm



## SUFFOLK COUNTY

*Al-Anon* in participation with **AA**



“Let's Talk  
Tradition”  
Session 4  
traditions 10-12

FREE  
EVENT

Saturday, December 14th  
10am - 2pm

**TRUE NORTH CHURCH**  
1101 Lakeland Avenue Bohemia,  
NY 11716

For information contact  
AAliaison@al-anon-suffolk-ny.org