

September 2025

Vol. 53 - No. 05



SUFFOLK INTERGROUP ASSOCIATION

Bulletin

**"Though no one can go back
and make a brand new start,
anyone can start from now
and make a brand new ending."**

– Carl Bard



Visit us at
suffolkny-aa.org
tel : (631) 654-1150



Suffolk A.A. Needs YOU



Volunteers are needed for all service committees:

- Archives
- Big Meeting
- Bridging the Gap
- Treatment Facilities
- Correctional Facilities
- Public Information
- Schools
- SIA Office
- Special Events
- Cooperation with the Professional Community
- Technology

Come to the next SIA Meeting to learn more !

September 30th, starting 8:00 p.m.

New Rep Orientation 7:00 p.m.



IN PERSON

True North Church
1101 Lakeland Ave
Bohemia, NY 11716



VIRTUALLY

Zoom ID 941 2170 5886
Passcode service
Tel Dial-In (929) 205-6099

HOTLINE VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!!

*Volunteering to answer the Suffolk County
A.A. Hotline is easier than you think!*

- ✓ 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**
- ✓ all the resources you need are available on our website

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

To sign up as a **Phone Volunteer**, scan or click the QR code to the right :



To sign up as a group or for any other inquiries, email phones@suffolkny-aa.org

*We're rebuilding our 12-Step Volunteer list
— and we need YOU on it!*

- ✓ YOUR phone number is never shared
- ✓ you'll be given the caller's number to return their call
- ✓ you choose what level of help you're comfortable offering:
 - return a phone call to share your experience, strength, and hope
 - arrange to meet them at an AA meeting
 - pick someone up and bring them to a meeting—with another AA member

To sign up as a **12 Step Volunteer**, scan or click the QR code to the right:



To learn more about the hotline visit :

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

Stories from The International Convention

This month, we're thrilled to **share stories and reflections** from a few of the more than **40,000 sober members of A.A.** who gathered for the **2025 International Convention — a decidedly unglum lot!**

For those who couldn't be there, we hope these tales bring you a taste of the **laughter, fellowship, and spiritual "highs"** — and inspire you to **join the camaraderie and the fun in St. Louis in 2030!**

The Language of the Heart at 86

It was a great privilege for me to be able to attend the International Convention in Vancouver, Canada. I'm especially grateful to the many younger A.A. friends who helped make it all possible. Travel from Greenport, NY to Vancouver had its stressful moments—but with a little patience and a few well-timed questions, it all worked out.

I was lucky to stay at the Sheraton with my dear friend, a past Trustee-at-Large. My service assignment was to chair the "Pioneers in A.A." panel, with the speakers selected by our Archivist. I reached out to the panelists ahead of time—and discovered I already knew one of them! He's been one of A.A.'s most prolific letter writers over the years (and yes, his letters are famously long and frequent!).

Running into old A.A. friends was such a joy—a wonderful reunion with many folks I worked with during my 24 years at G.S.O. and even more during my time freelancing afterward. It truly felt like a gathering of past and present friends from all over.

Of course, turning 86 and living in a retirement home in Greenport made getting around a bit more challenging than at Conventions 10, 20, or 30 years ago—so we relied on rideshares to help us get from place to place.

The Convention site was spectacular, and it was a joy to do volunteer service in the Archives suite and at the G.S.O. booth. The oldtimers meeting was terrific, as were several other speakers. Some of the topic meetings were so packed we couldn't even get in! All in all, I'm full of praise for the Convention organizers and already looking forward to St. Louis—when I'll be in my 90's, God willing.

After the Convention, I traveled with a younger A.A. friend through Washington and Idaho on our way to Bozeman, MT. We stopped at a few meetings along the way, all centered on the theme of gratitude—so fitting, as the seventh month's *Daily Reflections* focus on just that.

Thank you to our Co-Founders, and thank you for the Twelve Steps, the Traditions, the Concepts, the Fellowship, and the reminder of our equality in A.A.—and for the enduring importance of one drunk talking to another. See you next time.

- Susan U., Never Too Late Group, Greenport NY

September Calendar

Sep 1 @ 6:00 pm - 7:00 pm
Big Meeting Committee Meeting
(virtual)

Sep 2 @ 7:00 pm - 8:00 pm
Corrections Committee Meeting
(virtual)

Sep 9 @ 6:00 pm - 7:00 pm
Web Committee Meeting
(virtual)

Sep 9 @ 7:00 pm - 8:00 pm
Archives Committee Meeting
(virtual)

Sep 12 @ 6:00 pm - 7:00 pm
Bridging The Gap Committee
Meeting (virtual + SIA Office)

Sep 13 @ 8:00 am - 9:00 am
SIA Speaker Exchange
(True North - hospitality included)

Sep 15 @ 5:30 pm - 6:30 pm
Schools Committee Meeting
(virtual)

Sep 19 @ 8:00 pm - 9:00 pm
Suffolk General Service Meeting
(virtual + Emanuel Lutheran
Church, Patchogue NY)

Sep 27 @ 10:00 am - 2:00 pm
THE BIG MEETING 2025
(St. Joseph the Worker —
510 Narragansett Ave, Patchogue)

Sep 30 @ 6:20 pm - 8:00 pm
Treatment Committee Meeting
(virtual + True North)

Sep 30 @ 7:00 pm - 8:00 pm
Share-A-Thon Committee Mtg
(virtual + True North)

New Intergroup Rep Orientation
(virtual + True North)

Sep 30 @ 8:00 pm - 9:00 pm
SIA Business Meeting
(virtual + True North)

Commitment : The Practical (Part 2 of 2)

Greetings, fellow A.A. Members. Last month I considered some thoughts on the practical side of taking, honoring, and carrying out commitments in our wonderful Fellowship. Obviously, there are many more benefits, far more than I was able to share in a one-page article. But if we're going to consider the spiritual side of what a commitment is, we need to start with a riddle I was posed – and could not answer – in my first year of sobriety, up in Connecticut:

Question: What is the spiritual part of Alcoholics Anonymous?

Answer: All of it!

Granted, my behavior in that first year was a combination of the Tasmanian Devil and Elmer Fudd. However, as cliched as it may sound, I only started the journey into my spiritual side when I started working the Steps with my first sponsor, right around the end of those first twelve months—at the age of 55. And it took well over a year to make my way through A.A.'s lifesaving and life changing Twelve Steps. I had to be willing to change; and with change came growth. In my case, slow, sometimes painful growth has been the way I learned a new life.

I dropped in a sentence last month that I hope didn't come out as conceited: "On the other hand, I've never walked away from an A.A. commitment before completing it." I actually wrote it in a kind of awe, because in my many years of drinking I made a lot of commitments – and kept almost none of them. I heard a circuit speaker years ago who said she'd been married a number of times: "I loved getting married. I just had no follow-through." That was the story of my life until Alcoholics Anonymous. I had no follow-through. And now I do, as do so many of you.

I have learned over the last number of years that commitments, like everything else of value in my life, are spiritual. The various forms of A.A. service that we do are surely practical, but the ways in which we perform them make them spiritual. Perhaps you've

heard this excerpt somewhere along the line: "The point is, that we are willing to grow along spiritual lines. The principles we have set down are guides to progress. We claim spiritual progress rather than spiritual perfection."

So: When does a commitment become a spiritual one?

If I'm a door-greeter, it's practical; if I look someone in the eye and smile each time, it becomes spiritual.

If we honor the Principle of Rotation (*A.A. Service Manual*, Appendix E, page 111), it's practical; if we prepare the next person for the job with love and support, it becomes spiritual.

If we try to encourage new (or long-time) members to participate in an A.A. commitment on any level, it allows our Fellowship to survive; but if we encourage those same members to find their passion in service, to do it with joy, and to pass it on, then our Fellowship can thrive, and continue to save lives. A commitment is A.A. spirituality in action.

Step 12... Tradition 5...

"This we owe to A.A.'s Future"...

"What we really have is a daily reprieve contingent on the maintenance of our spiritual condition."

I don't like riddles I can't solve. Thank goodness Alcoholics Anonymous was willing to help me out with this one.

In Service, Tom B.

Looking for AA Literature?

You can purchase AA literature at the SIA Office.

SIA OFFICE

33 Comac Loop
Suite 1A-1
Ronkonkoma

OFFICE HOURS

Mon - Fri 9 am - 3 pm
Saturday 9 am - 1 pm
***Telephone** (631) 654-1150



**Please call first to ensure that a volunteer is there to assist you*

AA's 90th Birthday Bash was Spoken in the Language of the Heart

Our Primary Purpose is the official podcast of the General Service Office; the most recent episode was about AA's International Convention, July 3–6, 2025, in Vancouver, British Columbia.

Held every five years, our International Convention celebrates AA's founding and is hosted by the US/Canada General Service Structure. Every 20 years it is in Canada; the rest of the time it's in the US. **2025's theme was "The Language of the Heart."**

This was my sixth International Convention (IC). My first was so exhilarating that I kept coming back. I learned to arrive at least two days early and leave a day late.

I'm giggling because that's what I was taught about AA meetings: *get there early, stay late.*

This year I served in the **Technology in AA Hospitality Suite** and visited other hospitality suites, including the **Northeast Regional Hospitality Suite**, where I caught up with lots of friends— including our Delegate, Nisaa.

I perused booths in the Convention Center; at the Grapevine's, our AA Grapevine Non-Trustee Directors Teddy and Nikki were staffing the booth, showing how **we all have "hands-on" work to do.**

There are always tons of volunteering opportunities at the Internationals.

I caught up with friends from all over, *fellowshipping*. A highlight for me was the opportunity to hang with a couple of AAs who were attending their first IC.

An AA meeting of 30,000 to 65,000 in a stadium is awe-inspiring, and the excitement at one's first IC is contagious! I hope that my presence at every International Convention, from my first to my most recent, was helpful to someone.

Back in 1995, at my first in San Diego, I happened to sit next to a past delegate from one of the 93 areas in the US and Canada.

By then, I'd been privileged to serve at different times in both SIA and in General Service. As we chatted, she told me something I still read once a year—I wrote it down in my *Daily Reflections* book. She told me: **"People that stay, stay in service."**

Remembering this makes me smile again.

In 1988, I attended an SIA service workshop where the workshop chair said, **"97% of the people involved in service beyond the group level stay sober."**

I like the odds.

- Jane E., Stony Brook Freethinkers

Godwinks — All Along the Way

I was reading a book called *Godwinks* (about how there are no coincidences) on my flight. I had a layover in Dallas. I took the tram to my gate (from A to D). I got to my terminal, but they had changed it to another one. I got back on the tram, which was going the long way around. I was going to miss my connecting flight.

It turned out a lady was trying to get her motorized scooter on the plane and delayed the flight 15 minutes. I made that flight.

At these conventions, all the different Areas—with some cities and, of course, other countries—had pins they were giving out. I had many of them attached to

the lanyard provided. As a typical alcoholic, one wasn't enough, so I set out to get as many as I could.

I ran late for the Big Meeting, so I didn't eat dinner. I walked in, and the concession stands were open. Dinner was served.

It was hot in there. My friends decided to leave during the second-to-last speaker. I stayed but needed more water. I walked down the ramp, looking for a water fountain, when a guy came up and noticed my pins. He said he was from India and offered me an Indian medallion with "AA India" on one side and the Taj Mahal on the other.

My friend Heather had mentioned going to India

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Around the A.A. Campus

Group Updates

36 Principles in Farmingville

36 Principles in Farmingville stopped meeting at the end of July. It met Mondays at 6:00 PM.

True Friends

True Friends, the women's group in Port Jefferson has switched its 7:00 PM Wednesday's meeting to a Closed Beginners. They also meet on Sundays at 8:00 AM with an Open Discussion. All this happens at Mather Hospital 75 North Country Road

Just For Today in Kings Park

Effective September 3, Kings Park's Just For Today will have a time change to 7:00 PM for its Wednesday meeting. St. Joseph's School 59 Church Street has been its home since it first started exactly forty years ago.

Smithtown Group

Big shake-up at the Smithtown Group. Its new schedule is as follows: Tuesday simultaneous Beginners (in person only) and Step (hybrid)—both at 6:45PM Friday Open Discussion (hybrid) at 6:45 PM. Zoom information is 597 354 0391 passcode hope364. Smithtown meets at the United Methodist Church 230 Middle Country Road.

Recovery in East Setauket

Boy, have they got a story for you! Recovery in East Setauket Presbyterian Church 5 Caroline Avenue will be reading and sharing about the personal stories from the first, second and third editions of the *Big Book* that were deleted from later editions. Happening the fourth Saturday of every month at 11:00 AM.

Melville High Noon Online

Melville High Noon's online Sunday meeting has switched to a *Daily Reflections* format. You can join them on Zoom with the ID 996 2149 2360 and passcode letmein. And yes, meeting time is at noon.

Orient Step Group

Orient has changed its online information. Henceforth it will be 876 3276 9589 Passcode: Orient631.

Orient meets Monday (Step) and Friday (Big Book). These are hybrid meetings, so if you prefer showing up in person, head to Congregation Church 25045 Main Road.

Phelps Lane

Phelps Lane in North Babylon at the Senior Center Annex 281 Phelps Lane has mixed up its Sunday schedule a bit. First and third Sundays will now be Beginners, while the second, fourth and fifth will be Big Book. That's at 3:00 PM. Its Wednesday 7:00 PM schedule remains the same.

Seasonal Meetings

After Labor Day many seasonal meetings shut down for the year, like **Fire Island Pines Clean and Dry**. Let Suffolk Intergroup know what's happening with your group, so we can adjust things accordingly. An accurate up-to-date meeting list is our goal.

Meetings That Could Use a Boost

Looking for a different meeting to vary your routine a little? Why not consider these three, which could use some support.

- 1 Organic Mustard Seed** meets Monday to Friday at 7:30 AM and Wednesday at 3:00 PM 10 Flanders Road Second Floor Riverhead.
- 2 The One and Only** every Saturday at 3:00 PM at St. Thomas of Canterbury 29 Brookside Drive Smithtown. Wondering why their name? Speakers are invited in to speak one and only one time!
- 3 Sober and Out** at the LBGT Network 125 Kennedy Drive Suite 100, Hauppauge Thursday 7:00 PM *Daily Reflections* meeting. Sober and Out is one of only three LGBTQ+ meetings in Suffolk. **Alive Again in Dix Hills** meets at the United Methodist Church 400 Deer Park Road Dix Hills on Saturday (11:00 AM) and online on Wednesday (6:00 PM) using Zoom ID 832 2577 4908. Passcode PICKLES. **Cherry Grove Off-Island** an online only meeting meets seven days a week at 6:00 PM. Zoom ID 817 779 951. Passcode 11782.

Big Book at Brooksite Group History

St. Thomas of Canterbury
29 Brooksite Drive
Smithtown, N.Y. 11787
Bill K. was the founder of this meeting. He also co-founded the old New Lease on Life Group in Smithtown and Northport. He was famous for introducing himself:



“I am an alcoholic. Bill K is my problem.”

One of the Archives Committee remembered him from Kings Park Fort Salonga Workshop. He seemed gruff, but in reality, was a marshmallow - kind and compassionate. Bill’s drinking brought him to the point where he ended up in a psychiatric hospital. While there, he reached his moment of truth and came to the conclusion that alcoholism was his problem.

He was a steamfitter by trade and a major part of his paying back to Alcoholics Anonymous was by bringing the message of sobriety to the very hospital where he was a patient. He ran a meeting at Building 22 at Kings Park Psychiatric Center for years. Bill’s love for these people was apparent. Meetings were held in locked wards with windows closed shut. In the days of indoor smoking, it was brutal being inside. It took a special person to come back week after week to lead these. Bill was just that.

His next plan was to create this Big Book meeting. According to long time member, Maureen, Bill died before the first meeting and although apprehensive about running a meeting, she carried on. “We should do this for Bill.” They first met at Community Hospital at the corner of Route 111 and 347 in Hauppauge. They were given two weeks’ notice when the building was shutting down.

They then moved to the Thomas Moore Knights of Columbus building at the intersection of Smithtown Bypass and Veterans Highway. This was a historic building that once served as Hauppauge Town Hall. Here they were known as Big Book at the Crossroads. When the roadway was expanded, the building was razed. In 2009, they moved to St. Thomas of Canterbury in Smithtown. With that move came a new name: Big Book at Brooksite. Through it all, they have met at 10:00 AM on Tuesday.

With the pandemic in 2020, they went on sabbatical for two years. They never did go online. When they resumed, it was slow at first but has slowly been growing again. The meeting has never been packed. There are 10 to 15 people each week. The people sit around a table, while reading the Big Book aloud. Sharing goes on after that. Bill K may be gone but his meeting is still bringing Bill W to us.

SIA Committee Meeting Schedule

Archives (virtual)
2nd Tuesday 7:00 pm

Big Meeting (virtual)
1st Monday 7:00 pm

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

Corrections (virtual)
1st Tuesday 7:00 pm

Schools (virtual)
3rd Monday 5:30 pm

Share-A-Thon (virtual+TrueNorth)
last Tuesday 7:00 pm

Treatment (virtual + True North)
last Tuesday 6:20 pm

Web (virtual)
2nd Tuesday 6:00 pm

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

SIA Virtual Meeting Space



Zoom ID 941 2170 5886
Passcode service
Tel Dial-In (929) 205-6099

Ebby, Bill, Bob ... and Me — A Golden Thread of Grace

My sponsor taught me that if I were to have a comfortable sobriety, I would have to learn to live a day at a time. Since then, I have had to remind myself to stay in the day many, many times; but this year, the year of my impending fiftieth anniversary, God-willing, was the perfect time to celebrate AA's 90th anniversary at my first International Convention in Vancouver. The theme was "Language of the Heart."

In my early days of dryness my annoyingly cheerful sponsor would ask, don't you want to be "part of?" To that I would emphatically respond, no I didn't want to be part of any group; I just wanted to keep from getting drunk. The joy of living wasn't even on my radar. I didn't know how to be one among many because I was still stuck in my self imposed disease of alcoholic isolation. But with the twelve steps and a lot of help from the fellowship, a wonderful and inspiring experience was awaiting me.

At the convention, I got to interact with thousands of sober alcoholics, all of whom wanted to carry the message and have a good time in a beautiful city. I was part of a travel group of several AA's from home. The convention brought home to me that I have received the gift of belonging, the gift of being part of, that alcoholic loneliness is a long distant memory, useful only in carrying the life-giving AA message to the alcoholic who still suffers.

The opening Big Meeting displayed an exciting and impressive flag ceremony with over ninety countries represented. Among those present were very special guests including relatives and descendants of persons who were instrumental in the early days of Alcoholics Anonymous. Of those who struck me most emphatically were descendants of Ebby T., the man who carried the message of recovery to our beloved founders, first to Bill W. then through Bill to Dr. Bob then to thousands more including the throngs sitting right near me at that very moment. It has always seemed to me that Ebby was a very humble instrument, a power of example, and his story, a profound lesson to me that the most important work in this life is done selflessly, without fanfare, glitz or glory.

The matter of anonymity was treated simply as it was requested at the beginning of each meeting that no photos or recordings be taken at the meeting or at nearby venues. It is AA's tradition that utmost care must be taken to protect members' anonymity, especially at the level of press, radio, film (and presumably social media). There would be conference approved, anonymity protected videos of meeting highlights available after the convention. Most people honored that request. (We take our own inventory.)

A very special bonus for me was that my convention roommate, a friend since meeting in the rooms in the 1970's and who has over 51 years of continuous sobriety, entered her name in the hat to speak to 35,000 AA members, Al-Anons and other supporters at the Old-timers Big Meeting. She was allowed to invite one other person to sit by the speakers' platform with all the other old time speaker hopefuls, so I got to mingle with them even though I haven't yet reached my 50th (a day at a time, remember?)

With a great deal of exhilaration and suspense, twelve names were drawn out of the hat; and although hers wasn't picked, my friend already had decided going in that her higher power would choose the speakers. Of course He did, and they were all just fine and inspiring. We had the best time sharing and laughing with A.A. oldsters from all over the world. The oldest had 65 years (his name wasn't chosen either, and he was fine with it).

There were block parties with food trucks and music and so many topic meetings in rooms at the convention centers and in nearby hotels. Many of the hotels also had welcome suites open to all. Our particular hotel had a group from Australia who gave a fond welcome at their suite with coffee, cookies and little kangaroo pins. There was a lot of pin trading among groups.

As we walked through the city, we recognized each other by big name tags that included first name, home town and country. In the "not a glum lot" category, I missed a topic meeting about healing laughter, but that was because instead I attended a

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hilarious musical called, “My Fairly Drunken Lady,” (a takeoff on how Professor Higgins turned Eliza Doolittle, a street flower vendor, into a grand lady.) The “fairly drunken lady” was twelve-stepped into A.A. sobriety.

Vancouver residents were gracious hosts. Our hotel happened to have a casino adjacent to it with a 24 hour food court. One late night when I went to get some chili, a waitress at the counter said, I see by your name tag that you’re attending the big convention. What is *The Language of the Heart* Convention all about? I said that some of the attendees are members of Alcoholics Anonymous while others are friends, relatives, Al-Anons and supporters. She said, “Oh, I have a ‘friend’ who drinks a lot and could sure use some of that A.A.” Well, knowing that sometimes the one asking for a ‘friend’ might actually be the one seeking help. I gave her my number and told her to

call me any time if she had questions or if her ‘friend’ wanted help. I assured her we would be there for him or her.

The convention cost money, of course, because there are times when A.A. and finances mix, as any dedicated home group treasurer will remind us. We are self supporting through our own contributions. We are responsible for paying our legitimate expenses.

So much happened in those few days that I can’t do it justice in this writing; but I have to say that the highlight of the Closing Big Meeting for me was a simple statement in the language of the heart by the last speaker. He said, “we alcoholics stay away from one drink one day at a time. We don’t care if your last drink was fifty years ago or just outside in the parking lot. You are not alone. We have a seat for you here.”

Meet you in St. Louie at the next convention!

- Anonymous

My Vancouver Journey

My journey to the 2025 International Convention actually began in 2020 as the in-person Detroit convention was cancelled. That would have been my first International. After the cancellation I promised myself that I would definitely attend the 2025 convention.

Plans were underway to attend Vancouver with a good friend when she unfortunately passed away. Shortly after that I got an invitation to share a Vrbo rental with 9 women from the Seattle area. My prayers had been answered! However, in March we found that the landlady cancelled our reservation for the Vrbo. Now, what was I supposed to do? I already had my plane tickets.

My first thought was that maybe I wasn’t supposed to attend the International this year. Where was I going to stay? But after much prayer and reminding myself how badly I wanted to go in 2020, I was fortunate to be able to make a reservation to stay at Simon Fraser University (SFU). So, at the beginning of July with much fear and trepidation about going by myself, off I went to Vancouver.

As the journey unfolded, my fears quickly melted away. During my layover in Toronto, I met a couple also headed to the International. In Vancouver, a fellow AA shared an Uber with me from the airport to SFU,

and just as I arrived on campus, a friend I knew through service appeared and helped me find my room. Clearly, AA—and my Higher Power—were looking out for me every step of the way.

The convention itself was amazing. I met up with friends from Long Island and attended some inspiring workshops. The Flag Ceremony was as amazing as I had been led to expect. It was awesome to be part of such a large gathering that took over Vancouver. Everyone was so friendly, even the venue staff and local shopkeepers. I was particularly touched by one restroom attendant who when thanked for her help with something responded, “Anything for all of you”. She seemed genuinely grateful for our behavior.

After the convention ended, I spent a few additional days touring Vancouver. Even then I ran into a number of people who had attended the convention. I ended up spending one afternoon exploring Grouse Mountain with a woman I had just met on a harbor tour. She is from the Albany area, and I was able to meet up with her at the recent NYS Informational Workshop.

The 2025 International Convention was a memorable experience that inspires me to look forward to attending the 2030 International in St. Louis. My initial fears were certainly unfounded. I might even volunteer to do service in St. Louis.

- Karen K., Grateful Member of AA

Riding the R5...

I arrived in Vancouver already knowing I'd need to take public transportation from the college dorms where I would be staying to the convention site downtown. But when I **realized** my fastest option was nearly an hour by bus, I immediately felt the familiar twinges of **regret** and **resentment**.

That fastest **route** — **the R5 bus** — was a 50-minute **ride** from Simon Fraser University, gliding along **rolling** hills with downtown Vancouver **rising** in the distance. The route passed through some **rough** sections of the city, where desperate people in the throes of addiction — or perhaps **revenants** at the start of their **recovery** — were clearly visible from the windows; **reminders** of the many “yets” and, hopefully, “never agains” in my own life.

I thought the convention itself would be the main event. But as it turned out, the bus **ride** was equally **rewarding** — a daily **ritual** that let me take in the sights and sounds of the bustling, cosmopolitan Vancouver. I indulged in my favorite pastime of people-watching and interacting with the locals — who were, without fail, friendly and welcoming. Along the way, I met fellow travelers and convention-goers from Texas, Florida, and Iowa, striking up an easy **rapport** and **relaxed, rewarding** conversations that made the ride feel much shorter.

The convention site itself was spectacular — perched right on the waterfront, with breathtaking views of the harbor and **regal** mountains beyond. Stepping inside



each morning, I felt the buzz of anticipation, knowing I was part of something big.

It was thrilling to be among thousands of grateful **recovered** drunks — just like me — sharing memorable moments with newfound friends from across the U.S., Canada, Mexico, Latin America, and beyond. I heard the message of hope and **renewal** from people of all ages, backgrounds, and walks of life, in both English and Spanish.

As I've learned over and over again in recovery, doing service is a sure **remedy** for my innate introversion and my old sense of not belonging. Volunteering made me feel like I was contributing rather than passively watching life fly by.

But the most deeply **resonant** part of the convention was the Longtimers Meeting. Going in, I half-expected to slip out early to get a jump on the next day's early start. Instead, I was **riveted** by the 12 shares from 12 longtimers selected by lottery — members with 50+ years of sobriety. They had only 5 minutes each, but in that short time they **recounted remarkable** stories of **wreckage**, surrender, and **resurrection**. Their words were **radiant** with joy, gratitude and wisdom. It was, frankly, gobsmacking.

That's the thing about life and **recovery**: the **ride** matters as much — maybe more — than the final destination. The **R5 bus was more than a ride** — it was an unexpected gift and a **daily reminder** that connection, service, and shared experience are the **real rewards of recovery**.

- David V., Stony Brook Freethinkers

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when she got sober, and I mentioned giving it to her. He said, “No, I will give you two.”

I was still on the ramp, talking with him, when I felt a tap on my shoulder. I had dropped my wallet at the seats, and because I hadn't left yet, a fellow A.A.'er was able to return it—with all my money and credit cards still there.

I filled up my water and decided to stay. Then my phone vibrated. My friend's husband had lost his phone—could I go back to the seats and check? I found it.

After the final Big Meeting on Sunday, I was by myself. I pulled out my meeting app to see if there was anything nearby. I found a meeting—but the app's distances had converted to kilometers. A much longer walk. I still made it before the meeting started.

It was a unique meeting. They began with introductions of everyone present and where they were from. After the speaker shared, the chairperson called names to see if they would like to share. I was third.

After the meeting, I pulled up Google Maps to find my way back to the hotel. A guy offered me a ride. He had 48 years sober and was the past Archives Chair for the entire state of Montana. We talked for over three hours at lunch.

I had eight hours to kill before my flight home Monday, so I went to the casino. I lost all my “found” money. Oh well.

I met at least 10 more people at the airport—for my meeting after the meeting.

See you in St. Louis, 2030.

- Big Jim from Home for Dinner

The Bubble Popped the Moment I Turned It Over

What an experience Vancouver was! It was my first International—and I absolutely loved it.

Living in New Zealand, it had been really easy to tell myself “I can’t afford it” back when my home group was making plans for San Antonio.

As soon as I said that, the opportunity shut down. And I never went.

Then, not in a position to do Atlanta either, something shifted.

This time, instead of listing all the reasons this couldn’t be, I started asking—what if I could?

Turns out my diseased thinking will always sell me short.

But if I just set an intention and leave the rest to my HP, I’m constantly amazed at the results!

One day at a time.

One obstacle at a time.

I took the next right action—and before I knew it, everything was booked and paid for.

Effortlessly, it seemed.

My Higher Power nudged and guided me.

The results? Mind-blowing.

I exist in a bubble in NZ, telling myself all is well and people just complicate things.

Imagine my surprise when I came alive in front of 40,000 people—

Energised.

Empowered.

Living the recovery dream.

“I can’t afford it” is not a valid reason not to attend an International. Someone in my home group tried to tell me that before we left.

Fortunately, in the weeks that followed, I shared my experience, strength, and hope around San Antonio. God spoke through me and he was able to hear it.

That man went to Vancouver too. When he got back, he thanked me for “all the gentle persuasion” that got him there.

You see, his Higher Power provided for him too.

We put recovery first.

Made a decision.

Left the rest up to the God of our understanding—who did the rest.

The results were better than anything I could have imagined.

So thank you—

To everyone who helped make this event so spectacular.

Thank you for the attention to detail, the hard work, the dedication it took to bring it to life.

It truly was an event to remember.

I can’t wait for St. Louis in 2030.

The savings account is already being funded.

I *can* afford it.

And with five years to prepare—There really are no excuses.

See you there!

**Matt B., Seaside Steps Group,
Sumner Christchurch, New Zealand**

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Does your group need a literature rack?

The Archives Committee has a nice used one for free.

Send an email to archives@SuffolkNY-AA.Org

You will need to arrange a pickup.

Upcoming Events in the Area

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

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



LICYPAA CAMPOUT

WITH AL-ANON & ALATEEN PARTICIPATION

Wildwood State Park | Long Island | NY

September 12th-14th 2025

\$40 Weekend Pass
\$15 Day Pass

SCHOLARSHIPS
AVAILABLE!
contact:
outreach.licypaa@gmail.com



Scan the QR code for tickets!



Or visit:
licypaa.carrd.com

Join the Long Island Committee of Young People In Alcoholics Anonymous at our annual 3 day long camp out with meetings, workshops, food and games! More info to come!

**SERVICE IS OUR THIRD LEGACY
COME JOIN US AS AA CELEBRATES
90 YEARS OF SERVICE**



THE BIG MEETING

SEPTEMBER 27TH 2025
10:00 AM – 2:00 PM

ST JOSEPH THE WORKER
510 NARRAGANSETT AVENUE
EAST PATCHOGUE



Come join us for food, fellowship, and discussion on how we can serve those still sick and suffering and carry AA's message of hope.

Service tables will be set up to help you find the best fit for you to do service.

**This is an open event with Al-Anon Participation.

2025 SHARE-A-THON

AL-ANON PARTICIPATION

Bridge to Shore

Guest Speaker:

Connina D.
from Fort Lauderdale, FL



Sunday October 5th

9AM-4PM

Meetings Begin Every Hour
GSR & SIA Workshops
Lunch Served

Hyatt Regency LI
1717 Motor Parkway
Hauppauge, NY 11788

AREA 49 / SENY
PRESENTS

*Joy of Service
Workshop*

"Humility in Action"



Saturday, October 18th

11 AM - 3:30 PM

LUNCH WILL BE SERVED



True North Church
1101 Lakeland Ave
Bohemia, NY 11716

*** Easy access via LIRR @ Ronkonkoma ***
shuttle service on request—contact host committee

*** For information contact: Jim S. Alt-DCMC
jim.service2008@gmail.com ***

hosted by Suffolk General Service and District 107