



The Boomerang

Area 28, Panel 66, Edition 1

Winter 2016

A Journey In A.A.

The reality of becoming a Delegate of Panel 66 for Area 28 is still settling in. This is nothing that I have had any aspirations for and certainly wasn't what I was thinking on February 27, 1996 when I first entered the halls of Alcoholics Anonymous looking for help. Little did I know at the time what journey I was embarking on and what trails I had yet to travel. I would like to say that I came in and embraced all that A.A. had to offer and jumped into the middle of that circle and triangle. But that story belongs to someone else. For me it was accepting what A.A. has to offer but not putting it into practice. Four years passed with no sponsor, no fourth step and only token amends for things I imagined was my wrongs. As often happens to many of us, I reached a new point of desperation and knew I needed to do something different with my life or I'd surely die. As I've heard many times when the student is ready, the teacher will appear and so it was for me. A man entered my life who became my sponsor and brought me into a way of living that encompasses our three legacies of Recovery, Unity and Service symbolized by the circle and triangle.

One of the very first things this man did was to walk me through how important our three legacies are for living a happy life without alcohol. He went on to tell me that if I keep the three sides of this triangle in balance that my life would change in ways that neither of us could predict. Thus began a journey for me on a spiritual path through the teachings of Alcoholics Anonymous. How prophetic those words were during this first meeting for God has brought me into a way of life that I could never predicted. Part of this journey has brought me into the service structure of A.A. that began by establishing myself as an active participant of a home group. Something that has not changed to this day. As a GSR I was introduced into the A.A. Service structure that I have fallen in love with because of all the lives that have been positively impacted by our program. This beginning has lead me to hold numerous positions at the District and Area levels. I'm now humbled by the understanding that as Delegate I will be carrying the voice of Area 28 to the General Service Conference. I know that everything work out for the best if I keep my reliance on God and not myself.

Since being elected at our Fall Assembly I've received superb council from my service sponsor and our past delegates. In my prayers I've been asking God for guidance and strength as I embark on this new journey. There are many issues that we face as a fellowship and I need to have an understanding on how the members of the Area feel about these. Two of the many areas where I have concern is the lack of understanding of the A.A. Service Structure and the other is the alcoholics we are failing to reach.

All too often I hear people at meetings talking about us and them. Or the A.A. member as an individual versus an A.A. Service body that may be a District, Area or our General Service Office. I hear things like, "What are they doing for us?" I believe this is a symptom of people not knowing how A.A. structured and how we collectively are responsible for carrying our message of recovery. All of us need to take every opportunity to make the point that A.A. belongs to us the members as individuals. That the various service bodies are responsible to us the fellowship. Our program is about giving of ourselves and understanding that none of us are special by ourselves but as a group we carry God's power and grace. We all need to remember that our seventh tradition contributions should be used for carrying our message beyond the home group. We need to elect people who are qualified to serve us and communicating with them our concerns and hope. Each of us is responsible for the future of Alcoholics Anonymous by our words and deeds which is best done by getting involved.

Bill W. gave a talk in Toronto in 1965 on a panel entitled, "Our Responsibility to A.A.'s Future" where he stated "Our first concern should be for those sufferers of alcoholism that we are still unable to reach." There are people dying of alcoholism in our own backyard that do not even know they are afflicted. Alcoholics are a diverse group of individuals from all walks of life and we have to ask ourselves what more can we do to reach out to them whether they are the young people or the old people; the homeless and poor or the rich and famous; the

Continued on last page

Area 28 Calendar 2016

- Jan 3** Area Committee Meeting (ACM) Standing
Committees meet at 9am, ACM starts at 10am – Finished
Best Western 375 Main Street, Waterville Maine
- Feb 7** Area Committee Meeting (ACM) Standing
Committees meet at 9am, ACM starts at 10am – Finished
Best Western 375 Main Street, Waterville Maine
- Feb 19, 20 & 21 NERAASA** – (North East Regional AA Service Assembly)
Area 31 Springfield, MA.
- Mar 6** Pre conference Forum- Delegate presents General Service Conference Agenda for Round Table
Discussion starting at 9am,
Best Western 375 Main Street, Waterville Maine

**Spring Assembly District 1, April 1st, 2nd and 3rd
Woodford's Club, 179 Woodford's Street, Portland
Meals \$35.00**

- May 15** Post Conference Forum – District 7
9:00 am -1:00 pm
- July 15, 16&17** Area Round-Up at Sugarloaf USA
- Aug 7** Area Committee Meeting (ACM) Standing
Committees meet at 9am, ACM starts at 10am – Finished
Best Western 375 Main Street, Waterville Maine
- Sep 11 A** Area Committee Meeting (ACM) Standing
Committees meet at 9am, ACM starts at 10am – Finished
Best Western 375 Main Street, Waterville Maine

Oct 21, 22 & 23 Fall Assembly Area (East) – TBD

IMPORTANT ADDRESSES

Maine Area 28
499 Broadway #225
Bangor, ME 04401

The Boomerang
499 Broadway #225
Bangor, ME 04401

General Service Office
P.O. Box 459
New York, NY 10163-0459

Central Service Office
47 Portland Street
Portland, ME 04101

Downeast Intergroup
P.O. Box 1633
Bucksport, ME 04416

Message From Our Area Chair

Greetings to all Registered Groups, Districts, Central Service Office and Downeast Intergroup.

My Name is B. and I am an Alcoholic.

At our Fall Assembly in Brewer the GSR's, DCM's, District Chairpersons, Area Committee Chairperson's and Officers elected me to serve as your Panel 66 Area Chairperson.

It is truly an honor and privilege to serve you, Area 28.

I would like to thank all the people that open the Meeting Halls, Door Greeters, Coffee Makers, Group Secretaries, Group Treasurers, Group Members, GSR's, District Secretaries, District Treasures, District Standing Committee Chairpersons, DCM's, DCMC's, CSR's, Central Service Office and Downeast Intergroup Office Managers – Staff – Volunteers, Area 28 Round-Up Committee, Area 28 Standing Committee Chairperson's and Area 28 Officers (all past and present) for your service and being responsible. Thank You, Thank You, Thank You.

I look forward to serving for and with you the next two years. It will go fast.

There are a variety of THINGS and STUFF that come up, get discussed, debated, deliberated and sometimes recreated at ACM's (Area Committee Meetings) and Assemblies.

My main focus is and will continue to be RECOVERY – UNITY – SERVICE not THINGS and STUFF.

To be of service to all groups and its members.

After all, this is where the rubber hits road for Recovery.

This where we learn to agree to disagree yet stand United for the sick and suffering.

This also where all the trusted servants come from to be of Service.

May each of you and your loved ones have a Happy, Healthy and Winter Season and I look forward to seeing you in the halls.

Thank you for your service.

Gray Village Group

My name is Gary and I am an alcoholic

My home group is the Gray Village Group. We are a Speakers meeting on Thursday Night at 8 pm in the Saint Gregory's Parish Hall in Gray. We also have a Big Book meeting at 10:30 on Monday morning and a Women's meeting on Tuesday evening at 7 pm. You are all welcome to stop by. We are an AA speakers meeting and try very hard to stay on our singleness of purpose abiding by the 12 traditions of AA. This is an AA meeting with no or very little talk of other substances or issues. We have even had to ask groups that when the comeback or if they come back, please bring AA speakers that talk about their problems with alcohol and their recovery from alcohol. What it was like, what happened and what it's like today-Our stories in a general way!

We began a group inventory about six months ago to find how we can carry the AA message better and also to find things that we may have not been so well. We found we had begun to be lazy and not responsible to AA's primary purpose along with not following through on our commitment to this fellowship as a whole. Communication with each other had been slowly failing apart as we were not following through on our obligations to each other as members of our group.

We have started by-(Being Responsible to each other & AA) a renewed commitment to Sobriety-freedom from alcohol-through the teaching & practice of the 12 steps is the sole purpose of an AA Group. That means our group; as we move forward sharing in sobriety, learning to trust the traditions of past members knowledge which they have taught us by practicing and rereading the traditions along with the monthly checklist. Asking ourselves difficult question about our inventory; Such as what is AA. What AA does and what AA does not do.

AA In Western Maine: District II

Meetings are located from Kingfield, Carrabassett Valley, Stratton and Rangeley in the northern part of District II to Farmington, Dixfield, Andover, Mexico and Rumford in the south. Geographically the district runs from the foothills in the south through the mountains to the north. Driving distance is 82 miles via the longest route.

Most of the meetings are open discussion while Farmington Friday night meeting is a closed discussion, the Rumford Thursday meeting is a speaker meeting. District II also holds a jail meeting at the Franklin County Jail in Farmington, even though we are experiencing some challenges with that meeting, the members of the AA fellowship are dedicated to having a successful program available to those inmates who want to get help with ALCOHOLISM while still incarcerated.

The fellowship consists of men ranging from late teens to a gentleman of 90 years young and 52 years as a sober member of AA. We also have a dedicated bunch of woman who often travel to various meetings, their sobriety is a great example of the power of AA for many newcomer women in the District II area.

Most meetings stick pretty close to the message of recovery from the disease and carry that message well; at times discussion begins to drift to other topics but by the Grace of God is redirected to alcoholism and recovery.

The service structure of District II was non-existent for many years, until nearly 10 years ago John D., who was living in Stratton at the time, began visiting groups in the district to re-activate service that had gone dark, leaving western Maine unrepresented in area 28. At times the service structure seems to fade, yet the dedication and encouragement of the fellowship's leaders has maintained the service structure that we have today.

A monthly meeting for District II is held on the first Monday of every month, at the White Elephant Restaurant in Strong. The meeting starts at 5:30 PM with dinner in a private dining room and eventually gets into taking care of the business of AA in the district. All members are invited and challenged to become active GSR's for their respective groups. With varying results, service continues to expand. The fellowship in District II has sponsored workshops, hosted an area assembly, and supports the annual Maine Area Round Up, all since coming back into the light of Unity, Service and Recovery. Keep coming back.

Yours in Love & Service,
Eddie L. District II Chair



Big Book Quote

“We never apologize to anyone for depending upon our Creator. We can laugh at those who think spirituality the way of weakness. Paradoxically, it is the way of strength. The verdict of the ages is that faith means courage. All men of faith have courage. They trust their God. We never apologize for God. Instead we let Him demonstrate, through us, what He can do. We ask Him to remove our fear and direct our attention to what He would have us be. At once, we commence to outgrow fear.”

Reprinted with permission, AA World Services Inc.

Northern Boomerang Reporter

Hello everyone my name is Phil an I'm an alcoholic. I am also the Boomerang reporter for the Northern Districts. If you have anything going on in your districts or groups please let me know so that I can send it to the Boomerang Editor. Here is my e-mail address: plhender1349@outlook.com.

Here is my report. District 3 had its election of Officers on December 13, 2015. Here is the name of the new officers. Donna W. District Chair, Brent B. Alt. Chair, Phil H. Treasure, Jean M. Alt. Treasure, Ann D. Secretary, and Tony S. Alt. Secretary.

District 3 hosted a Holiday Alcahthon at the Barn in Brewer at 142 Center Street. It started at noon on December 24, 2015 until noon on December 25, 2015. Potluck dinner 2:00 PM to 5:00 PM. New Year's Eve started at 10:00 AM with meetings every 2 hours and fellowship meetings in between. Spaghetti dinner 4-5:30 PM followed by a 6:00-7:00 PM meeting and back to back meetings on New Year's Day 2:00 AM to 12:00 PM.

The last thing that I would like to say is that we had two visitors from New Brunswick at the Sunday Morning Fellowship Group . They really enjoyed the meeting and would like to come back again.

Yours in Service;
Philip H.

NERAASA....

North East Regional Alcoholics Anonymous Service Assembly. Big acronym, big event! One of the most informative and overall fun conferences each year, this event is important for many reasons and well worth the effort to financially assist your GSR, your DCM or anyone representing your district to go.

The weekend is a series of presentations put on for 8-10 minutes on topics that are important to the area and relative to the General Service Conference in the spring. Once these presentations are complete, the microphones are opened up for anyone to come forward and speak their opinion on the issue for two minutes. One day sober, or 45 years sober, everyone gets their chance to opine and share their experience strength and hope. It is one of the most fascinating and educational AA experiences you can attend.

Each year NERAASA is held in different parts of the North East Region and being held in Feb., there is always potential for challenges with the weather. This coming year, the event is held February 26th, 27th, and 28th 2016 in Western Massachusetts. The point is.....IT IS CLOSE! And regardless of the weather, this event is easy to get to, affordable and Maine should be well represented.

Start now planning for your GSR or DCM to be there. The weekend cost is in the range of \$200 to \$250 per person. This will depend on room sharing, food preference etc.... If you are interested to go, please contact me as soon as possible. Rooms fill up quickly so you'll want to make reservations soon. I can get you headed in the right direction and we will be making plans to car pool and make a fun road trip of this weekend.

If you want to have fun in sobriety while learning how to be a part of service, this is the event for you! You don't have to be in service to attend, anyone can go and have a great time so contact the new comer you sponsor, your sponsor, your sponsee, your GSR...ANYONE! Let's get to this event in large numbers and let's have a great time! If you're interested, please call me at: 207-751-1968 or check out the event information at: www.neraasa2016.org

In Service, Spencer R.

Maine Area Grapevine Committee Chair

The Grapevine is a great little magazine in print and online. AA Grapevine, Inc. also publishes 22 books and 20 E-Books as well as The Language of the Heart in audio. They publish wall calendars adorned with photos taken by our AA members and there is also a pocket planner. AA Grapevine is offering a poster of 'The Man on the Bed'. It is a newly restored reproduction of the popular oil painting, which was created for AA Grapevine and first appeared in the December 1955 issue. The Grapevine has been around for over 70 years.

Our newest book is Forming New Partnerships with candid and colorful stories on relationships with a wide range of experiences from sober alcoholics. These will be available at our Area 28 functions along with a wide range of other Grapevine books and subscription order forms. Use your magazine in meetings and for topic ideas. They are great for passing on our experience, strength and hope through sponsors to sponsees, reading material while in a waiting room or when the power goes out. They are a great way to share our message with shut-ins and those in institutions.

The Grapevine is always looking for stories, photographs, and illustrations. Please visit www.aagrapevine.org/share to learn more about how you can participate with Grapevine. I'm looking forward to serving you as your Area Grapevine Chair in the next two years and I am open to requests for material and information you may need. Just ask!

Yours in service, Peggy G.
Area 28 Grapevine Committee Chair



From the AA Grapevine

Ham on Wry

"You know what they say," In AA there's a wrench for every nut."

Anonymous

Reprinted with permission A.A. Grapevine

Editorial: on the Ninth Step

Made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others.

July 1945

Like others of the Steps, Number Nine is closely related to Number Three – 'to turn our will and our lives over to God *as we understood Him*.' If we have accomplished this Step to any measurable degree, we have attained at least a small measure of humility and a realization of our dependence on him.

Having prepared a list of all people we have harmed and brought ourselves to the point where we are *willing* to make amends to them, our Ninth Step is one calling for positive *action*. There is a world of difference between being *willing* to do a thing and actually *doing* it. How many times in the pre-AA state have we said "I am sorry, I won't do it again" and felt that that constituted complete amends.

A sincere apology, with a true explanation to the person harmed, of what we believe to be the reason for our past actions can quit frequently readjust personal relations – but the AA realizes that this cannot take care of the ones we have really hurt, and invariably these are the ones we should and do love most.

Most of us had at least a few years of real pathological drinking behind us when we first learned the Twelve Steps. Those terrible years are the ones that become repulsive to us as we progress in our

newfound life program for order and happiness – years in which our every action was influenced by alcoholic thinking, with all its implications. It naturally follows that whatever our state in life may be, those close to us bore the brunt of our outrageous behavior. How can one make amends to a dear wife, son or daughter, or parent who through no fault of their own truly suffered physically and financially, and more important, mentally, the humiliation and embarrassment of going through life with a drunkard? A simple “I am sorry; it won’t happen again” is not enough. It is not enough for us, and it is not enough for the aggrieved person.

Direct amends, by all means, is a must, in restoring physical property to the rightful owner, paying debts willingly within our ability to do so, and retracting the lie that hurt a reputation; but the real amends are made in scrutinizing our day-in and day-out conduct and keeping that conduct “on the beam.” The loved ones whom we have hurt don’t want their “pound of flesh.” Whether they are still in daily contact with us or not, amends are best made to them by restoring the love and confidence and respect they once had for us by the *action* of right living. With the thought clearly in our minds that “first drink” is an improbability, even an impossibility, and the well-rounded, good life we all yearn for becomes readily visible to us.

B.H., Forest Hills, N.

Reprinted with permission, AA Grapevine, Inc.

From the *Boomerang* Editor

My name is John D. and I am an alcoholic. My recovery from alcoholism is rooted from the practice and teaching of the twelve steps and for that gift I am grateful. Gratitude has taught me about faith and faith has taught me what I need to do with my interaction with God and my fellows. The twelve traditions protect Alcoholics Anonymous from us as individuals. Understanding anonymity, at both the individual and group level, is significant. AA isn’t a secret society and when I, or we, present AA to potential members, or to the greater society all around us, humility and anonymity are ideals that need constant vigilance. I have been recently appointed to serve the Maine Area as the *Boomerang* editor and appreciate the opportunity to help you communicate AA’s life saving twelfth step.

Thank you to everyone that submitted material to this *Boomerang*. The skiing moose on the cover is dedicated to the Stratton Moose Group, if you haven’t visited the moose group you really need to, it is a special experience. Area officers, an area committee chair, a district chair, an AA Group member, a 70 year old Grapevine article, and some fine clip art provide what I hope you find an enlightening newsletter. It is my hope that AA members and groups find the *Boomerang* a resource for AA principle. Service is a special responsibility, a responsibility I ask you to share. Please consider submitting material about your recovery, your group, your service, they are all related life saving principles.

Twelfth Tradition

And finally, we of Alcoholics Anonymous believe that the principle of anonymity has an immense spiritual significance. It reminds us that we are to place principles before personalities; that we are actually to practice a genuine humility. This to the end that our great blessings may never spoil us; that we shall forever live in thankful contemplation of Him that presides over us all.

A Journey In A.A.

physically and mentally challenged; the technologically savvy or those without technology resources and on and on. We need to carefully evaluate how we try to reach out these alcoholics that are not yet part of our fellowship. We need to be welcoming to all who suffer. We need to be open to new modes of communication while protecting our traditions but not doing something that will create 2 fellowships. Responsibility for reaching these alcoholics rests with each and every one of us. I look forward to the challenges that lay ahead as serve you as Panel 66 Delegate. I encourage you to reach out to me with your concerns, fears and hope for our life saving program.

In Love and Service,

Gene W. Area 28 , Panel 66. Delegate

Bill W. On AA Service

“The AA groups today hold the ultimate responsibility and final authority for our world services – those special elements of overall service activity which make it possible for our Society to function as a whole. The groups assumed that responsibility at the St. Louis International Convention of 1955. There, on behalf of Dr. Bob, the Trustees and the AA’s old-time leaders, I made the transfer of world service responsibility to our entire Fellowship.”

Reprinted with permission, AA World Services Inc.

Reflections From Our Newest Past Delegate

Becoming a Past Delegate is perhaps as big a step as becoming a Delegate and is definitely another leg on the journey of happy destiny. It was with some anxiety that I began to prepare myself to let go of the reigns of my service position as Delegate. What would I do now? Would my sobriety suffer? Was there to be purpose to my life? To some extent there has been anxiety around each service position I have held. I would let go, sometimes quickly but most times slowly, but I always realized it was what I needed to do in order to continue to grow in happy sobriety. So is this the end?

Through service I have learned to trust the process of our wonderful program, respect and appreciate others – their perspectives, opinions, and experience, and above all, to trust God. Thanks to AA I know God has a purpose and a plan for my being, which is a far cry from my drinking days when I could not imagine a reason for existing. In fact, I wanted to die. AA has truly given me a new life. Each step in service has given my life new meaning and I don’t want to stop taking those steps on this journey, so I’ll keep on moving – this is NOT the end, just a new beginning. The acceptance of becoming a past delegate came when I realized that God isn’t done with me and he isn’t done with others. I can’t keep one foot in the past (delegate position) and move off the bridge to the future. I don’t want to be stuck.

It does my heart good to see others stepping up to service and it has made it much easier to step down knowing that the program will continue under your good care. I know you will experience the joy and growth in that service that I have. You and the program are in good hands – God’s hands. I hope to sit and listen quietly for God’s direction and be of service or help whenever asked. The fellowship is all around and part of me and always will be as long as I want it to be. Thank you so much for the time of my life *and* my life! Service – what a trip!

Your trusted servant,
Mary Lou Q. panel 64 Past Delegate