



# Seeds of Service

VOL. XXVIII ISSUE 2  
Spring 2013  
THEME:  
Our Solution in Action  
Please share this  
newsletter with your  
group! Thank you!

## Small Part of a Great Whole

Jean M., Past Delegate, Panel 61 Area 60 WPA

A few days ago, I was delighted to receive in the mail a copy of the Report of the World Service Meeting.

When Alcoholics Anonymous was still in its infancy, Bill Wilson had a vision of it reaching around the world to help the alcoholic who still suffers in many different countries. After the end of the Second World War groups began to spring up in other lands and by the time of the First International Convention and the General Service Conference, there were AA Groups in 37 countries around the globe. In 1950, Bill and Lois Wilson made a six weeks journey overseas to visit the fledgling groups. Bill knew that GSO in New York could not possibly manage and conduct business affairs

in countries around the world, and thus, in 1969, the first World Service Meeting was held to share with these other countries our thirty-year history and experience with 26 Delegates from 12 countries overseas attending.

In October of 2012, the 22<sup>nd</sup> World Service Meeting convened at the Rye Town Hilton Hotel in Rye Brook, New York. In attendance were 61 delegates representing more than 34 different countries and zones around the world. The World Service Meeting has been held every other year beginning in 1972, with the site alternating between New York City and a country outside of the U.S./Canada structure, with the purpose of sharing of experience and

*(Continued on page 3)*

## What A.A. Members Are Asking

Excerpted in part from Box 459, February/March 2008

*Throughout the year, many A.A. members and groups direct questions about A.A. to the General Service Office. Some issues come up time and again. What follows are a number of those questions and the answers to them:*

**Q. Does A.A. sponsor spiritual retreats?**

**A.** While many A.A.s attend spiritual retreats, A.A.—in keeping with Tradition Six—does not sponsor such gatherings.

**Q. What are the origins of the Serenity Prayer?**

**A.** Most evidence indicates that the Serenity Prayer was written by Dr. Reinhold Niebuhr, theologian who served for many years as dean and professor at the Union Theological Seminary in New York City. A service piece on the Serenity Prayer (*“Origin of the Serenity Prayer: A Historical Paper”*—item SMF-129) may be obtained from GSO.

**Q. The facility where our group rents space requires that we obtain insurance. Does GSO have an umbrella insurance policy for groups?**

**A.** Liability insurance of GSO cannot be extended to cover local groups. A.A. groups are autonomous and not subsidiaries of GSO Groups requiring insurance coverage might consult a local insurance agent or attorney about liability matters. Some groups have approached their landlord to see if the group can be added as a “rider” to the facility’s policy and if necessary, the group pays for the cost of the “rider” through a rent increase. In this case, the group should avoid any appearance

*(Continued on page 10)*

## Taking Inventory Our Solution in Action

Barb G., We Are Responsible  
AA Literature Study Group, Dist. 11

This year’s GSO Conference theme\* highlights the importance of taking inventory as part of our “solution in action.” When I was new in sobriety, it never occurred to me that the need to take inventory went beyond my own nose – let alone being useful at the group level. Although “our solution” may be found in various forms throughout the program, taking inventory is a watershed activity.

I recently came across the pamphlet *“The A.A. Group, Where it All Began.”* Although we’ve studied it in my home group before, I had forgotten that suggestions for taking a group inventory could be found in the section entitled *“Principles Before Personalities,”* along with other topics so important to an A.A. group – such as the principle of rotation, and an informed group conscience. Although not new information, it was a familiar “aha” moment for me.

*Following is the narrative on taking an A.A. Group Inventory, from the pamphlet “The AA Group, Where It All Begins” (P-16, Page 29).*

### A.A. Group Inventory

Many groups periodically hold a “group inventory meeting” to evaluate how well they are fulfilling their primary purpose: to help alcoholics recover through A.A.’s suggested Twelve Steps of recovery. Some groups take inventory by examining our Twelve Traditions, one at a time, to determine how well they are living up to these principles. The following questions, compiled from A.A. shared experience, may be useful in arriving at an informed

*(Continued on page 2)*

## Our Solution in Action

Jody K., World Famous Ground Hog Group, District 15

I was meeting R. at the women's meeting, but I couldn't find it. It had moved, and work hadn't allowed me to get there for quite some time. I scanned both parking lots and the street, muttering the Serenity Prayer. I called someone else I knew who'd been attending sporadically, though I knew she, too, was working that day. I was hoping she would answer her phone. She did.

*"Is the meeting upstairs or downstairs? No one is here yet."*

She told me it was "in a house behind the church." I looked in the alley. All of the houses looked like apartments. I started wading through the snow between the church and a tool shed. A man in work clothes rounded the corner.

*"Are you with the church?"* I asked. Yes, he was, and he kindly pointed to the rectory *across the street* from the church.

I hurriedly sent a text to R. She was brand new, six days sober. Another

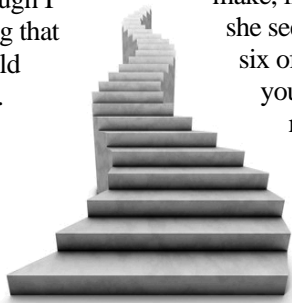
member had given her my phone number. She wanted to go to a meeting, but she was too afraid to walk in alone.

R. was young, barely legal drinking age, and I wondered what she'd think of the meeting. While it was her decision to make, in our telephone conversation, she seemed to qualify herself. Only six of us were present, the next youngest in her thirties, and the rest of us mid-forties and beyond.

We read from the Third Step in the 12 & 12, and she had to contend with words like "juggernaut"

and something about an iron lung for a polio sufferer. But she hung on, listened, most of us talking about our 1st, 2nd, & 3rd step experience, the customary share for the newcomer, and when she shared, our differences and all the odd words and references fell away. She had decided. She said she'd be returning, accepted phone numbers from the other women, and we made plans to meet at my home group in a few days.

*(Continued on page 11)*



Grapevine Cartoon Contest Winner  
Oct. 2012 — Kathleen M., West Hartford, CT

*"I'd like to make amends for stealing your husband.  
I'm sober now. Will you take him back?"*

## Taking Inventory Barb G.

*(Continued from page 1)*

group conscience. Groups will probably wish to add questions of their own:

1. What is the basic purpose of our group?
2. What more can our group do to carry the message?
3. Is our group attracting alcoholics from different backgrounds? Are we seeing a good cross section of our community, including those with special needs?
4. Do new members stick with us, or does the turnover seem excessive? If so, why? What can we as a group do to retain members?
5. Do we emphasize the importance of sponsorship? How effectively? How can we do it better?
6. Are we careful to preserve the anonymity of our group members and other A.A.s outside the meeting rooms? Do we also leave what they share at meetings behind?
7. Does our group emphasize to all members the value of keeping up with the kitchen, set-up, clean-up and other housekeeping chores that are essential for our Twelfth Step efforts?
8. Are all members given the opportunity to speak at meetings and to participate in other group activities?
9. Mindful that holding office is a great responsibility not to be viewed as the outcome of a popularity contest, are we choosing our officers with care?
10. Are we doing all we can to provide an attractive and accessible meeting place?
11. Does our group do its fair share toward participating in the purpose of A.A.—as it relates to our Three Legacies of Recovery, Unity, and Service?
12. What has our group done lately to bring the A.A. message to the attention of professionals in the community—the physicians, clergy, court officials, educators, and others who are often the first to see alcoholics in need of help?
13. How is our group fulfilling its responsibility to the Seventh Tradition?

*\* 2013 GSO Conference Theme: "The General Service Conference Takes Its Inventory—Our Solution in Action."*

## Small Part of a Great Whole (Continued from page 1)

Jean M., Past Delegate, Panel 61 Area 60 WPA

ideas on ways to carry the AA message. The theme for the 2012 meeting was "Rotation: The Heartbeat of A.A."

The conference report is very similar to the final report of the General Service Conference; it contains presentations by the delegates on the theme of the conference and the workshops; there are country highlights, committee reports and others topics of interest.

There are also reports from other Interim and Zonal Service Meetings: the 17<sup>th</sup> Meeting Of The Americas (annual); The Fifth Sub-Saharan Africa Service Meeting (annual); The Ninth Asia-Oceania Service Meeting (biennial); The Sixteenth European Service Meeting (annual). Although Alcoholics Anonymous has a presence in over 81 countries and zones worldwide, not all of them are able to participate in the World Service Meeting.

The next World Service Meeting will be held in October of 2014 in Warsaw, Poland.

The long form of the First Tradition reads: "Each member of Alcoholics Anonymous is but a small part of a great whole. A.A.

*must continue to live or most of us will surely die. Hence, our common welfare comes first. But individual welfare follows close afterward."*

Reading these reports and becoming aware of what is happening with our fellowship in other parts of the world reminds me that even though we are people who "would not ordinarily mix," and that we are different in our ways, our language and our dress, we are all alcoholics with the same issues, problems and achievements no matter where we live.

Jean M., Past Delegate  
Panel 61 Area 60 WPA

## A. A. Acronyms

Here is a small collection of A.A. Acronyms—what would we do without them? They are welcome guideposts on our journey of recovery. Some are more colorful than others. Please feel free to share your favorites!

AA=Absolute Abstinence

AA=Altered Attitudes

ABC=Ashtrays, Broom, Coffee

DEAD=Drinking Ends All Dreams

DENIAL=Don't Even Notice I Am Lying

EGO=Easing God Out

FEAR=False Expectations Appearing Real

FEAR=Face Everything and Recover!

FINE=Freaked out, Insecure, Neurotic and Emotional

GIFT=God Is Forever There

GOD=Good Orderly Direction

GOD=Group of Drunks

HALT=Hungry, Angry, Lonely, Tired

HOPE=Hearing Other Peoples' Experience

HOW=Honesty, Open-mindedness, Willingness

ISM=I, Self, Me

KISS=Keep It Simple, Stupid

NUTS=Not Using The Steps

PMS=Poor Me Syndrome

RID=Restless, Irritable and Discontent

SLIP=Sobriety Loses Its Priority

TIME=Things I Must Earn

YET=You're Eligible Too

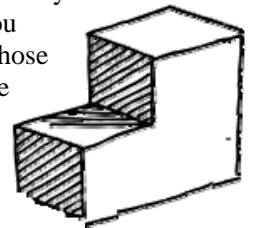
## Came to Believe

Larry R. L., SCI Fayette

I title this "Came to Believe" because it took a long road for me to reach the point of truly believing in the solution that the fellowship has to offer someone like myself who suffers from the disease of alcoholism and addiction to other mind altering mood changing chemicals.

I've been in and out (repeatedly) of the fellowship since 1985. I got some "dry" time, employment, relationships with females and "came to believe" that I had alcoholism licked. I even had most of the 12 steps memorized. But as it says in the Big Book (p 83-84), the promises will "only" materialize if we work for them. This work, I believe, is our "solution in action" — to formally work the 12 steps of the program of Alcoholics Anonymous.

As a recovering alcoholic, I have to be on guard against complacency or my story will repeat itself. Much like the "jay walker" story in the Big Book (page 37-37), I'll be hit by a fire engine, street car, you name it! I've made those promises to everyone around me, including myself to stay off the streets altogether or, in my case, get locked up in the asylum I call prison.



I've come to believe in a power greater than myself -- the group(s), my sponsor, and working the steps with a lot of ink and paperwork. Add a few "brave sponces," and my life at 4 1/2 years sober has become a miracle; even in the asylum I call prison -- one day at a time!

Just for today, I can joke around and say my life is like an old country western song played backwards where everything is slowly being returned to me, but most of all serenity and sanity. I love country music. I grew up on the

(Continued on page 9)

## The AA Solution – Simplicity Itself!!!

Jan H., Past Delegate, Panel 57 Area 60 WPA

To begin, I would like to share excerpts from an article written in the December, 1949 Grapevine titled "SIDEBAR".

*"Ralph Waldo Emerson once said, 'Nothing astonishes men so much as common sense and plain dealing.' Perhaps that explains why so many people are amazed at AA's success. Certainly the problem of alcoholism has plagued civilization ever since that prehistoric fellow discovered he could get a 'kick' out of the juice of a berry that had fermented in the sun's heat.*

*In almost comical contrast to huge laboratories, banks of test tubes, exhaustive clinical research, and reams and reams and volumes and volumes of data—comes the simple act of one drunk helping another drunk do what they both wanted—stay sober!*

*Then what happens? We get together in groups and start behaving as God intended people to behave toward each other—or more nearly so than any group of people I ever knew. So*

*And our only concern, yours and mine, seems to be to keep right on being simple and humble. Our 12 Steps and our 12 Traditions are just that!"*

*the solution of the problem of the ages seems to be simplicity itself. And our only concern, yours and mine, seems to be to keep right on being simple and humble. Our 12 Steps and our 12 Traditions are just that!"*

"Keep It Simple" is one of the first slogans that I learned when I first came into the rooms. It was all I could put into my still confused head! I was sharing the other day that the first action I took toward our solution was to follow a suggestion to make a phone call. When two happy AAs came to pick me up for a meeting as a result of that phone call, they said "get in" and I did.

Little did I know that I would learn to live a spiritual life far beyond my expectations. Through my sponsor's actions and those of many others, I began to follow the simple path of our 12 Steps toward change and spiritual living. The 12 Traditions and the 12 Concepts teach me how to serve in my home group and AA as a whole.

*(Continued on Page 6)*

## The 12th Concept

Vaughn H., Past Delegate, Panel 51 Area 60 WPA

**Concept XII:** *The conference shall observe the spirit of A.A. tradition, taking care that it never becomes the seat of perilous wealth or power; that sufficient operating funds and reserve be its prudent financial principle; that it place none of its members in a position of unqualified authority over others; that it reach all important decisions by discussion, vote and whenever possible, by substantial unanimity; that its actions never be personally punitive nor an incitement to public controversy; that it never perform acts of government, and that, like the Society it serves, it will always remain democratic in thought and action.*

**General Warranties of the Conference:** *in all its proceedings, the General Service Conference (GSC) shall observe the spirit of the A.A. Tradition, taking great care that the Conference never becomes the seat of perilous wealth or power; that sufficient operating funds, plus an ample reserve, be its prudent*

*financial principle; that none of the Conference members shall ever be placed in a position of unqualified authority over any of the others; that all important decisions be reached by discussion, vote, and, whenever possible, by substantial unanimity; that no Conference action ever be personally punitive or an incitement to public controversy; that though the Conference may act for the service of Alcoholics Anonymous, it shall never perform any acts of government; and that, like the Society of Alcoholics Anonymous which it serves, the Conference itself will always remain democratic in thought and action.*

This Concept consists of Article 12 of the Conference Charter. Taken as a whole, our Conference Charter is the substance of an informal agreement which was made between the A.A. groups and their Trustees in 1955. It is the agreed basis by which the GSC operates. In part, the Charter is an elastic document; its first 11 Articles can be readily amended by the Conference itself at any time.

Article 12 of the Charter stands in a class by itself. An amendment or cancellation of any of its vital Warranties would require the written consent of ¾ of all the directory listed A.A. groups who would actually vote on any such proposals, and the considerable time of six months is allowed for careful deliberation. **Remember that, although changes in the Warranties of Article 12 have been made difficult, they have not been made impossible!**

It is clear then that all the Warranties have a high and permanent importance to A.A.'s general welfare. It is stated that we believe we should permit change in them only when there is possible evidence of their defectiveness and then only by common consent of the A.A. groups themselves. Thus they have been ranked along with the Twelve Traditions in importance. They are felt to be as important to A.A.'s world services as the Twelve Traditions are to A.A. as a whole.

*(Continued on Page 6)*

## ARCHIVES CORNER

### History of A.A. In McKeesport

Vaughn H., Past Delegate, Panel 51

**AA** in McKeesport started approximately in 1946. Tom B. brought it to McKeesport from Pittsburgh in 1943. Tom was a superintendant in the McKeesport Mill. The first meetings took place in Tom's home and later in other private homes.

As the fellowship grew, the six members moved the meeting to the Penn-McKee Hotel on Sunday nights in March of 1946. From a McKeesport newspaper clipping in 1950; it stated that over 140 alcoholics, by their own admission, attended meetings at the Penn-McKee.

The paper went on to say that since the inception of the McKeesport group of A.A. has been instrumental in forming groups in Duquesne, Charleroi and Clairton. To pay for renting the room in the Hotel a hat is passed at the end of the meeting and if there is any money



Penn-McKee Hotel

left over it is put into the bank. When the steering committee meets, the money matter is treated quite simply by whatever money is in the bank it is sent to the regional office in Pittsburgh, or the national organization in New York to help pay for the literature that is distributed throughout the United States and thirty foreign countries where AA meetings are held.

In September 19, 1957, some of the members wanted to have coffee and desserts and be able to smoke, so they contacted St. Stephen's Episcopal Church

in McKeesport. That was the start of the McKeesport Thursday night meeting. The Penn-McKee Group continued for a short while, but it finally went out of existence for lack of support in member attendance.

The oldest recorded information on McKeesport A.A. at New York Office is dated July 7, 1947 from George W. George W. was the secretary at the time. George was one of the first McKeesport residents to receive a telephone in this area at the time, because he was on the telephone answering service for A.A.

Maynard Berger from N.Y. Office wrote George back on July 11, 1947 from their records in N.Y. that McKeesport Sunday group originated around 1944. This would make A.A. in the McKeesport Area "69" years old. All records, before 1947 were lost in a fire at the New York Office.

### Our Solution Into Action

Maggi A., Mt Washington Sunday Morning/Sharpsburg Tuesday

**O**ur times and our connections in the world have changed greatly since I have been an active member of Alcoholics Anonymous. We have moved into a much more electronic era. We are in a time of technology that is so easily accessible and almost necessary for business that there is opportunity to lose the human contact with each other that has worked so successfully for us as a fellowship.

I was approached recently by a friend that related a quote, "Alcoholics are perhaps the only group of people that tend to think loneliness can be treated with isolation". I got the quip but as I laughed I was also struck by the personal truth and sadness of what she said.

As a fellowship that can be global these days I believe we can truly benefit from the ability to chat with China, India or England; connecting with others in recovery and compare and share stories. This is the crux of our sobriety and has

been since Bill W. sat down with Dr. Bob. Our languages are no longer a barrier since the right software will translate and communicate for us. Amazing!

However, let's sit with this for a moment. I came into these rooms in 1986 and began this long association with sobriety in 1988. After I put the drink down I was truly afraid given that alcohol was my survival skill and coping technique for so many years. I did not know about other tools. I was well read at the time, but self-help books did not help me keep away from the next drink. All I got from printed words were good ideas and guilt when I could not implement them.

I was in desperate need of an advisor and friends who understood my dilemma. Meetings brought me to the threshold of relationships. I was 'shown' a way of life that included a reliance on God. The love and care in the rooms of AA

became my family and my education in managing my life. I was taught to shake hands and help new faces feel welcomed to come in and welcomed to stay. This is what was done for me. I learned laughter and tears can be in the same sentence because I watched it. I will never be capable with mere words to express my gratitude for a well-timed hug or side splitting laugh at my own mistakes.

Technology is good. It has opened my world to much but keeping things simple when it comes to staying sober depends on my presence. I am honored to have the ability to pass on what was so freely given to me. Watching others enjoy a reliance on a God of their understanding and see a fellowship grow up about me has been an indescribable privilege.

Service work is truly an honor and has kept me sober since March 20, 1988. God Bless.

**12th Concept** Vaughn H. Past Delegate, Panel 51 Area 60 WPA  
(Continued from page 4)

For the past two years we have been going over the first 11 Concepts. This newsletter submission is the final Concept, Concept Twelve. It is the longest of all the Concepts and covers the six Warranties.

All of the Warranties are counsels of prudence (**maturity, judiciousness, the capacity to be reasonable**) – prudence in personal relatedness, prudence in money matters, and prudence in our relations with the world about us. For us, prudence is a workable middle ground, a channel of clear sailing between the obstacles of fear on the one side and of recklessness on the other.

Prudence in practice creates a definite climate, the only climate in which harmony, effectiveness and consistent spiritual progress can be achieved. The Warranties of Article 12 express the wisdom of taking forethought for the future based on the lessons of the past. They are the sum of our protection against needless errors and against our very natural human temptations to wealth, prestige, power, and the like...

From a 1984 Conference presentation by Jan P., Washington, stated: “Clear words, these, and the correlation drawn between prudence and the continued health and vitality of the Fellowship and between prudence and the spiritual progress is thought-provoking. Our prudent obligation, then, is first to understand the Concepts and second to utilize them, as Bill suggests, ‘throughout our entire structure.

*It is by using the accumulated wisdom of experience the Concepts embody that we can profit from the lessons of the past and make necessary changes when change is clearly good for the Fellowship. If mistaken departures are made, the Concepts”...provide a ready means of safe return to an operating balance that might otherwise take years of floundering to rediscover.”*

*The Concepts, in addition to the Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions, were developed from the hard knocks of experience; to ignore or overlook them is to move against the vital principle of A.A. unity. The Concepts indeed give evi-*

*dence to Bill’s statement that prudence in practice creates a climate where consistent spiritual progress can be achieved. The maintenance of the traditions of shared responsibility and individual freedom so clearly expressed in the Concepts is the guarantee that A.A. will always remain democratic in action and in spirit. As Bill concludes the discussion of the Warranties, “We of A.A. believe that our freedom to serve is truly the freedom by which we live-the freedom in which we have our being.”*

These six Warranties are the sum of our protection against needless errors and against our very natural human temptations to wealth, prestige, power, and the like...I will try and discuss the Warranties in the following editions of the Seeds of Service, hopefully, God willing, two Warranties in each edition....Thank you for letting me share,

Yours in Love and Service,  
Vaughn H.

**The AA Solution** Jan H., Past Delegate, Panel 57 Area 60 WPA  
(Continued from page 4)

I love Mr. Emerson’s word: astonishes. Living one day at a time; God’s daily gifts; the people I have met; having paths to follow; the sharing and understanding; and the opportunity to serve to give back---I continue to be astonished!

Some of my favorite words are in the last two paragraphs of a “vision for you” in the Big Book. There are simple ACTIONS mentioned here to keep us in the solution.

“... Ask Him in your morning meditation what you can do each day for the man who is still sick. The answers will come, if your own house is in order. ... See to it that your

*relationship with Him is right, and great events will come to pass for you and countless others. ....*

*Abandon yourself to God as you understand God. Admit your faults to Him and to your fellows. Clear away the wreckage of your past. Give freely of what you find and join us. We shall be with you in the Fellowship of the Spirit, and you will surely meet some of us as you trudge the Road of Happy Destiny...”*

**GRAPEVINE** Quote of the Day

January 17, 2011

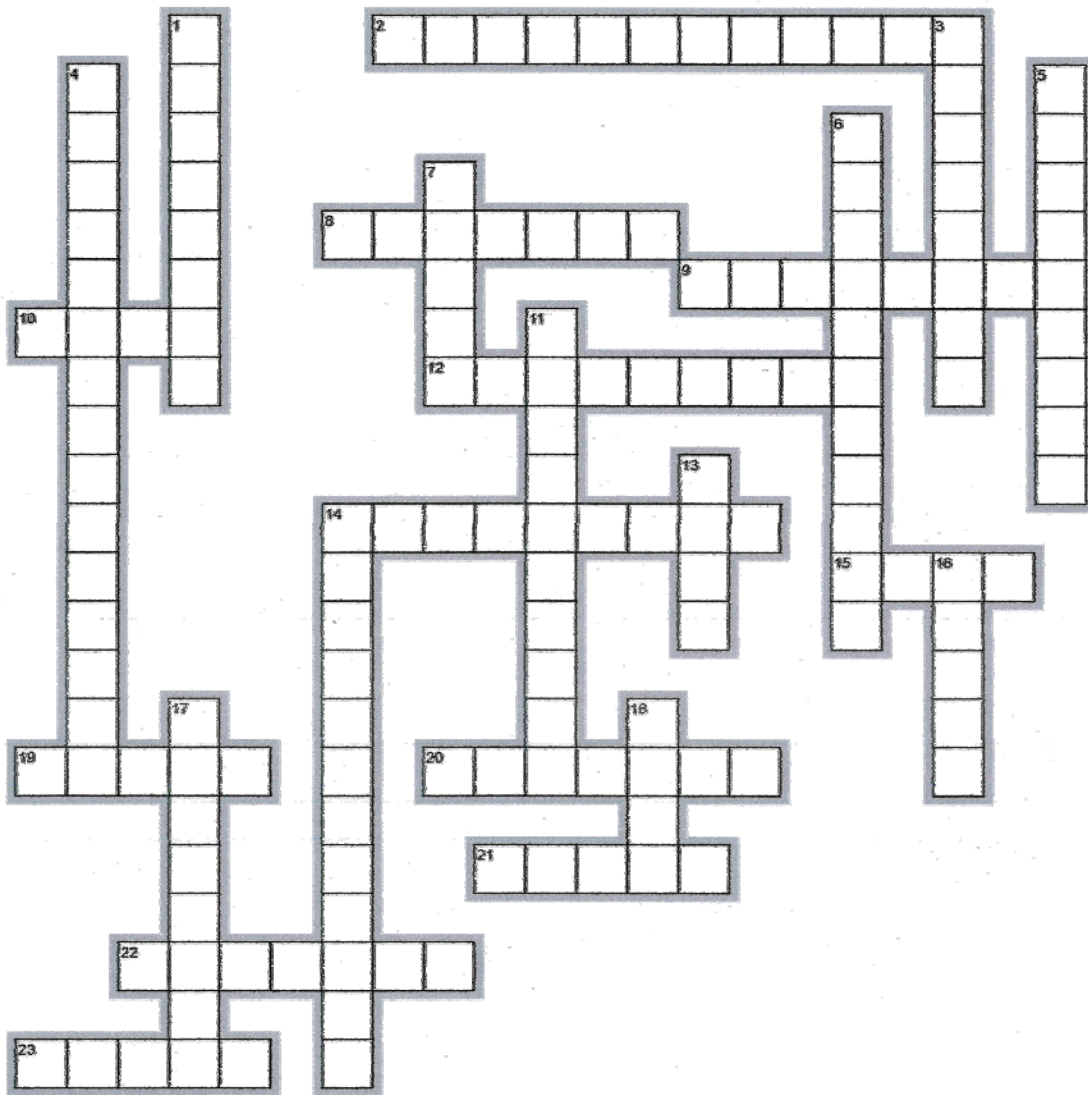
*“When we AAs look to the future, we must always ask ourselves if the spirit which now binds us together in our common cause will always be stronger than those personal ambitions and desires which tend to drive us apart ... Though the individual AA is under no human coercion, is at almost perfect personal liberty, we have, nevertheless, achieved a wonderful unity on vital essentials. For example, the Twelve Steps of our AA program are not crammed down anybody's throat. They are not sustained by any human authority. Yet we powerfully unite around them because the truth they contain has saved our lives, has opened the door to a new world.”*



AA Co-Founder, Bill W., September 1945  
From: "Rules' Dangerous but Unity Vital"  
The Language of the Heart

# "There is a Solution" Crossword Puzzle

Feel free to send suggested words and clues to [newsletter@wpaarea60.org](mailto:newsletter@wpaarea60.org)!



## Across

2. non-alcoholics may attend
8. who we should call
9. what we are restored from
10. co-founder's wife
12. what we become
14. what isn't enough
15. how we do it
19. co-founder
20. \_\_\_\_\_ makers make it
21. wrote chapter to the wives
22. the text
23. a grateful heart will not \_\_\_\_\_

## Down

1. what we must be
3. what we need to accept, what we cannot change
4. wrote the serenity prayer
5. in print and media
6. alcoholics anonymous is a fellowship of \_\_\_\_\_
7. \_\_\_\_\_ greater than ourselves
11. the key to happiness
13. one thousand forms of \_\_\_\_\_
14. my favorite website
16. there are twelve of them
17. what there is if we do the work
19. what we turn over

Answer Key on Page 9

## Tradition Eleven ... Should it be changed?

Excerpted from a presentation entitled "Tradition Eleven: Let's Just Change It!"

by Karen K. District 27 at the 2013 Area 60 Get Away Weekend

There has been much discussion in recent years about changing the short form of Tradition Eleven to reflect the current technology. This question has been asked numerous times over the years. To better understand the evolving history of the discussion, we are reprinting in part a presentation made at Area 60's recent Get Away Weekend.

**1954.** Bill's original Grapevine essays on the Traditions can be found in the book "Language of the Heart." Bill stated that "the 11<sup>th</sup> tradition stands sentinel over these lifelines, announcing that there is no need for self praise, emphasizing the principle of personal anonymity. No member ought to describe him or herself in full view of the general public as an A.A., even for the most worthy cause lest he divert AA from its sole purpose and injure our public relations."

**1960.** Bill writes "The Traditions are neither rules, regulations, nor law, yet they carry a power greater than that of law. We obey our Traditions willingly because of the need for A.A. survival."

**1964.** GSO Conference. Questions arose concerning changing the 11<sup>th</sup> tradition to include television. Consensus of the Trustees: Our objective is to be custodian of the traditions, rather than to change them.

**1970.** GSO Conference. The suggestion was again brought up to change the tradition to include television. Consensus of the Trustees: The word "films" covered "TV," and that in order to change a tradition, the Conference and Board must approve it and then all groups should be polled, 75% would have to be in agreement.

**1986.** GSO Conference. There was a floor motion for the board to initiate a process on amending Tradition 11 to include TV. Consensus of the Trustees: The process to change a tradition would be lengthy, lasting over a year. Although the Conference option not to change the wording of the tradition itself, the literature that describes the tradition was edited to

### TRADITION ELEVEN

**Short Form.** Our public relations policy is based on attraction rather than promotion; we need always maintain personal anonymity at the level of press, radio and films.

**Long Form.** Our relations with the general public should be characterized by personal anonymity. We think A.A. Ought to avoid sensational advertising. Our names and pictures as A.A. members ought not be broadcast, filmed, or publicly printed. Our public relations should be guided by the principle of attraction rather than promotion. There is never need to praise ourselves. We feel it better to let our friends recommend us.

designate current broadcasting methods.

**2000.** GSO Conference. The question of how the tradition related to the internet was considered. Consensus of the Trustees: that changes concerning anonymity on the internet be made in a selection of Conference approved materials (AA Fact File, A Brief Guide to AA, Speaking at non-AA Meetings, and Understanding Anonymity). This action is one of the ways that the words "new media technologies such as the internet" became a part of AA literature.

**2010.** GSO Conference. The Committee on Public Information (PI) suggested that the delegates utilize a variety of means such as workshops, newsletters, panels, delegate reports, area websites, etc. to stimulate A.A. members' discussion on how to maintain anonymity on online media such as social networking sites.

**2011.** GSO Conference. The conference presented a workshop on the topic

"Practicing Our Traditions in a Digital Age." GSO produced a service piece called "Frequently Asked Questions about A.A. Websites" which talks about guarding anonymity online. Notably, it suggests that when we use digital media, we are responsible for our own anonymity and that of others. When we post, text or blog, **we should assume that we are publishing at the PUBLIC LEVEL.** When we break our anonymity in these forums, we may inadvertently break the anonymity of others.

**2012 GSO Conference** Committee on Public Information had a lengthy discussion about adding language to reflect current media. The committee concluded that the spirit and principle of anonymity at the public level is conveyed adequately in the long form of Tradition Eleven.

### What is involved with this change?

In 1955, a resolution passed with the original conference charter when the General Service (GS) Conference became the guardian of the Traditions.

It states that "neither the twelve traditions of A.A. or the warranties of Article XII... shall ever be changed or amended by the GS Conference except by first asking the consent of the registered A.A. groups of the world.

*These groups shall be suitably notified of any proposal for change and shall be allowed no less than six months for consideration thereof. Before any Conference Action can be taken, there must first be received in writing ... the consent of at least three quarters of all those registered groups who respond to such proposal."*

(Continued on Page 9)



There is currently no mechanism in place to carry out the process described above. If the GS Conference should ever decide to poll the registered A.A. groups for the purpose of changing a step or tradition, the GS Board would probably appoint an ad hoc committee to develop a mechanism for the process. There are many things to consider, only a few include:

- 1) cost of printing and mailing,
- 2) translation services – how many languages?,
- 3) how to assemble list of all registered groups in the world,
- 4) how long would groups have to respond,
- 5) how will forms be checked and complied, and
- 6) will additional translation services be needed?

***If it passed, what then?***

The revised Tradition would need to appear in ALL A.A. literature where the traditions currently appear, hundreds of items in over 80 languages! Given that there are over 114,070 registered groups worldwide, the process would involve hundreds of staff, thousands of hours and millions of dollars. We now know a lot more about what all is

involved to change a tradition—but guess what? We still don't have an overall cost figure for this “humongous” task!

A ballpark figure on contacting all groups would cost well over \$100,000, and GSO

has no speculative costs available. So given the amount of time and money involved, — do I support changing the short form of Tradition Eleven to reflect current technology? Yes or no. Hmmmmm.

Respectfully submitted,  
Karen K. Dist. 27.

<b>ESTIMATES OF A.A. GROUPS &amp; MEMBERS</b>			
<i>As of January 1 2012</i>			
	Groups	Members	
United States	58,820	1,290,716	
Canada	5,025	93,983	
Worldwide	114,070	2,133,842	

music of the 50's, 60's and 70's. I tried to live out all those old songs, but unsuccessfully. Although I still love all those old songs, I don't need to drink today to truly enjoy them or use them as a “trigger” to relapse.

Yes, I've “come to believe” that God “IS” doing for me what I could not do for myself. By formally working the steps on paper with a sponsor, not just claiming I have one I don't use, I can find the solution to the dilemma of alcoholism and addiction. I can avoid being “hit again” by my disease skipping in and out of fast moving vehicles – those vehicles I call old behaviors. When you've been “hit” as many times as I have over the years, one becomes willing, open and honest enough to become someone who came believe.

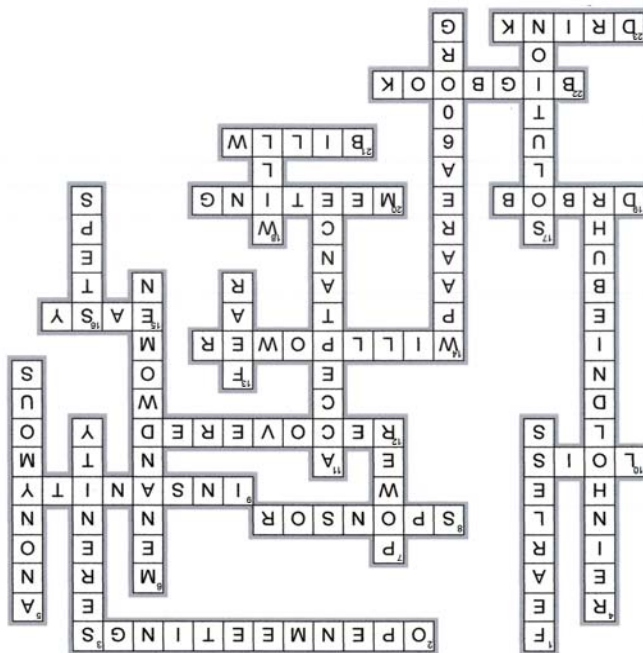
With Gratitude,  
Larry R. L.

**HEARD  
AT MEETINGS**



<b>HUMOR</b>	<b>SLIPS</b>
The good news is you get your emotions back; the bad news is you get your emotions back.	If you feel like drinking.... put the chip in your mouth and when it melts you can drink.
<b>INSIGHTS</b>	<b>THOUGHTS</b>
Resentments are like stray cats: if you don't feed them, they'll go away.	When I was new, I didn't think I had any obsessions until I started thinking about it. Then it was all I could think about.

**Crossword Puzzle Answer Key**  
*from Page 7*



## Gratitude is Part of the Solution

Scott, SCI Fayette

**M**y life before prison consisted of alcohol abuse, lying to everyone, abusing, manipulating people, driving drunk, committing crimes and always doing what I wanted to do. Then I got a rude awakening...prison.

Luckily for me, I bumped into a few good people who turned me onto God, which is something I never had. Then I got into the fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous. I heard from others who struggled with the same issues that I did. I made a commitment to attend whenever I could, because I liked what I heard. I learned a lot from just listening to others.

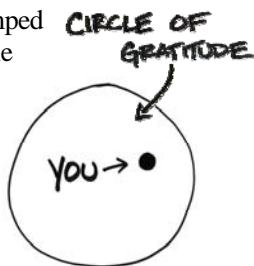
I also learned from my past mistakes. I live for the day, not concerning myself with the future. I believe finding a higher power and AA saved my life. My life in prison is better than I had outside these walls. I'm healthy, happy and mentally on top of my game, which is something I did not have before. I am thankful to AA and all the brothers I have met here and elsewhere. I owe my life to them.

One day I will leave hear and alcohol will be the last thing on my mind, because I have built a foundation for a new life in AA. I thank Sue H. for giving her time, Andy too and the other people who publish the newsletter we get from our local district.

In gratitude, Scott

**Donations to Area 60 are  
always welcome and  
appreciated!**

Make check payable to...  
Area 60 Treasurer, P.O. Box 152  
Conway, PA 15027



## What AA Members are Asking

Box 459, February/March 2008 (Continued from page 1)

of affiliation with the facility.

**Q. What is the difference between an "open" and "closed" A.A. meeting?**

**A.** Closed meetings are for A.A. members only, or for those who have a drinking problem and "have a desire to stop drinking." Open meetings are available to anyone interested in the AA program of recovery from alcoholism. Nonalcoholic's may attend open meetings as observers. At both types of meetings, the A.A. chairperson may request that participants confine their discussion to matters pertaining to recovery from alcoholism.

**Q. Why doesn't the GSO give its opinion when asked for it?**

**A.** The role of the General Service Office is to provide the accumulated shared experience of A.A. groups and members. Pertinent information from correspondence to GSO over the years, from A.A. literature and from GSO's Archives is shared to help groups reach an informed group conscience.

**Q. Is the Grapevine a part of A.A.?**

**A.** Yes, the Grapevine and its Spanish-language equivalent—La Viña—are a part of Alcoholics Anonymous. To affirm the magazine's place in the Fellowship, the 1986 General Service Conference affirmed that: "the Conference recognizes the A.A. Grapevine as the international journal of Alcoholics Anonymous."

**Q. Is there such a thing as an A.A. club?**

**A.** No. Though many clubs act as landlords for A.A. meetings, the meetings remain autonomous and do not involve themselves in club operations or policy. For more information, see "A.A. Guidelines on Clubs" from G.S.O.

**Q. Does GSO publish meeting lists or schedules, and how do I find a meeting?**

**A.** No, GSO does not publish meeting lists or schedules. GSO does publish a complimentary "List of Central Offices,

Intergroups and Answering Services in the U.S./Canada," and one for overseas offices. Anyone interested in finding current meeting information should contact their nearest central office or intergroup. You can find the lists of local offices on GSO's A.A. Web site at [www.aa.org](http://www.aa.org), on Contact Local A.A., or by checking in the local telephone book.

**Q. Is a central office or intergroup office A.A.?**

**A.** Yes. Central offices and intergroups provide vital local services and Twelfth Step opportunities. A central office or intergroup is an A.A. service office that involves partnership among groups in a community. A central office/intergroup is established to carry out functions common to all the groups, and it is usually maintained, supervised and supported by these groups. It exists to aid the groups in carrying the A.A. message. For further information, see "A.A. Guidelines on Central or Intergroup Offices."

**Q. Who wrote Chapter 8 of the Big Book, "To Wives"?**

**A.** Bill was the author of the "To Wives" chapter, despite the common misconception that Lois wrote it. In "Pass It On" (page 200), Lois says: "Bill wrote it, and I was mad.... I wasn't so much mad as hurt. I still don't know why Bill wrote it.... I said to him, 'Well, do you want me to write it?' And he said no, he thought it should be in the same style as the rest of the book."

**Q. Is ICYPAA (the International Conference of Young People in A.A.) a part of A.A.?**

**A.** Yes, ICYPAA is a part of A.A., as are young people in A.A. committees at the state and regional levels, as long as the events they organize are run by A.A. members, for A.A. members, and there is no other affiliation. ICYPAA is listed in our confidential A.A. directories under "Special International Contacts."

## Play it Again Sam

Jason L., SCI Fayette

It may not have been the weekend, but as a kid, Thursday was always one of my favorite days the week. How could it not have been with meatloaf dinner, apple pie for dessert and classic television shows like the Cosby Show, A Different World and Cheers?

I was recently reminded of an episode of Cheers that is very pertinent to my life in recovery. As some may recall, Sam Malone was an alcoholic and also the bar owner. This is most certainly not the best example of a good career choice for an alcoholic, but it was something other than that which stood out to me.

As alcoholics, we know that recovery will be a life long process. Sam was no exception to this rule. During this particular episode, Sam shared something that he carried with him that helped him in daily struggle with alcohol. It was simple, yet profound. He carried in his pocket an old beer bottle cap.

Any time Sam would feel the urge to drink, he would pull out that cap and squeeze it in the palm of his hand with all he had. He would tighten his fingers around that cap even to the point of causing himself physical pain. He used this as a reminder of the pain that his using had caused himself, and others.

As alcoholics, it certainly is not beneficial to drown ourselves in the sea of mistakes we have made in the past. Doing so cripples our recovery and births a mindset of hopelessness. It can also heap a mound of guilt so high that drinking seems like our only escape...again!

Crazy huh? It certainly is, yet most of us know that feeling all too well. It continues the devastating cycle of alcoholism, always leading us right back where we started.

Sam taught us another valuable lesson. He showed us that although we strive to move on and live in the present; it is dangerous to completely let go of the past. We must play our tape back and remember where this insanity took us time and time again. But Sam held a cap as a remembrance; he didn't smash the bottle over his head!

So what is your bottle cap? Maybe it's that 8x10 picture you carry to remind yourself of what's more important than that first drink. Maybe it's the letter that you read over and over to remind yourself that you are valued and loved.

Maybe it's a drawing from your child that brings you hope.

Whatever form your "cap" comes in, make a vow to use it. Continue to move ahead in your recovery, one day at a time, but when you need it most, never forget where you came from. Remind yourself that you never have to live that way again.

Squeeze your own personal bottle cap with all your might. Get your focus back and work those steps. Gain wisdom from yesterday, be bold today, and embrace the hope of tomorrow. And each time the ugly head of temptation comes at you, pull out that cap and play it again Sam! Today is the day.



## Our Solution In Action Jody K. (Continued from page 2)

I don't get to as many meetings as I'd like to these days. I heard about a woman not long ago who said she didn't need meetings after she hit ten years sober, my current milestone. I don't get it. I think about all the action I had to take when I was opening myself to the solution. My sponsor always had me doing something, even when I wasn't actively writing a fourth step, making amends, or building on my relationship with the God of my understanding.

Each time I "finished" a step, she'd tell me, "That's a tool in your tool box.

*Take it out and use it. Don't let it rust. PRACTICE."*

When I got to the 12th step, she told me if I wanted to keep what I had (and watch it multiply), I had to give it away,

*"carry this message to alcoholics, and practice these principles in all our affairs."* That meant action.

In Gratitude, Jody K.



## AA GRAPEVINE

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### THE LANGUAGE OF THE HEART 25th Anniversary Edition

*This special 25th anniversary edition (soft cover only) will only be available while supplies last. \$12.99*

Bill W. was the Grapevine's most prolific contributor, writing more than 150 articles, from his first in June 1944 to his last in December 1970.

Here in one volume are all of Bill's Grapevine articles, including his first thoughts about the Traditions, his battles with chronic depression and spiritual pride, memories of an all-night drinking spree with Ebby, and a vivid description of how he came to organize the Steps (*there were six in the first draft*).

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- Webmaster - Bill M.  
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- Website Coordinator - Mario D.  
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Flyers for the Days of Sharing, the full calendar for 2013 and much more information (including pamphlets, flyers and service documentation) is available on the Area 60 website at [www.wpaarea60.org](http://www.wpaarea60.org)



*Matt Hartman, Panel 45 Delegate from Area 60, passed away unexpectedly on Saturday, April 27, 2013, in Buffalo, NY. Please keep his wife 'Gerri', their children and other family members in your prayers.*

2013 Calendar of Events		
DATE	TIME	EVENT
Sunday May 19	8:30 AM - Registration 9:00 AM - Workshop 10:15 AM - Area Assembly	Area 60 2nd Quarterly Meeting Post-Conference Assembly
Friday-Sunday June 7-9	9:00 AM	Northeast Regional Forum Area 11 (NERF) Cromwell, CT
Saturday June 22		Dist. 16, 40 Day of Sharing Clarion, PA
Sunday June 23	9:00 AM	Area 60 Officers & Coordinators Meeting/GAW Wrap-up
Friday-Sunday August 2 - 4		PA State Convention Harrisburg, PA
Sunday August 18	8:30 AM - Registration 9:00 AM - Workshop 10:15 AM - Area Assembly	Area 60 3rd Quarterly Meeting
Saturday Sept. 14		Dist 19 Day of Sharing Warren, PA
Sunday Sept. 14	9:00 AM	Officer and Coordinator Meeting Comfort Inn, Penn Hills
Saturday Oct. 19		District 23 Day of Sharing Latrobe, PA
Sunday Oct. 20	8:30 AM - Registration 9:00 AM - Workshop 10:15 AM - Meeting	Area 60 Fall Assembly
Sunday Oct. 27	9:00 AM	Officer and Coordinator Meeting Comfort Inn, Penn Hills

Area 60 meetings are held at the  
Comfort Inn, 699 Rodi Road Penn Hills, PA 15235



The WPA Area 60 newsletter, *Seeds of Service*, is published quarterly by the Area Committee. It is for A. A. members only and is distributed to D.C.M.'s for redistribution to A.A. groups through their G.S.R.'s. The opinions expressed are those of the contributors and not necessarily that of the Area Committee or AA as a whole.

**SUBMISSION GUIDELINES**

Suggested length is 500 words or less. Material should be generally relevant to the theme, and may be edited for clarity and length. All material submitted on time is reviewed, selected by topic and appears on a space available basis. The newsletter does not publish song lyrics, tributes to individuals, prayers, plays, or anything unrelated to AA or that violates the principles of AA.

Please include first name/last initial, home group and district. Submissions may be emailed to [newsletter@wpaarea60.org](mailto:newsletter@wpaarea60.org). This newsletter may be printed from the Area 60 website: [wpaarea60.org](http://wpaarea60.org).

**Themes for Upcoming Newsletters**

Summer 2013: "The Home Group-Heartbeat of AA" Deadline July 18  
Fall 2013: "The Spirit of Rotation" Deadline Sept. 20