



The Voice Within

NH A.A. District 12 News



"We're all in this
together
And together we
work the steps"

Hey Manchester, Bedford, Hooksett, Goffstown, and New Boston—Take A Look Inside!

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Statement of Purpose

The Voice Within is the newsletter for A.A. District 12. It communicates District business, provides a forum for individual stories of experience, strength, and hope from District 12 members, and provides other information relating to the pulse of A.A. District 12. Opinions or content in articles and letters are solely those of the contributor. The editorial team reserves the right to edit materials for length and content. Quotations from AA literature are copyrighted and reprinted with permission from its source.

Newsletter Chair: Lance C.

Editor: Cindy C.

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Greetings from Your Newsletter Chair

It is my pleasure to serve as Newsletter Chair in cooperation with our newsletter committee. I serve in an ongoing and widening effort to give back what was so freely given to me. My primary purpose is the desire to help ensure that AA is here for those alcoholics yet to discover this wonderful way of life, also in recognition that should we assume that this momentous responsibility lies solely with others, then our capacity to continue to pass this on is jeopardized. I hope to be able to carry this spirit of unity in the pages of *The Voice Within*, and to remember, as the name implies, just who the *Ultimate Authority* is.

The Voice Within is here to serve District 12 and groups within the District. District 12 is composed of Manchester, Bedford, Hooksett, Goffstown, and New Boston. Its importance cannot be overstated, as it is the only regular "hard" copy of District 12 news, announcements, changes, etc. serving as liaison between the District and the groups. If the groups are the lifeblood of A.A. and District 12 is the heart of these groups, then the Voice Within serves as the pulse, relaying important messages between the two.

In Grateful Service- Lance C.

Greetings from your DCM:

Here we are with a new editorial staff of the VOICE WITHIN. Thank you Lance and Cindy for stepping into these service positions.

As for me: it is amazing that a year has gone by already and what a year it has been. It started out my being your representative to the Area Committee. How humbling it is to realize you put your trust in me to be your voice and to be the communicator between Area and District.

My attendance at NERAASA in New Jersey was worth the trip. I found the panels to be informational and I know I was able to place the lessons learned into my service to the District.

The District has had a year of change; also a year of growth. We as a District took on the Back to Basics question, held our first District Inventory in years and the attendance at meetings has grown. I won't say the District hasn't had its moments, there have been personnel changes and floor discussions but they all worked out.

The District Inventory is one tool we will use to improve how the District works. Next year will hopefully mark the advent of in-district service sponsors and mentoring. A service sponsor will help the new trusted servant in their role on the district level, so a person is not just given a position and told to run with it. The service sponsor or mentor will guide the newly elected district member and help them to be more effective from the outset of their term. On that note, in 2009 a rotation/election year, the District theme will be "The Secret is in the Service"

We will be instituting Sharing Sessions again. These will be general service sessions open to all members of Alcoholics Anonymous in District Twelve as well as any interested visitors from other districts. They will be held on a regular basis starting in January of 2009. We are also planning mini-workshops on service to be held throughout the year. In addition to these events several in-service mini-meetings, (workshops on each District Service Position), are planned for the coming months. The District will also hold, in early September, an all day Service Workshop for all members of A.A. on what service means to our sobriety. This general workshop will also cover each service role on the district and group levels to improve the relationships / communication between both, and to help us better carry the message to the sick and suffering. I am so looking forward to next year and being your humble servant. Each day I thank my Higher Power for the time to serve and for the group of District Officers and Committee Chairs because without them I could not be an effective DCM.

I want to wish all of you a pleasant holiday season and because I'm who I am "A MERRY CHRISTMAS"

Your Humble DCM, George B.

*If you want to keep drinking, that's your business.
If you want to stop, that's our business.*

**NH AA Hotline
1-800-593-3330**

Meeting Announcements

Manchester Wednesday night -The Rainbow Group that is in your meeting list for is no longer running, however there is a new one in its place.

New GSO registered meeting
Manchester
Circle of Many Paths



Wednesday 7-8:30pm
The Universalist Unitarian Church
669 Union Street.

In this meeting we use
Native American spirituality
This is an open meeting-All are welcome

Here's a short Native story for you to enjoy.

Napi was up on this hillside and he was kind of leaning against the tree. All of sudden he noticed this centipede come by where he was standing. The centipede with its many legs, were in full stride as he passed Napi.

About that time Napi looked down at him and said, " Oh my, you've got so many legs. How in the world do you know which one to move next?"

The little centipede just froze up. He got to thinkin' 'bout that... what leg to move next and suddenly he just could not move any. So the centipede was stuck in that very spot.

Just about that time, there was a cloud cover over this meadow down off the hillside. Through this cloud cover there was a sliver of light coming down and it covered this meadow. This centipede gazed on that and then he felt released. He saw the beauty and the presence of that light. His little legs were free and they started to move as he headed on his way.

"We realize that God is doing for us what we could not do for ourselves"

Promises 3rd ed. Big Book pg.83

Manchester Big Book Step Study

9:00AM- Saturday

this group meets in the exact same location but this is a better address to find it.

**Birthright Center next to
Parish of the Transfiguration
307 Kelly Street**

New Women's meeting Needs support Saturdays 3-4PM

Family Willows
Recovery Center
161 South Beech Street
Manchester
Families In Transition
Behind Family Outfitters

New A.A. for Women Manchester



Weekday Noontime Meeting
Grace Episcopal Church
Corner of Lowell & Pine St

Did you know that District 12 has it's own web page? On it you will find an online meeting list and other information about the district.

<http://www.aadistrict12.org>

Women's Meetings Behind the Walls

Greetings District 12 from your new Women's Correction Chair. I am very grateful to be in service with something that I have such a passion for, which is carrying the message to those not fortunate enough to enjoy their choice of meetings during any given day or week.

We are truly blessed here in District 12 with the amount and variety of meetings we have available daily in which to get our spiritual nourishment and precious fellowship. Here is your opportunity to give freely what was freely given to you- by committing to one hour, once per month!

"Yup that's right!" Whether as an individual or as a group-carrying our message to any of these facilities:

Goffstown Woman's prison
Shea Farm transitional Housing (Concord)
Valley Street Jail (Manchester)
SYSC (Formerly YDC-Manchester)
Angie's Woman's Shelter (Manchester)

There is a simple process for filling out applications and there are orientations being scheduled for all facilities. Once you are approved these last for 3 years; so you get to pick how and when during that period that you would like to commit. That's a long time to decide ladies!

I'm only asking you to get approved so that when you're ready, you'll be able to begin without delay.

I will be available to help fill out applications, allay any fears, and coordinate with interested AA's and groups to get orientations completed. Feel free to call me with any inquiries. Anne D. 218-9766

Join the Young People's Video Project

The General Service Office in NY is looking for videos of people who got sober between the ages of 12 and 25
Check out the web site at
aa.org

Recovery Related Acronyms

WISDOM

When Into Self, Discover Our Motives.

PRIDE

Personal Recovery Involves Deflating Ego

Valley Street Jail

The first time I brought a meeting into the Valley Street jail was almost 5 years ago. I can remember I was scared to death of the process. I was afraid of the unknown.

Now I bring other women behind the walls to share their experience, strength and hope. I can really identify with the women and their fears. I try and alleviate that fear by explaining the situation before they get there. This was not done with me.

The main purpose of my commitment to the jail is purely selfish. I don't ever want to forget my bottom and should I ever decide that I can drink again, my options are this jail and I have no doubt about that. The women at this jail keep me sober and I can see myself doing this commitment until I die.

It has been a new beginning for my sobriety. Even though these women are doing time for crimes, many of them realize that God was doing for them what they could not do for themselves. Many see their sentence as a second chance to clean up their lives and start over.

The reward for me is seeing the women change from their first meeting to the present. I see how the program has brought so many of them together with a special bond that only another alcoholic can understand. It is very rewarding to see them release and come to our meeting and hook up on the outside or write to them to see how they are doing when they move from one facility to another.

I think people forget, "*But for the Grace of God*", when it comes to inmates; I think people forget that any one of us could be one of them if the addiction got a hold of us once more. I know if I were in a jail, I would want to have some meetings for peace of mind.

We just started a second meeting at the jail for the step meeting and are in need of facilitators for that meeting. If you are interested, please contact Ann R 661-3635.



The Newcomer

My last drunk was a gray-out; flashes of the night before. I woke up with the usual self-loathing and panic. When I tried to get up, I realized I had fallen while walking home from the bar and sprained my hand. This is serious, as it would make my work difficult.

My drinking had progressed to the point that I was drinking every day, without my permission. Vodka! Lots of it! I was bankrupt. I decided I needed to get sober and went to a meeting that night. I went inside full of fear and self-pity.

The people had smiles on their faces and I immediately felt a sense of relief. People came up to me and offered me coffee and support. They accepted me right where I was and I was a mess. I didn't have to ask for phone numbers, they offered them to me.

I met my sponsor at my third meeting. She flew into action, picking me up and taking me to meetings once or twice daily. She took me grocery shopping, and to counseling because I couldn't do it without a drink. As weeks progressed she took me walking in the woods and other places so that I might get outside of myself.

She introduced me to others in the program that had quality sobriety so that I don't build a dependence on her alone but built a foundation on the fellowship.

Her sobriety is based on spirituality, a daily reprieve and she is passing it on to me. If I can't get this part of the program then I would have run on self-will run riot, and surely drink again.

Although I am less than thirty days in, my life is already a thousand times better. I am finding a new way of thinking and a new way of life. I pray someone will identify with my feelings and reach out for help. There is someone in AA that will grab you by the hand and save your life by sharing his or her experience, strength and hope.

Godspeed-J.

Item Found

Gold Colored Medallion

"Carry the Message"

"In Memory"

Contact Editor and describe

Are There Any History Buffs in Your Group?

My name is Karen R., and I'm your District 12 Archivist. Part of my job is to collect history from groups in Bedford, Goffstown, Hooksett, Manchester, and New Boston. I am looking for history such as; when formed, location, anniversary dates, other functions, etc. Hope you can help with this history search. Contact me with information. District 12 Archivist 232-7054 leave a message

Functions

Hang on and enjoy the journey, another holiday season is here again!



All year, of course, is the time for caring and giving of ourselves. What about sharing your time and talents?

The Function Committee is especially busy this time of year so why not meet the challenge and open up to new opportunities? There is no "I" in team, learn first hand about Principles over Personalities, no professional qualifications necessary but "jack of all trades" needed for brain storming new ideas. The list of needs includes:

- Transportation for food and supplies
- People who love to decorate
- Cooks, and kitchen helpers
- Shoppers
- Also we need those who like to set up and tear down of the halls.

Best of all, you can take pride in a job well done! Why not join us at Grace church on the corner of Lowell and Pine St. at 7:00 PM the first Wednesday of every month? Upcoming discussions will be centered on the Alcathon.

On a personal note I've found this to be a great way to experience service work and fellowship at the same time. We are not a glum lot!

Yours in service Jeannie B.
District 12 Functions Chair

A Conversation With An Original: Searcy W. on 01-29-02

Searcy W. was the founding member of the Whitehouse Group in Dallas
He passed away September 30, 2003 with 57 years continuous sobriety

I have recently been in a quandary regarding actions involving the service side of our program. I had discussed these situations with friends that shared the same concerns and we spent a considerable amount of time and energy researching the A.A. literature concerning these issues.

I contacted Searcy in Dallas and asked for his help. I explained that my perception was that we were somehow "off the path" concerning these matters and expressed to him some of my concerns. I asked for his input regarding these matters. Searcy listened intently and after a thoughtful pause stated:

"There are three questions that we have to ask ourselves concerning matters related to A.A., "Is it kind, is it true and is it necessary?"

I did not understand and asked what he meant. He responded again, ***"Is it kind, is it true and is it necessary?"***

I was speechless. His message reverberated into my conscious. Why was I expending so much time and energy on issues that were not my primary purpose? I felt like I had been slapped with a 2x4 inscribed "What really matters?"

Searcy let his message sink in for a moment and then asked, ***"Do the actions you are discussing help sick and suffering alcoholics?"***

AA Meeting Quotes

**'Remember: It's ok to look back
But don't stare. "**

**" Alcoholic drinking's three stages:
impulsive, compulsive, repulsive. "**

"Would you like to be right or happy?"

"Ah..ha."!

Searcy then made the following observations:

"The side of the A.A. triangle involving business meetings, group conscious votes, district meetings etc sometimes get wrapped up in issues not related to carrying the message. We can quickly forget what our primary purpose is. With all good intentions, we can still lose focus".

"The newcomer does not come into AA asking us to explain the way we conduct the service side of our program. They come in asking for a way out of where they are. What is the solution"?

"We must always remember the fate of the Washingtonians and the Oxford Group. Focus on what really matters. Never lose sight of the reason we are here. The primary focus of a group should always be, "how can we help the newcomer"?"

I am once again in awe of those who paved our path to sobriety. My brief conversation with Searcy brought back into focus why we were chosen to carry the message to sick and suffering alcoholics. Searcy has traveled down every road in his A.A. experience and never lost sight of the primary purpose of our program of recovery.

Our primary purpose is to stay sober and help other alcoholics to achieve sobriety.

Our groups' primary purpose is to carry it's message to sick and suffering Alcoholics.

Thank you Searcy! ALK



Reprinted from Grapevine with permission

Cooperation Not Affiliation: We Are Responsible

The principle of anonymity has been associated with our spirit of cooperation and non-affiliation from AA's early years. In 1945, Bill wrote in the AA Grapevine about the time when Yale University hired an AA member to do some professional work and Bill had agreed that the individual could drop anonymity. Before long, people were confusing AA with Yale's educational program.

As Bill tells us in *AA Comes of Age*, the "Traditions were beaten out on the anvils of . . . experience." Anonymity, indeed, is the soul of our Traditions. So important is it that in Bill's last message, he stated, "If I were asked which of these blessings I felt was most responsible for our growth as a fellowship and most vital to our continuity, I would say, the 'Concept of Anonymity.'" It is our collective experience that the practice of anonymity leads to humility, self-sacrifice, and above all, freedom. Affiliation leads to dependency and to ties that bind.

A few weeks ago, I was tempted to suggest the name of our chairman of the board to be an honoree at a dinner sponsored by a national organization on substance abuse. It seemed to me that suggesting that somebody from AA be the honoree for such a dinner was contrary to our Traditions. The purpose of the dinner was to raise funds to allow this organization to continue its good work. The honoree would be a key drawing card for people who would be attending the function to use as a standard bearer for the organization. This seemed to me to be something that was trading on the AA name.

Power, "money, property and prestige," as listed in the Sixth Tradition, are all extremely valuable tools. The trick for AA is not to allow the siren song of these values to shipwreck us because we fail to stay the course of our primary purpose. For an anonymous Fellowship, affiliation is impossible. If you can't name the organization with which you are affiliated, how will anybody ever know such a thing has ever happened? Anonymity is true spiritual power. It is the power not to be diverted from carrying the message of the miracle of recovery to alcoholics who still suffer. As an anonymous Fellowship, AA realizes that we are pilgrims on a journey. We are mendicants on the road with no place to build a lasting city. The spiritual power made manifest by this attitude of reckless abandon to the principle of recovery is the nuclear capability of Alcoholics Anonymous. This is the same power that propels alcoholic after alcoholic out of the gutters, out of the hospitals, out of the institutions, and into the arms of a loving human race. It is not a rational attitude. But neither is recovery a rational process. It is so irrational that recovery involves the achievement of a different state of consciousness. It is a total reversal of negative attitudes—impossibility prior to the functioning of a Higher Power in the life of an alcoholic. Non-affiliation leads to freedom just as non-drinking leads to life.

All well and good but how does this wonderful spirituality apply in my daily life? Let me challenge you here, today, to try it on for size. Over the next day, over the next week, experience the freedom of anonymity. Do something good for someone and make sure that person doesn't find out who is responsible. In other words, don't affiliate with the good of others. Think about it. Tell your best friend about it if you want. But make sure that the person for whom you did

The good thing doesn't know that you've done it. If you really want to experience the power, do it for someone you don't like, or for someone against whom you have resentment.

The anonymity of non-affiliation certainly applies to people who take AA meetings into hospitals or institutions. It applies to our work with treatment facilities, churches, and professional groups and to each of the treatment facilities committees around the country. It applies to the focus of the Public Information Committee, where the principle of anonymity and "principles before personalities" need be maintained to preserve the ideal of attraction rather than promotion. It applies to our ability to avoid controversy. We are the twentieth century "know-nothings." How can people who refuse to give you their name because they wish to remain anonymous get up on the podium and rattle sabers about issues of politics, economics, or philosophy? Once I am positioned in these elements, I am affiliated with them and am no longer free to live totally, sharing only the miracle of recovery. I am like the caterpillar that was unable to transform itself into a butterfly.

The principle of non-affiliation is the practice of anonymity in action in our relationships with the other institutional elements of our society. It is a safeguard of our unity and the foundation stone of personal recovery.

—Anonymous

This article was originally presented at the 1991 General Service Conference.

Responsibility

I realized that as a practicing alcoholic I had no rights. Society can do anything it chooses to do with me when I am drunk and I can't lift a finger to stop it; for I forfeit my rights through the simple expedient of becoming a menace to myself and the people around me.

With deep shame came the knowledge too that I had lived with no sense of social obligation nor had I known the meaning of moral responsibility to my fellow men.

Reprinted from Alcoholics Anonymous, page 549 with permission AAWS

This issue of The Voice Within was sponsored through the 7th Tradition

Clean & Serene BB, Courage to Change,
First Light of Day, Free At Last, Friday
Women's Meeting. Goffstown We
Understand, Happy Hour East, Hard Hat
Group, Heard It Through The Grapevine,
How to 12 & 12, Joy of Living, Keep It
Simple, Ladies Night Out, Lake
Massabesic Group, Men's Intro 12 & 12,
North End Group, Over Fifty Group,
Pathway To Sobriety, Precise Method
Group, Queen City Group, Sunday AM
Round Robin, There is a Solution,
Women's Back to Basics,
Women's Daytime,
District 12 Assembly 7th Tradition



Submitting Articles

Length and format: The newsletter may publish work of different lengths, from snappy one-liners and one-paragraph anecdotes to full-page articles (word count 400-800max) **Text** sent by e-mail should be submitted in the body of the message or as attached files, saved in "Word," "Simple text," or "Rich text." **Handwritten text** should be written clearly on one side of the paper. Include your phone Number please.

Articles are reviewed and selected by the editorial team.

Dark Pen Line drawings, cartoons, crossword puzzles, etc., are also welcome Please scan and email these items

February's Absolute Deadline

Sunday January 18th
At the District meeting

Many people have said, "I want to write something but I don't know what to write about." So here are some suggestions:

- If you're a founding member of your group, or it's just been around for a long time, write about its history and any hardships it's had to overcome along the way.
- Write an article about your recovery for the issue of your anniversary month.
- What was the easiest step for you? The hardest? Why?
- Tell us about meetings you've attended in other states and/or other countries. How were they the same? How were they different?
- Explain why a certain slogan or saying in AA is your favorite.
- How did you come to choose your home group? How did you choose your sponsor - or did s/he choose you?
- If you've had a spiritual experience, when and what was it?
- What has the program given you that you never had before?
- Tell about the service work you've done and how it enriched your recovery. Don't be shy. Submit something today

The Voice Within

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