

The Boomerang

SPRING EDITION

AREA 28, PANEL 72, EDITION VII



From the Delegate

I love to go to the Northeast Region Alcoholics Anonymous Service Assembly (NERAASA) because I am reminded of my first one, when I discovered that there was a bigger world to AA, beyond our Area. Our hopes and fears and squabbles are part of a larger tapestry.

NERAASA also launches the Conference season for us. The background just comes out as our Pre-Conference Forum looms, then the Northeast Region Delegates meeting (NERD) is followed by our Spring Assembly; it follows a little too closely, in fact, to maximize potential communication within the Maine Area service structure.

It's a challenge to fit it all in, and also a challenge for Districts to get information on conference agenda items to groups and have the opportunity to hear feedback. It might better support communication if our Spring Assembly was a week or two later, closer to the Conference. *Something to think about.* NERAASA makes you realize that other Areas do things differently, and Areas can, and do, change when and how they do things.

Also, our Fall Assembly used to give us time to reach an Area conscience on a proposed conference agenda items, but now these have to be submitted by September 15, two months earlier, to allow time for translation into French and Spanish. So, maybe we should ponder whether our Assemblies are still at the time that serves us best.

Peter B.
Panel 72,

Editorial or Group Conscience?

Editorial or Group conscience? There is no shortage in AA of what individuals think, or for strong opinions. How does our literature speak to us regarding how we communicate AA principles? What did our founders hope for when they set up Alcoholics Anonymous? Loaded questions and a good place to begin when we are developing and expressing group conscience .

Our second tradition states that, "For our group purpose there is but one ultimate authority – a loving God as He may express Himself in our group conscience". The process of developing this newsletter includes reading how others interpret our AA tradition. The quality of any AA service communication, for me, begins with is it grounded in the spiritual principles of AA service. Recovery is just talk, it is action. It is action that can be observed and action that can be supported by good sponsorship and healthy use of our literature. Personally I appreciated listening to and reading someone who digs into the book *Alcoholics Anonymous*, the *AA Service Manual and Concepts for World Service* or Bill's conference talks in the book *Our Great Responsibility*. What we ought to be looking for is, how well does our communication support our goal of developing a group conscience, as our loving God expressing Himself to us.

(Continued on page 3)

The Sponsor mobile continues to run for AA service so, 5 of us agreed to vanpool to NERAASA again this year.

Allen (Alternate Delegate), Ken (Registrar), Matt (Grapevine Chair) and I took off early Wednesday morning for NERAASA. John (Boomerang Editor and Ted (Corrections Chair) went in John's car, but we all travelled together, leaving a day early because bad weather was coming. Unfortunately, Jamie was not able to leave that early and wound-up driving solo in awful weather late at night. We missed her including on the way back, but the Sponsormobile was practically shaking with our laughter all the way.

NERAASA, like the Round Up, is a spiritual reboot for me, although it is entirely service focused. Okay, there is a lot of socializing and being silly, too. It was a weaving of speakers, presenters, meetings, hanging out, eating together and deliberately spending time with people I remembered from years past as well as new folks. Spirituality flowed. I was in the groove. I think everyone was. Floating. Spiritually full.

All of the weekend's panel presentations, focused group round table discussions and AA meetings were incredible as was Francis's goodbye as Northeast Regional Trustee.

I attended the Treasurers' and Accessibilities Committees' round tables and learned a lot, networked and asked for and received direct feedback and suggestions for Area 28.

Specifically, I asked other Area Treasurers about sending the \$1800 to the General Service Fund, fully funding one's Delegate's participation (between \$8 and \$9 thousand per year) or sending some of the money forward (maybe reaching for or exceeding that amount or not) after other expenses are covered.

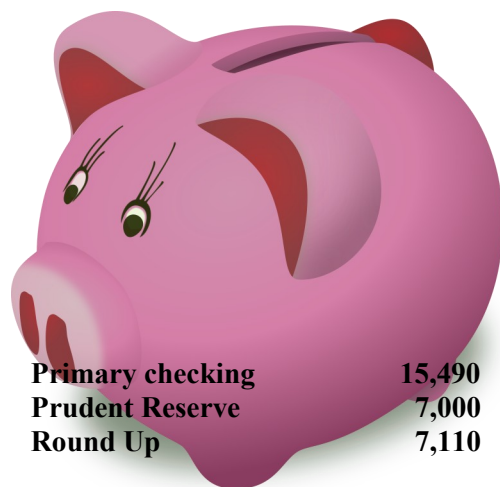
Most relayed they deliberately spend their income on local expenses. These include further expanding committee services to help reach the newcomer and help that individual stay sober. Some provided DCMs and GSRs full or partial scholarships to NERAASA. Some help inactive committees get back in the middle of the circle and triangle. A few cover their Delegate's expenses at the Conference in full, most partially and a few send \$1800 and call it good.

I also attended the Accessibilities round table discussion. ASL, visual, mobility, cognitive and other accessibility needs and how they are met were discussed. We also identified additional objectives going forward. A full report will be in the NERAASA minutes along with a contact list of those who attended these round tables.

It was truly an amazing weekend...did I say the ride home in the Sponsormobile was a blast, including the phone issue. What happens in the van, stays in the van. NERAASA 2024-Let's GO!

In love of service,
Drew S, Area 28 Treasurer, Panel 72

The A.A. groups themselves ought to be fully supported by the voluntary contributions of their own members. We think that each group should soon achieve this ideal; that any public solicitation of funds using the name of Alcoholics Anonymous is highly dangerous, whether by groups, clubs, hospitals, or other outside agencies; that acceptance of large gifts from any source, or of contributions carrying any obligation whatever, is unwise. Then too, we view with much concern those A.A. treasuries which continue, beyond prudent reserves, to accumulate funds for no stated A.A. purpose. Experience has often warned us that nothing can so surely destroy our spiritual heritage as futile disputes over property, money, and authority.



Primary checking	15,490
Prudent Reserve	7,000
Round Up	7,110

NERAASA & Me

Several years back, my home group adopted A.A.'s Responsibility Statement to close our meeting. For those not familiar, A.A.'s Responsibility Statement is as follows: "I am responsible when anyone, anywhere reaches out for help, I want the hand of A.A. always to be there. And for that: I am responsible." The sentiment of this Statement is one reason I keep active in service – because I truly want to hold the door open for others who have the desire to stop drinking in the future. I want A.A. to be there if my children, grandchildren, and any and all others in need.

I also believe that A.A. is the world's most dangerous spectator sport. When I am not involved, I start to lose my sense of community – my belonging in A.A. And it gets worse from there. Fortunately, there are many opportunities for service in A.A. And once in service at the home group level, members learn more about the service structure – and the many levels of structured service that are needed to fulfill the promise of the Responsibility Statement.

As DCM for District 9, I learned more about Northeast Regional A.A. Service Assembly affectionately known as NERAASA and talked with others who had attended. This year I had the opportunity to go NERAASA in person in Albany, NY. Wow! What an experience! The love and energy flowed. It was a wonderful feeling to be with so many people who love A.A. and love being sober. It was great learning from others in service. The driving time just melted away as I got to know another member who I have long respected. We shared our experience, strength and hope – and lots of laughs! We even trudged an icy road to get to Ebby Thatcher's grave site. (Ebby 12-stepped Bill Wilson long before the steps were even written.) I brought back some "goodies" back for my district members – some pamphlets and information of interest – and most notably information about next year's NERAASA which will be in Hershey PA February 22-25, 2024. It is being billed as the "The Sweetest NERAASA in History!" I have already requested time off from work so that I can attend again next year. You will not want to miss this experience! I hope to see you there!

Submitted by Harriett W.
DCM District 9

I Am Responsible

When anyone, anywhere, reaches out for help, I want the had of AA to always be there,
and for that I am responsible.

(Editorial or Group Conscience, con't from page 1)

It is my hope that folks read, listen and pray for guidance from the Loving God of our understanding as we read the pages of the Boomerang newsletter. There is plentiful experience form recent attendees to the NERAASA conference and we can expect, I believe, great input from all this folks as we gather for our area service meetings. Peter B., our delegate, shares above a few thoughts around the idea of looking at our service meeting schedule to support the flow of information around the General Service Conference agenda. Tad J., a Panel 70 Past Delegate submitted to Nikki O., our delegate at the time, an article titled, *Alcoholics Anonymous: A World of Change in a World of Change*. It speaks to not only the challenges and changes of an active pandemic but also to what we change moving forward. Would it be good for Area 28 to implement an online virtual district? Please read this, it been done, and some folks are finding it a great way to carry the AA message.

The purpose of meeting for a Spring Assembly is, in large part, to inform our delegate as he or she prepares for the upcoming General Service Conference. I appreciate the opportunity to be ingaged in the process and thank you for reading and listening to the Ultimate Authority that our literature calls a "Loving God" as expressed through our AA services.

John D., Boomerang Editor

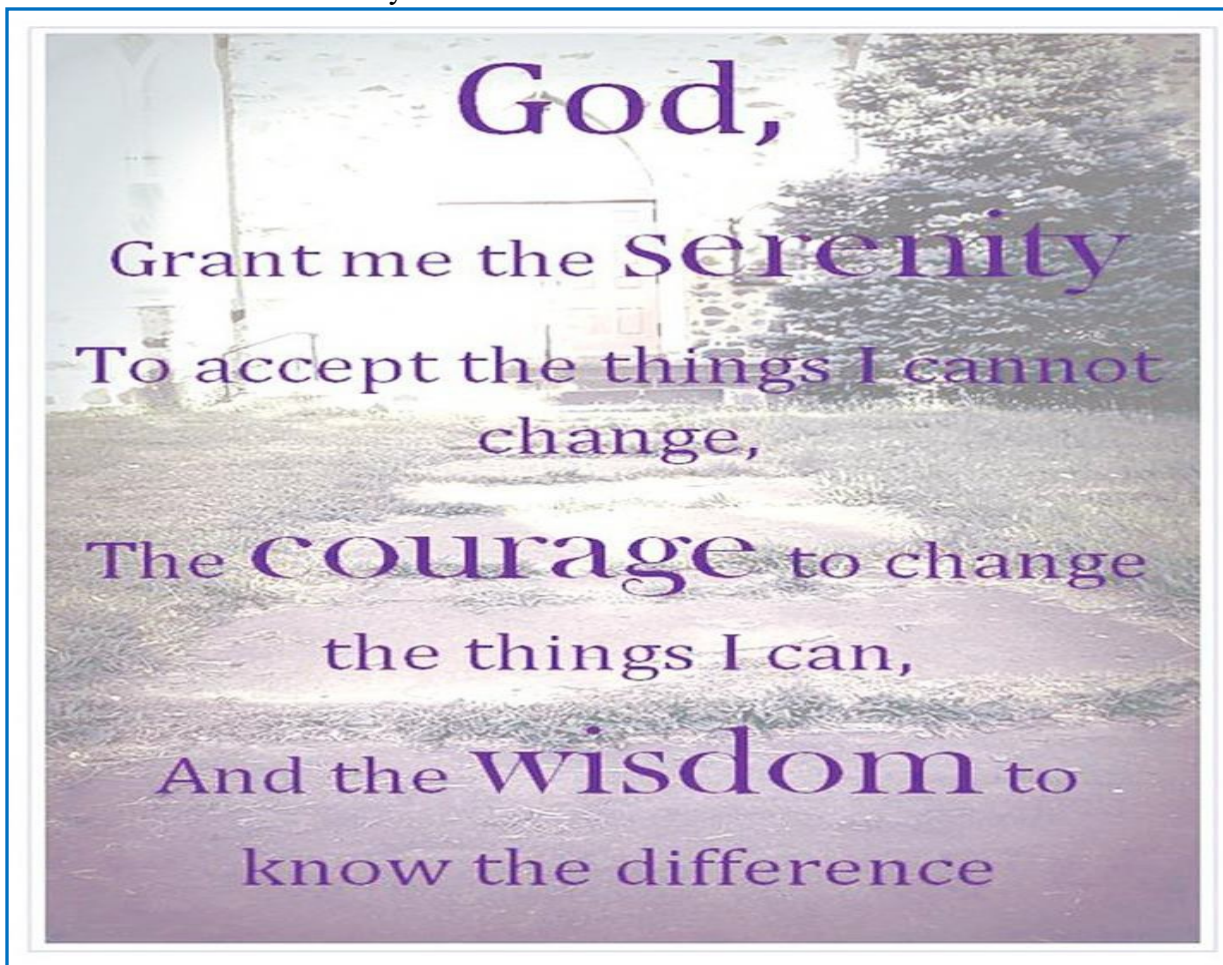
I was asked to share my experience on communication using online meetings, and the possibility to make Area 28 business hybrid in Area 28. In Alcoholics Anonymous we have an abundance of work to do; often so much work is required that it seems like there's too few people. If you were taught as I was, you would never say "no." What is sharing about having an online presence like for me? it keeps me active in fighting a, one day at a time, deathly disease. Having a commitment to an online presence in Alcoholics Anonymous helps me stay sober for one more day. By not resting on my laurels, or being an angry drunk! I get to practice the principles of the program, while carrying online meetings to people who have accessibility restrictions.

I also get to be a part of an Alcoholics Anonymous that is coming of (digital) age. I get to learn about how guidelines are developed for an online presence, and how it's evolving into something we never could have dreamed of. What makes me passionate about this is that, AA is a democracy, and everybody has a voice. The minority vote can influence the vote of countless GSRs, DCMs, Committee Chairs, and Area Officers, just by speaking a language of the heart, and this voice makes the entire body be responsible when anyone anywhere reaches out for help. The upside-down triangle ensures that minority opinions are heard. Nothing gets heard more closely, than a passionate GSR generating a discussion about how online meetings saved their lives, and gets them active in service.

I've also been given the gift to learn through active service in AA. I learned to have an open mind to opinions other than my own. When ideas are brought to the Area, they are discussed, then reviewed, considered, and a brand new vision is presented. I've learned that motions that pass are motions that AA can get behind. It has nothing to do with personalities, opinions, or grandiose ideas.

You may say that this does not sound any fun, but through the learning process of patience, tolerance, and love, I've had some of the best belly laughs and deep connections to my family of choice. This is the only place where you can dress in your best, fool around, and make AA change the things it can.

Jamie R. Area Alternate Secretary



Alcoholics Anonymous: A World of Change in a World of Change..

As we all know, things in Alcoholics Anonymous are often slow to change, and historically with good reason. Those that came before us developed our 36 Spiritual Principles over a period of years, with careful thought and small changes driven by experience. They have largely remained the same and are timeless. How we meet and how we carry the message have also remained the same for the most part. We gathered in church basements, we reached out to the next sick and suffering alcoholic through hotlines, meetings taken into various facilities, and from one person to another. And we still do. And then 2020 rolls in, bringing with it a major pandemic in the form of the novel coronavirus known as Covid-19 and our world turns upside down. The risk of a deadly disease causes meetings to close, access to facilities to be shut down, and personal contact to cease for the most part. Our world, and Alcoholics Anonymous must adapt and adapt quickly. We are blessed (and cursed) to live in a world of technology now and we have been able to jump into the world of virtual gathering in short order in order to maintain necessary contact. And while there have been online meetings for a while, thousands more meetings go online and all of a sudden, we can travel to meetings across the country and the world from the comfort of our homes. Those that have been uncomfortable with technology are learning. We are going to any lengths. We can continue to conduct the business of Alcoholics Anonymous. In the matter of a few short weeks, our General Service Conference was moved to a virtual platform, albeit in an abbreviated form. In short, we have adapted and changed the face of Alcoholics Anonymous in a time frame previously unheard of. What does all this mean for our future? Personally, I am convinced that we will continue to seize the opportunities that have come about, even as we hopefully move towards a resolution with the pandemic. As meetings find a way to meet in person again, virtual meetings will continue - to help with accessibility issues, reduce the need to travel long distances or in inclement weather, just plain convenience, and a host of other benefits. But how do those groups get their voice heard? How does their group conscience reach down the Service structure so they too are participating wholly in our Fellowship? In Area 48, one of our trusted servants has come up with a proposal to form a virtual District to accommodate the online meetings that have started up and hopefully will continue. This District would have a DCM and the groups would have a GSR. They would participate in our service structure like the rest of the Districts, be welcome to come to Assemblies, and have voting rights. I see this as the initial step forward in being inclusive, after all, they too are alcoholics if they say so, according to our Third Tradition, and should be part of AA as a whole. I reached out to the General Service Office to gather information, see if there was any history around this idea, and to simply raise the issue if it hadn't been already. I received an answer from Group Services stating that they met and discussed it just this week in a staff meeting, and that the Operations team will be meeting soon to discuss it as well, and bring it to the attention of the management. I see this as positive progress and they are recognizing that this idea will become real - if not now, sometime in the near future. Here in Area 48, we may well have a new virtual District in about one month, should our Assembly approve the proposal in October when we meet to consider it. This certainly would be ground breaking in our Area and it may be happening elsewhere too - I know there has been much discussion in the Northeast Region, and most likely elsewhere too. I am excited and encouraged that AA continues to grow and evolve as our founders foresaw, and that maybe, just maybe, things will move ever so slightly faster and continue to foster unity across our Fellowship as we find new ways to carry the message of Alcoholics Anonymous into the future! Be safe, be sober!

Tad J Hudson Mohawk Berkshire Area 48 / Panel 70 Delegate

Reprinted from the Fall 2020 Boomerang

Regarding the AA Grapevine



At Wit's End

Many returns A drunk walked into a bar and swallowed a Boomerang. The bartender threw him out—47 times.

Reprinted with permission AA Grapevine, Inc.

I attended the AA Grapevine round table discussion group while at NERAASA along with the other grapevine reps from the northeast region. We were very fortunate to have the grapevine publisher and two grapevine board members to give us up to date news as well as a question and answer session. Here are some of my takeaways from these discussions.

Before I get to what I consider is the big news of the discussions I have a few interesting points. The grapevine has launched an Instagram page which I logged into and found 1158 posts with 9272 followers. There are some posts from the NERAASA weekend photos and such so I encourage all to check it out. You have heard me mention the podcasts before (cause I really like them) and they have 75 episodes now with between 350 and 400 thousand downloads, and is in the top 5 percent of all podcasts. Grapevine also has a YouTube channel that plays 7 minute audio members stories that they submit soooo if you're not that into writing you can submit an audio recording no reason not to get involved now!

So the big news of the discussion!?! Grapevine is developing a grapevine app! First some background. The board members told us they estimated a loss of 1.1 million dollars by 2026 if the grapevine stays as it is today. They also looked at other printed subscriptions aka newspapers. One newspaper had around 900 thousand physical printed subscriptions and (hold on to your hats) 9 million app subscriptions. The publisher then related a train ride he took and noticed out of 20 or 25 people on the train there were no books, magazines, or newspapers being read and everyone was on their phones so he realized a change needed to happen. Grapevine then used what funds they had and borrowed 500 thousand dollars from the AWS board and started developing an app. Financially speaking there is a plan in place to pay back the AWS board fully in three to five years and that 1.1 million loss is projected to turn into a 1.1 million dollar profit by 2026. The app is still in development but they gave us a few things it will have such as a sobriety calculator, daily quotes, calendar, and archives so personal libraries can be built from favorite stories. The publisher gave an example open the app and it says good morning today you have been sober x amount of days your home group meets tonight at 7:30 and then a list of personal quotes or readings. Cost wise some numbers that were thrown out was a monthly subscription of \$2.99 and \$29 yearly. The timeline is finishing development with testing over the summer and a release around September.

The Grapevine is also reassuring us how important the printed magazine is to us all and for as long as they could see it isn't going anywhere. I am very pleased I had the privilege of attending the discussions and if you have any questions feel free to contact me yours in service.

Matt

Maine Area Grapevine Committee Chair

My name is Joe K. and I'm an alcoholic. My last arrest was August 28th, 2018 and this is my first time being at or going to NERAASA, along with others. At first it seemed overwhelming. Getting ready for my trip to go to. Planning my route, checking in with another member of AA who was planning to go with me for the first time also. My travelling companion had to stay home due to inclement weather so I struck out to Albany NY by myself, (*without a drink in hand!*)

Checked in and it was a breeze. Met my sponsor shortly after arrival and instantly felt at ease. Not knowing what to expect, just started meeting new people who had the same problems looking to be of service to better their own lives and hopefully someone else's. I learned what a Red Ball meeting was by attending and it was great. I learned what a round table meeting was by attending one, it was great! I learned that we all have the same issues county wide.

In general, meeting new people in AA is great seeing how it works is remarkable. I raise my own food at home so the food in general wasn't up to what I'm used to. In spite of it all I would attend again, the late night meetings were the best.

Joe K.
District 2

Hello Area 28!

My name is Josh and I am standing as your Maine Round Up Chair. The Maine 44th Round Up will be held on July 22, and July 23 at Sugarloaf. I am excited to announce that Registration has opened for the 44th Maine Round Up! Registration is on line this year at www.maineroundup.org. I am also attaching a printable Registration Form that can be downloaded. Maine Area Round Up PO Box 2892 Waterville, ME 04903.

If you would like to be guaranteed a T-shirt and Hoodie you will want to order them with your Registration. There is a discount if you order ahead of time with your registration. There will be a limited amount of t-shirts and hoodies for sale at Sugarloaf. Also, with your Registration you can book your meal package. There is a lot of information on our website including the schedule, names of the committee members, and more.

Hotel Reservations for Sugarloaf will open up on April 1st. Pricing for hotel rooms are listed on our website and booked very fast. Contact Sugarloaf 1(800)theloaf. Please don't forget if you click on maineroundup.org website you are able to listen to the 2022 recordings which are available in the Archives.

Any questions or concerns contact MaineRoundupinfo@gmail.com

Yours in Service,

Josh T

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.



July 21, 22 & 23, 2023

Contact Sugarloaf for Lodging 1-800-THE-LOAF (1-800-843-5623)

Beginning **APRIL 1, 2023**

Be sure to mention Maine Area Round Up 2023 to qualify for special group rate.

Contact Sugarloaf for pricing on **Condos**

Meal Plan purchases for the 44th Maine Area Round Up need to be made through the The Round Up Registration. Registration is open! Visit **www.maineroundup.org**!

Get a \$5 dollar discount on your t-shirt or sweatshirt by ordering it

With your registration!!!!!!

***A limited amount of Swag will be available for purchase at Sugarloaf**

Round Up will open Friday July 21st

On Site Registration will open at Noon

For a full schedule go to the website

The QR code will bring you to the **www.maineroundup.org** website

ASL services MUST be requested by June 21, 2023

***For questions please email maineroundup@gmail.com**