

BOOMERANG

PANEL
74



AUTUMN
2025



**A Quasi-
Quarterly
Newsletter
Celebrating
Service &
Fellowship
In Area 28
And Beyond**

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ROUND UP

My Journey at the 46th Maine Round Up: A Story of Healing and Hope

My Name is Andy R. and I want to share how three days in June '25 changed my life forever. The Maine Round Up wasn't just a gathering—it was a divine intervention, a moment where I found healing, hope, and a renewed connection to something greater than myself. I arrived at Sugarloaf that Friday carrying the weight of years of struggles—hidden scars from addiction, shame, and a life that felt broken beyond repair. The mountains loomed above, touching the stars, and their grandeur made me feel both small and hopeful. As I stepped into the King Pine room, a warm light enveloped me. It wasn't just the glow of chandeliers, it was the energy of hundreds of souls—people like me, searching for redemption and united in fellowship. I felt God's grace in that room, a quiet assurance that I wasn't alone.

The Round Up was a sacred space. From meetings where speakers shared raw, honest stories of their journeys, to the Hospitality Room, where smiles and coffee pots at dawn created a sense of home, every moment was woven with love. I listened to Al-Anon and Alateen members speak with courage, reminding me that recovery isn't just about me—it's about the community we build together.

One morning in the Widowmaker Room I joined others for quiet prayers. In the shared silence I felt a direct line to God. I'd never been particularly religious, but in those moments I felt an undeniable presence that whispered, "You are enough." The keynote speakers' words cut through my doubts like beacons in a storm. The Decades Dance was a celebration of life. I laughed and danced with strangers who felt like family. I realized that recovery isn't a solitary path—it is a chain of love and strength built by people who care.

By the time June 15th came, I didn't want to leave. Sugarloaf had become my haven, a place where God's mercy washed away my fears. The twelve steps, walked alongside others, became lights guiding me home. I carried the warmth of that eternal flame back into my daily life, a reminder that I'm never alone. The Maine Round Up saved my soul—not just once, but every time I reflect on those days. I' forever grateful for the fellowship, the trusted servants, and the undeniable presence of God's love that showed me I'll never be the same.

To anyone reading this, I want you to know that hope is real. If you're struggling, find a meeting, a community. Round Up taught me that we don't say goodbye in recovery. We say, "See you next time", because God and this fellowship are always there, waiting to welcome you home.

With Gratitude,
Andy R.

POETRY

Sober Thoughts in a Messy World

I stand before the mirror with eyes surprisingly clear,
no blurry double vision, no lingering boozy fear.
Just me staring back at me, in this wild, chaotic age.

The sober observer on life's baffling stage.

The person in the glass, with a smirk and a sigh,
remembers nights spent wondering: 'Who am I?'

Waking up to riddles like, 'Whose shoe is that? Why?'

Piecing together moments behind bloodshot eyes.

Now the reflection is sharp, every wrinkle, every pore.

Witness to the madness and wanting something more.

Not a blackout escape nor a fuzzy, fleeting bliss,

but the unvarnished truth in a world gone amiss.

This person unbuzzed greets the news with a shrug,

as if the whole planet is on some kind of drug.

They're "adulting" so hard with their artisanal lattes

while the world unravels like badly-knit sweaters.

And here I am, clear-headed, watching the entire scene

like a designated driver at a truly wild Halloween.

'Could I have just one?' the mischievous whisper will start.

Then I recall the time I thought I was a work of art
and tried to explain quantum physics to a houseplant.

No, thanks! The hangover wasn't worth the silly rant.

To the reflection I offer a knowing wink.

We're doing alright, even when we think

the world's utterly bonkers, a circus sans ringmaster.

We're still here, un-pickled, enduring the daily disaster.

It's a strange kind of superpower, this clarity we've found,
to see all the absurdities and keep both feet on the ground.

Though the world's still messy and a bit of a fright,

at least we remember each ridiculous night.

- Andy R.

DISPATCHES

Summer this year was full of opportunities for fellowship. The whole year has been, in fact, with props to our Love and Service committee and dedicate trusted servants throughout the state! Here are four stories from AA events this year.

The Founders Day picnic began with a steady influx of people coming in to bring food and desserts. There was much fellowship before the meeting. People were chatting and the warm glow of camaraderie pervaded the pavilion. Soon the food was served and the quiet hum of munching was heard. Then the meeting started and Drew was the speaker. She shared her experience, strength and hope and suggested a topic of surrender. The meeting opened up and people shared. The rain started as soon as the meeting did. After the meeting was done, we decided to close up.

Crystal F.

At the End of June, beneath the vast Maine sky at Rangeley Lake State Park, we gathered—not just as individuals, but as a family bound by hope, healing, and love. The Love and Service Committee of District 2 and Area 28 lovingly brought us together for a weekend where the silver lining ran deep.

Friday night opened with a circle of sharing, where each voice was heard and every story honored. Many came alone, strangers at first, but the warmth of fellowship quickly melted the icy distance. Hands reached out, helping to pitch tents, prepare meals, and raise shelters—acts of kindness weaving us closer. The scent of a sizzling BBQ filled the air, and later, chicken cooked over a fire nourished both body and soul. A speaker's words carried the message of recovery, echoing through the trees. But nature had its own story: a fierce storm swept in with cold winds, thunder rumbling like a drum, and a relentless downpour soaking the earth. Yet, around the fire, we found refuge and warmth. We dried our sleeping bags and clothes, and kindled the flame of connection.

Each morning the bubbling coffee pots and homemade blueberry pancakes, drizzled with real maple syrup, were simple blessings reminding us of the sweetness in our recovery journey. We hula hooped, played games, and let positive music lift our spirits. Milestones were celebrated—a two-month chip given with love—and newcomers left with a new understanding, carrying hope in their hearts.

Through every challenge and joy, the silver lining of fellowship shone brightly. It is in these moments of service, support, and shared strength that we find gratitude—not just for sobriety, but for this life reborn. The pain of the past fades, replaced by the love we give and receive.

I am grateful beyond words to be part of this circle, this living testament to the power of recovery. Here, the silver lining runs deep, and the light of love guides us forward.

Bobbi S.

DISPATCHES

Sunlight spilled across the grass in South Portland on July 13th, 2025, as the Maine Conference of Young People in AA gathered for their annual cornhole tournament. The boards gleamed, and the air was alive with the smoky aroma of a backyard BBQ, laughter and cheers rising with every toss. Friends and newcomers mingled, sharing stories and smiles, united by more than just friendly competition. The real victory was the sense of belonging and hope that grew with each bag thrown and every plate shared.

As Bill W. once wrote, "We are sure God wants us to be happy, joyous, and free." Every moment and every effort supports the future MECYPAA events and the very first MECYPAA

Bobbi S.

Sunshine and starry skies were gifted to those that came together in Otisfield at the Field of Faith for the District 5 2nd Annual Camping Weekend this past August. People with all lengths of sober time enjoyed good food, lively conversations, and fireside meetings while continuing on their journey in sobriety. Discussion meetings, relationship workshops and speakers gave the fellowship opportunity to find and create new connections, from within as well as from a community full of acceptance and support.

The event was so family friendly, it felt like one big family reunion, with cousins I just hadn't met yet. Toddlers explored the outdoors while people in recovery explored new means of reaching out to their Higher Power. With games, karaoke, and a spiritual scavenger hunt to fill what little down time there was, the weekend flew by.

Much gratitude goes to the District 5 Love & Service committee! For me, the weekend was a gift from my Higher Power. From the weather and venue, to the people and dishes, I feel so blessed to share this camping experience with others who plan on remembering it.

Randi L.

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Good Things Come In Small Packages

In sobriety, as in life, I have found the greatest gifts where I least expected them.

More than two years ago, attending my 16th RoundUp, I was gifted an opportunity to conduct a workshop. Such a wonderful experience! But an even greater gift was on its way. Having fun with my assigned workshop and consequently engaging with other presenters and the RoundUp committee, I learned there was an opportunity to be in service in an even bigger way!

My workshop mentor mentioned her 2-year commitment was ending and her position would be open, so I eagerly took the position of Workshop Chair. I was informed that there would be a lot of organizational work involved, hours invested in finding responsible people, coming up with titles and descriptions, creating a schedule to slot in the workshops, and attending regular meetings. I was all-in!

I heard early on in my sobriety that we alcoholics are people that normally would not mix, and though that might be true, the committee members that I was required to work with were truly a blessing. All from different towns, ranging in age from our 20s to 70s, and all special. I felt a warm camaraderie with each of my fellow committee members. The cooperation and collaboration of different personalities all working toward a common goal became a valuable learning experience in itself as I watched y new friends at work in their respective committees. Preparations begin approximately six months in advance.

Here's an insider's glimpse into what it takes to pull together a successful RoundUp. This is not, by far, a comprehensive list, but just some of the things the RoundUp committee is responsible for:

Logo, theme, and colors; pricing out and ordering swag; designing and managing the website; one-on-one relations with the venue; finding volunteers and organizing the alcathon, the entertainment, the hospitality suite; keeping meticulous finances and meeting notes; creating the registration form, ordering lanyards, putting packets together; and of course, finding speakers!

It reminds me of a clock, each piece intricately working together with all its moving parts.

When asked if involving myself in this undertaking, with all of its work and responsibility, is worth it, I can emphatically say "Yes!" Any service in my program has given me a chance to learn and grow, and I am truly grateful these mini-miracle opportunities to serve mt HP and others continue to be part of my journey. My Service scorecard so far includes new friends, a chance to be a part of, an opportunity for responsible growth and to be held accountable, a lesson in humility as I learned to keep my ego and desire for control out of the equation, learning to work together toward a common outcome, connection, validation, moving out of my comfort zone, and the joy found in the journey.

All magical things and all of these gifts came in small packages.

Susie T.