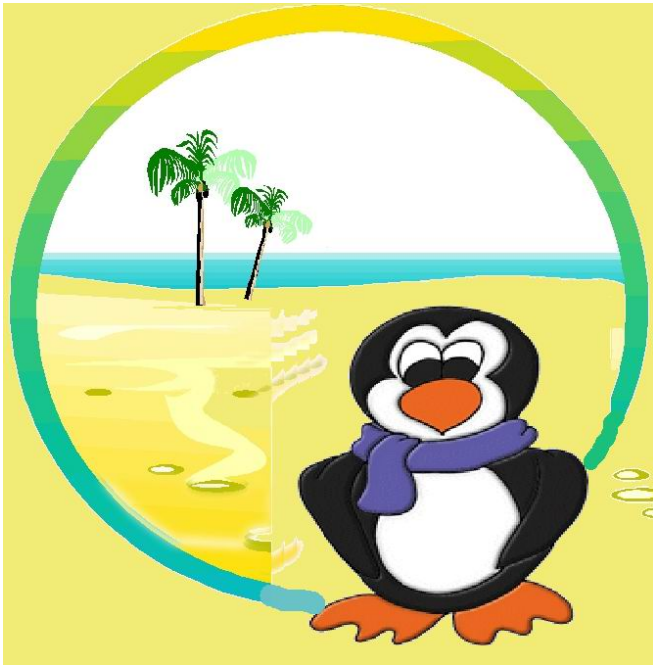


INTO ACTION



?-Daily NAVIGATION

From a talk by Bob Darrell..

One of the things that I started to get a picture of is the interlocking, interweaving and inter-relating to stuff; **inventory, self-examination, prayer and meditation.** When you think about it it's really a very similar process to what a sailor will do when he's trying to navigate on the ocean from point A to point B.

If you were to go over to one of the coasts; let' say you went over to Chesapeake Bay and were to rent the finest sailboat that you could rent; the best that money could buy; -- it's got everything, it's perfect.

You decided that you were going to sail from the Chesapeake Bay to the island of Bermuda so you went to go to the nautical library. You do the first nine steps of navigation and you charted a perfect course – no screwing around this is perfect, right on the money, to the island of Bermuda, from Chesapeake Bay.

Once you set off, no matter how perfect your sail boat is; no matter how perfect your course is set, it will come to pass that every single day; the winds, the tides and the currents are going to move you off of that course.

It's not because you have a bad boat, or that you played with your tiller to much, or nothing, it's just the way it is. So, what has to happen is everyday, a good sailor will get out his inventory equipment. It might be old style, a sextant, a compass; today it most likely is a GPS or whatever.

But he can't fool himself about values. He's got to know exactly where he is. He's got to know! What he will find every single day is that he is a little off course. Not because he is a bad guy, he's just a little off course and that is ok.

(Continued on page 2)



(Navigation – Continued from the front page)

So he can readjust his course back to the island of Bermuda and he can do the same thing the next day over again. Taking an honest inventory, he can't fool himself about values; he must see where he is.

Ah, he's not going to Bermuda, he's going over here to self! He's not over here being helpful, he's helping himself; he's running the universe.

He inventories to see how far off course he has been, so he can readjust. What happens to guys like me is that Steps 10 and 11 are weak areas of my program. And they have always been. There are some basic personality qualities in me that make it sometimes difficult. I know that if I do this to the degree I am suppose to, everything would be a lot better, but I don't.

One of the things that happens to me is that if I'm not in emotional distress or pain; I don't look real close. You know, I've had a lot of nights that I do this, "when we retire at night" and constructively review my day I ask myself those questions; Well, today was I selfish? Was I dishonest? Was I afraid? Do I owe an amends and I'll go: NO! NO! OH-OH NO! And I just go to bed.

If you are properly armed with information about yourself like I am you know that that's crap because there has never been a day, I've been alive, that I haven't been afraid. There's never been a day, I have been alive, that I haven't been dishonest or selfish. I mean, Never!

Even if it is the subtler stuff, like the dishonesty; that isn't really dishonest, it's being creative. You just tweak reality enough to give you a bit of an edge. Like, Bob, what a great car that was, what did you pay for that? Well, actually I paid \$37,945.50. But there is no edge in truth. OH! I paid way over 40 thousand! That's sounds a lot better because then I want you think I'm a big shot or I want you to think that I really know a good deal and I'm a smarty shrewd guy and I say; "Well a little over 30. Both of them serve self! How often do we tweak stuff just a little bit? I go through the whole day and unconsciously don't even notice I am lying. (Denial)

So what happens to me, and I think this is a matter of semantics; a there's lot of people in A.A. that say that you never have to go back and do a 4th Step; well, whatever you call it, you're going to do inventory. What happens to me is that if I'm not diligent, as I'm not, that I am from time to time with Steps 10 and 11, then big stuff starts slipping through the cracks. Then it starts building up.

What happens is that I think that I am on my way to Bermuda and I'm wondering why there are chunks of ice with penguins on them floating by the boat. I didn't know that they had penguins in Bermuda!

If I am real lucky, I have somebody in my life like my sponsor or a friend that will say, "You're Whacked!" "You are really out there!" Then I will go, "Oh Ya-Okay." Then I go back and do a major house cleaning. If you do this for a while and your sober for a while and you're helping others, you get to a point where you start to know that you're "Off."

Once you taste the comfort of a "Balanced Spirit", and once you have experience that connectedness, you then know that you're "Off". When you are "not", you know that you're not. There are times that I know that I'm not that. But, I'm not that bad off so I'm not going to look any more. Let's go on; you know what I mean; I'm that kind of guy.

I don't think that makes me a bad guy; it makes me like a lot of people in A.A. When it say's in our Book in Chapter 5, "that no one among us has been able to maintain anything like perfect adherence to these principles" that means we don't even come close. But I've got to try and stay in the zip code because I've watched guys who don't.

I've watched guys who get so entrenched in self, so far out that they will never get back on course to Bermuda again. So far out, and so much into serving self and concerned with self and all of the judgments, resentments and things that they have to defend, that they can't get back.

I've seen guys right before they drink again. I used to go to a lot of discussion meetings at noon in Vegas and eventually they wore me out and I go to other meetings at noon now.

(Continued on page 11)

INTO ACTION Editorial Policy

INTO ACTION News is a bimonthly newsletter of District 11; NIA 20 of Alcoholics Anonymous. It is about, by and for the Members of the Fellowship of AA. Opinions expressed herein are NOT to be attributed to AA as a whole, nor does publication of information imply any endorsement by AA. Quotations and artwork from AA literature are reprinted with permission from AA World Service, Inc. and/or The AA Grapevine, Inc. Submissions are edited for space and clarity ONLY. Contact information is required and anonymity is respected.



District 11 G.S.R.

**Meetings Are Held
On 1st Thursday of
the Month at the
First United**

**Methodist Church,
236 W. Crystal Lake
Ave. Northeast**

**Corner of Dole & Crystal Lake Avenue in Crystal
Lake, Illinois.**

District Meeting 7:30 PM

**THE THEME FOR THE DECEMBER
08/JANUARY 09 ISSUE OF
INTO ACTION IS STEP 12 & or
ENJOYING THE HOLIDAYS SOBER,
(or anything you wish to submit).**
**Be part of carrying the message,
right here is your District 11's
Newsletter.**

**Send Your Experience Strength
and Hope to Dave G.:**

INTO Action:

District 11's Newsletter

Editor: David Gilbert 815-344-6523

****E-mail: Soulsurgery@comcast.net**

DISTRICT 11's WEB SITE:

<http://www.aa-nia-dist11.org>

SOBERFEST WEB SITE:

www.soberfest.org

****SCHEDULE INFO CHANGES: PLEASE CALL**

LINDA S., 815-678-4129 OR EMAIL AT:

schedulemaker@gmail.com

From Group (Name) _____

Group #: _____

Dist. #: _____

Meeting City: _____

Northern Illinois District Eleven

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McHenry, IL 60051-0846

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New York, NY 10163-0459

Group Contributions ~ Mail To: ~



**IT IS A MOST WONDERFUL BLESSING TO BE
RELIEVED OF THE TERRIBLE CURSE WITH WHICH
I WAS AFFLICTED....**

**I SPEND A GREAT DEAL OF TIME PASSING ON
WHAT I LEARNED TO OTHERS WHO WANT AND
NEED IT BADLY. I DO IT FOR FOUR REASONS:**

- 1. SENSE OF DUTY.**
- 2. IT IS A PLEASURE.**
- 3. BECAUSE IN SO DOING I AM PAYING MY
DEBT TO THE MAN WHO TOOK TIME TO
PASS IT ON TO ME.**
- 4. BECAUSE EVERY TIME I DO IT I TAKE OUT
A LITTLE MORE INSURANCE FOR MYSELF
AGAINST A POSSIBLE SLIP.**

Dr. Bob's Nightmare – BB, Pg. 181

DCM Report

Oct-Nov 9/21/09

As my 2-year term as DCM for District 11 draws to a close, I am able to look back upon the experience with warm memories of fellowship. There were times when I felt like a failure, and every time the good folks of District 11 supported me. I am very grateful for this opportunity to grow in service Alcoholics Anonymous. I learned a lot about patience and trust in the fellowship of AA. I sincerely thank all who served the district in the past couple of years - you really made my experience enjoyable. Service in the fellowship is an excellent way to grow in sobriety. Which leads me to the main purpose of this letter: **District 11 elections will be held November 5th.**

All elected service positions will be open. I hope, with this letter, to better inform the general fellowship in District 11 of the opportunities available here. The district has several service committees that provide valuable support in the effort to carry the message to the alcoholic that still suffers. Remember, our sobriety is nothing short of miraculous when considering the nature of alcoholism. *If you can attribute your sobriety to the 12 steps of Alcoholics Anonymous, you owe the fellowship a debt that can only be paid by service in carrying the message of hope that lifted you from the pit of desperation that is alcoholism.* Just not drinking is only a beginning in the journey that is the rest of your life. From what I have seen at district and area, service has provided a lot of people with *life-long* sobriety. We stay sober one day at a time, but if you have a couple years sobriety you are ready to make the type of commitment that will ensure sobriety when all else fails: **working with others** to carry the message that there is a solution to alcoholism.

Here are some of the service committees at the district that will need a chairperson and alternate. Some of these will likely have an Alternate Chair stand for the position of Chairperson, so if you are new to service work you will have an excellent opportunity to learn in the position of Alternate. In any case, rest assured that you will be well-supported by persons with experience in service work at the district. The fellowship is strong here.

Anyway, here are the service committees open to elections of Chairpersons and/or Alternates with short descriptions:

Answering Service Committee - Return phone calls from people looking for information or in need of a 12th step call. A professional answering service serves as a go between. A list of volunteers and a binder of contacts with hospitals, etc. are available for persons on the Answering Service Committee to make the job a snap.

Corrections Committee - Maintains volunteer list for meetings in jail and delivers literature to the jail.

Cooperation with the Professional Community Committee - offers information to clinics, social workers, and other professional workers that deal with alcoholics about the nature of alcoholism and our solution.

Public Information Committee - serves as a link to the general public to provide information on how to contact AA, may participate in health fairs open to the public held by public and private organizations.

Grapevine Committee - helps carry the message by making people more aware of "our meeting in print" and other publications made by Grapevine Inc. as well as giving away subscriptions.

Hospital & Treatment Committee - maintains contact with local hospitals & treatment centers and a volunteer list to carry the message to those places. Includes **the Bridge the Gap** program that makes the connection between AA and people leaving treatment centers.

Special Needs Committee - Keeps list of signers for the hearing impaired that may be utilized when needed, provides support for recovering alcoholics with disabilities to attend meetings including shut-ins and persons with injuries that prevent them from travel.

The following positions are held by appointment: Newsletter Editor, Schedule Maker, Archivist, Workshop Coordinator, Webmaster, and Local Committee Member (LCM). The District Committee Member (DCM) appoints people to these positions. Any of these positions are potentially open, and these people appreciate any help that is offered as well. So you could serve without holding an identified position in the district. Just show up at a district business meeting and announce your interest.

The following officer positions will also be open: Alternate Treasurer, Alternate DCM and DCM. The current Alternate DCM has expressed that he will not stand for the position of DCM, so hopefully someone with experience at the district level will offer to serve in that position.

(Continued on page 5)

(DCM RPT. OCT/NOV. - Continued from page 4)

We appear to be strong at the position of Secretary, but there may be an opening for Alternate.

Please consider a service position at the district level, and talk it up with others in the fellowship. Suffering alcoholics need your help as a sober member of Alcoholics Anonymous. Our fellowship is only as strong as we make it. So get involved in service, if for no other reason than to stay sober yourself. You have to give it away to keep it!
Yours in Service, (Highlights added by editor☺-)

Dan M.
DCM District 11

NIA Calendar

Oct 10

16th NIA Big Book Conference

Hemmens Center
45 Symphony Way
Elgin IL 60120
District 22, Host

Oct 17

Fall Committee Meeting

Lord of Life Church, La Fox
Special Needs Committee, Host

Nov 13 – 15

East Central Regional Forum

Radisson Plaza Hotel
100 W. Michigan Ave.
Kalamazoo, MI 49007
Area 34, Host

Dec 12

Winter Assembly

Lord of Life Church, La Fox 60119
District 40, Host

Monthly Meeting Minutes for District 11 September 3, 2009

(Editor's Note: Dates and times contained in the following minutes are a reflection from the minutes taken on September 3rd, 2009, not the date of this publication.)

Meeting Time: 7:30 PM
Attendance: 39
Committee Members: 17
Groups Represented: 22

Anniversaries: CONGRATULATIONS!

Nikki 5yrs, Mike 19yrs, Mary 22 yrs, Craig 2 yrs

Secretary's Report: *Christine G. (Alt. Mary Flynn)*

Written committee reports must be submitted to secretary to be included in minutes. Please submit any changes or updates. Updated Rosters and Contact list as of August 09 on back table. **Please be reminded that Group Change Forms are on table, by me or can be submitted on website: niaregistrar@gmail.com.** If submitted by website, please cc. me, Mary Flynn, Alt. Sec., and Linda S., Scheduler Maker. Thank you for your cooperation and support.

DCM Report: *Dan M.* See Sept. report below – p. 3-4

Inserted by editor: See October/November Report on page 4 of this issue.

Treasurer's Report: *Lynn B.*

Starting Balance	\$3832.97
Expenses	\$1250.11
Footnote: (1,013.84)	
Income	<u>\$ 653.30</u>
Below Prudent Reserve	
Ending Balance	\$3236.16



(Continued on the next page)

(MINUTES - Continued from page 5)

Old Business:

- Alternate Corrections positions are still open- please bring back to groups to volunteer service work.
- DCM discussed changing facility for District 11 meetings. Rent paid at Crystal Lake First United Methodist Church thru December 2009. Paid thru Jan.2010.
AD Hoc committee on Dist. 11 mtg location site location: Bob K. – contacted (6) places, 3-MCHenry (3) in Crystal Lake. Will advise.
- Update from 2010 IL State Conference Planning Committee: Still need volunteers



New Business:

- **Elections are in November 2009. Please consider rotating into another service position and talking to others who you think are good candidates (2 yr. sobriety required to chair committee)**
- **Report and Q&A on the Primary Purpose Register: Ray**
- **Alternate Secretary open position, filled unanimously by Mary Flynn (22 yrs sobriety)**

Public Information: Brandon L. (Alt. OPEN)

- Alternate PI position open. If anyone interested in doing service work, P.I., could use help doing some legwork on some tasks as well. Thank you.

Corrections: Chuck L. (Alt. OPEN)

- Have meetings scheduled Jan. 2010 to revisit adding (2) volunteer members (making 4) to the Thursday Men's meeting. We've added (1) male and (2) female to regular scheduled meetings at jail. Held Correction's Committee Meeting 9-3-09. Alternate Correction Chair position still open.

Hospital and Treatment: Mike R., Dave "Scooter" R.(alt)

- (6) BTG calls. handed out literature. BTG meeting at Family Services has changed to every 6th Monday. Getting more openings for hospital volunteers.

Cooperation with Professional Community:

Tammy C. (John S., alt)

- Mailed out (68) letters to finish up the District's middle and High Schools. School project complete.

Answering Service: Jim M., Tom F. (alt)

- Fred gave report but did not get copy of report.

Newsletter: Dave G.= Editor; Ric J. = Events; Justin K.= Research

Send all info to Dave G. →
soulsurgery@comcast.net

Up-dated by editor – The Deadline for the Dec. 09/Jan 10 issue is November 21st.

- Dave reminded that Newsletter **deadline** for Oct/Nov Issue is **Sept. 19th**. Please bring to groups for any additions to newsletter. Share you're your group's news and events of the year as well as experience, strength and hope. Ric J. is helping with events. Justin K. is doing research for newsletter. Thank you.



Archives: Clarence J.

- No report. Thank you

Grapevine: Frank G.(Steve L.)

- I rec'd letter sent back to District from Grapevine from last month in regards to excess funds for (5) Grapevine subscriptions. Need to check to see if people from Soberfest Fundraiser who won a year's subscription are receiving them. Will check with Lynn (treasurer) to try to figure it out. Thank You
(Continued on the next page)

(MINUTES - Continued from page 6)

Special Needs: *Dave S.(alt) Chuck S.*

- No report. Thank you for all donations to overseas contributions. Keep 'em coming.

Special Needs Committee

Looking for your
unwanted-unused
Big Book's, & 12X12's
Grapevines & Coins
CD's, & Tapes



To send to our
Troops over seas!

*Remember- It's because of what
they do, that allows us to do what
we do!!*

Call: Chuck Stoddard
Chair-Special Needs/District 11
815-403-1994



Local Committee Member: *Linda S.*

- No report

Workshop: *Craig C, Sue C.(alt)*

- Not present – no report

Webmaster: *Chuck T.*

- Not present – no report

Schedule Maker: *Linda S.*

- Deadline for any schedule changes for next printing is Sept. 15th.
- Suggested to put procedure for schedule changes into Into Action Newsletter. Changes can be done via schedulermaker@ymail.com Thank you.

Upcoming Events

- 2010 State Conference - Volunteers 25-100 needed. Meetings held third Sunday each month til event. (3 pm at Centegra, McHenry, Classroom A)
- Flying Geese "Keep It Simple" , Sept 25-27, Bishop Ln. Retreat Ctr, Rockford, IL
- 2009 E. Central Reg.Forum, Nov. 13-15, Kalamazoo, MI
- McHenry's 20th Annual Soberfest, Nov. 20-22, Grand Geneva Resort, Lk. Geneva, WI

ANNUAL ALL WANDERERS

GROUP MEETING

52 Annual Wanderers

FRIDAY - OCTOBER 2ND, 2009

7:30 - FELLOWSHIP

8:30 - MEETING

CLOSED/NON-SMOKING

3 (THREE) SPEAKERS

WANDERERS □ 3 WILL SPEAK

ST. CECILIA CHURCH HALL

700 S. MEIER RD.

MT. PROSPECT, IL.

CONTACT:

GEORGE F. 847-394-4717

Open Mic

- Dave – Soberfest Chairperson looking to get in touch w. Dan & Sue about workshop speaker.
- Mike – Co-Chair for Soberfest , brought Soberfest registration forms.
- Frank-Oct 31st MAC-O-Ween Dance
- Bill-Asking about Men's Wanderer's Round Up
- Brandon-Co-Chair-ISCPPA Dance after Chicago Open, 9/19 @N. Suburban Fellowship, Forest Park.
- Ray – Reminder of 75th International Conf in San Antonio, TX, July 2010.
- Dave, Please send any flyers to website for newsletter

Bulleted items from DCM report

September 2009

- **Visit to state conference was helpful to the 2010 IL State Conference planning committee**
- **District 11 is doing well with service and participation relative to many districts in our 5 state region**

(Continued on the next page)

(MINUTES - Continued from page 7)

- 1st walkthrough of facilities for 2010 state conference completed
- Next walkthrough will be November 8 with State Policy Committee – anyone is welcome to attend
- Alcahion Coordinator needed for 2010
- Decorations Chair needed for 2010
- Please volunteer to help with the 2010 State Conference – Meeting minutes are posted on the D-11 website – we meet every 3rd Sunday in classroom A of NIMC
- District service positions will rotate this year – elections held at the November district meeting (Continued on the next page)
- Please consider a chair position and recommend others who may be good candidates – talk it up within the fellowship

DISTRICT CONTRIBUTIONS Jun-Jul'09

Date	Group	Amount
06/09/09	Mon night Park District	50.00
05/28/09	Men's Priority BB #672942	98.00
06/15/09	Labaan-Hain, Tue, L.I.T.H.	50.00
06/01/09	1st Things 1st #688351,361	135.00
05/17/09	Mon BB, Huntley, #657321	25.00
06/22/09	Mon night BB, Algonquin	90.00
06/23/09	Freedom Farm #643018	60.00
06/24/09	Mon BB #655321	50.00
	Tue Riverside Burt Bridge #659638	90.00
06/26/09	Serenity Seekers #606153	90.00
06/27/09	Design for Living #654091	300.00
07/02/09	Winners & Beginners #614507	382.00
07/02/09	Winners & Beginners #614507	333.00
07/13/09	Discussion Group #657318	25.00
07/24/09	Fri 12&12 #657318	25.00
07/25/09	Sun am BB, Centegra #658742	168.00
	Fri night Women's 12&12 #689957	120.00
08/03/09	McHenry Women's #125242	120.00
07/15/09	Step Group #608430	100.00
07/01/09	Thur Mens Priority BB #672942	64.00

Submitted by Linda L. Alt Treas.

Up-dated by editor: The Next meeting will be held on Thursday November 5th, 2009****

*Respectfully Submitted,
Christine Grechis, Secretary*

16th Annual NIA Big Book Conference



Hosted by District 22

Saturday, October 10, 2009

**When the student is ready,
the teacher will appear**

The Hemmens Cultural Center

45 Symphony Way

Elgin, IL 60120

www.hemmens.org

Registration at 8:00 AM

Program begins at 9:00 AM

ONLINE REGISTRATION available at:

www.aadistrict22.com

Download a copy of this flyer at:

www.aa-nia.org/BBConference.pdf

Need more info?

Chris D. 847-997-2102

Donna K. 847-343-2947

Marcia S. 815-222-9768

Special Needs – Michelle B.

847-323-3586

ANAL OPTIC NERVE

**R
V
L
E
62**



DID YOU KNOW THAT IN THE HUMAN BODY THERE IS A NERVE THAT CONNECTS THE EYEBALL TO THE ANUS. IT'S CALLED THE ANAL OPTIC NERVE. IF YOU DON'T BELIEVE IT, TRY TO PULL A HAIR FROM YOUR BUTT AND SEE IF IT DOESN'T BRING A TEAR TO YOUR EYE. IT IS RESPONSIBLE FOR GIVING PEOPLE A CRAPPY OUTLOOK ON LIFE.

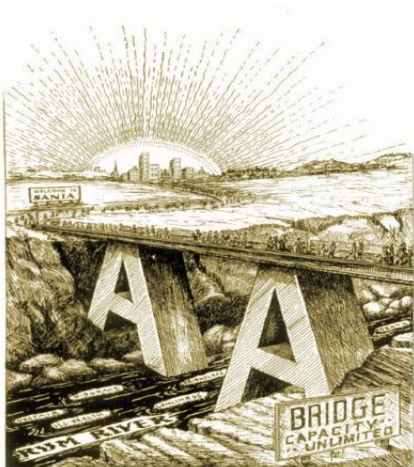
Bridge the Gap

<http://aa-nia-dist11.org/BTG/BTH.htm>

Bridging the Gap from Treatment to Alcoholics Anonymous can be of one of the more "slippery" places in the journey to sobriety between the treatment facility and the nearest AA group or meeting. Some recovering alcoholics can tell you that, even though we heard of AA in treatment, we were too fearful to go. There are recovering alcoholics who can help you bridge the gap between treatment and AA meetings. They can take you to a variety of AA meetings, introduce you to other members of AA, and talk to you about sponsorship and a home group. If you are interested in making contact with one of these recovering alcoholics, please leave your contact information and a volunteer will be found for you.

Information needed: Your name, the date

you will be leaving treatment, the town or zip code where you will be living when you leave treatment and a phone number where you can be reached before or after leaving treatment.



You can also call us @ (815) 455-3311 or email us at bridgethegap@aa-nia-dist11.org and state that you are interested in making a "Bridge the Gap Temporary Contact".

As you know as a recovering alcoholic, it can be a big step walking into an AA meeting for the first time, or asking someone to be your sponsor when you are not even sure what a sponsor is or does.

A Bridge the Gap Volunteer (B-T-G) is a member of Alcoholics Anonymous who assists the alcoholic while they are transitioning out of the treatment/facility program. The primary purpose of this is to help them bridge the gap to Alcoholics Anonymous. It is a short term arrangement to help a newcomer become established in a group, and find sponsorship.

If you are interested in being a part of this program as a B-T-G Volunteer, you will be called upon to help a newcomer by matching their zip code, gender, and age group whenever possible. **A minimum sobriety requirement of one year is suggested for temporary contacts.**

Information Needed:

Your Name

Sex (Male or Female)

Sobriety Date

Age (Optional)

Your Town or Zip Code

Your Phone number and Email Address

Email the information to bridgethegap@aa-nia-dist11.org, and we will contact you.

Responsibility Declaration

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

“IN A GENERAL WAY”? DON'T CHEAT THE NEWCOMER!

I recall vividly about 19 years ago when I heard a speaker tell his story. He painted a picture of himself in such detail that he had me firmly on the edge of my seat. I remember the room. I remember the seat I sat in. I hope I never forget being there. He described the emotional pain of the Alcoholic flailing through life in such turmoil that he couldn't stand it any longer. He described the emptiness and loneliness that I felt by letting me know the intimacies of his life. His *specific* description of what he had become as a man at the end of his drinking allowed me to identify as never before, even though his specifics were very different than mine. As far as I am concerned, he could have gone on for hours. Lord knows I spent longer stretches on a bar stool.

My “Big Book” says the alcoholic should describe “in his own language and from his own point of view the way he established his relationship with God. These give.....a clear-cut idea of what has actually happened in their lives.that it is only by fully disclosing ourselves and our problems that they will be persuaded to say, “Yes, I am one of them too; I must have this thing.” (last 2 paragraphs of chapter 2, There Is A Solution) “Clear-cut” and “fully disclosing ourselves” are highlighted in my book.

I know I left some things out of the 2 paragraphs that I quoted above, however I think I am catching the author's thoughts with what I have written. I do not want to be one of the people that twists writings to fit myself and to make me right. I may be wrong, but I thank God the man at the podium 19 years ago and many others since did exactly what the book actually says and I was able to say, “Yes, I am one of them too; I must have this thing.” Please don't cheat a newcomer by being too general.

Now, I know where the “general way” comes from. People think they are quoting chapter 5 when they say that they are supposed to tell their stories in a general way at the podium. My book, in chapter 5 does not say we disclose our stories in a general way, It says “Our stories disclose in a general way”. There's a big difference to me. I am not trying to say that we should share 5th steps from the podium either. But we must not fool ourselves with misquotes and dilute a perfect message. I believe what happened to me is that I was able to come to believe that a power greater than me could restore me to sanity.

I also believe that the only way I was able to do that was to see that the power had restored you to sanity. The only way I could do that was to come to believe that you, at one time, were insane too. I have to know specifically how you were, to be able to say to myself that I am no longer different or unique.

Let's remember that Dr. Bob asked his wife Anne to promise that they would not stay with Bill W. over fifteen minutes. Six hours and fifteen minutes later (according to my Big Book) they left.

Please don't cheat the newcomer!!!

Submitted by Joe H.



Johnny One Step

MY SPONSOR, MY SELF

My sponsor knows me better than anyone, and is a key person in my recovery. Until I was able to get completely honest with another man in A.A., my sobriety was limited and, at best, precarious.

My old sponsor had several good qualities. He was a nice guy. He understood me. He saw my side of every issue. He told me I was right even when I was clearly wrong. He said I could skip meetings—after all, I had several years of not drinking under my belt. He said I had prayed so often in the past that I could scale back.

What happened? I got drunk. Then, I realized it's not a good idea to sponsor myself.

Since then, I have begun a new journey into the Twelve Steps. But this time, I am relying on my Higher Power to lead me through, along with help of my sponsor.

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(Navigation – Continued from page 2)

But what would often happen in these meeting is that they would start the meeting and the Chairperson would say, “Does anyone have a problem that they need to talk about?”

I really hate meetings that start like that, I really do, they are very self-serving to begin with. There is sometimes one guy who raises his hand and now he hasn't worked with his sponsor, done Steps 10 and 11, hasn't helped anybody; hasn't really been to very many meetings in maybe months or years and he's out there, in the Antarctica and wondering why there are no palm trees there. All of the sudden, what has happened in his life is that he has built this house of cards based on self and now something has happened and it's collapsing.

Maybe his wife is leaving him? Maybe his business is going south on him? Maybe he is getting an IRS audit? Maybe something has happened to one of his kids and he doesn't have any God behind him. He doesn't have anything; it is just him out there on that limb. He comes to the meeting and he's in “crisis mode”. But he is so entrenched in self that he will “dump” on the meeting all of these problems with the job and the wife and the IRS and the kids and this other stuff, (he doesn't have a sponsor that he's working with), as if he is going to get advice from the meeting.

Trying to get advice from an A.A. meeting is like trying to take a drink of what from a fire hose. At once, everyone in the meeting starts sharing **at** him. Inevitably, half way through the meeting he can't take it anymore and he'll bolt out of the meeting; leave the meeting spinning on this problem and the guy isn't even there anymore. I've seen that lot of times and he's going out to get drunk. Because he got so far out there –

You know something, it's funny when we talk about it but that guy is me, left unchecked. He's me left unchecked. I can see myself going down that road; I can picture myself getting so entrenched and right; when I am **really right** about a lot of stuff.

Like Scott was talking about; I am at my sickest when I am at my very “rightist” about stuff. So, I try

and do this stuff every day. I hope I improve in this area; it is an area I would like to improve in.

I'm such a slacker though. I wish I wasn't a guy who is capable of settling status quo mediocrity. I know that I didn't do that in my drinking.

It is almost like my 10th and 11th Steps are like “near-beer”. Really, I know that there is more there if I were more diligent about it. I'll go through period where I'm pretty diligent then I'll get real comfortable and there goes my motivation for being diligent. Anyway, that's my deal.....end

Transcribed from Disc 10; Tracks 5, 6 & 7 –
Audio of Bob Darrell.

“Twelve Step Study”, Scott L. & Bob D.

Principles for the Twelve Concepts

1. **Responsibility - ultimate authority of AA is the groups**
2. **Reliance - GSC is the active voice of AA**
3. **Trust - Right of Decision**
4. **Participation - Right of Participation**
5. **Democracy - Right of Appeal**
6. **Accountability - Chief initiative is to be guardians of Traditions**
7. **Balance - balance of power - traditions and AA purse**
8. **Consistency - custodial oversight and administration of AA**
9. **Vision - trusted leadership by example**
10. **Clarity - responsibility matched by authority**
11. **Respect - rotation and participation**
12. **Spirituality - Spirit of AA tradition through 6 warranties:**
 1. **Never become seat of perilous wealth or power**
 2. **Prudent financial principle**
 3. **Never shall one be placed in unqualified authority over any others**
 4. **Decisions by substantial unanimity**
 5. **Actions shall never be personally punitive or incitement to public controversy**
 6. **Conference never to perform any acts of government should remain democratic in thought and actions**

- Questions and Feedback -
**20th Annual McHenry
 Soberfest 2009**

Submitted by Justin K.: InfoAction Research

Soberfest is an event that is put on by members the Soberfest A.A. Group and includes Al-anon and Alateen. There are several committees consisting of volunteers which plan and execute the event. It's a weekend event that occurs a week before thanksgiving which consist of discussion panels, speakers, banquets, 24hr meetings and so on. This event is and can be enjoyed by anyone who attends. (All meeting are open meetings). It starts on Friday and ends on Sunday; the usual is that over 2,000 attendees register.

Recently I asked a few people what their interpretation of Soberfest was as well as what they think and feel about the event. Here are some of the questions and answers asked to people in District 11 who had not been there yet, who had been there and who were involved in some of the committees as well.

Here is an account of someone who was only a few months sober and had never been there before.

Q: What do you think of Soberfest from what you have heard?

A: I am excited about going, just the fact that so many people will be there sounds cool and I liked the fact that there will be meetings all day every day. I also liked hearing that there will be so many things to do.

Q: Besides meetings, what where these things you heard about that you look forward to?

A: I heard that some of my friends were hanging out and playing poker in their room, I look forward to the water park, and I'm excited about the banquet and the dance. They went on to say they have never done those things sober with other sober people.

Here is an account of someone who had been there once and looks forward to going back again.

Q: What did you think of Soberfest when you went the first time?

A: It was larger than I expected and I was impressed and thought it was very well organized.

Q: What did you do there and what did you like the most?

A: I went there for only four hours, went to one speaker, I had fun meeting lots of new people that I now see at the meeting I go to and I really enjoyed the camaraderie.

Q: What are you looking forward to this year?

A: I'm looking forward to doing the things I did last year and going to the banquet this time.

Here is an account of someone who got involved after they went there for their first time and what it is like for them now.

Q: How did you get involved and what did you like about Soberfest?

A: It was exciting. I liked seeing the greeters and all the volunteers. I remember feeling like I wanted to be a part of that. Someone approached me the first year and asked me if I would like to be on the committee.

Q: Being involved on a Soberfest committee, what is it like for you to be involved in Soberfest now?

A: I enjoy it much more. I have way more fun than I did just showing up to Soberfest. I like being involved and getting to be a part of it all. I enjoy and appreciate the fellowship more.

I had asked a lot of questions similar to those and received a lot of positive feedback. I'm not only more excited about going this year than I was last year, I feel I will go to it with an appreciation and understanding than I did not have before. As someone who only attends the event, I found I took it for granted as far as the amount of work, the accountability, and the stamina the people have to make sure that Soberfest can be enjoyed by all who attend. To not have a much deeper respect for the amount of service work that goes into to any event of this size would difficult.

Recently I have had the pleasure and opportunity of talking to some of the committee members to ask about what one would expect and see as a result of being a part of the committees. The things I found out amazed me on many levels, as I hope it will, anyone else who is reading this. I also hope and pray that maybe it will inspire some of you to get involved for next event. I will start by saying that I have not yet talked to one person who is not enjoying the work they do. Everyone I have talked to says they love seeing the event that they have worked on all year be a success, knowing the unity of the fellowship has succeeded as a group for the benefit of everyone who attends.

There are about fifteen committees involved on the Soberfest Committee. Here some that I know of Chair person, Secretary, Treasure, Registration, Speakers, Public Information, Marketing, Archives, Technical, Coffee, Literature, Facilities, Entertainment, Hospitality, Alcahons; PLUS Al-anon which includes their al-anonathons and Alateen and their alateenathons..

(Continued on page 13)

(Soberfest – Continued from page 12)

There are at least a Chair and Co-chair per committee, which have commitments from 2 years to 4 years. Though it is similar to district in many ways, it is different in one, it has a single event focus which is Soberfest. The accountability of each person involved is very important. To be a chair, it is required that someone have one year sober prior to Soberfest. The way I understood it was that if your sobriety date was anytime before the recent Soberfest anybody could join a committee to help plan for the event of the following year.

Among the service work for Soberfest, there are many opportunities for people to volunteer and help out. Some of it is stuff we do in our meetings throughout the year, like greeting the people as they come in, chairing a meeting for the Alcathons, and making coffee as well. There is also hospitality rooms were groups pick time slots and provide hospitality and snacks. Al-Anon and Alateen are involved as well and have similar committee and participations; Al-anonathons and Alateenathons

Please accept my apologies to anyone it may concerns for anything that may have been missed or left out I promise you it is not intentional. I have found that there is more work involved that goes into the whole event than many of us could have ever imagined. It was another reminder of how much anyone of us can and do take for granted. For anybody who would like to see more here is the Soberfest website www.soberfest.org. I would like to thank all who make Soberfest possible. Undoubtedly, I speak for many when I say we are forever grateful.

Submitted by Justin K.: **IntoAction Research**

GOD PLUS AA

I MUST REMEMBER THAT THAT MENTAL OBSESSION IS ME!

IT IS MY OLD ME (SELF). GOD AND AA HAVE PROVIDED ME WITH A WONDERFUL SUBSTITUTE FOR THAT DESTRUCTIVE SET OF IDEAS, EMOTIONS, AND ATTITUDES WHICH COMPRISED MY OLD SELF. (BB PG 27)

SELF CANNOT RID SELF OF SELF WITH SELF.
SO I NEED A POWER GREATER THAN SELF. (GOD) OR,

SELF CANNOT RID SELF OF SELF WITH SELF.
SO I NEED ANOTHER SELF TO SHARE WITH. (AA FELLOWSHIP)

GOD + AA = MY SOLUTION! Submitted by: Bob S.

Soberfest Online Registration - Please be aware of....

"To our valued guests,

If you plan to purchase more than 10 banquet seats online, be aware that PayPal will question the transaction. This is in accordance with standard banking practices which are designed to prevent credit card fraud and are therefore for your protection.

If you wish to make the additional purchase immediately, please consider using another credit card for the transaction. A notice will appear at the time you fill out the registration form advising you of this, and directing you to contact registration@sobergest.org

to advise them that you wish to have adjacent tables.

The Soberfest Planning Committee wishes to thank you for your interest in the Conference, as well as for your patience and understanding in this matter.

Thank you"

Also: Please note; your transaction with PayPal will not be complete until you click on the "confirm" button and receive a confirmation number from PayPal. If you have no confirmation number, your transaction is incomplete and on hold; your credit card has not been charged, and the purchase will remain open for ten days. After this time; if you have not completed the transaction the stored information will automatically be deleted, and you will be required to start the process over again. If you are in doubt about whether or not your transaction went through, please send an email to:

treasurer@soberfest.org

We, on the Soberfest Planning Committee, appreciate your time and patience, as well as your interest in our Conference. If there are any questions regarding the online registration process, please contact us via email at:

technical@soberfest.org

Thank you,
Doug
Soberfest Tech. Comm.

12X12 PG. 174

Unless each A.A. member follows to the best of his ability our suggested Twelve Steps to recovery, he almost certainly signs his own death warrant. His drunkenness and dissolution are not penalties inflicted by people in authority; they result from his personal disobedience to spiritual principles.

**2009 NIA 20
FALL
COMMITTEE
MEETING**
Preliminary Agenda

OCTOBER 17, 2009

Lord of Life Church
La Fox, Illinois 60119
(Special Needs Committee, Host)

8:00 AM Registration and welcome

9:00 AM Call to order

Quiet time

New attendees

AA anniversaries

Twelve Concepts of World Service

9:20 AM Approval of 2008 Summer Committee Minutes

9:30 AM Officer Reports Chairperson (3 min. limit)

Alt. Chair

Secretary/Alt. Sec.

Registrar

Treasurer (10 min. limit)

Alt. Treasurer

10:00 AM Delegate Report Delegate (10 min. limit) Alt. Delegate

10:20 AM Conference and Forum Reports (3 min. limit)

10:30 AM DCM Reports (3 min. limit)

11:45 PM Ad hoc Service Structure Committee Report

12:00 PM LUNCH

12:45 PM Open microphone session (2 min. limit)

1:00 PM Standing Committee Reports (3 min. limit)

1:45 PM Matters for Consideration and Approval by Area Committee

1. 2010 NIA Proposed Primary Purpose Register Basic Items
2. 2010 NIA Proposed Calendar
3. Bids to Host 2010 Assemblies and Committee Meetings
4. Bids for the 2011 NIA Spring Conference

2:45 PM Discussion of additional NIA Winter Assembly Agenda items

1. Election of Alternate Treatment Facilities Chair

3:45 PM Adjournment and Close

**NORTHERN ILLINOIS AREA
(NIA) AREA 20
WINTER ASSEMBLY
DECEMBER 12, 2009**

Lord of Life Church
40W605 IL Route 38,
La Fox, IL 60119
Southeast Corner of Route 38 &
La Fox Rd.
Enter Parking Lot on La Fox Rd.

Registration begins: 8:00 A.M.

Meeting begins: 9:00 A.M.

Lunch will be served, \$\$ TBD

Hosted by: District 40

Information Contact:

Kelly L. (630) 510-3069

kellysecondlife@aol.com

**See District 11's Web
Site for Flyer(s) ~**

<http://aa-nia-dist11.org/>



Heard Around the Tables District 11's Wisdom and Witticisms

- ⊕ The meeting topic was patience: "I'm waiting as fast as I can!"
- ⊕ "I never seem to realize I'm powerless until I'm sitting in a pile of consequences."
- ⊕ "To get what you've never had, you must do what you've never done."
- ⊕ **The solution is always simple.
The solution is always spiritual.
The solution SELDOM has anything to do with MY perception of the problem!**
- ⊕ Step 10: Clean house all day long
Step 11: Pray to God all day long
Step 12: So we can be of maximum service all day long
- ⊕ **I knew I was in trouble when I realized that I was no longer participating in my sobriety, I was visiting it.**
- ⊕ They say you need newcomers to tell you where you came from, old-timers to tell you where you could go, and a sponsor to tell you where you are.
- ⊕ **Alcoholism, not leadership authority, is the enforcer of A.A.'s principles.**
- ⊕ More than anything, I wanted to be a normal drinker. Of course, my idea of normal was being able to drink as much as I wanted with no consequences!
- ⊕ **Amends are best made to our loved ones by restoring the love, confidence and respect they once had for us by the action of right living today.**
- ⊕ The shortest distance between a problem and a solution is the distance between your knees and the floor.
- ⊕ "I own my own behavior today."



Heard by a fly on the wall in AA...

- I woke up with a horrible hang over and felt awful. I couldn't wait to do it again.
- I have always prided myself on my humility.
- I married my designated driver.



**20TH Annual
M.cHenry SOBERFEST**
Alcathons 24 hours a day..Fri-Sun am
Friday Night – Nov. 20th :
Karaoke in the Evolve Lounge
9pm-1am
Texas Hold 'Em Tournament
10pm_at Timber Ridge –**PENDING**

Saturday Nov. 21st :
Sat. In the Grand Ballroom ↓
"Alkapalooza" (AA Skits) 11am-1pm
Traditions in Relationships–3pm- ~
George & Tina H; Waukesha, WI
Hosted by District 11
Sat. in the Evergreen II ↓
"A.A. Group" NIA 20 Hosts-11am-12pm
"Bridge the Gap" NIA 20 Hosts-1pm-2pm

Saturday & Sunday in Linwood A

Big Book Step Workshop

Saturday, Nov. 21st

7:00 – 8:00am Steps 1 & 2
8:00 – 9:00am Step 3
9:00 – 11:00am Step 4
Inventory of Resentments & Fear
11:00 – 12:00pm Steps 4 – Sex & Step 5
Inventory of Sex Conduct, Then Step 5
1:00 – 2:00pm Steps 6 & 7
2:00 – 3:00pm Step 8
3:00 – 4:00pm Step 9

Sunday, Nov. 22nd

7:00 – 8:00am Step 10
8:00 – 9:00am Step 11
9:00 – 9:45am Step 12

SPEAKER SCHEDULE ↓

Grand Ballroom

Friday, Nov. 20th ↓

Time Topic ↓
6:45pm Invocation ↓
Kathy K. (Past Chair)
7:00pm Al-anon Speaker
Rich J., Toronto, Canada
8:00pm A.A. Speaker
Don M. Louisville, KY

Saturday, Nov. 21st

9:30am A.A. Speaker
Brian M., New York, N.Y.
1:00pm Al-Anon Speaker
Stephanie B.
Granite Shoals, TX
> 1:PM Alateen Speaker
Gretchen T. Lake Zurich, IL

Continuing...

Saturday, Nov. 21st

6:30pm Invocation
Father Patrick Boyle
6:45pm Banquet in the Forum
8:00pm A.A. Speaker
Sheldon F.
Las Vegas, NV.

Sunday, Nov. 22nd

10:00am
A.A. Speaker
Deb H. Yucca, CA.
11:00am
Conference Closing
Jay D. & David G.



November 20th, 21st and 22nd 2009

Greetings from the Soberfest Planning Committee!

This year's banquet is selling out fast! If you haven't already done so, please take a minute and **register for this year's conference either by going to www.soberfest.org and following the prompts to register online, by downloading the registration form and mailing it in or pick up a registration form at one of your meetings and mailing it in.** To make room reservations at the Grand Geneva Resort please contact the **[Grand Geneva Resort by calling 1-888-392-8000](http://www.grandgeneva.com)**. If there is a waiting list for a room, please add your name to it. Pre-registered rooms open up and the likelihood of you getting called is good. **There is a 10 day room cancellation policy.**

To view the Grand Geneva Resort and its amenities please visit www.soberfest.org or www.grandgeneva.com.

The Grand Geneva Resort will have a variety of food options available. There are 5 restaurants on the property ranging from fine dining to pizza and snacks The Prime Rib buffet on Friday night and buffet meals on Saturday and Sunday will receive Soberfest Conference discounts. Pizza Delivery from Timber Ridge Lodge to the Grand Geneva will be available until 2:00 am on Friday and Saturday nights.

Trolley Shuttle Services will run between Timber Ridge Lodge and The Grand Geneva throughout the conference. Saturday night there will be stops at The Forum where the banquet is being held.

The Timber Ridge Lodge will offer the **Water Park** at reduced rates for all who attend the conference. Those who stay at the Timber Ridge will be given free Water Park passes with their rooms.

A **Texas Hold 'em** Tournament will be held **at Timber Ridge on Friday** starting at 10:00 pm. – **PENDING**

Karaoke will be held in the **Evolve Lounge** on Friday night from 9:00 pm to 1:00 am

The revised **Alateen Pizza Party** will be extended to midnight and additional tokens are available for the game room. The cost is \$25.00 per child and is held at the **Timber Ridge Water Park**

The **Grand Geneva Resort Spa** offers an adult only spa that includes a pool, tennis courts, volleyball courts and an array of exercise equipment. **There will be no fee to enter this spa. Spa services will be offered at a 15%** discount from Thursday to Monday for conference attendees. **Please call and make your reservations early as these services sell out quickly. You may look at Spa Services online at www.grandgeneva.com.**

If you have children attending the Grand Geneva Resort offers a program called Grand Adventure Kids Club. Please contact the hotel for more information.

For information regarding any of these events, please contact us info@soberfest.org or by phone ~

A.A. Jay D. 224-392-4248

Al-Anon Tim C. 815-790-7557

Alateen Josie 847-639-4440

Young A.A. Kathy K. 847-910-4346

We are in need of over 300 volunteers at the Conference.

Please contact any of the below to volunteer:

Hospitality Room or Greeters

John S. 815-579-6105

Alcathon

Hugh O. 312-823-4675

Step Workshop

David G. 815-344-6523