

Downeast Intergroup Newsletter

February 2022

The Downeast Intergroup Committee is a group of AA members coming together in the spirit of fellowship to help carry the AA message through publishing a newsletter, sponsoring AA events, and distributing AA literature. We support communication and participation between AA members, groups, and districts.

DEIG FINANCES- DECEMBER 2021

Operating Account

- beginning balance.....\$1,996.70
- total debit..... <\$236.18>
- total credit..... \$566.66*
- ending balance..... ..\$2327.18

*Donations were received from the following:

District 8.....\$566.66

District 16 News (Joe M.)

On a snow covered Saturday morning, District 16 held its monthly meeting with hot coffee and homemade snacks. Sixteen people, some live and some zooming in attended. Good job folks.

St. Patty's Alcathon was talked about. Could it be hybrid...maybe a short one? Could it be at Saint Margaret's Church with a few snacks? Stay tuned for further updates.

Most meetings are holding their own. Do your best to help to help struggling meetings. Meeting makers make it! Some missed anniversaries include: in Lincolnville Ken (26 years), In Stockton Springs Tom P. (16 years), in Brooks Hilton (40 years) and Ken S. (33 1/3 years). Anniversary dates coming up include: In Orland Rob W. (24 years on February 14), at the Belfast Ladies meeting Sarah (9 years) and Eileen (8 years). Thank You folks!

The Savant speaks again! (Joe M.)

- If your standing upright, do not worry if your shadow is crooked.
- You forsake lasting recovery if you try to

quit for someone else's sake.

A.A. won't keep you from going to Hell, nor is it a ticket to Heaven. A.A. will keep you sober long enough for you to make up your mind which way you want to go.

Changing Bill W.'s Words (Peter B.)

What do you think about changing Bill W.'s writings? One of the fun things about A.A. is that the Big Book and the 12 and 12 are in his voice. However, some things that were normal to say 70 years ago make people uncomfortable now. How will the newcomer feel about it? But how do the old timers feel about changing it?

One way to navigate this is to have a historical note up front: when this was written, how language usage has changed, how A.A. has evolved. Another possibility is to have footnotes where possibly outdated language come up.

At this year's General Service Conference, these ideas will be considered, for the 12 and 12. As your Delegate, I will vote on this. It is possible my committee will have a hand in shaping these proposals. So, what do you think?

We will discuss this and many other Conference-related issues at the Pre-Conference Forum, March 6, 2022, at 9 AM in Skowhegan. Then District Chairs will brief the GSRs, who will come to the Spring Assembly, April 1-3 in Fairfield to vote the conscience of their groups.

. . . . And then I go off to New York informed by group conscience of the Area.

Peter B, Delegate

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Reflections on Service Work (Mary A.)

When I first got sober all of the old timers told me that service work would keep me sober, in addition to “go to meetings, say your prayers, stick with the winners, don’t pick up, call your sponsor”, to name a few other suggestions. They were right. My first few years of sobriety, besides attending meetings daily, was a busy one. I set up chairs at meetings which meant I had to arrive early and stay late. I made coffee at other meetings, again, having to show up early and stay late. Not surprisingly, I started get to know people, both newcomers and the old timers. I made friends, heard about women’s meetings in my area, and picked up helpful tips about what was working for others in A.A. Eventually, with a couple of years of sobriety under my belt, I volunteered to be the chip (or medallion) person for my home group, We Care, in Olney, MD. In Maryland, where I got sober, we called the A.A. coins to commemorate years of sobriety, chips. Here in Maine, we call them medallions. I was responsible for making sure we had enough chips. We were fortunate to have a downtown office (in Washington D.C.) about twenty miles from Olney. I would regularly go there to pick up chips when my home group was running low. I also became the chairperson for my home group after about 10 years of sobriety. This is a speaker meeting, so I was responsible for finding speakers each week. That also expanded my network of A.A.’s. I started going to meetings in other towns around Olney, finding people whom I invited to speak at our We Care group. I am indebted to the

people who told me early on that doing service work would keep me sober. My immersion in A.A., through service work helped me stay sober.

When I moved back to Maine two years ago, I started looking for service work. I found that the Noontimers meeting in Blue Hill needed someone to chair the meetings. I volunteered to do that and am still the chair. As my Maine network of A.A. grew I started hearing about District 21 and the need for people to volunteer to serve the District. The same people were volunteering to take vacant positions (chair, secretary, treasurer, literature chair, outreach chair, etc.) because there were no others who could step up. I had never attended District meetings, or Intergroup meetings in Maryland. This was a part of A.A. that I had little knowledge about. Some of my new friends in this area convinced me to go to some District and Downeast Intergroup meetings. I began to attend these monthly meetings and was educated in how much work goes into District and Downeast Intergroup activities. Eventually, I became the secretary of both District 21 and the Downeast Intergroup. I look at this kind of service work as “paying it forward”. So many people helped me get and stay sober, many behind the scenes, so to speak. By serving A.A. in this way I can help support this wonderful organization, and thereby help the community of A.A.s, both old timers and newcomers.

Mary A.

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Appetite for Construction By Heath W.

Are we really in February already? And it's what year again? 2022? Man, time sure flies in the sober life. One minute you're on your knees asking for help from your unmanageable life and the next, getting closer to something you've never done before - being sober for multiple years. I still remember it feeling impossible to be sober for a couple hours. Like the movies say, "what a twist!". I never thought by this point in my sobriety I'd be this involved in AA or the community around me or just present in my day to day affairs. But I am. It all comes from a continual drive that began when I started doing the impossible from the beginning, and the drive keeps growing and growing. My drive in sobriety is hungry and I want to keep it fed. Its appetite grows more and more all the time. So, how do I keep things ever so interesting and new? How do I find fresh ways of learning, communicating, and listening? Don't get me wrong, simple is key. I'm not trying to over complicate things, which is quite easy, but I don't want to turn into a robot, someone just going through the motions in my sobriety. I don't want to become someone that only has one story to share and shares it at every meeting I attend. My appetite is too big. But again, how do I do that?

A lot of people in the world around this time of year are still trying to continue their New Year's resolutions or are trying to figure out why "it" didn't work again and say, "well, guess I'll try again next year". I also knew some people that

would talk about what they were planning for a New Year's resolution a couple months before the new year, continuing to do what they want to stop doing, thinking that in a couple months they'll tackle it and get serious about it. I never saw the point in all that - the resolutions or the waiting. I wasn't the best at following through with my "renewal" plans either but my old self would have said, "if you have an issue you want to work on, why not work on it now". Funny coming from an alcoholic who thought he was better than most. I usually thought I could tell people how to do their stuff better but could never figure out my own. I was pretty blind, just focusing on others' defects. But luckily for us, we have this amazing program in AA that can help with all of our affairs at once. No need to wait. No need to put it off for more weeks or months. There's an option to get better with the desire to quit drinking and the willingness to do whatever it takes. The Big Book doesn't talk about putting things off and getting to them when it's convenient. It speaks in an urgency: "at once", "now", are continually used. It doesn't play around, and nor do I want to with this second chance at life.

I'm grateful for today because I don't know if there will be a tomorrow. I get to choose to act now. So if I'm looking to deepen my sobriety knowledge and experience, I can do something about it, at once. And that could be many things: reading AA literature that I haven't read or reading the books I have again to find something a new, more disciplined prayer, attending

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meetings that I've never been to even if that means traveling farther, getting to places earlier and staying later for the conversations with my fellows, or just being available to listen even in difficult times. I find speaker tapes very helpful and have endless amounts at my fingertips through Spotify on my phone and computer; I can choose to listen to them at any time. I never wrote before sobriety, besides silly rock n' roll lyrics for songs when I was younger, and now writing has turned into a passion that began with a suggestion from a fellow AA member. That was outside the box for me and I've grown so much by adding it to my belt. But similar to the other things, I try and push my writing and thoughts more and more. If I've written about a concept once before, I try to find another way to reflect on it instead of repeating myself. I do believe it's okay to be still at times and to not move chaotically, but once I've collected myself, I want to be moving forward, even if it's one small baby step at a time. I don't want to change the world, but I want to learn and gain the experience needed to be helpful to the alcoholic who is still sick and suffering like I once was. And I'm of no help if I'm sitting still for too long, not pushing myself. This disease of life or death takes no days off.

So, here's to the new year and acting now and at once, for together we can do a lot of good for our fellows. And in return we will remain free, free from the chains that held us prisoners for so long. I want to continue to look for helpful and encouraging people and surround myself with

them. I look forward to this new year and the opportunities that will present themselves. For it's Thy will, not mine. If I lead wherever I go knowing and trusting in that, it'll be a great day, followed by a great week and finally, to a great year. Stay hungry.



CONTACT INFORMATION

Please send articles, events, corrections, anniversaries, and other group or district news to Newsletter Editor Bill L., 1056 Pleasant Street, Blue Hill, Maine 04614; or editor@downeastintergroup.org.

Contributions to support the Downeast Intergroup can be mailed to: Intergroup Treasurer, PO Box 1633, Ellsworth, ME 04602-1633. We ask for your name and AA job title from all who contribute items printed in this newsletter.

Events listed are for your information, and are not necessarily sponsored or endorsed by AA or this Intergroup.