



# The Boomerang

Area 28, Panel 72 Edition 1

*Winter 2022*

From the Incoming Delegate

In November I went to the District 7 meeting in Caribou. It was a long drive! If you were to drive from the Portsmouth bridge to Fort Kent, it would take you 8 hours—that's how big Maine is. We met in the Bread of Life Soup Kitchen, six people at long tables in a cinderblock building with a worn hardwood floor. Some their problems echoed those of the DEIG Districts: fewer meetings, not enough GSRs. Some were unique to them: a once-friendly, open border constricted by terrorism fears and Covid. There is now an elaborate testing regimen to get back and forth across the border, with differing requirements on each side.

The other problem is distance. I asked them about the 9 AM Area Committee meetings in Skowhegan. They'd have to leave home at 4 or 4:30, "or 5, if you drive 80 miles an hour the whole way." They liked it better when Area meetings were held on Indian Island! In the old days, Route 95 ended at Orono, and the County was reached by the Haynesville Woods Rd, immortalized in the song, "A Tombstone Every Mile."

There was much talk of the Valley of St John. Madawaska, a mill town, "once had 21 bars and one church." On Tuesday evening there was a two-speaker meeting: one spoke in English, the other in French. So many missed the meeting because they were working on the swing shift that another was started on Saturday morning.

The District members want to have a function, but lack manpower. I suggested a Love and Service workshop. They were interested, but observed, "It's hard to get down states to come up in the winter." For their part, they would have come to our recent Fall Assembly if it hadn't shifted to Zoom at the last moment. Six people from District 7 were planning to attend. I told them I wanted to come back and attend their Love and Service workshop. They threatened to hold it on January 5—the dead of winter. I'd still like to go. Maybe next time I'll make it to Madawaska.

(Continued on Page 2)

## **Big Book Quote**

"We never apologize to anyone for depending upon our Creator. We can laugh at those who think spirituality the way of weakness. Paradoxically, it is the way of strength. The verdict of the ages is that faith means courage. All men of faith have courage. They trust their God. We never apologize for God. Instead we let Him demonstrate, through us, what He can do. We ask Him to remove our fear and direct our attention to what He would have us be. At once, we commence to outgrow fear."

(Continued from page 1)

This Christmas has come and gone, bringing a remembrance of things past. But we also know that “one day at a time” means we get a second chance every day is December, I’m leaving the world of Alternates---3 monthly Zoom meetings for two years, lots of goodbyes—and incoming Delegates are waiting for their committee assignments, the committees they serve on at the Conference. Everyone is wary of Literature, because it is so much work: lots of agenda items. I wouldn’t have minded. . . . but I got Finance, which is good for me because I don’t know anything about it.

The 2022 Conference launches an experimental effort to even the workload among the committees. So, Finance may get some Literature items anyway. Recently, I spent an evening with Francis, our Regional Trustee. He’s a green eyeshades guy, and was delighted I got Finance. He mentioned an issue of concern to the Fellowship: individual contributions have risen in relation to group contributions. Does this indi-

## **From the Area 28 Archives**

The following two articles come from “A History of AA in Maine”, a book published by the Boomerang, 880 North Main Street, Brewer Maine in 1965. It is my goal to publish group histories directly from this book in upcoming Boomerang newsletters. It is hoped we will appreciate our group histories and preserve them for future AA members. John D. Editor

A brief report of the first A.A. Group meeting ever held in Maine:

"I am not sure that I would have anything to add that would ably assist you in your research. The group of young men that I was gathered with in the Summer of 1943 were young men allied to the college, and were sharing the same type of problem. At this date, I cannot even remember their names

"The impetus for [the group] came from some reading material we had received and, while we subscribe rather faithfully to the [AA] program, we were in no way a formal organization for the City of Waterville. I suspect there may have been an A.A. group in the city itself, but if so, we were not aware of it.

"I do know that my experiences with these young men were very helpful to me and to the further course of my ministry."

### **Rumford Group**

The very first group was started in an unknown year and folded the same year. AA second attempt was made in September 1955 and folded again in January 1957. They met at the Civil Defense Center and then in the Court room at the Municipal Building.

The group finally got started on September 5, 1957, and has been going strong ever since. They met in the Nurses Dining Room at the Rumford Community Hospital. Some of the early members were: Dave M., Julian I., Bernard B. and Libby R.

The group outgrew the nurses dining room and moved to the living room in the nurses residence, from there to a member’s restaurant, 210 Waldo Street. Smoked out there by an inadequate pot-bellied stove, they moved to 44 Oxford Street, where they are now located. Since 1957 meetings have been held on Tuesday and Thursday evenings at 8 P.M. Originally Tuesday night meetings were closed discussion. They are now open and with regular or discussion by decision of the chairman.

**Area 28 Calendar 2022**

- Jan 2** Area Committee Meeting (ACM) Standing  
Committees meet at 9am, ACM starts at 10am – Finished  
653 Waterville Road, Skowhegan, ME
- Feb 6** Area Committee Meeting (ACM) Standing  
Committees meet at 9am, ACM starts at 10am – Finished  
653 Waterville Road, Skowhegan, ME
- Feb 25, 26 & 27 NERAASA** – (North East Regional AA Service Assembly)  
Area 60 Pittsburg, PA.
- Mar 6** Pre conference Forum- Delegate presents General Service Conference Agenda for Round Table  
Discussion starting at 9am,  
53 Waterville Road, Skowhegan, ME

**Apr 1, 2 & 3 Spring Assembly District 14**

VFW Hall  
175 Veterans Drive  
Winslow, ME

- May 15** Post Conference Forum –  
Donald Small School  
4 Sheridan Road, Bath ME  
9:00 am -1:00 pm

**July 15, 16 & 17 Area Round-Up at Sugarloaf USA**

- Aug 7** Area Committee Meeting (ACM) Standing  
Committees meet at 9am, ACM starts at 10am – Finished  
TBD

- Sep 11** Area Committee Meeting (ACM) Standing  
Committees meet at 9am, ACM starts at 10am – Finished  
TBD

**Oct 21, 22 & 23 Fall Assembly Area (East) – TBD**

**IMPORTANT ADDRESSES**

Maine Area 28  
499 Broadway #225  
Bangor, ME 04401

The Boomerang  
499 Broadway #225  
Bangor, ME 04401

General Service Office  
P.O. Box 459  
New York, NY 10163-0459

Central Service Office  
47 Portland Street  
Portland, ME 04101

Downeast Intergroup  
P.O. Box 1633  
Bucksport, ME 04416



## *From the AA Grapevine*

### **Work in Progress...**

How many times in my life have I found people, places and things unacceptable to me over the years, countless times I am sure of it.

Why is it that so many things cause consternation? Why after many years hanging out in AA are issues still disagreeable to me? Well part of the answer is I am an alcoholic first and foremost. I had spent so many years trying to arrange everyone and everything so that I would not be in a position to be hurt. Ah yes, the lies and deceit of many years sometimes still haunts me. I spent years arranging all the ducks so that I would not feel any discomfort, even after I stopped drinking. Why would anyone want to feel uncomfortable? For a long time, I poured inordinate amounts of alcohol in my system to avoid those uncomfortable feelings.

Then there is the fear...wow, what I would do in the name of fear. I could not even begin to tell anyone how I was feeling. That fear of being judged, not being liked by my peers. The feelings of being less than, not ever having enough. All those esteem issues that can still haunt me to this day.

I have reached a point in my sobriety where the steps and continued step work have brought me to a place of peace. I have somewhat of a serene life save for sometimes at work that I find conditions and people disagreeable to me. And acceptance...why do I struggle sometimes more than others? Why is it difficult to accept things, people, places and situations as they are?

This excerpt from the Big Book, *Alcoholics Anonymous*, found on page 417, holds the key.

**“And acceptance is the answer to all my problems today.**

**When I am disturbed, it is because I find some person, place, thing, situation — Some fact of my life — unacceptable to me. And I can find no serenity until I accept that person, place, thing, or situation as being exactly the way it is supposed to be at this moment. Nothing, absolutely nothing happens in God’s world by mistake. Until I could accept my alcoholism, I could not stay sober; Unless I accept life completely on life’s terms, I cannot be happy. I need to concentrate not so much on what needs to be changed in the world as on what needs to be changed in me and in my attitudes.”**

I was told many years ago when I first came to AA that acceptance did not mean I had to like whatever it is that has me all beggared up. But why do I still feel plagued by unacceptance at times?

#### **Ham on Wry**

“You know what they say, ’ In AA there’s a wrench for every nut.”

Anonymous

Reprinted with permission A.A. Grapevine

My Mother-in-law uses the phrase “it is what it is” far too often as far as I am concerned. But is this another key? Finding peace and serenity is about modifying something within yourself so that the bothersome situation no longer has control over you and thoughts of doing something hurtful or worse thinking about drinking.

Why do I fight these feelings that have a stranglehold on me? I get so focused on wanting a situation to change to meet my standards (or ducks in a row) that I miss out on the opportunity to examine why it’s got me so beggared up and do something to fix it. Why must I insist on going to a pity party when things are not going my way?

The answer is simple. These are old tapes, old playbooks that are deeply ingrained in me. But I have been given a way out and an opportunity to do things differently.

I feel that acceptance is somewhat of a process for me. First there is anger, then some self-centered fear mixed in.

I have felt myself become angry with people around me because my ducks are not in a row. I have struggled with the ability to change me and my attitude in this moment in time.

So, the message is pick up the pace. Do the things I did early on when the chips were down. It seemed so much easier back in the day when I was struggling to stay away from booze. Attend more meetings and change my attitude. We are all in the same boat. Find some good in the meetings rather than the negative. Reach out to others more, read more of the literature, double down on prayer and meditation. Treat people the way I would like to be treated. Yes, there will still be those days when I am disturbed, sad or frustrated. There will still be those days when I allow myself to enjoy a pity party or two. But I will recognize much sooner that there is a better choice. I will be grateful for the opportunity to grow even more. I am so glad that I am a work in progress

### **The Spirit of Rotation**

The very spirit of rotation and the way we do business may be one of the most bizarre mysteries to the outside world. In the corporate world we’re taught, ‘the more you know the higher up you go’. In Alcoholics Anonymous that ego building pattern may be the very thing that kills us. For this Alcoholic justification is the slipperiest slope. “I’m doing a great job.”, “There isn’t anyone else available” and “If I don’t do it no one will”, are the very statements that harm both the old-timer as well as the newcomer (though he usually doesn’t think so). Some of us have witnessed the power of the empty seat. In our service structure, as soon as you begin to understand what you are doing we have you rotate into another new position. When you finally reach the very bottom rung of the service ladder, we ask you to simply please be quiet unless we need your knowledge and wisdom (wink).

It is that very spiritual nature that keeps Alcoholics Anonymous and its members practicing a genuine humility. I can always tell when it’s about time to rotate out of a service position ... I start knowing what I’m doing. Now it’s time to step aside and let someone who, just like me, is shaking in their boots, on the verge of throwing up and painfully wondering how this happened. To allow someone to experience just how to ‘feel the fear and do it anyway’; is how God began to move me toward actual adulthood, how he began to show me the art of being smaller, and how to be a voice and not the voice. I never would have imagined that this was really about the softening of my heart. I try hard today not to rob anyone of experiencing this unique style of growth. It’s the very life blood and beauty of this program.

This isn’t always an easy task for me; using my mind less and my heart more, learning to suit up and show up even when I’m terrified and to stop talking when I’m certain I’m right. Knowing I have the answer should come with a large caution light. The very moment I begin to think “look what I’ve done, I have already ruined the gift. “May our great blessings never spoil us”, is more of a warning than a statement of gratitude. Ego is as subtle a foe as Alcohol ever was. It’s my sober Alcoholism alive and well.

No need for me to worry though. I have a loving God with an interesting sense of humor who has a way of making use of my weaknesses, accentuating my strengths and keeping me rightsized even if that transformation is a bit painful. So this Alcoholic, at least for these 24 hours, will remain grateful for that ‘One who presides over us all’. The words of Byron B. seem appropriate as a closing; “Thank you all for my life today”.

### From Our Area Treasurer

"You've got to give it away to keep it," was something I heard fairly often in new sobriety. Initially, that meant sharing with anyone newer than me, or who was having a rough spot, exactly what I was doing to stay physically, emotionally and spiritually sober. Going early to help set up and staying after to clean up led to a home-group and sponsorship. Alcahons and potlucks led to district picnics and road trips. I generally began to help in whatever ways I knew how. Or however someone suggested I help. Crazy, doing for others and AA made ME feel better. Suddenly I was asked to be a GSR. When I answered that I had no idea what that meant, I was told not to worry about it. I would have help. My home-group elders spoon fed me directions and provided lots of support. District meetings gave fresh perspective and always more to consider. At least once, like being the coffeemaker early on, this commitment held me tight on a Saturday when the notion to drink came. My first Assembly was stressful: I was clueless...didn't understand the structure or the language, but I felt the love and generosity of AA pull me further in. Help was everywhere.

I wound up attending Area Committee Meetings and Assemblies as a GSR and frequently not. Always there was someone available to encourage my participation and help me better understand what was going on and why. "You've got to give it away to keep it" was modeled in the exchanges from the outgoing service position holder to the incoming one at home-group and district meetings as well as at Area Swap Meets, Committee Meetings, Assemblies, etc. All I had to do was be willing (and take notes so I'd know what the heck was said later)!

Along this journey my sponsor said, "Honey, if you're not feeling spiritually fit, maybe you need to do more service". So far, I can't say she's ever been wrong. She also told me not to complain if I didn't like something. "Be part of the solution" has sometimes meant REALLY listening and learning something new, finding myself with another job, or becoming close friends with the last person I thought possible. All I have to do is be willing, try my best and let others help me.

I've recently reached out to the person swapping into my former role as the Area 28 Love and Service Chair. We had an amazing conversation about the job and it's joys. I've forwarded some materials and suggestions and will be here to help in any way I can.

Which leaves me with this newest opportunity, in which you've graciously extended me the opportunity to serve as the Panel 72 Treasurer. Let me tell you that I'm yet again learning the language and the structure. Clueless, anxious, and...well, a bit tweaking occasionally. And then I remember my higher power, the steps, my sponsor and sponsees, brothers and sisters in AA, my home-group and the many, many tools sobriety has brought. Serenity returns. Through face to face meetings, as well as those on Zoom and over the phone, I am receiving incredible support as well as instruction. I watch, I do with supervision, I do independently....and practice, practice, practice, while still asking for help. The spirit of rotation allows me to give what I am able as I am able and to lend my experience to the next AA. Nothing I do or say is original. I am blessed, gifted with much more than I can ever give away. I want the hand of AA always to be there...as it has been for me, please allow me to pass it on.

### Tradition 7, Long Form

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. 18. Experience has often warned us that nothing can so surely destroy our spiritual heritage as futile disputes over property,



<b>Primary checking</b>	<b>25,736</b>
<b>Prudent Reserve</b>	<b>7,000</b>
<b>Round Up</b>	<b>3,411</b>

### **From Our Immediate Past Delegate**

For me, service has been an integral part of my sober journey. Service, does not keep me sober, but it certainly has enhanced my sobriety. When I made myself available to be GSR for “Levittes Meeting” in Princeton, ME, I had no idea what I was getting myself into. It may have been out of egoism, possibly a vain attempt to give back. I had no idea what the job entailed, or how to carry it out, but I learned. I have found every job in A.A. to be just the same; making myself available for something I didn’t understand, only to be given 2 years to learn how to do it. I have heard in many meetings about “finally knowing my responsibilities, just in time to rotate out” to the next position.

Each position in AA provides me with the unique opportunity to learn more about me, you and the fellowship of AA. Using what I have learned allows me to more easily practice the principles in all of my affairs (or a least give it a good try). I have the gift of being able to choose my friends, who I want to have coffee with, and with who I want to take a walk. What Service has given me, is the opportunity to learn how to deal with the person sitting next to me, that I might not have wanted to spend time with at all. I have needed to learn how to actively listen, argue only when nothing else is an option (which really is never), lean into the discomfort of saying “I don’t know” and “can you help me understand...”. I have sat with many people in Service, who I didn’t know I would eventually come to greatly admire. I may not have given them the chance to know me.

I learned about Area level Service, on the fly. As Alternate Round Up Chair for one year, I stepped into the Chair position after I was half way through the role. The Area Chair appointed a knowledgeable Service junkie to help me understand what I needed to know, to follow the Traditions and Concepts. I appreciated all of the lessons I received in that first year as Chair. I stayed on for the next Panel as Round Up Chair and then stood for Alternate Area Chair and was granted the privilege to learn more. I learned the importance of principles before personalities (I didn’t say I practiced this...but I did learn about it).

Moving into the Alternate Delegate role had challenges of its own. I was chair of the Guidelines Committee so I needed to understand the guidelines while doing my best to practice the principles in as many situations as possible, and remembering the Traditions and Concepts.

I felt ready to move into the delegate position, knowing full well, I knew very little, but could learn from 4 of the best past delegates anyone could ask to have on their side. I was nowhere near ready to be a pandemic panel 70 delegate or double digital delegate or any other form of virtual only delegate. I am grateful for all of the lessons from my past positions to prepare me to step up the game and do the necessary work to continue the practice of “one day at a time”.

As delegate I was able to employ the lessons I had been taught over the years to prepare me to rotate out of the delegate position. I helped keep the Boomerang afloat during Panel 70, and had the chance to get writings from past delegates and trustees, this is where I learned one of the most valuable lessons. The lesson that comes from understanding the principle of rotation. Having had roles in groups, districts and area, under the guise that no one else will do it, I have continued but the power of the empty seat can speak volumes.

Having come to the end of my service to Area 28 as delegate does not mean I am done with Service, it just means that I will do Service in another role. This feels more like rotating on, rather than rotating off, gaining experience, strength and hope from those around me, to take another position to learn more. It has been a privilege and I am honored to be rotating on to the next Service adventure. I think of our friend J.G.L. who says “My favorite people in the world are in A.A. and my favorite people in A.A. are in Service” I am grateful to understand and completely agree. Service for me, is an integral part of my sober journey.... What’s next?

Love through Service,  
Nikki O. Area 28, Panel 70 delegate,  
Grapevine & La Vina Committee

### **Bill W. On AA Service**

“The AA groups today hold the ultimate responsibility and final authority for our world services – those special elements of overall service activity which make it possible for our Society to function as a whole. The groups assumed that responsibility at the St. Louis International Convention of 1955. There, on behalf of Dr. Bob, the Trustees and the AA’s old-time leaders, I made the transfer of world service responsibility to our entire Fellowship.”





43<sup>rd</sup> Maine Area Round Up



In A Time Of Change

## In-Person Once Again!

The 43rd Maine Area Round-Up Committee welcomes you to join us July 15th thru 17th, 2022 at the Sugarloaf Mountain Resort in Carrabassett Maine. After a 2-year hiatus, we plan to meet in-person once again to celebrate our program of recovery. We are working hard to put together a full weekend of dynamic speakers, workshops, entertainment and plenty of fellowship.

Please pass the word to your districts, groups, A.A. and Al-Anon friends that the Round-Up is back. We look forward to seeing you at the mountain.

## Self-Supporting

The Maine Area Round Up will be serving coffee this year for \$1 per 12 oz cup. Tickets will be available for sale throughout the weekend. Purchase individual tickets or buy 6 tickets for \$5. The sale of coffee is our effort to keep expenses manageable as we gather once again. We encourage you to bring your favorite travel mug for the weekend.

## Register

The Maine Area Round Up registration will be \$30.00 for the entire weekend of fun, fellowship, and recovery.

We are excited to offer the option to pre-purchase your T-Shirt or Hoodie at a \$5.00 discount. There will be a limited number of shirts available at the Round Up. Please consider purchasing your T-Shirt or Hoodie when

The Maine Area Round Up will kick off with a 3 pm local speaker.

Friday evening speaker will begin at 7pm and we will end the evening with dancing to DJ Corey and fellowship.

Saturday will offer a morning workshop, Al-anon Speaker, Long timers meeting, afternoon workshops and break out meetings. Saturday evening we will meet again in the King Pine room for an evening speaker followed by the live band The Root Notes

Sunday morning, we will have a workshop, speaker and sobriety countdown.

## Questions?

Access [www.maineroundup.org](http://www.maineroundup.org)  
with *our QR code*

July 15, 16 & 17, 2022



[www.maineroundup.org](http://www.maineroundup.org)