



Conscious Contact

Information and Inspiration From District 10, NIA

Vol. 11 No. 4

May 2013

- Written and supported by the District 10 NIA fellowship
- Available in color online in PDF format, print version in B&W at meetings
- Contributions from any alcoholic are welcome. See the last page for details.
- Next meeting date: May 26, 2013

Next deadline: May 22, 2013

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"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."

Northern Illinois Area 20
District 10, P. O. Box 854
Libertyville, IL 60048

www.district10nia.org

Answering Service:
847-362-1811

Some Things My Sponsor Taught Me...That I Never Want to Forget!

I'm sure just about everybody in our program has a sponsor. But mine was special. . .at least he was to me. His name was "Big Book Kenny" and the first time I met him I had been all of six days without a drink. I was sitting at the tables at the Round Lake Area Alano Club, at a Saturday noon Closed AA meeting. I didn't want to be there, and I wasn't even sure I wanted to get sober. . .or stay sober, but I had run out of options. It was AA or jail and I hadn't decided yet which was worse!

I had been told that I should get a "sponsor", and Kenny was at that meeting and when he spoke I thought maybe he could be my sponsor. He said stuff like "If you don't take a drink you can't get drunk!" and "I got sick and tired of being sick and tired of being sick and tired." Of course I didn't know what a sponsor did, or why I should get one, but this guy sounded like he had been around for a while and I figured one person was as good as another as long as I could say I had a sponsor. I got very lucky. At that time Kenny had 26 years in the program. He was 54 years old. . .and by any definition he was "old school" AA. He had sponsored dozens of others like me over the years so I was no big deal to him. I would end up having him as my sponsor for the next 15 years. In the end, I would have the privilege of sitting by his bedside in Condell Hospital the night he passed away from Alzheimer's. That was close to six years ago. . .and I still miss him every single day. But I'm getting ahead of myself.

On that first Saturday, after the meeting was over, I went up to Kenny and asked him to be my sponsor. He wanted to know if I was sure that's what I wanted and I said it was. He then asked if I knew what a sponsor did. And I said I didn't. He said:

• "A sponsor is there to comfort you when you are upset. . .and upset you when you are comfortable. I suspect I will be upsetting you a lot." That was the first of many things Kenny would teach me that I never want to forget. There was more to being sponsored of course, including working the steps and reading the big book, and going to meetings together. But we started with him upsetting me. . .and comforting me. He was good at both.

• He also told me early on that I was lousy at listening. He said "You have to learn to listen. . . THEN you can listen to learn." He said the way he was going to teach me to listen was to have me call him each day with the "best thing I heard" at a meeting that day. He said I could never use the same thing twice, so I would have to pay close attention so I would have something new that I heard each time I called. It worked. I still try to remember the best thing I hear at meeting. . .every time I'm at one.

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Step Five

*"Admitted to God, to
ourselves, and to another
human being the exact
nature of our wrongs.."*

Tradition Five

*"Each group has but
one primary purpose—
to carry its message to
the alcoholic who still
suffers."*

Opinions expressed herein are
those of the authors and do not
necessarily reflect the thinking of
Alcoholics Anonymous, NIA,
District 10 or the Conscious Con-
tact volunteers.

- He also told me he wanted me “to hang out with the Winners!” I said, “How will I know who the Winners are?” And he said, “That’s easy...you won’t like them!” He was right about that. The guys I liked had about thirty minutes of sobriety and already knew what was wrong with the program and the people in it. The Winners wouldn’t put up with my bullshit. These were the guys and gals that would still be there a year later...and five years later...and for the rest of my life. They really were the “Winners”.

- I’ll never forget a few Saturdays later, after the noon meeting was over, Kenny asked me to stay behind and mop the bathroom floors at the Round Lake Area Alano club. I said “Why do I have to do that?” And he said “Whenever you ask WHY you are trying to start a fight...when you ask HOW you are trying to get better! Now ask me HOW you mop the floor.” So I said, “Fine...how do I mop the floor?” And he said “Hold the mop handle with two hands, when both of your hands are full you can’t pick up a drink, then make small circular motions with the wet mop.” Very funny. But I did it...and that would be the first actual service work I would do. In my time in AA I’ve done a variety other service work, but I’ve never forgotten the day I learned the difference between WHY and HOW.

- I also remember telling Kenny I didn’t know if I could actually stay sober...but I was pretty sure I couldn’t go the rest of my life without having a drink like some of these other guys were doing. He said not to worry about it...and asked how long I had been sober now. I replied “6 days.” And he said “OK, so at least you haven’t had a drink in last 24 hours.” And I said “No.” And he said “That’s all you have to do. Just do the same thing for one more day. You’ve already done that. In fact, you’ve done that 6 times. You just have to put off drinking for one day. Anybody can do that. It’s a day at a time program.” All these years later it is still “a day at a time” program. I learned that from Kenny.

- Like a lot of new people, in the beginning I had a million questions. I would ask anybody at the meetings who would listen to me, questions like: How do you find this power “Greater than yourself”? What exactly am I supposed to put on my 4th step? How long do I have to go to these meetings? Exactly how DOES it work? And invariably, I would get the same response “Keep coming back.” I found that answer inconsiderate and not helpful at all...and told my sponsor so. He was not very sympathetic. Well a number of years have gone by, and I’ve had the opportunity to learn a little bit in AA in that time...and I’m not reluctant to share that information. So if you would like to know “how it works”... the answer is “Just keep coming back!”

I would learn a lot more from my sponsor of course. But these are a few of the things he taught me that I hope I never forget.

By Steve R.

Volunteers Needed!

Spring Conference Planning Committee will meet on May 12, 2013 at the Waukegan Alano Club. Committees being formed include: Registration, Literature, Printing, Hospitality, Coffee, Public Information, Decorations, Entertainment, banquet, Grapevine, Archives and Special Needs, Programs.

If you would like to help, please attend the next planning committee meeting.

Spiritual Kindergarten Group

Meets on Tuesdays at 7 pm at the Crossroads Community Church. Hwy. 137 Grayslake, IL

1st Tuesday of the month is “Service School” which follows the meeting.

Last Tuesday of the month is “Open Speaker and Anniversary Celebration” this month’s speaker is: Kevin

Special Needs Survey

The District 10 Special Needs Committee would like to hear from each Group regarding their specific needs that falls under the Special Needs heading.

While we understand that we are here to serve the Groups and provide information, we would like to request information so we know how best to assist and what information we can provide.

We would appreciate if you could discuss this at your Group and return the survey to your GSR.

Thought for this Issue...

" Today may bring our crowning achievement, or bring about our most humiliating defeat....
the question is will we be spiritually ready for either?

Serenity House Events Libertyville, IL

First Sunday of the month @ 2:30 pm: "Sunday Movie Matinee."

May 5th: "The Bill W. Documentary."

June 2nd: "Days of Wine and Roses."

\$2.00 per seat Popcorn and soda available at the concession table

Last Sunday of each month: Anniversary Roast

Do you know someone that has an anniversary this month or coming up? Get some friends together and "Roast" the person with a little celebration. It could be a sponsee, a sponsor or just a friend.

Serenity House will provide the anniversary cake. Start time for the "Roast" is 6:30 pm



Soberfest AA Funraiser Saturday May 4, 2013

Doors open at 5pm, AA Speaker at 7pm

Soberfest Alanon Funraiser Saturday August 3, 2013

Doors open at 5pm, Alanon Speaker at 7pm

Both events at:

McHenry Township Hall
3703 N. Richmond Rd (Route 31)
Johnsburg, IL 60050

The Clipboard

Calendar for 2013— District 10, NIA 20

See information for these and other events at: <http://www.district10nia.org/Clipboard/events.pdf>



May 4, 2013—24th Soberfest AA Funraiser Doors open 5 pm, Speaker: Randy K. Ingleside. \$5

May 11, 2013—Spring Committee Meeting Lord of Life Church LaFox, IL D28 Host

May 12, 2013—Spring Conference planning meeting Waukegan Alano Club 2 pm

June 15, 2013—Summer Assembly Hosted by D-12, Church of the Holy Spirit 400 E Westminster Lake Forest

August— 23-25 2013 Illinois State Conference Schaumburg, IL

October 26th— 2013 Big Book Conference Montgomery, IL \$15

Only 797 days until the 2015 International Convention in Atlanta, Georgia

Heard At Meetings

"Nothing changes if nothing changes" - "the alcoholic mind is the slayer of the real" " nothing is constant except change"

"God will bring us to it, and lead us through it"

"Yesterday is history, tomorrow is a mystery, today is the present that's why they call it a gift"

Be Part of Conscious Contact

All alcoholics are welcome to contribute to Conscious Contact. We'd be happy to publish your stories, poems, artwork and cartoons as long as they pertain to recovering from alcoholism. Maximum length is about 600 words. Send your material to:

newsletter@district10nia.org or to

P.O. Box 854, Libertyville, IL 60048.

Help/Support Wanted

Support Needed-New Meeting- "Guided Meditation" - Fridays—5:30pm at the Serenity House, 1103 W. Park Ave., Libertyville—call Chuck D. 224-220-6455

Meeting Time Change Notification—Gurnee Community Church—"Here's How" Tuesday night meetings will be held at 7pm instead of 8pm starting October 1st.

THE GRAPEVINE needs subscribers— only \$28.97 per year—makes a great gift. www.aagrapevine.org

Monday Night Jail Meetings Need Support—Lake County - 7:30pm—volunteer applications are located under "Committees" on the NIA website. Great opportunity for service work. Young people are encouraged to participate. Contact Gillian 847-986-4266

Support Needed—Condell Hospital "Survivors Bloom" Thursday evening 6:30 pm Open Discussion Meeting, Speaker 1st Thursday of the Month.

Volunteers Needed! Spring Conference Planning committee meeting is at 2 pm May 12, 2013 Waukegan Alano Club

A. A. Contacts

District 10 answering service: 847-362-1811

District 10 Treasurer: P.O. Box 854, Libertyville, Illinois 60048 <http://www.district10nia.org>

NIA Treasurer: NIA Treasurer, NIA Ltd., PO Box 241, Elburn, IL 60119, <http://www.aa-nia.org>

General Service Office: P.O. Box 459, Grand Central Station, New York, NY 10164, <http://www.alcoholics-anonymous.org>

AA Grapevine, Inc.: Box 1980, Grand Central Station, New York, NY 10163, <http://www.aagrapevine.org>

2013 District 10 Officers (Confidential—this information is for A. A. use only.)

Every alcoholic is welcome at District 10 meetings, held on the fourth Sunday each month at St. Gilbert's Catholic Church, 301 E. Belvidere Rd in Grayslake—5:30 Tradition Meeting —6:00pm District meeting. See <http://www.district10nia.org>

2013 Illinois State AA Conference

August 23-25, 2013

Hosted by Northern Illinois Area, Districts 22 & 23

HYATT REGENCY SCHAUMBURG

1-888-421-1442

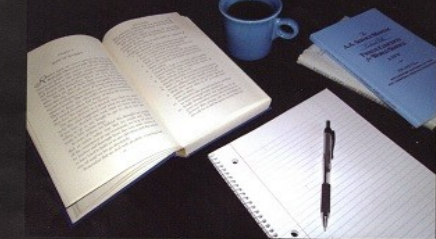
Conference Room Rate \$89

Mention Illinois State AA Conference 2013

1800 East Golf Road

Schaumburg, IL 60173

<https://resweb.passkey.com/go/ILStateAA>

**Our Solution in Action****AA Speakers**

Friday – Debra B. (Madison, WI)
Saturday – Jack G. (Huntington Beach, CA)
Sunday – Mary D. (GSO Staff)
& Trustee's Report

Alcathon

Al-Anon

Al-Anon Speakers

Friday – Eric S. (South Elgin, IL)
Saturday – Beverly B. (Lewisville, TX)
Alateen – Katie R. (Elgin, IL)

Alateen

Dance

For more information, contact:

Larry S. 847-702-1952 or Allen J. 630-830-6145

Al-Anon contact: Colleen H. 224-629-6453

Groups that wish to sit together must register together (8 per table)

Call the Conference Special Needs Chairperson, 847-271-4417,
no later than two (2) weeks before the conference if an interpreter is needed.



MAKE CHECKS or MONEY ORDERS PAYABLE TO: 2013 Illinois State Conference
SEND CHECKS TO: Illinois State Conference, P.O. BOX 894, Elgin, IL 60121

PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY

Name _____

AA Northern Illinois Area 20
2013 Big Book
Conference
"Rocketed into the Fourth Dimension"

St. Luke's Church
 63 Fernwood Rd.
 Montgomery, IL 60538
October 26th 2013
Laurie L. – Guest Speaker – Lisle, IL
 Laurie is the daughter of Ruth Hock who was AA's first secretary
Surprise Guest Speaker
Four Al-Anon Breakout Sessions Available
 Friends and Family of Alcoholics Welcome! Please Register
 Hotel Rooms at Reduced Rate are available for \$85.00 a night
 (Must book room before 10/01/2013 and mention the Big Book Conference)
 Holiday Inn Express & Suites 2055 Wiesbrook Dr. Oswego IL 60543 630-844-4700
 For Questions or Volunteer Opportunities Email or Call
BigBook2013@aol.com Michelle H. 630-639-8366 Dan L. 630-913-8888

Please fill out completely. All information is strictly confidential and used only for verification at check-in or if there is a problem with registration, payment, or special needs accommodations.

First Name: _____ Last Name: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

☐ \$15 Registration only ☐ \$20 Registration + Lunch Buffet (vegetarian options available)

Please select one: ☐ AA ☐ Al-Anon ☐ Other _____ (i.e. visitor, medical professional)

☐ Special Accommodations ☐ Spanish Interpreter ☐ Sign Language

☐ Other Accommodations _____

Send Registration and Checks Payable To:
 2013 Big Book Conference, P.O. Box 612, Montgomery, IL 60538
 Mail in Registrations must be received by 10/10/2013
 (Please Do Not Mail Cash)
 or
 Online Registration available at <http://dist62.aa-nia.org> (additional \$1.50 fee for online payments)