



# Knox Knews

District 15 Happenings

District Meeting,  
Sunday, March 9.

5-6:30 pm

GSR Roundtable and  
committees, 4-5 pm

UU Church, Broadway,  
Rockland

Showing it Works!

## March Anniversaries

**Rose V, 11 yrs**

Brown Bag  
Saturday, March 1

**Bird B, 19 yrs**

**Anne J, 19 yrs**

Mountain View  
Sunday, March 2

**Shawn S, 10 yrs**

Brown Bag  
Wednesday, March 5

**Travis M, 5 yrs**

Brown Bag  
Saturday, March 8

**Maude, 9 yrs**

**Richard W, 10 yrs**

**Bob F, 40 yrs**

Pen Bay  
Sunday, March 23

**Brian P, 15 yrs**

**Brian G, 17 yrs**

It's In the Book  
Wednesday, March 26  
Potluck at 5:30.

## Judge, Jury and Executioner:

### Putting a face on the third tradition

On December 7, 1941, Irma Livoni received a letter from a self appointed "Executive Committee of the Los Angeles Group of Alcoholics Anonymous" telling her that "your attendance at group meetings [is] no longer desired until certain explanations and plans for the future [are] made to the satisfaction of this committee" and that otherwise, "your membership is terminated."

According to her sponsor, Sybil C, Irma never came back to another meeting, left AA and died of alcoholism. Irma is one of the reasons that the phrase "judge, jury and executioner" is used in discussing the Third Step in the Twelve and Twelve. She is part of the reason for the Third Tradition and part of the story women in AA.

This account is based on a long note written by "Matt" about a conversation he had with his sponsors, Sybil and Bob C, in 1984 when they told him about Irma and about the Third Tradition. Most of the language is Matt's. According to Matt, besides being one of the first women in AA, Sybil was the first woman west of the Mississippi.

Irma became a member in 1941, just after Sybil. Sybil said that many people's bottoms were very low then, no home, no job, no watch, no car, nothing and that it was different then for a woman to be an alcoholic. That most of them had burned all their bridges with their families, and were looked down upon, even more so than male alcoholics. Sybil said

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#### Third Tradition

The only requirement for  
A.A. membership is a  
desire to stop drinking.

## The Serenity Prayer —

### Grace, Courage and Wisdom

One Sunday in the summer of 1943, Rev. Reinhold Niebuhr gave a prayer he had written for the service at the Union Church in Heath, Massachusetts. It was a "soldier's prayer" of "hope and effort." A version of his prayer has become known as the Serenity Prayer. Here is the prayer he gave:

God, give us grace to accept with serenity  
the things that cannot be changed,  
Courage to change the things  
which should be changed,  
and the Wisdom to distinguish  
the one from the other.  
Amen

"The Serenity Prayer presumes that it's hard to accept 'what cannot be changed,'" writes his daughter, Elisabeth Sifton, in her book, *The Serenity Prayer*. "It reminds us of the human truth that no pain, death or irreversible loss is easily managed. Yet acceptance must come serenely or not at all since anger or resentment hardens the heart and makes acceptance impossible. On the other

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The **Area 28 Spring Assembly** will be held in Sanford the weekend of March 28-30. The primary agenda for the Assembly will be the **agenda items for the General Service Conference** the last week in April. The group GSRs attending will, through their discussion and votes, convey their group's opinions. The purpose is to inform our Delegate, Kathi D from District 13, so that she can carry this to the Conference. This is the way our voices get heard.

The District meeting this month will also be devoted to discussion of these agenda items so that GSRs can carry background information to their groups and lead informed group discussions of the items. For our further information, there will be a Pre-Conference Forum at the Muskie Center in Waterville on March 2 to discuss the Agenda items. GSR's are invited to attend. The purpose being, again, to help ensure that there is an informed group conscience that is communicated nationally and internationally.

**Serenity Prayer** (Continued from page 1)

hand, all too many of us seem able, even ready and willing, to accept inhumane and cruel situations that we could ourselves do something to improve. Surely we should find it intolerable to endure them.

“If instead we find the courage to change ‘what should be changed,’ how far will our decision take us? Do I act just for myself, or of my family, society, country? Does *praying* for the courage to make changes suggest that at morally ambiguous and dangerous junctures, let alone ordinary everyday ones, summoning up the strength to do this may require divine intervention?”

And the third part is wisdom! “Many prayers in many faiths petition God to show the way to right action,” Sifton continues. “But this prayer asks only for the wisdom to discern the right way on our own. It presumes it’s within our powers to accomplish this.”

You may come across an expansion of the Serenity Prayer that begins “Living one day at a time/Enjoying one moment at a time. This is not part of the original prayer. The origin of this is unknown but it is clearly not Niebuhr. It conveys a message of passivity rather than activity—it clearly contradicts both the basic prayer itself and Niebuhr’s philosophy and ideas. (Thanks to Anne B who suggested story on the serenity prayer. Pl)

**Tanglewood Organizes for 2008**

Hello, my name is Lisa D and I am an addict/alcoholic. I am writing to give everyone a little information about Tanglewood Big Book Weekend. Tanglewood Big Book Weekend is in June on the 6,7 and 8th of this year. This event is put on by the Camden "Its in the Book" group that meets on Wednesdays at 6:30 in Camden and this is our 11th year at Tanglewood. I am so excited to be the chairperson this year of this event. As a newcomer 8 years ago I got involved in participating in the committee and putting this event on. This was my first introduction to sober fun, putting principles above personality's and spirituality. I felt the presence of god at Tanglewood and continue to do so every year.

Tanglewood is located in Lincolnville Maine, and is a beautiful location lots of cabins with a large lodge surrounded by trees and wildlife. This year’s speaker is Val D and she will be taking us through the 12 steps of the Big Book. This is a wonderful opportunity to meet new people, be of service and just relax in a tranquil location. We have incredible food provided all weekend and a large Lobster dinner on Saturday night. Everyone pitches in to help cook, clean and make the coffee!! The evenings are spent sharing our experience, strength and hope around a roaring camp fire, playing cards in the lodge or just chilling with old friends and new.

The committee is open to all who would like to do some service work or enhance there recovery. The meetings are held at my and jos house in Rockland usually on a Sunday. I encourage new and old friends to stop by and check it out. I look forward to seeing all my old friends in recovery and meeting many new! I am grateful for the opportunity to chair this event and am really excited for June to come. Any other questions feel free to call me @ 542-2263 or Jo(co-chair)975-6731. Thank you, Lisa D

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**Third Concept and Checklist:**

To insure effective leadership, we should endow each element of A.A. — the Conference, the General Service Board and its service corporations, staffs, committees, and executives—with a traditional “Right of Decision.”

- Do we understand what is meant by the “Right of Decision”? Do we grant it at all levels of service or do we “instruct”?
- Do we trust our trusted servants — G.S.R., D.C.M., area delegate, the Conference itself?

**Irma** (Continued from page 1)

she watched AA help Irma get sober, watched AA help Irma get cleaned up, watched AA help Irma get her first job in sobriety, and watched AA help Irma get her first apartment in sobriety.

There was only one meeting in the entire state of California when Sybil came in. By December, 1941, there may have been two or three, but Irma had nowhere else to go, no one else to turn to. No other Group in California that she could ask for help.

Sybil said, “Imagine only one or two meetings in your entire state, and being shunned by your family, and by society, and by the only group of people who were on your side, your AA group. Imagine them shutting the door on you and sending you such a letter.” “It was Christmas time, the stores were decorated and now poor Irma was all alone.”

Matt writes: “I learned that night that no one can get kicked out of AA. We can ask a disturbing wet drunk that he needs to settle down or we might have to ask him to step outside for that day, but we don't vote to kick anyone out forever. And we don't shun people because our guidelines, our traditions tell us that no one has to believe in anything (they don't have to be like me) and they don't have to conform to anything (they don't have to dress a certain way, or have no facial hair, or pay anything, or be male). Even if I get drunk again, I am still welcome at any AA meeting.

“So that's the story about Irma Livoni. It sort of puts a face on tradition 3: the face of a woman I never knew, who got kicked out of AA.” Who got drunk and died.

(Thanks to Bird B. who passed on a version of this story and suggested it for the newsletter. pl)