



ALKI-LINE



TAKE ONE, IT'S FREE

The Area 11 A.A. Newsletter Vol. 31 No. 1 February 2022 - March 2022

What's the Harm

Bangkok. Thailand. A fall from a balcony. A crumpled and broken body. Donald, my youngest son, after recovering from his near-death alcohol-fueled week in the hospital, decided to travel to Thailand. Reason unknown - but I have my speculation. For two weeks he did not return phone calls or texts from a worried family. All we received was a phone call from the US Embassy. Did he intend to die there? Perhaps not. Maybe he was drinking? Maybe he decided to sit on the balcony railing? Maybe he thought: WHAT'S THE HARM. Did the universe (fate?) fulfill an unspoken intention? In any event, he now resides as ashes in a sealed box which his mother cries over.

In the last few years of my non-sober life, I can't count the number of times I said: WHAT'S THE HARM. My favorite place to drink was in bed. When I blacked out, I would be in a comfortable place. One afternoon my girlfriend came over to my house unexpectedly (she had a key). You guessed it. She caught me tossing back slugs of 100 proof Yukon Jack. Well, don't-cha-know, we had a few words and she left in a huff. I was a donkey's hind end. But I thought I was the injured party. I was caught drinking! Well ... I did say I was going to stop with the booze, but hey, I didn't mean right away. Well, I'll show her! I got dressed and packed an overnight bag. Now get this: in my driveway there was a 2009 Chevy 1500 Silverado truck and a 1995 Mazda Miata convertible. Toss the bag in the Miata and I was outta there. What's that sign over there say? WHAT'S THE HARM.

Okay. I decided, in my slightly altered state of mind, to drive to the liquor store and buy a quart of ... hold it ... who said 100 proof Yukon Jack? Give that person a kewpie doll. I got back into the Miata and continued driving. The "I'll-show-her" destination was my cabin in the Adirondacks (NY), 274 miles away. Go ahead, ask WHY. Simple: because my ego has a supercharger. It comes free with a bottle of Yukon Jack. I was going, because I was caught doing what I said I wouldn't do in the first place. The logic was impeccable: WHAT'S THE HARM.

Oh, here comes the sweet ending to this story. I don't remember driving. It had to have been muscle memory or something because I wasn't there. WHAT'S THE HARM. Hmmmm, I decided to do something stupid to "show her". In my drunken state of mind, a great many things seemed rational. I pushed my red tin can up to 100MPH! Now, let me get this straight. If I hit an obstruction in the road at that speed, then the universe would probably come up with something nasty for me.

After miraculously surviving three hours of driving, I drifted off the road in a blackout, and slid down the side of an embankment. On the way, a mile-marker post had the audacity to ruin my exhaust system as I ran it over. Thankfully just money, and not someone's life was involved. In true alcoholic fashion however, that was not the last time I said: WHAT'S THE HARM. I will eventually meet my son again, on the other side of life. The girlfriend stuck with me and my life in sobriety is great. Perhaps just one drink in celebration. WHAT'S THE HARM

– Al Di.

¿Cuál es el daño?

Bangkok. Tailandia. Una caída desde un balcón. Un cuerpo desplomado y quebrado. Donald, mi hijo menor, después de recuperarse de su semana cercana a la muerte impulsada por el alcohol en el hospital, decidió viajar a Tailandia. La razón se desconoce – pero tengo mis especulaciones. Durante dos semanas él no devolvía las llamadas ni textos de parte de una familia preocupada. Lo único que recibimos fue una llamada telefónica de la Embajada de EE.UU. ¿Intentaba él morir allá? Quizás no. ¿Tal vez él estaba bebiendo? ¿Tal vez él decidió sentarse en la baranda del balcón? Tal vez él pensó: ¿CUÁL ES EL DAÑO? ¿Será que el universo (¿destino?) cumplió con una tácita intención? Sea como sea, él ahora reside como cenizas en una caja sellada sobre la cual su madre llora.

En los últimos pasados años de mi vida no sobria, no puedo contar la cantidad de veces que yo dije: ¿CUÁL ES EL DAÑO? Mi lugar favorito para beber era en cama. Cuando perdía el conocimiento yo quedaba en un lugar cómodo. Una tarde mi novia llegó a mi casa inesperadamente (ella tenía una llave).



Ya lo pudieron adivinar. Ella me atrapó echándome unos tragos de Yukon Jack con una graduación alcohólica de 100. Bueno, lo que no saben es intercambiamos unas cuantas palabras y ella se fue en un resoplo. Yo era la parte trasera de un burro. Pero, yo pensé que yo era el ofendido. ¡A mí me atraparon bebiendo! Bueno...sí había dicho que iba a dejar de tomar, pero oiga, yo no quise decir de inmediato. ¡Bueno yo le voy a demostrar a ella! Me vestí y empaqué un bolso de viaje. Ahora imaginen esto: en la entrada de mi casa había una camioneta Chevy 1500 Silverado del 2009 y un Mazda Miata convertible de 1995. Tiro el bolso en el Miata y yo me largué. ¿Qué dice ese rótulo por allá? ¿CUÁL ES EL DAÑO?

Bueno. Yo decidí, en mi estado mental ligeramente alterado, que iba a conducir a la licorería y comprar un cuarto de...esperen...¿quién dijo Yukon Jack con graduación alcohólica de 100? Entréguele un premio a esa persona. Me metí nuevamente al Miata y seguí conduciendo. El destino “yo le demostraré a ella” estaba en mi cabaña en las montañas Adirondacks (NY), a 274 millas de distancia. Adelante, pregunten ¿POR QUÉ? Simple: porque mi ego tiene un sobrealimentador. Viene gratis con una botella de Yukon Jack. Yo iba, porque a mí me atraparon haciendo lo que yo dije que yo no iba hacer más. La lógica era impecable: ¿CUÁL ES EL DAÑO?

O, aquí viene el dulce final a esta historia. No recuerdo cuando iba conduciendo. Tiene que haber sido memoria muscular o algo, porque yo no estaba ahí. ¿CUÁL ES EL DAÑO? Mmmm, yo decidí hacer algo estúpido para “enseñarle a ella”. En mi estado mental ebrio, una gran cantidad de cosas parecían ser racionales. ¡Forcé mi lata roja hasta 100 millas por hora! Ahora, permítanme aclarar esto. Si le pego a alguna obstrucción en el camino a esa velocidad, entonces el universo probablemente me presentaría algo terrible.

Después de haber sobrevivido milagrosamente tres horas de estar conduciendo, me desvié de la carretera en una laguna mental, y me deslicé a la orilla de un terraplén. En el camino, un rótulo de punto kilométrico tuvo la audacia de arruinar mi sistema de extracción cuando lo atropellé. Afortunadamente solo dinero, y no la vida de alguien estuvo implicado. Sin embargo luciendo un verdadero estilo alcohólico, esa no fue la última vez que yo dije: ¿CUÁL ES EL DAÑO? Eventualmente me encontraré con mi hijo nuevamente, al otro lado de la vida. La novia se quedó a mi lado y mi vida en sobriedad es genial. Tal vez sólo un trago en celebración. ¿CUÁL ES EL DAÑO?... – *Al Di*.

Gratitude

“Our Twelve Traditions represent the sum of our experience as individuals, as groups within A.A., and similarly with our fellows and other organizations in our great fellowship of

humanity under God throughout the world. They are our experiences, yet the spirit in which they have been conceived merits their serious, prayerful consideration as the guideposts of A.A. policy for the individual, the group, and our various committees, local and national.” - *Dr. Bob*

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A Confidence I Never Knew

Hello, my name is Olivia, and I am an alcoholic.

When I got sober at the age of 20, I could barely utter those words. My mind, body, and spirit were weighed down by shame that felt unrelenting and permanent. I wanted to get better. I was lost. I didn't know how to live a life without alcohol. I met my sponsor. They took me through the Twelve Steps in the “Big Book” which then prepared me to sponsor other women. After my first year sober, I began to walk down the path of service that granted me a new life. After several homegroup commitments, I was elected as the Area 11 Bridging the Gap Chair. The purpose of Bridging the Gap is to provide temporary A.A. contacts for individuals being released from treatment centers or correctional facilities. During my first committee meeting I was filled with fear and self-doubt. Now I am almost halfway through my commitment. This has been a difficult yet rewarding experience. I spoke at a panel on how Bridging the Gap reached newcomers during Covid-19. I discovered a confidence I never knew I had. I spoke to a newcomer who had nothing but a bike to get to his next A.A. meeting, and I experienced gratitude and the power of connection. I could name countless experiences that have altered who I am as a person. I want the reader to know that I never thought I would be capable of doing what I do now. With a Higher Power and a program in my life my potential for insightful change is endless.

If you are in need of Bridging the Gap services, please call 855-565-2345 or email btg@ct-aa.org. – *Olivia G.*

Area 11 Event Committees

The Area 11 Event Committees meet monthly to plan our annual events. The committees can benefit from your participation and service. The [Area 11 Service Calendar – Alcoholics Anonymous \(ct-aa.org\)](#) provides meeting details, as well as information about other service committee, district, and area meetings.

Area 11 Convention

Meets 3rd Sunday 12:00pm – 2:00pm (virtually)

Round-Up

Meets 4th Wednesday 6:00pm

Rompiendo Fronteras

Meets 3rd Wednesday 6:00pm

CSCYPAA

Meets 4th Sunday 12:00pm – 2:00pm



Soberfest

Meets 1st Sunday 12:00pm – 2:00pm

Farewell and Remember

Just a beer, Just a nip
Just a sip, Just a slip
Just this once, Just tonight
No repercussions
Felt no fright
Alone in the drink
Alone with how I think
A shot, A sleeve
The burn, The yearn
Just for tonight, Just once more
A delusion plain and simple
As I reach for more
Too little, Too much
Too little, Too late
Sipping away, Slipping away
Fearing the fate
As it becomes too late
I sun, I swim
After I let it all begin
A shot in the dark, A shot in the arm
Once it's begun, Nothing but harm
I wither, I die
I suffer, You cry
I want to be honest, But do I dare
How did I get here
And now to where
The pain is so great
When's it going to be too late
I want to say no, I want to let go
How can I get through it all
I know I need to make the call
One last shot, One last dime
Little did I know
I was running out of time
Now I'm out, Spoke to a friend
No one knowing, It was all about to end
I'm not here anymore
No more fear lurking beyond the door
Alone I lie
Alone I die

WWW.CT-AA.ORG

Farewell and remember

– Thomas N.

News and Notes

Have news and notes to share? Contact the Alki-Line committee, alkiline@ct-aa.org.

Area 11 Pre-Conference Assembly is virtual April 3rd!

The Area 11 Pre-Conference Assembly will be held virtually on Sunday, April 3 from 8:30am – 1:30pm. Details coming soon!!

Newly Updated Alcoholics Anonymous Website

A message from General Service Manager of the General Service Office (G.S.O.)

[It is my pleasure to announce the launch of our newly updated Alcoholics Anonymous \(A.A.\) website \[www.aa.org\]\(http://www.aa.org\).](#)

What a great time and privilege to serve as the General Manager of your General Service Office (G.S.O.).

G.S.O. coordinates many services that help groups and members fulfill their purpose of carrying the A.A. message to the alcoholic who still suffers, and www.aa.org plays an important role in that work.

Among the many benefits of our new website, it will serve as a significant resource for A.A. members, those seeking help from A.A., professionals working with alcoholics, the media, and the public at large. About all, it will provide consistent information about Alcoholics Anonymous.

Reminder on the A.A. Service Manual

Check out the revised and reformatted A.A. Service Manual, as approved by the 71st General Service Conference! It is a smooth read, contains some excellent graphics, and has frequently asked question sections. This is most certainly worth checking out! You can view it at no cost [here](#).

Box 4-5-9 Winter 2021

[This issue](#) highlights important A.A. events, both in the U.S./Canada and around the world. The issue also reports on some developments at G.S.O. that will help A.A. members in custody and A.A. members on the outside to connect more quickly and to share experience, strength and hope through correspondence. There is also some information about the annual anonymity letter distributed to the media by G.S.O. and an article about how group problems can actually be a good thing.

Delegate's Reports

Monthly Delegate's Reports are available on www.ct-aa.org in English and Spanish. [Click here for quick access.](#)

WWW.AA.ORG





Service Sponsorship

The following is a presentation given at the Northeast Regional Forum in 2021 and appeared in the NERF final report, an A.A.W.S. publication.

Northeast Regional Forum Presentation

Friday, June 4, 2021

Presenter: Matt K., Area 11 (Connecticut) Panel 71 Delegate

Presentation Topic: Service Sponsorship

So many of my meaningful A.A. experiences stem back to service sponsorship. When I asked someone to be my service sponsor, I had no idea what I was in for. I then entered a world of road trips to service assemblies, countless growth opportunities, trips to international conventions, more friendships than I could ever imagine, and a steady course of staying neck-deep in Alcoholics Anonymous.

Because of service sponsorship, I learned many spiritual lessons. I was shown the importance of having integrity and keeping my word. I was taught that A.A. service is an important place to demonstrate excellent customer service because we might be the only example of general service someone meets. This means striving to treat every service-related phone call and email with enough care that it catches the other person by surprise. My service sponsor enlightened me that when I stop wasting time trying to arrange life to suit myself, suddenly many more hours become available to be useful. Above all else, my service sponsor instilled in me that the most important things I do in A.A. are those things I do when nobody is watching.

Service sponsorship pushes me to my outermost limits. My mind will always have me believe that certain things are unattainable. Luckily, my service sponsor reminds me that I cannot trust my alcoholic thinking. I am prompted to be wary of settling for “good enough” rather than considering how “good is the enemy of the best.” Today I know it IS possible to find a replacement American Sign Language interpreter at the last moment. It IS possible to be a young person involved in Area service. It IS possible to rearrange one’s entire schedule on a moment’s notice to drive two hours and give a presentation. It IS possible to redistrict during a pandemic. It IS possible to say “yes” whenever someone asks for help. It IS possible to have an Area service position while also juggling demanding professional commitments. Without service sponsorship, I will convince myself that none of that is possible.

In addition to the countless spiritual lessons, service sponsorship has also taught me many informational points. I learned that the first essays written on the Twelve Traditions by co-founder Bill W. appeared in the A.A. Grapevine several

years before the book Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions was written. I learned that there is a difference between A.A. Conference-Approved literature and A.A. literature in general. I learned that service material from the General Service Office does not require Conference-approval. I learned that when we make contributions to support the General Service Office, we are technically making the contribution to the General Service Board before it makes its way to funding the office. I learned that Article 8 of the General Service Conference Charter indicates that Area Delegates, District Committee Members, and General Service Representatives should all serve terms concurrently. All this information is readily available in our literature, but it was through service sponsorship that it came alive for me.

While service sponsorship might take many forms, my experience with it is strenuous. We met together, one on one, going over the Traditions and Concepts. We read line-by-line, highlighting the text, and writing in the margins. We studied the A.A. Service Manual cover to cover—including the appendices. I was given homework assignments and was urged to incorporate service-related matters into my 11th step practice. Most importantly, we spent time—lots of time. This was not some form of second-class sponsorship, nor was it simply a matter of being told: “Give me a call when you have questions.” We had an experience together and we continue to enlarge upon that experience to this day.

Having the ability to service sponsor others has been an absolute joy. I try my best to pass on what was given to me, leaning on two important ingredients: (1) using A.A. literature as the guide; and (2) spending adequate time. If a service sponsee justifies their beliefs by simply stating “my service sponsor told me so,” that means I have done a terrible job. Using A.A. literature as the basis for service sponsorship allows the A.A. message to guide the discussion, rather than my message. I remember how insecure I felt the first time someone asked me to service sponsor them. My service sponsor said: “Listen, if you simply read A.A. literature with another alcoholic, magic will always happen.” That has been my experience. My service sponsor also reminded me about the other important ingredient: spending adequate time. Effective service sponsorship requires time. This is not always convenient. As a reminder, Chapter 5 of the Big Book (“How it Works”) contains a few powerful phrases: “rigorous honesty,” “strenuous effort,” and “vigorous action.” When I find myself fighting the idea of giving service sponsorship ample time, I need to be reminded that I almost died from alcoholism, that I am on borrowed time, and that I would be nothing without Alcoholics Anonymous.

— Matt K.

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Finance Committee Corner

Hello, Area 11! My name is Mike R., and I have the honor and privilege of serving as Area 11 Chairperson. At the time of this writing, 2022 is days old, and the new year is showing promise to bring many of the same challenges and opportunities that 2021 brought. One of the many joys of my service position is that I concurrently serve as a member and Recording Secretary of the Area 11 Finance Committee alongside our Area 11 Treasurer, Jeff B., Alternate Treasurer, Ryan R., and Delegate, Matt K.

As I reflect upon the past year in Area finance, I am pleased to share that 2021, in my assessment, was a great year. Admittedly, success in A.A. finance can be difficult to measure. Because of this, I thought it would be helpful to share some measurable highlights from the year and some things to look forward to in 2022.

In the [April 2021 – May 2021](#) Alki-Line, our Alternate Treasurer, Ryan, introduced our Finance Committee and detailed some of his responsibilities that support the day-to-day operations of Area 11. Jeff, our Treasurer, followed with several specific updates in the [August 2021 – September 2021](#) Alki-Line. Without expressly stating as much, the column followed one central theme: Area 11, Connecticut General Service Committee, Inc. strives to practice the principles of the program, and, while doing so, must adhere to some real-world principles as well. This means anything from tax filings to contract negotiations are fair game, even in A.A. service.

During August and September, Jeff and Ryan connected with committees to support compilation of a draft 2022 budget. With requested budgets compiled, a Budget Committee (consisting of event chairs, special service committee chairs, and Area officers) held a meeting in September to share thoughts, feedback, amendments, and ultimately approval of a proposed 2022 budget. Later presented to the full Area 11 Committee, this proposed budget gained Committee approval as presented.

The year closed with the first installment of what will be an ongoing Finance Committee workshop series. During this workshop, we heard from a past Area 11 Delegate as well as the current A.A.W.S. (Alcoholics Anonymous World Service) Director as they fielded questions on the topic of: “where money and spirituality mix.”

As we move forward in 2022, the Area 11 Finance Committee aims to continue the workshop series, and to stay engaged with the Area 11 Committee. We will also continue to shape a clearly defined mission statement for our committee. Perhaps the best news of all is that with A.A. principles in our

minds and in our hearts, your 7th Tradition contributions have, are, and will continue to help carry our message of recovery to the still sick and suffering alcoholic.

If you have any questions for me or if there is anything on your mind I can help with, please email me at areachair@ct-aa.org. Thank you for allowing me to be of service!

– Mike R.

AAGRAPEVINE

The International Journal of Alcoholics Anonymous

AAGV – Podcasts

Click to experience! [Grapevine Podcast | AA Grapevine](#)

Subscriptions and Literature

Visit [AA Grapevine Store • Magazines, Books & More.](#)
Free shipping on products in the month of February!

Carry the Message Project

Want to help another alcoholic? Grapevine and La Viña are Great Twelfth Step Tools!

Give a gift subscription to an alcoholic who needs it. Great for: Sponsees * Newcomers * Prisons * Detoxes * Doctor's Offices * Group Celebrations * District and Area Events * Giveaways.

Go to <https://www.aagrapevine.org/carry-the-message> to get started. Carry the Message, it's easy!

Visit the NEW AA.org

So much content and resources on the Alcoholics Anonymous website! From the latest editions of *Box 4-5-9* and *Sharing from Behind the Walls*, to American Sign Language on the A.A.W.S YouTube Channel, Regional Form videos and a variety of reports, it's all a click away!

Explore! [Visit AA.org](#)

Responsibility Pledge

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

And for that, I am responsible!





presents

The Gratitude List.

The Alki-Line is excited to announce a brand-new feature, "The Gratitude List". Members from across the Area share their gratitude by visiting our web page and sending a message directly to your Alki-Line committee.

I am grateful for...

- *The continued effort of the Alki-Line committee for one! Additionally, I can actually understand and experience Gratitude as a result of coming to A.A. and having an experience with recovery. - Chris S., Bethel*
- *A.A. and antidepressants that work for me. - Bryan H., Danbury*
- *Grateful that a Higher Power brought me to A.A., and that A.A. brought me to my Higher Power. Sobriety, safety, Fellowship, friendship. Honesty and some humility. Unexpected opportunities to grow and be of service. – Thomas N., Portland*

Here's your opportunity to be part of this exciting column!

You can view the form by visiting the Alki-Line page at: <https://ct-aa.org/alki-line/>.

Literature on Safety in A.A.

Safety is an important issue in A.A. – one that all groups and members can address to develop workable solutions and help keep our meetings safe based on the fundamental principles of the Fellowship.

"Each member of Alcoholic Anonymous is but a small part of a great whole. A.A. must continue to live or most of us will surely die. Hence our common welfare comes first. But individual welfare follows close afterward". -Tradition One (Long Form)

- Use the links below to access safety pieces:
 - ["Safety: Our Common Welfare" Service Piece](#)
 - [Safety Card](#)
 - [Safety and A.A. Flyer \(service piece\)](#)

Public Service Announcement

Would you like to get involved in service at the district level?

A District Committee Member (DCM), special committee representative, or your group's General Service Representative (GSR) could provide you with information and guidance. You could also attend a district/GSR meeting.

Don't know when your district meeting is?

Or perhaps you don't even know what district is yours? [The District Map](#) will help you determine your district. Once you know your district number, go to the [Area 11 Service Calendar](#) to find out the district meeting details – or ask a GSR.

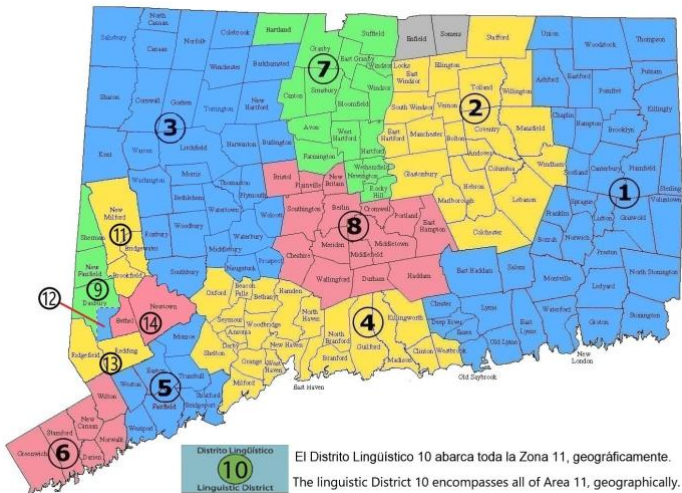
Service Committees

Area 11 maintains standing service committees whose mission is to serve the A.A. community in Connecticut and carry the message of A.A. to the alcoholic who still suffers. Visit the individual service committee pages below to learn more:

- [Accessibilities Committee](#)
- [Alki-Line Committee](#)
- [Answering Service Committee](#)
- [Archives Committee](#)
- [Cooperation with the Professional Community \(CPC\) Committee](#)
- [Corrections Committee](#)
- [Grapevine Committee](#)
- [Public Information \(PI\) Committee](#)
- [Schedules Committee](#)
- [Treatment Center Committee](#)
- [Website Committee](#)



Area 11 Districts



Learn about the Area 11 Districts [here](#).

Create & Print Meeting Schedules and more on the Area 11 Website

Our Area 11 Website continues to evolve and be a central source of information and communication. This resource is even more important during these times of limitations with in-person interaction. Some, but not all, of recent enhancements / additions include:

- ****Create & Print meeting schedules****
- Landing page links to key information & events
- Meeting finder tool
- Contact information for the Area 11 Officers
- District maps and information
- From the events calendar, links to events outside of Area 11

Visit www.ct-aa.org

Being Responsible as A.A. Members

With the increased availability of in-person meetings and while A.A. has no rules, compliance with local/state guidelines and protocols for meeting spaces are important. Let us remember to honor our Traditions, not taking actions affecting other groups or A.A. as a whole, and not being drawn into public controversy.



Please refer to www.ct-aa.org for information regarding state-wide recovery events and meeting information.

NERAASA 2022

The weekend of February 25-27, 2022

Pittsburgh, PA

<https://www.neraasa.org/>

*** Area 11 Pre-Conference Assembly***

The Area 11 Pre-Conference Assembly will be held virtually on **Sunday, April 3 from 8:30am – 1:30pm**. Details coming soon!!

Save the date and spread the word!!

The Alki-Line

The Alki-Line is a bi-monthly publication by the Area 11 Alki-Line Committee, a dedicated team of trusted servants, whose primary purpose is to offer current events, articles, and information that foster experience, strength, and hope in recovery, in the spirit of the Traditions of Alcoholics Anonymous and in particular “to stay sober and help other alcoholics to achieve sobriety”. The Alki-Line has many service positions open and would benefit greatly from more district representation.

Share your stories, essays, articles, poetry, etc. with others through the Alki-Line. We are accepting submissions of one page or less:

Email: alkiline@ct-aa.org

Mail: Alki-Line, P.O. Box 7060, Meriden, CT 06450

Or hand your material to your GSR or Alki-Line Representative

Mándenlos las historias personales, los ensayos, las opiniones, la poesía, etc. . . y entérenos más de usted en el Alki-Line. Se puede entregar una página o menos de las historias a una de los siguiente:

Por el correos electrónicos: alkiline@ct-aa.org

Por el correos: Alki-Line, P.O. Box 7060, Meriden, CT 06450

O De mano a su GSR or Representativo de Alki-Line

Alki-Line

This newsletter is by and for alcoholics; however, we review submissions by all interested in the A.A. program of recovery. Material may be edited for clarity and length. This newsletter and earlier issues can be downloaded at www.ct-aa.org.

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