



# ALKI-LINE



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The Area 11 A.A. Newsletter • Vol. 19 No.6 • Dec-Jan. 2009-2010

## The Kindness of a Complete Stranger

I recently was reflecting upon my awesome relationship with my lovely sponsor Kim. Many moons ago, our paths crossed at a women's meeting on a Friday morning in a church basement where children were welcome. I'm eternally grateful that we met. My oldest son (now 16) was in kindergarten and I decided to try bringing my second son (now 11) who was a toddler at the time. I was struggling, trying to stay sober and desperately needed help. I reached out for the hand of AA and the kindness of a complete stranger was there.

My little one was literally a bouncing baby boy – a very active child. People in public would often make snide remarks and give unfriendly glances. People in church would say “shush” and “sit still.” Although I was very attentive to my beautiful, busy boy, these comments were negative and upsetting. When it was my turn to share, an adorable petite woman came up to us with a toy and a book. My son was fascinated with the toy, He was happily occupied and I was able to share!

This lady with the sparkling eyes and bright smile truly came to my rescue that day and many times since. We talked after the meeting. I went to it regularly with my terrific two year old. She graciously accepted my request to be my sponsor. One day at a time and many years later, she's still my supportive sponsor. She patiently guided me through the program and gently worked with me on the twelve steps. My little boy has grown taller than my sponsor!

As my children have grown, I have grown as well. She's been there for me through many difficult times: bedrest during my third pregnancy (my first and only girl), a nasty separation, difficult divorce and through many happy, joyful times too. During challenging situations in her life, I've actually been able to offer words of wisdom to help her. I've told her and shared at meetings that Kim is like the big sister that I never had. I'm sincerely grateful for our friendship and always will recall the kindness of a complete stranger.

*Stephanie A., Stratford*

## Calendar

**November 15, 2009** • Fall Assembly • 9am-1pm • Knights of Columbus Hall • 2630 Whitney Avenue, Hamden, CT

**November 27-29, 2009** • **CSCY-PAA** • 24th Annual Ct. State Conference for young people in AA • The Crowne Plaza, 100 Berlin Rd., Route 372, Cromwell, CT

**February 26-28, 2010** • **NERAASA** • Niagara Falls

### Thanksgiving Alkathons

**Milford:** Mary Taylor Church, 168 Broad St., Milford CT 06460  
Weds. Nov. 25, 7p.m.—Thurs. Nov. 26 at 7 p.m.;

**Clinton (21st Annual):** sponsored by districts 1 and 4; 5p.m. Wed. Nov. 25—5 p.m. Th. Nov. 26; St. Mary's Church, 54 Grove St., Clinton, CT

**Bridgeport: Unity Group;** Calvary St. Georges Episcopal Church 755 Clinton Ave., Bridgeport CT. 6 PM til 6PM 24 hours; Nov. 25-Nov.26; Dec. 24-Dec.25; Dec. 31-Jan.1

**Windsor: Recovery Club;** Wed., Nov. 25,m 5:30pm - Thurs., Nov. 26, 6:30pm, 118 Palisado Ave. (Rt. 159), Windsor

### Christmas-New Years Alkathon

**New Haven: The Parish House;** 323 Temple St., New Haven, Ct; Sponsored by the Little Red Deer. Starts Xmas Eve, Dec. 24 at 6 p.m. thru Xmas Day, Dec. 25 6 p.m.; Constant speakers, Dinner served at 2 p.m. on Xmas Day

**Torrington:** from 6pm Christmas; New Years eves until noon Christmas; New Years day at the St Francis of Assisi school cafeteria Prospect St Torrington.

**Cheshire: Tri City Alkathon:** Cheshire Grange; Wallingford Road, Cheshire, Ct Christmas Start time: Noon 12/24 Ends 3 p.m. 12/25; New Years Start time: Noon 12/31 Ends 3 p.m. 1/1/2010;

**District 9:** Dates: Dec 24th & 25th 4pm-4pm 12/24 to Noon 12/25 (tentative) Dec 31st & Jan 1 3pm 12/31 to Noon 1/1(tentative)

**West Hartford: Covenant Congregational Church;** 1 Westminster Drive, West Hartford CT; December 24, 2009 to December 25, 2009, 6 p.m. to 6 p.m. Food, Fellowship and Marathon Meetings

**Manchester:** December 24th 6pm thru December 25th 6PM Location: Pathfinders, 102 Norman Street Manchester, CT

**East Hartford:** December 31st 6pm thru January 1st 6pm, Location: St. Johns Episcopal Church, 12 Rector Street East Hartford CT



## One Sunday in Spring

One Sunday in spring 2001, Mocha, the greyhound, came home.

Who would have thought a Greyhound would make such a difference?... but there he was with his brindle coat all over him.

I had never seen a greyhound up close much less one with a brindle coat which was made up of colors and patterns that I could not imagine piecing together. The artist that I am - way too complex! Must be God's work - that dawned on me only because of program... and sure enough it was God's work.

I made a list of 100 names. I spoke each one to him and he paid no attention. Eventually I said Mocha and he pranced forth without looking back. He simply stole my heart with his beautiful amber eyes and his huge trembling frame... I felt I could see into his frightened soul. I knew how he felt. I got down on my hands and knees, I looked into his eyes and I told him I loved him and that little by little everything would be okay. And it was.

It took a year and a half before he would leave his long narrow safe space between the bed and the window without coaxing. The space was long and slim like his crate at the track. Then, because he and my husband formed a bond, instead of cringing he began to sniff men who came over and let them pet him. Men at the track had treated him badly.

The kids down the block frightened him so that he would make an about face, stop and turn towards home. One day he pulled a gymnastic Houdini - he contorted himself out of his harness and collar and ran home! Finally a little girl came to pet him. We made him stand still and let her. Today he runs with the kids on the block, nudges them



with his cold wet nose and licks them.

Saddest of all in the beginning was that he was scared to death of other dogs in the neighborhood. He knew only Greyhounds! However once he went to the kennel for a weekend, when he returned home he excitedly and eagerly sniffed and played with glee with each dog he encountered.

You see, I relate to Mocha - his process of assimilation back into society was just like mine.

*Judi G., West Hartford*

## The Chaplain's Tent

As a reserve Army Medical Officer, I attended two weeks annual training each summer. At the first morning formation, I announced the time for sick call. The chaplain next invited all reservists with any emotional or stressful problems to attend an evening discussion at his tent. No one showed up. The chaplain approached me and said, "I can't understand why not even one person responded. Everyone has problems."

The next two nights were also fruitless for the chaplain.

Several reservists I knew from AA had asked me to hold an AA meeting but I had no place to conduct it.

Seeing the chaplain very sullen, I said, "Chaplain, I think I can get people into your tent tonight. I know many reservists who would like a place to air the stress and disdain in their lives."

"I can't believe it," he said gazing at the reservists in his tent. At the end of the AA meeting we thanked the Chaplain for the use of his tent. He was overwhelmed. "I had no idea AA was like this," he said. "I thought they just talked about drinking. I

heard many people discuss how life improved without using alcohol and how they used spirituality and each other to live one day at a time."

At the next morning's formation, the chaplain announced that an evening AA meeting would take place in his tent. We needed a bigger tent.

*Peter G., Sandy Hook*

## Rocky Road

On my journey to AA, I continuously looked for shortcuts. Taking shortcuts took me down a very long dark road.

One morning, I awoke to regrets - regrets of my past and present. I thought there was no future. I dropped to my knees and started to cry uncontrollably.

*Dear God, I had just had another night of binge drinking.*

While in agony with emotional pain, I decided to pray. I wanted God to take the pain away. I needed help beyond my control.

How soon alcoholics forget . . . because later that night, I was closing the bars again. Not knowing what to do with myself, or wanting to go home, I decided to go on a long drive. I call that "involuntary suicide."

Soon after, I was pulled over at a closed gas station. Despite my objections, was arrested and given a DWI. I have always had angels watching over me along my shortcuts. But that day I truly felt God's presence. I know in my bones I would not be here if it were not for my higher power stepping in. And for that I am truly grateful.

*Jessica S., Bethel*

**You aren't who you think you are. Aren't you glad?**



## What's in Your Toolbox?

I'm using the coping skills of participating in the meetings, sitting up front and listening to everything that is being said. *Kimberly N, Trumbull*

### The Visitor (Who's Sitting Next to You?)

You don't know who I am. I wandered into your meeting place alone the other night, a stranger in a strange town.

You didn't speak to me.

Oh, you saw me. You glanced my way, but you didn't recognize me, so you quickly averted your eyes and sought out a familiar face.

I sat there through the meeting.

The topic was gratitude. You and your friends spoke about how much AA means to you. You said how much the people there had helped you when you first came through the door—how they extended the hand of friendship to make you feel welcome, and asked you to come back.

And I wondered where they had gone, those nice people who made your entrance so welcoming and so comfortable.

You talked about how the newcomer is the life blood of AA. I agree, but I didn't say so. In fact, I didn't share in your meeting.

So who am I? You don't know, because you didn't bother to find out. Although yours was a closed meeting, you didn't even ask if I belonged there.

I was just an ordinary drunk with a few years of sober living in AA who was traveling and was in need of a meeting.

So I sat silently through your meeting, and when it was over I watched enviously as all of you gathered in small groups, talking to one another the same way we do in my home town.

When I got to the motel, as I lay in my bed waiting for sleep to come, I made a gratitude list. You were on it, along with your friends at the meeting place. I knew that you were there for me. I knew that if I had needed help, and had asked for it, you would have gladly given it. But I wondered...what if I hadn't been able to ask?

I know who you are.

Do you remember me?

*Anonymous*

### The Special Needs Committee is looking for Language Translators and Signers

Contact Bob P. at [specialneeds@ct-aa.org](mailto:specialneeds@ct-aa.org)

### A Service Opportunity

At the AA Convention in September, I attended the service workshop. It was announced that both corrections and treatment facilities have a dire need for AA meetings. Sometimes, there is only one meeting scheduled per week, and speakers sometimes do not honor their commitments. Imagine looking forward to a meeting for an entire week and then having no one show up. One woman in attendance spoke up and said. "I WAS one of those people in prison when a speaker failed to show up and I can tell you that the mood of the entire facility was affected. We all felt depressed and let down."

The presenter suggested having an AA group "sponsor" a meeting at a correction or treatment facility for three months. The group would be responsible to find speakers for a weekly meeting, who would then be accountable to find a replacement if they could not serve. At many correction facilities, speakers do not even need to go through pre-clearance security checks.

Each district has a committee chair for both Corrections and Treatment. Ask your GSR for their contact information, and consider being an important bridge in bringing AA behind closed doors.

*Christine B., West Hartford*

## LET'S HEAR FROM YOU!

### Short Articles, Photos, Letters, Suggestions and Constructive Criticism

**1. E-MAIL:** [alkiline@ct-aa.org](mailto:alkiline@ct-aa.org)

**2. MAIL:** Alki-Line, P.O. Box 261084  
Hartford, CT 06126

**3. HAND material to a GSR** (General Service Representative)

This newsletter is by and for alcoholics; however, we review submissions by all interested in the AA program of recovery. Material may be edited for clarity and length. This newsletter and earlier issues can be printed from the Area 11 Website: [www.ct-aa.org](http://www.ct-aa.org).

**This is an honest fellowship; we presume all submissions are original or in the public domain. Following publication all copyright reverts to the author.**

**If people aren't showing up for you the way you want, think of what way you're not showing up for them.**

# **RECOVERY ROCKS**

This is an experience  
you must not miss!

## **CSCYPAA 2009**

24th Annual CT. State  
Conference for Young  
People in AA

with Al-Anon participation

November 27th-29th

The Crowne Plaza  
100 Berlin Rd., Route 372  
Cromwell, CT

CSCYPAA Registration  
P.O. Box 501 Middletown, CT 06457

## **A.A. TRADITIONS WORKSHOP!**

The "Alcoholics in Action" Group in New Haven  
hosts several Guest Speakers including  
Billy N. from Spring Lake Heights, N.J.

Saturday, December 5, 2009, 10am to 4pm

Southern Connecticut State University; Engelman Hall  
Fitch Street @ Pine Rock Ave., New Haven, CT  
Lunch & beverages provided free!

# **ROUND-UP 36**

Planning Committee Now Forming

All Are Welcome

Meets: 1st Wednesday of the Month - 7:30 p.m.

First Congregational Church of Stratford  
2301 Main St., Stratford, CT 06615

(Enter through double doors on Church Street)  
Parking is available on the street or in the church lot.

Event Date/Location: TBD

Planning Committee Meeting Dates are as Follows:

Dec 2, 2009

Jan 6, 2010

Feb 3, 2010

Mar 3, 2010

# **FALL ASSEMBLY**

November 15

9am-2pm

Knights of Columbus Hall  
2630 Whitney Ave.,  
Hamden, CT

