

## HIGHER GROUND



### The Serenity Prayer. . .it's origin is traced. . .

*Grapevine*, Jan. 1950

At long last the mystery of the Serenity Prayer has been solved!

We have learned who wrote it, when it was written and how it came to the attention of the early members of AA. We have learned, too, how it was originally written, a bit of information which should lay to rest all arguments as to which is the correct quotation.

The timeless little prayer has been credited to almost every theologian, philosopher and saint known to man. The most popular opinion on its authorship favors St. Francis of Assisi.

It was actually written by Dr. Reinhold Niebuhr, of the Union Theological Seminary, New York City, in about 1932 as the ending to a longer prayer. In 1934 the doctor's friend and neighbor, Dr. Howard Robbins asked permission to use that part of the longer prayer in a compilation he was making at the time. It was published in that year in Dr. Robbins' book of prayers.

Dr. Niebuhr says, "Of course, it may have been spooking around for years, even centuries, but I don't think so. I honestly do believe that I wrote it myself."

It came to the attention of an early member of AA in 1939. He read it in an obituary appearing in the *New York Times*. He liked it so much he brought it in to the little office on Vesey St. for Bill W. to read. When Bill and the staff read the little prayer, they felt that it particularly suited the needs of AA. Cards were printed and passed around. Thus the simple little prayer became an integral part of the AA movement.

Today it is in the pockets of thousands of AAs; it is framed and placed on the wall of AA meeting rooms throughout the world; it appears monthly on the back cover of your magazine and every now and then someone tells us that we have quoted it incorrectly. We have.

As it appears in *The A. A. Grapevine*, it reads:

*God grant me the serenity To accept things I cannot change, Courage to change things I can, And wisdom to know the difference.*

Many tell us that it should read:

*God grant me the serenity To accept the things I cannot change; The courage to change the things I can; And the wisdom to know the difference.*

The way it was originally written by Dr. Niebuhr is as follows:

*God give me the serenity to accept things which cannot be changed; Give me courage to change things which must be changed; And the wisdom to distinguish one from the other.*

Dr. Niebuhr doesn't seem to mind that his prayer is incorrectly quoted. . .a comma. . .a preposition. . .even several verbs. . .the meaning and the message remain intact.

"In fact," says the good doctor, "in some respects, I believe your way is better."

## District 10 Servants

Following are the individuals currently serving in District positions:

District Committee Member (DCM): Sue W.

Treasurer: Laura H.

Answering Service: Bill G.

Grapevine: Bob T.

Public Info./Cooperation with the Professional Community (PI/CPC): Nora

Special Needs: Ralph

Website: Dave G.

Secretary: Tina W.

Bridging the Gap (BTG): Mike R.

Newsletter: Peter Y.

Treatment: Bob D.

The following positions are vacant:

Alternate DCM: open

Records Keeper: open

Corrections: open

Anyone interested in serving in one of the foregoing positions should contact their GSR or attend the District meeting.

## AA Hotline

District 10 needs volunteers to take Hotline and 12 Step calls. Pick your own hours. Calls are screened by an answering service. You DO NOT get calls directly. For application forms and more info, contact your GSR or email this newsletter at: yochum@frontiernet.net.

## Group Anniversaries

Feb. 1 2001 Plattsburgh - Diamonds in the Rough

Feb. 2 2006 Plattsburgh - HOPE Group

Feb. 8 1981 Westport - Westport Group

Feb. 9 1976 Plattsburgh - Southend Group

Feb.13 1996 Ausable Forks - Saturday Big Book

Feb.22 1983 Elizabethtown - Elizabethtown Group

Mar. 7, 1986 Chazy

## Upcoming Events

### Local

March 24 - Corrections Workshop  
Dannemora

### On the Road

Feb. 20-22 - NERAASA 2015,  
Somerset, NJ, See:

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

## For What It's Worth

Following is important information from the G.S.O. for members that are about to celebrate an anniversary or plan to redo their will.

Q Is there a limit on how much an individual can contribute to G.S.O.? A Yes. That limit is \$3,000 a year.

Q Can people leave money to A.A. in their wills? A Bequests in wills are acceptable only from A.A. members on a one-time basis, and not in perpetuity. The limit is \$5,000.

## THIS MONTH IN AA HISTORY

Feb 13, 1937 – Oxford Group's "Alcoholic Squadron" meets at home of Hank P. in NJ.

Feb. 1939 - Dr. Hoard of Montclair, NJ suggests changing the "you must" to "we ought" in the Big Book.

Feb. 1940 – first aa clubhouse opens at 334½ West 24th St. in NYC.

Feb 8, 1940 - the "Rockefeller Dinner" is held at the Union Club in NYC.

Feb 18, 1943 – although gas rationing is in effect, AA's are granted permission to use automobiles for 12th step work in emergency situations.

Feb 19, 1967 – father "John Doe" (Ralph P.) the first catholic priest in AA, dies.

## UPCOMING DISTRICT 10 MTGS.

FEB. 10	<b>ELIZABETHTOWN</b> UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST FELLOWSHIP HALL, COURT ST.
MAR. 10	<b>PLATTSBURGH</b> CLUB 12, 1 DURKEE ST.
APR. 14	<b>SARANAC LAKE</b> ADIRONDACK MED CTR, RT. 86

ALL MTGS. BEGIN AT 7:30PM  
ALL AA MEMBERS ARE WELCOME

