



HAPPY!
JOYOUS!
FREE!

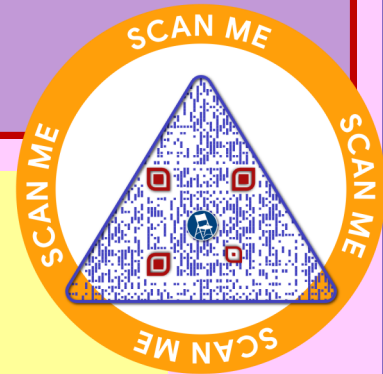
**February 2024 Issue
KCCO Newsletter**



Love the addict.
Hate the addiction.

Kent County Central Office

4920 Plainfield Ave. NE, Suite 19, Grand Rapids, MI 49525
Office Phone (616) 913-9216 (M-F, 1-5 PM)
AA 24-hour Helpline (616) 913-9149



Upcoming Events

Friday Evening Speaker Meetings

February 2, 9, 16, 23
7 p.m., North Alano Club

District 7 Business Meeting

Saturday, February 3
10 a.m. to 1 p.m.
Not So Secret Service
Grand Rapids

Area 34 Assembly

Sunday, February 18
10:30 a.m. (see attached flyer)

KCCO Business Meeting

Thursday, February 15
6 p.m., KCCO

Spring Roundup

April 27
North Alano Club

Michigan State Convention

June 7-9
(see attached flyer)

NEED TO FIND A MEETING?

Scan the QR Code at right, or go
to the AA meetings listing at:
www.grandrapidsaa.org/meetings

Fighting Cabin Fever in February: How to Stay Sober and Sane

February is here. The cold wind is biting, snow is always a threat, everyone is counting down the days until spring. Your cabin fever is making you feel stuck. You're getting a little stir crazy. And boredom can be a trigger. Here are three practical ideas to deal with cabin fever:

1. Find a way to get to a meeting.

Make the impossible possible. Check your meeting list (see the QR code above!). Is there a meeting closer to where you live than the one you were planning on attending? Do you know anyone who can come get you? Could you shovel your car out in time? Are there buses running? Or can you walk there? Getting out of the house and facing the storm, if it's not actually dangerous, may elevate your spirits.



A unique camaraderie pops up among the brave souls who venture out to a meeting in a snowstorm. You might find just 2 or 3 other AAs and plenty of coffee brewing. Maybe somebody brought cookies (if you pass a store on your way, buy the snacks yourself). Bring your own coffee if you can, because there's a chance the meeting coffee started brewing late. Often more people drift in as the hour progresses. It's a relaxed but intimate space for sharing. You could help a newcomer. If no one's opened the meeting room and you don't know who to call, leave a note.

Continued on page 2 . . .



Continued from page 1 . . .

Tell them you'll be at a nearby diner for about an hour, and to come meet you there. Of course, there's a chance that the meeting isn't open AND there's no diner. So you trudge back home. You'll feel good that you tried.

2. **Make phone calls.**

If the weather is treacherous and going out is a bad idea, spend the evening making calls. Call your sponsor (even if you've called them earlier—nothing wrong with double dipping). Go down your list of AA members. Reach out to someone in your home group. Or be bold and call someone whose name you don't recognize. Tell them you needed to connect with people. If they are a lapsed member, maybe your call will be the catalyst to bring them back.



3. **Try online recovery.**

AA offers online meetings that are part of the official meetings list. Just like regular, live meetings, most will start on the hour or half-hour, will have an open format, and will have people taking turns sharing. Don't rely on online meetings alone—we all need live, human connectedness. But it's a great resource for times when you can't get out. Whatever you are going through emotionally during these long, cold, and often snowy winter days, talk about it with someone. You don't have to go through it alone.

<https://recoverycentersofamerica.com/blogs/fighting-cabin-fever-in-february-how-to-stay-sober-and-sane/>

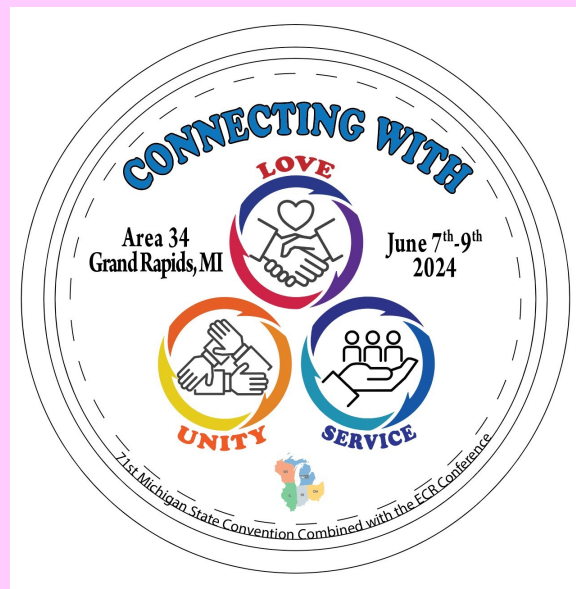
Have you registered for the 71st Michigan State Convention and ECR Conference?

What are you waiting for?

See the flyer, included in this newsletter, for detailed registration and accommodation information, as well as information to enter a District 7 drawing to receive a

Scholarship!

(Entry deadline extended to April 1, 2024!)



The Principle of Love in AA

The spiritual principle of love calls on us to be gentle, to be kind, and to treat others and ourselves with respect. It is a reminder to choose to "Live Lovingly" in our words, and with acts of love. As a recovering alcoholic, I have found that being in a place of love is the antidote to fear, the ultimate place of serenity and acceptance. Through my program of recovery I have learned that even when faced with great darkness, I have my higher power to guide me with a focus on the light of love. I can make a choice every day to accept that everything, everyone, and all experiences are "Love". When we experience that place of loving and being loved, we get a relaxed sensation - a warmth, vulnerability, humility - and it brings us to a place where we can embrace everything just as it is.

THE PRINCIPLE OF LOVING OTHERS & OURSELVES

The principle of love is about empathy and compassion and is in alignment with Step Eight of Alcoholics Anonymous. Understanding and growing are important in recovery, but so is taking action! So, when we make a list of everyone we have harmed in our past and become willing to make amends, we are practicing the principle of love. A huge part of my recovery and how I have practiced the principle of love is taking ownership for my actions, being accountable, removing anger or resentment, and making things right whenever possible.

Continued on page 3 . . .

Continued from page 2 . . .

During the trials and tribulations of my life as an active alcoholic, there was a lot of damage done and a serious lack of love. I felt like I was thrust into the middle of hopelessness and it was nearly impossible to generate love for myself or to receive it from others. For me, part of my spiritual program of recovery has also been the healing process of loving myself.

This deep dive into self-discovery with the eighth step and principle creates a better self-awareness that we must give ourselves the grace and compassion of self-love. During those times in life that are very hectic (even when it's all "good things" that are happening) we can all get frustrated or angry. This is when it's even more important to be gentle and kind with ourselves first.

I have learned how to create a reliable foundation for positive relationships, one that is built on the principle of love. This kind of love honors everyone and everything - no matter if I admire their character or not, I can still honor that person from a spiritual perspective.

LOVE AS A WAY OF LIFE IN RECOVERY

I know that some people bristle at the word "God", however I love talking about my relationship with my higher power, which I choose to call God. I love that when I don't have all of the answers I can turn to God to let go and seek guidance. When I am in a good place with myself and with God I am better able to help others. This is where I feel like the principle of love comes full circle, and this is what creates love as a way of life in recovery.

The principle of love is not some kind of vague personal characteristic a person has; it is habits that we train ourselves to put into practice daily because cultivating these habits creates profound satisfaction in all of our relationships. You can practice love as a way of life in recovery by daily acts of patience, forgiveness, respect, courtesy, generosity, and honesty.

In order to foster love and live lovingly we have to continue to be honest in all matters big and small, and make a daily, sober decision to express and demonstrate love to others and ourselves. Always remember that love is an answer that can be applied to almost any problem! Savor moments by choosing love daily and relishing connections with others.

<https://www.jasonwahler.com/12-principles-of-aa/principle-eight-of-aa-alcoholics-anonymous-love#:~:text=%238%20%2D%20The%20Principle%20of%20Love,and%20with%20acts%20of%20love.>

What's Your Story?

We'd love to hear it! It just might be what another alcoholic needs to jump on the recovery bandwagon, or what encourages another to stay the recovery course or to more fully engage in it
We all have a story. Will you share yours?



"People that are not 'alcoholic' just don't understand. In AA, I don't feel like I'm different anymore. I have something to belong to. I have found new, meaningful friendships. I am also reminded if I ever start to think I can drink like 'normal' people, I will end up right back where I came from. Best of all, I found that by following a few simple suggestions on a daily basis, the desire to drink alcohol has completely disappeared. I have discovered that I can solve, or at least cope with, any problem that comes along today by using the tools I found in the fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous. The people in AA really care about what happens to me, and I have a life way beyond my dreams. I have been able to get my life back on track and make up for a lot of things I felt guilty about in the past. My one small regret is that I enjoy my life so much today that I wish I had done something about my drinking problem a little bit earlier."

-Anonymous

24 Hour Helpline: 616-913-9149

We can show you how taking some simple steps can help loosen the grip that alcohol has on your life. The first step is to reach out and ask for help. This can be done by attending an A.A. meeting. If you are unsure or have questions, call the 24 hour helpline at 616-913-9149. Making that call will put you in touch with an A.A. member that can answer your questions and point you in the right direction.



Help us continue to carry the message to those suffering from the disease of alcoholism.

**Volunteer for our 24-hour AA Helpline.
A one-month commitment of 4 hours per week is needed.
Morning and afternoon shifts are available.
If you can help, please do not hesitate
to call our office at 616-913-9216 .**

Kent County Central Office 76th Annual (wow!) SPRING ROUND UP April 27, 2024

Theme:

The AA Camel

Location:

North Alano Club

Various Speakers:

AA, Alanon, Young People,
AA History

Meal:

Catered Dinner

And more!

Stay tuned! More details and
registration information
are coming soon!

THANK YOU

to all of the Groups and Individuals who have
recently donated to Kent County Central Office!

Easy Does It
Sober Chicks
Lowell Serenity
Avery St
Coopersville AA
North Kent Bible Sunday Night
North Kent Enrichment
Friday Night Big Book Study (SAC)
Individual PayPal donations

Git Er Dun
Early Birds
Oakview
SJV Big Book Study
Friends For Life
John Wayne
Women's Serenity

**Thanks also to those groups and individuals
who donated baskets and a quilt for our
Fall Gratitude Dinner**

St. Anthony's Expect a Miracle
Boys in the Barn
Not So Secret Service Manual
Second Chance Sober Riders

St. Paul's Early Birds
South Alano Club
Myla T.

*My greatest act of
self-love was the day
I broke up with alcohol.*

12 x 12 x 12

A.A.'s Twelve Steps are principles for personal recovery. The Twelve Traditions ensure the Unity of the Fellowship. Written by co-founder Bill W. in 1962, the Twelve Concepts for World Service provide a group of related principles to help ensure that various elements of A.A.'s service structure remain responsive and responsible to those they serve.

STEP TWO

"Came to believe that a power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity."

TRADITION TWO

"For our group purpose there is but one ultimate authority—a loving God as he may express himself in our group conscience. Our leaders are but trusted servants; they do not govern."

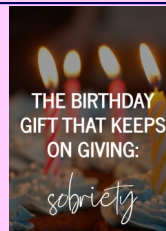
CONCEPT TWO

"The General Service Conference of A.A. has become, for nearly every practical purpose, the active voice and the effective conscience of our whole Society in its world affairs."

To read the Long Version of the 12 Steps, 12 Traditions, & 12 Concepts, visit: www.aa.org.



THE BIRTHDAY CLUB Celebrating Sobriety!



WHAT IS THE BIRTHDAY CLUB?

We will add your name, or that of someone you know, to our Birthday Club list, for a donation of the amount equal to your number of sober years. Names and sobriety dates will appear in our newsletter all year.

Mike W. - January 29, 2004

Tom W. - March 30, 1980

Ed B. - May 29, 2010

Ben S. - December 5, 1978

Sharron S. - April 12, 1984

Jim H. - July 5, 2005

Anne S. - August 30, 1981

Steve C. - August 14, 2018

Dave P. - November 18, 2007

Pamela W. - 20 years

Wanda W. - 33 years

Have you ever heard
of the lonely
Maytag repairman?

Yes?

(If not, Ask Mr. Google)

Well, we feel his pain!



We are just itchin' to hear about what is going on in your district and/or local group!

Our newsletter@grandrapidsaa.org email is feeling lonely indeed, but is ever ready to accept your messages and read about, then publish, what is going on in your neck of the woods! AA teaches us to become empathetic souls; won't you answer this call? Let KCCO be another voice for the suffering alcoholic. Your local group or event may just be the life ring someone is waiting for.

Do you know?

An element of the KCCO Mission is focused on the promotion of "a degree of unity among the local AA groups in District 7 and the surrounding areas"?

THIS . . . is exactly what we are inviting our local groups to embrace and participate in.

SHARE YOUR NEWS. SHARE YOUR STORY.

Together we are stronger.

The mission of the Kent County Central Office newsletter is to serve Kent County and the surrounding community in four ways:

1. To carry the A.A. message
2. To inform our readers.
3. To provide a forum for discussion of A.A. principles
4. To provide service work opportunities for A.A. members.

If you would like our KCCO newsletter sent to you through email, please send an email request to: newsletter@grandrapidsaa.org.

PLEASE NOTE:

Inclusion of articles and announcements in *Happy! Joyous! Free!* does not constitute A.A. or KCCO endorsement. Rather, members of the fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous are encouraged to share their experience, strength and hope through this humble publication. Opinions expressed are those of the writer unless otherwise noted. The Kent County Central Office makes these announcements solely as a service to the reader, not as an endorsement.

Kent County Central Office Business Meeting Minutes January 18, 2024

Present: Susie J. (Chairperson), Dave P. (Vice Chair), Steve C. (Office Manager), Emily B. (Secretary), Mike W. (Trustee #2)

The meeting opened with a moment of silence followed by The Serenity Prayer at 6:00pm.

Reports:

- **Minutes** were submitted and **approved**.
- **Financial report** were submitted and **approved**. The KCCO started the month of December with \$29,870.00, ended the month of December with \$28,593.00 and as of the business meeting January 18, the Kent County Central Office has \$25,135.00 in the bank account.
- **District 7 Report:**
 - The last district 7 meeting was in Portland last month. Next meeting will be the first Saturday in February at Alpine Baptist Church.
 - Ed B, our new Area Delegate presented his report.
 - District 7 will be starting their own website instead of have a page on the KCCO website
 - Toni M is the new District 7 liaison for the KCCO.
- **Young People:** No report this month
- **Web Report:** Everything is up and running and seeing normal traffic to the sites.
- **Phone and call list:** Nothing new to report
- **Newsletter:** Nothing new to report, everything is going good.
- **Friday Night Speaker Meetings:** Dave P has Fridays filled up through the end of February. We are always looking for groups to host a month. If anyone is interested please contact Dave P directly.

Old Business

76th Annual Spring Round Up:

- Quincy has confirmed Flight, Susie will follow up with her about her hotel reservation.
- Flyers for save the date are out and posted. There are a few more things to finalize before an official flyer will be made.
- Billy K has presented a banquet menu, voting on which options for the menu will take place at next months meeting.
- Scott S has confirmed he will be the kick off speaker for the round up.
- Debra E confirmed as the Alonon speaker.
- Norm B confirmed to do a presentation about the history of AA.
- Lindsay B confirmed to host a meditation
- There was a motion made to have an Alcothon at the round up. **Approved.**
- There was a motion made to not record speakers and events. **Approved.**
- **Bridge the Gap:** April with the Bridge the Gap Program would like some time during the Round up to talk about this new program. There was a motion made to give her some time at the event to inform people about the Bridge the Gap Program. **Approved.**
- Emily will make tee shirt a lighter color per the graffiti artist request.

Fall Gratitude Dinner (Follow Up Report):

- We made a list of everything that went well at the event and things we could improve on for next year and made a separate document to refer to next year to make the event run smoother for next year.

- Laptops were purchased and all programs installed. Everything is up and running and switched over to new computers.

New Business

Office Help: Peggy has been filing in for Steve C the office manager as has needed some time off recently. It has been proposed to hire Peggy officially to work two days a week. **Tabled**

Next Meeting: Thursday, February 15th, 2024 at 6:00pm at the Kent County Central Office. 4920 Plainfield Ave NE, Suite 19, Grand Rapids 49525. 616-913-2916

Option to attend via Zoom, hosted by District 7. **Meeting ID: 881 7063 2218**
Password: 23525

Send your GSR or someone to represent your group to have a voice in how your Central Office is run!

Meeting was adjourned with The Lord's Prayer at 7:17pm

Respectfully submitted,
Emily B. (Secretary)

Love Sober

FRIDAY NIGHT SPEAKER MEETING

LOCATION: THE NORTH ALANO CLUB

1020 College Ave, NE, Grand Rapids, MI (Lower Level Balcony)
Phone 616-456-5709

Friday, February 2, 2024, 7:00 pm

Speaker: Rich C

Home Group: Cherry Valley

Friday, February 9, 2024, 7:00 pm

Speaker: Ken G

Home Group: Cherry Valley

Friday, February 16, 2024, 7:00 pm

Speaker: Caitlin M

Home Group: Cherry Valley

Friday, February 23, 2024, 7:00 pm

Speaker: Norm B

Home Group: Cherry Valley

**Sponsored by Kent County Central Committee
4920 Plainfield NE, Suite 19, Grand Rapids, MI 49525**

For any information call: 616-913-9216

DISTRICT **17** IS HOSTING

AREA 34 ASSEMBLY

Sunday, FEBRUARY 18, 2024

District Roll Call @10:30am

9:00am MI State/ERC Committee Meeting



VISIT OUR WEBSITE

area34aa.org



Rockford Sportman's Club
11115 Northland Drive NE
Rockford, MI 49341



cant make it in person?
join us virutally!

Zoom Link: 521-659-0401



Potluch Lunch Noonish. (please bring a dish to share)

All GSR'S and DCM'S are highly encoraged to attend
ALL A.A. MEMBERS ARE WELCOME - STAY PLUGGED IN!

Michigan Mock Conference

Connecting with Love, Unity and Service

Saturday, March 23, 2024

9:00AM - 4:00PM



First United Methodist Church
400 South Main St., Mount Pleasant, MI 48858

What is a Mock Conference?

"Mock" means a practice or rehearsal for a later event. The Michigan Mock Conference simulates the General Service Conference held annually in New York. Attendees are just like the Delegates at the GSC.

Upon registration, you will be assigned to one of the Conference Committees and provided with two agenda items for your assigned committee to consider, along with relevant background materials.

Come, listen, and learn. Give your input to your Delegates.

All attendees are strongly encouraged to pre-register online at www.michiganmockconference.com or use the QR code below.

After you register, you will receive Conference background material prior to the event via the email provided at registration. If registering in-person the day of the event, you will not have the background material in advance.

This year, there will be a virtual option for either full day committee assignment or as an afternoon session observer only. Virtual participation is limited so register ASAP. Registration on the day of the event is not available for virtual participation.

Deadline for pre-registration and virtual participation is Friday, March 15th.



Planning on coming Friday?

Friday night at 8:00PM, join us for an AA Meeting at the Mt. Pleasant Alano Club, 1201 N. Francker St. Mt. Pleasant, MI.

If staying overnight, there are discounted rooms (\$115/nt) at the Hampton Inn by Hilton, 5205 E. Pickard Rd. Mt. Pleasant, MI. Cut off date for reservations is 2/23/24.

Call the front desk at (989) 772-5500 or go to <http://group.hamptoninn.com/goqfmt> and use Group Code: Mock Conference 2024

**Questions? Email 2024mockconference@gmail.com
or call (734) 834-5386**

Save the date!
April 27, 2024

**KCCO Spring
Round Up**



71st Michigan State Convention

combined with the

ECR Conference

June 7th-9th, 2024

Calvin University

3201 Burton S.E.

Grand Rapids, MI 49546



CONNECTING WITH
LOVE



UNITY



SERVICE

Keynote Speakers:

Friday: **Rich H.**, Hebron, IL

Saturday: **Madonna V.**, Auburn Hills, MI

Saturday Al-Anon - **TBA**

Sunday: **Barefoot Scott S.**, Hersey, MI

CARRYING THE A.A. MESSAGE OF RECOVERY

What makes an A.A. convention click for its participants?

It's probably not style or form that matters so much as the spirit and feeling behind it. As one member puts it, the best A.A. convention is "*just a darned good A.A. meeting blown up big.*" Just watch enthusiastic members at any A.A. convention and you'll get what he means. The atmosphere alone is worth the trip. Here you'll find fellowship, laughter, warmth, and understanding — "*heaped up, pressed down, and running over.*"

Mg-04 A.A. Guidelines, Conferences, Conventions, and Roundups

Please visit wmaa34.org for more information as it becomes available.

Co-Chair Contacts: **Linda B** 269.329.3159 ♦ linbow421@gmail.com | **Brian S.** 616.366.5827 ♦ digi@wmis.net



Register here, or online at: wmaa34.org Look for the 2024 State/ECR Button

Registration Early: \$30 per person (before 5/1/24), after 5/1, \$35 Total Registration \$ _____

#1 Name _____ Email _____ Phone _____ Area _____ Home Group _____
 #2 Name _____ Email _____ Phone _____ Area _____ Home Group _____

Dorm Lodging #1 6/7 6/8 Check if sharing with Registrant #2 Need a Roommate? _____
Roommate gender preference

Choose one: Shared + Shared Bathroom \$30/night Private Room + Shared Bathroom \$45/night
 Shared + Private Bathroom \$40/night Private Room + Private Bathroom \$70/night

For shared occupancy, list roommate if registering separately or a roommate will be assigned by committee:

Dorm Lodging #2 6/7 6/8 Need a Roommate? _____
Roommate gender preference

Choose one: Shared + Shared Bathroom \$30/night Private Room + Shared Bathroom \$45/night
 Shared + Private Bathroom \$40/night Private Room + Private Bathroom \$70/night

Dorm lodging can be reserved until 5/24/24. Total Dorm Lodging \$ _____

Meals 5-meal package-\$80 x _____ Sat. dinner only-\$18 x _____ Ice cream social-\$12 x _____ Total Meals \$ _____

Extra Contributions _____ Extra Contributions \$ _____

If group contribution, provide group name Grand Total \$ _____

To Reserve a room on line: HOTEL ONLY
 Guests will need to go to princecc.com
 At the bottom of the home page select Reserve A Room
 Below the banner click on RATE OPTION
 Type in the code: **DIGI**
 This will take you to the block dates and rates. Select from the room types available and click on the picture and then click **BOOK IT!**

Make Checks out to:
 2024 Michigan State Convention
Send Registration and Checks to:
 2024 Michigan State Convention
 PO Box 319
 Plainwell, MI 49080

If you encounter a problem, please contact, **Jim Nyhoff**
Hotel Operations Supervisor at 616-526-0107 or
 at jln3@calvin.edu and he will assist you as soon as possible.

Register/Dorms/Meals On-Line
<https://tinyurl.com/vptsx77j>
 or use the QR code



71st MICHIGAN AA STATE CONVENTION



June 7, 8, 9, 2024
Calvin University
Grand Rapids, MI



EXTENDED TO APRIL 1, 2024

Ten \$200 Scholarships!

In need of a helping hand getting to the state convention? District 7 will be offering 10 scholarships for those in need of financial assistance. The scholarships will be randomly drawn from names submitted now until ~~February 1, 2024~~. To enter the drawing complete the simple form below and return it to your local General Service Representative (GSR), or feel free to enter by attending a District 7 business meeting, held on the first Saturday of each month. For monthly meeting dates and locations, visit www.grandrapidsaa.org. The drawing will take place at the April meeting.

Included in each scholarship:

- \$30 convention registration fee;
- \$80 meal voucher for meals offered at the convention;
- \$80 for dormitory accommodations
(\$40 per night; must be double occupancy);
- \$10 gas card



Please visit www.wmaa34.org for more state convention information as it becomes available.

71st Michigan AA State Convention - Scholarship Drawing Entry Form

Name: _____

Email: _____

Phone # _____

Local Group Name: _____

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...

Area 34

Treatment Committee

Virtual Scheduled Meetings



Bridging the Gap



Join us on the 2nd and 4th Tuesday at 5:00 pm. as we discuss *Bridging the Gap Program* that helps inform us how to connect Alcoholics who are just coming out of treatment, correctional, or other institutions, with a Temporary Contact to help introduce them to the *A.A. Program*. All district and group committee chairs are encouraged to attend and collaborate on your experiences and interest in reaching out to the alcoholics that still suffer.

2nd Tuesday 5:00 – 6:00pm

Join Zoom Meeting

Meeting ID: 521-659-0401



4th Tuesday 5:00 – 6:00pm

Join Zoom Meeting

Meeting ID: 521-659-0401



area34aa.org

treatment@area34aa.org

bridgingthegap@area34aa.org

I am responsible... 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...

I am responsible... 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...

