

Alcoholics Anonymous

Dr. Bob's Birthplace & Boyhood Home



God grant me the Serenity to accept the things I cannot change... Courage to change the things I can... and Wisdom to know the difference.



## CapeAtlanticInterGroup

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New Gretna • No. Wildwood  
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# Pass It On

The Cape Atlantic Intergroup Newsletter November/December, 2012 – Issue 6

## Coming “Home” Choosing an A.A. Home Group

When I came into the rooms, I chose a home group immediately. Or, should I say, my sponsor chose one for me. It’s a great group with a friendly membership, a traditional candlelight speaker meeting; two speakers and a leader. And at the time, it was just what I needed. I really didn’t know about other types of meetings and it was close to home. I enjoyed going on outgoing commitments, especially the camaraderie of the car rides there and back.

Ah, but nothing in life is perfect, right? As time passed I travelled around, went to a LOT of meetings, and I came to understand the different formats. Eventually, a change just felt right.

So how does one choose a home group? One of the most wonderful aspects of our fellowship is the wide diversity of groups and members. If you’re lucky to live in a populated area, chances are good that there will be several to choose from on any given day.

The AA home group brochure says:

Traditionally, most A.A. members through the years have found it important to belong to one group which they call their “Home Group.” This is the group where they accept service responsibilities and try to sustain friendships. And although all A.A. members are usually welcome at all groups and feel at home at any of these meetings, the concept of the “Home Group” has still remained the strongest bond between the A.A. member and the Fellowship.

With membership comes the right to vote upon issues that might affect the group and might also affect A.A. as a whole – a process that forms the very cornerstone of A.A.’s service structure. As with all group-conscience matters, each A.A. member has one vote;

*cont’d on page 2*

### Local Voices... from the heart

## Self Supporting

I went to a meeting the other night and after the meeting my friend who was helping me put the chairs away, asked me if this clean up was an elected position. He (being relatively new) wanted to know why the same three people were always putting the chairs away. He then asked me the statement/question that shocked me - “How come you’re helping put the chairs away, I thought the newcomer was supposed to do that?”

I could be wrong but I always thought that fully self supporting meant being active also, chairs, commitments, greeting. I have to take responsibility for my actions because the newcomers are not only hearing my words but watching my actions. If I leave after the Lord’s Prayer and leave my coffee cup and chair where they are, what does that say about my sobriety?

The big book warns of complacency and of resting on my laurels; I have been out there in the past, and it didn’t get any better. I see the newcomer come in and from the look in his eyes I see that fact hasn’t changed. A self appraisal is good for me and my thinking.

Am I too sober to pick up my coffee cup and chair? Am I too sober to go on a commitment with my home group? Am I too sober to greet the newcomer? So on and so forth. I am responsible not only to be there financially for my home group but to help support it physically.

### Trivia Question...

Where did Dr. Bob grow up?  
Answer on page 3!

**Home Group** (cont'd from page 1) and this, ideally, is voiced through the home group.

Talking about her own group, a member says: "Part of my commitment is to show up at my home-group meetings, greet newcomers at the door, and be available to them – not only for them but for me. My fellow group members are the people who know me, listen to me, and steer me straight when I am off in left field. They give me their experience, strength and A.A. love, enabling me to 'pass it on' to the alcoholic who still suffers."

A bit of searching came up with a list of criteria others in AA have used to select a home group:

- Whether the group strongly carries the message. That is, if there are newcomers at a meeting, then the meeting focuses on the newcomer, and getting him or her started in AA, including getting that person literature, phone numbers, and so on.
- Whether the group participates in AA. That is, if there's a local intergroup, then the group should have an intergroup representative. And the group should have a General Service Representative so it's voice (AA groups are spiritual entities) can be heard AA-wide.
- Whether the group understands "self-support." That is, every AA group uses the AA name and, even if indirectly, services provided by service entities. So, I like groups that contribute to their local office and General Service district, to the area General Service committee/assembly, and to the General Service Office.
- Whether the group knows what a group is. That is, putting on an AA meeting may be the most important thing a specific group does, but it is not the only thing a group is.
- Whether a group relies on informed group consciences in business matters and the Spirit of Rotation in elections.
- Whether a group feels like a group, a mini-fellowship, rather than a room full of people who "need a meeting."

- A home group also is a place where you are able to notice the newcomer when they come in and greet them to make them feel more comfortable. One is able to do this because they have attended the home group enough to know when a new face walks in. This allows you to give back what was given to you.

So what if you love your home group and don't want to make a change, but aspects of it are driving you nuts? Get involved. Attend business meetings and take a commitment. The only way to affect a change is through group conscience. And if, despite your best efforts, nothing changes? Perhaps it's time to start a search of your own, and embrace the next change on your journey.



HERE ARE SOME ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS OTHERS HAVE USED TO HELP CHOOSE A HOME GROUP:

- ✿ Does this meeting CARRY THE MESSAGE? Is the message of "problems with alcohol" and "recovery from alcoholism" discussed? Are the 12-steps (our program of recovery) explained? ...or does it seem to be a 'group-therapy, anything-goes social hour'?
- ✿ Is there an Alcoholics Anonymous text and other A.A. literature available for reference? Do people actually READ from the Big Book and other A.A. literature?
- ✿ Are there regular group members who understand the Big Book and the 12-step program? ...and do you believe they can guide you and help you learn how to overcome alcoholism according to the proven methods as shown in the Big Book?
- ✿ Are members willing to be of service? ...to meet with you after meetings to answer questions? ...to 'reach out the hand of A.A.'?



**Deus Concede-me,  
Serenidade para aceitar as  
coisas que eu não posso  
modificar,  
Coragem para modificar  
aquelas que posso,  
E Sabedoria para distinguir  
umas das outras.**



- ✿ Do you sense honesty and straightforwardness? ...or do you sense phoniness and ego-stroking?
- ✿ Are you encouraged and even prodded to continue working (taking action) on a daily basis? ...or are you patted on the back and assured that you can do Your Program Your Way, and you'll be fine as long as you attend meetings?
- ✿ Do long-term members have a sense of excitement about their recovery and carrying the message?
- ✿ Do members seem to be 'demonstrating spiritual principles in all their affairs' (outside the meeting)? ...or are they proud of being 'still sick' and behaving badly?
- ✿ Are you encouraged to discover and explore your own path with a Higher Power as you may understand Him?
- ✿ Are you feeling more comfortable about 'getting real' and honestly expressing your progress or lack of progress while working the steps in various areas of your life?
- ✿ Do you believe that you have a few 'new friends' who will Watch Your Back when the going gets tough? ...and will not abandon you (turn their back on you) after you step out in faith? ...who will not reject you in the face of controversy or criticism from the 'AA in-crowd'?
- ✿ Do these people encourage reliance on your Higher Power RATHER THAN continued dependence on a sponsor who will dictate what you may and may not do.

**Special Note:**

The material in this newsletter does not necessarily represent Cape-Atlantic Intergroup. Much of it has been contributed by individual members with the intention of passing the message to the alcoholic who still suffers.

# Meet My Home Group



<b>Name</b>	Friday Sobriety
<b>Meeting Location</b>	Absecon Presbyterian Church 208 New Jersey Avenue Absecon
<b>Meeting Day/Time</b>	Friday, 8:00 p.m.
<b>Format</b>	Big Book
<b>Years in existence</b>	27 Years
<b>What's so great about it?</b>	Our group is awesome because it's a Big Book meeting. One of our members always bakes cakes & cookies, and brings them for us to snack on. It's the perfect sober way to spend a Friday night!
<b>Introduce us to your home group!</b> Send picture (no people, of course) and information to: newsletter@caigrp.org	

## In times of trouble...

As the day goes on, we can pause where situations must be met and decisions made, and renew the simple request: "Thy will, not mine, be done." If at these points our emotional disturbance happens to be great, we will more surely keep our balance, provided we remember, and repeat to ourselves, a particular prayer or phrase that has appealed to us in our reading or meditation. Just saying it over and over will often enable us to clear a channel choked up with anger, fear, frustration, or misunderstanding, and permit us to return to the surest help of all -- our search for God's will, not our own, in the moment of stress. At these critical moments, if we remind ourselves that "it is better to comfort than to be comforted, to understand than to be understood, to love than to be loved," we will be following the intent of Step Eleven.

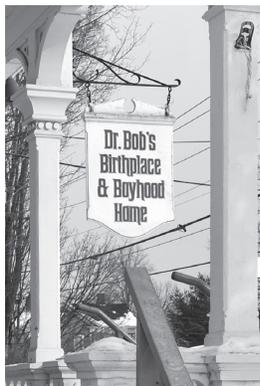
-- "Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions"  
(AA's 12 & 12) pg. 103

## Answer to the Trivia Question... St. Johnsbury, VT

Most folks know that Bill W. was a Vermonter, but some may not realize that Dr. Bob also hailed from the Green Mountain State. His childhood home is located at 297 Summer Street in the Northeast Kingdom town of Vermont, just 48 miles south of the Canadian border.



Northeastern Vermont Regional Hospital purchased the home in April 1991. The property now hosts regular Alcoholics Anonymous meetings (14 meetings a week, according to the current District 3, Area 70 meeting list) and also houses Tri-County Substance Abuse Services.



"When Dr. Bob was getting ready to die, he wanted to do three things. He wanted to go to St. Johnsbury once more; he wanted to go to Texas for Christmas; and he wanted to make that appearance at A.A.'s first International Convention in Cleveland," states "Dr. Bob and the Good Old-timers." Some of his final words of advice to fellow recovering alcoholics urged simplicity and kindness. When Smith addressed hundreds of attendees at the 1950 convention, he said, "Let us guard against that erring member the tongue, and if we must use it, let's use it with kindness and consideration and tolerance."

## We are not a glum lot...

A man in a hot air balloon realized he was lost. He saw a person on the ground and yelled down to him, "Can you help me? I don't know where I am." The man replied, "Sure, I'll help you. You are in a hot air balloon hovering 30 feet above the ground...between 40 and 41 degrees North latitude and between 59 & 60 degrees West longitude."

"Wow, you must be an AA sponsor", said the man in the balloon. "I am", said the man, "but what gave me away?"

"Well", answered the balloonist, "everything you told me is technically right but I am still lost. Frankly you're not much help at all and you might even have delayed my trip."

"You must be an AA sponsee", replied the man. The man in the balloon was amazed and said, "I am, but how did you know?"

The man on the ground said, "Well, you don't know where you are or where you're going. You have risen to where you are due to a lot of hot air. You are expecting other people to solve your problems and the fact is that you are in exactly the same position you were in before we met, but, somehow now IT'S MY FAULT!"

# CapeAtlanticInterGroup

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Visit our website: [www.caigrp.org](http://www.caigrp.org) for  
committee meeting times or to contact  
a committee chairperson.

## UPCOMING EVENTS

Flyers for most events may be downloaded at [caigrp.org](http://caigrp.org)

If you have an event that you would like to appear in *Pass It On*, please forward it to [newsletter@caigrp.org](mailto:newsletter@caigrp.org). Remember, because our publication is bi-monthly, announcements should be made well in advance.

Monday December 3 6PM Dinner 7PM Meeting	<b>Casino Serenity Celebrates the Holiday Season</b> Epiphany Lutheran Church, Franklin Blvd. & Tunis Ave, Pleasantville Celebrate with us! Dinner and guest speaker.
Monday December 3 7:30PM Dinner 8:30PM Meeting	<b>Harbor Lights 33rd Group Anniversary</b> 351 Cincinnati Avenue (under the water tower) Egg Harbor City 7:30 p.m. food, 8:30 p.m. meeting. Speaker Jennifer M. from Cherry Hill. Appetizer and dessert donations welcomed.
Friday December 7 7PM	<b>CAIG Unity presents First Friday Fellowship</b> AC Billiards, 6701 Black Horse Pike, EHT Join us for this open event - family and friends welcome! \$5 per hour, look for "Friends of Bill" when arriving.
Saturday December 8 7PM	<b>South Shore Group Christmas Party</b> Somers Point United Methodist, Bethel Rd. & Doran Ave. Cake, coffee and fellowship. Speaker Carol C. of Hammonton.
Friday December 14 5:30PM Dinner 6:45PM Talks & Games begin	<b>Unity Night</b> United Methodist Church, Bethel Rd. & Doran Ave., Somers Point Dinner, a game, and talks on the 12th Step and the 12th Tradition by Andrew L., our Area 45 Chair and Stella J., our past Area 45 Delegate.
Monday December 31	<b>New Year's Eve Celebration</b> Methodist Church, W. Church & Pitney Road, Absecon check <a href="http://www.caigrp.org">www.caigrp.org</a> for details

join us as we trudge the road of happy destiny....



## Service Opportunities

**24 HR. Hotline Help**  
Volunteer from home  
(minimum one year  
continuous sobriety) or  
at the office (six months).  
Two-hour slots. Subs are  
always needed. Contact  
Beth R. at [caigphone@caigrp.org](mailto:caigphone@caigrp.org)  
**Newsletter**  
Send new events, articles  
and your favorite meeting  
quotes to Nancy O. at  
[newsletter@caigrp.org](mailto:newsletter@caigrp.org)

**Hospitals & Institutions**  
Need volunteers to  
carry the message into  
treatment centers and  
correctional facilities. Ask  
your Intergroup Rep for  
details or contact Devon  
at [hichair@caigrp.org](mailto:hichair@caigrp.org)  
**12th Step Call Group**  
Help people who have  
reached out and called  
our hotline. Sign up at  
[www.caigrp.org](http://www.caigrp.org)

**Public Information/  
Cooperation with the  
Professional Community**  
CAIG reaches out to the  
local community,  
providing speakers and  
information to schools,  
organizations and  
businesses.  
Please contact Vinnie at  
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are interested in helping.