

The DIALog

A PUBLICATION OF THE DALLAS Intergroup ASSOCIATION (est. 1947)



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From the Director

The **10th Annual DIA Chili-Cook-off** has been scheduled for October 22, 2016. Our speaker will be Chris C., from the Frisco Group. We plan to have the event from 2-6pm at this time, depending on our location. We are waiting to hear about that now. Hopefully you will participate and be a part of our 10 Year Event. We will have other events leading up to the Cook-Off and our Anniversary.

The **Dallas Central Office will celebrate 69 years on Sept. 17th, 2016** with Speaker Earl H. Once we have that location for sure we will begin posting the full schedule and handing out flyers.

Our Faithful Fivers and Individual donations have helped the office by supplementing our Group Contributions. We are truly appreciative, but we only have 55 active plans from an area of over 6,000,000 people. If we take 10% of that as possible alcoholics, it seems we should have many more donating to the vital services provided by the Central Office. We make it as easy as we know how to contribute to the office. Like many other non-profits, you can go online via our donation link to make monthly or annual contributions. We provide free DIA envelopes for groups to use on birthday nights. The only source of income we have comes from the membership of Alcoholics Anonymous. We do not want to make money by increasing literature prices. We kept the Big Book at \$9 long after it was increased by New York.

Many offices sell AA literature for increased prices and for good reason; the lack of support. Groups that do not support us yet use our services are treated the same as those groups that donate every month. If you do use our services, why aren't your contributing? We depend on you to help us keep the Dallas Central Office/Dallas Intergroup Association going strong and adding more services. Please consider donating to the office. Who answered the phone when you needed help? Chances are it was a Central Office volunteer.

Many thanks to everyone and every group that does support us.

Janis R., Executive Director

This Newsletter Edition

Spring has arrived! So has the latest edition of the DIALog. The theme is our 3rd and 4th Steps, Traditions, and Concepts. I hope you enjoy reading articles from Dallas area AA's. From the Archives is a 1948 Grapevine from co-founder, Dr. Bob S. We even threw in a cartoon from the Grapevine to liven things up a bit. If you would like to share your experience, strength and hope on these topics, just send your article to janis@aadallas.org at the Dallas Intergroup.

Thank you for the opportunity to be of service.

PJ HR

Board Member Spotlight

Hi, my name is Dave R. and I'm an alcoholic. I've been kept sober since March 7th, 1985 and for that I'm truly grateful.

I sobered up when I was 23 years old. Not long after, I was introduced to the H. &I. (Hospitals & Institutions) Committee. (Texas A.A. uses different terminology) Members of H. &I. take treatment meetings (called panels) into hospitals and jails. My friend Lou G. AA members to the VA Hospital in Long Beach. Carrying the message with Lou helped me stay sober and experience the gratitude I get when I share experience, strength and hope with another alcoholic. I continued to take panels to different hospitals and jails and eventually became a panel leader.

In 1991 I moved to Texas. I was given a great job opportunity as a direct result of the AA program and good friends back home. Wonderful AA members in Long Beach introduced me to AA members in Dallas. I've been here ever since. It was suggested to me to get involved as soon as possible. I started going to meetings at several groups in the Dallas area. I was immediately made to feel "part of."

I joined the Georgetown Group in 1994. When elected GSR, I began to learn about the AA service structure and was eventually appointed as District 54 Treatment Chair. I have served on the Gathering of Eagles convention committee and continue to experience through service work the gratitude that comes from carrying the message.

Presently, I am the Dallas Intergroup Association Board Of Trustees Treasurer. I'm grateful to have the opportunity to serve the AA community in Dallas. The benefits I receive from service work are sobriety and a life I could have never imagined.

Dave R., Georgetown Group

Step 3:

While I have had incredible experiences with each of the 12 Steps, my Step 3 experience definitely stands out. At the time, I was hearing many clichés. One about the three frogs on the log and that making a decision is not a decision unless followed by action; or that Step 3 is only about making the decision to continue working the steps. This was fine, but it did not really hit home with me or answer my questions. “How exactly do I turn my will and life over to the God of my understanding?” Those words sounded like quite a feat at a couple months sober.

What I needed to do was go back to Steps 1 and 2 where I learned that I can’t and God can. It is a willingness to believe that there is hope with a Higher Power. So for Step 3, if I can’t and God can, then it’s the decision to let Him. Let Him do what exactly? Well, to restore my sanity through Him. It is about the deflation of my own will and growing towards God’s will.

The Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions explain that we must have a dependence on a Higher Power as a chief source of strength. Therefore, in Step 3, my willingness to believe started to turn into faith. I had already relied on Him and AA for the solution to my alcohol problem. At Step 3, I began to realize I had a whole heap of problems and that alcohol was my solution. Now I am entrusting God with all my problems!

Turning my will and life over to God looks like having the FAITH that my God is big enough to handle whatever I may throw at Him and that I am important enough to be heard by Him.

Sara P., Chicago Group

Step 4:

After almost eighteen months in AA, and still not drinking, I found myself once again, desperate for relief of the burden of what seemed like the inevitable for me, the miserable existence of drinking. By now I was drinking to “turn off” the remorse and lived in fear of when (not if) my next drink would occur.

In a last ditch effort to avert the suicide of taking a drink and dying from booze or suicide by my own hand, I finally sat for two days and examined my life, for the first time, in depth. A friend in Los Angeles had been telling me “You’re not writing a screenplay, get it done!” All out of excuses, and as I said, desperate, I launched out on a personal housecleaning.

The previous eighteen months I had been without a drink (I won’t call it sober) had been a time of discovery. Learning to pray to whatever Power I believed in at that moment. Doing my best to “fix” my family that couldn’t take my behavior anymore. Thank God for a school counselor who suggested my family leave me (which they did).

I could never deny I hadn’t had resentments most of my life. Some of these resentments went as far back as around two years

of age. Then there was the Fear. I had been living in fear all of my life. I had been a coward all my life. My biggest fear was that I didn’t know what I was doing and was terrified you would find out.

The people I had harmed; my family, friends, the people I’d taken money from, merchandise, cheated and lied to, and those I’d harmed, including sex - these things jumped on to the page, as soon as I made a decision to follow through with the process. This had only happened when I was forced to do so because of desperation of the choice of taking a drink or committing suicide. To me they are just about the same.

When I finished that inventory I made an appointment with an old retired sailor. We met the next Sunday afternoon and I acquainted him, one of God’s representatives, with my shortcomings. It was then, that two things happened to me. I slowly began to feel the nearness of my creator, and I now finally felt that I belonged to Alcoholics Anonymous. God Bless AA!

Bubba R., Cornerstone Group

Tradition Three:

I was in another 12 Step fellowship saying I was ok; it was his problem. These kind members told me to go to open A.A. meetings. It was there I finally heard my story. My husband had left and my drinking had gotten worse. I no longer had the excuse of drinking because of him.

I decided I needed to be in AA and was warmly welcomed. After I joined AA some people in the other fellowship were surprised and told me I could use the Steps in their fellowship... but I knew my problem was alcohol. I needed to be in A.A.

After I joined A.A., I quit drinking but continued to use other things. I knew I was not sober until I could get away from the people, places and things that were affecting my sobriety. I decided to change my sobriety date. Some people in AA told me since I hadn’t used alcohol, I didn’t need to change my date. I had to tell them I didn’t do it for them, I changed it to be honest with myself.

Once I started doing the Steps, I realized my drinking had caused problems for my children and for me, even before my husband left.

In the 3rd Tradition, it tells me I can be a member of A.A. if I say so. I can’t tell someone else they are alcoholic. I’m know I am an alcoholic because when I drink, I have no control over how much I drink and it leads to other bad behavior.

Kathy F., Town South

Birth of A.A.’s Third Tradition

The 3rd Tradition in the Twelve and Twelve provides a story of how this Tradition developed. A.A. was only two years old.

A man came to a group asking for help. He was a desperate case. He asked the oldest member of the group "Will you let me join your group? Since I am the victim of another addiction even worse stigmatized than alcoholism, you may not want me among you. Or will you?" The three elder statesmen of the group met. At first, they could only see objections to him joining AA, saying, "If we turn this man him away, he will surely die. If we allow him in, God only knows the trouble he'll brew." Eventually one member spoke and said, "What would the Master do." No another word was spoken and the man was welcomed into the group.

Many of us know this story, but we stop before we get to the end. Bill writes about the man, "Never did he trouble anyone with his other difficulty." Out of this experience, AA's Third Tradition was born. "Our membership ought to include all who suffer from alcoholism. Hence, we may refuse none who wishes to recover. Nor ought AA membership ever depend upon money or conformity. Any two or three alcoholics gathered together for sobriety may call themselves an AA group, provided that, as a group, they have no other affiliation."

Anonymous

Tradition Four:

Each group should be autonomous except in matters affecting other groups or AA as a whole.

People often talk about their RIGHTS ... the rights we enjoy as a people, as Americans. In an election year we hear a lot about RIGHTS ... The right to bear arms, the right to free speech, the right to worship as we choose, the right to assemble, the right to vote, the right to work. In AA, we have the right to attend any AA meeting we choose. We have the right to call ourselves an AA member if WE say we are (providing that we have a desire to stop drinking). We also have the right to start an AA group meeting of our own. If I have an AA friend or two and we want to get together to study AA principles and apply them to our lives, then we can call ourselves an AA group if we want to!

Now that little group could, over time, grow into a medium sized group or even a large group. They can choose to handle their affairs any way they wish, as long as they don't accidentally step on the toes of their fellow AA groups in the area or negatively impact AA as a whole. They can choose how often to meet, how often to hold meetings, what time the meetings start, and how long they will last. In the Dallas area, most meeting last an hour, but some are scheduled for 90 minutes. In some cultures, an AA meeting can last two hours ... or more. I can remember a few Birthday Meetings at my home group that lasted two and a half or three hours. You know, some of us like to hear ourselves talk.

The fledgling group will also have to decide what kinds of meetings it will have. Will the meetings just focus on the "first 164 pages" of the Big Book? Will they read and study the

"case studies" (stories) in the back of the book? Will they have meetings using the Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions book? Will they invite AA speakers to come and share their stories of experience, strength and hope once in a while? Will all of their meetings be Closed and allow alcoholics only, or will some of them be Open to all people wanting to learn more about alcoholism, alcoholic or not? Obviously there is no rush to decide all of these things at once. There is an old AA saying that goes something like, "Everything doesn't have to be decided by Thursday!"

One of the things I find so very interesting about different groups outside my home group is that they are made up of interesting people with different experiences and varied customs. In some parts of the country, before you speak at a meeting you are expected to give your latest sobriety date. When you introduce yourself "I'm an Alcoholic named Bob..," some groups will chime in "HI BOB!" If you are visiting a group in another part of the country, and a speaker introduces himself in the very same way, BE CAREFUL, and listen to how the rest of the room responds before shouting "HI JAMES!" The common practice at this meeting might be to listen politely, and you just disrupted their meeting. The group may hold hands at the close of their meeting, say a group prayer and chant an encouraging phrase to close their meeting. Other groups may follow the closing prayer with a moment of silence or reverence.

Another interesting bit of autonomy happens every year in December. Some groups decorate for the winter holidays with red and white stockings hung around the meeting rooms. Those stockings may be decorated with first names, nicknames, sober dates, etc. I've even seen a "BILL W." stocking. Other groups string lights, schedule parties and dances, and put out real or fake Christmas trees. These decorations sometimes upset those who traditionally celebrate "other" winter holidays. Small (or not so small) rival holiday decorations pop up... Menorahs, Kwanza candles, etc. Sensitive, self-centered alcoholics may unknowingly intimidate those with backgrounds different from their own and DIS-UNITY can break out. Perhaps a timely Group Conscience convenes or perhaps the group claims it has another RIGHT ... the right to be wrong.

AA groups also have various practices around when and how monthly and annual chips are handed out. While many local groups give colorful aluminum chips at 1-, 2-, 3-, 6- and 9-months, there are some locations across the country where you can collect 12 colorful chips in your 1st year and a bonus 18-month chip as well... all without drinking! There are also groups that give poker chips instead of the monthly aluminum variety, or none at all. Cakes are the local tradition instead of annual chips in some places. If your group isn't handing out chips "The Right Way", then feel free to address that at your next Group Conscience Meeting.

There are no "AA POLICE" charged with keeping erring AA groups (or members) "in line" though some of us from time to time, have wished for such an entity. Instead, we usually choose

to do things “our way” until God speaks to us or to our group through its Group Conscience. If you get to a point where your group or its members start to really get on your nerves, then maybe it’s time to “TAKE IT EASY”, “LIVE AND LET LIVE” or “TURN IT OVER” and try praying for them.

James V., ODAAT

A Discussion of Concepts Three and Four of the Twelve Concepts for World Service

Like our 12 Steps which assure our recovery from the hopeless state of mind and body as a result of alcoholism and our 12 Traditions which ensure our group health and Fellowship Unity, the 12 Concepts, written by Bill W. in 1962, enable our Service Structure to function in service to our Fellowship as a whole. The Concepts provide the “why” of our structure and provide a background of experience of the past, the lessons learned from that experience, our relationships with one another, and most importantly, the spiritual principals behind our structure. It has been stated that AA is a spiritual entity which must do a little business and the 12 Concepts provide that framework. Concepts 3 and 4 deal with two of our spiritual principals and how they relate to our service structure.

Concept III – As a traditional means of creating and maintaining a clearly defined working relation between the groups, the Conference, the AA General Service Board and its several corporations, staffs, committees and executives, and of thus ensuring their effective leadership, it is here suggested that we endow each of these elements of world service with a traditional “Right of Decision”.

Every Trusted Servant has the right to decide how they will interpret and apply their own authority and responsibility to each particular problem or situation as it arises. This means we trust our Trusted Servants. We let our Trusted Servants decide which problems they will dispose of themselves and upon which matters they will report, consult, or ask specific direction. We therefore “inform” rather than “instruct” our Trusted Servants. Otherwise, a Trusted Servant who cannot act on his own is just a messenger. There are ways to correct inefficiency, ineffectiveness, or abuse. If the Conference does not function well, the groups can send better Delegates. If the Trustees get badly out of line, the Conference can censure them, or even reorganize them. If our Services need correcting, the Trustees can elect better directors and hire better help. But, in his essays on the Concepts, Bill W. warns against using “The Right of Decision” as an excuse for failure to make proper reports of actions taken; or for exceeding a clearly defined authority; or for failing to consult the proper people before making an important decision. Our entire program rests on this principal of trust. We trust God. We trust AA. And we trust each other to act as our leaders as Trusted Servants. This Right of Decision is the means

by which they act and lead effectively and is also the symbol of our implicit confidence.

Concept IV – Throughout our Conference structure, we ought to maintain at all responsible levels a traditional “Right of Participation”, taking care that each classification or group of our world servants shall be allowed a voting representation in reasonable proportion to the responsibility that each must discharge.

The principal of Participation has been carefully built into our Conference structure. The Conference Charter specifies that the Trustees and non-Trustee Directors together with their respective executive staffs, shall always be voting members of the Conference. This is to ensure that there are “no superiors”, “no inferiors”, and ensures a proper degree of voting participation. The other reason for this Concept has to do with our spiritual needs. All of us deeply desire to belong. It is our shining ideal that the “spiritual corporation” of AA should never include any members who are regarded as “second class”. In the early days of AA, Headquarters was run on authoritarian and institutional lines. The Trustees saw no reason to delegate their managerial powers or to work in voting participation with any others outside their own body. Today in our Conference Structure, as depicted by our “upside down triangle”, the final authority on matters affecting AA as a whole rest with our groups. But if the groups exercise this ultimate authority by sending Delegates to the Conference with explicit instructions, would the Delegates feel like participants, trusted servants? No, they would feel like order takers. The same is true at all levels of service, whether it be GSRs or IG reps representing their groups and on down through the structure. This right also extends to our paid staff who work at GSO and Grapevine on our behalf, whose experience and familiarity with day to day operations is invaluable. The Right of Participation is actually a corrective principal of ultimate authority because it prevents harshness or misuse of authority. It also encourages Trusted Servants to accept the necessary disciplines that our work requires. We can do this when we are sure that we belong and this right to participate assures us we are truly Trusted Servants as described in Tradition Two.

Jim C., Rockwall Lakeside Group

From the Archives

July 1944 Vol. 1 No. 2

On Cultivating Tolerance

During nine years in A.A. I have observed that those who follow the Alcoholics Anonymous program with the greatest earnestness and zeal, not only maintain sobriety, but often acquire finer characteristics and attitudes as well. One of these is tolerance. Tolerance expresses itself in a variety of ways: in kindness and consideration toward the man or woman who is just beginning the march along the spiritual path; in the understanding of those who perhaps have been less fortunate in

educational advantages, and in sympathy toward those whose religious ideas may seem to be at great variance with our own. I am reminded in this connection of the picture of a hub with its radiating spokes. We all start at the outer circumference and approach our destination by one of many routes.

To say that one spoke is much better than all the other spokes is true only in the sense of its being best suited to you as an individual. Human nature is such that without some degree of tolerance, each one of us might be inclined to believe that we have found the best or perhaps the shortest spoke. Without some tolerance we might tend to become a bit smug or superior--which of course is not helpful to the person we are trying to help, and may be quite painful or obnoxious to others. No one of us wishes to do anything which might act as a deterrent to the advancement of another--and a patronizing attitude can readily slow up this process.

Tolerance furnishes, as a by-product, a greater freedom from the tendency to cling to preconceived ideas and stubbornly adhered-to opinions. In other words, it often promotes an open-mindedness, which is vastly important--in fact a prerequisite to the successful termination of any line of search, whether it be scientific or spiritual.

These, then, are a few of the reasons why an attempt to acquire tolerance should be made by each one of us.

Dr. Bob of Akron

Upcoming Events: April & May

INTERGROUP REP MEETING FOR APRIL

April 14 @ 8:00 pm - 9:00 pm

First United Lutheran Church, 6202 E Mockingbird Lane, Dallas, TX 75214

We will have our monthly meeting, April 14th, at 8pm. If you are new or need more information, please contact the office. 214-887-6699 or email janis@aadallas.org or carrie@aadallas.org

29th ANNUAL INTERNATIONAL MEN'S CONFERENCE

April 15 @ 1:00 pm - April 17 @ 2:00 pm

Crowne Plaza Chicago, 5440 North River Road, Rosemont, IL 60018

IAAMC Chicago Windy City Host Committee, hosting the 29th International Men's Conference, April 15-17th, 2016, Crowne Plaza Chicago O'Hare Hotel. "HAPPY, JOYOUS AND FREE" for \$109 room rates thru April 1st, 2016. Hotel phone, 877-337-5793 Registration: \$35.00 Banquet Dinner Saturday Night: \$50.00, table of 10-\$450.00. Register: www.IAAMC2016.org 29th Annual Men's Conference Chicago

MESQUITE BIG TOWN'S 58TH ANNIVERSARY

April 16 @ 8:00 pm - April 17 @ 2:00 pm

Mesquite Big Town Group, 11401 Elam Road, #108, Balch Springs, TX 75180

The group Mesquite Big Town will celebrate their 58th Anniversary on Sunday, April 17th, 2016. 10:30am: Ala-Teen, David M., Branches of Serenity Grp 11am: BJ, Al-Anon, Lambda Grp Noon: Fred W, Richardson Grp 1pm: Lunch Saturday Night Kick-off: April 16th: 8pm, AA Speaker Don M, Traditions Group

CLEAN AIR NORTH CELEBRATES 24TH ANNIVERSARY

April 17 @ 11:30 am - 2:30 pm

Clean Air North, 16517 Addison Rd #108, Addison, TX 75001

Join the celebration on Sunday, April 17th, 2016 11:30am Prep & Fun Noon Food and Fellowship 12:45 History of Group 1pm AA Speaker, Claudia H., Ft Worth Clean Air North Anniversary See Flyer for all details.

SPIRIT OF THE PINES

April 22 @ 3:00 pm - April 24 @ 1:00 pm

Camp Olympia, FM 3188, Lake Livingston, TX

April 22-24, 2016. Camp Olympia on Lake Livingston. Website: www.spiritofthepines.org First come, first served. \$105 before April 13th. \$110 after. Please contact the conference for details.

SPONSORSHIP WORKSHOP AT TOWN NORTH

April 24 @ 1:30 pm - 3:30 pm

Town North Group, 12895 Josey Lane #213, Farmers Branch, TX 75234

The Town North Group will be holding a workshop on Sponsorship April 24th from 1:30pm to 3:30pm. The panelist will be added as we get more information. Pizza and fellowship as well as sharing of our experience, strength and hope will be provided!

SERENITY WEEKEND 27TH ANNIVERSARY

April 29 @ 3:30 pm - May 1 @ 12:00 pm

Johnson Creek Camp, Jefferson, United States

Lake O' Pine Johnson Creek Group Campground, Jefferson, TX from April 29- May 1, 2016. See flyer for all details! Serenity Weekend 2016. \$125.00

2016 TEXAS MEN'S RETREAT

April 29 @ 5:00 pm - May 1 @ 1:00 pm

Glen Lake Camp and Retreat, 1102 NE Barnard St., Glen Rose, TX 76043

The Texas Men's Retreat, sponsored by the Carrollton Men's Group, will take place April 29-May 1, 2016 at the Glen Lake Retreat Center located on the Paluxy River. The weekend begins with a cookout on Friday evening and continues through lunch on Sunday with Big Book studies, fire pit meditations and fellowship. All men who are members of AA in the surrounding areas are invited to attend. For registration and up to date information: www.texasmensretreat.com or email: texasmensretreat@gmail.com Cost is...\$150.00

24TH ANNUAL GATHERING, SERENITY IN NATURE

April 29 @ 7:00 pm - May 1 @ 12:00 pm

Brookhaven Retreat, 748 CR 3909, Hawkins, TX 75765

"Hand in Hand", will be the theme of the 24th Annual Gathering of AA & Al-Anon Women, April 29-May 1, 2016.

Group Contributions

March 2016

	<u>TOTAL</u>
Aquarius Group	25.00
Belmont	50.00
Carrollton	200.00
Cornerstone	250.00
Dallas North	270.00
Forney Group	20.00
Georgetown	400.00
Keep It Simple	-97.32
Lake Highlands	438.30
Legacy	50.00
Little Elm Group	50.00
McKinney Fellowship	10.00
McKinney Miracle Group	360.57
Primary Purpose	1,875.00
Shalom Today	30.00
Southwest Clean Air	25.07
Sunday Morning Live	330.00
The Colony Group	40.00
The Gift of Sobriety	30.00
Town North	100.00
Town South	20.00
Waxahachie	10.00
White House	50.00
Wylie Group	20.00
TOTAL	<u><u>4,556.62</u></u>

To Subscribe

Support your Dallas Intergroup Association, and get your DIA Log hot off the presses! For individuals and groups, a yearly subscription is \$12; two years, \$18.

Please contact carrie@aadallas.org or call the Dallas Intergroup Association at (214) 887-6699.

Find Us Online

At www.aadallas.org you'll find group announcements, an events calendar, a searchable group directory, online bookstore & more.

"We come together to enrich our recovery experience by interacting with other recovering AA and Al-Anon women through friendship, speaker sessions, workshops, meetings and meditations. This year will be a new location": Brookhaven Retreat 748 CR 3909 Hawkins, TX 75765 Rooms are assigned on a first come basis.

WYLIE GROUP'S 24TH ANNIVERSARY

May 14 @ 4:00 pm - 9:00 pm

Wylie Group, 3990 Lakeview, St. Paul, TX

The Wylie Group will celebrate their 24th Anniversary on May 14th, 2016. Doors open at 4:00pm. Tickets for the raffle and 50/50 will be on sale until 6pm. Potluck Dinner with brisket and chicken provided at 5pm. Al-Anon Speaker, Katherine K, Preston Group AA Speaker, Bill P., Lake Highlands Group. Everyone is invited!

30th ANNUAL GATHERING OF EAGLES

May 26 @ 6:00 am - May 29 @ 1:00 pm

Doubletree Hotel (Dallas), 4099 Valley View Lane, Dallas, TX 75244

The 30th Annual Gathering of Eagles will take place May 27-29 over the Memorial Day Weekend 2016. Thursday's "Kick off Dinner" (limited seating) May 26. Register online by visiting: www.dallasgatheringofeagles.org Old Timers Panel, Countdown, AA Archives, Raffle, Al-Anon Participation. Speakers include: Paul McQ, Belle Harbor, NY Ajit S, Anaheim, CA (Al-Anon) Mildred F, Toronto, Ont. Phil P., Rociada, NM, Gail LaC, The Villages, FL, Arthur S, Arlington, TX. Registration: \$25 or \$30 at the door. Dinner: \$22.



"Uh, I don't think you can add the liquor store as a dependent..."

—Fred F., Albany, N.Y