



# Coffee Pot Talk NDIAA Newsletter

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<https://ndiaa.org/>

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## April 2025

*Step 4*  
Made a searching and fearless  
moral inventory of ourselves.

*Tradition 4*  
Each group should be  
autonomous except in matters  
affecting other groups or A.A. as a  
whole.

*Concept 4*  
At all responsible levels, we ought  
to maintain a traditional "Rights  
of Participation," allowing a  
voting representation in  
reasonable proportion to the  
responsibility that each must  
discharge.

### Step 4: Spiritual Principle – Courage

There is a saying in the 12-step programs that recovery is a process, not an event. The same can be said for this step – more will surely be revealed. The 4th step requires fearless self-examination. And few things are more frightening than facing one's failings and shortcomings. Yet, courage is also needed to meet every day with an eagerness to improve ourselves.

If you would like to share your experience, strength, and hope, please consider writing for the newsletter! Email [mainoffice@ndiaa.org](mailto:mainoffice@ndiaa.org), to the attention of Ann Marie.

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## Special Events

Please [click here](#) for details about special events, including a Spring Breakfast, a Blue Rocks game, an Interactive Workshop hosted by District 6 & 7, and a Roundup in Charlotte, NC.

## **Correctional Commitments**

Baylor Correctional (Women)  
Saturdays, 1:00-3:00 PM

Plumber Center Correctional (Men)  
Wednesdays, 2:00-3:00 PM

Howard Young Correctional (Men)  
Thursdays, 6:00-7:00 PM

If you are interested in service opportunities, please visit the [Other Service Opportunities page](#) on the NDIAA website. Scroll past the information on InterGroup Committee Chairs to the section entitled “Volunteers Needed!” You will find more information, including an application, under the subsection entitled Corrections Commitment. Once you have completed the application, email it to [mainoffice@ndiaa.org](mailto:mainoffice@ndiaa.org), or you can drop it off or mail it to:

Northern Delaware Intergroup  
21 B Trolley Square, Wilmington, DE 19806

*Please note that the application must be completed. If there are any discrepancies or blank areas, the application will NOT pass through security.*

If you have questions or concerns, you can contact Jack B., men’s contact, or Maureen, women’s contact.

Jack B.: 302-723-6641, [jbromwell911@comcast.net](mailto:jbromwell911@comcast.net)

Maureen: 856-952-9629, [vertplanet@comcast.net](mailto:vertplanet@comcast.net)

## **Experience, Strength, and Hope**

*This month, we’re happy to share an interview so readers can learn more about Ventalators, a local men’s group with a long and impressive history! Thank you, Ventalators!*

### **The History of Stanton Ventalators Men’s AA Meeting**

1. Who were the founding members of the group?

The founding Members were Terry C. and Joe M.

2. When and where was the first meeting held?

The first meeting was held on Friday, January 19, 1973, at 8:00 PM. Meetings have always been held at St. Mark's United Methodist Church located at 1700 Limestone Road, Stanton, Delaware in the lower room under the school.

3. Did the group list with the AA General Service Office at the time that the members first met?

Not immediately but shortly after the group was founded

4. What is the group's name? Have there been any changes to that name over the years?

The founding members and those in attendance at the first meeting called the group "The Dirty Dozen" or "Ventilators." The men settled on Ventilators. That is and has always been the group name.

5. How did the founding members let the community know that a new meeting was being formed?

By word of mouth...After the first few meetings, the meeting specifics were published in both Wilmington area papers – The Morning News and the Evening Journal.

6. How many members attended the first meeting?

Thirteen men were in attendance. They were Terry, Joe, Harry, Lenny, Tom, Charlie, Mace, Tom, and five others.

7. Describe the group composition.

The group is men only of various ages.

8. How did the group experience growth over the years?

From the original thirteen attendees, attendance has fluctuated, usually between 35 to 70, depending on the time of year and the weather. Sometimes we have over 100 men during the January celebration of the group's anniversary. The group was closed during the COVID-19 crisis but did open a Zoom within a few weeks.

9. Are group inventories conducted regularly, and have they been helpful?

Ventilators regularly conduct business meetings chaired by the group Treasurer to discuss finances, current questions, or concerns from GSO, the Delaware State Assembly, the District, NDIAA, or the church where our meetings are held. Since this is a "Closed Meeting," we also have group consciences when any situation arises such as when a woman shows up for our meeting or when a newcomer

brings a “support person” with them, or any other situation that may affect the group such as COVID.

10. How did COVID affect your group?

When the U.S. Department of Health notified facilities of the health hazard, St. Mark's UMC told all groups that used their facilities that they would close church properties until further notice. Our meeting closed for a short while, then one of the members, Sam B, called some members and informed them that he would start a Zoom meeting for our group. We started slow, as Zoom was new to most people, but within a few weeks, we had up to 30 people on the meeting. Within a few months, St. Mark's opened back up with two requirements – masks were required and 6' clearance between chairs in all directions with a maximum of 36 men. When the Department of Health changed the requirements, we went back to the normal seating format.

11. Has the group used a steering committee?

See #9 above.

12. Who were the early group officers? List for example: GSR, Group Contact, Chair, Secretary etc.

Following what is asked for above, the GSRs were Don R. in 1980 through 1981 followed by Tony D. from 1982 through 1983. The group has had numerous treasurers throughout the years but does not utilize the other offices listed.

13. Have any group members participated in Area, District, or other service to the Fellowship?

Since 1980, Ventalators have had various members serve the Fellowship in a variety of ways. We have had and currently have members serving at the Area and District levels. Since 1980, we have had an Intergroup representative, and we usually have an Alternate Representative to NDIAA. Ventalators has had one member serve as Chair of NDIAA for 1 ½ years, and we've had two members serve as Vice Chair. We also had one member chair the Cooperations with the Public Committee for five years. For a total of 15 years, we had five different members chair Special Events Committees.

14. How often were meetings held and has that changed over the years?

The group has always met on Fridays since the beginning, and that has not changed except during the changes required by the government and St. Mark's UMC because of COVID.

15. What meeting formats have been used – closed, open, discussion, speaker, etc.

Ventalators is a closed men's meeting. We use a discussion meeting format driven by a topic that the chair of that particular meeting proposes unless there is a newcomer here for the first time or if a member asks that we discuss something that is bothering him. We also have designated that the last Friday of the month is "Tradition of the Month" night. This was presented to the group by member Jay K. (deceased) and was adopted by the group.

16. Describe the group's growing pains or controversies?

The only growing pains at Ventalators were when we changed to a Tradition Friday meeting; attendance fell off slightly for a short time, but we eventually picked back up. At times, the number of attendees at the meetings can make it hard for everyone in attendance to get a chance to speak. That is when "the meeting after the meeting" becomes important, or that topic may become a topic again the next week. We handle any possible controversies or problems immediately with a group conscience or schedule a business meeting.

17. How does the group celebrate members' anniversaries of sobriety?

At the beginning of each meeting, the meeting chair asks if anyone is celebrating an anniversary that night or in the past week. Our "Coin Person" passes the appropriate medallions around the room for everyone to see. Before we close with a prayer at the end of the meeting, those medallions are presented to the celebrant. We also have a cake at the end of each month, made by whoever is the designated "Cake Baker" for the group, and we celebrate all anniversaries that month.

18. How does the group celebrate the anniversary of its founding?

On the Friday closest to January 19<sup>th</sup> each year, we have a special "dinner meeting" in our regular meeting room. We start with setup at 6:00 pm. Our group supplies meatballs and roast beef, and many of our members bring sodas, water, rolls, various salads, hot and cold veggies, tomato pie, desserts, etc. We then start early and extend the meeting to 1 1/2 hours until 9:00 pm. It is a great time for all with a lot of stories and reminiscing about past/passed members.

19. Describe how the group has cooperated with professional agencies (by signing court cards, supporting a meeting in an institutional setting, taking phone duty at NDIAA or Central Office etc.)

Many Ventalators members have done signing of court cards and taken meetings to institutional settings through personal or NDIAA commitments. Many have

done volunteer work by answering phones, helping in the NDIAA office, or helping at AA events. Our members have committed to well over 300 speaking events at church groups, schools of every level, professional offices, colleges and universities, wellness sites, Boys and Girls Scouts, etc. For many years, we have supported and supplied speakers and volunteers for the Jesus House's Thanksgiving Alkathon. When asked, we try to be there. That is our group's belief: "Trust God, Clean House, and Help Others."

20. Has the group participated in special local or regional AA functions such as conventions, conferences, round-up, forums or workshops?

This group has many members who have attended numerous International Conventions, the Delaware State AA Convention, as well as conventions, conferences, and round-ups in other states. We attend and help out at many local and regional breakfasts, forums, and dinners. Our members have always participated and volunteered at AA functions, workshops, conferences, or conventions when possible or asked to do so.