

## **Berkshire Institutions Committee Meeting June 20th, 2018**

Meeting opened at 7pm with 3 attending. Chaula H chair, Ashley E- IGR from Tues Nite Women's Step Group, and Pat B - BIG office mgr. It was a light night and the meeting adjourned early so we could attend Larry B's 28th Anniversary mtng at Berkshire Big Book in Lanesboro.

Here is a sketch of this month's H&I activity:

Sheffield 12&12 rolled out of its 2nd Saturday night McGee commitment and Larry B, from Berkshire Big Book has rolled into that slot. Many Thanks to John M and Will H for maintaining lines of communication between Sheffield 12&12 and Institutions committee and for your group's years of service at McGee.

Cheshire In Focus Tuesday Nite Step Group has rolled into Jones II, 11 am, First Saturday Commitment with John M as the contact.

Tommy I has rolled out and Ned R and Mark M have rolled in...to 1st Tues 7pm CSS commitment

Tommy I rolled into 3rd Sunday, 10 am, Jones II commitment. Congrats Tommy on your 2nd Anniversary!

Brian C and John M have rolled into 4th Sunday, 10am Jones II, on behalf of their Matt Talbot retreat Berkshire brothers

Berkshire County House of Correction has discontinued the 1st Monday "awaiting sentencing" meeting that was announced open last month. The committee will continue to CORI check anyone interested in being on a last minute fill in list to do commitments at the jail.

Berkshire Institutions Committee (Chaula H) did a joint commitment with Frank M, Pete C and Sue S from Cooperation with the Professional Community for Timberlyn Heights Neuro-Behavioral Unit. They serve many patients with a Traumatic Brain Injuries sustained due to substance abuse and alcoholism. They have been requesting a meeting be started on the unit in Great Barrington. They are also requesting drivers from any handicap accessible AA meeting in the area to take ambulatory patients to outside AA meetings. There are a few who have volunteered for this service at the Southern Berkshire Group, but the facility has not yet requested the service. IF anyone is interested, you can set your own schedule.

Another such joint presentation is planned for Tuesday the 26th of June at Hillcrest Commons Skilled nursing facility in Pittsfield. They also have requested a meeting be brought in. They still would like to have an in-house meeting on Wednesday nights, if anyone is interested. Interested parties are encouraged to contact Chaula and to come along to the joint presentation next tuesday to get a flavor of the facility.

District 3 will be hosting a service workshop in September with Carrying the Message in Institutions as a theme. Chaula communicated on the phone with GSR Lisa from Ray of Hope Group who filled her in on the idea, which is to have speakers who have served or who heard the AA message in an institutional setting and opportunities to sign up on the spot for a service commitment. Unfortunately, the institutions committee will go unrepresented at this months District 3 meeting, as the chair is attending a weekend training out of town and there is no identified co-chair to attend this month's meeting. There will be an

ad-hoc committee meeting at 6pm at the Lee Courthouse, just prior to the district 3 meeting this friday (June 22) if anyone is interested or able to attend. Chaula will attend the District 3 meeting in August. More information will follow from both district 3 and the institutions committee.

The committee continues to encourage monetary donations from groups to Western MA /Area 31 Institutions Committee as we get all of our literature from them. Contrary to what some groups believe, monies that are donated there do come back to us in the form of literature, bridging the gap cards, and meeting lists for all of our close to 70 closed H&I meetings here in the Berkshires.

The committee also welcomes donations of literature, be it new or gently used, for distribution to patients and inmates.

We do encourage those with 90 days or more sobriety to come out with a member of the committee to observe a commitment. This is at the discretion of the committee only and interested parties should contact the chair, Chaula H at number below.

Group Representation is required for this work!

A message to all who read this. At this time, we have only a few open commitments. Jones II, 11 am meetings on the 2nd, 3rd, and 5th Saturdays remain open. We also have open requests for meetings at Timberlyn Heights in GB and Hillcrest Commons Weds pm in Pittsfield. But much more important openings exist on the actual committee. We have virtually NO Institutions Group Representatives. Without IGRs, we have no committee. Committee meetings have been attended by as few as 1 to 3 members. We have no co-chair, secretary, or facility Liaisons at this time. Most of those who come as IGRs attend sporadically and do not stand for committee positions. Without group representation at the committee, we cannot move forward with many progressive initiatives that would enable us to carry the message more effectively inside the walls of hospitals, jails, or institutions. We will forever be conducting business by putting out fires. The problem isn't that no one is taking on the sponsorship of the individual commitments.

The lack of a functioning committee, prevents the chair and co-chair from circulating to the many committee and group AA meetings where big picture plans like the current District 3 committee service workshop are hatched. This writer strongly urges all interested parties to put the emphasis on strong group representation at the monthly meeting as a tool for moving forward with this important 12-step work.

It is the aim of the committee to increase cooperative ventures with Cooperation with the Professional Community, Public Information, and Accessibilities committee, in addition to District 3 and Berkshire Intergroup Committee. Please encourage your home groups to send an Institutions Group Representative to our monthly meeting. With 70 meetings per month behind closed doors in hospitals and institutions, this is our primary way of carrying the message in 2018. To make more 12 step work possible, we need a functioning committee.

Our next meeting will convene on Weds, August 15th at Berkshire Intergroup office, 152 North Street, Suite 30C, 3rd FL, Pittsfield. We meet at 7pm at the office, but some of us meet at 5:30 for tacos at Pancho's prior to the meeting for fellowship. All are welcome.

Thanks for your service!

Respectfully submitted, Chaula H

For more information, or questions, Chaula [berkshireinstitutionscommittee@gmail.com](mailto:berkshireinstitutionscommittee@gmail.com)