

A Pillar of AVP Honored

By William Holmes a.k.a. Hip Hop Holmes

The one day workshop on July 13, 2012 began as all the other one day workshops Mary Ann Burke, a.k.a. Merciful Mary Ann, facilitated over the past 22 1/2 years. The AVP facilitators and participants behaved as though this were an ordinary one day workshop. As they sat in the circle and focused on the agenda which included encouragement, compassion, hope and legacy, they anxiously awaited the moment the surprise ceremony in Merciful Mary Ann's honor would begin.

The room was rearranged after lunch. Vincent Sanborn, a.k.a. Vital Vince, the new AVP outside coordinator, introduced the ceremony. (Vital Vince has 18 years, and counting, of facilitating workshops at Sullivan.) The Deputy Superintendent of Programs, D. Cunningham, presented Merciful Mary Ann with a plaque for her 22 years of dedicated service to the upliftment of humanity and AVP's mission on behalf of AVP facilitators and participants. Then, Marjory Clark, another long-term volunteer at Sullivan (in the Quaker Worship Group) spoke words of praise and blessings for Merciful Mary Ann's legendary work.

Merciful Mary Ann skillfully embodied encouragement, compassion and hope throughout her years of service for AVP. As outside coordinator for AVP Otisville, Woodbourne and Sullivan Correctional Facilities, Merciful Mary Ann reinforced the importance of genuinely displaying encouragement, compassion and hope to all people even though some may not have felt worthy to receive it. Her dedication and devotion exemplified there are good people in the world wanting better for everyone, not only within the walls of correctional facilities but in the community as well.



Vicky Harris

AVP Sullivan (Prison) Inside and Outside Facilitators.

Front row (squatting left to right): Hip Hop Holmes (William Holmes) and Born Black (Earl Jefferson).

Middle row (left to right): Joyous Jay (Juan Perez), Marjory Clark (a Quaker Worship Group volunteer), Merciful Mary Ann (Burke), Vital Vince (Sanborn) and Jumbo Jah Myke (Michael Bilbrew).

Back row (left to right): Cano Cantante (Freddy Cano), Beloved Brotherman (Elliot Murphy), Chilly Choa (James Choa), Airborne L (Alton Lee) and Sunny Smiles (Anthony Wall).

We at Sullivan pray and hope that this ceremony is just the first acknowledgment given to Merciful Mary Ann. Anyone that selflessly gives 22 1/2 years to a cause that improves the lives of others should get a recognition that equals or surpasses the person. The ceremony will forever be a part of AVP's workshop when we do our "Opening Rap" here at Sullivan, and we will preserve the banner in loving memory of Merciful Mary Ann.

William Holmes, a.k.a. Hip Hop Holmes has been an AVP facilitator for five years and recently became the Inside Coordinator at Sullivan Prison.

[Eds. note: Walter Jones, a.k.a. Justice Jones's piece, *Thank You Merciful Mary Ann* is in the news section of www.avpny.org]

Please support AVP!!

AVP New York's 2012 budget totals \$40,600.

To date we have received \$23,260.

We greatly appreciate all contributions in all sizes.

Thank you very much!



AVP Outside Coordinator Merciful Mary Ann Burke and Deputy Superintendent of Programs, Darrow Cunningham, at a ceremony honoring Mary Ann for her 22 years of volunteer service with AVP at Sullivan Prison.



Building an Archive

By Don Goodman a.k.a. Daring Don



Progress at this stage of building an archive continues slowly, but we are moving forward. One major task is to transform paper archives into digital formats. We are planning a meeting in January in Skaneateles, NY, where the collected items in Cynthia Loring MacBain's basement will be brought to the light of her dining room table, and sifted through by a group of AVP facilitators. Although space is limited; let us know if you wish to attend. We can then convert those documents to an electronic format which can be more extensively shared.



Another dimension of assembling our history is the initiation and gathering of interviews of those involved in the history and development of AVP, here and now. This really includes all of us. The purpose of the History Task Group is not so much to leave a set of documents for some future historians, but to share among ourselves, now, the stories that have animated and inspired us to continue the AVP process. Are there particular facilitators that you would like to know more about, why they started in AVP and why they have continued? Can we begin a systematic process of such enquiries, among ourselves?



Nadine Hoover has forwarded to us a set of questions, some of them are called, Story Starters, which any of us could use to interview another AVP facilitator. We need to begin that ground level activity.



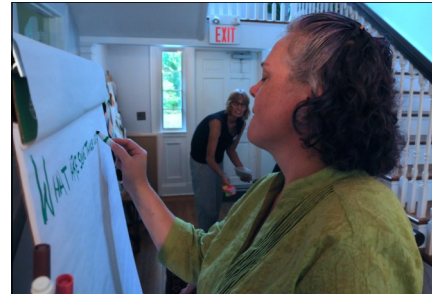
Our history is the stories we have to tell each other. But to become a history they have to be collected and that is a process that we all have to pitch in and begin. Is there a person you want to ask what his or her first AVP workshop was like? or a memorable moment for him or her in AVP? or what keeps him or her in AVP?

Please find our **Archive Guide** at www.avpny.org under “Downloads” in the left sidebar or at [http://www.avpny.org/files/Archive Guides.pdf](http://www.avpny.org/files/Archive%20Guides.pdf)

Please send all material to archive@avpny.org. Thank you!

Other members of the History Task Group are: Frederica–Azania Clare, Kathleen Gale, Jill McLellan, Jim Pepler, Ray Rios and T. Williams-Bey.

—Don Goodman is convener of the History Task Group.



Photos from AVP New York's Annual Gathering, Powell House, Old Chatham, NY, September 7-9, 2012

All photos by Jim Pepler a.k.a. Jazzy Jim

Looking ahead...

By Carolyn Polikarpus a.k.a. Triple C



As we reflect on the history of AVP, I am grateful for the foresight and commitment that our pioneer foremothers and fathers had for this fledgling project. And I am thankful also for those

who carry on the work begun in the halls of Green Haven and Auburn thirty-six years ago.

The circle of AVP facilitators at Green Haven are always aware of the legacy they carry and have a sense of protection for all that it stands for. Those of us who have become involved with AVP through the years are the recipients of a gift brought into being by the inspiration of men on the inside and those drawn to work with them from the outside. We have an obligation to maintain the integrity of the program as well as to carry the gift everywhere we can.

This means that we aim to live our Transforming Power principles in our daily lives, not just in a workshop. It means that we talk the talk *and* walk the walk in our dealings with others. It means that we encourage one another and provide support when one of us slips.

And we can continue expanding our horizons into new corners where the needs are calling to us. There are so many opportunities in our communities: youth facilities in need of meaningful programs, community organizations working with gangs, support for those returning from prison back to the community. Local probation departments are fertile ground.

But all these opportunities need people to carry the workshops. So before our eyes get bigger than our stomachs, building up our corps of active facilitators available for the work has to come first. All this requires commitment and organization... are we game for it?

—Carolyn Polikarpus is Co-President of AVP/NY and outside coordinator for AVP at Green Haven Prison.

Our Annual Gathering

By Shirley Way a.k.a. Sure Shirley



Twenty-seven facilitators and one child gathered for the AVP/NY annual gathering weekend for the first time at Powell House, a Quaker retreat and conference center in the rolling hills of Columbia County, Sept. 7-9.

The special rate Powell House offered us and the generous contributions to our scholarship fund allowed us to break even for the weekend even as seven facilitators attended on full or partial scholarship. THANK YOU Powell House!!

It was delightful to gather together, nourished by delicious food, comfortable accommodations and beautiful grounds. The loss of electrical power on Saturday night created space for deeper community building in smaller groups. One group focused on forming a history / archive committee and another shared experiences of challenges and successes in facilitation and team-building.

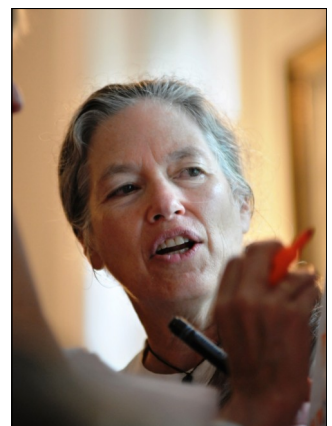
Some of us had met Maji Peterx (Positive Peterx) from Nigeria at the AVP International Gathering last year. It was wonderful to reconnect and to hear more of the strides AVP has made in his country. Maji taught us new light and livelies and songs.

We shared some of our history through photos and stories and discussed best practices for archiving our materials.

In a world café we challenged ourselves to brainstorm where we are as an organization, where we'd like to be and how to get there.

Twenty gathered for AVP New York's annual meeting on Sunday where we identified some of our goals for the coming year: archiving our materials, holding more workshops, holding fund-raising house parties, developing our organizational infrastructure and creating a list-serve for facilitators.

—Shirley Way is the part-time staffperson for AVP/NY and outside coordinator for AVP at Cayuga Prison.





ALTERNATIVES TO VIOLENCE PROJECT

Note: Printed on 100% post-consumer recycled paper.



Jim Pepler

AVP/NY's Annual Gathering!
Powell House, Old Chatham, NY
September 7-9, 2012

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Year to date 2012 Workshop Summary Report

Note: These statistics represent the workshops reported to the AVP/NY office.

ALBION Prison (Women's) Workshop count: 1 Participant count: 7	GREEN HAVEN Prison English lang. wksp. count: 15 Spanish lang. wksp. count: 2 Participant count: 162 Apprentices trained: 19	WOODBOURNE Prison Workshop count: 6 Participant count: 66 Apprentices trained: 8	NIAGARA FRONTIER AC Workshop count: 2 Participant count: 22 Adult apprentices trained: 6 Youth apprentices trained: 2 Mini Workshop count: 4 Mini Youth part't count: 45
ATTICA Prison Workshop count: 6 Participant count: 69	GREENE Prison Workshop count: 3 Participant count: 54	ALBANY Area Council Workshop count: 2 Participant count: 22 Apprentices trained: 7	WESTCHESTER Area Council Workshop count: 2 Participant count: 22 Mini Workshop count: 1 Mini Adult participant count: 3 Mini Youth part't count: 9
AUBURN Prison Workshop count: 10 Participant count: 157	GROVELAND Prison Workshop count: 9 Participant count: 139 Apprentices trained: 17	BRONX Area Council Workshop count: 3 Participant count: 28	YTD 2012 PRISON WRSPs: Prisons served: 15 Prison workshops: 108 Participant count: 1,221 Apprentices trained: 73 Inside facilitators: 134 Inside support: 13
BEDFORD HILLS Prison (W's) Workshop count: 5 Participant count: 29 Apprentices trained: 5	OTISVILLE Prison Workshop count: 4 Participant count: 73	CATSKILL Area Council Workshop count: 2 Youth participant count: 30 Youth apprentices trained: 14 Mini Youth workshops: 5 Mini Youth participants: 100	YTD 2012 COMMUNITY WORKSHOPS: Community workshops: 17 Participant count: 197 Mini workshops: 10 Mini adult part't count: 3 Mini youth part't count: 154 Apprentices trained: 29
BUTLER Prison Workshop count: 8 Participant count: 53 Apprentices trained: 4	SING SING Prison English lang. wksp count: 18 Spanish lang. wksp. count: 3 Participant count: 216	ELMIRA Area Council Workshop count: 1 Participant count: 9	
CAYUGA Prison Workshop count: 9 Participant count: 66 Apprentices trained: 7	SULLIVAN Prison Workshop count: 3 Participant count: 37	GENESEE VALLEY AC Workshop count: 3 Participant count: 34	
EASTERN Prison Workshop count: 1 Participant count: 13 Apprentices trained: 13	WENDE Prison Workshop count: 5 Participant count: 80	NYC Area Council Workshop count: 2 Participant count: 30	