

A Call to Arms (and Pens) From the SENY Delegate - GSC Panel 65

Be Involved. Be Inspired. Be of Service. This is one of the topics for discussion related to the 2016 General Service Conference theme. How can your group respond to this call? It's simple: take a look at the Delegate's Questionnaire and the four questions put before you, and respond with your group's conscience. The four questions, with a brief summary, are as follows:

- 1. Consider developing a plain language version of the Big Book, *Alcoholics Anonymous*. According to the Plain Language Association, "a communication is in plain language if the language, structure, and design are so clear that the intended audience can easily find what they need, understand what they find, and use that information." Note that the Conference has reaffirmed on several occasions the Fellowship's consensus that the writings of our co-founders not be changed. Should this be considered as another attempt to alter those affirmations?
- **2. Consider the request for revision/update to the pamphlet** *Young People and A.A.* Should the pamphlet be revised considering adding material pertinent to their activities and/or adding/changing some of the stories currently in print?
- **3. Consider the request to update the pamphlet** *Twelve Traditions Illustrated*. The pamphlet was written and illustrated in 1971. This item is submitted for discussion purposes only. Review the pamphlet and consider the need for an update or not.
- 4. Consider removing "Special Needs" from the committee's name ("Cooperation with the Professional Community/Treatment/Special Needs") and throughout the Composition, Scope and Procedure. Is "Diverse Needs-Accessibilities" an appropriate change? What about changing all references to "Special Needs-Accessibilities" to "Accessibilities"? Should there be further exploration of appropriate language associated with Special Needs in this day and age? Consideration of technology applications and advances related to carrying the A.A. message through "Special Needs-Accessibilities" service work, and whether or not to include this type of information in the workbook?

Need to know more? Come to the Delegate's Day of Sharing on Saturday, March 26th at the Pearl River Middle School in Rockland County from 9 am to 2 pm and listen to the various presentations on the above items. If you can't make it, feel free to call/speak/write your delegate or alternate delegate for further information as applicable.

Be involved. Be inspired. Be of Service. The future of A.A. depends upon your input.

Peace and serenity,

Jim W.

delegate@aaseny.org

Your voice in The Link

Your SENY Office

Are you willing to share your experience, strength and hope about your service in A.A. at the group, district, county or area level? *The Link* is published ten times per year and welcomes articles from all AA's in our area. Please limit your article to 275 words, and email it to link@aaseny.org or mail it c/o The Link Editor, P.O. Box 571, NY, NY 10116. Thanks!

Visit: 199 Lincoln Ave., Suite 302 Bronx, NY 10454

Send mail: P.O. Box 571, New York, NY 10116

General inquiries: info@aaseny.org

Call: 718-665-1253

"Our Spiritual Way of Life: Steps, Traditions and Concepts."

Theme of AA's 2016 General Service Conference

It's Almost Conference Time!

From the SENY Alternate Delegate - GSC Panel 65

I love the lead up to the General Service Conference! The Delegate's Questionnaire has been sent out. The dates for the Delegate's Day of Sharing and the pre-Conference assembly have been set. And now we get to exercise our voice and see the first three Concepts in action.

Concept One states, "The final responsibility and ultimate authority for A.A. world services should always reside in the collective conscience of our whole Fellowship."

Concept Two states, "When, in 1955, the A.A. groups confirmed the permanent charter for their General Service Conference, they thereby delegated to the Conference complete authority for the active maintenance of our world services and thereby made the Conference — excepting for any change in the Twelve Traditions or in Article 12 of the Conference Charter — the actual voice and the effective conscience for our whole Society."

Concept Three states, "As a traditional means of creating and maintaining a clearly defined working relation between the groups, the Conference, the A.A. General Service Board and its several service corporations, staffs, committees and executives, and of thus insuring their effective leadership, it is here suggested that we endow each of these elements of world service with a traditional 'Right of Decision."

We get the opportunity to discuss Conference agenda items and provide our group's conscience and direct feedback to our delegate. Our delegate gets to hear the collective voice of the area. And then we wish our delegate well as he heads to the Conference informed by the area and prepared to act in the best interest of the entire Fellowship.

I hope everyone uses this special time of year to see how important it is for groups to have a GSR and to be connected to the entire Fellowship. I'm grateful for the privilege of being part of the process.

Yours in service, **John W.** altdelegate@aaseny.org



Connecting with the Newcomer Are We Doing Enough to Help the Newcomer?

The Alcoholics Anonymous Responsibility Pledge says it all: "When anyone anywhere reaches out for help, I want the hand of AA always to be there..." Do you live by this pledge?

I first came into AA as a young person in 1987. I had almost six years of sobriety when I left AA for various reasons. When I tried to return, I called my previous sponsor for help, but she said she was helping someone else. That gave me a reason to stay out for a long time. Needless to say, I could have been spared many years of misery if the woman had put out her hand to me and grabbed hold of mine.

By the grace of God, I have returned to AA for three years now. I learned from this experience that when someone asks for help, I am responsible and being busy is not an excuse. I want to demonstrate a life of sobriety by not only "talking the talk" but also "walking the walk."

What are you doing to help the newcomer today? I challenge you for a period of time to do one small thing to help a newcomer.

Our co-founders, Bill W. and Dr. Bob, didn't wait for people to come to them; they went out and looked for prospects and offered their services. By the time we come to Step Twelve, we have had a spiritual awakening. We are approaching life in a new way and need to carry the message. What little work for such powerful results.

Kathleen S. GSR, Orange County Young People's Group



Thank You for Your Service

From the SENY Chair

I recently had the privilege of receiving an invitation to participate in the 14th annual Eastern Area Conference of Young People in Alcoholics Anonymous (EACYPAA) Convention. Something happened that was pretty awesome, and at the same time made me stop and think. I was invited to share my experience, strength, and hope on Concept Nine Saturday afternoon. Then, that evening, at the main meeting, I was asked to share from the podium as the Area 49 Chair on the importance of young people's involvement in the general service structure.

After I spoke, I was stopped no less than 10 times by complete strangers, young people who took the time to thank me for showing up and representing the area. You might call it a random act of kindness or you could call it simple respect, but for this drunk, it meant everything. That these kids would stop what they were doing long enough to thank another drunk, someone they didn't even know, for their service to the Fellowship is pretty commendable in my book.

I guess the reason it stuck with me is that I don't seem to hear people in my circles (at area, county, and district meetings—or even in my home group for that matter) telling others "thank you for your service" all that much anymore. Maybe we take other's service for granted, or maybe we are just simply keeping our appreciation to ourselves. When I started recognizing this omission in others, I had to stop and take my own inventory to see if I am doing a good job of expressing my gratitude for the service of others..The answer? I can do better—a whole lot better.

The long-form of Tradition Nine ends with this statement about leaders and trusted servants in AA: "Universal respect is their key to usefulness." I know I still have growing to do in this area. Where do you stand on this question? Are you honoring and respecting the work done by those you do service with? By God's grace, we will all take a look at this and be open and willing to grow in this area just a bit more.

In Love and Service **Rick W.** chair@aaseny.org



About the Delegate's Questionnaire

The A.A. Service Manual states: "While the General Service Conference operates all year round, the annual meeting, usually held in April, is the culmination of the year's activities, the time when the collective group conscience of U.S./Canada A.A. comes together to take actions that will guide the groups in the years to come."

Our delegate Jim W. seeks input from as many Area 49 groups as possible so he can bring an informed area conscience back to the Conference. To that end, he's created a questionnaire containing several Conference agenda items for area groups to consider and discuss in order to develop a group conscience and share it with our delegate.

Each group's General Service Representative (GSR) is responsible for bringing the questionnaire to their group and sharing the outcome with the delegate. Check with your GSR to make sure it's on their radar. If your group doesn't have an active GSR, then you can bring it up to the group yourself.

This is your group's chance to participate in the fellowship-wide decision-making of A.A.! Ask yourself: do I consider my group important enough to have our voice heard?

The Delegate's Day of Sharing is when the background material or context underlying each agenda item on the Delegate's Questionnaire will be presented. Every GSR and Alt-GSR should participate, or send someone else from their group. Without having this context, your group's responses to the questionnaire won't be nearly as well informed.

Groups typically review the questionnaire at a special or regular business meeting after the Delegate's Day of Sharing. If your group doesn't have a business meeting scheduled between the DDoS (March 26) and the pre-Conference Assembly (April 9), then try to interest the group chair in organizing a "special business meeting" for group members to discuss the items in the questionnaire. It's important to make time to develop a group conscience on the agenda items.

At the business meeting, the GSR typically reads a question and shares some of the highlights of that item's background material, and then group members can share their perspective. A time limit is recommended. After giving everyone a chance to briefly share once, if there's still time allotted for that question, a discussion can be opened up.

Usually the secretary or GSR will take notes. The outcome should reflect any consensus reached, and if possible the differing perspectives when consensus was not reached.

In some instances, groups may not be interested in participating. A GSR can point out why it's important, not least of which is because an isolated group is like an isolated drunk. If your group still decides not to participate, do not just submit your own personal take as the group conscience.

If you're a new GSR or uncertain about how to develop your group's conscience on the Delegate's Questionnaire, don't hesitate to reach out to your delegate or alternate delegate, your service sponsior, another GSR or service buddy who has been through this process. Thanks for your service!

The Delegate's Day of Sharing



At the Delegate's Day of Sharing, background material related to the General Service Conference (GSC) agenda items contained in the Delegate's Questionnaire is shared with the area. Every GSR and Alt-GSR is encouraged to attend. If the group does not have a GSR, please consider sending a group member. By having context for the Delegate's Questionnaire, a group's conscience on the agenda items can be truly well informed. Plus, it's super interesting!

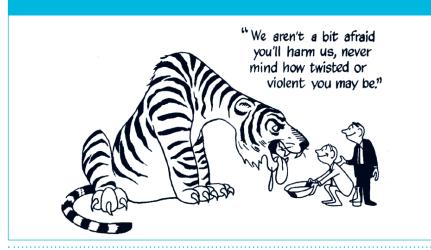
Step 3Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God as we understood Him.



I let a Higher Power take over.

Tradition 3

The only requirement for AA membership is a desire to stop drinking.



Self-Support: Where Money and Spirituality Mix (A Call to Alms)

From the A.A. Quarterly Report From G.S.O. dated November, 2015:

- Contributions through 9/30/15 from A.A. Groups and members for 2015-\$4,886,227
- Contributions through 9/30/14 from A.A. Groups and members for 2014-\$4,911,225

This represents a decline in contributions from 2014 to 2015 of \$24,998, a continuing trend comparable to recent years.

From the "Self-Support pamphlet, page 8:

"Now that we are sober in A.A., the word 'support' has to do with sharing, people, self-respect, gratitude, and what we are privileged to give – not take – in material terms."

For more info on how contributions support Twelve Step work go to www.aa.org and download the Service Piece F-203 (English) or SF-13 (Spanish) Contributions Fact Sheets.

The 2016 General Service Conference

Presentation & Discussion Topics for the 2016 General Service Conference

Among the 2015 Advisory Actions that emerged from the 2015 General Service Conference were recommendations for the theme of the 2016 Conference to be "Our Spiritual Way of Life: Steps, Traditions and Concepts" and for the topics of presentations/discussions to be:

A. Connecting With the Newcomer

- 1. All Inclusive Never Exclusive
- 2. Are We Doing Enough to Help the Newcomer Are We Going to Any Length?
- 3. Home Group Where It Begins

B. Connecting With Each Other

- 1. Singleness of Purpose Staying Pertinent in a Changing World
- 2. Informed Group Conscience The Key to Unity
- Be Involved. Be Inspired. Be of Service

C. Connecting With A.A. as a Whole

- 1. Participating in All of A.A.
- 2. Understanding Self-Support
- 3. Reaching Out to the Next Generation of AAs



In the spirit of Unity, Area 49 groups and their members are encouraged to discuss and reflect upon these topics in 2016.

Concept 3

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



Why Do We Need a Conference?

The late Bernard B. Smith, nonalcoholic, then chairperson of the board of trustees, and one of the architects of the Conference structure, answered that question superbly in his opening talk at the 1954 meeting: "We may not need a General Service Conference to ensure our own recovery. We do need it to ensure the recovery of the alcoholic who still stumbles in the darkness one short block from this room. We need it to ensure the recovery of a child being born tonight, destined for alcoholism. We need it to provide, in keeping with our Twelfth Step, a permanent haven for all alcoholics who, in the ages ahead, can find in A.A. that rebirth that brought us back to life.

"We need it because we, more than all others, are conscious of the devastating effect of the human urge for power and prestige which we must ensure can never invade A.A. We need it to ensure A.A. against government, while insulating it against anarchy; we need it to protect A.A. against disintegration while preventing overintegration. We need it so that Alcoholics Anonymous, and Alcoholics Anonymous alone, is the ultimate repository of its Twelve Steps, its Twelve Traditions, and all of its services.

"We need it to ensure that changes within A.A. come only as a response to the needs and the wants of all A.A., and not of any few. We need it to ensure that the doors of the halls of A.A. never have locks on them, so that all people for all time who have an alcoholic problem may enter these halls unasked and feel welcome. We need it to ensure that Alcoholics Anonymous never asks of anyone who needs us what his or her race is, what his or her creed is, what his or her social position is."

(from p. S20, The A.A. Service Manual)

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GRAPEVINE News

From the Executive Editor/Publisher

What's New For March 2016



What's New in Print and Online

Grapevine

Current Issue Spotlight

This month's special section is "Stories from Old Timers." Read articles by members with long-term sobriety. They share their experience of what it was like and what it's like now.

Send Us Your Story
Go to www.aagrapevine.org/contribute to see our 2016 issue themes and writers' guidelines.

Upcoming Issues

We are now accepting stories for "The Many Ways You or Your Group Use Grapevine to Carry the Message to Alcoholics" issue (due March 5), our annual "Young & Sober" issue (due April 5), and "Stories by Atheist and Agnostic members' issue (due May 5).

Grapevine is always looking for stories, photographs, and illustrations.

Please visit www.aagrapevine.org/share to learn more about

how you can participate with Grapevine. To listen to two free audio stories, visit

www.aagrapevine.org/audio-portal.



Area Chair and GVR Corner

Grapevine features highlights of upcoming area activities in GV News as well as on www.aagrapevine.org/gvr.

ep Us Up-To-Date

All GV area chairs are encouraged to submit event information, photos, or great ideas to get the word out about Grapevine and

Be sure to update us on your Area, District, GVR, and RLV registration information by contacting gvrc@aagrapevine.org

Jake S., Area 42 Grapevine Chair, will attend PRAASA. March 4-6

Grow Your Grapevine

Grapevine Needs Support to Grow

Announcing a fun way to get more involved with Grapevine.*



Get together with your friends, your home group, as a group of groups, district or area to complete as many activities as you wish.

The Area with the greatest number of Arbor Cards submitted will be featured online and in the magazine.

> Every returned Arbor Card will be entered into a drawing to win Grapevine books and other items.

*Visit our homepage starting March 1st to learn more!

Mental Sobriety Means Spotting Danger Sign

1992 I twin may be delth. Security I me gring of the A.A. seed then twent indeed a could be a seed from the could be a country or could be a country or co

From the General Service Office Archives

In a response written in May 1949 to a letter from an A.A. member in Detroit, Bill says: "Alcoholics Anonymous is in the process of evolution concerning its relations with the outside world. When you consider the vast army of screwballs that we really are, I think we have done astonishingly well." A big part of the reason that the Fellowship was healthy was that the groups learned from their mistakes, and the solutions to their problems were codified in the 12 Traditions.

Items Available

From the G.S.O. Archives

Did you know that the G.S.O. Archives will send you free of charge such items as



copies of the 1941 and 1950 articles from the Saturday Evening Post, the article from Liberty Magazine, Bill's Last Message, Dr. Bob's Farewell Talk, service material on "Researching A.A. History," or an article titled "A.A.'s Roots in the Oxford Group"? In addition, we have other materials, such as the prepublication manuscript (or multilith) of the Big Book or two sets of 10 photos each of A.A. historical interest, which we provide for a con-

tribution. Also, the Conference-approved Literature Catalog contains items from the Archives, such as the A.A. Archives service piece, the History of Service CD, and the Archives DVD "Markings on the Journey." If you are interested in receiving any

of these items, or a list of what we make available, please contact us at archives@aa.org or at 212-870-3400, and

 $came \ out \ of \ the \ problems \ that \ A.A. \ groups$ wrestled with in the first 10 years of Alcoholics Anonymous, were first published in the April 1946 issue of the Grapevine. The first page of that issue and the page on which the article about the Traditions was printed are shown here.

Points for A.A. Traditio

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The Twelve Traditions, which

Upcoming Events & Service Opportunities







Our Spiritual Way of Life: Steps, Traditions, and Concepts

Convention Highlights

Friday 3/18

Kickoff and Welcome Meetings

Saturday 3/19

Oldtimers, Theme, and Banquet Meetings

Sunday 3/20

Spiritual Meeting

AND

AA Panels & Workshops Alkathon Meetings AA Archives & AA Videos Spanish Meetings **AlAnon Meetings** Hospitality Room **Evening Entertainment**







Staying for the weekend?

Convention rate: \$131+10.375% tax per night

(single/double/triple/quad occupancy)

Hotel reservations via phone: 1(800) 882-1042

On-line: www.marriott.com/nycwe **Reservation code: SNMSNMA**

Coming for the day or evening?

Registration Fee: \$17

(free for children 10 and under)

Registration plus Banquet: \$95

On-site Registration Hours:

Friday 3 PM-11 PM Sat 8 AM—midnight

There are many opportunities to participate in general service! District, county and area committees always need more volunteers. You can find information about these committees on SENY's website at www.aaseny.org/service.

Calling all Manhattan Groups!

Please help us make this Manhattan Share-A-day 2016 possible by sending in your contributions as soon as possible.

Please make checks payable to: Manhattan Share-A-Day P.O Box 6990. FDR Station New York, N.Y 10150

With Love and Gratitude,

Manhattan Share-A-Day 2016 alling all GSRs and DCMs! Area 49 wants to hear more about your experience strength and hope doing service as a GSR or DCM. Please consider including your voice in The Link during 2016 by submitting an article. Thanks for your service! "The GSR may be the most important job in A.A." says our literature. By the same logic, the second most important job is the DCM, the next link down that inverted pyramid

of communication that connects each group member to A.A. as a whole.

Corrections Connection Workshop

May 13, 2016 9:00am - 3:30pm (lunch included)



Contact Anthony . (914) 262-8173 - anthonycorrections(a) aaseny.org

This workshop is easily accessible from the MTA Metro North Railroad's Ossining Station.

The Quality of Work Life Building is within walking distance of the train station

Carrying the message of recovery to the incarcerated alcoholic

South Eastern New York, Area 49 General Service Committee of AA

NYS Department of Corrections and

Lower Hudson Valley/NYC Region 1

Sing Sing Correctional Facility* Quality of Work Life Building 354 Hunter Street Ossining, NY 10562

* Workshop is not located within the prison we security clearance not required.

Calendar of Events Visit www.aaseny.org for complete, up-to-date information. E-mail agenda@aaseny.org to add				
03/07/16	7:30 pm	SENY Committee Meeting: Church of the Holy Family, Mechler Hall, 2158 Watson Avenue, Bronx, NY 10472		
03/08/16	7:00 pm	Putnam County General Service Meeting: Mount Carmel Baptist Church, 76 Gleneida Avenue, Carmel, NY 10512		
03/15/16	7:00 pm	Orange County General Service Meeting: First Presbyterian Church, Campbell Hall, Rte. 207, Campbell Hall, NY 10916		
03/16/16	7:30 pm	Westchester County General Service Meeting: Memorial United Methodist Church, 250 Bryant Ave, White Plains, NY 10605		
03/18/16	8:00 pm	Suffolk County General Service Meeting: True North Church, 1101 Lakeland Avenue, Bohemia, NY 11716		
03/18-03/20	weekend	48th SENY Convention, Westchester Marriott Hotel: 670 White Plains Rd., Tarrytown, NY 10591		
03/20/16	3:00 pm	Sullivan County General Service Meeting: Sullivan County Community College, 112 College Rd., Loch Sheldrake, NY 12759		
04/09/16	8:30 am	SENY Area 49 pre-Conference Assembly: P.S. 84 Jose De Diego School, 250 Berry Street, Brooklyn, NY 11249		
04/10/16	9:00 am	Rockland County 12th Annual Spiritual Breakfast: Crowne Plaza, 3 Executive Boulevard, Suffern, NY 10901		
04/11/16	7:00 PM	Queens County GSR Boot Camp: Queens Intergroup, 105-29 Metropolitan Avenue, Queens, NY 11375		
04/12/16	7:00 pm	Putnam County General Service Meeting: Mount Carmel Baptist Church, 76 Gleneida Avenue, Carmel, NY 10512		
04/13/16	7:00 pm	Bronx Upper Manhattan General Service Meeting: Bedford Park Congregational Church, 3008 Bainbridge Avenue, Bronx, NY 10458		
04/15/16	8:00 pm	Suffolk County General Service Meeting: True North Church, 1101 Lakeland Avenue, Bohemia, NY 11716		
04/17/16	3:00 pm	Sullivan County General Service Meeting: Sullivan County Community College, 112 College Rd., Loch Sheldrake, NY 12759		
04/18/16	7:30 pm	Nassau County General Service Meeting: Nassau Intergroup, 361 Hempstead Turnpike, West Hempstead 11552		
04/19/16	7:00 pm	Orange County General Service Meeting: First Presbyterian Church, Campbell Hall, Rte. 207, Campbell Hall, NY 10916		
04/20/16	7:30 pm	Westchester County General Service Meeting: Memorial United Methodist Church, 250 Bryant Ave, White Plains, NY 10605		
04/25/16	7:30 pm	Queens County General Service Meeting: Saint Mary Gate of Heaven Church, 101-18 104th St., Queens, NY 11416		
05/01/16	9:00 am	Orange County Spiritual Breakfast: Kuhls Highland House, 512 Highland AvenueExt, Middletown, NY10940		
05/02/16	7:30 pm	SENY Committee Meeting: Church of the Holy Family, Mechler Hall, 2158 Watson Avenue, Bronx, NY 10472		
05/07/16	9:00 am	Manhattan Share-A-Day: Save the date! Location info to follow		

SENY Of	SENY Officers					
Delegate	Jim W.		delegate@aaseny.org			
Alt. Delegate	John W.		altdelegate@aaseny.org			
Chair	Rick W.		chair@aaseny.org			
Treasurer	Manny A.		treasurer@aaseny.org			
Registrar	Fred M.		registrar@aaseny.org			

County DCMCs						
Bronx/U-M	Colleen R.		dcmc@bum.aaseny.org			
Brooklyn	Richard S.		brooklyn@aaseny.org			
Hispanic	Alfredo L.		alfredola1273@gmail.com			
Manhattan	Michael S.		dcmc@manhattan.aaseny.org			
Nassau	Steve K.		dcmc@nassau.aaseny.org			
Orange	Mike D.		ad01@optonline.net			
Putnam	John G.		johnnyg320@yahoo.com			
Queens	Michael H.		dcmc@qcgsa.org			
Rockland	Mike D.		rocklandnydcmc@gmail.com			
Staten Island	Steve F.		s.fallis26@gmail.com			
Suffolk	Geoff C.		dcmc@aasuffolkgs-ny.org			
Sullivan	William D.		williamdosterjr@gmail.com			
Westchester	Sally B.		dcmc@westchester.aaseny.org			

SENY Standing / Ad Hoc Committee Chairs							
Acc./Special Needs	Michele E.		asn@aaseny.org				
Agenda	Kathy B.		agenda@aaseny.org				
Archives	Steve G.		archives@aaseny.org				
Convention 2016	Jarrett D.		convention@aaseny.org				
CPC	Preston W.		cpc@aaseny.org				
Corrections	Anthony B.		corrections@aaseny.org				
Grapevine/La Viña	Mike D.		grapevine@aaseny.org				
Intergroup Liaison	Nellie P.		intergroup@aaseny.org				
Link Editor	Domi E.		link@aaseny.org				
Literature	Michelle G.		literature@aaseny.org				
Office Manager	Kevin M.		office@aaseny.org				
Public Information	Nisaa A.		pi@aaseny.org				
Recording Secretary	Jeanne C.		secretary@aaseny.org				
Translation	Edwin		translation@aaseny.org				
Treatment Facilities	Christopher H.		tf@aaseny.org				
Website	Jon O.		web@aaseny.org				
Finance	Mike S.		finance@aaseny.org				
NYSIW 2015	Amanda S.		nysiw@aaseny.org				
Publications Review	Chris B.		publications@aaseny.org				
Service Participation	John W.		participation@aaseny.org				
Service Sponsorship	Jamie S.		sponsorship@aaseny.org				