

The 66th General Service Conference Comes to A Close

From the SENY Delegate - Panel 65

The 2016 General Service Conference has come to a close. It was a week-long process in which much was accomplished, after many long days. Committee work started the week off, followed by the Feasibility Study (for most members, this occurred at Conference; while for a few others it was conducted at the Mt. Sinai-Roosevelt Emergency Room), regional elections, committee report-backs and eleven floor actions. Thursday evening concluded after 10 pm, and Friday's closing session concluded around 9:15 pm with the Panel 65 Delegates saying their goodbyes.

In terms of the items on the Delegate's Questionnaire considered by area groups:

- the Literature Committee took no action on the "plain language" Big Book item, and it did not come out of committee for a vote;
- regarding the pamphlets *Young People and A.A.* and *Twelve Traditions Illustrated*, consensus was reached by substantial unanimity to update these publications;
- the term "special needs" was removed from the name of the corresponding Conference committee by substantial unanimity; the new name for the committee will be the "Conference Committee on Treatment/Accessibilities."

Group contributions continue to decline--an alarming trend--dropping from 41.6% in 2014 to 40.3% in 2015. A complete Conference report will be given at the post-Conference assembly on June 11th in Manhattan (see the back of *The Link* for location and start time).

The 2016 Conference approved the theme "Supporting Our Future" for the 2017 Conference.

A delegate from another area asked me to sum up this year's Conference experience in one word. My response was: "intense."

It was truly a most rewarding and exhilarating experience.

Peace and serenity,
Jim W.



Your voice in *The Link*

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!

Your SENY Office

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

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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

Are We Doing Enough?

From a GSR

Are We Doing Enough to Help the Newcomer - Are We Going to Any Length?

AA's Declaration of Responsibility says it all: *"When anyone anywhere reaches out for help, I want the hand of AA always to be there. And for that: I am responsible."*

Do you live by this pledge?

I first came into AA as a young person in 1987 and 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 person would have put her hand out to me and grabbed hold of mine. Or, if I had sought out someone else.

By the grace of God, I have returned to AA for three years now. I learned from this experience and when someone asks for help I know 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--every day.

In conclusion, our founding fathers, Bill and Dr. Bob, didn't wait for people to come to them; they went out and looked for prospects and offered their services. After we complete Step 12 we should have a spiritual awakening: approaching life in a new way, and needing to carry the message. What little work for such powerful results!

Kathleen S.

GSR, Orange County Young People's Group, Warwick, NY



"Faith without (Art)works Is Dead"

From *The Link* Editor

In October, *The Link* will be celebrating its 55th anniversary! Our area archivist, James D., is taking the lead in planning a special celebration, and I'll be sharing more info about it as plans unfold.

I'm putting out a call now to all of you talented folks in SENY: start sharpening your pencils, pens, and/or styluses! Send in some sweet, cool or funky artwork that we can use in various flyers announcing the anniversary, and any special events surrounding it.

We hope to make a number of different flyers, with artwork representing the area as a whole.

The deadline for submissions is June 18!

Digital submissions:

300 dpi resolution

JPG, PNG, EPS or PDF file format

Please email me the file or provide a link to it (Dropbox, Box or Google Drive)

Paper submissions:

No larger than letter size

Art medium should be able to survive placement face down in a scanner bed

Paper submissions can be hand-delivered to me at the area assembly on June 18; or mailed by then to the SENY office: c/o The Link Editor, P.O. Box 571, NY, NY 10116

Please let me know if you intend to submit something; and, if you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact me via email or phone. My contact info is on the back page of *The Link*. Looking forward to seeing the artistic talent of Area 49 in full bloom!

Together we can,

Domi E.



Keeping You In The Loop: Area Inventory Progress Report - April 7, 2016 update From Rick W., Area Chair

SENY conducted its Area Inventory in November 2015 and area officers created 26 action items to address needs. Our goal is to provide the body ongoing updates on our progress. We delivered updates 3/7 at a Committee meeting, 4/9 at an assembly AND are keeping it updated in real time on our website at aaseny.org/inventory. We will provide two more printed updates before the end of the year.

[IN PROGRESS] SENY will develop and distribute to county DCMCs a one-sheet information piece that can be distributed to GSRs to help counties promote the importance of attendance at area assemblies and what the GSRs role is in an area assembly.

[IN PROGRESS] SENY will recommend to the Service Sponsorship chair that the orientations for new DCMs & GSRs be split up so as to provide clarity on a specific position, and will create a suggested framework for the Service Sponsorship chair to build upon.

[COMPLETED / IN PROGRESS] We have re-imagined our morning workshop structure at assemblies, taking it from five workshops each assembly to three. The three workshops will be: "GSR Forum-Q&A", "Newcomers to Service" and "GSR Orientation."

[IN PROGRESS] In an effort to provide more value to our members, we are creating informal interaction opportunities in the form of roundtables during the lunch break at each assembly where members can come together on a specific topic and discuss it over lunch.

[COMPLETED] SENY leadership will do a better job in encouraging counties hosting area assemblies to choose locations closer to public transportation and to address A/SN needs; we will update the Assembly Planning Toolkit distributed to county DCMCs to include this information.

[COMPLETED] We are rethinking the information that's being reported at assemblies. We will include reporting from area committee chairs as well as DCMCs at all assemblies except Conference-related assemblies.

[COMPLETED] We have added a service position titled "Spiritual Timekeeper" for each assembly and committee meeting to help address time management concerns.

[COMPLETED] SENY feels scheduling is always a concern and we feel like we do a pretty good job scheduling our events. However, The area chair will recommend to the Agenda chair that SENY not list non-SENY events on its website if they fall on the same date as a SENY event.

[COMPLETED / IN PROGRESS] Our area registrar is working with Hispanic members of the area to do a better job of translating minutes from our meetings for distribution. We will be working to develop a strategy for improving translation of our email communications for our Spanish-speaking membership. Our registrar is also changing our database schema to incorporate language preference to better accommodate linguistics needs.

[COMPLETED / ONGOING] SENY is committed in doing a better job in engaging young people in AA in the general service structure and will continue to take actions towards furthering connection between the two groups.

[IN PROGRESS] SENY is researching development of a new event with a working title of ALL-COUNTY WORKSHOP that would be similar to something like "Taking SENY on the Road." An event of this nature would be an opportunity to cluster all districts in a county together for a service workshop that we hope would help in engaging area members in new ways, and promote greater unity and interest in service.

[COMPLETED] SENY is committed to doing a better job on highlighting the importance of service sponsorship. The area is looking at things like adding a visual indicator to name badges at area assemblies identifying those who are interested in BEING a service sponsor to help easily identify them to those NEEDING a service sponsor. SENY is also considering developing an "assembly buddy" program, much like delegates have "Conference buddies" at the General Service Conference.

[COMPLETED] Area officers have been attending and will continue to attend various county/district events to do a better job of inter-connecting the area (Share-a-Days, Breakfasts, Workshops, etc.). One way that SENY is considering how to better involve GSRs more is to figure out ways to engage them in execution of area events. Having more GSRs lead area workshops at assemblies is one thing SENY is looking at. SENY believes involving GSRs is vital to increased engagement and is open to any suggestions that members of SENY may have. SENY is encouraging counties to develop transportation options that will facilitate getting GSRs to area events (carpools, buses, travel reimbursements in their budgets, etc.).

[COMPLETED] Starting in 2016, SENY is going to add a component to all area assemblies (time restraints permitting) for a "GSR Q&A Session" allowing GSRs the opportunity to ask questions that are on their mind about any topic that will help them with their service position.

[COMPLETED] Area Chair has created a Robert's Rules "cheat sheet" and will begin distributing it at all area committee meetings and assemblies (starting 02/6/16).

[COMPLETED / ONGOING] Our area chair will work on doing a better job of using Robert's Rules POINT OF ORDER to help principles prevail over personalities. The Ad-hoc Publications Review committee will be working on revising the SENY Service Handbook and will be presenting proposed revisions to the Area Committee for its review/approval no later than November 2016.,

[IN PROGRESS] Our area chair will appoint a task force to include our delegate, alternate delegate, and at least one other trusted servant who has experience in this area to review our leaders' job descriptions and our bylaws to identify any changes that need to be made to better meet the needs of Area 49.

[COMPLETED] Regarding better meeting the needs of the Hispanic community, at the April 2016 assembly, the body voted to allot funds for a Spanish translator at all SENY assemblies and committee meetings. We have also secured a volunteer to assist us with written translations.

[IN PROGRESS] Area chair is appointing a task force to develop an area communications strategy that will cover all forms of communication SENY will use (e.g. print, email, website, etc). This task force will include the area registrar, Web chair, *The Link* committee members, the Ad-hoc Publications Review Committee and the area chair.

[COMPLETED / ONGOING] SENY will take steps to develop better relationships with area intergroups.

[IN PROGRESS] While SENY is not currently in a position to be able to do anything financially to help groups, districts or counties who are in need of insurance, we'll ask the Web chair to consider incorporating helpful information on the website.

Synergies: Step Five, Tradition Five, and Concept Five

From the SENY Chair

Integrity (Step 5), Primary Purpose (Tradition 5), and Democracy (Concept 5) are the foundation principles of our three legacies. I have found it difficult at times to see the connections between the Steps, the Traditions and the Concepts, but when I look closely I can see that there are some very basic synergies between them. The Fifth Step helps me to see the exact nature of my wrongs and to stop being God by sharing them with someone else rather than analyzing them myself. The Fifth Tradition helps me to see the exact nature of what is best about me - my willingness to honor my primary purpose of carrying the message to the still suffering alcoholic. The Fifth Concept reminds me of the exact nature of what the spirit of democracy is all about - allowing the minority opinion to be heard (which is vital to the unity we profess we must have in Tradition 1).

What is meant by the phrase “exact nature”? One of the definitions of the word “nature” is “having the character or innate qualities of.” Is it my nature to always want to be a man of integrity? No. I’m a drunk with a propensity to pitiful and incomprehensible demoralization. Thankfully though, I also have a fairly constant desire to experience that personality change Bill W. talks about in his spiritual experience on page 567 of our basic text. Reaching out and allowing somebody else to hear those character defects that block me from God’s grace through listening to my Fifth Step is a great way to effect the change I am constantly seeking. Is it in my nature to always want to take action by carrying the message to the still suffering alcoholic? No. Because I’m a selfish and self-centered person, my first instinct is always to do what I want to do when I want to do it - and not to think of others first. By God’s grace, that is changing also. Is it my nature to want to listen to those who don’t agree with me? No, it is not. But as a result of a better understanding of Concept Five, I recognize there are times when the minority can be right and it is my responsibility to listen to their views. I have seen many examples where a well stated minority opinion can change an outcome entirely (as well as my opinion). That is what true democracy is all about - letting all voices be heard.

The exact nature of these three foundation principles lies in my willingness to become the spiritual example of them at all times, and not just when it’s convenient for me. I continue to be grateful for that willingness, and recognize that I still have much to learn about all three.

In love and service,
Rick W.

Step 5

Admitted to God, to ourselves and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs.



Tradition 5

Each group has but one primary purpose....to carry its message to the alcoholic who still suffers.



I am responsible.
When anyone, anywhere,
reaches out for help, I want
the hand of AA always to be there.
And for that: I am responsible.

Self-Support: Where Money and Spirituality Mix

(from page 5 of the pamphlet)

“Self-support begins with me, because I am part of us — the group. We pay our rent and utility bills, buy coffee, snacks and A.A. literature. We support our central office, our area committee, and our General Service Office. If it were not for those entities, many new people would never discover the miracles of A.A.”

Twelfth Step work is the lifeblood of Alcoholics Anonymous — carrying the message to the next suffering alcoholic. Without it, the Fellowship would wither and die. Yet, even at its simplest level this vital contact between one alcoholic and another involves an investment of time and money.

The 2016 General Service Conference

Presentation & Discussion Topics for the 2016 General Service Conference

The theme of the 2016 Conference is *"Our Spiritual Way of Life: Steps, Traditions and Concepts"* and the topics of presentations/discussions for this year-long Conference are:

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
3. 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 5

Throughout our world services structure, a traditional "Right of Appeal" ought to prevail, thus assuring us that minority opinion will be heard and that petitions for the redress of personal grievances will be carefully considered.



The First General Service Conference

"OUR first General Service Conference of Alcoholics Anonymous gathered at New York City in April, 1951. It was composed of thirty-seven U.S. and Canadian delegates plus AA's General Service Headquarters staff and Trustees. The single purpose of our Conference was: to serve AA throughout the world.

This unexciting statement now carries a deep meaning for all who were there. We came to believe that AA's future had been made secure. We became certain that AA could live for so long as God might need us.

...The Conference scene that Sunday afternoon we last met will always be a precious memory in the annals of AA. For in that historic assemblage we could all hear the Voice of Alcoholics Anonymous. These were the words: "To serve AA is to live. We gladly accept our Third Legacy and may we guard it well and use it wisely. God grant that the Legacy of Service remain ever safe in our keeping.

In that fine hour the torch of Service did pass from the hands of us who are older to yours, which are younger; it passed to every oncoming generation of those Children of the Night whose darkness, God willing, shall be banished within the Society of Alcoholics Anonymous all through the bright years which Destiny surely holds in store for us."

-- BILL W.

(from "To Serve Is To Live" AA Grapevine, June 1951)

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The Birthday Plan (what's yours?)

The Birthday Plan provides a way for members to celebrate their anniversary--and express their gratitude--by setting aside a dollar or more for each sober year and sending it off to the General Service Office for AA services worldwide.

Some groups keep a regular stock of Birthday Contribution Envelopes, which can be requested on AA's website or by calling AAWS. Ask your group's Literature chair about it.



Letter From the AA Grapevine Editor

Once we become free of what co-founder, Bill W., called that “merciless obsession” with alcohol, why do some of us return to drinking in the face of such serious consequences? Our Big Book describes it as a “peculiar mental twist.” But one thing is for sure—whether or not we have a difficult time getting or staying sober—the hand of AA is always there for us. In this month’s special section, members share powerful, heartbreaking stories of relapse.

In the story “I Can Handle This,” a woman with eight years of sobriety drinks her husband’s wine while on a vacation in France—an act that leads to years of controlled drinking and misery. In “Back From Hell,” a man with 20 years decides he needs a “break” from AA. The break he gets is not what he had in mind. “She Said She Was Doing Fine” is a sad tale about a member who has a sober friend who knows everyone in AA and seems to have it all, yet drifts away and relapses. And on a trip to Mexico, a man with 27 years gets a powerful urge to drink. Will he tell someone? Or will he keep it to himself? Find out in “High Fever.”

In 2016, Grapevine invites you and your group, group of groups, district and/or area to join in the new Grow Your Grapevine effort throughout the year. For details, see page 7. Get involved! And while you’re at it, please send us your stories of experience, strength and hope at aagrapevine.org/share. We’re especially looking for your experience or your group’s experience with any of our 12 Traditions. And don’t forget to send us your jokes and cartoons. Enjoy the issue, and have a beautiful April.

In fellowship,
The Editor

Upcoming Events & Service Opportunities


Manhattan Share-A-Day 2016

The Age of Miracles is Still With Us



Date: Sunday May 1st
 Time: 8am until 5pm
 Location: Park West High School 525 West 50th
 Enter on West 50th Btw 10th & 11th Avenue
 Transportation: 1, C, E, M, R, F, D, M trains to 50th st
 M50, M11, M104, and M20 Buses
 Child care provided for children ages 3-9 until 3pm
 (Except during meals)
 Breakfast (8-8:45) and lunch (12-12:45) will be served!
 (Wheelchair Accessible)
 ASL interpreting services provided

Speaker Training For Speaking at NON AA Meetings



WHERE:
TRUE NORTH CHURCH
 1101 Lakeland Avenue, Bohemia, NY

WHEN:
June 18, 2016 9am – 1:00pm

Presented by:
 Suffolk County AA General Service and SENY General Service
 For additional information call: Kathie W, 631-475-0639
 Preston 917-796-7263 or Nissa 646-717-7511

There are many opportunities to participate in general service in our area! 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.

Corrections Connection Workshop

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



Carrying the message of recovery to the incarcerated alcoholic

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

In cooperation with
 NYS Department of Corrections and Community Supervision
 Lower Hudson Valley / NYC Region 1

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

Contact Anthony - (914) 265-8173 - corrections@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.

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

Alcoholics Anonymous is a fellowship of men and women who share their experience, strength and hope with each other that they may solve their common problem and help others to recover from alcoholism.

The only requirement for membership is a desire to stop drinking. There are no dues or fees for A.A. membership; we are self-supporting through our own contributions. A.A. is not allied with any sect, denomination, politics, organization or institution; does not wish to engage in any controversy; neither endorses nor opposes any causes. Our primary purpose is to stay sober and help other alcoholics to achieve sobriety.

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SAVE THE DATE SUNDAY, JUNE 26, 2016 A/SN SHARE-A-DAY

THIS IS ACCESSIBILITIES / SPECIAL NEEDS

WHERE: ISS – THE WALTER CROWLEY INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL
 50-40 JACOBUS STREET, ELMHURST, NY 11373

TIME: 10:00 AM – 3:00 PM

LUNCH WILL BE SERVED.



Calendar of Events

Visit www.aaseny.org for complete, up-to-date information. E-mail agenda@aaseny.org to add an event.

05/03/16	7:30 pm	Orange County Grapevine Committee: First Presbyterian Church, Campbell Hall, Rte. 207, Campbell Hall, NY
05/04/16	7:00 pm	District 601, AA's 12 Concepts Meeting: Bronfman Center, 7 W. 10th St., NY, NY b/t University Pl & Fifth Ave
05/8/16	7:00 pm	Staten Island General Service Meeting: Oakwood Heights Community Church, 345 Guyon Ave, Staten Island, NY
05/9/16	7:00 pm	Queens County GSR Boot Camp: Queens Intergroup, 105-29 Metropolitan Avenue, Queens, NY 11375
05/11/16	7:00 pm	Putnam County General Service Meeting: Mount Carmel Baptist Church, 76 Gleneida Avenue, Carmel, NY 10512
05/11/16	7:00 pm	District 602 Meeting: 208 West 13th Street, New York, NY Ask at the desk for meeting room# (<i>Steering Committee meeting @6:45</i>)
05/13/16	7:00 pm	Bronx Upper Manhattan General Service Meeting: Bedford Park Congregational Church, 3008 Bainbridge Avenue, Bronx, NY 10458
05/13/16	9:00 am	Corrections Connection Workshop: Sing Sing Correctional Facility, Quality of Work Life Building, 354 Hunter Street, Ossining, NY 10562
05/14/16	10:00 am	Grapevine/La Viña Workshop: 260 Chestnut Street, West Hempstead, NY 11552
05/14/16	12:00 pm	SENY Archives Committee Meeting: SENY Office, 199 Lincoln Avenue, Bronx, NY 10454
05/14/16	12:00 pm	SENY Service Workshop: Asbury Crestwood United Methodist, 167 Scarsdale Road, Tuckahoe, NY
05/15/16	9:30 am	Asamblea de Distritos Hispanos: El Grupo Fortaleza y Esperanza, 145 Mt Vernon Ave (basement), Mt Vernon, NY 10550
05/17/16	7:00 pm	Orange County General Service Meeting: First Presbyterian Church, Campbell Hall, Rte. 207, Campbell Hall, NY 10916
05/17/16	7:15 pm	SENY PI & CPC Joint Committee Meeting: NY Intergroup, 307 7th Avenue #201, New York, NY 10001
05/18/16	7:30 pm	Brooklyn County General Service Meeting: St. Francis College 180 Remsen St., Brooklyn, NY 11203
05/20/16	8:00 pm	Suffolk County General Service Meeting: True North Church, 1101 Lakeland Avenue, Bohemia, NY 11716
05/22/16	3:00 pm	Sullivan County General Service Meeting: Sullivan County Community College, 112 College Rd., Loch Sheldrake, NY 12759
06/01/16	8:15 pm	District 601, AA's 12 Concepts Meeting: Bronfman Center, 7 W. 10th St., NY, NY b/w University Pl & Fifth Ave
06/05/16	9:00 am	Nassau County Spiritual Breakfast: Long Island Marriott Hotel, 101 James Doolittle Blvd, Uniondale, NY 1155
06/06/16	7:30 pm	SENY Committee Meeting: Church of the Holy Family, Mechler Hall, 2158 Watson Avenue, Bronx, NY 10472
06/11/16	8:30 am	SENY post-Conference Assembly: P.S. 167, 220 E. 76st Street, New York, NY 10021

SENY Officers

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