

Supporting Our Future From the SENY Delegate - Panel 65

You may be reading this during our September 17th election assembly, or sometime after the votes have been tallied and the results are in. In either case it's important to our area's future (and that of AA as a whole) that those we elect have sufficient experience at the area level to carry out their duties. After all, the theme for the 67th General Service Conference is "Supporting Our Future." Some key characteristics that make for well-qualified candidates (from the AA Service Manual, page S51):

- Several years of active participation at the area level as a committee member.
- The ability to make and take suggestions and criticisms, too.
- · Knowledge of AA affairs and of where to find the correct information when they do not know the answers.
- The ability to be open-minded; to sit down with AAs in the area to discuss and act on matters vital to the area, to AA as a whole.

If you're thinking about standing for a position, have you talked with others to get an idea of the time and effort required and the sort of work you will need to do in terms of attending area events regularly? Are you prepared, as is suggested, to do general service work only during your rotation, to place other service activities on hold for a while?

Reading further on this subject matter will help you determine whether or not a candidate is truly qualified. Experience in the past has shown that ego and serving more than one master at the same time have led to problems in terms of leadership capabilities.

Concept IX, on page 34 of the AA Service Manual, starts as follows:

"No matter how carefully we design our service structure of principles and relationships, no matter how well we apportion authority and responsibility, the operating results of our structure can be no better than the personal performance of those who must man it and make it work. Good leadership cannot function well in a poorly designed structure. But weak leadership can hardly function at all, even in the best of structures. But once we have created a basically sound structure, that job is finished, except for occasional refinements."

"With leadership we shall have a continuous problem. Good leadership can be here today and gone tomorrow. Furnishing our service structure with able and willing workers has to be a continuous activity. It is therefore a problem that in its very nature cannot be permanently solved. We must continuously find the right people for our many service tasks. Since our future effectiveness must thus depend upon our ever-new generations of leaders, it seems desirable that we now proceed to define what a good service leader should be, that we carefully indicate in each level of service (think district, county, area, etc. here)...what special skills will always be required; and that we review our present methods of finding and choosing that leadership."

Bill W:s essay "Leadership in A.A.: Ever a Vital Need," on page 36 and following, is a wonderful resource, too. May our area leaders be chosen wisely based on their service capabilities rather than on popularity. Thank you for the opportunity to be of service to SENY for all these years, and to the God of my understanding for granting me the leadership gifts needed to carry out AA's message. Peace and serenity,

Jim W.

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

Supporting Our Future From the SENY Alternate Delegate

"Supporting Our Future" is the theme for the 67th General Service Conference in April 2017, and an invitation to present at the August Manhattan General Service Meeting gave me plenty to think about with regards to what this means to me. I was asked to give a financial overview based on the presentation at the 66th General Service Conference by the General Service Board treasurer, David Morris, a Class A (nonal-coholic) trustee.

There were a few big (scary) takeaways for me. The first is that only 26,500 groups of the 65,741 registered with the General Service Office send Seventh Tradition support to the GSO. That's only two out of every five groups! And that number has been slowly decreasing (42.5% in 2013, 41.5% in 2014, and 40.1% in 2015).

The second is that we as a Fellowship are not fully self-supporting through our own contributions. Seventh Tradition disbursements to GSO from individuals, groups, and other service entities provide only about 75 percent of the funds necessary to cover the programmatic and group services that AA World Services provides each year. The balance comes from the sale of our literature.

And the third was that if we rely on literature sales to cover our costs, given the general outlook in the world of publishing, what does our future look like?

Well, it could be gloomy. But it makes me me think of the Responsibility Statement. Specifically the first line, "I am responsible."

I've been taught that I need to be an active part of my recovery. I can also be an active part of supporting our common future. I can participate in GSO's "Birthday Plan" and celebrate my AA anniversary with a gift of support to the organization that saved my life. I can encourage my home group to support GSO as part of our group's overall anniversary celebrations. I can buy my sponsees subscriptions to the Grapevine for their anniversaries. I can put more in the basket at every meeting I attend. It's not about the money--it's about being responsible.

Yours in service, **John W.**



Learning With My Service Sponsor From the Bronx-Upper Manhattan County DCMC

As my rotation as Bronx Upper Manhattan (BUM) DCMC comes to a close, I find myself thinking back and reflecting on what this service has meant to me.

Early on in general service I was told I should have a service sponsor. The logical question was why? I had a sponsor already. I was informed that a service sponsor is not a replacement for my recovery sponsor but is someone who has been active in general service. They should be well versed in the Twelve Traditions and the Twelve Concepts and be able to respond to my service-related questions.

I met my service sponsor at a wedding more than 22 years ago. She explained that my service as a GSR ensured that our groups were represented and had a voice in AA. As a GSR I had a vote at area assemblies and brought back to my group information that affected AA as a whole. She provided me with the contact information I needed so I could obtain the AA Service Manual and directed me to a GSR orientation. Then came the position of county treasurer. While I was scared, I knew that I could meet the responsibilities. When I was elected DCMC, I told her I wasn't sure I was ready for this responsibility. She replied that God was in charge. She told me that this was not a position for the thin-skinned and that I would need to have a working knowledge of the BUM's Articles of Association and Bylaws, Robert's Rules of Order, and the AA Service Manual in order to be an effective servant.

My service sponsor also reminded me of importance of the Twelve Traditions in service work. The First Tradition taught me that AA's welfare comes first, that my personal ambition would need to be put aside, and that I would have to love our Fellowship more than myself at times. I would have to put the needs of the county above my own. A very humbling experience. The Second Tradition was a reminder that I am but a trusted servant and that I do not govern. As Bill W. said in his Grapevine article "Leadership in A.A: Ever a Vital Need," "Act for us but don't boss us."

I learned that good ideas can come from many sources, even the prideful and angry. I turned to my service sponsor when I had difficulty with overwhelming personalities. I learned about the Twelve Concepts and what an important part they play in doing service.

I am grateful to my service sponsor for provided me with the guidance that I needed and to the Fellowship for trusting me. I am also glad for the spirit of rotation.

In gratitude and service,

Colleen R.

In Love and Service

From the Suffern Group GSR

When I was about a year sober, an annoyingly enthusiastic GSR from a nearby home group repeatedly and relentlessly shared at my home group that our county would soon be hosting SENY's area elections, and that witnessing the Third Legacy Procedure in action would be an incredible event--not to be missed. In retrospect I am grateful that his efforts got me curious enough to attend. That "annoying service person" GSR was right about the Third Legacy Procedure. When the vote went to the hat, I was hooked. I am also grateful that the first trusted servants I met were happy to answer my questions and did not complain (much) that they had traveled three hours to do service in my home town.

I am nearing the end of my two-year commitment as GSR and, since I sometimes struggle with feeling disheartened, annoyed and/or defensive at area assemblies, it's been important for me to remember that warm welcome I had initialy received. I understand that some trusted servants don't appreciate the metaphor, but at times sitting through an assembly truly does feels like a GSR Bootcamp, and the enemy I am learning to fight is the bossy control-freak inside of me who knows exactly how things should be run and sulks when things don't go its way. I can become sad and demoralized when I hear trusted servants complain about having to sit through a workshop, or I hear about the ways our area fails to follow through on promised tasks. I witness how easily we fall into old habits of miscommunication, blame and defensiveness. And I am humbled when I remember that I am not attending SENY functions on my own behalf, but on behalf of the home group that trusts me to carry our group conscience and to bring back information from SENY that supports our primary purpose.

Luckily I have the Steps (especially Step Ten) to help process all that. Just as important, our service structure provides seasoned veterans who are willing to help me on this spiritual path when I get stuck or lost. My service sponsor has listened to me vent and has offered her perspective and helpful suggestions. Our area officers as well as old timers in my home group have taken me aside after my reports and shared their experience and given me a sense of the history of some of the issues involved. Listening to them has helped me to accept that I still have a lot to learn. And that's okay! I do know a few things for sure. On assembly days I don't want to worry about losing "me-time," or to take sides based on personality or my own ego. I do want to be open to doing what's best for our fel-

lowship as a whole. And I do want to be willing to give back what's been freely given to me.

In his welcoming remarks to the 65th General Service Conference, (Delegate Conference Chair) Michael J. declared that "Alcoholics Anonymous is a society of drunks in action, so excited by the opportunity to enjoy this second chance at life that we forgo our own comfort to save the lives of our brothers and sisters" (italics mine). I want to hold on to that excitement, and trust that when service feels like a burden I will humbly seek the AA attitude adjustment that can get me right again.

I am grateful to be a member of this fellowship. I look forward to the SENY area elections, and using the right of decision my home group has entrusted to me to help choose the area officers who at this time are best qualified and able to serve Alcoholics Anonymous in Southeastern New York.

Anne L.

Onward!

From the SENY PI Committee Chair

I wanted to take this opportunity to say how fulfilling and enjoyable it has been serving SENY as Public Information (PI) Committee chair for the past two years. When I began this committment, after accepting our area chair's invitation, I was super nervous--but that was taken away almost immediately by the help and encouragement I received from countless people. From my very first PI committment hosting a table at a health fair, I knew this was the right gig for me! I felt like I was really helping AA continue to reach, in some small way, those who may need us.

There is so much more I could say about my time in this position but it all boils down to "Thank you". Thank you HP, thank you SENY!

A special round of thanks goes out to our SENY PI Committee members, to our CPC Committee, to the New York Intergroup PI Committee, and to all the PI volunteers that have helped carry the message to those who still suffer. I couldn't have done any of this without you all.

Now let's finish out the year strong!

Love, and always in service, **Nisaa A.**

Synergies: Step Nine, Tradition Nine, and Concept NineFrom the SENY Chair

Justice (some might say discipline) (Step 9), spiritual simplicity (Tradition 9) and vision (Concept 9) are the underlying principles for the ninth in the list of each of our Three Legacies of Service. I have found it difficult at times to see the connections between a specific set of Steps, Traditions and Concepts; but when I study them more closely, I start to perceive the synergies that connect one to another.

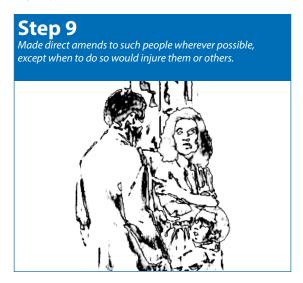
It appears odd to most people that an organization the size of AA isn't organized. I mean, how could we not be organized, right? However, Tradition 9 has allowed AA to be "a society without organization, animated only by the spirit of service – a true fellowship." The idea that the only way to have a true fellowship is to be disorganized is a crazy idea. How does this principle, which shows us how to love each other, translate from the AA group to the rest of the relationships in our lives? For me the answer is that if I am willing to not try to control or "organize" others but to let God do the organizing, I have a chance of developing good relationships with one and all.

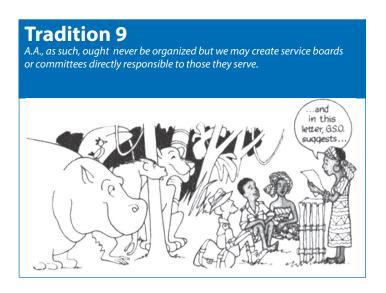
Since we are not organized, how do we get anything done? The answer can be found in two words: divine order. And how does Tradition Nine relate to Step Nine? The way I see it is, my life gets an unimpeded flow of divine love within the triangle that includes God, you and me. Whenever a relationship within that triangle is disturbed, I can contribute to restoring order by making the unmade amend that sent things out of order in the first place. Step Nine asks the question: "After making amends, how do I stay reconciled with you today?" Tradition Nine answers that question by implying that I remain aligned with divine order by NOT trying to control or "organize" that triangle that binds God and you to me--so that I might be available for service to God and to you.

Tradition Nine seems at face value to be all about the operational functionality of the Fellowship, but when I look deeper it becomes clear that it is about much more. Finally, Concept Nine prepares me for leadership through its parallel Tradition and Step: having made all my amends, I am now aligned with divine order and thereby capable of becoming a spiritual example of good leadership and vision for the Fellowship.

In love and service,

Rick W.





Growing Up in Service

From the Accessibilities/Special Needs Committee Chair

As I begin the last months of my commitment as Accessibility/Special Needs (A/SN) Chair, I am reflecting on how much I've grown and learned in the past year and a half.

When I first started this commitment I was nervous, and flat out scared I wouldn't do the commitment "right." My service sponsor, Joanne F., from Suffolk, lovingly reminded me, as did our SENY Chair Rick W., that there is no wrong or right way to handle a commitment in AA. So I charged forward and what a ride! My first A/SN meeting, which I was convinced no one would show up for, was well attended, and the county chairs have kept coming all through this term. At one point I had stepped down, as work obligations had to come first. Then, with the help of our SENY chair, we devised a way for me to come back and finish my term. I think the event that had the biggest impact on me was the Northeast Regional Forum (NERF) in 2015. This forum really brought a lot

I think the event that had the biggest impact on me was the Northeast Regional Forum (NERF) in 2015. This forum really brought a lot of people off the pedestals I had put them on in my mind, and they became approachable. Talking with staff members from the General Service Office, trustees, and our regional delegate was inspiring. Their focus was on us, general service representatives (GSRs).

We had our bi-annual Share-a-Day, celebrating the A/SN committee's history of service from the early 1990's up through today. Let's continue to bring the message of hope that is Alcoholics Anonymous to all those who seek it--regardless of age, illness, or ability!

Michelle E.

The 2017 General Service Conference Theme: "Supporting Our Future"

The topics for presentations, discussions, and workshops relating to this theme are:

"Growth"

- Diversity Outreach and Attraction
- Safety An Important Consideration
- Communication Today and Tomorrow

"Participation"

- · Fellowship vs Membership
- · Leadership: I am Responsible
- Is You Voice Heard?

"Contributions"

- Spirituality and Money
- Fully Self-supporting our Obligations

In the spirit of unity, Area 49 groups and their members are encouraged to discuss and reflect upon these topics and the future of support for all levels of service in AA.

Concept 9

Good service leaders, together with sound and appropriate methods of choosing them, are at all levels indispensable for our future functioning and safety. The primary world service leadership once exercised by the founders of A.A. must necessarily be assumed by the Trustees of the General Service Board of Alcoholics Anonymous.



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Save the Date!

March 24-26, 2017: the 49th SENY Convention (in an at exciting new location!)

With the 2017 SENY Convention just 6 months away, it's time to calendar the weekend of March 24-26. This will be SENY's 49th area convention with workshops on service, recovery and unity – as well as ample time for fellowship and fun.

Our exciting new venue, the Renaissance Westchester Hotel in West Harrison, bordering White Plains, is four miles from a Metro-North station. This beautiful hotel is in a retreat-like setting and offers extensive fellowship space and new opportunities. Here's a quick update of planning committee activities so far:

- All convention committee chair positions were quickly filled by trusted servants from across Area 49 at the kick-off meeting on July 16.
- The convention budget, prepared by John W, 2017 Convention Treasurer (and past delegate, Panel 57) was approved at the August 20 meeting.
- The theme of the convention is "Supporting Our Future" and it will be reflected in workshops and other activities.
- Details for early registration and hotel reservations will be available soon.
- The publicity committee has designed the 2017 logo (shown above) and will be providing regular updates for groups. A note on the logo: yes, there are exactly 12 steps in the illustration. We counted! Many thanks to Robin F, GSR, Croton Group in Westchester, for her just-right design.

As Convention Chair, I am honored to facilitate the monthly planning meetings and coordinate the planning process and very glad to be constantly reminded that in AA, we don't have to do anything alone.

Dates for upcoming convention planning meetings at the SENY office in the Bronx:

Sunday, Sept. 18

Saturday, Oct. 15

Sunday, Nov. 20

Saturday, Dec. 17.

All meetings are at 2 pm, and you're all invited! In service,

Janice M

From the AA Grapevine and the General Service Office

The Birthday Plan (what's yours?)

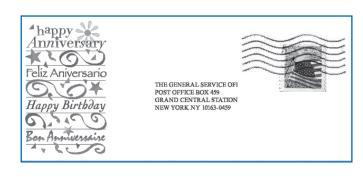
The Birthday Plan provides a way for members to celebrate their anniversary—and express their gratitude—by setting aside a dollar or more for each sober year and sending it off to the General Service Office for AA services worldwide.

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.

In terms of its history, the Birthday Plan was conceived during a coffee break at the Oklahoma State Convention in 1954. Delegate Ab A. was "inspired," he later said, by fellow A.A. Ted R., who had "the great idea" that members might like to celebrate their sobriety by "giving it away to G.S.O.," at the rate of a dollar a sober year, on their A.A. birthdays. Ab checked out the suggestion with members back home in Tulsa; the idea took hold and snowballed with spectacular results: Contributions nearly doubled inside the first year. The concept spread quickly across the U.S. and Canada, and in 1956 the General Service Conference approved the Anniversary Fund Plan, whereby older members would remind other A.A.s of their responsibility to G.S.O.

Speaking at the A.A. state meeting in Great Bend, Kansas, in 1956, Ab explained, "The way we approach these oldtimers is this: We ask them how they would like to do a little Twelfth Step work with money... We alcoholics are blessed with two birthdays: On the first birthday God gave us life and a soul, and we receive gifts. Along came old John Barleycorn and misjudgment, and we lost our soul; we lost it and we almost lost our life. Then this great philosophy of A.A. came along and through it we eventually found our soul, and for that we should give of ourselves in gratitude."

(Excerpts from Box 4-5-9, Vol. 62, No. 3 / Fall 2016)



Today, members still express gratitude for their sobriety with a Birthday Contribution. Some members contrib- ute a dollar for each year of their sobriety, while others give a penny for each day of their sobriety — some give more, but the amount that the General Service Board can accept from an individual member is limited to \$3,000 for any year. Many AA's like to make birthday contributions to their local service entities as well.

"Think about what you could and should do, and remember that alcoholism is a family business: your children and grandchildren are stockholders and may not know it yet. What you invest today in this Fellowship will insure that the hand of A.A. will be there when and if a member of your family needs it." (Stanley K., Temple, Texas, May 2000)

I am learning from experience how difficult it is to talk about, let alone get real interest in, the fact that we have a world-wide responsibility for the maintenance and growth of A.A. Ours is a program of shared responsibility, as well as shared experience, strength, and hope. I believe it's vital to our spiritual well-being for each of us to take on our part of that responsibility, in proportion with our individual means.... Let's all of us who owe our lives to A.A. give more as we grow more." (F. F., Bethesda, Maryland, October 1972)



WRITE FOR THE AA GRAPEVINE WORKSHOP





Write It for AA's Grapevine Magazine, Our Meeting in Print Come to District 608's Writing Workshop!

Saturday, November 5th 10:00 am to 12:30 pm Doors Open @ 9:30 am

Hudson Guild 441 West 26th Street - Dan Carpenter B Room (Between 9th &10th Aves) Wheelchair Accessible

No Writing Experience Required! Win a free subscription to the GRAPEVINE! Breakfast, Paper & Pens will be provided

Bring your friends, sponsor and sponsees!

Upcoming Events & Service Opportunities



Long Island Spirituality Through Service (LISTS)

It's that time again! Long Island Spirituality Through Service (LISTS) is a workshop celebrating spirituality through service in Alcoholics Anonymous. This year's workshop is hosted by Suffolk County.

Now, if you've been to any one LISTS workshop, you definitely have not seen them all. Each year the venue, program and features change according to the creative inspiration of the people in charge of planning the event, and of those carrying it out. There have been guided outdoor meditations, skits, AA Jeopardy, service fairs and the like in the past--and we'll be seeing some of that this fall as well.

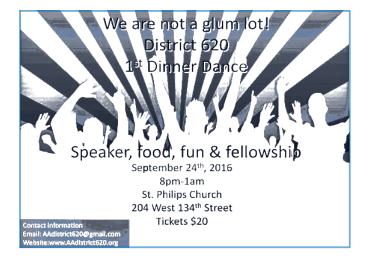
For yours truly, participating in the planning of LISTS has been a very satisfying endeavor. I've been to the Intergroup locations of Queens, Nassau and Suffolk counties for the planning meetings. I've made great friendships with others who participate in planning this event, and continue to. It's one of the many great ways to knit yourself into the fabric of general service within South East New York (SENY).

It's also a great way to introduce newcomers to service below the group level. Think about taking a nice drive in the country on a sparkly October Saturday to partake of the experience, strength and hope of people who've stayed sober over the years (and decades) by extending their hands in service and by carrying AA's message of recovery to those alcoholics who have yet to come into the rooms

Yours in service,

Cathy M., LISTS publicity chair

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.



"Beyond Your Wildest Dreams"

2016 Bill W. Dinner

November 12, 2016 ~ 7:00pm

New York Hilton Hotel - (335 Avenue of the Americas ~ NYC 10019

Grand Ballroom, 3rd Floor

8125.00 per ticket

Free Special Events

❖ Old Timers Afternoon Meeting 1:00 - 3:00pm
 ❖ Bill's Own Story (AA Conference approved video) 3:30 - 4:30pm

HOSTED BY STATEN ISLAND, ANDY V., CHAIR
PROCEEDS OF THE BILL W. DINNER SUPPORT NY INTER-GROUP'S
TWELFTH-STEP WORK



ANNUAL UNITY BREAKFAST

GREAT FOOD, FELLOWSHIP AND FUN



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WWW.GRAYMOORCENTER.ORG

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT: JIMMY Z. 914-419-6932

Calendar of Events Visit www.aaseny.org for complete, up-to-date information. E-mail agenda@aaseny.org to add an event.						
09/18/16	9:30 am	Asamblea de Distritos Hispanos: SENY Office, 199 Lincoln Avenue, Bronx, NY 10454				
09/18/16	10:00 am	SENY Corrections Committee Meeting: 199 Lincoln Avenue, Bronx, NY 1045409/18/16 (SENY Office)				
09/18/16	10:00 am	SENY Treatment Facilities Committee Meeting: NY Intergroup, 307 7th Avenue #201, New York, NY 10001				
09/18/16	2:00 pm	2017 SENY Convention Committee Meeting: 199 Lincoln Avenue, Bronx, NY 1045409/18/16 (SENY Office)				
09/18/16	3:00 pm	Sullivan General Service Meeting: MSullivan County Community College, 112 College Rd., Loch Sheldrake, NY 12759				
09/19/16	7:30 pm	Nassau County Concepts Workshop: 361 Hempstead Turnpike, West Hempstead, NY 11552 (Nassau Intergroup Office)				
09/20/16	7:00 pm	Orange General Service Meeting: First Presbyterian Church, Campbell Hall, Rte. 207, Campbell Hall, NY 10916				
09/20/16	7:15 pm	SENY PI & CPC Joint Committee Meeting: NY Intergroup, 307 7th Avenue #201, New York, NY 10001				
09/21/16	7:30 pm	Brooklyn County General Service Meeting: St. Francis College, 180 Remsen St., Brooklyn, NY 11201				
09/21/16	7:30 pm	Westchester County General Service Meeting: Memorial Methodist Church, 250 Bryant Avenue, White Plains, NY 10605				
09/21/16	8:00 pm	District 814 La Viña Workshop: Grupo AA de New Rochelle, 217 Union Ave, New Rochelle, NY 10801				
09/24/16	2-8:30 pm	Westchester Share-an-Evening: 250 Bryant Avenue, White Plains, NY 10605				
09/24/16	3:30 pm	District 404 Writer's Workshop: Our Lady of Mt Carmel Church (Cafeteria), 275 North 8th St, Brooklyn, NY 11211				
09/24/16	8:00 pm	District 620 First Dinner Dance: St. Philip's Church, 204 West 134th Street, New York, NY 10030				
09/25/16	1:00 pm	District 714 Service Workshop: El Grupo Asta Aquí Llegamos, 448 College Ave, Bronx, NY 10454				
10/1/16	3:00 pm	Manhattan Service Workshop: Seafarer's House, 123 East 15th Street, New York, NY 10003				
10/3/16	7:30 pm	SENY Area 49 Committee, Meeting: Church of the Holy Family, 2158 Watson Avenue, Bronx, NY 10472 (new DCM Orientation at 7pm)				
10/4/16	7:00 pm	Orange County Grapevine Committee Meeting: First Presbyterian Church, Campbell Hall, Rte. 207, Campbell Hall, NY 10916				
10/4/16	8:15 pm	District 601, AA 12 Concepts Meeting: Bronfman Center, 7 W. 10th St., NY, NY 10014 (b/w University Place & Fifth Ave)				
10/8/16	12:00 pm	SENY Archives Committee Meeting: 199 Lincoln Avenue, Bronx, NY 1045409/18/16 (SENY Office)				
10/9/16	10:00 am	SENY Corrections Committee Meeting: 199 Lincoln Avenue, Bronx, NY 1045409/18/16 (SENY Office)				

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