



Informed, Not Instructed From the SENY Delegate - Panel 67

Thanks so much to all who participated in helping me prepare for my first General Service Conference. It's been an awesome process, and as I write this, I am counting down the last few days until I leave for Rye, New York. That means I've been struggling with just staying in today, and so my sponsor suggested I reread Step Three. This alcoholic still needs to remember the basics and to keep things simple.

I received a great reminder today in an e-mail from the delegate of Area 56, who is the chair of the Convention Literature Committee. She wrote: "I hope your final preparations for the Conference are going well. Just remember, they will never be perfect and they aren't supposed to be. The work of the committee is to pool our thinking and our inspiration to come up with an informed group conscience. And that means each of us just does the best we can...I am looking forward to working with you and seeing how the committee comes together. I believe that we are all there for a reason, which may not become obvious for a while, but this is the committee that is supposed to be and you are supposed to be a member. For real."

So while I have reviewed all 1,277 pages of background material, studied all the background material for my two committees, read each of the 316 questionnaires returned so far, reread chapters 6, 7, and 8 in The AA Service Manual, as well as the Concept III and IX essays and the Conference Charter, I must remind myself that this is a spiritual process and not a final exam.

I'm about to be the 34th representative of SENY who's had the honor and privilege of voting at the Conference on behalf of what's in the best interest of our Fellowship as a whole. And for that, I am most grateful.

Yours in service,
John 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

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

General inquiries: info@aaseny.org

Call: 718-665-1253

"Supporting Our Future"

Theme of AA's 2017 General Service Conference

La Asamblea de Nosotros? (part 1/2) From the SENY Alternate Delegate

Upon completion of his brief, the Chair introduced the Secretary (el Secretario) for a reading of the minutes from the last session of the Asamblea and the Treasurer (el Tesorero) presented the Financials (la presentación de las finanzas). Once these were accepted, the Chair (el CMCD) addressed the body with a short report of his activities and progress on various initiatives since the last reunión. This was followed by a report from the Alternate DCMC (CMCD Alterno). The SENY Alternate Delegate (yours truly) was then given the opportunity and privilege of addressing the asamblea with a concise report on his activities, announcements and upcoming events.

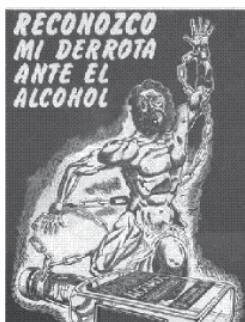
Next up were the DCM reports followed by reports from the Hispanic Intergroups and Central Offices, a 7th Tradition collection, and a succession of committee chairs making presentations on past and upcoming events and projects. These presentations included: the 33rd Hispanic Share-a-Day, the 37th Convención Hispana, the Hispanic liaison to the SENY 2017 Convention, CPC, Agenda, Corrections, La Viña, Accessibilities/Special Needs, Web, Public Information, and Enlace.

RSGs (GSRs) in attendance were then asked to inform the body on group activities (tiempo para los RSGs), followed by Old Business (Puntos Pendientes) and New Business (Puntos Varios Y Sugerencias) brought to the floor for consideration, discussion, and/or vote.

Amidst this seeming cauldron of activity I felt a loving welcome suited for the return of a long lost and beloved brother or son. The reception that you gave me, full of pleasure and warmth, made me feel as if I had returned home. (La recepción que me dieron llena de placer y calidez me hizo sentir como si hubiera regresado a casa).

As the motion to adjourn was seconded, I felt such a caressing and safe feeling: that my sobriety was being protected and enhanced and that our future and the future of Alcoholics Anonymous is in such good hands at the Asamblea of the Hispanic community. (Sentí que el futuro de Alcohólicos Anónimos está en tan buenas manos en la asamblea de la comunidad hispana.)

Manny A.



Goings On From the SENY Area Chair

I'm excited to hear our delegate John W's report back from the Conference at the June 17 SENY Assembly in Queens! Invite all your AA friends to hear the news from the Conference. Continental breakfast and lunch will be served. I mention food because I think of all the people who got sober even when they only came for coffee and donuts. Who knows what future trusted servant is out there who'll come on June 17 just for lunch?

On April 3, this recovering lush was touched by the SENY Committee working in unity to provide greater support for AAs to get to the Northeast Regional Forum (NERF, and aka the "GSO Road Show"), June 2-4 in Mars, PA. Per the Committee meeting minutes:

The area committee has voted to reimburse any driver or any member who took transportation by any means to get to NERF 2017 up to \$100, provided that they can prove they were at the event with receipts.

Registration for this event can be found on aa.org and is free. The first time I attended NERF was in 2003 on Grand Island. I was intrigued! We are fortunate in Southeastern NY to be able to drop by the GSO office pretty much whenever we want. Not so in other areas. The first Forum was in 1975, created to bring the Office to the groups.

A note: working with this panel of trusted servants (that's you!) is amazing. I am so happy to be:

Your lush-ious Chair,
Jane E.



Conceptions From the DCMC, Suffolk County

"It meant I would have to throw several lifelong conceptions out of the window". Alcoholics Anonymous, p. 42.

I loved the SENY Convention this year, and I especially loved the radical change in venue. Although I have struggled with change most of my life, in AA I have learned - slowly - that change is not necessarily a bad thing. When I did the walk-through with the Convention Committee two weeks before the event, I felt that there was a rustic spirituality about the place, in spite of the several issues (especially those concerning Accessibilities) that needed to be addressed.

My joy continued throughout the weekend, and the Daily Reflections meeting on Sunday morning clinched it. When John W. announced at the next SENY Committee meeting that we were going back to the Marriott next year (for a number of very good and well thought-out reasons), initially my heart sank. I pouted for a couple of minutes, but then I had my moment of clarity. These moments are one of the greatest gifts that sobriety has given me.

That moment of conception-throwing was not about change; it was about spirituality. My conception, no matter how subconscious, had been that spirituality was somehow connected to the physical environment. As I listened to our Delegate, I thought of the words he often quotes from his sponsor years ago: "Your life will get as big as the program you're willing to work".

GRAPEVINE Quote of the Day

April 22, 2017

"I live in the Three Legacies of Unity, Recovery, and Service, and have gained 36 spiritual principles to help me through life one day at a time."

"Get in the Car," Gig Harbor, Wash., April 2011
AA Grapevine



If my spirituality depends upon trees and bunny rabbits, I'm in trouble. But if it depends upon God, my fellows, and the 36 Principles of AA, then I have a very good chance not to drink today. Thank you, John; thank you, AA!

In Love and Service,

Tom B.

Spirituality and Fellowship Pre- vailed

From the 2017 SENY Convention Committee

The 49th SENY Convention, March 24-26, was amazing, starting with the 1,126 attendees, 506 who were pre-registered and 620 on-site registrants. The Banquet sold out early and exceeded expectations with 290 diners filling the Grand Ballroom on Saturday night. Reservations for group-rate rooms at our new hotel, Renaissance Westchester, also met expectations.

Numbers aside, a happy, joyous, and free spirit prevailed at Area 49's major annual event. The theme "Supporting Our Future" was explored in workshops and panels, by speakers at main meetings, as well as in a Friday night immersive theater performance.

Spirituality and fellowship mixed. A main meeting speaker expressed the overall tone of love and gratitude at the event when he said, "God gave me you guys, and you've given me my life back."



As members of the Convention 2017 Planning Committee, we felt privileged to do service. Here we share some personal thoughts about what we gained from the experience:

- A great sense of mentoring
- It forced me to grow, to crack the shell of fear, and to work as part of a team
- My sobriety has been enriched ten-fold
- Faith allowed us to see our plans transformed into reality
- It was about providing valuable information and new opportunities for A.A. members to enhance their experience in Recovery, Unity and Service
- I grew in humility by having to ask for help many times
- The gift of the spirit is to Pass It On
- I'm just happy to have been present
- I got a hand-made 'Learn to Listen' button, and that's a message from God I needed!
- My first convention gave me a needed fresh start; I wanted be there this year
- It was a wonderful learning experience, and we had fun, too!

With Gratitude,

Your trusted servants for the 2017 SENY Convention

The 2017 General Service Conference

The 67th General Service Conference

The General Service Conference was established to maintain a link among all AA groups, and to help AA effectively and consistently carry its message in ways impossible for local groups to do, yet important to the fellowship. At its heart is the communication through GSR's and other elected representatives to the area's Delegate who in turn represents the area's conscience and spirit of service on questions and issues before the Conference.

The following questionnaire was prepared by our delegate John W. for Area 49's consideration, and is based on the final agenda of this year's Conference.

- 1. ARCHIVES:** Consider proposal for a new publication: *Unity in Action: Bill W.'s General Service Conference Talks, 1951 – 1970* (working title)
- 2. COOPERATION WITH THE PROFESSIONAL COMMUNITY:** Consider request that the title of the pamphlet "Is There an Alcoholic in the Workplace?" be changed to "Is There a Problem Drinker in the Workplace?"
- 3. FINANCE:** Consider request to add text to the pamphlet "Self-Support: Where Money and Spirituality Mix" indicating there is no dollar limit to the amount a group may contribute.
- 4. LITERATURE:** Consider request for revisions to the pamphlet "Questions and Answers on Sponsorship."
- 5. LITERATURE:** Consider request to retire the pamphlet "Too Young."
- 6. LITERATURE:** Consider requests for literature and/or language regarding safety.
- 7. LITERATURE:** Discuss request for a revision to the pamphlet "The A.A. Group."
- 8. POLICY/ADMISSIONS:** Consider a request to add a "YPAA Subcommittee" to the service structure.



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 Your Voice Heard?

"Contributions"

- Spirituality and Money
- Fully Self-Supporting Our Obligations
- Apathy and the Power of the Purse

In the spirit of unity, Area 49 groups and their members are encouraged to discuss and reflect upon these topics,

New Service Material Available

The General Service Office has developed two new service pieces that are now available to the Fellowship upon request (in English, French and Spanish). Service material differs from Conference-approved literature in that it has not come about through Conference Advisory Action. It is produced when there is a need for readily available information on a specific subject. Service material reflects A.A. group experience as well as specific and timely information that is subject to change.

The first new service piece is titled "Safety and A.A.: Our Common Welfare" and shares some of the experience groups have had in ensuring the safety of the group and its members. As noted in the opening of this service piece, "Safety is an important issue within A.A. — one that all groups and members can address to develop workable solutions and help keep our meetings safe based on the fundamental principles of the Fellowship."

The second service piece is an Accessibilities Checklist, designed for meetings and groups, to help determine how accessible a meeting place is and to help diminish the trials that people with access barriers may encounter. The checklist reflects the experience many groups have had in developing meeting spaces that are accessible to all alcoholics.

To obtain service material, please contact G.S.O. at (212) 870-3400 or email the Literature Desk.

Supporting Our Future: *The Buck in the Basket*

How does the newcomer come to learn what passing the basket is all about?

The first thing that comes to mind is what I hear in meetings: various scripted or impromptu comments such as “Give what you can but if you can’t, keep coming back” and “We need you more than we need your money”. In reality, even a penny in the basket will do if that’s all I have to contribute today. My contribution, regardless of the amount, gives me a voice in AA and ensures it will continue to be here for the next drunk that staggers in.

There’s a story about a homeless man who collected bottles so that he could contribute towards making sure that the meeting would be there for him and for others. It reminds me that the Seventh Tradition is as much about participation as it is about self-support.

Some groups in Area 49 pass the basket twice, once for group expenses and once to support AA service entities. This is one way of clarifying what the money in the basket is for. Other groups suggest to newcomers that they not contribute until they become members of AA.

When I came to the Greenwich Village Group, I saw people putting a dollar in the basket so I did too. Since then it’s been suggested to me that I contribute more when I can; so now I typically put in \$2, and sometimes more. This is still far less than the cost of a drink in 1994 when I got sober, let alone now. In most of the meetings I attend, a single dollar remains the typical contribution in the basket—as if that dollar were as capable of supporting AA services today as the dollar I contributed when I came in.

Many AAs believe that in order to become truly self-supporting, we need to be able to rely on income from the Fellowship only. That “buck in the basket” is unlikely to get us there. Which made me wonder: just how long has that \$1 been the standard for contributing in the basket?

I contacted the General Service Office and told the person who answered that I was curious about when that \$1 in the basket became the standard. He passed me on to someone in GSO Archives who warmly welcomed my question, as though it were simply the most important question in the world. I was told that I would receive some material on the subject within a couple of days—and I did, a sheaf about half an inch thick! And here’s what it revealed.

In 1941, Bill Wilson realized that for the first time, Alcoholic Foundation had to ask the AA groups for assistance rather than consider outside contributions.

Although the sale of literature had begun to produce income to help support other service activities of the Foundation, it wasn’t yet enough. Two members were dispatched to travel out among the AA groups and explain the need. It was expressed in a simple message: “if each group (sends) the Foundation a sum equal to \$1 per member per year, this might eventually carry (the) office, without other assistance.” I think it must have been at this time and in this way that the “buck” found its way into the basket—both as a response to that first appeal for self-support and as a symbol of our desire as AA’s to take full responsibility for our own affairs.

By 1961, the \$1 plan born in 1941 had morphed into the “Birthday Plan”, which was recommended to the Fellowship by the 1961 GSC as follows: “under the Plan, members contribute \$1 per year for each year of sobriety on the occasion of their A.A. anniversaries.” By the following year, some delegates were even suggesting that larger groups could have “B.P. chairmen”, such was the excitement at the new plan.

Now for a little math. In 1948, in a Grapevine article, Bill wrote: “the A.A. member who really meets his group responsibilities finds himself liable for about \$5 a month on the average.” Of those five dollars, two were allocated for each member’s share of the group’s monthly operating expenses. If the “buck” of the 1950’s is now worth about 25 cents, that means that today each of us would need to ensure that we contribute at least \$20 a month to the basket, just to cover the cost of our own seat in AA. And that’s assuming that my share of the monthly cost of my group’s operating expenses remains \$8 or less—in this age of rental costs, doubtful.

I believe that if each of us did a bit of math along these lines, the result could very well be a widespread renewal of our connection to the 7th Tradition, throughout the Fellowship. It would make it personal and real for each of us, bringing home the knowledge that “we cannot skimp when the treasurer of our group passes the hat.”

It’s up to each one of us to communicate the 7th Tradition to our fellow/fella AAs, in the hopes that eventually more than 40-45% of groups (on average yearly) will contribute to AA services. Greater participation will not only sustain our 12th Step work, but will expand and deepen the informed conscience of our Fellowship.

What more can we do to invite the silent majority to assume a voice in the affairs of AA?

Domi E. (from a 2008 NERAASA presentation)

GRAPEVINE News

From the Executive Editor/Publisher

What's New For May 2017

Making Amends



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Your story could be selected for a special section about **SERVICE** in 2018

NOW ACCEPTING ARTICLES FOR UPCOMING ISSUES

AA in the Military

Did you ever serve in the military sober? Were you ever stationed overseas or on a ship while trying to stay sober? What were AA meetings like in the military? What were some of the challenges? Is that where you found AA? Share some experiences about being AA while serving your country (Due: May 5).

Service During the Holidays

December is a great time of year to reach out to alcoholics and do service. What are some things you do to stay sober? What are the ways you stay grateful during December and the New Year? Share your experience! (Due: July 5).

Visit aagrapevine.org/contribute

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Upcoming Events & Workshops

Orange County General Service

Spiritual Breakfast

Supporting Our Future **May 7th 2017**
Growth, Participation, & Contributions



9 AM - 12 NOON

Kuhl's Highland House
512 HIGHLAND AVE
MIDDLETOWN NY 10940
TICKETS AVAILABLE \$20
CONTACT ANY ORANGE GSR
JENNY (845) 258-9102

The Joy of Service! Enlightning, Engaging, Informing

A service workshop featuring speakers from groups in Brooklyn, Manhattan, Nassau, Queens, Staten Island, and Suffolk

*Do you want to help carry the message to the still suffering?
Have you been thinking about ways to help AA?*

Saturday, May 20
9:00 am-1:00 pm

Hibernian Hall
85 Grand Ave, Massapequa, NY 11758



Sullivan County SPIRITUAL BREAKFAST

May 21, 2017
9:00 am - 12:00 pm

Save the Date!
Location to be announced




A.A. REGIONAL FORUMS

NORTHEAST REGIONAL FORUM

hosted by your General Service Board

June 2-4, 2017

DoubleTree by Hilton
Pittsburgh Cranberry Hotel, Mars, PA

Register online at aa.org

Nassau County General Service 33rd Unity Breakfast



Presents:
82 Years of AA
Supporting Our Future

To be held at the
Long Island Marriott
101 James Doolittle Blvd.
Uniondale, NY 11553
June 4, 2017
9AM to 1PM
Doors open @ 8am
Tickets are \$30.00 per person

For information please contact Marty K. (516) 640-7964
"What We Cannot Do Alone We Can Do Together"



Brooklyn County Share-a-Day

Saturday, June 24
9:00 am - 5:00 pm

St. Francis de Sales School for the Deaf
260 Eastern Parkway, Brooklyn, NY

Upcoming deadlines for submission of articles and flyers to *The Link*:

Sunday, June 5 (for distribution at the June 17 Area Assembly meeting)
Sunday, September 3 (for distribution at the September 16 Area Assembly meeting)

2017 Area Committee Meetings and Assemblies

5/1/17	7:30 pm	Area Committee	Church of the Holy Family, 2158 Watson Avenue, Bronx, NY 10472
6/5/17	7:30 pm	Area Committee	Church of the Holy Family, 2158 Watson Avenue, Bronx, NY 10472
6/17/17*	8:30 am	Post-Conference Assembly	<i>Queens County:</i> Aviation High School, 45-30 36th Street, Long Island City, NY 11101
9/16/17*	8:30 am	Area Assembly	<i>Orange County:</i> TBA
10/2/17	7:30 pm	Area Committee	Church of the Holy Family, 2158 Watson Avenue, Bronx, NY 10472
11/6/17	7:30 pm	Area Committee	Church of the Holy Family, 2158 Watson Avenue, Bronx, NY 10472
11/11/17*	8:30 am	Area Assembly	<i>Putnam County:</i> TBA
12/4/17	7:30 pm	Area Committee	Church of the Holy Family, 2158 Watson Avenue, Bronx, NY 10472

* these dates are tentative

County General Service Meetings

Please visit www.aaseny.org for the most up-to-date information

Bronx-Upper Manhattan (2nd Wed, every other month)	Bedford Park Congregational Church, 3008 Bainbridge Avenue, Bronx, NY 10458	6/20/17	7:00 pm
Brooklyn (3d Wednesday, every other month)	St. Francis College, 180 Remsen St., Brooklyn, NY 11201	5/17/17	7:30 pm
Hispanic Districts (3d Sunday, monthly)	Location rotates - please see aaseny.org or aacdhseny49.org each month	5/21/17	9:30 am
Manhattan (3d Tuesday, every other month)	Seafarer's House, 123 East 15th Street, New York, NY 10003	6/20/17	6:30 pm
Nassau (3d Monday, every other month)	Nassau Intergroup Office, 361 Hempstead Tpke, West Hempstead, NY 11552	6/19/17	7:30 pm
Orange (3d Tuesday, monthly)	First Presbyterian Church, Campbell Hall, Rte. 207, Campbell Hall, NY 10916	5/16/17	7:00 pm
Putnam (2nd Tuesday, monthly)	Mt. Carmel Baptist Church, 76 Gleneida Avenue, Carmel, NY 10512	5/09/17	7:00 pm
Queens (last Monday, every other month)	Saint Mary Gate of Heaven Church, 101-18 104th St., Queens, NY 11416	6/26/17	7:30 pm
Rockland (3d Wednesday, monthly)	Elim Alliance Church, 40 Lake Road, Valley Cottage, NY 10989	5/17/17	7:30 pm
Staten Island (second Sunday, monthly)	Oakwood Heights Community Church, 345 Guyon Ave, Staten Island, NY 10306	5/14/17	7:00 pm
Suffolk (3d Friday, monthly)	True North Church, 1101 Lakeland Avenue, Bohemia, NY 11716	5/19/17	8:00 pm
Sullivan (4th Sunday, monthly)	Sullivan County Community College, 112 College Rd., Loch Sheldrake, NY 12759	5/28/17	3:00 pm
Westchester (3d Wednesday, monthly)	Memorial Methodist Church, 250 Bryant Avenue, White Plains, NY 10605	5/17/17	7:30 pm

Standing Committee & District Meetings (recurring)

Please visit www.aaseny.org for the most up-to-date information

Accessibility and Special Needs Comm. (3d Thurs, monthly)	NY Intergroup Office, 307 7th Ave. #201, New York, NY 10001	6/2/17	7:30 pm
PI & CPC Joint Comm. Meeting (last Tuesday, monthly)	NY Intergroup Office, 307 7th Ave. #201, New York, NY 10001	5/30/17	7:15 pm
District 404 (second Sunday, monthly)	Greenpoint Reformed Church, 136 Milton Street, Brooklyn, NY 11222	5/14/17	5:30 pm
District 601: 12 Concepts Workshop (first Wed, monthly)	Bronfman Center, 2nd Floor, 7 W. 10th St., between 5th and University Place	6/7/17	7:00 pm
District 602 (second Wednesday, monthly)	LGBT Center, 208 W 13th St., New York, NY 10011	5/12/17	7:00 pm
District 603 (monthly)	St. George Church, 209 E 16th St., New York, NY 10003	6/6/17	6:30 pm
District 605/608 (monthly)	NY Intergroup Office, 307 7th Ave. #201, New York, NY 10001	5/15/17	7:00 pm
District 618 (second Wednesday, monthly)	Church of the Holy Name – Little Room, 207 West 96th Street, New York, NY 10025	5/10/17	7:30 pm

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*ad hoc committees