

## From the Top of the Triangle on Down From the SENY Delegate - Panel 67

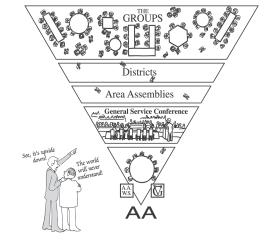
The first month of the year is a great time to think about Concept I: "the final responsibility and ultimate authority for A.A. world services should always reside in the collective conscience of our whole fellowship."

Here's one example of how the "whole Fellowship" exercises final responsibility and ultimate authority: Potential agenda items for the 68th General Service Conference have been submitted from all across the Fellowship and have been forwarded to the appropriate trustees' committee for review. The General Service Board will meet at the end of this month with each of its committees to finalize which items will be sent on to the corresponding Conference committees.

By mid-February, the final agenda is sent out to the 93 delegates. That list of items is what gets discussed and voted on at the Conference. To ensure I have a good sense of the collective conscience of SENY, and as part of my preparation for the Conference, I will likely select 5 to 8 agenda items from which to seek your group's feedback in detail.

The background material on those selected items will be presented on Saturday, March 3 in Manhattan at SENY's annual Delegate's Day of Sharing. Groups will then have a five full weeks to discuss the items and report back to me their conscience. Responses are due no later than our pre-Conference assembly on April 8.

That leaves me two weeks to review them all and get a strong sense of how SENY feels about this items, before I head to the Conference and join the other 134 voting members.



So while there is no way for the whole Fellowship to have a literal say on every aspect of how Alcoholics Anonymous functions, Concept I does indeed enable the voice and the conscience of groups at the top of the service triangle to be heard loudly and clearly by those at the bottom.

Yours in service,

John 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 AAs 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

"A.A. — A Solution for All Generations."

Theme of AA's 2018 General Service Conference

**The Link** | No. 581 - Jan18

### **Our Common Welfare** From the SENY Area Chair

I've definitely experienced how "personal recovery depends on AA unity." While the Fifth Tradition has taken me the farthest in my recovery, the First Tradition remains my favorite. Nevertheless, this alcoholic needs to work all the Traditions, and so I often use the Traditions Checklist (and the Concepts Checklist) for my own inventory.

Communication is crucial to unity. With that in mind, I'm sharing the following information about what affects the scheduling of area assemblies and committee meetings during any given year (it's a bit complicated!).

- Our bylaws state that we should have 5 assemblies and 7 committee meetings annually, although more may be scheduled called at the discretion of the chair;
- The Delegate's Day of Sharing does not count as one of those five, and its timing is dependent on when the General Service Office provides background information on the General Service Conference (GSC) agenda to the delegate;
- Pre- and post-Conference assemblies must be coordinated with the Conference dates;
- The delegate's schedule must always be considered.
- We don't meet in July or August;
- SENY Committee meetings can only be held on the first Monday of a month, per our current lease, but some first Mondays are holidays;
- It's best not to have assemblies and committee meetings in the same week, or an assembly on the day after the third Friday of the month--when Suffolk General Service meets--but sometimes it can't be avoided:
- Assemblies can't be on the third Sunday of the month, as both the Hispanic Districts and Sullivan County meet then;
- We try to avoid having an assembly on the date of New York Inter-Group's Big Meeting or Bill W.
   Dinner. We're not affiliated with NYIG, but we're mindful of dates that will significantly impact GSR attendance at assemblies.

When I was a new GSR, District 108's DCM told me that the most important thing I could get to was the area assembly, because that was how my group's voice could be heard at the Conference. At that time I needed to schedule a day off to attend an assembly 10 weeks in advance! I know I'm not the only trusted servant in one of the many occupations that require non-traditional working hours, so I've set the calendar ahead of time. My hope is that it will help.

I am available,

Jane E.

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### Remembering Denis O'B. From past delegate Bill C. (Panel 55)

AA lost a dear trusted servant in November with the passing of Denis O'B., of Malverne's Sobriety Without End group, only a few weeks after celebrating his 20th AA anniversary. He suffered a massive heart attack on November 10, and died November 18.

Denis wasn't perfect, but he was pretty good by any fair measure. From his first days in the Fellowship, he took to heart our suggestions and worked hard to "practice these principles in all [his] affairs." As a result he became a significant mover in all the spheres of his life, not just within AA. Active in his profession, church, community, family and AA, Denis was able to leave positive marks in so many places and with so many people, all without looking to shine a spotlight on his accomplishments. And he got to do some cool stuff too.

In AA he served his home group and offered sponsorship to newcomers. Grateful for his recovery, his generosity was without parallel. One little known example is that Denis frequently paid all expenses for groups of newcomers to attend the SENY convention, and other similar events which would otherwise have been difficult for them to attend. Denis also served in a wide range of positions within both the General Service and Intergroup service structures, working tirelessly in every job.

Denis lived Dr. Bob's admonition to remember that our Twelve Steps "resolve themselves into the words 'love' and 'service," and that we need to be ready "to extend to our less fortunate brothers that help which has been so beneficial to us."

It wasn't so long ago that Denis and I talked of plans for the future, plans we will now not be able to see through together. I'm reminded to cherish today, and to live well the present moment for tomorrow is never guaranteed. Denis lived well in recovery, and all who knew him are better off for it.

Bill C.



# **Going to Any Lengths** From the DCM, District 107

AA's Twelve Steps are a gift passed on to us by the origiOnce upon a time, after years in the program, I took a commitment in my local Intergroup association. That service had me finding chairpeople for AA meetings in local treatment institutions. It was one of the most rewarding positions I've ever held doing service below the group. At one point, a daycare facility for head injury patients with varying degrees of mobility was looking to start an AA meeting. I was able to find a woman who had suffered a head injury herself, and whom I had known for years in Alcoholics Anonymous, to chair the meeting. She gladly accepted the commitment.

Eventually I rotated out of my Intergroup position, and continued my routines and commitments within my home group. One day, running late and caught up in day-to-day activities, I arrived late to my meeting. The Preamble and the secretary's report had already been completed. There was a gentleman in front of the room, sitting in a wheelchair and already a few minutes into his story. As I listened, I marveled at his ability to face life's difficulties and to continually pass the message on to suffering alcoholics. At one point during his story, he mentioned where he had become acquainted with Alcoholics Anonymous: it happened to be at the meeting started a few years earlier at the daycare facility for head injury patients, which my friend had chaired.



Most of the time you never know in Alcoholics Anonymous whom you're going to touch, or if you've ever helped someone. But sometimes HP drops that inforight in your lap.

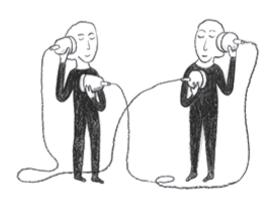
Thank you for the opportunity to serve!

Brian K.

## **Usefulness Through Service**From the SENY Service Sponsorship Chair

#### Happy New Year friends in service!

The January 1 entry in *Daily Reflections* starts with the quote, "I AM A MIRACLE". We can all follow that positive thought with our own meditation on what will help to keep us sober each day. For me, it's asking to be shown how to be useful. One way to find the path to usefulness is through AA service.



As Service Sponsorship Chair, I have a few New Year's service suggestions to share:

#### DCMs, please attend the Committee Meetings.

Come to the SENY Committee meetings and participate in the DCM workshop at 7 p.m. What started as a DCM Orientation has grown into a healthy discussion around DCM outreach, successes and occasional frustrations. We approach these in a productive, "You are never alone in AA" style. Also DCMs, remember: your vote is key at Committee meetings! The next Committee meeting is on Monday, February 5th at the Church of the Holy Family, 2158 Watson Ave. Bronx NY 10472.

#### Make a Date with Your Service Sponsor.

Often, one of the goals a sponsee looks to their service sponsor for is to go through the Twelve Concepts together. A good way to start to establish a foundation for this exercise is to attend a Concepts meeting together. I recently attended a Twelve Concepts of World Service Meeting at Trinity Lutheran Church in the East Village, Manhattan. This gem of a meeting, which goes from 8:15-9:00 p.m. on the first Wednesday of every month, covers one Concept per night. To find a Concepts meeting near you, search or contact your local intergroup. Make a commitment to attend a series of all twelve!

Wishing you a wonderful year of usefulness in service, Sally B.

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50<sup>TH</sup> SENY CONVENTION MARCH 23 - 25, 2018





## **2018 SENY CONVENTION**

#### Convention Highlights

Friday 3/23:
Kick Off & Welcome Meetings
Saturday 3/24:
Old-Timers, Theme, & Banquet
Meetings
Sunday 3/25:
Spiritual Meeting

AA Panels & Workshops Alkathon Meetings AA Archives & AA Videos Spanish Meetings Al-Anon Meetings Hospitality Room Evening Entertainment

Westchester Marriott Hotel 670 White Plains Road Tarrytown, NY 10591 convention rate: \$129.00 + tax p

Convention rate: \$129.00 + tax per night (single/double/triple/quad occupancy)
Room reservation deadline: March 1, 2018
Hotel reservations via phone:

1(800) 228- 9290 On-line: www.marriott.com/nycwe

Reservation code: SCTSCTA (King) SCTSCTD (Double)



On-site Registration Hours:
Friday 3 PM—11 PM Saturday 8 AM —midnight
For On-line registration visit
www.aaseny.org/seny-convention
Spanish translation for all main meetings.
American Sign Language or other
Translation needs will be made only through
pre-registration.

NO Pets ALLOWED! Service Animals are permitted in the Convention Area Designated smoking areas located near hotel exits.

Wheelchair accessible.

\*\* For further information contact: Mike C., SENY Convention Chair (718) 665-1253 (SENY voicemail) or convention@aaseny.org (SENY email)

For on-line registration: www.aaseny.org/seny- convention		REGISTRATION ADLINE: March 5, 2018	One form per person. Please make copies foreachregistrant.		
Name:		Registration Only	\$20.00		
Address:		Registration Children 10	years and Under Free		
		Registration & Banquet\$90.00			
		(Convention badges <u>must</u> be worn at all times.)			
AA:AI-	Anon:	Please select one menu option:			
Other (please specify):		BeefChicken	FishVegetarian		
Home Group:		Special Dietary Needs (please specify):			
State / County:					
First time at convention? Y Special Needs / ASL / Tran	es No slation Needs (please specify):	(Tables seat 10. Submit <u>all</u> for to be seated together Amount Enclosed: \$ Checks/ Money Orders payable to	at the banquet.)		
Old-timer 25+ years (sober	date):/	Mail to: SENY Convention PO Box 516 New Rochelle, N			

## News from the General Service Office (from Box 4-5-9, Vol. 63, No.4, Winter 2017)

## Passing the (Digital) Basket

About two years ago, Stephen H. assumed the service job of treasurer for the Ninth Avenue Group, a well-attended meeting in Manhattan. The Ninth Avenue Group meets in two different locations in the Chelsea area, with three meetings apiece on Monday and Wednesday evenings, and nine meetings on Friday night — a total of 15 meetings a week.

Stephen says, "It was a cash-intensive job. I would ask everyone to funnel money to the Friday night meetings, where I would collect all the envelopes, but 15 envelopes is a lot of money to keep track of until you can get it into the bank." And that was only part of it. "You still had to tally up how much money came from each meeting and keep a detailed spreadsheet in order to make treasurer's reports."

An active treasurer, Stephen did what he could to streamline the process. He arranged for online bill paying in the group's bank account so that group expenses — like rent for the church and contributions to G.S.O., the area and intergroup —went out automatically. Lots of groups do this, but Stephen went a step further. At a Ninth Avenue Group business meeting, he suggested that the group pass a digital Seventh Tradition basket alongside the actual one by employing the mobile payment service Venmo. After a group conscience, it was agreed that they would.

The group took this step not just because of the problem of keeping track of money from 15 different meetings, Stephen says. "So many people just are not carrying cash anymore. They use cards or mobile devices. You look around the room during a meeting, and they pass the basket on because they literally don't have any physical money on them. We wanted to find another way for people to contribute."

Area 45 delegate Andrew L. came to the same conclusion a year and a half ago at his southern New Jersey home group, the Monday night Lifeline Group. "People use cards for everything — coffee, newspapers — almost nothing is too small." After a business meeting, the Lifeline Group agreed to try a digital payment platform, in this case PayPal, as a way to increase contributions from the cashless. The process has been successfully incorporated into the meeting itself. "As the basket is being passed," Andrew says, "the treasurer gets up and stands by the coffee. And if you want to contribute that way, you go back there and he swipes your card with the card reader. You get sent an electronic receipt. It's very quick."

Digital contributions themselves are nothing new in A.A. In 2010, G.S.O. launched its Contributions Online system, a web-based Internet application that allows both groups and individual members to make recurring

contributions to the U.S./Canada General Service Board of Alcoholics Anonymous via credit card or e-check. And now, many A.A.s feel that reaching for your smartphone during the Seventh Tradition break at your home group will in the future be as natural as pulling a couple of bucks out of your pocket and depositing them in the basket.

Helping chart this largely unexplored territory is James O., chair of the tech committee at San Francisco/Marin intergroup group, (officially known as the Intercounty Fellowship of A.A., serving both San Francisco and Marin Counties). He began to explore using mobile payment platforms about nine months ago, he says, because of a "personal pain point. I just don't carry cash on me these days, and I regularly forget to bring any to a meeting. So, at our monthly business meeting at intergroup, I mentioned that someone should look into the idea of digital contributions.

Of course, that someone turned out to be me." James formed a digital contributions working group at SF/ Marin intergroup to explore the idea. "Ultimately, we realized that what we wanted to do," he says, "was to produce a document that answers a lot of questions — a user's guide for any group that has the need, want, interest or desire to implement a digital contributions solution at their meeting."



That document can now be found on the SF/Marin intergroup's website at www.aasf.org/digitalcontributions. It guides potential users through the pros and cons of six different platforms (Venmo, Paypal, Square Cash, Tilt, Txt2Give and GiveByCell), each of which would be tied in to the group's bank account. "We don't endorse one platform over another," James says, "so as not to break with Tradition Six. It's up to groups to decide for themselves."

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## News from the General Service Office (from Box 4-5-9, Vol. 63, No.4, Winter 2017)

## Passing the (Digital) Basket - continued

James and his working group felt that Venmo was the best fit for them. It was decided to put digital contributions to a three-month test, both at James's home group (which agreed to the trial) and at the monthly business meeting at SF/Marin intergroup. The main concern people had with using mobile platforms was anonymity. James explains that anonymity is not an issue: your Venmo payment (and most payments made via other mobile platforms) is simply made to the name of your group. (Venmo does not provide your name to third parties for marketing purposes.) But people had other worries. Could their accounts or identities be hacked or stolen? Well, possibly, but that can happen to any user of any credit card or to anyone who shops or banks or even browses online. Would a meeting treasurer have access to people's account numbers? No. Would a treasurer have access to the cash that was deposited (usually once a month) by Venmo in the group's bank account? Yes, but treasurers already do with regular cash-only meetings. (Many, in fact, still use their own personal bank accounts for group business.) And one advantage of Venmo and other mobile payment platforms is that multiple admin users can be set up for additional oversight.

After three months, both the SF/Marin intergroup business meeting and James's home group decided to keep the electronic Seventh Tradition indefinitely. "It has been running at my home group for nine months," James says. "Mobile payment contributions represent one-third of our overall contributions, with 10 to 20 percent of our meeting attendees contributing that way. We have a time in the meeting agenda where we talk about the Seventh Tradition and announce, 'If you prefer to contribute digitally, you can find the group name on Venmo and contribute that way.' That's all it takes."

Maury P., office manager at SF/Marin intergroup, emphasizes that the digital contributions are meant "to supplement the basket, not supplant it." In order to furthe spread the word about their experiment, James and Maury took their research to a workshop at the National A.A. Technology Workshop and have asked their intergroup reps to make sure groups are aware of it. "The idea is that groups who want to do this don't have to reinvent the wheel every time," Maury says.

And how did the digital Seventh Tradition work out for Stephen H., the treasurer surrounded by piles of cash at the Ninth Avenue Group? Well, Stephen has rotated out of the treasurer job at this point, but digital contributions are announced as an option at every meeting. Most of the money is still cash in the basket, but people tell him they like the idea of a second option, and a minority are using their smartphones to pay.

Many expect that minority to increase across the Fellowship in general as the electronic Seventh Tradition becomes more common. It does seem to be the wave of the future. As the Area 45 delegate Andrew L. puts it, "Look at it this way: Would you rather live with the Jetsons or the Flintstones?"

It's something to think about.



## Our 50th SENY Convention! From the 2018 SENY Convention Chair

Once again it's time to plan our SENY Convention, which will be held March 23-25, 2018. This one is extra special because it will be our 50th!

We're looking for more volunteers to help out during these months leading up to the event, as well as during the weekend of the convention itself. All are welcome! Feel free to contact either a committee chairperson directly, or Mike C., 2018 SENY Convention Chair, to let him know how you would like to help out: convention@aaseny.org.

#### 2018 SENY Convention committee chairs:

Michael C. Chair Treasurer Steve G. Secretary Christina A. **Publicity** Ben L. Program Jerry R. Hosp. Co-Chair Trish D. Hosp. Co-Chair Kevin McQ. Entertainment Richard P. Registration Nisaa A. Mike O'B. **Banquet** Alkathon Frank G. Accessibilities Nellie P. Hispanic Liaison Sandra V. Al-Anon Liaison Rene V. **Greeting Team** Emma M.

Next Convention Planning Committee Meeting: January 14, 2018, 11 am

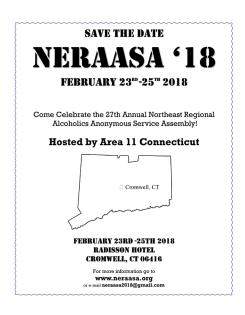
SENY Office, 199 Lincoln Ave., Bronx, NY 10454

All are welcome!

### **Upcoming Events & Workshops**

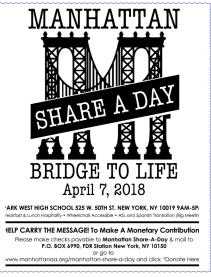












# Upcoming deadlines for submission of articles and flyers to *The Link*: Sunday, January 21 (distribution at the February 5 Area Committee meeting)

Sunday, February 18 (distribution at the March 5 Area Committee meeting)

Sunday, March 11 for the special issue celebrating our 50th SENY Convention (distribution at the at the Convention only)

Wednesday, March 21 (distribution at the April 8 pre-Conference assembly)

Upcoming 2017-2018 Area Committee Meetings and Assemblies				
02/05/18	7:30 pm	Area Committee	Church of the Holy Family, 2158 Watson Avenue, Bronx, NY 10472	
03/03/18	8:00 am	Delegate's Day of Sharing	Manhattan County: location TBD	
03/05/18	7:30 pm	Area Committee	Church of the Holy Family, 2158 Watson Avenue, Bronx, NY 10472	
04/02/18	7:30 pm	Area Committee	Church of the Holy Family, 2158 Watson Avenue, Bronx, NY 10472	
04/08/18	8:00 am	Pre-Conference Assembly	SuffolkCounty: location TBD	

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County General Service Meetings			
Bronx-Upper Manhattan (2nd Wed, every other month)	Please visit www.aaseny.org for the most up-to- Bedford Park Congregational Church, 3008 Bainbridge Avenue, Bronx, NY 10458	2/14/18	7:00 pm
Brooklyn (3d Wednesday, every other month)	St. Francis College, 180 Remsen St., Brooklyn, NY 11201	3/21/18	7:30 pm
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Hispanic Districts (3d Sunday, monthly)	Location rotates - please see aaseny.org or aacdhseny49.org each month	1/21/18	9:30 am
Manhattan (3d Tuesday, every other month)	Seafarer's House, 123 East 15th Street, New York, NY 10003	2/20/18	6:30 pm
Nassau (3d Monday, every other month)	Nassau Intergroup Office, 361 Hempstead Tpke, West Hempstead, NY 11552	2/19/18	7:30 pm
Orange (3d Tuesday, monthly)	First Presbyterian Church, Campbell Hall, Rte. 207, Campbell Hall, NY 10916	1/20/18	7:00 pm
Putnam (2nd Tuesday, monthly)	Mt. Carmel Baptist Church, 76 Gleneida Avenue, Carmel, NY 10512	2/13/18	7:00 pm
Queens (last Monday, every other month)	Saint Mary Gate of Heaven Church, 101-18 104th St., Queens, NY 11416	2/26/18	7:30 pm
Rockland (3d Wednesday, monthly)	Elim Alliance Church, 40 Lake Road, Valley Cottage , NY 10989	1/17/18	7:30 pm
Staten Island (2nd Sun; no meetings May, July or August)	Oakwood Heights Community Church, 345 Guyon Ave, Staten Island, NY 10306	1/14/18	7:00 pm
Suffolk (3d Friday, monthly)	True North Church, 1101 Lakeland Avenue, Bohemia, NY 11716	1/19/18	8:00 pm
Sullivan (3d Sunday, monthly; except July & August)	Sullivan County Community College, 112 College Rd., Loch Sheldrake, NY 12759	1/21/18	3:00 pm
Westchester (3d Wednesday, monthly)	Memorial Methodist Church, 250 Bryant Avenue, White Plains, NY10605	1/17/18	7:30 pm
Standing Committee Meetings & W	Orkshops Please visit www.aaseny.org for the most up-to-	date infori	mation
Accessibility/Special Needs Committee (1st Friday, monthly)	NY Intergroup Office, 307 7th Ave. #201, New York, NY 10001	2/2/18	7:00 pm
Convention Planning Committee	SENY Office, 99 Lincoln Ave., Bronx, NY 10454	1/14/18	11:00 am
Corrections Committee (3d Saturday, monthly)	SENY Office, 99 Lincoln Ave., Bronx, NY 10454	1/20/18	12:00 pm
PI & CPC Joint Committee Meeting (last Tuesday, monthly)	NY Intergroup Office, 307 7th Ave. #201, New York, NY 10001	1/30/18	7:15 pm
Treatment Facilities Committee (last Sunday, monthly)	SENY Office, 99 Lincoln Ave., Bronx, NY 10454	1/28/18	11:30 am
12 Concepts of World Service Workhop (1st Wed, monthly)	Trinity Lower East Side, 602 E 9th St New York, NY 10009	2/7/18	8:15 pm
SENY Committee Chairs Meeting	SENY Office, 99 Lincoln Ave., Bronx, NY 10454	1/28/18	12:00 pm
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SENY Off	<b>SENY Standir</b>	SENY Standing / Ad Hoc Committee Chairs							
Delegate	John W.	delegate	@aaseny.org		Acc./Special Needs	Nellie P.		asn@aaseny.org	j
Alt. Delegate	Manny A.	altdelega	altdelegate@aaseny.org		Agenda	Jeanne C.		agenda@aaseny.org	
Chair	Jane E.	chair@aa	chair@aaseny.org		Archives	Richard S.		archives@aaseny.org	
Treasurer	Michelle G.	treasurer	treasurer@aaseny.org		Convention 2018	Mike C.		convention@aaseny.org	
Registrar	Fred M.	registrar@	registrar@aaseny.org		Corrections	Mike D.		corrections@aaseny	
County DCMCs				СРС	Anthony B.		cpc@aaseny.org		
Bronx/U-M	Barbara Ann	dcmc@bu	xm.aaseny.org		Grapevine/La Viña	Laura G.		grapevine@aase	eny.org
Brooklyn	Mel R.	dcmc@br	ooklynaa.org		Intergroup Liaison	Steve K.		intergroup@aaseny.org	
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Rockland	Ray W.	dcmc@aa	rockland.org		Service Sponsorship*	Sally B.		sponsorship@aa	aseny.org
Staten Island	Jerry R.	jerryr1952	1984@gmail.com		<b>Translation</b> Eddie D.		translation@aaseny.org		
Suffolk	Tom B.	dcmc@aa	suffolkgs-ny.org		Treatment Facilities Kathy			tf@aaseny.org	
Sullivan	John B.	dcmc@su	llivan.aaseny.org		Website	Chris N.		web@aaseny.or	g
Westchester	Emma M.`	dcmc@we	stchester.aaseny.org		AlAnon Liaison	Jamie S.		alanonliaison@a	aseny.org
					YPAA Liaison			ypaa@aaseny.o	rg

<sup>\*</sup>Special committees (neither standing nor adhoc committees)