

### **Actions of the 68th General Service Conference**

#### From the SENY Delegate - Panel 67

I was at a meeting recently where the format was to read a page from *As Bill Sees It*. That day's selection was page 95, which includes an excerpt from a letter dated 1954. Bill wrote, "we are only operating a spiritual kindergarten in which people are enabled to get over drinking and find the grace to go on living to better effect."

While Bill was talking about the Fellowship as a whole, it made me think of my time with SENY (no, really!). Serving at the area level has been a wonderful spiritual kindergarten and it has provided me an amazing opportunity to grow and strengthen all three sides of my triangle.

This service has made me a better sponsor, a better citizen in my community, and a better person to my loved ones. SENY has allowed me to work on my character defects, which in turn has helped me be a better employee and a better boss. I've become a better listener, more patient, and more tolerant. And still so much more work to do.

SENY service has helped me think about the bigger picture, of our worldwide Fellowship. What actions were we taking that effected AA as a whole? What was Area 49's part? How can SENY better carry our message through Public Information and Cooperation with the Professional Community?

My spiritual kindergarten classmates have enriched my life beyond words. Getting to watch fellow trusted servants stretch outside their comfort zones to carry out their service work has been inspiring. I've learned the valuable lesson that there is often more than one solution to a problem and that an informed group conscience is the best way to reach that.

I am ever grateful for the opportunities that SENY provided me during my time on these last two rotations. I know I'm not ready to graduate from spiritual kindergarten. So while my time as delegate is coming to a close, we fortunately have open enrollment. I'll be back, in a different capacity, still eager to find the grace to live to better effect.

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 300 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

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### Unity and Centrality From the SENY Area Chair

SENY Area 49 is like my home group: alcoholics from different backgrounds and customs, looking unalike and speaking various languages, working together in unity to solve one common problem. Our area is comprised of 12 geographic counties and one, non-geographic county representing the Hispanic Districts (I sometimes say the "13 counties"). Each is diverse and autonomous (Tradition 4), with unique "small t" traditions. The 13 serve as one area, just like individuals do in our home group (Tradition 1).

Many of the 13 counties use cars to get to where we're going, a few use cars and public transportation, and a couple use public transportation exclusively. Before 1987, we met in downtown Manhattan for our SENY Assemblies. Area 49 wanted better inclusion (Tradition 3) and accessibility for all members and decided to have our SENY Assemblies rotate amongst the 13 counties. In more recent years, at different times, and with different members, at least two Ad Hoc Committees were formed to research and report back about where the best place to have SENY Committee and Standing Committees meeting space was, and the Bronx was determined to be best.

Why the Bronx? Public transportation is robust: trains (outer counties call them "subways") and buses.

For those who drive (Nassau, Orange, Putnam, Rockland, Staten Island, Suffolk, Sullivan, Westchester as well as members of the Bronx, Hispanic Districts and Queens), parking is less expensive and more available in the Bronx than in other boroughs with robust public transportation. I recently could not get street parking near NY Intergroup and paid \$42.00 for a two-hour meeting to park my economy car. So much for economy.

When I have plenty of time I do on occasion take the train. It comes every hour and a half to and from my hamlet. In order to get into the boroughs via train for a weekday evening meeting, I have to take time off from work. In the northern counties I hear that the trains, if available at all, are more complicated and run from Grand Central Station. Many of our driving members are not subway fluent; once we get in, we face obstacles to get to where we're going. Happily, my friends in Manhattan have tried to educate me, but it's slow going (those maps are in a language I do not speak).

For driving alcoholics there is one bridge to cross instead of two to get to the Bronx--except for Staten Island. Many counties would have to cross two bridges otherwise. Thank heaven the Bronx is in a central location of Area 49 as a whole!

I love SENY! We're one fabulous, amazing area; inclusive, united, accessible to all who wish to serve, and celebrating our diversities.

Jane E.

### **Preservation: Past, Present, and Future**From the SENY Archivist

Greetings from the Preservation Work Group. I'm Mary R., your archivist. For those who may not be familiar, the Preservation Work Group consists of me, Cathy M., the digital archivist and Kathy K., the preservationist. I am excited to be serving as the archivist for our area.

First, a big "thank you" to the Assembly for sending me to the National AA Archives Conference in Lombard, Illinois September 27-30, hosted by Area 19, the Chicago Area Service Assembly (CASA). It was a weekend filled with in-depth workshops and presentations by archivists in and around Chicagoland. Topics included collection policy, storage and display, and writing an area or group history. Michelle Mizra, GSO archivist walked us through an exercise in Copyright as well as a workshop on utilizing the A.A. Archives Workbook. There was a wonderful presentation by Gail L. past Akron intergroup Archivist, on the topic "Keeping Archives Repositories Aligned with A.A.'s Twelve Traditions." Michelle came back with Chicago historian Ellen Skerret and they presented "Dr. Bob: Early Days and Early Writings."

The CASA is about to publish an Area 19 history and members of the committee shared some of that history as well as their journey in making the book a reality. I made some new connections at the meeting after the meeting in the hospitality suite and hope to get to Detroit next year. The conference was just the boost of confidence and confirmation that I needed. I look forward to continuing to build the Area 49 archives.

Mary R.

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## The Minutes: Carrying the Message From the SENY Recording Secretary

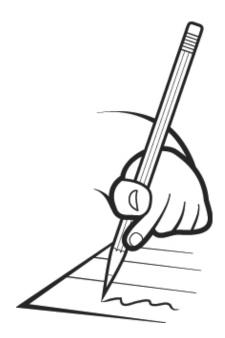
On becoming Recording Secretary, I was faced with a question: what should go into the minutes? Group business meeting minutes are, in my experience, terse. District and county minutes, less so. Even at the area level, there is little written guidance. Our bylaws state that the Recording Secretary records the minutes, to be edited by the delegate and dhair. The content is not defined, and prior panels have had different practices.

As Bill writes in As Bill Sees It, AA is more than a set of principles; we are a society of alcoholics in action. If we do not carry the message, we may wither and die. So, for what one alcoholic's opinion is worth, I believe the thoroughness of the minutes should be commensurate with the level of service. That said, I recognize that's only my opinion. What's more important is that as long as a secretary, at any level of service, prepares the minutes in accordance with our principles, AA will be fine.

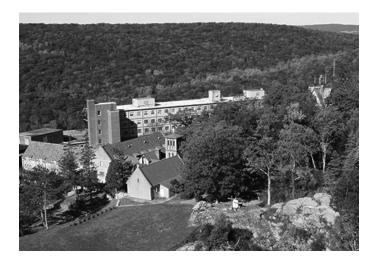
Many alcoholics do not know what a service area does, or even that it exists. I know I did not until becoming a GSR. The anonymized minutes, available on SENY's webpage, are an opportunity to show what SENY does, the opportunities for service, and members carrying the message forward. Thus, I decided that area minutes should be inclusive, to describe the service undertaken. This acknowledges each member's service and hopefully inspires others to take up these services. I hope I have accomplished that.

Lastly, I thank the area for the opportunity to serve. We are truly a privileged people.

Mike O.



### **Save the Date!**From the 2019 Chair of the NYSIW



SENY Area 49 will host the 40th anniversary of the New York State Informational Workshop (NYSIW) at Graymoor Spiritual Life Center, on the weekend of August 2nd, 3rd, and 4th, 2019.

The purpose of NYSIW is to share information about our committee work here with our service counterparts across the state. GSRs, DCMs, DCMCs, committee chairs, area chairs, and delegates from Areas 47, 48, 49, and 50 come together for a weekend of panels, presentations, and meetings. It's exciting AND informative.

We anticipate 125 people from across the state will attend next summer. Graymoor is affordable, beautiful, has great food, and is accessible to all. ADA compliance is high on our list of requirements. Graymoor has gone above and beyond the requirements our committee set.

We will meet in a single, elevator building: housed in thei center's dorm, fed by their staff, and convening there as a group. Several large rooms are available in which to meet for sessions, breaks and break-out meeting, with coffee pots. The grounds are beautiful and the center sits in a forested mountaintop. The train station is minutes away and Graymoor has two vans available to us, free of charge, to shuttle anyone during the weekend to and from the station. This means anyone coming just for the Saturday sessions AND everyone else coming for the entire weekend will have easy access. They will provide meals that are gluten-free, sugar-free, dairy-free, vegetarian, and vegan-- in addition, of course, to meat and potatoes!

Save the date: August 2-4, 2019. Registration packets will be available soon!

Kent C.

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#### **68th Annual General Service Conference - Keynote Address** (from the 2018 GSC Report)

Good morning, everyone. My name is Richard B., and I am an alcoholic. I have had the honor of serving as the Eastern Canada regional trustee for almost four years now, and I will treasure that privilege during this last week, just as I did during the first. I would like to extend a special welcome to all of the Panel 68 delegates and a warm welcome back to the Panel 67 delegates. The theme of the General Service Conference this year is "A.A. — A Solution for All Generations."

In these few minutes, I would like to talk about some of the principles that will make way for the 68th General Service Conference to do just that, to ensure that A.A. remains a solution for the alcoholic who still suffers. I believe that we will achieve this if we remain focused on our primary purpose, if we remain humble and aware of our beginnings, if in everything we do, we work for the preservation of Alcoholics Anonymous, and if we extend to one another mutual respect, and practice tolerance.

### First, the importance of focusing on our primary purpose:

We are the 68th General Service Conference. Each of us here today in this room has the trust of a group con-science, to be its eyes and ears and to ensure that the A.A. message will be where it needs to be heard. This year, perhaps more than ever, we will have to be unified in our commitment to ensure that A.A. is and always will be there for all generations. What can we do that will enable us to strengthen the transmission of the A.A. message from our groups, districts and areas, to reach professionals working with alcoholics, to reach remote communities, to reach alcoholics everywhere?

There are so many ways that any and every A.A. member can ensure that our services reach the stillsuffering alcoholic. At the heart of each is humility and sacrifice, but in my experience, we do not hesitate to practice these for our common welfare: beginning with our respect for the group conscience that tells us what is best for Alcoholics Anonymous, to the service we provide as we carry the message to the still-suffering alcoholic. From the dollars in the basket, to cleaning our meeting spaces. From our service on committees, to our answering a call for help. We know that the sacrifice is nothing compared to the benefit of being a part of this magnificent society of alcoholics in action. This week, as we serve Alcoholics Anonymous as a whole, let us focus on how we can best serve the groups in fulfilling their primary purpose of reaching those who still suffer.

### Second, as we do our work, let us remain humbly aware of our beginnings:

Today, here in this room, we wear beautiful clothes. This morning we had a hot shower, a good breakfast, met great people around us carrying love and an immeasurable passion for our Fellowship. We are all members of the US/ Canada General Service Conference. How did we get here today? Because one day, some time ago, someone gave each of us some of their time and a chance to recover through the message of Alcoholics Anonymous. When we got here, when we reached out for help or stumbled into our first meeting with feelings of desperation, guilt and helplessness, we didn't look, smell, or feel like we do today. How did we get here, to this place and time? We got here because at the end of the road, when there was no place else to go, A.A. was there. A.A. was there because someone had done something. The meeting was there, the literature was there, the service was there. The message of hope was there, and the journey began. Let us remember that none of us would be here today, serving at the General Service Conference, if somebody hadn't taken the time to explain things to us, to give us a little pat on the back, to take us to a meeting or two, to do numerous little kind and thoughtful acts on our behalf. So, let us never get such a degree of smug complacency that we're not willing to extend to our less fortunate brother that help which has been so beneficial to us. And let us not forget from whence we came.

### Working for the preservation of Alcoholics Anonymous:

Things change. We know that. Today's world is not what it was in 1989 when I first came, and not what it was in 1935. Twenty-nine years ago, when I would attend an A.A. meeting, if there were 40 cars in the parking lot, there would be about 160 people in the A.A. room. Today, if there are 40 cars, there will be about 40 people. What has changed? Has A.A. changed? Are we not doing some-thing we did back then? Or has the world changed? I do not have the answer to these questions, but I know that it is our duty this week to work for the preservation of A.A. Why would we not want to preserve this program for our children and their children to come? Of course, we do. But how do we do that, in this ever-changing world? The progress of today's world is unparalleled. What we can do now with communication, negotiation, learning — all shepherded by rapidly evolving technology, methods of commerce, patterns of care — is astonishing.

#### **68th Annual General Service Conference - Keynote Address** (from the 2018 GSC Report)



This keynote address is published in full as it appears in the 2018 General Service Conference Report, available at www.aaseny.org and at service meetings across Area 49.

Despite all this, the fact of alcoholism has not changed, and fortunately, neither have our Twelve Steps and their effectiveness. As we work to preserve Alcoholics Anonymous for future generations, we must think about how we can continue to effectively meet our primary purpose of carrying the message to the still-suffering alcoholic in our current context. The challenge for us is to find the way that Alcoholics Anonymous can exist and thrive in today's world, without compromising our message or our principles.

### Finally, the extraordinary power of mutual respect and tolerance:

We are imperfect beings. Sometimes, personalities win over principles. Sometimes, we misstep and then take refuge and comfort as things right themselves. Our human nature requires us to keep coming back to the Twelve Steps that saved our lives, to the Traditions that guide our groups and services, to the Concepts that are the beacon for our service structure and society.

I have no doubt that sometimes the work will be hard. Sometimes it will seem demanding. There have been times during my service when I have felt discouraged, disappointed, overwhelmed. If you want to know where you are in your recovery program, become a trusted servant in the A.A. service structure. I have to remind myself that the same patience, love and tolerance I would extend to a newcomer is the same I must extend to all of us, because here, too, we do God's work. This reminds me of a quote from page 338 of Dr. Bob and the Good Oldtimers: "Let us also remember to guard that erring member the tongue, and if we must use it, let's use it with kindness and consideration and tolerance."

I will share with you that several times during my time in the service structure of A.A., I have tried to change things, but have not succeeded. But I have always changed. My daily life has changed; my A.A. life has changed. I have come to understand that there is little to debate in the hope of being right — instead, the greatest satisfaction is what I gain as I witness the informed group conscience unfolding through our careful work. That is the beauty of General Service. With our equal voices, and our careful deliberation, a power greater than any of us will express himself through our group conscience.

There is a beautiful message in Language of the Heart where it talks about "humility for today." It warns us against pride-blindness, "the imaginary perfections that we do not possess." None of us is right all the time. None of us can do this singularly. Let us remember that we all suffered in the same way when we entered the halls of A.A., and we all remained there in the Fellowship of the spirit. Let us remember that each of us here loves Alcoholics Anonymous and is trying to protect this society for our future generations. Let us try to understand each other without assumptions, and let us hear and learn from one another. And finally, let us remember that it is our group conscience, not any of us alone, that will keep and guide our beloved A.A. I want to thank all of you for listening today. It has been a privilege for me to take part in many General Service Conferences. I look forward to working with all of you this week as we, the members of the 68th General Service Conference, act as the group conscience for A.A. as a whole and for all generations.

Richard B., Eastern Canada Regional Trustee

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Save the date.

51st SENY
Convention
"Our Big Book
80 Years
71 Languages"



March 22-24, 2019

# Westchester Marriott Hotel

670 White Plains Road, Tarrytown, NY 10591

Speaker Meetings • Workshops & Panels • Alkathon • Banquet • Archives Literature & Service Tables • AA Videos • Spanish Translation Entertainment • Al-Anon • Much More

Get involved. Upcoming Convention Planning Committee meetings are October 28 & November 17, 2018, 12PM, Program Sub-Committee, 11AM. (At NY Intergroup, 307 Seventh Avenue, Room 201, NYC 10001.) Submit logo artwork for our theme.

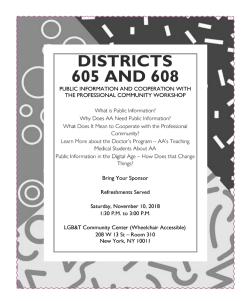
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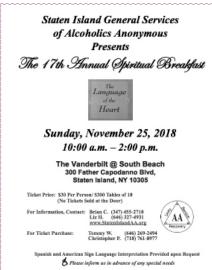


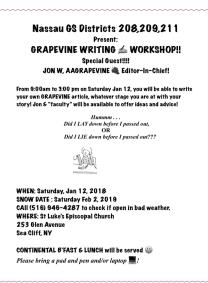
#### **Upcoming Events & Workshops**













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

Wednesday, November 14 (distribution at the December 3 Area Committee meeting)

Sunday, December 30 (distribution at the January Area Committee meeting)

Upcoming 2018 Area Committee Meetings and Assemblies				
11/04/18	8:30 am	Area Inventory Assembly	Fallsburg HS, 115 Brickman Rd, Fallsburg, NY, NY 12733	
12/03/19	7:30 pm	Area Committee	Church of the Holy Family, 2158 Watson Avenue, Bronx, NY 10472	

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County General Service Meetings	Please visit www.aaseny.org for the most up-to-	date infor	mation
Bronx-Upper Manhattan (2nd Wed, every other month)	Bedford Park Congregational Church, 3008 Bainbridge Avenue, Bronx, NY 10458	12/12/18	7:00 pm
Brooklyn (3d Wednesday, monthly)	St. Francis College, 180 Remsen St., Brooklyn, NY 11201	11/21/18	7:30 pm
Hispanic Districts (3d Sunday, monthly)	Location rotates - please see aaseny.org or aacdhseny49.org each month	11/18/18	9:30 am
Manhattan (3d Tuesday, every other month)	Seafarer's House, 123 East 15th Street, New York, NY 10003	12/18/18	6:30 pm
Nassau (3d Monday, every other month)	Nassau Intergroup Office, 361 Hempstead Tpke, West Hempstead, NY 11552	12/18/18	7:30 pm
Orange (3d Tuesday, monthly)	First Presbyterian Church, Campbell Hall, Rte. 207, Campbell Hall, NY 10916	11/20/718	7:00 pm
Putnam (2nd Tuesday, monthly)	Mt. Carmel Baptist Church, 76 Gleneida Avenue, Carmel, NY 10512	11/13/18	7:00 pm
Queens (last Monday, every other month)	Saint Mary Gate of Heaven Church, 101-18 104th St., Queens, NY 11416	12/10/18	7:30 pm
Rockland (3d Wednesday, monthly)	Elim Alliance Church, 40 Lake Road, Valley Cottage , NY 10989	11/21/18	7:30 pm
Staten Island (2nd Sun; no meetings May, July or August)	Oakwood Heights Community Church, 345 Guyon Ave, Staten Island, NY 10306	11/11/18	7:00 pm
Suffolk (3d Friday, monthly)	Bellport United Methodist Church, 185 South Country Road, Bellport, NY 11713	11/16/18	8:00 pm
Sullivan (3d Sunday, monthly; except July & August)	Sullivan County Community College, 112 College Rd., Loch Sheldrake, NY 12759	11/18/18	3:00 pm
Westchester (3d Wednesday, monthly)	Memorial Methodist Church, 250 Bryant Avenue, White Plains, NY10605	11/28/18	7:30 pm
Standing Committee Meetings & W	Orkshops Please visit www.aaseny.org for the most up-to-	date infor	mation
Accessibility/Special Needs Committee (1st Friday, monthly)	NY Intergroup Office, 307 7th Ave. #201, New York, NY 10001	12/7/18	7:00 pm
Archives Advisory Commitee	NY Intergroup Office, 307 7th Ave. #201, New York, NY 10001	12/5/18	1:00 pr
Corrections Committee (3d Saturday, monthly)	SENY Office, 99 Lincoln Ave., Bronx, NY 10454		
PI & CPC Joint Committee Meeting (last Tuesday, monthly)	NY Intergroup Office, 307 7th Ave. #201, New York, NY 10001	11/27/18	7:15 pn
Treatment Facilities Committee (last Sunday, monthly)	SENY Office, 99 Lincoln Ave., Bronx, NY 10454	11/25/18	11:30 aı
12 Concepts of World Service Workshop (1st Wed, monthly)	Trinity Lower East Side, 602 E 9th St New York, NY 10009	11/7/18	8:15 pm
SENY Service Participation Meeting	NY Intergroup Office, 307 7th Ave. #201, New York, NY 10001		
Intergroup Liaison Meeting	Nassau Intergroup Office, 361 Hempstead Tpke., West Hempstead, NY 11552	12/2/18	11:00 ar
SENY Budget Committee Meeting	SENY Office, 99 Lincoln Ave., Bronx, NY 10454	12/8/18	10:00 aı

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