

## The Spirit of Rotation From the SENY Delegate - Panel 67

It's been an absolute privilege and honor to serve SENY. I am grateful for all the support and the many new friends. It's been a terrific ride. I can honestly look back and say that I loved every exhausting minute of it, and I want to thank you all for this experience of a lifetime.

As I prepare myself to rotate out, I've been reading (and re-reading) a section from the AA Service Manual to ready myself for the end of my time as delegate. On page S24 it states: "to step out of an A.A. office we love can be hard...but it can be a real step forward in growth — a step into the humility that is, for some people, the spiritual essence of anonymity...rotation helps to bring us spiritual rewards far more enduring than any fame. With no A.A. 'status' at stake, we needn't compete for titles or praise — we have complete freedom to serve as we are needed."

To ease this process, SENY has a tradition of the past delegate making themselves scarce for a while. I like to refer to it as getting pushed out to sea on an ice flow. I love the spirit of allowing the new delegate to come into their own without the watchful eyes of their immediate predecessor. My guess is that rotating will also provide me with ample opportunities to work Steps 6 & 7! Plus it will allow me to get back to my home group; and to be, as a friend likes to say, just another bozo on the bus.

The best thing for me is that I'm always going to be SENY's Panel 67 delegate. I'm looking forward to seeing you all again in the warmer weather, once my ice flow has melted.

Thanks again for the privilege to have served you.

Yours in service,

John W.

"We humbly hope and believe that our growing AA tradition will prove to be the will of god for us...and we need not depend overmuch on inspired leaders. Because our active leadership of service can be truly rotating, we enjoy a kind of democracy rarely pos*sible elsewhere...therefore* we of AA are certain that there is but one ultimate authority, "a loving god as he may express himself in our group conscience."

Bill Wilson, AA Grapevine, Jan. 1948



#### 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

"Our Big Book – 80 Years, 71 Languages"
Theme of AA's 2019 General Service Conference

### The 36 Principles: Round and Round From the SENY Area Chair

I'm feeling sad that this amazing Panel 67 is coming to an end, and feeling excited about Panel 69. When I got sober, I was numb: either I didn't feel (I was numb from years of hard drinking), or I couldn't identify with what I was feeling--other than feeling grateful to not be hungover. To be able to feel many emotions is a gift from both God as I understand Him, and AA.

I want to thank my fellow officers, the SENY Committee, and all members of SENY for supporting me as area chair and for a plethora of fond memories. It's been an amazing journey. The circle surrounding my equilateral triangle, in addition to representing the whole of AA, now also represents how the 36 principles go around and round without end. I cannot do service well without practicing the Steps in addition to the Traditions and Concepts. More than ever before, I've learned not to take things personally ("principles before personalities"). I've seen us grow in unity, which doesn't mean that we always agree; but part of what it does mean is that we can disagree without being disagreeable. (There's that "principles before personalities" again!) And now that I'm feeling more comfortable in the role of area chair, it's time to rotate out, just like any other AA commitment.

Our delegate has been mentoring me for transition. I'm thrilled that I get to follow him. He's set some amazing precedents that I'll follow to the best of my ability. I'm looking forward to what I'll learn in my next AA commitment, and to working with you for Panel 69.

I'm excited! And very, very grateful.

Misty eyed and loving SENY and AA as a whole, Jane E.



### **Letting Go**From the DCMC, Manhattan County

On p. S24 of the A.A. Service Manual it says: "To step out of an A.A. office we love can be hard." For me, seeing the end of my rotation as DCMC quickly approaching, I must admit feelings of loss, sadness and fear. Where shall I go? What shall I do? Although I'm deeply grateful for my time in service, I must also admit that I'm feeling "burned out." Even so, my deceptive, alcoholic pride wails at the loss of prestige, importance and applause. However, I'm reminded that "rotation brings us spiritual rewards far more enduring than fame . . ."

As I rotate out, I pray that I will go next where God leads me; not where my selfish desires would have me (especially considering the above-inventoried tangle of emotions). I feel as if I'm lost, standing at the crossroads where one sign points to the way of the bleeding deacon and the other, the elder statesman. How easy would it be to trip down the road paved smooth with pride and self-righteousness, to insert myself where I'm neither needed nor wanted, so I can still grasp the specter of importance close to my breast for comfort.

When the assemblies are over, the chairs put away, and that beloved instrument of power the microphone is turned off, I'm left in the quiet with myself, my alcoholism, and God. The position of DCMC has enabled me to grow spiritually, "sometimes quickly, sometimes slowly." I'm proud of the work we did in this rotation, grateful for the friendships I've forged, and anticipate with hope that the hand of A.A. in SENY will always be there.

Love and Service,

Scott M.

#### Responsibility Statement in Marathi

आम्ही जबाबदार आहोत जेव्हा कोणीही कोठेही मदतीसाठी हात पुढे करतो तेव्हा तेथे अे.अे. चा हात सदैव उपलब्ध असायला हवा आणि त्यासाठी आम्ही जबाबदार आहोत.

### **Corrections in the Digital Age** From the SENY Corrections Chair

In early November, I had the honor of attending the second annual AA National Corrections Conference in Portland, Maine. The weekend consisted of panels devoted to AAs in the service of alcoholics behind the walls. In corrections work, we often get frustrated by the amount of time it takes to get clearance to enter a facility, whether it be the lengthy paperwork and vetting process, or the at times hours-long wait just to enter a facility. So it was refreshing to hear the experience of wardens as they described the staggering number of unpredictable variables at play which could transform a routine day into an emergency situation; and how the addition of just one outsider into a facility greatly affects the mindset of the prison staff and its population. Even when prison administrations are in full support of Alcoholics Anonymous, there is no easy way around this reality, and every precaution needs to be taken to protect all parties.



Another important discussion item was the shift prisons are making towards lending digital tablets to prisoners, rather than books. This change would better enable us to get the AA message to folks behind the walls, via digital Grapevine subscriptions and Conference-approved e-literature. However, to achieve this goal, we would need to work with the technology companies tasked with preparing the software on e-reader devices. Would AA World Services have to create an app similar to an eReader, to preload devices with our literature--or would local corrections committees have to cooperate with the technology companies individually to get the literature on the tablets? As AA services evolve with the ever-changing world of technology, we are finding new and exciting ways to spread the message.

#### Mike D.

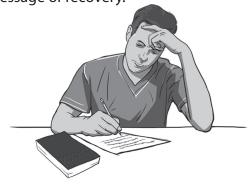
### **Carrying the Message Behind Bars**From the Nassau County Corrections Chair

WOW!!!

At the 2018 AA National Corrections Conference, there were 53 areas represented, from 32 states and 4 Canadian provinces, and 319 registrations. The conference opened with the reading of a poem called "Hell Bound Train," written in 1961 by an incarcerated AA inmate. Next, the roll call was taken: Area 21 (Southern Illinois) shared a powerful message titled "How much is a life worth?" and Area 28 (Maine and New Brunswick) celebrated Canada's 70 years of registering prisons where we carry the message--with GSO. Also noteworthy, California carries the message to 36 state prisons, having begun this service in 1942.

Panel topics were awesome. One of the panels had the warden of a correctional facility share on "Cooperation through Participation." A sheriff of the Cumberland County Jail organized a walk through the jail itself, in which 20 attendees participated. The district lost its access to the Cumberland County jail last winter when a recent inmate tried to enter facility as part of an A.A. group (recent inmates are barred from returning to the facility). Every April, Cumberland County has a Recognition Day to support alternatives to incarceration. Their treatment courts combine intensive judicial supervision, mandatory testing, treatment, and incentives to help offenders with substance abuse problems break the cycle of alcoholism, addiction and crime.

Another panel arranged for a call with an AA member inside a local prison who shared a very powerful message of recovery.



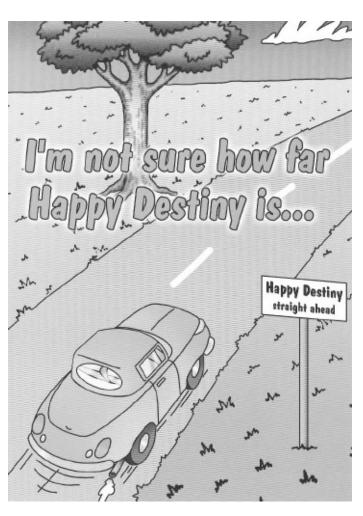
It's my feeling that the most effective way to carry the message is to be an active member of an active home group, and an active member of an active district, county, or area committee.

#### Marty K.

#### **Passing the Torch** From the GSR, Decision Group (Nassau)

My term as general service representative (GSR) for the Decision Group in Nassau County is ending, and I have a few related regrets. Mostly, I wish I had made room in my busy schedule to participate in more SENY assemblies and other general service events while serving as my home group's GSR. Participation in AA service events strengthens my recovery and fills me with pride. I am reminded at each level of service that membership in AA connects me with a worldwide movement propelled by love, selflessness, and persistent dedication to positive global change, and I feel grateful to play a small role as one of many maintenance workers on the Road to Happy Destiny. I will soon pass the GSR "torch" to a very dear friend who will be a wonderful GSR for our home group, and I will have the privilege of serving Nassau County as DCMC for 2019-2020. As such, I look forward to taking part in as many SENY area events as possible, opening myself up to the spiritual lessons this service opportunity will offer.

#### Annabel B.



#### News from your GSO: Box 459, Fall 2018

In keeping with A.A.'s Responsibility Declaration, the need for A.A.'s service structure to pay special attention to alcoholics living in remote communities was first articulated in the 1970s with reports from A.A. members dedicated to carrying the message to some of the most far-flung places across the U.S. and Canada. A number of years later, the first formal meeting of a Remote Communities Conference took place in Toronto in 1996. Soon after, a Remote Communities meeting, comprised of a group of delegates to the General Service Conference, took place before the 1997 Conference, and at that time reviewed and recommitted to a definition of "remote communities" as "any community where it is difficult to carry the message because of language, culture and geography." It also expanded the committee to include all Conference members who wished to participate and made the decision to publish a yearly newsletter. Today, this effort has morphed into what is known as the Pre-Conference Remote Communities Meeting that is held just prior to the annual General Service Conference, and has two co-chairs who create the agenda and a G.S.O. staff member who supports them.

On a Fellowship-wide basis, each area determines how best to apply the definition of "remote communities" to its specific circumstances, in several cases adapting and even translating A.A. service literature to suit their needs. The work of many area committees embodies the Remote Communities reminder: "Know that 'far' or distant does not necessarily equal remote."

With that said, in northernmost North America, issues of "far" — of geographical distance and physical access — are all too real. As noted in the most current issue of the Remote Communities Communicator (from which the following highlights are excerpted), Area 79 (British Columbia/Yukon) reports that many of its 800-plus groups (among 48 districts) are "only serviceable by ferry, small plane, boat and even skidoo." Area 02, Alaska, reports that it has an active Remote Communities committee, with three telephone meetings ongoing in the Alaska bush; videoconference meetings are in discussion. Area 78 (Alberta/Northwest Territories) hosts online meetings, but notes challenges, such as the cost of Internet service and concerns about anonymity breaches in small online communities.

In these and other area Remote Communities commit-tees, First Nation/Native communities and reservations often present both telecommunication challenges and cultural/language barriers, in addition to being geographicallly remote. A 2017 highlight for Area 79 was connecting over 50 people and two First Nations communities. One of these was so isolated it only received telephone lines in the last few years (there's no cell phone or Internet access), but today it has a regular telephone meeting. Another success story was

#### "Remote Communities in A.A.: Notes from the Field"

Area 78, where three Tsiigehtchic people joined an online meeting through their health center and later started their own meeting.

Of course, nothing is better than alcoholics carrying the message face to face. Each year, Area 02's District 8 undertakes a trip to a remote area in Alaska, and this year they head to Kotzebue; last year's trip to Utqiagvik (Barrow) was a highlight. One New York City A.A. member recently commented to a committee member, "I thought I was going to any lengths to carry the message when I walked two blocks from my apartment to attend a meeting. I can't believe that you folks in Alaska get on airplanes to hold an A.A. meeting!" Meanwhile, Area 78's committee strives to bring remote members to area assemblies, and asks that area groups send around a second Seventh Tradition can to help fund this endeavor. The Area 80 (Manitoba) committee makes two trips a year to different remote areas. In Area 80, eight committee members attended the first annual A.A. roundup at Opaskwayak Cree Nation, which featured a sobriety dinner with over 200 in attendance and a traditional hoop dancing performance by children from the community.

Quite different distances are traveled in Area 17 (Hawaii), a "remote community of remote communities." There, each year in an event called The Crossing, Maui members travel to the far less populous islands of Lanai and Molokai and share meetings.

In Area 18 (Idaho), many struggling alcoholics in the state's rural mountain, farming and ranching communities are miles away from any town that might have a meeting. Internet service isn't reliable or even available in these areas.

Other culturally and linguistic "remote" communities abound. Area 79 contains a very large population of Asian and South Asian people, for example, and while certain groups (Punjabi, Hindi, Korean) list their meet- ings, other ethnicities (Chinese, Japanese, Vietnamese) do not. In response, the area is building a list of members who speak these languages to reach out to those not rep- resented. Area 17 is currently involved in outreach to the Micronesian community, in which very few A.A. members speak English; attempts are being made to have English- speaking non-members assist with translation.

Area 15 (South Florida/Bahamas/VI/Antigua) reports that in its area, ""remote' could be three blocks away if language and culture are barriers." Here, members are engaged in multiple efforts, including taking Big Books to the Bahamas and Cuba; starting meetings in Cayman Brac (the eastern most island in the Caymans); and reaching out to migrant farm workers. They've also discovered an unlisted Russian meeting. Three districts in the area have expressed linguistic and cultural

challenges connecting with the Haitian community, including anonymity concerns, due in part to the cultural stigma associated with alcoholism. The area is currently developing an area service kit with materials in Russian and Creole.

Because the theme of the 2018 Remote Communities Communicator issue was to share on the idea of "The Military as a Remote Community," several areas speak to this topic. Area 03 notes there are seven military bases in Arizona; however, non-military people are not allowed to bring meetings on base, in order to protect the anonymity of military personnel. The area Remote Communities coordinator is gathering information from members with ties to the military to see what support might be provided, however.

Both Areas 26 (Kentucky) and 40 (Montana) offer first-person shared experience from A.A. members of the military. The Area 26 member served in Iraq during Desert Storm and, later, in Afghanistan. He used every tool he could to stay sober, including literature, but more important were joining LIM and asking to be placed on a list of troops seeking support from A.A. members. On a dark day in Baghdad, just when he was ready to drink, he says, "the miracle happened," and mail came pouring in. He added, "It is a great example of meeting adversity with serenity and doing the best we can with what we have." And, upon notification that he was being deployed to Iraq, the Area 40 soldier prepared by building an A.A. email list — a "tether to sanity" that he predicted, correctly, would be critical to his recovery.

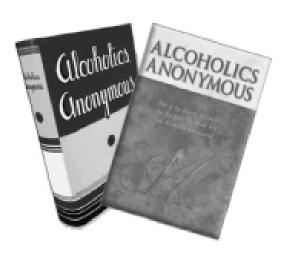
Area 87 (Southwest Quebec) also weighs in, "Our troops are in our backyards, and yet they seem so far away when we think about trying to help them recover," adding that these A.A.s are in a kind of "professional isolation." The committee member reports that in the Canadian military, soldiers are encouraged to attend A.A. meetings off base. At the moment, the Area 87 C.P.C. committee plans to collaborate with the Canadian Armed Forces.

Area 91 (Saskatchewan) describes its Remote Communities committee as at the "infant stage." Thus far, they have identified communities that are geographically and culturally remote, including shut-ins, the elderly, active and retired military, and an increased immigrant population, some from countries where it is illegal or dan-gerous to identify as an alcoholic.

When considering the many difficulties faced by these committees, it's reassuring to read the words of wisdom from Area 17: "Let us remember we must always look at our efforts in light of two questions: does it help the drunk and does it build unity? In reaching out to remote com- munities, I know I need to remember that the drunk I'm helping may, in fact, be me."

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

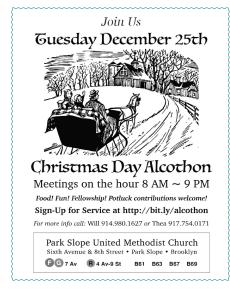
Speaker Meetings • Workshops & Panels • Alkathon • Banquet • Archives Literature & Service Tables • AA Videos • Spanish Translation Entertainment • Al-Anon • Much More

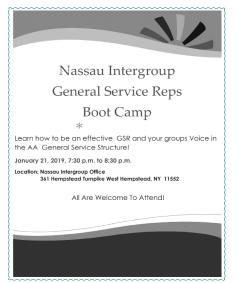
Get involved. Upcoming Convention Planning Committee meetings are October 28 & November 17, 2018, 12PM, Program Sub-Committee, 11AM. (At NY Intergroup, 307 Seventh Avenue, Room 201, NYC 10001.) Submit logo artwork for our theme.

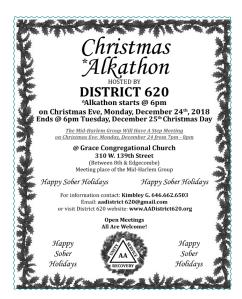
convention@aaseny.org



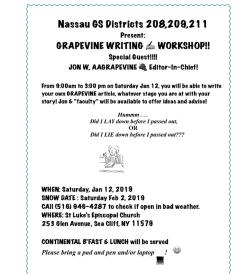
#### **Upcoming Events**

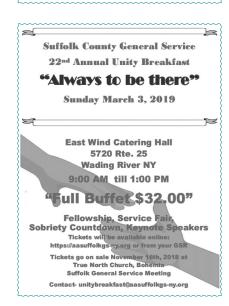












#### Upcoming deadlines for submission of articles and flyers to *The Link*:

Sunday, January 20 (distribution at the February 9 Area Assembly)
Sunday, February 17 (distribution at the March 4 Area Committee meeting)
Sunday, April 21 (distribution at the May 4 Pre-Conference Assembly)
Sunday, June 2 (distribution at the June 15 Post-Conference Assembly)

Upcoming 2018 Area Committee Meetings and Assemblies								
01/07/19	7:30 pm	Area Committee	Church of the Holy Family, 2158 Watson Avenue, Bronx, NY 10472					
02/09/19	8:30 am	Area Assembly	P.S. 48- William G. Wilcox School, 1050 Targee Street Staten Island, N.Y. 10304					
03/04/19	7:30 pm	Area Committee	Church of the Holy Family, 2158 Watson Avenue, Bronx, NY 10472					
04/01/19	7:30 pm	Area Committee	Church of the Holy Family, 2158 Watson Avenue, Bronx, NY 10472					
05/04/19	8:30 am	Pre-Conference Assembly	TBD - hosted by Hispanic Districts					
06/03/19	7:30 pm	Area Committee	Church of the Holy Family, 2158 Watson Avenue, Bronx, NY 10472					
06/15/19	8:15 am	Post-Conference Assembly	TBD - hosted by Brooklyn					

<sup>2</sup> County General Service Meetings	Diago visit varue accome and for the most up to	data infan	mation			
Bronx-Upper Manhattan	Please visit www.aaseny.org for the most up-to- Bedford Park Congregational Church, 3008 Bainbridge Avenue, Bronx, NY 10458	12/12/18				
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Brooklyn	St. Francis College, 180 Remsen St., Brooklyn, NY 11201		7:30 pm			
Hispanic Districts (3d Sunday, monthly)	Location rotates - please see aaseny.org or aacdhseny49.org each month		9:30 am			
Manhattan (3d Tuesday, every other month)	Seafarer's House, 123 East 15th Street, New York, NY 10003		6:30 pm			
Nassau (3d Monday, every other month)	Nassau Intergroup Office, 361 Hempstead Tpke, West Hempstead, NY 11552	12/17/18	7:30 pm			
Orange (3d Tuesday, monthly)	First Presbyterian Church, Campbell Hall, Rte. 207, Campbell Hall, NY 10916	12/18/18	7:00 pm			
Putnam (2nd Tuesday, monthly)	Mt. Carmel Baptist Church, 76 Gleneida Avenue, Carmel, NY 10512		7:00 pm			
Queens (last Monday, every other month)	Saint Mary Gate of Heaven Church, 101-18 104th St., Queens, NY 11416		7:30 pm			
Rockland (3d Wednesday, monthly)	Elim Alliance Church, 40 Lake Road, Valley Cottage , NY 10989		7:30 pm			
Staten Island (2nd Sun; no meetings May, July or August)	Oakwood Heights Community Church, 345 Guyon Ave, Staten Island, NY 10306		7:00 pm			
Suffolk (3d Friday, monthly)	Bellport United Methodist Church, 185 South Country Road, Bellport, NY 11713	12/21/18	8:00 pm			
Sullivan (3d Sunday, monthly; except July & August)	Sullivan County Community College, 112 College Rd., Loch Sheldrake, NY 12759	12/16/18	3:00 pm			
Westchester (3d Wednesday, monthly)	Memorial Methodist Church, 250 Bryant Avenue, White Plains, NY10605	12/19/18	7:30 pm			
Standing Committee Meetings & W	Orkshops Please visit www.aaseny.org for the most up-to-	date infor	nation			
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 Committee	NY Intergroup Office, 307 7th Ave. #201, New York, NY 10001		1:00 pm			
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	xx/xx/19	7:15 pm			
Treatment Facilities Committee (last Sunday, monthly)	SENY Office, 99 Lincoln Ave., Bronx, NY 10454	12/30/18	11:30 am			
12 Concepts of World Service Workshop (1st Wed, monthly)	Trinity Lower East Side, 602 E 9th St New York, NY 10009	12/5/18	8:15 pm			
SENY Service Participation Meeting	NY Intergroup Office, 307 7th Ave. #201, New York, NY 10001		7:00 pm			
SENY Convention Planning Meeting	NY Intergroup Office, 307 7th Ave. #201, New York, NY 10001		7:00 pm			
Queens GSR Boot Camp	St. Mary Gate of Heaven Church, 103-12 101 Avenue South Ozone Park, NY 11416	1/14/19	7:30 pm			
SENY Officers SENY Standing / Ad Hoc Committee Chairs						

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

Westchester

Rich S.