



## **UPCOMING EVENTS**

### **EXCHANGE MEETING**

Public School 41  
116 West 11<sup>th</sup> Street  
@Sixth Avenue  
New York, NY 10011  
JUNE 6<sup>TH</sup>  
7 am

### **CORRECTIONS & TREATMENT FACILITIES LITERATURE PACKING**

New York Inter-Group Office  
JUNE 6<sup>TH</sup>  
11 am

### **NEW INTER-GROUP DELEGATE WORKSHOP**

Public School 41  
116 West 11<sup>th</sup> Street  
@ Sixth Avenue  
New York, NY 10011  
JUNE 6<sup>TH</sup>  
10 am

### **QUARTERLY INTER-GROUP DELEGATES' MEETING**

Public School 41  
116 West 11<sup>th</sup> Street  
@ Sixth Avenue  
New York, NY 10011  
JUNE 6<sup>TH</sup>  
11 am

### **CORRECTIONS & TREATMENT FACILITIES COMMITTEE ALL AREAS MEETING**

New York Inter-Group Office  
JUNE 8<sup>TH</sup>  
7 pm

### **GROUP RELATIONS COMMITTEE MEETING**

New York Inter-Group Office  
JUNE 9<sup>TH</sup>  
6:30 pm

## **LEANING ON A.A. IN NEW YORK CITY**

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that everyone gets torn up by the death of a close family member.

Meeting Makers Make It!

My program tells me to increase participation in A.A. when the going gets tough. Now I needed meetings. Fortunately, I was in one of the birthplaces of A.A., a great city with hundreds of meetings a day. At home, I do public information service with the Continental European Region of A.A. Lately, I had wished I could attend some of the conventions held around the Continent, whether in Costa del Sol or Berlin. Now I would have my very own urban A.A. retreat.

I went all over Manhattan, sometimes qualifying – from Perry Street to Central Group at St. James Church

on the Upper East Side, from the Mustard Seed to the Upright Citizens Brigade, from the Tribeca Group to the Fearless Group at All Souls Church on Lexington Avenue. From Sobriety on the Square to Metropolitan Group to St. Bart's noon meeting, where a woman recognized me when I said I was from out of town. "Are you my cousin, Michael?" Yes, it was my cousin, whom I hadn't seen in more than 30 years.

One night my friend Pat spoke at the After Eight Group. She said that through her 27 years of sobriety she learned that no matter how hard or softly she leans on the program, A.A. is always there when she needs it.

Thank you, New York, for making sure that the hand of A.A. was there for me.

## **Join the Anniversary Club!**

**CELEBRATE YOUR SOBER ANNIVERSARY BY  
JOINING NEW YORK INTER-GROUP'S  
ANNIVERSARY CLUB.**

Your Contribution will help NYIG to carry A.A.'s message of hope and recovery to still-sick and suffering alcoholics throughout the Greater New York City Area.

A voluntary contribution of **\$1 (or more)** for each year of sobriety is suggested. For more information, please stop by the NYIG office or visit our website at

**[www.nyintergroup.org](http://www.nyintergroup.org)**

# Support the CTFC Literature Fund!

HELP US CARRY THE A.A. MESSAGE TO THOSE WHO CANNOT GET TO A MEETING ON THEIR OWN.

## The 2015 CTFC Annual Dinner Dance Benefit

Antun's Restaurant  
96-43 Springfield Blvd.  
Queens Village, NY 11429

SATURDAY,  
JULY 25, 2015  
8 PM - 1 AM

**\$85** Tickets Available  
at the NYIG Office

## WHAT IS AN AREA FORUM?

By Christopher D.

My name is Christopher D., Chair of the Steering Committee of New York Inter-Group (NYIG); and I'd like to talk to you about Area Forums.

Area Forums are bimonthly meetings of Inter-Group Delegates and other A.A. members, held in each of the five New York City Boroughs, as well as Westchester County. These meetings are sponsored by NYIG, and presided over by an Area Representative, who also serves on the NYIG Steering Committee.

A good way to think of Area Forums is that they're like two-way conversations between the groups and the Steering Committee.

Group representatives stay informed about NYIG's activities, in between the more formal Quarterly Delegates Meetings. Area Representatives stay informed about group concerns, as they relate to NYIG. Then, the Area Representatives inform the Steering Committee of these concerns during their monthly meetings.

For example, last year—for the whole year—NYIG was hit with

unexpected expenses. Anniversary Club and Faithful Fivers contributions went down because groups lost their meeting spaces, either through construction or rent increases.

Yet, there are also a lot of exciting things going on here at NYIG. Like the office being rearranged, for example. Or the sale of anniversary coins. Or our maiden voyage into accepting credit card payments for tickets to the Bill W. Dinner.

Some questions a group might ask during a forum meeting might be: How many people go to the Forums now? How can we increase participation? When and where does the Big Meeting Committee meet? When and where does the Bill W. Committee meet? What are the dates for both events? What about the CTFC Dinner at Antun's?

We hope we can count on you to participate in our next Delegates and Exchange Meeting. As you can see, there is lots to talk about. I hope this article provides a bit of insight, as well as a reminder of what we can do together that we cannot do alone.

So let's start the conversation!

## UPCOMING EVENTS

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### **MANHATTAN AREA FORUM**

New York Inter-Group Office  
JUNE 16<sup>TH</sup>  
7 pm

### **STATEN ISLAND AREA FORUM**

Immanuel Lutheran Church  
2018 Richmond Avenue  
Btwn. Rockland Avenue  
& Signs Road  
Staten Island, NY 10314  
JUNE 18<sup>TH</sup>  
7:30 pm

### **THE BIG MEETING**

New York Hilton Hotel  
Grand Ballroom, Third Floor  
1335 Avenue of the Americas  
Btwn 53<sup>rd</sup> & 54<sup>th</sup> Streets  
New York, NY 10019  
JUNE 28<sup>TH</sup>  
1 pm

### **CORRECTIONS & TREATMENT FACILITIES LITERATURE PACKING**

New York Inter-Group Office  
JULY 11<sup>TH</sup>  
11 am

### **CORRECTIONS & TREATMENT FACILITIES COMMITTEE ALL AREAS MEETING**

New York Inter-Group Office  
JULY 13<sup>TH</sup>  
7 pm

### **QUEENS AREA FORUM**

Queens Inter-Group Office  
105-29A Metropolitan Avenue  
Forest Hills, NY 11375  
JULY 14<sup>TH</sup>  
7:15 pm

**Come Wish  
A.A. a Happy  
80<sup>th</sup> Birthday!**

By Steve T.

The  
**Big  
Meeting**

Eighty years ago this June, Dr. Bob Holbrook Smith had his last drink, and the worldwide fellowship known as Alcoholics Anonymous officially began.

In the decades since, that first conversation between Dr. Bob (as he is affectionately known) and Bill Wilson has been repeated countless times. In meeting after meeting, in country after country, alcoholics share their experience, strength, and hope, in order to help each other stay sober one day at a time. A concept that was inconceivable before June 10, 1935.

Here in New York, we celebrate the founding of A.A. with a Big Meeting, held in the Grand Ballroom, on the Third Floor of the New York Hilton Hotel, located at 1335 Avenue of the Americas, between 53<sup>rd</sup> and 54<sup>th</sup> Streets, New York, NY 10019. This year's event will take place on **Sunday, June 28, 2015**. Doors open at noon, and the meeting begins at 1 pm.

The three-speaker meeting opens with the

Serenity Prayer. A recording of Bill W. reading "How It Works" from Chapter Five of the Big Book is played. Then, a newly-restored video of Dr. Bob's "Farewell Address" is shown. During the break, there is a Sobriety Countdown, and a Seventh Tradition collection, which benefits New York Inter-Group (NYIG). The entire event is interpreted for the hearing impaired, as well as simultaneous Spanish translation. A.A. Conference-Approved literature is also available for sale.

This twenty-six-year tradition dates back to July 9<sup>th</sup>, 1989, when the very first Big Meeting took place in the cavernous Jacob Javits Convention Center. That first event drew hundreds of joyful, sober alcoholics. All of them willingly admitted that their newfound freedom from alcohol was made possible by the fellowship whose birthday they had come to celebrate.

The honor of hosting this year's event goes to

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**“THIS WE OWE TO  
A.A.’S FUTURE: TO  
PLACE OUR COMMON  
WELFARE FIRST; TO  
KEEP OUR FELLOWSHIP  
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UNITY DEPEND OUR  
LIVES, AND THE LIVES  
OF THOSE TO COME.”**



Image Courtesy of A.A. Grapevine

Staten Island. Under the leadership of Andy V., from the Victory Group, the dedicated members of the 2015 Big Meeting Planning Committee have been working hard to ensure that this New York tradition continues in style.

Denise K., and her selection team, have been traveling to meetings across the Five Boroughs, and Westchester County, to hear potential speakers. Once she has narrowed the selection down to three speakers and two alternates, then Denise will present their names to the NYIG Steering Committee. If approved by the Steering Committee, then the final speaker selection will be put to a vote by the area groups at the next Quarterly Delegates Meeting on June 6<sup>th</sup>.

Nick M. and Don S. have been rounding up volunteers for hospitality—a huge job, given the size of the venue. Over forty A.A.s will have two on-site run-throughs before manning information tables, selling literature, and passing out the Seventh Tradition baskets. Nick and Don are extremely grate-

ful to all the groups who have offered to provide volunteers for this important service.

Xtina R. has designed all the graphics, including the program itself, as well as the postcards and fliers distributed at area meetings. This year’s program will feature the orange cover of the first edition of the book, *Alcoholics Anonymous*.

And, just as she did all those years ago, at the very first Big Meeting, Rosa C., from the Victory Group, will read the Unity Statement, written for A.A.s 35<sup>th</sup> Anniversary International Convention in Miami Beach Florida, back in July of 1970:

“This we owe to A.A.’s future: to place our common welfare first; to keep our Fellowship united. For on A.A. unity depend our lives, and the lives of those to come.”

If this year’s Big Meeting, in celebration of our 80<sup>th</sup> Birthday, is any indication—and I think it is—then the future of Alcoholics Anonymous is in good hands.

## **UPCOMING EVENTS**

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### **VOLUNTEERS COMMITTEE MEETING**

New York Inter-Group Office  
JULY 15<sup>TH</sup>  
6:30 pm

### **2015 BILL W. DINNER TABLE LOTTERY**

New York Hilton Hotel  
1335 Avenue of the Americas  
New York, NY 10019  
JULY 15<sup>TH</sup>  
7 pm

### **WESTCHESTER AREA FORUM**

First Baptist Church  
456 North Street  
@ Bryant Avenue  
White Plains, NY 10605  
JULY 18<sup>TH</sup>  
9:30 am

### **BROOKLYN AREA FORUM**

First Unitarian  
Congregational Chapel  
Btwn. Clinton Street  
& Monroe Place  
121 Pierrepont Street  
Brooklyn, NY 11201  
JULY 18<sup>TH</sup>  
2 pm

### **BRONX AREA FORUM**

Westchester United  
Methodist Church  
2547 East Tremont Avenue  
Btwn. Silver Street  
& Lurting Avenue  
Bronx, NY 10461  
JULY 18<sup>TH</sup>  
2:30 pm

### **CTFC ANNUAL DINNER DANCE BENEFIT**

Antun's Restaurant  
96-43 Springfield Boulevard  
Queens Village, NY 11429  
JULY 25<sup>TH</sup>  
8 pm

## **Faithful Fivers!**

### **NY INTER-GROUP'S SEVENTH TRADITION GRATITUDE PLAN**

Your monthly pledge of **\$5 (or more)** supports NYIG's continued efforts to carry the A.A. message.

For more information, please stop by the NYIG Office, or visit our website: [www.nyintergroup.org](http://www.nyintergroup.org)

## **WHAT'S SO SPECIAL ABOUT SERVICE?**

By Kathleen Mc

I think that, for me, getting involved with service was the particular thing of AA's recovery program that helped me. Because, I was never a shy person; I was always involved with stuff. But once I got to AA, you know, I didn't have all my props (booze!) So, I turned to this person who I didn't even know, and this lovely woman got me involved with doing service right away.

My first service position was, you know...A-B-Cs: Ashtrays; Brooms; and Coffee.

I got sober in July of 1986, back when you could still smoke in meetings. That's why my first one was ashtrays. And at my home group, the Seventy-Ninth Street Workshop, our ashtrays were cat food cans. When I was probably a month sober, my sponsor, who didn't smoke (and at that time I did smoke), told me to clean up the ashtrays after the meeting.

I remember thinking, "Is she serious?" Truly, that's what I thought.

But I did it anyway, because she asked me to. Then, my sponsor said she'd meet me downstairs, and we would go out for coffee. So, I remember running down the stairs, after I'd finished, and there she was. Waiting for me.

My whole life, as a kid and as a drunk, I was always afraid that nobody would be there. Like I was always going to miss the party. So, when anyone told me they'd meet me somewhere, I never believed them, or trusted them. My sponsor was the first person I trusted. So when she said, "Do that," I did it. When she said, "Jump," I jumped.

After that, I did hospitality at the 6:15 meeting at the Seventy-Ninth Street Workshop. Then, I chaired a meeting: 7:15 am Round Robin. That was after I had a year, because you had to have year to chair a meeting. And, for my entire 28 years of sobriety, I have never *not* done service in A.A.

My sponsor always said, Is there not one hour a week that you could possibly give to A.A.? One hour a week? So that lesson always stayed in my head. If there's not one hour a week that I can give back to A.A., then I'm in pretty bad shape.

## **Bill W. Dinner Table Lottery**

**WEDNESDAY,  
JULY 15, 2015  
7 PM**

**NY Hilton Hotel**  
1335 Ave of the Americas  
New York, NY 10019

**Must Bring 50% Deposit  
To Reserve Your Table**

## **CALL TO ACTION:** **THE BILL W. DINNER**

By Michael B.

Every year, scores of alcoholics from across the Five Boroughs, and Westchester County, flock to the Grand Ballroom of the New York Hilton Hotel on Sixth Avenue, between 53<sup>rd</sup> and 54<sup>th</sup> Streets, for New York Inter-Group's annual fund-raising gala: The Bill W. Dinner.

Manhattan is hosting this year's event, which oddly enough, takes place on October 31st. Does that mean it is going to be a costume ball? Not according to Kathleen Mc., Chair of the 2015 Old Timer's Meeting, and Bill W. Dinner Planning Committee: "We have no opinion one way or the other. There is no dress code for the event. Nothing is written on any of the fliers, or postcards, etc."

When asked if she thought people would dress up anyway, she replied, "We're alcoholics! So, chances are some people will come in costume."

While not necessarily embracing the holiday, the committee is not ignoring it either. This year's theme, "We Are Not Saints", seems as much a nod to All Hallows Eve as it does to Bill W.

Now, it is no secret that last year's event did not do as well as expected. When asked what she and her committee were doing to ensure that history does not repeat itself, Kathleen deferred to her Publicity Chair, Vince V. "We started promoting the event [in February]," Vince said. "And we wanted that to be a little bit more far-flung geographically than it's been in the past."

Exactly how far has Vince been

## **"We Are Not Saints!"**

**BUT WE CAN BE ANGELS  
AND SPREAD THE WORD!**

**THE 81<sup>ST</sup> ANNUAL  
BILL W. DINNER  
OCTOBER 31, 2015**

To learn how to get  
involved, please email  
**BillWDinnerInfo  
@nyintergroup.org**

spreading the word? "We wanted to cover at least the Five Boroughs, but we also reached out to New Jersey, Suffolk, and Nassau County, as well as ah...Boca [Raton, Florida], frankly." As he explains "There's more New Yorkers down there than there are here."

Aside from the actual event, Vince and his team are also promoting the Table Lottery, which takes place on **July 15<sup>th</sup>** at the Hilton Hotel. Vince pointed out, "A lot of people don't know that there's a Table Lottery. People don't know that they can take a table, you know? So I'm sending out that message, as well." The Lottery itself is free; however, in order to reserve a table, a group must put down a 50% deposit.

The Bill W. Dinner may still be months away, but Kathleen and her committee have issued a bold "call to action" to the entire New York area fellowship: "Help us make this year's event something amazing!"

To learn how to get involved, please call the New York Inter-Group office, or email them at **BillWDinnerInfo@nyintergroup.org**

## **UPCOMING EVENTS**

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### **PUBLIC INFORMATION COMMITTEE MEETING**

New York Inter-Group Office  
JULY 27<sup>TH</sup>  
7 pm

### **CORRECTIONS & TREATMENT FACILITIES LITERATURE PACKING**

New York Inter-Group Office  
AUGUST 8<sup>TH</sup>  
11 am

### **GROUP RELATIONS COMMITTEE MEETING**

New York Inter-Group Office  
AUGUST 11<sup>TH</sup>  
6:30 pm

### **CORRECTIONS & TREATMENT FACILITIES COMMITTEE ALL AREAS MEETING**

New York Inter-Group Office  
AUGUST 11<sup>TH</sup>  
7 pm

### **WESTCHESTER BOOKING MEETING**

Memorial United  
Methodist Church  
250 Bryant Avenue  
Btwn. North & Mamaroneck  
White Plains, NY 10605  
AUGUST 15<sup>TH</sup>  
6:30 am

### **MANHATTAN AREA FORUM**

New York Inter-Group Office  
AUGUST 18<sup>TH</sup>  
7 pm

### **STATEN ISLAND AREA FORUM**

Immanuel Lutheran Church  
2018 Richmond Avenue  
Staten Island, NY 10314  
AUGUST 20<sup>TH</sup>  
7:30 pm

# **soberNEWS**

## **wants YOU!**

**YOUR EXPERIENCES  
YOUR STRENGTH  
YOUR HOPE**

**YOUR ARTWORK  
YOUR LETTERS  
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**YOUR A.A. EVENTS  
YOUR OLD-TIMERS  
YOUR GROUP HISTORIES**

### **SUBMISSIONS:**

400- to 1000 word articles. Topics include:

**YOUNG AND SOBER  
GETTING SOBER IN NYC  
MY FIRST SOBER HOLIDAY / BIRTHDAY**

**DOUBLE DIGIT SOBRIETY  
INTERVIEW WITH AN OLD -TIMER  
MILESTONE GROUP ANNIVERSARY**

Please send as email attachments only. Also please indicate if you wish to have your name printed. In accordance with A.A. tradition, we respect the anonymity of our contributors.

### **VOLUNTEERS:**

Help us spread the word about Sober News to all Five New York City Boroughs, and Westchester County.

### **CONTACT VIA EMAIL:**

**[sobernews@nyintergroup.org](mailto:sobernews@nyintergroup.org)**

Sober News may be found at the New York Inter-Group office, as well as area meetings, area forums, and other local A.A. related events. It is also available online at

**[www.nyintergroup.org](http://www.nyintergroup.org)**