

SOBER NEWS

NEW YORK INTER-GROUP – FALL 2008

307 Seventh Avenue (28th Street), Room 201, New York, NY 10001-6007

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Website: www.nyintergroup.org (includes Meeting List)

E-mail: sobernews@nyintergroup.org

I am responsible...

When anyone, anywhere, reaches out for help,

I want the hand of A.A. always to be there,

And for that I am responsible.

Reflections on Chairing the New York Inter-Group Steering Committee

John F. chaired the New York Inter-Group Steering Committee from July 2006 through June 2008. As he rotates out of this service, he shares with us his experience.

It is really hard to believe that my two-year term has passed by so quickly. While I had been on the New York Inter-Group Steering Committee before, as Queens-area chair, I never could have imagined how much the overall-chair commitment would enhance my recovery and my sober life. I discovered how fervently devoted so many people are to helping the suffering alcoholic, using New York Inter-Group as a vital tool.

The members of the steering committee during my two years of service were remarkable. The standing committees accomplished a lot. Our treasurer, Harry, helped to get our prudent reserve to the desired level, while also allocating funds to overhaul the office. Dorothy, who chairs the Group Relations Committee, is making dramatic inroads in updating our meeting book, to make sure that the information is accurate. Dorothy continues to make groups in all six areas more aware of the crucial role New York Inter-Group plays in helping suffering alcoholics. Eddy, our volunteers' chair, was dedicated to covering phone shifts with trained representatives, to help alcoholics who reached out.

The Public Information Committee expanded its coverage in nursing homes, schools, and other venues; Mike and Sandy led with hands-on participation. I was gratified that our Corrections and Treatment Facilities Committee, chaired by Owen and Felicia, substantially reduced the number of open commitments, while showing passion and devotion to the cause of helping the suffering alcoholic. All of the area chairs during my tenure (Chassie, Gregory and Mike, Barry and Christine, Sharon and Diane, Joe and David) demonstrated dedication to their areas, and kept everyone informed of all New York Inter-Group events and needs. While numbers of attendees at area forums fluctuated, the enthusiasm of our area chairs was always

apparent. I urge all New York Inter-Group member groups to support their monthly area forums and our quarterly delegates' meetings.

The devotion of the steering committee members during my tenure made my job a whole lot easier. At New York Inter-Group major events, people would approach me and say, "You are doing a great job." I realize that the members of the steering committee made me look good! My co-chairs, Stephanie and Steve, were always there with insight and support. Our secretary for the last two years, Laurie, carried out her commitment with tireless work and efficiency. I anticipate that my successor, Hermina, will have as devoted a group as I had. I believe that the New York Inter-Group inventory process will enable even further efficiency of both the steering committee and the office.

Our office staff (Sean, Cynthia, Zedekiah, and Alma) showed true dedication to their positions, and always went the extra mile to make sure the office truly served the alcoholic who reached out. The office staff gave our steering committee all the resources we needed to run as smoothly and efficiently as we could.

Whether I was in the office phone room, at an area forum, a group anniversary, the Big Meeting, or the Bill W. Dinner, I must acknowledge the many devoted AA members I met during my tenure. I saw first hand how many people truly want to see New York Inter-Group succeed, and I saw that they will participate in any way they can. Every AA member I met touched me in a special way: my sobriety and my life have been enriched because of it. Thanks always

*John F., Queens, Chair,
New York Inter-Group Steering Committee,
July 2006-June 2008*

We're Taking Our Inventory!

The decision to take New York Inter-Group's inventory came about when some issues arose at the Manhattan Area Forum about New York Inter-Group; it was suggested that the area representative bring these concerns to the steering committee's attention, with the suggestion that New York Inter-Group do its inventory. Steering committee members thought that doing an inventory was a wonderful idea. It was decided that the committee would bring the idea to the New York Inter-Group delegates, who in turn would go to their groups for input.

An ad-hoc committee from the steering committee - to be responsible for composing the inventory questionnaire - was formed consisting of John F., Chair, Laurie S., Secretary, Diane B., Bronx Area Representative, and Chassie P., Manhattan Area Representative (John, Laurie, and Chassie have since rotated off the steering committee). An independent body, comprising former SENY delegates and other AAs with long-term sobriety and a history of service, is in place to review and expand on the ad-hoc committee's work. At the outset, in order to gather collective experience to determine how New York Inter-Group should go about doing its inventory, Sean K., the executive secretary of New York Inter-Group, contacted central offices and other inter-groups around the country to ask if they had ever performed their inventory. He heard from over twenty-five central offices and inter-groups and he presented the information to the ad-hoc committee, who embarked on this process. This is where we are now. We foresee that when the ad-hoc committee and independent body meet again, they will put the finishing touches on the inventory questionnaire for distribution to the delegates either by mail or at the September 13, 2008 Quarterly Delegates' Meeting. Once the groups have been given ample time to respond, the independent committee will review the groups' responses and report back to the delegates.

Laurie S., Queens; John F., Queens

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NY Inter-Group belongs to you:

Has your group considered inviting speakers from New York Inter-Group to lead your meeting? You'll hear a great story; a little about how the volunteers at New York Inter-Group make life-saving connections with the still-suffering alcoholic; and what kind of service opportunities are available at New York Inter-Group. For more information or to schedule New York Inter-Group speakers to come to your group, please contact Sean K. at the New York Inter-Group office at (212) 647-1680; or Dorothy D., Group Relations Committee Chair, at (212) 683-3779.

ICYPAA: At Any Age

The International Conference of Young People in AA (ICYPAA) – pronounced: ick-ee-pa - just wrapped up its 50th annual conference in Oklahoma City. More than 2,000 AAs of all ages and from all over North America and beyond got together for the yearly celebration of sobriety. "Young People in AA," has nothing to do with age or sobriety length: it means "having room to grow." For the past three years, AAs from New York City have been bidding to bring the conference back to New York City, for the first time since 1993. This year in Oklahoma City, Atlanta was awarded the 51st ICYPAA. Out of the nine cities bidding, however, New York City was the clear runner-up. The other bidders were Chicago, St. Louis, Phoenix, San Francisco, Vancouver, Milwaukee, and multiple cities in Texas. To demonstrate that your city is qualified to host the conference, you need to meet nine requirements. The bidding committees usually spend many months leading up to the conference preparing a document (usually called a bid book) that lays out its qualifications. Some of these prerequisites: at least three members with three years or greater of continuous sobriety; contracts from at least two hotels or other facilities large enough to hold the conference; having results of tax-law research to show what the local tax implications of the conference would be; a full treasury report of your committee's financial transactions; a prepared pre-registration flyer, so that AAs can register early at a reduced rate; a letter from the area chair confirming that your proposed dates do not conflict with the local AA schedule; a concise statement describing your city's reason for bidding. Bidding for ICYPAA is an intense experience that takes hard work and dedication, with participation of from of all ages from all over the area. To learn more about ICYPAA, visit www.icypaa.org. The New York City Young People in Alcoholics Anonymous Committee meets the on first and third Sundays of the month at Veterans Affairs Hospital on First Avenue at 23rd Street, at 4 P.M. in room 3036w. All alcoholics are welcome to attend and participate. The website www.nycypaa.org presents details about current flyers, committee minutes, and general AA information.

Daniel S., Brooklyn

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A caller asks:

Tell me about the Bill W. Dinner Dance.

IG volunteer: AA, can I help you?

Caller: Where is the Bill W. Dinner Dance held?

IG volunteer: The New York Hilton Hotel, 1335 Avenue of the Americas (at 54th Street and 6th Avenue), Grand Ballroom on the third floor.

Caller: Why does it cost so much?

IG volunteer: Approximately three-quarters of the \$100 ticket price cover the dinner and entertainment costs. Only one-quarter of the ticket price goes to support New York Inter-Group's Twelfth-Step work. The dinner is New York Inter-Group's only annual fundraiser.

Caller: Can you skip the dinner and just come for the dance?

IG volunteer: Nope. Attendance at the dance requires a purchased \$100 ticket. The Hilton's ballroom space accommodates only the approximately 2,000 people who attend the dinner.

Caller: How do you get tickets?

IG volunteer: The table lottery was held on June 5th, 2008, for groups or individuals who wanted to purchase tables. Tickets are now available at the New York Inter-Group office. Tickets will not be sold at the door.

Caller: I've never been to a formal dinner dance. What do I wear?

IG volunteer: There's no dress code, but most men wear jackets and ties, and most women wear dresses. Some people wear formal evening clothes, gowns and tuxes, but not everybody dresses formally.

Caller: How did this thing get started?

IG volunteer: A number of Bill Wilson's friends liked to take him out to dinner for his anniversary. When they realized that the newly formed New York Inter-Group needed financial support, they suggested that an annual dinner-dance benefitting Inter-Group be held in honor of his anniversary. Bill agreed, and New York Inter-Group has held the annual event since 1947.

Caller: What time does it start, and when is it over?

IG volunteer: The dinner starts promptly at 7 pm (doors open at 6:45 pm). Starting at 10 pm, an orchestra will provide music for dancing in the Mercury Rotunda Ballroom (also on the third floor). At 10:30 pm, a DJ will provide disco music in the Grand Ballroom. The evening's entertainment ends at 2 am.

Caller: What if I can't afford a ticket?

IG volunteer: There's a free afternoon program, featuring an "Old Timers" Meeting beginning at 1 pm and ending at 2:45 pm. It will be held in the Beekman Parlor/Sutton North Suite on the second floor. After the meeting, various AA videos will be shown in a room next door until 4:30 pm.

Miracles Everywhere

Mabel gave me my first ticket to the Bill W. Dinner Dance in 1982. She was a painter of scenes from Central Park, short and slightly stooped, with white hair in a pixie haircut. A person who liked to stay in the background, she gave the ticket to someone else to give to me. I was excited and frightened all at the same time. Just a couple of months sober, I had never been to a dinner dance in a fancy hotel, and was tormented by the question of what I would wear. I owned very little clothing at the time, and none of it was nice. Don't remember now what I finally ended up wearing, but I am certain that it was a collaborative effort among women from my home group to dress me up. Everybody looked so good that night! Many were in tuxes or formal gowns. Boy, do we clean up! Later I was to learn that this annual celebration of our co-founder's sobriety anniversary was originally started by several of Bill W.'s friends, who celebrated his anniversary by taking him to dinner. When, in 1947, they learned that the newly formed New York Inter-Group needed financial support, they suggested to Bill that an annual dinner-dance to benefit New York Inter-Group be held to honor his anniversary. Bill agreed, and spoke at the dinner every year until illness prevented his participation. I do not recall much from my first dinner dance: my brain was still addled from its recent soaking in alcohol. What I do retain is the impression of excitement, and gratitude at how fortunate we were. A high point of the dinner was Bill's widow Lois' appearance on the stage, in a wheelchair. We sat quietly as the room was darkened and, one by one, candles were lit, all from Lois' first candle. A sense of awe swept the room. We felt honored by her presence, and we knew that our own miracles were linked to Bill's recovery and a conversation he and Bob had more than fifty-two years ago. We felt blessed and we were grateful.

Dee K., Manhattan

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Spread the Word!

Will your meeting be closed on any upcoming holidays? Is your group holding a special event such as the group's anniversary celebration? Notify New York Inter-Group, giving full details!

Office Telephone and Call Forwarding Volunteer Orientation, New York Inter-Group office, 307 7th Ave, @ 27th & 28th Sts, Rm 201, Manhattan, 10001. Orientations are held Monday morning; between 9 A.M. & 1:30 P.M., Wednesday, Thursday & Friday between 6 P.M. & 9 P.M.; Saturday afternoon between 1:30 P.M. & 6 P.M. No appointment is necessary for those time periods. If you are unable to attend one of the listed times, contact a N.Y. Inter-Group staff member at (212) 647-1680 to arrange a convenient orientation time. One year of continuous sobriety is required to answer telephones at N.Y. Inter-Group.

September, October, November:

2008 Bill W. Dinner Planning Committee Meetings, @ N.Y. Inter-Group, 307 7th Avenue, @27th & 28th Sts, Rm 201, Manhattan, 10001. Call our office for date & time of the next meeting.

Manhattan Area Forum, N.Y. Inter-Group office, 307 7th Avenue, @ 27th & 28th Sts, Rm 201, Manhattan, 10001. Meets every other month, same location. Call N.Y. Inter-Group for date and time of next meeting.

Telephone Volunteers Committee Meetings; N.Y. Inter-Group office, 307 7th Ave, (@ 27th & 28th Sts), Rm 201, Manhattan, 10001. Meets every other month; call N.Y. Inter-Group for date and time.

September 18th Manhattan Corrections and Treatment Facilities Committee Mtg, 6:30 P.M., @ N.Y. Inter-Group, 307 7th Ave, Rm 201, @ 27th & 28th Sts, Manhattan, 10001. Meets the 3rd Thursday each month, same time & location.

September 18th Queens Corrections and Treatment Facilities Committee Meeting, 7 P.M., Christ Congregational church 85-27 91st Street, @ 85th Road Church Hall on Ground Floor Woodhaven, NY 11421. Meeting is held on the 3rd Thursday each month, same time and location.

September 19th Bronx Corrections and Treatment Facilities Committee Meeting, 7:00 P.M., @ St. Nicholas of Tolentine, @ Fordham Rd & Andrews Ave, University Heights group meeting place, Bronx, 10468 Meeting is held on the 3rd Friday each month, same time & location.

September 20th Westchester Area Forum, 9:30 A.M., First Baptist Church, in the Wilson House, Bryant Ave & North St, enter parking lot on Bryant Ave; White Plains, N.Y. 10605. Meeting is held every other month, same time & location.

September 20th Bronx Area Forum, 11:00 A.M. to 12:30 P.M., Bedford Park Congregational Church, 3008 Bainbridge Ave, Gunhill group mtg place, Bronx, 10458. Meetings are on the 3rd Saturday every other month, same time & location.

September 20th Brooklyn Area Forum, 2:00 P.M., Queen of All Saints Church, 300 Vanderbilt Ave, between Lafayette & Dekalb Ave, Brooklyn, 11205. Army Plaza group mtg place. Meetings are on the 3rd Saturday every other month, same time & location.

September 20th Queens Area Forum, 4:00 P.M., Our Savior Lutheran School, 64-33 Woodhaven Blvd @64th Dr. 11374. Location of share-a-thons, etc. Meeting held on the 3rd Saturday every other month, same time and location.

September 22nd S.I. Corrections and Treatment Facilities Committee Meeting, 7:00 P.M., How Club 252A Port Richmond Ave S.I., N.Y. 10302. Meets on the 4th Monday each month, same time & location.

September 27th Brooklyn Corrections and Treatment Facilities Committee Meeting, 1:00 P.M., 103 Quincy St, Between Franklin & Classon Aves, Basement, Daily Reflection Workshop group meeting place, Brooklyn, 11238. Meets on the last Saturday each month, same time & location.

October 11th Corrections and Treatment Facilities Literature Packing, 10 A.M., N.Y. Inter-Group, 307 7th Ave, @ 27th & 28th Sts, Rm 201, Manhattan, 10001. Literature packing is done on the 2nd Saturday of each month, same time & location. **Newcomers always welcome.**

October 11th Spanish Language Corrections and Treatment Facilities Committee Meeting, 3:00 P.M., Spanish Intergroup, Oficina Central Hispania de A.A., 2234 First Ave @ 120th Street, Manhattan 10029. Meeting is held the 2nd Saturday each month, same time & location.

October 14th Group Relations Committee Meeting, 6:30 P.M., N.Y. Inter-Group, 307 7th Ave, @ 27th & 28th Sts, Rm 201, Manhattan, 10001. Meetings held monthly at N.Y. Inter-Group; call Inter-Group for date of next meeting.

October 14th Westchester Corrections and Treatment Facilities Committee Mtg, 7:30 P.M., @ Immaculate Conception Church, 199 N. Broadway, 2nd fl, Tarrytown Pocantico Hills group mtg place, @ College Ave, Rte 9, Sleepy Hollow N.Y. 10591. Meets 2nd Tuesday each month same time & location.

October 16th Manhattan Corrections and Treatment Facilities Committee Mtg, 6:30 P.M., N.Y. Inter-Group, 307 7th Ave, Rm 201, @ 27th & 28th Sts, Manhattan, 10001. Meets are on the 3rd Thursday each month, same time & location.

October 16th Staten Island Area Forum, Immanuel Lutheran Church 2018 Richmond Ave betw. Rockland Ave & Signs Rd S.I., N.Y. 10314. Meeting is held every other month, same time & location.

October 16th Queens Corrections and Treatment Facilities Committee Mtg, 7 P.M., Christ Congregational Church 85-27 91st St, @ 85th Rd, church hall, ground fl, Woodhaven, N.Y. 11421. Meets 3rd Thurs. each month, same time & location.

October 17th Bronx Corrections and Treatment Facilities Committee Meeting, 7:00 P.M., St. Nicholas of Tolentine, @ Fordham Rd and Andrews Ave, University Heights group meeting place, Bronx, 10468 Meets on the 3rd Friday each month, same time & location.

October 25th Brooklyn Corrections and Treatment Facilities Committee Meeting, 1 P.M., 103 Quincy St, between Franklin & Classon Aves, basement, Daily Reflection Workshop group meeting place, Brooklyn, 11238. Meeting is held on the last Saturday each month, same time & location.

October 27th Staten Island Corrections and Treatment Facilities Committee Meeting, 7:00 P.M., How Club 252A Port Richmond Ave S.I., N.Y. 10302. Meeting is held on the 4th Monday each month, same time & location.

November 8th Corrections and Treatment Facilities Literature Packing, 10 A.M., @ N.Y. Inter-Group, 307 7th Ave, @ 27th & 28th Sts, Rm 201, Manhattan, 10001. Literature packing is done on the 2nd Saturday of each month, same time & location. **Newcomers always welcome.**

November 8th Spanish Language Corrections and Treatment Facilities Committee Meeting, 3:00 P.M., Spanish Intergroup Office, Oficina Central Hispania de A.A., 2234 First Ave @ 120th St Manhattan 10029, Meeting is held on the 2nd Saturday each month, same time & location.

November 8th 2008 Bill W. Dinner Afternoon Program, Old Timers Meeting, 1:00P.M.-3:00P.M @ New York Hilton Hotel 1335 Ave of the Americas, Manhattan, 10019, between 53rd & 54th Sts, in the Beekman Parlor & Sutton North suites, 2nd fl.

November 8th 2008 Bill W. Dinner, Doors Open At 6:45pm, Dinner is served promptly at 7:00pm @ New York Hilton Hotel, 1335 Ave of the Americas, Manhattan, 10019, between 53rd & 54th Sts, in the Grand Ballroom, 3rd floor.

November 11th Group Relations Committee Meeting, 6:30 P.M., N.Y. Inter-Group, 307 7th Ave, @ 27th & 28th Sts, Rm 201, Manhattan, 10001. Meetings held monthly at N.Y. Inter-Group; call the office for the date & time.

November 11th Westchester Corrections and Treatment Facilities Committee Meeting, 7: 30 P.M., @ Immaculate Conception Church, 199 N. Broadway, 2nd fl, Tarrytown, @ College Ave, Route 9. Sleepy Hollow, N.Y. 10591. Mtgs are held the 2nd Tuesday each month same time & location.

November 15th Westchester Booking Meeting, 6:30 A.M Memorial United Methodist Church, 250 Bryant Ave, between North & Mamaroneck Aves, White Plains, N.Y. 10605. Next date & time will be announced.

November 15th Westchester Area Forum, 9:30 A.M., First Baptist Church, in the Wilson House, Bryant Ave & North St, enter parking lot on Bryant Ave, White Plains, N.Y. 10605. Meeting is held every other month, same time & location.

November 15th Bronx Area Forum, 11:00 A.M. to 12:30 P.M., Bedford Park Congregational Church, 3008 Bainbridge Ave, Gunhill group mtg place, Bronx, 10458. Meetings are on the 3rd Saturday every other month, same time & location.

November 15th Brooklyn Area Forum, 2:00 P.M., Queen of All Saints Church, 300 Vanderbilt Ave, between Lafayette & Dekalb Aves, Brooklyn, 11205. Army Plaza group meeting place. Meeting is held on the 3rd Saturday every other month, same time & location.

November 15th Queens Area Forum, 7:30 P.M., St. James Episcopal Church, 84-07 Broadway, corner of Corona Ave, in the gym, Elmhurst, 11373. Meeting held on the 3rd Friday every other month, same time & location.

November 20th Manhattan Corrections & Treatment Facilities Committee Mtg, 6:30 P.M., @ N.Y. Inter-Group, 307 7th Ave, Rm 201, @ 27th & 28th Sts, Manh., 10001. Mtgs are on the 3rd Thursday each month, same time & location.

November 20th Queens Corrections and Treatment Facilities Committee Meeting, 7 P.M., Christ Congregational church 85-27 91st St, @ 85th Rd, church hall on ground fl, Woodhaven, N.Y. 11421. Meeting is held on the 3rd Thursday each month, same time & location.

November 21st Bronx Corrections and Treatment Facilities Committee Meeting, 7:00 P.M., @ St. Nicholas of Tolentine, @ Fordham Rd & Andrews Ave, University Heights group meeting place, Bronx, 10468. Meeting is held on the 3rd Friday each month, same time & location.

November 24th S.I. Corrections & Treatment Facilities Committee Meeting, 7:00 P.M., How Club 252A Port Richmond Ave S.I., N.Y. 10302. Meeting is held on the 4th Monday each month, same time & location.

November 29th Brooklyn Corrections and Treatment Facilities Committee Meeting, 1:00 P.M., 103 Quincy St, between Franklin & Classon Aves, basement, Daily Reflection Workshop group meeting place, Brooklyn, 11238. Meeting is held on the last Saturday each month, same time & location.