

SOBER NEWS

NEW YORK INTER-GROUP – SUMMER 2009

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

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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.

Showing Up and Being Responsible: A New Way to Live

It was a cold, gray day in January of 2007. I did not have a group service commitment, but had been told early on that having one each term would keep me showing up, responsible to the group. In a mailing from New York Inter-Group describing future events, I noticed a flyer asking for volunteers to plan and carry out the Big Meeting. I went to the first planning meeting, with the intention just “to listen.” The five boroughs and Westchester take turns hosting the Big Meeting: This was Bronx’s turn. This meeting was for the election of chairs of the subcommittees. When I was asked if I would be willing to chair the Big Meeting Hospitality Committee, I nearly panicked. At this time in my sobriety, I was still very quiet – not talking to a lot of people, even though I was coming up on five years. I had a hard time connecting. To be chair of hospitality meant that I would have to gather sixty or more people to meet and greet attendees at the Big Meeting. This seemed to me a huge undertaking - how in the world would I do it? Well, by the end of the planning meeting, I was the chair of the 2007 Big Meeting Hospitality Committee.

Breaking out in a cold sweat, I turned for advice to my sponsor who simply said, “Well, you’ll raise your hand during AA-related announcements in meetings and ask for volunteers.” This was outrageous, I thought: people would have to come up to me and give me their names, phone numbers or e-mail addresses...and I was still very afraid of people! But, as with everything in AA, I was able take one step at a time. I first raised my hand to make my announcement at my home group, a safe place. Then I did this at other meetings I attended, and, by the time the Big Meeting came around in June, I had gathered some sixty people willing to do hospitality service. I cried from gratitude that day...once again, AA had come through...I learned to get out of myself and show up for others. My fear of people was starting to fall away. The hand of AA was held out for me and it was a very big hand!

In 2008, I chaired the Big Meeting, standing at a podium in front of 2,000 fellow AAs...and now I am humbled to be chairing the 2009 Bill W. Dinner. This shows me that by showing up, in spite of our fears, AA has a way of allowing us to grow and blossom in our sobriety. Seeing AA in action at New York Inter-Group has shown me how widespread and crucial its activities are in carrying the AA message in our area. The program of AA promised me at the very beginning that, not only would I learn not to drink a day at a time, but that I would also learn to live a life that was happy, joyous and free. Little by slowly, that promise is coming true, by staying sober and keeping the AA responsibility statement first and foremost, “I am responsible. When anyone, anywhere, reaches out for help, I want the hand of AA always to be there. And for that I am responsible.” I am so deeply grateful to AA, my sponsor and my home group for supporting me through my sobriety and these service commitments.

Michelle T., Manhattan, Chair, Bill W. Dinner, 2009



Where Spirituality and \$\$\$ Mix

Here is something to think about: As of June 30, 2008 (the close of fiscal year 2008), New York Inter-Group was running at 101 per cent prudent reserve. As of April 30, 2009, we are running at an 88 percent prudent reserve - a 13 percent decrease. It is important to note that we are still a solvent office, but the incremental dip over the last several months cannot be ignored.

Here is another thought: New York Inter-Group functions largely on group contributions. There are 1,103 AA groups in the five boroughs and Westchester. Were you aware that, of those 1,103 Groups, only 591 contribute to InterGroup? How can we fill the gap? The New York Inter-Group Steering Committee works hard to get out the word to groups which are uninformed about the activities of New York Inter-Group.

What can you do to help? How about putting \$2 – instead of \$1 - in the 7th Tradition basket? Maybe you can contribute even more (especially if it is your home group).

When I learned that it takes an average of \$357,000 per year to keep the doors of New York Inter-Group open, I realized that \$2 is not a lot to ask for...especially when I easily spend \$5 at Starbucks before the meeting!

*Brian C., Manhattan,
Treasurer, New York Inter-Group*

Cost of a fifth of bourbon:	\$15.00 - \$240.00
Cost of a six-pack of beer:	\$ 6.50 - \$ 10.00
Cost of a fifth of gin:	\$16.00 - \$ 60.00
Cost of a fifth of scotch:	\$18.00 - \$800.00
Cost of a café latte:	\$ 2.50 - \$ 3.95
Cost of sobriety:	Priceless

***** Sober Dancing *****

As a member of AA, I have had the privilege of attending many events. I have been to a share-a-day, an international convention, a state convention, the Bill W. Dinner and the Big Meeting - the list goes on! Year after year, I have thoroughly enjoyed each event more than the last. I went for the first time to New York Inter-Group Corrections & Treatment Facilities Committee's Literature Fund Dinner-Dance (held at Antun's of Queens Village) because I had started taking an AA meeting to a women's jail on Riker's Island. I wanted to help support the committee - so I went to the dance. The energy in the room was electric - for me it was simply beyond words. The speaker shared inspiringly about the experience, strength and hope of getting the message of AA inside an institution, after which the best DJ

I have ever heard at an AA event took over. The room was filled with people from all over our area; there was a vibrant sense of camaraderie and gratitude in the air. It did not take long for everyone to take to the dance floor! I have made it a point never to miss this event. I hope that everyone gets to experience this wonderful annual evening. This year's event will be held on Saturday, July 25. The dinner-dance raises funds for the New York Inter-Group Corrections and Treatment Facilities Committee. The net proceeds, along with group contributions received throughout the year, allow us to distribute AA literature free of charge to over 300 institutions in the New York Metropolitan Area. Volunteers take one of the more than 700 meetings per month which we provide to prisons, detoxes or jails. They leave behind the message of the AA program through literature, including the Big Book, the Grapevine, the Meeting Book and pamphlets to help newcomers stay with the AA program on the inside and to help them get to their first AA meetings on the outside. The tickets cost \$65 (table of ten seats, \$650) and can be purchased from a staff member at New York Inter-Group.

I personally have seen the gratitude of women and men who have had their first contact with AA and received their first Big Book at a meeting we have brought. I will forever be aware that I receive much more than I give by simply bringing an hour-long meeting and a packet of literature to people who have no other way to get an AA meeting. I know that all AA members who have been involved with this service have been inspired by it. I have loved doing this service and, as I get ready to rotate out of the job, am feeling nostalgic.

My term as chair of our committee ends on June 30, 2009. I am gratified to be leaving it in the most capable of hands. The spirit of rotation assures me that, just as those who came before me made a wonderful contribution and inspired me, those who follow are very dedicated and committed members who will ensure that we carry the message to our fellow AAs in institutions.

I hope to see many of you at this year's event on July 25 at Antun's in Queens and I look forward to celebrating all that we are able to accomplish together.

In love and service,

*Felicia B., Manhattan,
Chair, New York Inter-Group Corrections & Treatment
Facilities Committee*

Has being an inter-group delegate enhanced your sobriety? Share your **SOBER NEWS with us by mail, E-mail or fax, shown at the top of page one of this issue.**

A caller asks:

What's the Best Way Celebrate My Sponsor's AA Anniversary?

IG volunteer: AA, can I help you?

Caller: I've seen AA members giving and getting coins and medals to celebrate their anniversaries. I've also seen mugs and other items imprinted with the AA logo or the Serenity Prayer. Can I give my sponsor a coin and a personalized mug for her anniversary?

IG volunteer: Through the years, I've gotten quite a few coins and commercially produced items imprinted with slogans or sayings relevant to recovery in AA. I have also gotten letters from New York Inter-Group notifying me that someone has made a 7th-Tradition donation in my name honoring the anniversary of my sober date. I'm grateful when my anniversary is remembered, but I'm especially moved when my sobriety is honored in the spirit of AA, passing along our message of hope, which is the work of New York Inter-Group.

Caller: How does my anniversary donation help New York Inter-Group to carry the AA message?

IG volunteer: New York Inter-Group provides telephone help to alcoholics looking for information and meetings; publishes our area meeting book twice a year and this newsletter four times yearly; provides meetings and literature to inpatient facilities which ask for them; sends informational packets to groups and group officers; supports a website – this is a partial list. In order for our inter-group to carry out these 12th-Step activities, the rent has to be paid; the electricity bill has to be paid; the phone bill has to be paid; the printer has to be paid; the webmaster has to be paid. Your gift to New York Inter-Group honoring your sponsor's sobriety is part of all of this: helping to keep open the doors of our inter-group so that its 12th-Step work will continue to get done, so that no one who wants help will ever find the door closed and the lights off.

Are your name and number on file at New York Inter-Group for Twelfth-Step calls?

Sober News is Online, Too

Sober News can be viewed online, at nyintergroup.org. Click on the *newsletter* link. You will need a .pdf-file reader to open *Sober News* online.

“Our spiritual way of life is safe for future generations if, as a Society, we resist the temptation to receive money from the outside world. But this leaves us with a responsibility – one that every member ought to understand. We cannot skimp when the treasurer of our group passes the hat. Our groups, our areas, and AA as a whole will not function unless our services are sufficient and their bills are paid.

When we meet and defeat the temptation to take large gifts, we are only being prudent. But when we are generous with the hat we give a token that we are grateful for our blessings and evidence that we are eager to share what we have found with all those who still suffer.”

Bill W. “The Language of the Heart,” p. 221

Celebrate with New York Inter-Group's *Anniversary Club!*

Here's how:

Send your name, address and anniversary month to New York Inter-Group. During your anniversary month, you'll get a **congratulations!** card from New York Inter-Group. At that time, you may send a 7th-Tradition donation in gratitude for the gift of sobriety. A suggested guideline is one dollar for every year you have been sober. (Or, you could use the wreckage of your past to help carry the message by sending this amount for every year you drank!) (AA General Service Conference guidelines specify that an individual is permitted to donate an annual maximum of three thousand dollars.)

Give Inter-Group the Scoop

Is your group planning a special meeting, an alkathon or a group anniversary celebration? **Are there holidays when your meeting will be closed?** New York Inter-Group needs to know so we can **spread the word**. Looking for a special event? **Call New York Inter-Group for the scoop!**

New York Inter-Group Calendar of Events, Jun, Jul, Aug 2009

Office Telephone & Call-Forwarding Volunteer Orientation, NY Inter-Group, 307 7th Ave, @ 27th & 28th Sts, Rm 201, Manh, 10001. Orientations are held Mon morning; betw. 9 am. & 1:30 pm, Wed, Thu & Fri betw. 6 pm & 9 pm & Sat afternoon betw. 1:30 pm & 6 pm. No appointment needed for those time periods. If you are unable to attend one of the listed times, call an Inter-Group staff member at (212) 647-1680 to arrange an orientation. One year's continuous sobriety is required to answer phones at NY Inter-Group.

June 20th (See all events listed below)

Exchange Meeting, 7:30 A.M., @ Public School 41, Sixth Avenue & 11th Street, Manhattan, 10011. (Meeting is usually held on the 2nd Saturday in March, June, September and December; at the same time and location.) Corrections and Treatment Facilities Information/Orientation Workshop, 9:30-10:30 A.M.; Inter-Group Delegates' and Group Officers Workshop, 9:30-10:30 A.M.; Public Information Orientation Workshop, 9:30-10:30 A.M.; Inter-Group Delegates' Meeting, 11am- FINAL REPORT ON THE SUBMITTED INVENTORIES WILL BE GIVEN

June 20th: 2009 Big Meeting Planning Committee Meeting, 4:00 P.M. @ New York Hilton Hotel 1335 Ave of Americas. Meet in the center of the lobby @ 3:45. Call NY Inter-Group ofc for more information.

June 22nd: Staten Island Corrections & Treatment Facilities Committee Mtg, 7:00 P.M., How Club 552 Pt Richmond Ave, SI 10302. The 4th Mon. of mo., same time/loc.

June 27th: Brooklyn Corrections & Treatment Facilities Committee Meeting, 1 P.M., 103 Quincy St, btwn Franklin & Classon Ave, bsmt, Daily Reflection Workshop group meeting place, Bklyn 11238. Meets on the last Sat each month, same time/loc.

June 28th: Big Meeting, (A.A.'s 74th Birthday), 1:00 P.M. - 3:00 P.M., @ The New York Hilton Hotel 1335 Avenue of Americas, (between 53rd & 54th Streets), Grand Ballroom 3rd Floor, New York, N.Y 10019. Three Speaker Open meeting. It is a free event, no tickets are required. There will be a Seventh-Tradition collection.

July TBA: 2009 Bill W. Dinner Planning Committee Meeting, @ New York Inter-Group Office, 307 7th Ave, @ 27th & 28th Sts), Rm 201, Manhattan, 10001. Call the New York Inter-Group ofc for date and time.

July TBA: Group Relations Committee Meeting, 6:30 P.M., NY Inter-Group ofc, 307 7th Ave, @ 27th & 28th Sts, Rm 201, Manh., 10001. Meets bi-monthly at NY Inter-Group; call office for date and time.

July 11th: Corrections and Treatment Facilities Literature Packing, 10 A.M., @ NY Inter-Group ofc, 307 7th Ave, @ 27th & 28th Sts, Rm 201, Manh., 10001. Literature packed on the 2nd Sat of each month, same time/loc. Newcomers always welcome.

July 11th: Spanish-Language Corrections & Treatment Facilities Committee Meeting, 3:00 P.M., Spanish Intergroup Office, Oficina Central Hispania de A.A., 2234 First Ave @ 120th St, Manh. 10029, Meeting is held 2nd Sat of month, same time/ loc.

July 14th: Westchester Corrections & Treatment Facilities Committee Meeting, 7:30 P.M., @ Immaculate Conception Church, 199 North Broadway, 2nd floor, Tarrytown Pocantico Hills: 1 meeting place. @ College Ave, Route 9. Sleepy Hollow, N.Y. 10591. Meeting is held 2nd Tuesday each month same time and location.

July 16th: Manhattan Corrections & Treatment Facilities Committee Meeting, 6:30 PM @ NY Inter-Group ofc, 307 7th Ave, Rm 201, @ 27th & 28th Sts, Manh., 10001. Meets 3rd Thu of mo. same time/ loc.

July 16th: Queens Corrections & Treatment Facilities Committee Meeting, 7 P.M., Christ Congregational, 85-27 91st St, @ 85th Rd Church Hall on Grnd Flr, Qns 11421. 3rd Thu of mo., same time/loc.

July 17th: Bronx Corrections & Treatment Facilities Committee Meeting, 7:00 PM, @ St. Nicholas of Tolentine, @ Fordham Rd & Andrews Ave, Univ. Hgts grp mtg place, Bx 10468. 3rd Fri of mo. same time/loc. July 18th: Westchester Area Forum, 9:30 PM, First Baptist Church, the Wilson House, Bryant Ave & North St, enter parking lot on Bryant Ave, White Plains, N.Y. 10605. Meets every other month, same time/loc.

July 18th: Bronx Area Forum, 11:00 A.M. to 12:30 P.M., Bedford Park Congregational Church, 3008 Bainbridge Ave, Gunhill grp mtg place, Bronx 10458. Meets 3rd Sat every other month, same time/ location. July 18th: Brooklyn Area Forum, 2:00 PM., Queen of All Saints Ch., 300 Vanderbilt Ave, between Lafayette & Dekalb Ave, Bklym 11205. Army Plaza grp mtg place. 3rd Sat every other mo., same time/ loc.

July 18th: Queens Area Forum, 4:00 P.M., Our Savior Lutheran School, 64-33 Woodhaven Blvd @64th Dr. 11374, Location of Share-A-Thons, etc. Meets 3rd Sat every other month, same time and location.

July 25th: Brooklyn Corrections & Treatment Facilities Committee Meeting, 1:00 PM, 103 Quincy St, betw. Franklin & Classon Ave, bsmt, Daily Reflection Workshop group meeting place, Bklyn 11238. Meets last Sat each month, same time/location.

July 25th: Corrections & Treatment Facilities Committee Literature Fund Dinner Dance, Antun's 54th Anniversary, 8:00P.M to 1:00A.M., @ Antun's 96-43 Springfield Boulevard, Queens Village 11429. Disco and Open Buffet Tickets \$65.00.per.person, available at the New York Inter-Group office, weekdays 9A.M to 5P.M.

July 27th: Staten Island Corrections & Treatment Facilities Committee Meeting, 7:00 P.M., How Club 552 Port Richmond Ave, SI 10302. Meeting is held 4th Monday each month, same time/location.

August TBA: Telephone Volunteers Committee Meeting, 6:30 PM, NY Inter-Group ofc, 307 7th Ave, (@ 27th & 28th Sts), Rm 201, Manh. 10001. Meets every other mo.; call NY Inter-Group for the date/time.

August TBA: 2009 Bill W. Dinner Planning Committee Meeting, @ New York Inter-Group ofc, 307 7th Ave, @ 27th & 28th Sts, Rm 201, Manh. 10001. Call New York Inter-Group office for more information.

August TBA: Manhattan Area Forum, 7 PM, New York Inter-Group ofc, 307 7th Ave, @ 27th & 28th Sts, Rm 201, Manh. 10001. Meets every other mo., same time/loc. Call New York-Group for the date.

August 8th: Corrections & Treatment Facilities Literature Packing, 10 AM, New York Inter-Group ofc, 307 7th Ave, @ 27th & 28th Sts, Rm 201, Manh. 10001. Literature packing is done the 2nd Sat of each month, same time and location.

Newcomers always welcome.

August 8th: Spanish-Language Corrections & Treatment Facilities Committee Meeting, 3:00 P.M., Spanish Intergroup Office, Oficina Central Hispania de A.A., 2234 First Ave @ 120th St., Manh. 10029. Meets the 2nd Saturday each month, same time/ location.

August 11th: Westchester Corrections & Treatment Facilities Committee Meeting, 7:30 P.M., @ Immaculate Conception Church, 199 North Broadway, 2nd floor, Tarrytown Pocantico Hills :1 group meeting place, @ College Ave, Route 9, Sleepy Hollow 10591. Meeting is held 2nd Tuesday each month same time and location.

August 15th: Westchester Booking Meeting, 6:30 A.M Memorial United Methodist Church, 250 Bryant Ave, Betw. North & Mamaroneck Aves, White Plains 10605. Booking Meeting will also be held 11/21/09

August 20th: Manhattan Corrections & Treatment Facilities Committee Meeting, 6:30 P.M., NY Inter-Group ofc, 307 7th Ave, Rm 201, @ 27th & 28th Ss, Manh. 10001. Meets 3rd Thu ea. mo., same time/location.

August 20th: Queens Corrections & Treatment Facilities Committee Meeting, 7 PM, Christ Congregational, 85-27 91st St @ 85th Rd Church Hall Grnd Flr Woodhaven 11421. 3rd Thu of mo. same time/loc.

August 20th: Staten Island Area Forum, 7:30 P.M., Immanuel Lutheran Church 2018 Richmond Ave betw. Rockland Ave & Signs Rd SI 10314. Meets 3rd Thu every other month, same time/location.

August 21st: Bronx Corrections & Treatment Facilities Committee Meeting, 7:00 PM, St. Nicholas of Tolentine, @ Fordham Rd & Andrews Ave, University Heights group meeting place, Bx 10468. 3rd Fri of mo., same time/location.

August 24th: Staten Island Corrections & Treatment Facilities Committee Meeting, 7:00 P.M., How Club 552 Port Richmond Ave SI 10302. Meeting is held 4th Mon each month, same time/location.

August 29th: Brooklyn Corrections & Treatment Facilities Committee Meeting, 1 PM., 103 Quincy St, betw. Franklin & Classon Ave, bsmt, Daily Reflection Workshop group meeting place, Bklyn11238. Meeting is held last Sat each month, same time/location.
