

# SOBER NEWS

## NEW YORK INTER-GROUP – WINTER 2008

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

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Website: [www.nyintergroup.org](http://www.nyintergroup.org) (includes Meeting List)

E-mail: [sobernews@nyintergroup.org](mailto: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.*

### A Season of Gratitude in AA

As the calendar pages fly by, I realize that we are at the official gratitude month of November. The red, brown and gold leaves falling from the trees and the clouds covering the moon at night remind me of early sobriety – and love, friendship and service.

I remember cooking my first Thanksgiving turkey dinner for all the friends and AA family I had found in my home group. I had an open house for all the wayward souls who had nowhere else to go.

I cooked my first Thanksgiving dinner sober – we had appetizers, vegetables, deserts, cold beverages and, of course, coffee!

When the ten of us joined hands and said the Serenity Prayer before our meal, I was moved to tears. I can remember thinking: “Here I am, sober, in my home with all of MY people, eating my food that I had cooked. I had cleaned and prepared for my guests, and was calm even though I didn’t know exactly how many people would be coming! My heart was full.

After the meal and clean-up, we all headed to our home group, to set up for the meeting. The Friday night after Thanksgiving was the meeting night of my other home group; I had so much food still left that, after the Friday meeting, we headed back to my place.

I set out food and coffee and we held an informal round-robin sharing in between snacking and drinking coffee. I looked around my living room: it was a room filled with hooligans and professional scallywags indeed! Folks who had done time in jail among them. And here they all were – in my home, which was now filled with love, friendship and devotion to service.

It crossed my mind that all of my personal belongings were arrayed right there, for the taking – yet not a single item nor a single cent was taken out of my home. How could that be? With a room full of hooligans and scallywags? Simply because AA had given us the gifts of sobriety and dignity.

I will always remember that special Thanksgiving, when hands were joined in love and gratitude.

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In the years since, I have held other Thanksgiving open houses because I remember how special the first one was. If you’re down in the dumps for the holiday, reach out your hand to another. What you will get in return for reaching out will be self-esteem and gratitude for another sober day.

Enjoy the holidays! May they help you to walk into the next moment of sobriety with integrity, dignity and love in your heart.

*Amylynn K., Staten Island*

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### Hooray! The Holidays are Coming!

Is your group planning a special meeting or alkathon, a party, a dance, an open house, or any other celebration of the season? 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 for the holidays? **Call New York Inter-Group for the scoop!**



## Your Money and New York Inter-Group

Ever wonder what happens after your group makes a contribution to New York Inter-Group? Ever wonder how your contributions are used? What about literature sales?

At the end of the July 1, 2007 – June 30, 2008 fiscal year, the office collected \$285,644.00 in group contributions, netted \$68,058.00 in AA literature and Meeting Book sales, as well as \$43,281.00 from three special events - the Bill W. Dinner; the Corrections and Treatment Facility Committee's Literature Fund Dinner; and the Big Meeting, celebrating AA's anniversary - and another \$9,597.00 from interest earned. So our total income for the 2007-2008 fiscal year was \$406,580.00.

This is an amazing sum. Take into consideration, however, that it cost NY Inter-Group \$382,051.00 to operate during this time. When you factor in rent, telephones, offices supplies, equipment, salaries, insurance, and so forth, it really adds up! It takes a great deal of money to ensure that our inter-group office functions effectively to help the alcoholic who still suffers and who wants to recover. NY Inter-Group belongs to you: YOUR contributions play a major part in keeping our doors open to all who reach out for help.

It's no secret that we are in a difficult economic period, but, because of groups like yours, practicing our 7<sup>th</sup> Tradition, we can keep the door of our inter-group open. Let's keep it up!

*Brian C., Treasurer, NY Inter-Group Steering Committee*

### Fiscal Year 2008 (07/01/07-06/30/08) Breakdown

<u>INCOME Source:</u>	<u>Amount: (\$)</u>	<u>Percentage of total:</u>
Donations:	285,644	70%
Special events:	43,281	11%
Meeting list sales:	34,043	8%
Literature sales:	34,015	8%
Interest earned:	9,597	2%
Income total:	406,580	100%
<u>Expenditures:</u>	<u>Amount: (\$)</u>	<u>Percentage of total:</u>
Group services:	80,496	21%
Telephone help-line:	71,665	19%
Administration:	71,341	19%
Literature sales/dist:	57,006	15%
Corrections & treatment facilities	38,162	10%
Meeting list sales/dist:	37,175	10%
Special events:	20,460	5%
Public information:	5,746	2%
Expenses total:	382,051	100%
Net income (income minus expenses) \$24,529.		

## "Try God"

On the weekend of July 26, I was privileged to attend the 40<sup>th</sup> New York State Convention in Tarrytown, NY, where I had a lovely sober time. I met Dorothy D. to whom I told the story of how we named our home group, whereupon she asked me to write it down for publication in New York Inter-Group's newsletter, *Sober News*.

Our group was started in 1988. We proudly submitted our new group's name (Long Island City Try God) and particulars (Wednesday, 7:30 PM closed discussion candlelight meeting – years later we were to add a Monday, 7 PM, beginners' meeting) to NY Inter-Group. After several weeks, I, as the group secretary, received a notice from NY Inter-Group suggesting that we not use the word God in our group name, in order to be welcoming to anyone who came to our door. We were disappointed, but we understood – and accepted – this reasoning.

We held a meeting to determine group conscience on our group's renaming. There were many suggestions, but none resonated with us. We felt somewhat discouraged, but we kept on with our task.

After some arduous deliberation, one member suggested scrambling the letters in "try god." It wasn't long before another member yelled out: "I got it! Long Island City Got Dry!" We fell silent and looked at the rearranged letters. We looked at each other and we all knew: This was our home group's new name. This happened in mid April 1988: This year, we celebrated our group's 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary.

We "Got Dry" and we "Try God" and they both work for us still. My home group: The best group in AA!

*Linda M., Queens*

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### **How Are We Doing???**

Our mission at *Sober News* is to tell member groups about opportunities for service in AA through New York Inter-Group committees. We provide information, but the best way to spread the word is for you to share your service experience with other AAs.

There are three ways to submit your written articles to us: e-mail to [sobernews@nyintergroup.org](mailto:sobernews@nyintergroup.org); fax to (212) 647-1648; or mail it to NY Inter-Group, 307 Seventh Avenue, Room 201, New York, NY 10001-6007. We'd also like to know what you think of the new *Sober News*: we'd love to have your comments or suggestions.

## ***A caller asks:***

### **I am newly sober...**

**IG volunteer:** AA, can I help you?

**Caller:** I've been sober for a year and a half and I am so bored - no clubs, no parties, no fun. My sponsor said I should call you and find out what's going on. Can you help me?

**IG volunteer:** Yes, I can. We have a full calendar of events, all aimed at carrying the AA message through New York Inter-Group's service committees. It has been our experience that doing this kind of service lets us meet more AA members and have a much more interesting life.

**Caller:** Last year was my first sober holiday season, and it was awful! What should I do this year?

**IG volunteer:** NY Inter-Group keeps a list of holiday activities put on by the area AA groups. Activities include alkathons, dances, group-anniversary celebrations, parties, or open houses. Call the inter-group office and simply ask what special events have been planned.

**Caller:** Ever since I stopped drinking, I feel so self-conscious at any kind of social event.

**IG volunteer:** Most of us felt that way at first. It helped to find out that other people feel the same way. We felt safe and we found that it got easier to go to social events.

**Caller:** What else can I do?

**IG volunteer:** Volunteers are needed to answer the phones at NY Inter-Group 365 days a year. There are likely to be more calls at this time of year. It is vital that there always be a sober AA member at the other end of the line to offer help and hope. Every day, 21 volunteers are needed to fully staff the phone lines in three shifts which run from morning until 10 PM.

**Caller:** What do I do – just walk in?

**IG volunteer:** Visitors are always welcome – this is your inter-group. Volunteers need to attend an orientation and sign up in the phone-volunteers' scheduling book.

**Caller:** Is anything special planned for New Year's Eve?

**IG volunteer:** Yes. There's an open house at NY Inter-Group on New Year's Eve, and all-night alkathons – in English and Spanish. Many AA groups hold special events, as well. The phone volunteers maintain and update the list of events planned for the holiday season.

### **How I Stopped the Pain**

Almost 15 years later, my memories of my initial days at rehab are blurry, hazy, and dreamlike. I detoxed, wondering how I had ended up here - in freezing Minnesota, thousands of miles from my home in the British Virgin Islands - what had happened to my life, and what was in store for my future. My days were filled with meetings with therapists, reading from AA literature, and meeting other alcoholics. I was ready to stop the insanity, to stop the pain, I was beaten down, and filled with remorse over wasted time, wasted friendships, a seemingly wasted life. As the weeks rolled by, some clarity started to return to me. Okay, so it wasn't a "normal" person's clarity, but it was a real sense of how I would live and what I would do when I arrived back in the Caribbean, where the smell of rum is everywhere. But could I stay away from alcohol, to which I had sacrificed nearly everything – including my soul - and start to rebuild my life anew?

At the end of my stay, I got ready to go back to the real world. I was anxious: Was I ready? Was I strong enough? Could I resist that which I hadn't been able to resist day after day for years? I knew nothing else, my friends drank, it's all I ever did on this island - booze was my life's blood. I was relieved when I was given the name and number of a man living on a boat off of Virgin Gorda: he had been to this rehab and could help me with the reentry process. He could tell me where AA meetings were - and just talk. It was comforting to have the piece of paper with his number. When I returned, I was not the same person. But the scenery and the people were the same; and drinking was still everywhere. I called my contact person. My heart sank when I found out his phone had been disconnected. I tried to track him down, and was told that he had left the island some time ago. But I did not drink, and have not had a drink since I landed, in March 1994, at that rehab in Minnesota - and for that I will always be grateful. Because of my own experience, I offer my number to anyone who might need a contact as I did back in those early days when a number to call was a true lifeline.

Recently, I was given the opportunity to call a woman who was days away from her own reentry from rehab into real life. I left a heartfelt voicemail message, telling her that it would all be okay, her whole life was ahead, and suggesting that she call me anytime, day or night. I may never hear from her, but I know the value of hearing encouraging words from someone who has walked the same path. More, it made me feel good to call: extending random acts of kindness to others is also a gift to ourselves, which begins the process of healing and building self-esteem.

*L.R., Manhattan*

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

**New York Inter-Group Calendar of Events, Dec 2008 & Jan 2009**

Office Telephone and Call-Forwarding Volunteer Orientation, New York Inter-Group office, 307 7th Avenue, @ 27th & 28th Streets, Room 201, Manhattan, 10001. Orientations are held Monday morning; between 9 A.M. and 1:30 P.M., Wednesday, Thursday and Friday between 6 P.M. and 9 P.M. and Saturday afternoon; between 1:30 P.M. and 6 P.M. No appointment is necessary for those time periods. If you are unable to attend one of the listed times, please contact a New York 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 New York Inter-Group.

**December 9<sup>th</sup> : Westchester Corrections and Treatment Facilities Committee Meeting, 7:30 P.M., @ Immaculate Conception Church,** 199 North Broadway, 2<sup>nd</sup> floor, Tarrytown Pocantico Hills @ College Avenue, Route 9, Sleepy Hollow N.Y. 10591. Meeting is held 2nd Tuesday each month same time and location.

**December 11th: Manhattan Area Forum, 7 P.M., New York Inter-Group Office,** 307 7th Avenue, @ 27th & 28th Streets, Room 201, Manhattan, 10001. Meeting is held every other month, same time and location.

**December 13<sup>th</sup> : Corrections and Treatment Facilities Literature Packing, 10 A.M., New York Inter-Group Office,** 307 7th Avenue, @ 27th & 28th Streets, Room 201, Manhattan, 10001. Literature packing is done on the 2nd Saturday of each month, same time and location. Newcomers always welcome.

**December 13<sup>th</sup> : Spanish Language Corrections and Treatment Facilities Committee Meeting, 3:00 P.M., Spanish Intergroup Office,** Oficina Central Hispania de A.A., 2234 First Avenue @ 120th Street, New York New York, 10029. Meeting is held on the 2nd Saturday each month, same time and location.

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

**December 18<sup>th</sup> : Manhattan Corrections and Treatment Facilities Committee Meeting, 6:30 P.M., New York Inter-Group Office,** 307 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Room 201, @ 27<sup>th</sup> & 28<sup>th</sup> Streets, Manhattan, 10001. Meeting is held on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday each month, same time and location.

**December 18<sup>th</sup> : Staten Island Area Forum, 7:30 P.M., Immanuel Lutheran Church** 2018 Richmond Avenue Between. Rockland Avenue & Signs Road Staten Island, N.Y. 10314. Meeting is held every other month, same time and location.

**December 19th: Volunteer Committee Annual Holiday Party, 10 A.M. until 9 P.M. @ New York Inter-Group Office,** 307 7th Avenue, @ 27th & 28th Streets, Room 201, Manhattan, 10001. Food, beverages and snacks will be served throughout the day.

**December 19<sup>th</sup> : Bronx Corrections and Treatment Facilities Committee Meeting, 7:00 P.M., St. Nicholas of Tolentine,** @ Fordham Road and Andrews Avenue, University Heights group meeting place Bronx, 10468 Meeting is held on the 3rd Friday each month, same time and location.

**December 22<sup>nd</sup> : Staten Island Corrections and Treatment Facilities Committee Meeting, 7:00 P.M., How Club 552** Port Richmond Avenue, Staten Island, N.Y. 10302. Meeting is held the 4th Monday each month, same time and location. Orientation at 6:30 P.M., meeting starts at 7:00 P.M.

**December 27<sup>th</sup> : Brooklyn Corrections and Treatment Facilities Committee Meeting, 1 P.M., 103 Quincy Street,** Between Franklin & Classon Avenue, Basement, Daily Reflection Workshop group meeting place, Brooklyn, 11238. Meeting is held on the last Saturday each month, same time and location.

**December 31<sup>st</sup> : New York Inter-Group New Year's Eve Alkathon, 10 P.M. until 9 A.M. Open discussion meetings will be held in English and Spanish @ New York Inter-Group Office,** 307 7th Avenue, @ 27th & 28th Streets, Room 201, Manhattan, 10001. If you are interested in answering phones or chairing a meeting during the Alkathon, please call the Inter-Group office.

**January 10<sup>th</sup> : Corrections and Treatment Facilities Literature Packing, 10 A.M., @ N.Y. Inter-Group Office,** 307 7th Avenue, @ 27th & 28th Streets, Room 201, New York, NY 10001. Literature packing is done on the 2nd Saturday of each month, same time and location. Newcomers always welcome.

**January 10<sup>th</sup> : Spanish Language Corrections and Treatment Facilities Committee Meeting, 3:00 P.M., Spanish Intergroup Office,** Oficina Central Hispania de A.A., 2234 First Avenue @ 120th Street New York, NY 10029. Meeting is held on the 2nd Saturday each month, same time and location.

**January 13<sup>th</sup> : Group Relations Committee Meeting, 6:30 P.M., @ N.Y. Inter-Group Office,** 307 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue, @ 27<sup>th</sup> & 28<sup>th</sup> Streets, Room 201, Manhattan, 10001.

**January 13<sup>th</sup> : Westchester Corrections and Treatment Facilities Committee Meeting, 7: 30 P.M., @ Immaculate Conception Church,** 199 North Broadway, 2nd floor, Tarrytown Pocantico Hills: 1 meeting place. @ College Avenue, Route 9. Sleepy Hollow, NY 10591. Meeting is held 2nd Tuesday each month same time and location.

**January 14th: Telephone Volunteers Committee Meeting, 6:30 P.M., New York Inter-Group Office,** 307 7th Avenue, (@ 27th & 28th Streets), Room 201, New York, NY 10001. Meeting will be held every other month; call the New York Inter-Group office for date and time.

**January 15<sup>th</sup> : Queens Corrections and Treatment Facilities Committee Meeting, 7 P.M., Christ Congregational Church,** 85-27 91<sup>st</sup> Street, @ 85<sup>th</sup> Road Church Hall on Ground Floor Woodhaven, NY 11421. Meeting is held on the 3rd Thursday each month, same time and location.

**January 15<sup>th</sup> : Manhattan Corrections and Treatment Facilities Committee Meeting, 6:30 P.M., @ N.Y. Inter-Group Office,** 307 7th Avenue, Room 201, @ 27th & 28th Streets, New York, NY 10001. Meeting is held on the 3rd Thursday each month, same time and location.

**January 16<sup>th</sup> : Bronx Corrections and Treatment Facilities Committee Meeting, 7:00 P.M., @ St. Nicholas of Tolentine,** @ Fordham Road and Andrews Avenue, University Heights group meeting place, Bronx, NY 10468. Meeting is held on the 3rd Friday each month, same time and location.

**January 17th: 2009 Big Meeting Planning Committee Kick-Off Meeting, 1 P.M. @ New York Inter-Group Office,** 307 7th Avenue, @ 27th & 28th Streets, Room 201, New York, NY 10001.

**January 17<sup>th</sup> : Queens Area Forum, 4:00 P.M., Our Savior Lutheran School,** 64-33 Woodhaven Blvd @64<sup>th</sup> Dr. 11374, Location of Share-A-Thons, etc. Meeting held 3rd Saturday every other month, same time and location.

**January 17<sup>th</sup> : Westchester Area Forum, 9:30 A.M., First Baptist Church, in the Wilson House,** Bryant Avenue and North Street, enter parking lot on Bryant Avenue, White Plains, NY 10605. Meeting is held every other month, same time and location.

**January 17<sup>th</sup> : Bronx Area Forum, 11:00 A.M. to 12:30 P.M., Bedford Park Congregational Church,** 3008 Bainbridge Avenue, Gunhill group meeting place, Bronx, NY 10458. Meeting is held on the 3rd Saturday every other month, same time and location.

**January 17<sup>th</sup> : Brooklyn Area Forum, 2:00 P.M., Queen of All Saints Church,** 300 Vanderbilt Avenue, between Lafayette & Dekalb Avenue Brooklyn, NY 11205. Army Plaza group meeting place. Meeting is held on the 3rd Saturday every other month, same time and location.

**January 25th: 2009 Bill W. Dinner Planning Committee Kick-Off Meeting, 1 P.M. @ New York Inter-Group Office,** 307 7th Avenue, @ 27th & 28th Streets, Room 201, New York, NY 10001.

**January 26<sup>th</sup> : Staten Island Corrections and Treatment Facilities Committee Meeting, 7:00 P.M., How Club 552** Port Richmond Avenue Staten Island, NY 10302. Meeting is held on the 4th Monday each month, same time and location. Orientation at 6:30pm, the meeting starts at 7:00pm.

**January 31<sup>st</sup> : Brooklyn Corrections and Treatment Facilities Committee Meeting, 1:00 P.M., 103 Quincy Street,** Between Franklin & Classon Avenue, Basement, Daily Reflection Workshop group meeting place, Brooklyn, NY 11238. Meeting is held last Saturday each month, same time and location.

**Save the date: February 21<sup>st</sup>, 2 009, 10:00 A.M. - 3:00 P.M.: Corrections and treatment facilities committee's 2<sup>nd</sup> annual conference**

*-Panel presentations by AA members committed to service in correctional and treatment facilities and professionals working in these facilities.*

*-Experience, Strength & Hope from those that heard the message in correctional and treatment facilities.*

*-Information about how your home group can adopt a meeting and carry the message.*

●●●●● **Continental Breakfast & Light Lunch** ●●●●●

**Public School 41, 116 West 11<sup>th</sup> Street @ 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Manhattan 10013**

**If you wish to sign up for service or nominate someone to speak on a panel or have any questions contact David at (917)714-7251**