

May 4, 2020 - SENY VIRTUAL COMMITTEE MINUTES – Approved

CHAIR: (Jerry R.) Meeting called to order at 7:33 p.m.
Serenity Prayer and AA Preamble, in English and Spanish.
Quorum established; and Housekeeping (explanation of voting)

March 2, 2020 minutes approved

SENY HANDBOOK UPDATE 2020: Handbook Update Editor, Mike O.: (handbookeditor@aaseny.org)

The handbook is done. On 5/12 Ray will post it on the SENY website for two weeks for review by the committee, and comments. You will be getting an email from SENY in the next few days with these instructions. The committee will vote on this at the June 1st committee meeting and present to the assembly in June.

OFFICER'S REPORTS

DELEGATE'S REPORT (Jane E): delegate@aaseny.org

Let's take a moment to think about the members we have lost and those members who have lost loved ones to this pandemic. Thanks to the Chair for taking a moment of silence to start tonight's meeting.

Thank you for your prayers and/or other eleventh Step endeavors, and for your responses to the Delegate's Questionnaire (DQ). To date, there have been 123 online responses and 17 postal mailed or emailed in. Information given on the spiritual and diverse consciences submitted by the Area's Groups. All of this year's Delegate's questionnaire responses will be passed on to the next delegate, some of this year's agenda items will be forwarded to the 71st GSC, more on reduction of agenda items later in this report. Information on how the Questionnaires will be passed on to the next delegate was shared.

AA goes on, no matter what, just like we don't drink, no matter what. In the midst of this pandemic, groups are meeting, we are having a General Service conference, and the groups are sending the delegate their consciences. AA goes on, no matter what.

The "From the Delegate" page is frequently updated and where your delegate provides timely info to members. Please serve our Area and AA as a whole by informing other members about this link: aaseny.org/from-the-delegate to help the collective conscience of our whole fellowship to be an informed one.

On April 9, I received a letter from Greg T. General Manager of the General Service Office (GSO):

Dear friends,

As we, together, follow the global developments related to the response to the COVID-19 (Coronavirus) pandemic, the experience, strength and hope offered by A.A. groups, Intergroups and Central Offices, AA Grapevine and La Viña, and the General Service Office has never been more evident.

The extraordinary effort taking place across our Fellowship is heartening in this truly difficult time: A.A. groups who are unable to gather at their usual locations are now meeting on virtual platforms. These virtual meetings have provided A.A. members, as well as those newly seeking help, the ability to connect with recovering alcoholics across the U.S., Canada and internationally – and stay sober one day at a time.

Local Intergroups and Central Offices are also providing support and resources to help A.A. groups navigate technology that might be unfamiliar to many members. In addition, some offices have developed "best practices" that have been helpful to a number of groups – especially those new to digital platforms.

Although our physical doors are closed for the time being, the General Service Office continues to provide services to the Fellowship. Members can continue to download A.A. literature and service material from the aa.org website. We respond to nearly 200 letters a week from members in correctional facilities in the U.S. and Canada. Further, we are working

around the clock to field the steady stream of national and local media requests, with the understanding that an accurate representation of our efforts can help members and others who might be struggling during this unprecedented period. There has been a lot of media coverage of A.A. in recent weeks.

As an important additional resource to A.A. members, AA Grapevine has provided free access to all 2020 Grapevine and La Viña stories, including the audio Grapevine stories.

Your groups' support and participation in the Seventh Tradition is always a fundamental element of the Fellowship and is especially crucial now. It ensures that groups sustain good relationships with their landlords so that they have a place to meet once we can gather again, and it ensures that A.A.'s vital services continue. Shared experience reflects an increased use of the "digital" basket wherein groups and members utilize digital payment options for Seventh Tradition contributions to support the group and local entities. Many Intergroups and Central Offices and Area service structures have added information to their websites about digital contributions.

For contributions to the General Service Office members can access the online contributions link on aa.org. You may also continue to send checks via standard USPS mail. Subscriptions to Grapevine and La Viña are available on the aagrapevine.org website, along with their other materials. Support is even more important given that revenue from literature sales has substantially decreased for the time being.

It is clear that our shared efforts ensure that the hand of A.A. will always be there when anyone, anywhere reaches out. We thank you for your continued support.

Yours in gratitude and fellowship,

Greg T.,

General Manager

(This letter is on aaseny.org/from-the-delegate)

The first ever virtual General Service Conference will be May 16-19! Pre-Conference Sessions (April 29 through May 13) include reduction of agenda items following guidelines from the General Service Board, but in practice of Concept I, the reduction is ultimately determined by each of the 13 Conference Committees. Information was provided regarding the guidelines for reduction and noted that these guidelines are on aaseny.org/from-the-delegate. Information provided regarding the International Conventions/Regional Forums Conference Committee Pre-Conference Session, held Friday night. Information given on Treatment and Accessibilities Pre-conference Session which will meet tomorrow evening. Information given on the Northeast Regional Pre-conference Session which will be held tomorrow night. Information shared about the 70th General Service Conference preparations. Please reference aaseny.org/from-the-delegate for frequent updates regarding this Conference, the first ever of its kind. We're making AA history, in the Flying blind Period 2.0. Archival notes by all members, and especially Archives Committees and enthusiasts, are encouraged.

I'm very excited about the first ever virtual General Service conference!

Thank you for allowing me to serve. Thank you for my life.

ALTERNATE DELEGATE'S REPORT (Tom B): altdelegate@aaseny.org

Good evening / Buena Noches... I have the privilege and the joy of serving as your alternate delegate.

Our previous SENY Committee meeting was nine weeks ago, and it was the last time this body got to meet together, face to face, and shoulder to shoulder. Almost no one in SENY is untouched by what has happened since. In the swath that this pandemic has cut, the majority of us have dodged the bullet; a number of us have gotten sick and recovered; and some of us have died. We have all suffered, in one way or another.

Nonetheless, A.A. goes on – it *has* to go on – and those of us who serve the groups have to continue that service as best we can. And as I've said before, everyone attending this meeting is further down on the service triangle, and we all bear that responsibility. I currently have four major responsibilities: 1) to back up and support our Delegate; 2) to support all of you; 3) to support the groups of SENY; and 4) to do my small part in considering what we have learned over these past two months, and how we can carry the lessons into the future.

The first three responsibilities have been the substance of what I have done as your Alternate Delegate all along; although the method has now changed, the mission has not. But the challenge of this “new normal” that we face, as a society, is daunting, and that’s what I’d like to talk about tonight.

For the last six weeks I have been on virtual meetings, virtual workshops and virtual assemblies, almost on a daily basis. I have watched A.A. move rapidly into a new aspect of its own digital age, with all the growing pains and urgency which one would expect. I have seen the new challenges that our committees are facing, especially PI, CPC, and Treatment/Accessibilities. And, of course, our Delegate Jane will be attending the first virtual General Service Conference!

But then, at the General Service/Intergroup meeting on April 26th, I heard the other side of the coin: meetings that stayed open too long, usually for all the right reasons, but at a cost. Those who are homeless, or unable to make the technology jump, are faced with a terrible choice: to not attend live meetings and potentially sink back into active alcoholism, or to attend live meetings and risk contracting yet another deadly disease. Sometimes I take a lot for granted.

In 2002 there was a federal literacy program enacted called No Child Left Behind. The title was self-evident: everyone should have the chance to learn to read, so that we as a society can improve – and so that no one has to pay the price for illiteracy. And now we have to think about no alcoholic being left behind, so that we as a fellowship can improve – and so that the still-suffering alcoholic has a chance to survive.

I wish I had a clever answer for this challenge, but I don’t. So I’m asking all of you: think about the road you’ve travelled in the last two months, and the lessons you’ve learned – and ask yourself: “how do I give every alcoholic a chance?” That’s 12th Step work, and someone’s life depends on the answer.

Please, stay safe and healthy, and give the virus the same respect that you give to alcohol, so that you can continue to live this hard-won life of sobriety.

One way or the other, I remain available to facilitate Group and County Inventories, meetings or workshops on Traditions or Concepts. I would love to visit your group. And beyond being available, I am delighted and honored to be of any service I can to SENY, and to AA as a whole. Thank you for allowing me to serve and support all of you. Questions/Preguntas?

CHAIR’S REPORT (Jerry R.) chair@aaseny.org

Concept of the Month - Concept Five

Throughout our structure, a traditional “Right of Appeal” ought to prevail, so that minority opinion will be heard and personal grievances receive careful consideration.

A.A. History

May 4th, 1940-Sunday Star reported founding of the first AA group in Washington, DC.

May 4th, 1946- Marty Mann explained Alcoholics Anonymous and the National Committee for Education on Alcoholism on the “We the People” radio show.

We are making S.E.N.Y. History tonight at our First Virtual Area Committee meeting.

I have attended many Zoom Recovery, Traditions, Concepts, and Service meetings and have seen how the love of one alcoholic for another and the Passion of our primary purpose of reaching the alcoholic who suffers is still paramount. I have had the pleasure of attending a meeting of all the Area chairs from the U.S. and Canada which was weekly and now monthly.

The NYSIW is still on and will be Virtual July 31 to August 2, 2020 in Area 50, Western New York. The Program Chair for the Workshop is Zach F. (zacharymichaelfischer@gmail.com). He is hoping to have committee chairs to share their successes and struggles with their respective committees and participation from all areas. More info to follow.

Dates to Remember

May 9, 2020 - 3P.M. To 5P.M-Joy of Service Virtual Workshop- ID 529-332-401, PW-1935

May 16th to May 19th, 2020 - 70th General Service Virtual Conference - [AA History](#).

June 1st, 2020 - SENY Virtual Committee meeting.

June 13th SENY Virtual Area Assembly - ID 968 4375 2716, PW 316685.

September 12, 2020 - SENY Election Assembly - Hosted by Manhattan County (Possibly Virtual).

October 5th- SENY Committee meeting. - More info to follow.

TREASURER'S REPORT: (Joann M.) treasurer@aaseny.org

Report covers the March 2020 and April 2020 reports. Treasurer reviewed the income and expenses pointing out significant expenses and discussing overhead costs such as rent and technology expenses. Looking at the March 2020 income and expenses, specifically the expenses; it is important to note that although the expenses seem high, when we look at the dates the checks were written we see they were close to the end of February and did not clear the bank until March. Also of note is that at the beginning of the year there are significant yearly expenses that seem to be due during the first few months of the year. Our rent increased at the end of February due to us moving to a larger cubicle. We were also able to move the archives to a closer storage facility at a lower cost and clear out the second storage unit which held our supplies. The supplies are now stored in the larger office cubicle instead of the storage unit. Moving to the new larger cubicle also increased our rent and we had to add to our security deposit. April's expense report is similar to March whereas there are checks from March that cleared in April. Total expenses were down for April due to the State mandated shutdown. I believe the Area is still financially sound. Although contributions went down in March and April expenses went down also. Please ask the groups to continue sending contributions since we have monthly overhead expenses to pay whether we are meeting physically or not.

TECHNOLOGY AND COMMUNICATIONS OFFICER: (Mike D.) registrar@aaseny.org

We had our first SENY technology committee meeting last month. We are building the committee and working out who will handle the technology questions for each county. I announced the creation of a new page on aaseny.org site. If anyone is interested in joining the tech committee you can sign up at aaseny.org/tech. If you have skills with web design, database management, or if you are good with Gmail, please sign up. Next committee meeting is this Thursday at 8:00 p.m.

One thing we talked about was creating guides for SENY members on how to use some of the technology. I created a YouTube video on how to set up Zoom settings for AA meetings. Link is on aaseny.org. Goes over privacy settings and changing settings once the meeting has started to prevent disruptive behavior.

You can look up your group number at aaseny.org/groups.

There is a paragraph that describes the difference between registering with intergroup and general service.

You can download the SENY calendar at aaseny.org. Go to events, calendar, you will see a list of upcoming events which you can download by choosing "export listed events". Or, go to months, events, and download them.

You will be able to find the agenda for committee meetings by clicking on the meeting.

We will be talking about the best ways to share the agenda and meeting minutes if we have to continue to conduct business via zoom. The committee is talking about hosting a Zoom workshop.

2020 SENY CONVENTION CHAIR: (Rich N.) convention@aaseny.org

Will have full report including treasurer's report at next committee meeting on June 1st.

Agenda - Jeannette K.: (agenda@aaseny.org)

Reminding everyone to utilize the aaseny.org website for our Committee and Assembly Meeting Agendas and Zoom information. Asked anyone who has a posting on the calendar to please view it and update the status OR offer Zoom or other meeting alternative information, if available. We wish to offer you an accurate and up-to-date calendar.

Archives – Hank G.: (archives@aaseny.org) Just had a workshop on Saturday, had four presentations. Planning an archives committee meeting, more to come on that. We are delaying the history book.

Grapevine – Sherri A.: (grapevine@aaseny.org)

GV May issue: The Joys of Getting into General Service.

Nassau County's Steve S. writes about his "jumpstart", another member shares she's "Just Crazy About the Concepts".

La Vina May/June issue: Annual edition of AA in Prisons.

Carry the Message project continues with Grapevine: aagrapevine.org/carry-the-message

AA Grapevine/La Vina now has free access to 2020 magazines and audio at aagrapevine.org/we-are-here-to-help.

Visit the Grapevine You Tube channel youtube.com/aagrapevine.

As of March 31, 2020, the Grapevine app has been discontinued and replaced with ePub.

Treatment – Ed M.: (tf@aaseny.org)

Like most of AA, we had the rug yanked out from under us. Progress has been slow. I am not aware of any physical meetings being brought into institutions in our Area at this time.

Eddie D, graciously invited me to the S.E.N.Y. Corrections Committee Meeting, always a rewarding experience. I also attended the Manhattan NYIG CTFC Committee Meeting, as well as a Suffolk County Bridging the Gap Committee Meeting. I attended Queens and Nassau County Meetings and asked in the "Chat" for any information on any possible treatment facilities that might want a Zoom meeting. I did get some leads that were followed up on, but nothing has panned out.

We can report that Rockland County has 2 new meetings being Zoomed into treatment facilities, which is encouraging. The pandemic has turned everything on its head, and I suppose the institutions are also trying to readjust, just as we are. We have had no Bridging the Gap requests from other Areas, and also no Bridging the Gap requests from our own Area that I am aware of.

I received an invitation from Area 50 to participate in this Year's New York State Informational Workshop on the weekend of July 31 to Aug 2. It will be remote. More details to follow.

I also received an invitation to participate in New York Inter Groups Corrections and Treatment Conference scheduled for June 6. This conference will be remote. It is on the S.E.N.Y. calendar. Typically, it is a well-attended event of over 100 persons. This is your opportunity to attend and not have to travel to Manhattan!!

Website – Ray W.: (web@aaseny.org): Doing my best to keep website updated as quickly as possible.

CPC – Laura G.: (cpc@aaseny.org) Had a meeting on April 19th via Zoom. Next meeting is May 17th, via Zoom. Sending letters to facilities and organizations informing them that AA is currently meeting on Zoom, and advising them to contact either NYIG or GSO to follow up with counties. I will be attending the NYSIW.

PI – Mike D.: (pi@aaseny.org) The corona virus impact has put planned activities on hold for now.

Encouraging our PI chairs to consider PSAs as an activity, also to maintain communication if possible with canceled event contacts. I am doing that with Queen's college presently. PI responded to the recent anonymity issues in the press and media by emails informing SENY officers, standing chairs, and DCMC's of the issue. We followed this up with a more detailed report with suggestions for individual members and trusted servants at the April assembly. That report was sent to the DCMC's and the PI's. A workshop entitled "Interacting with the Public and Media" is being held June 20th, 1:00 p.m., via Zoom.

DCM, Districts 208, 209, 211- Steve S.: Treasurers workshop May 18th, 7:30, posted on SENY website. Will be via zoom. Topics Tax and literature sales, setting up checking accounts, anonymity in banking paperwork, group treasurer responsibilities, where does the money go and how does it help the alcoholic, questions and answers and more.

Intergroup – Mel R.: (intergroup@aaseny.org) Unable to attend. Had an Intergroup Liaison meeting on April 26th. Next meeting is May 17th at 10:00 a.m. Email him for meeting link.

Corrections – Eddie D.: (corrections@aaseny.org) Working on getting into Riker’s Island and possibly doing Zoom meetings there.

Staten Island – Frank D.: (dcmc@si.aaseny.org) Did not have formal April business meeting. Questions about Zoom came up and referred people to workshop. We are going to have our county meeting this weekend.

Queens – Frank G.: (dcmc@qcgsa.org) – Had virtual meeting, moderately well attended. We have not decided if we will be doing another Zoom meeting. Have made Zoom account available to DCM’s.

Note from the Delegate – Jane E.: (delegate@aaseny.org) If anyone is recording a speaker, best practice is to have them sign a release.

Manhattan – Mike O.: (dcmc@manhattan.aaseny.org) County had Zoom meeting. We tried survey voting. Co-hosts can’t vote and some tweaks are needed. Share-A-Day has been postponed from May 30th to sometime in fall. Had a Zoom series of Traditions workshops. Attended a number of district meetings by Zoom. Our trusted servants are working hard to support the groups in their respective districts. Workshop in 618 on May 13 about reopening meetings.

Westchester – Rich S.: (dcmc@westchester.aaseny.org) Rich – did not meet in April but will have county Zoom meeting on May 20th. A couple committees are meeting by Zoom. Hoping to have our picnic on August 29th and Share-A-Day on October 17th.

Suffolk – Christine D.: (dcmc@aasuffolks-ny.org) May 15th we will have our first Zoom county meeting.

Putnam – John, Alternate DCMC: We had our April county meeting via Zoom and expect May will be as well. This Saturday at 3:00 SENY Joy of Service workshop. ID and PW are on home page at aaseny.org. There will be a Big Book history presentation and four other half hour panels on Is it Odd or Is it God.

Nassau – Annabel B.: (dcmc@nassau.aaseny.org) Held a virtual GSR meeting last month. Very well attended and spirited. Big concern was how to complete Delegate’s questionnaire, and logistics of how to do it, when not meeting physically. Steve, one of our DCM’s, is hosting a treasurer’s workshop on May 18th. Corrections chair is hosting a corrections workshop the third Monday of July. Whether or not that is virtual remains to be seen.

Hispanic - Reina R.: (distritohispanos@aacdhseny49.org) We are doing Zoom meetings every night at 8:00 except Wednesday which is at 7:00. We are participating, via Zoom, with Mexico. We also have a Delegate from Mexico joining our Zoom meetings. The national convention scheduled for September 4 – 6 has not yet been cancelled. Our committee meeting is still on. We have lost some of our members to Covid 19. Some of our groups in Nassau, Suffolk, and Brooklyn are still open.

DCM 617 - Larry: Our former manager of SENY facilities, Pablo, passed away.

Close with AA’s Declaration of Unity - 9:57 pm

Next Committee Meeting: June 1st, 2020 - Virtual - Details coming soon

Next Assembly: June 13th - Virtual - ID 968 4375 2716, PW 316685.