



THE

BROOKLYN JUNCTION

Summer Supplement 2011

Good communication is of vital importance. In personal Twelfth Step work, there is no end to communication. The sponsor talks with the drunk; speakers share their experience; we share with each other. But when it comes to general service work, communication has a general tendency to break down. It can take hard work to get the attention of alcoholics, but with a creative approach, they can be encouraged to take time out from the nuts and bolts of recovery to think about another phase of their new lives. Once A.A. members are well informed about service, they often want to become involved and to take on their own service responsibilities.

— The A.A. Service Manual, p. S23

From Your DCMC

Hello Brooklyn! Our Brooklyn County Share A Day is just around the corner. It's great to be in a meeting and hear someone get up and make the announcement. It should be an exciting day of meetings, fellowship and good international food reflective of the diverse cultures that make up Brooklyn AA. We need all your help from getting the day going to getting people to show up and attend the meetings and workshops (so our presenting members will have someone to talk to!) Continue to pass the word on and bring your new comers and sponsees. There will be child care so don't let that stop you from coming out and being part of this great day.

I had the opportunity to experience, for the first time, our Northeast Regional Forum (NERF). First off let me express my gratitude to Brooklyn County for sending me and to SENY for providing the awesome bus that took us there and brought us home. Thanks also to the Suffolk County DCMC for taking on the bus commitment.

Without going into a blow-by-blow detail of what NERF was like let me say that I have over the last 7 or 8 years heard of NERF and for some reason the only picture I got in my head was a boring couple of days where the staff of our General Service Office and Grapevine came out, set up tables filled with literature and tried to stuff our heads with statistics.

Now, to be sure, no one ever said that's what it was but somehow that is the picture I got so whenever NERF was mentioned I couldn't sum up the enthusiasm to pass on so that others might want to attend. Let me say that I was 99.999% wrong. There were a few tables there stocked with literature but not as much as I thought and not in a way that made it the focus of the day.

Rather this is a time where we got to interact with our AAWS, GSO, and Grapevine Directors, Trustees, Delegates, past Delegates and GSO staff members and each other! It's a forum so they share with us and we share with them. They answer our questions and if they can't right away they actually find you later (at least they did me) or they get your info and will send you an answer later by email. They want to hear from us, after all the group is the top of the "who's in charge pyramid" and the GSR is the voice of that group, and this is an amazing time for us to let them know what we are happy about, unhappy about, confused about, angry about, thinking about or just stuff we would like to see. This event is not just open to GSR's, DCM's or DCMC's (and/or their Alternates). It is also open to group members. There will be a report posted at our AA.org website soon which will be available for download.

One of the things that stuck out for me was the sense of accountability I got from the reports given and questions answered. Everything is accounted for - from pennies to policy. Where there was uncertainty there was the promise of clarity. This I think is a good modeling for me and us all. "I am responsible".

Another thing that stuck out for me was the level of care and commitment demonstrated by our non-alcoholic trustees. I got the impression that they were not in this just for the money and prestige but because they deeply believed in who we are and what we do.

I recently heard a member express concern regarding AA's future. After attending this year's NERF I can say that we are in good hands guided by a divine wind and a steady adherence to our 36 spiritual principles - 12 steps, 12 traditions and 12 concepts for world service.

Thank you for allowing me to serve and I look forward to seeing all of you at this years share-a-day!

In service,

Michael S., Brooklyn County DCMC

We Are Responsible for AA's Future...

The notion of leadership in AA is largely covered by the Second Tradition and the Ninth Concept. As Bill W. pointed out in his essay on leadership (reprinted in the Service Manual), "[w]ith *leadership* we shall have a continuous problem. Good leadership can be here to-day and gone tomorrow." That is especially true when our Fellowship faithfully enacts its policy of rotation.

Many of us have the mantle of leadership in some form or other thrust upon us. This could be because we have a pulse and that we cannot sit on our hands longer than someone else can. Whether as the group's treasurer, chair, program chair or group service representative (GSR), we may hold these positions because no one else was willing to step forward. When was the last time you saw a spirited campaign to claim your group's GSR position, for example? This can also happen at levels below the group, too. Committee chairs must be populated. They must be rotated.

Therefore the call for potential new blood for the leadership pool remains relentless. AA's very future would be in question if this call were not heeded. So the next question becomes: what kind of leader shall we strive to be? The kind of leader that we end up actually being can range from resentful, to uninspired, to inspired, to overbearing.

We are trusted servants; we do not govern. This in no way conflicts with the need to cultivate leadership within the Fellowship. In fulfilling our service positions, we discover our strengths and weaknesses; we learn what our limitations are. We also discover that we have talents that can be put to excellent use and we can draw upon the support of those with whom we serve. And importantly, we come to learn how to balance our service obligations with the demands on our lives outside of the Fellowship, and with furthering our own recovery and spiritual growth.

It is with this in mind that I have invited some of Brooklyn's elder statesmen and SENY's current leadership to participate in a panel on *Leadership At All Levels In AA* in the upcoming Share A Day, and encourage all of you—from aspiring sponsors to group service representatives (GSRs) to committee chairs at the county level and above—to partake of their experience, strength and hope, and perhaps to add a bit of your own to the mix.

I hope to see you at this year's Share A Day on June 18!

Cathy M., Share A Day chair

32nd Annual Brooklyn County Share A Day

Saturday, June 18 8AM-5PM

Bishop Kearney High School
Bay Parkway & 60th Street

Spread The Word!

Leadership in A.A.: Ever a Vital Need

(Excerpts from Bill W.'s article in the April 1959 Grapevine.)

Somewhere in our literature there is a statement to this effect: "Our leaders do not drive by mandate: they lead by example." In effect, we are saying to them, "Act for us, but don't boss us." ...

Therefore, a leader in A.A. service is a man (or woman) who can personally put principles, plans, and policies into such dedicated and effective action that the rest of us want to back him up and help him with his job. When a leader power-drives us badly, we rebel; but when he too meekly becomes an order-taker and he exercises no judgement of his own—well, he really isn't a leader at all....

Good leadership originates plans, policies, and ideas for the improvement of our Fellowship and its service. But in new and important matters, it will nevertheless consult widely before taking decisions and actions. Good leadership will also remember that a fine plan or idea can come from anybody, anywhere. Consequently, good leadership will often discard its own cherished plans for others that are better, and it will give credit to the source....

Good leadership never passes the buck. Once assured that it has, or can obtain, sufficient general backing, it freely takes decisions and puts them into action forthwith, provided, of course, that such action be within the framework of its defined authority and responsibility....

Another qualification for leadership is give-and-take, the ability to compromise cheerfully whenever a proper compromise can cause a situation to progress in what appears to be the right direction. Compromise comes hard to us all-or-nothing drunks. Nevertheless, we must never lose sight of the fact that progress is nearly always characterized by a series of improving compromises. We cannot, however, compromise always. Now and then, it is truly necessary to stick flatfooted to one's conviction about an issue until it is settled. These are situations for keen timing and careful discrimination as to which course to take....

Leadership is often called upon to face heavy and sometimes long-continued criticism. This is the acid test. There are always the constructive critics, our friends indeed. We ought never fail to give them a careful hearing. We should be willing to let them modify our opinions or change them completely. Often, too, we shall have to disagree and then stand fast without losing their friendship.

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The A.A. Service Manual, p. S51

From the Accessibility/Special Needs Chair

I want to introduce myself, Charlene B., as Brooklyn County’s new Accessibility / Special Needs Chairperson. I bring a mixture of personal and professional experience to this position. I have many years of experience in Alcoholics Anonymous, and recovery from mental illness. The more sober I became the more I realized that I wanted to dedicate my life to service in every aspect. At five years sober I went back to college to finish my bachelor’s degree in psychology. Then I continued on to get my master’s degree of social work. I am also an interfaith minster. My experience will allow me to extend the hand of A.A. to those who have special requirements in getting the program or getting to a meeting.

One issue that has been problematic for some AAs in wheelchairs is the outdated information on wheelchair accessibility. Does the ramp meet appropriate slope specifications? Can someone in a wheelchair get to the bathroom? Turn around in the hallway? And what about scooters? New York Intergroup wants to update the meeting list so that anyone in a wheelchair who needs a meeting can get to one without being frustrated trying to join the group.

Intergroup will be sending out a form to check on the all dimensions to see if they meet New York State requirements for wheelchair accessibility. It is very important that group officers of a wheelchair accessible group measure or get the dimensions of doorways, ramps, rest rooms, etc. for your group and to fill out the form. If you have any questions or need help feel free to contact me, Charlene, at cbannon9@yahoo.com. Watch for the mailing this summer.

Something to remember “What can you do to carry the message to the still suffering alcoholic?”This might mean taking a meeting to someone who is shut in or hospitalized, helping someone who has trouble reading get the Big Book on DVD, or show someone how to find a meeting on line. When you can reach out to someone who needs you to go above and beyond in the spirit of the 5th Tradition, you are practicing our primary purpose and that keeps us all sober. Have a great summer.

Charlene B., Accessibility/Special Needs Chair

Alternative Junction Format

Recently I received input from one of our DCMs about changes that could be made to the Brooklyn Junction. That it might be better if we were again a simple newsletter (one legal-sized page, front and back) instead of a *Link* wannabe (tabloid-size page front and back, comprising 4 letter-sized pages).

Poking through the archived *Brooklyn Junctions*, I saw the main article of Vol. 1 No. 1, which was a proposal for the purpose and scope of the *Junction*, to be approved or not at the subsequent Brooklyn County assembly. Here are some of the original proposals:

- That [the *Brooklyn Junction*] be mailed to GSRs, 2 or 3 copies per;
- That it be printed separately from (and mailed with) the agenda sheet for each County assembly;
- That \$75.00 per year seemed a reasonable printing cost for 5 or 6 issues (this was as of 1982);
- That the information to be published should include, but not be limited to:
 - Area discussions (SENY) which affect Brooklyn
 - Service Dates
 - Special presentations by other counties in SENY
 - Cooperating committees’ meetings and functions
 - Annual Share-A-Day info
 - Interesting Brooklyn history
 - Articles on Traditions and Concepts
 - Short summaries of actions of prior assemblies
 - Hints to help our trusted servants in their various service jobs.

The merits of returning to the legal-sized format include the fact that it is cheaper to reproduce (likely to be a good deal less than what we’re paying for each issue of the *Junction* in its current–tabloid–format, which is approximately \$175/600 copies, or \$875–\$1050 annually). The legal-sized format also fits nicely in the archival binders, allowing a viewer to examine a copy of the *Junction* front and back without having to remove it from its protective envelope.

The original distribution scheme is appealing, because getting two or three copies for your home group would not depend on your attending the County assembly.

The tabloid-size format speaks for itself visually, but editors rotating in would need to collect a good deal of material for each issue. Officers and committee chairs would be expected to contribute articles regularly.

So, GSRs & DCMs and sundry others: consider, discuss and let me know!

Cathy M., Editor, *The Brooklyn Junction*

Kevin Long (The Commissioner) passed away last night, after a long and valiant battle against cancer.

Kevin had been the GSR representative for the Bay Ridge Group, DCM for District 407 & 409 and Chairmen of the Brooklyn Share A Day in 2005.

Kevin also organized AA Fishing Trips, the AA Picnics in Gateway National Park and started the Serenity Soft Ball League. Kevin was always one of the first with his hand up to volunteer. He also was an advocate of doing service. He was an inspiration and will be missed.

Brooklyn County Contacts			
DCMC	Michael S.	dcmc@brooklynaa.org	
Alt. DCMC	Kathleen O.	altdcmc@brooklynaa.org	
Treasurer	Sara Z.	treasurer@brooklynaa.org	
Secretary	Michael C.	secretary@brooklynaa.org	
Registrar	Sue B.	registrar@brooklynaa.org	
Archives	Jim H.	archives@brooklynaa.org	
Convention Liaison	Charles P.		
CPC	Zack S.	cpc@brooklynaa.org	
Corrections	Bill F.	corrections@brooklynaa.org	
Grapevine			
Intergroup Liaison	Jane	intergroup@brooklynaa.org	
Junction Editor	Cathy M.	brooklynjunction@brooklynaa.org	
Literature (interim)	Adam S.		
Public Information	Adam S.		
Share-A-Day	Cathy M.	shareaday@brooklynaa.org	
Special Needs	Charlene B.	specialneeds@brooklynaa.org	
Sponsorship	Heidi C.		
Treatment Facilities	Fred P.		
Website	Cortney D.	webchair@brooklynaa.org	
Brooklyn County DCMs			
District	Name	District	Name
400	Adam S.	407, 409 cluster	Bill R.
401	Dennis A.	410	Nellie P.
402	Blake B.	411	Russell D. Kevin Y. (alt)
403	Annette C.	412	Holmes R. Lou G. (alt)
404	Vincent M.	Hispanic (414)	Mario
405	Richard S. Cathy M. (alt)	Polish	Mark
406,408, 413 cluster	Karen K.	Russian (in 408)	Valentina G., GSR

June 2011

June 12: SENY Post-Conference Assembly 9 AM to 4 PM
Sweet Hollow Hall in West Hills County Park
LIE East; Exit 49 Sweet Hollow Road; Left on Gwynne Road

June 18: 32nd Annual Brooklyn County Share A Day
8AM-5PM at Bishop Kearney High School, Bay Pkwy and 60th St.

June 25: Districts 401, 403 & 411 will host a service workshop 12-3PM Theme and Location TBA. Contact Annette C. (646-496-6820) for more information.

July 2011

July 29 - 31: The 42nd New York State Convention
Westchester Mariott, 670 White Plains Road, Tarrytown NY

August 2011

August 7: District 412 picnic at Prospect Park 11am-5pm
(rain date: August 14) Contact Lou G. (347-804-8480) for details.

August 19-21: 32nd New York State Informational Workshop
Carondelet Hospitality Center, 385 Watervliet Shaker Road, Latham NY 12110

August 28: Letting Go of Resentments Workshop 8am-4pm,
sponsored by Districts 401, 403, & 411. Location TBA.
Contact Annette C. (646-496-6820) for more info.

September 2011

September 25: Long Island Spirituality Through Service Jamboree,
11am-6pm at Sweet Hollow Hall, located in West Hills County Park in Melville 11747 (same place as SENY Post-Conference Assembly)

Brooklyn County General Service Meeting
St. Francis College, 180 Remsen Street
New GSR orientation at 6:30 PM, General Service Meeting at 7:30 - 9:30 PM

Brooklyn Institutions Committee Meeting
Old Park Slope Caton Group, 74 East 17th Street, 11226
First Saturday of **every** month at 3:30 PM (no meeting in July)

District 401 403 411 Cluster Meeting - 2nd Sat. of the month at 7:00 PM
103 Quincey Street basement, between Franklin and Classon, 11238

District 404 Meeting - 1st Friday of the month at 7:15 PM
St. Ann’s Church / 167 North 6th St, Williamsburg 11222

District 405 Meeting - Last Saturday of each month at 4:30 PM
Our Lady of Refuge Church basement (2020 Foster Avenue at East 21st Street)

District 406 408 413 Cluster Meeting - 2nd Sat. of the month at 11:30 AM
2240 79th St between Bay Pkwy and 23rd Ave (residence)

District 407 409 Cluster Meeting - 2nd Tuesday of each month at 7:00 PM
Church of the Good Shepherd (7420 Fourth Avenue)

District 412 Meeting - 3rd Sunday of each month at 6:00 PM
St. John’s Lutheran Church (281 Prospect Ave off 6th Ave., 11215)

District 414 Meeting - Every Saturday, 5:00 - 7:00 PM
30 Jefferson Street, 11206 (Bed Stuy)