



# THE BROOKLYN JUNCTION

March / April 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

## Spirituality Through Service - from your DCMC

I and our Brooklyn Junction editor recently had the opportunity to attend a planning meeting for a possible 4-county service event up in Suffolk county. The title of the service event would be “Spirituality Through Service”.

There was exciting discussion about how to inspire more service participation, how to give GSRs and DCMs from around the county a better chance to interact with, learn from, and support each other, as well as talk about what this service would look like. Not being sure what to expect, I showed up, participated and ended up walking away with a sense that we should be active participants in this event.

It got me to thinking, as I walked away, about what “spirituality through service” looks like.

To me it's like this: Sometimes when I am practicing our 11th step I can feel something, an invisible presence? I'm not sure what to call it but to me it feels like the spirit that infuses all things, that is the power behind all things and the thread that holds all things together. Whatever it is, the eleventh step puts me in a space where I can feel it.

Then there are times when no matter how quiet I get, how still or where I sit I just can't feel it. I have found that those are the times I am asked to open my eyes and see it. See it channeled through our coffee maker, our group chair, our greeter who welcomes people as they walk through the door to our meeting. See it in the experience, strength and hope of our speaker leading our meeting, in the secretary making announcements, the GSR sharing information from our GSO, Area, County or District. I see it in our business meetings as we struggle to reach consensus on issues great and small.

Then there are times when I am so involved in my service that I can neither see nor feel it. Such times can be daunting, since I believe that my spiritual connection is important to my sobriety. However, the wisdom of others who came before, coupled with some outside help and my own personal experience has taught me that those are times when, in the life of someone else, it is my turn to “be” it. Yes, it does happen we actually do have moments where we are what we prayed for in our eleventh step St. Francis prayer.

On a physical level, service can be seen as responsible actions we take that pull us out of ourselves and propel us into something bigger - triggered by a fundamental understanding that in order to keep this precious gift of sobriety we have to give it away. On a spiritual level I see service as the Higher Power in ACTION through us - triggered individually as a result of working our 12 steps and collectively as a result of working our 12 traditions and keeping to the spirit as outlined in our 12 concepts for world service.

It may not always seem so: Personalities clash. Tempers flare. Committees are seemingly senselessly repeated, tasks ignored or forgotten. Things get confusing or worse b-o-r-i-n-g (yawn). At crucial times someone fails to show up or they show up late and they forget the ‘thing’ that makes everything perfect. How is one supposed to see spiritual in that? But that is why we have service sponsors, regular sponsors, more experienced members and each other - to help us interpret what we are seeing in a way that allows us to add to the strength of our collective unity and not as something that allows us to contribute to fear, resentment and division.

Our first tradition reminds us of our common welfare. Our collective unity is essential to individual recovery. As our Twelve and Twelve more aptly states: “Realization dawns that he is but a small part of a great whole; that no personal sacrifice is too great for preservation of the Fellowship. He learns that the clamor of desires and ambitions within him must be silenced whenever these could damage the group. It becomes plain that the group must survive or the individual will not.” *Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions*, Tradition One.

Under the merciless lash of Alcohol we learned that alone we are no match for calamity, but our collective AA experience has taught us that in numbers we present a force sufficient enough to hold the space of safety and comfort our groups represent, for the new man or woman to fall into and for those already within to maintain continuous sobriety. That is our primary purpose: To stay sober and help others to achieve sobriety.

Together we are the hand of AA that reaches out when anyone, anywhere asks for help. Another view of what spirituality through service looks like.

In closing let me say we are blessed. We are given a second chance on life in spite of ourselves. Let's show our gratitude not just by our words but through our deeds. Suit up and show up. Help each other to show up. Invite others to show up. “BE” the spirit of AA in AA.

In Service,

Michael S. Brooklyn County DCMC

**The 32nd Annual Brooklyn County Share-A-Day will be  
Saturday, June 18 at Bishop Kearney High School  
on Bay Parkway and 60th Street**

Planning sessions for the event will be held on the following Sundays  
(time—most likely in the afternoon—and place to be announced):  
April 3, April 24, May 8, May 29, June 5, and June 12.  
All AAs are welcome to participate!

## District 412 Sponsors a Day-Long 4th Step Workshop

On Saturday, January 22, District 412 (Park Slope) held a day-long (10AM-4PM) 4th Step workshop at the Prospect Group meeting place at St John's Lutheran Church, 281 Prospect Ave. Approximately 50 people attended. Breakfast and lunch were served.

The speakers for this workshop were Jawill B. of the Young Brooklyn Group in Boerum Hill, and Larry G. of Staten Island's Common Solution Group of AA. Both shared their experience of having done the 4th Step, using the method described in the Big Book of Alcoholics Anonymous.

Naturally, Step 4 is not undertaken in a vacuum and hence a discussion of Step 1, focusing on the chapters *Bill's Story*, *There Is A Solution*, and *More About Alcoholism*, started off the workshop. The recovery tools and Steps 2 and 3, particularly as laid out in the Big Book's *Appendix II*, *We Agnostics*, and in the *Third Step Prayer* were then covered as a prelude to an in-depth discussion on Step 4.

As illustrated in the Big Book, Step 4 begins with an analysis of resentments. "We listed people, institutions or principles with whom we were angry." "People" included parents, siblings, children, spouses, employers, etc. "Institutions," listed after "People," could include the IRS, "city hall," the phone company, marriage, and so forth. "Principles," listed after the "Institutions," could be notions such as "the man should be the breadwinner" or "children should be seen and not heard". These all went into column 1.

Into the next column went the things they did that got us resentful. E.g., "my spouse doesn't listen to me," or "my co-worker is taking credit for my work."

The third column is labeled, "Affects my:" and for each resentment there is a set of check boxes that are labeled with:

- ☐ **Self-esteem:** how I see and feel about myself;
- ☐ **Pride:** how I think other people see or feel about me ;
- ☐ **Ambition:** what I want;
- ☐ **Personal relations:** how my family and friends see or feel about me;
- ☐ **Sex relations:** please me and never deny me;
- ☐ **Security:** what I need to be OK;
- ☐ **Pocketbook:** the price I pay in this resentment. This can be in terms of money, time, or effort.;

We check as many of the check boxes as apply.

For the final column: "Putting out of our minds the harms others had done, we resolutely looked for our own mistakes. Where had we been selfish, dishonest, self-seeking, and frightened? Where did I *start the ball rolling*?" Here is where we looked at the part we played in bringing on these resentments.

The idea of "starting the ball rolling" was a helpful concept presented in this workshop. We needn't have necessarily done a bad thing to provoke the action that got us resentful. We can "start the ball rolling" by having *expectations* which bring on the resentment when they aren't met.

Nothing counts but thoroughness and honesty. The perception that people are wronging us, that this is personal, leads to futility and unhappiness. Precious hours (or weeks or years) are squandered. Be prepared to look at resentments from an entirely different angle: when a person offends us, we can say to ourselves, "This person is sick. How can I be helpful to

him? God save me from being angry. Thy will be done." Holding on to resentments is tantamount to fighting for the right to be sick.

Not covered as extensively as the resentments, there was also a 3-column worksheet for analyzing fears: Column 1: Write down your fears; Column 2: Explain why you have these fears. "Write down your beliefs and ways of thinking that lead you to have these fears ... What part of your self is threatened? Think about parts of self which may be harmed by the people or institutions and circumstances you fear." In other words, we made use of the check boxes that applied in the "Affects my:" section on resentments.

Column 3 is given over to answering the question, "What did we do to these people or institutions that would make them want to harm us?" or "What did we do that makes us afraid of getting caught?" Here we also analyze where self-reliance fails us. In the final analysis, fear can only be combatted with faith.

Finally, a four-column worksheet is addressed to analyze sexual and other harms done to others. Here we (1) listed the people we harmed sexually, or other unlisted harms; (2) we described what we did; (3) we used the "affects my" checklist to answer the question, "Which parts of self were you trying to satisfy?"

The fourth column directs us to write out "Our Sane and Sound Ideal." Look at where you were at fault and what you should have done instead. Use this analysis to write out a sane and sound ideal for your future sex life and other relationships."

The last section of the workshop was given over to the remaining steps and sharing and questioning by the participants. In Steps 8 & 9, we ask God to show us anybody else we may have harmed. In Step 10, for instance, we continue to watch for selfishness, resentment, dishonesty and fear on a daily basis. Throughout, we ask God to direct our thinking. 🌿

## Highlights from First SENY Area Assembly of 2011

The Hispanic groups sponsored the first Area Assembly of 2011, which was held at St. Mary Gate of Heaven Church in Ozone Park, Queens. Approximately 150 people attended, with 47 new Group Service Representatives (GSRs) and District Committee Members (DCMs) registering. 65 people were counted attending the GSR/DCM orientation and the Treasurers' workshop, which were held before the Assembly; 92 people were counted attending the workshops on Concepts I and II.

From the Delegate: The Delegate's Day of Sharing is scheduled to take place on Saturday, March 19 from 9AM to 4PM at PS 41, 116 West 11th Street in Manhattan. All AAs are encouraged to attend. Prior to the 61st General Service Conference, AA groups will be given questionnaires so that their groups' conscience can be conveyed to the Delegate via their GSRs.

From the SENY Chair: Events planned for the next SENY Assembly in April will include workshops on Concepts III, IV and V, and a workshop titled "Leadership At All Levels". SENY officers are seeking to establish some consistency in how/when/where it holds its Committee Meetings and Assemblies. Committee Meetings are held on the first Monday of every other month at the SENY office. Assemblies are held on the intervening months in locations throughout the 12 counties. An attempt is being made to hold Assemblies on the 2nd Saturday of every other month. Under investigation is the proposal to

hold the Assembly in a single location, which is likely to be in the Bronx, owing to its central location. Discussion on this has been tabled until the next SENY Assembly in April, but GSRs are asked to gather the opinions of their groups on the matter. 🌿

### Third Step Prayer

God, I offer myself to THEE—TO BUILD WITH ME AND TO DO WITH ME AS THOU wilt. RELIEVE ME OF THE BONDAGE OF SELF, THAT I MAY BETTER DO Thy will. TAKE AWAY MY DIFFICULTIES, THAT VICTORY OVER THEM MAY BEAR WITNESS TO THOSE I WOULD HELP OF Thy POWER, Thy LOVE, AND Thy Way of life. MAY I DO Thy will ALWAYS!

### GSRs: Take This To Your Business Meeting!

It is being proposed that SENY Assemblies be held at a central location (which is likely to be in the Bronx). The Assemblies will continue to be sponsored by the different counties, which will remain responsible for providing breakfast, lunch, coffee and cleanup, etc. There are plenty of pros and cons to this proposal. What does your Group think?

## SENY Pre-Conference Assembly

Saturday, April 9 at 10AM

St Paul the Apostle R.C. Church

2534 Old Cedar Swamp Road (Rte 107)

Glen Head, NY 11545

Coming from the north, take I-95 South, go over the Throgs Neck Bridge, take the Cross Island to the Long Island Expressway (Exit 30 E) headed for Long Island. From the LIE, take Exit 41 North toward Route 107 North (Glen Cove). St. Paul the Apostle Church will be on the right hand side across from SUNY Old Westbury College.



### **Women in the Spirit and Courage to Change Sponsor Promises Workshop**

On Saturday, February 12, *Women In The Spirit and Courage to Change* jointly sponsored a workshop on the Promises. The workshop was held at the *In The Garden* meeting place at 918 Kent Avenue in the Pratt area of Brooklyn.

Former Brooklyn County DCMC Beverly M. stated that the workshop on the Promises which was held last year was so successful, that the sponsors decided to repeat the event this year. This workshop was also successful, with approximately 100 attendees. Beverly then introduced the panel of speakers: Carmen W. from *Women In The Spirit*, who shared her experience, strength and hope on Promises 1-3; George T. from *Brooklyn Central*, who shared his on Promises 4-6; Neil P. from the *St. Nicholas* Group, who spoke on Promises 7-9; and Laverne W. from the *Weeksville* Group, who spoke on Promises 10-12. Combined, the panelists represented 115 years of continuous sobriety.

Everyone agreed that we alcoholics get better *slowly*. Comprehending the word serenity, for instance, is not the same as knowing serenity. Fulfillment of the promises doesn't turn us into saints: "I came in with 3,000 defects of character, and I'm now down to around 790," said George T. Neil P. said that the telephone saved his life over and over and over again. There is a solution. Keep dialing until you find it. Laverne W. went from being a pan-handler to a workaholic. It wasn't easy for him to overcome his fear of people and of economic insecurity. With no pension and expensive medical problems, he has managed nonetheless to overcome his fear of financial insecurity. He considers the adventure of sobriety to be many times better than getting high.

A lunch was served, followed by a question-and-answer session, which produced many pearls of wisdom. For instance, we were advised to look for a higher power that doesn't look at what you did, or at what you're doing, but who looks in your heart and sees what you hope to become.... If you feel fear, you dishonor your God.... Old-timers had no idea when they first came into the fellowship of AA what they would end up knowing today. ☸

Paula D. passed away in her sleep on February 11, 2011, after a long and valiant battle against cancer.

Paula had been the Group Service Representative (GSR) for the Verrazano Group and for many years the editor of *the Brooklyn Junction*.

Prior to her illness, Paula was a regular at our GSR meetings and the Brooklyn County meetings. She was always there to volunteer and a strong advocate of doing service. She was an inspiration and will be missed.

## NERAASA 2011

This DCM spent a weekend in Tarrytown participating in the Northeast Regional Alcoholics Anonymous Service Assembly (NERAASA). The experience was exciting and informative.

Friday afternoon through Saturday morning were devoted to five panel discussions: Panel 1's topic was the General Service Conference, and one of the presenters was Bill N., Director of AA World Services. They discussed the Conference's history, its structure and its relationship to other service bodies. Finally they spoke about the 61st General Service Conference theme: "We Are Responsible for AA's Future—Let It Begin With Us."

Panel 2 was devoted to Public Information(PI) and Cooperation with the Professional Community(CPC). The topics covered included "How do our Public Service Announcements Reflect AA to the Public?," "Respecting the Principle of Anonymity in the Digital Age," and "AA Periodicals (*The Grapevine*, *La Viña* and *La Vigne*) as Tools for PI and CPC."

Panel 3 covered Literature and focused on "Whither the *AA Grapevine* and *La Viña*?", "We Agnostics, Seventy-Two Years On," and "Making AA Literature Available in Non-Print Formats."

Panel 4 dealt with Finance: "Self-Support in All Our Affairs: Tradition Seven and Personal Recovery," "Talking to the Fellowship About Self-Support," and "The Power of the Purse in AA Service: Follow the Money."

Panel 5 was titled "Practicing These Principles" and focused on "Concept V: The Minority Voice and the Right of Appeal at All Levels," "The Urge to Add to the 'Big Book'," and "An Informed Group Conscience: The Voice of AA."

I attended all five panels and came away with a greater understanding of how our fellowship functions and how we resolve the issues we are confronted with in A.A. Of particular importance to me was the question, How safe is it to be on websites? On the internet that AA uses how safe is my anonymity? These issues generated quite a lot of discussion and will continue to be discussed and resolved.

I also attended two out of 21 available roundtable discussions which will assist me in carrying out my duties as a DCM: on Friday night I attended the roundtable on DCMCs, DCMs and Alternate DCMs. On Saturday I picked the roundtable on Intergroup and the Central Office.

Throughout the weekend the importance of good communication and cooperation was continuously emphasized. Also in our present culture it is necessary and vital to provide written and spoken translation into Spanish.

It was a pleasure to interact with such a diversity of persons (963 registered) from different areas who have given many years of service at all levels. I definitely plan to attend future NERAASA events.

In Service,

Nellie P., DCM, District 410

### **The Promises**

1. If we are painstaking about this phase of our development, we are going to be amazed before we are half way through.
2. We are going to know a new freedom and a new happiness.
3. We will not regret the past nor wish to shut the door on it.
4. We will comprehend the word serenity and we will know peace.
5. No matter how far down the scale we have gone, we will see how our experience can benefit others.
6. That feeling of uselessness and self-pity will disappear.
7. We will lose interest in selfish things and gain interest in our fellows.
8. Self-seeking will slip away.
9. Our whole attitude and outlook upon life will change.
10. Fear of people and of economic insecurity will leave us.
11. We will intuitively know how to handle situations which used to baffle us.
12. We will suddenly realize that God is doing for us what we could not do for ourselves.

Are these extravagant promises? We think not. They are being fulfilled among us—sometimes quickly, sometimes slowly. They will always materialize if we work for them.



## DELEGATE'S DAY OF SHARING

Saturday, March 19 10 AM - 4 PM

PS 41, 116 West 11th St • Manhattan 10011

The Delegate's Day of Sharing offers interested AA members the chance to learn more about some of the items on the agenda for the upcoming 61st General Service Conference.

Brooklyn Intergroup Presents:

### BEGINNERS WORKSHOP!

Saturday, March 19, 2011 • 10 AM - 1 PM

Being held at the REFUGE GROUP meeting place at:

2020 Foster Ave Basement Between Ocean Avenue and East 21st Street  
(2, 5, B, Q trains stop nearby)

District 406, 408 and 413 is sponsoring a bilingual English/Russian workshop:

### Body, Mind and Spirit

the AA Triangle: Recovery, Unity and Service

Saturday, March 26 • 1 - 4 PM

at The Kingsway Group - East 12th Street and Avenue O.

Andrey from The Russian Group will speak on Recovery; Linda M., our Alternate Delegate will speak on Unity; Isadora, our past Delegate will speak on Service. There will be a Q+A to follow. We encourage all who understand Russian better than English to attend. SENY has graciously agreed to provide translation.

Один участник выступит на русском языке, будет предоставлен перевод на английский. Другие участники будут говорить по-английски с переводом на русский.

How are your Beginners' meetings doing? Are they attracting and keeping newcomers? Are they helping newcomers learn about AA and its program? Are they keeping to beginners' topics? Learn about what beginners did to get and to stay sober before rehabs played a prominent role. District 405 is having a workshop on running Beginners' meetings. Beginners and old-timers alike are welcome!

### Beginners Meetings - A New Beginning

Saturday, April 2 • 12 - 3 PM

at The Refuge Group

(Our Lady of Refuge Rectory, Foster Ave and E. 21st Street)

### Brooklyn County General Service Meeting

St. Francis College, 180 Remsen Street

Wednesday, May 11 • Wednesday, June 8 • September - TBD • November - TBD

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 the month at 3:30 PM

### District 401 403 411 Cluster Meeting

103 Quincey Street basement, between Franklin and Classon, 11238

2nd Saturday of each month at 7:00 PM

### District 404 Meeting

St. Ann's Church

167 North 6th St, Williamsburg 11222

1st Friday of the month at 7:15 PM

### District 405 Meeting

Our Lady of Refuge Church basement

2020 Foster Avenue at East 21st Street, off Farragut Rd, 11210

Last Saturday of each month at 4:30 PM

### District 406 408 413 Cluster Meeting

2240 79th St between Bay Pkwy and 23rd Ave (residence)

2nd Saturday of each month at 11:30 AM

### District 407 409 Cluster Meeting

Church of the Good Shepherd

7420 Fourth Avenue between 74th St. and Bay Ridge Parkway

2nd Tuesday of each month at 7:00 PM

### District 412 Meeting

St. John's Lutheran Church (Prospect Group's meeting place)

281 Prospect Ave off 6th Ave., 11215

3rd Sunday of each month at 6:00 PM

### District 414 Meeting

30 Jefferson Street, 11206 (Bed Stuy)

Every Saturday, 5:00 - 7:00 PM

The Once Again Group has moved to the Immaculate Heart of Mary Church Basement on E 4th Street off Ft. Hamilton Pkwy. It was previously located in the IHM Rectory basement.

Brooklyn Intergroup meets the 3rd Saturday of every month at 9 AM at the Greenwood Group - 357 20th St (off 7th Ave)

### New Meeting!

'Lefferts Gardens'

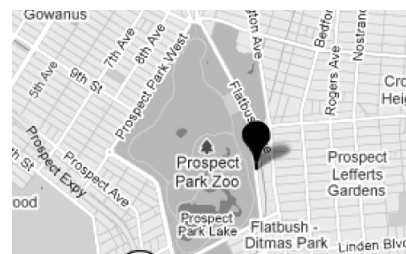
Tuesday Nights-7PM Closed

East Side of Prospect Park at

John Hus Moravian Church

153 Ocean Avenue

First Meeting in 11225!



SENY Translation Committee needs Translators  
Spanish, French, Polish, Russian, *any language!*

To volunteer, email [translation@aaseny.org](mailto:translation@aaseny.org)

The deadline for submitting articles and announcements for the May-June Junction is May 2. Remember that the following Junction will appear in September. Please let us know of events—anniversaries, workshops, etc.—which will take place during the summer months of July-August. They need to be published in this upcoming (May-June) issue.

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403	Annette C.	412	Holmes R. Lou G. (alt)
404	Vincent M.	Hispanic (414)	Mario
405	Richard S.	Polish	Mark
406, 408, 413 cluster	Karen K.	Russian (in 408)	Valentina G., GSR