



QUEENS COUNTY GENERAL SERVICE ASSEMBLY

SOBER CONNECTIONS

The Official Newsletter of
Queens County General Service Assembly

JUNE 2021 | VOLUME III

"HYBRID"

By: Malini M.

It was not a quick decision. How do we do this? Are we able to do this? What if we don't do this? Who else is doing this? So many questions. Over the last year, our group attracted members from our area, across the country, and the Caribbean. It was the 12th Step in action: recovery, unity, and service. Once we were invited to return to our meeting space, we knew we needed to decide. Will we become a hybrid meeting? We reflected on what we did in March of 2020. We had an emergency business meeting where we explored the meaning of fifth tradition. Are we moving to in-person meetings in haste? Are we mentally, emotionally, physically, and spiritually prepared to meet in-person? Do we keep our virtual meeting? Who knows how to handle the technical aspect of a hybrid meeting? Wait, what is a hybrid meeting? As our current chair loves to say: we beat this topic with a bat. We came to a truly well-informed group conscience considering our common welfare. Our group conscience determined that the transition to a hybrid meeting would be best for the group.

The next step was creating a "hybrid" subcommittee focusing on all technical aspects of a hybrid meeting. We discussed all possibilities and capabilities such as access to Wi-Fi or a hotspot, obtaining/purchasing a laptop and tv in addition to the peripherals for connectivity. We considered the location of the laptop (with camera) and tv for an optimal meeting experience for all those in attendance in the rooms. We realized that the chair also needed a device as they could manage the virtual room and the main room. Once everything was set up, we had to test it. So, we scheduled a tech rehearsal with the group which allowed for immediate feedback. A major decision we had to make was the purchase of a microphone that would best serve the whole meeting. Motion made and passed.

Then the Ninth Step Promises came true. NOT! The first night was a success but we began to run into a few technical issues. Some apparent and others not so much so. As a matter of fact, we learned technology is technology: ever changing and evolving; that it takes time to troubleshoot issues; and there always needs to be a backup to the backup plan.

The last year has taught us many lessons:

1. We are willing to go to any length to get sober. Groups quickly transitioned to virtual meetings and for some, even meeting outdoors.
2. We believed that if we did not shift our thinking, we would step back into that world of isolation bringing us one step closer to a drink.
3. We knew that the current situation wasn't forever but that we had to do this a day at a time.
4. We shared our fears. All of them. Knowing that once released, we could move forward.
5. We admitted that we couldn't do this alone.
6. We were willing to say we aren't perfect and may not know how to do new things.
7. We asked our Higher Power to remove the blockage so we can carry the message.
8. We looked into ourselves to see where we can best show up for our group.
9. We fought. We gave up. We hit the reset button.
10. When it didn't go the way we envisioned, we stepped back from troubleshooting so the solution can present itself.
11. Simply, we had to trust the process. Our Higher Power would carry us as it always does.
12. This wasn't about us but about the newcomer near and far, the alcoholic that isn't able to attend in-person meetings or access the internet (accessibility), and for those who need that option.

We have a disease that wants us dead. We know it is not getting better out on those streets. We have experienced, as a group, newcomers finding us on the virtual platform, relapse, and even death. We are taught to give back what was so freely given to us. So, if Bill W. could find a coin to make a call to find another drunk in a new city; soldiers can find a way to stay connected; meetings make it into prisons and institutions; groups figuring out how to do online meetings during a year of trauma; then we can also try to make hybrid meetings work. After all, Bill said, "Let us of AA, therefore, resolve that we shall always be inclusive and never exclusive, offering all we have to all, save our title. May all barriers be thus leveled, may our unity thus be preserved. And may God grant us a long life — and a useful one!"*

- W., Bill. "ON TRADITION THREE"; Grapevine February 1948

UPCOMING EVENT FLYERS

Crea 48 Presents

2021 NEW YORK STATE *virtual!*

INFORMATIONAL WORKSHOP

Friday - Saturday
July 30 - 31

Open to any AA member who would like to learn more about general service in NYS

Registration is OPEN!
<https://aahmbny.org/nysiw>

SENY 2021

The Joy Of Service Workshop

Join us in Sharing Gratitude for
Our Trusted Servants Behind the Scenes
In This Time of Change

Speakers from General Service, Counties &
Intergroups
Share Their Stories

Date: Saturday, August 7, 2021
Time: 10:00am — 12:00pm
Zoom ID: 849 8225 7824
Password: SERVICE

"Nothing matters more to AA's future welfare than the manner in which we use the columns of modern communication. Used wisely and well, it can produce results surpassing our greatest imaginations." Bill W.

HOSTED BY:
MANHATTAN GENERAL SERVICE MEETING
www.manhattanaa.org www.aaseny.org

**THE
BROKEN ELEVATOR**

WE GET TO TAKE THE STEPS!

TUESDAY JUNE 15TH

BLIND DAVE

AUSTIN, TX
PPG AUSTIN

"PRAYERS/PRINCIPLES/PRIORITIES"

STEP 11

45 MIN LEAD AND 30 MIN Q&A

12PM PDT

2PM CDT

3PM EDT

8PM UK

ZOOM ID: 795-4029-6512

PW: 736666

Queens Gratitude

Invites you to attend a Workshop
On

**Relapse
and
Recovery**

on Saturday, July 31, 2021
7:00 P.M. — 8:30 P.M.

Presented in a Hybrid Format
Zoom Info: 145 087 360 | Passcode 599386
Speakers followed by Q & A

**For current events, click link to website:
Queens County General Service Assembly**

THE GRAPEVINE

VOL. I, NO. 1, JUNE, 1944 P. O. BOX 328, GRAND CENTRAL ANNEX YEARLY SUBSCRIPTION, 1.50; COPY, 15c

May we remind those who see, read and possess a copy of this paper but who are not members of A.A. of the meaning of those two initials - - and ask them to respect our anonymity? Please do not quote or reprint without our permission.

TWO YALE SAVANTS STRESS ALCOHOLISM AS TRUE DISEASE

At the launching of *The Grapevine*, we wish to express our heartiest congratulations and best wishes for the success of this new publication. The invitation to contribute a note on the Yale Plan Clinics to the first issue of your Journal, confirms our belief in the close relation between the interests of Alcoholics Anonymous and the broad studies we have undertaken on all aspects of alcoholism.

The first Yale Plan Clinics, which are at New Haven and Hartford, were established by the Laboratory of Applied Physiology of Yale University in cooperation with the Connecticut Prison Association. This most recent venture does not stand by itself, but is closely integrated with the researches and educational activities of the Laboratory. These three activities represent a broad scheme in which rehabilitation of the alcoholic and the prevention of inebriety are equal goals.

The Clinics serve several purposes and it is hard to say which purpose ranks first. As long as the general public is not aware of the fact that alcoholism is a disease, the most important object of the Clinics is to spread this idea until it is fully accepted. For the time being, this object may be placed ahead of the guidance of alcoholics. Another object is to further the development of community resources which could be utilized in the rehabilitation of alcoholics. At present, in many cases therapy must be undertaken at the Clinics because of the scarcity of other resources. But when those facilities shall have been developed, based, perhaps, on recommendations coming from the experience

of the Clinics, the latter will limit their activity solely to the guiding of alcoholics to those facilities which according to diagnosis seem to be the most promising in the individual case. Such guidance is being practiced at present at the Clinics in bringing suitable cases into contact with the local groups of Alcoholics Anonymous. It goes without saying that one of our objectives is to further interest and confidence in Alcoholics Anonymous among those who have not heard of it or who are inadequately informed. The contacts of the Clinics with the courts, with various departments of State government and with civic agencies will contribute greatly to bring about adequate understanding of the nature of alcoholism, of the utilization of the existing, and the development of needed, facilities.

The Clinics in giving physical examinations to all alcoholics who come for advice bring to their attention physical ailments which all too frequently are neglected. The treatment of such ailments does not lie within the activities of the Clinics, but the Clinics facilitate contacts with hospitals or private practitioners.

The Clinics have been in operation only two months and thus a report on "results" is not justified. It is, however, worth reporting that out of 70 alcoholics who up to date have availed themselves of the Clinics, 22 have come without being "referred," but solely from their own desire for help. The remainder have been sent by their relatives, by the courts, social agencies, hospitals, and private practitioners. Local groups of Alcoholics Anonymous have sent four men either for diagnosis of nervous complications or for physical examination. Numerous inquiries have been received from court officers and municipal administrators throughout the country concerning the feasibility of estab-

lishing clinics in other cities. The indications are that there is a wide interest in the rehabilitation of alcoholics and that only direction is needed to give it full display.

The problem of the alcoholic is too great to be solved by any one person or even by any one organization. The cooperation of all individuals and all organizations, based on mutual respect and understanding of each other's aims, is needed to bring success to the efforts of all those who are interested in bringing back the alcoholic into the life of the community.

New Haven, Connecticut

Howard W. Haggard
E. M. Jellinek

"GRAPEVINE" IN BOW

In a big smoke-filled room six ink-stained wretches sipped at their Cokes as I shot question after question at them.

"All right," I said, "The stock didn't bring this paper. Nobody found it in a rose bush. It didn't just grow like Topsy. Come clean, now. How'd it all begin?" "Well," the six began, "It was just something that was in the air. Everybody, at some time or other, has had the bright idea: let's have an A.A. paper! Then—bang—Cleveland had one; so why not us, here in the Metropolitan area? We figured to take the paper out of the talking stage and put it into print." With that the six shut up. In the silence that followed I looked these people over. Very average. A cashier; a radio script writer; an author; a bookseller; an art director; a wife and mother of two. "Do you realize," I said, "that you people are sticking your necks out to here? Starting a paper up all by your little selves. Not putting it to a vote and all that kind of thing."

(Continued on page 8)

Grapevine Magazine, First Edition (1944)

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Suscripciones a La Viña



A song on Anonymity



Join
Our
Team!

OPEN POSITIONS

Accessibilities Chair

Corrections Chair

Grapevine Chair

CPC Chair

**Please contact Bert L. dcmce@qcgcsa.org
to learn more about doing service below
your home group level.**

**QUEENS COUNTY 2021-2022
STEERING COMMITTEE**

DCMC Bert L. dcmce@qcgcsa.org

Alt-DCMC Adina C. alt-dcmce@queens.aaseny.org

Registrar Maura Z. registrar@queens.aaseny.org

Treasurer Jan A. treasurer@queens.aaseny.org

Secretary Moh H. secretary@queens.aaseny.org

Intergroup Liason Roslyn T. intrgrpliaison@queens.aaseny.org

Archives Chair Pepper archives@queens.aaseny.org

QC Web Chair Kim H. webchair@queens.aaseny.org

Newsletter Chair Patty H. newsletter@queens.aaseny.org

Treatment Chair Liam N. treatment@queens.aaseny.org

Meeting Place Chair (new) Santiago G. mtgplace@queens.aaseny.org

QC Share-A-Day Chair Stephanie McB. QSAD@queens.aaseny.org

Literature Chair Power P. literature@queens.aaseny.org

Public Information Chair Emily F. publicinfo@queens.aaseny.org

Service Sponsorship Chair John Francis sponsorship@queens.aaseny.org

QC Spiritual Breakfast Chair MaryAnn L. QCSB@queens.aaseny.org

"The Joy is in the Journey: Serving Below the Group Level"

For many years the phrase, "serving below the group level" was a mystery to me. I remember when I came to AA my sponsor had a commitment at our District in Astoria. Also, my home group would intermittently have a GSR, who would report back at the business meeting. The reports were always interesting to me; however, I thought the commitments would be too time-consuming or I needed to have a certain type of experience and /or knowledge. So, I continued to stay sober serving in my group and carrying the AA message to other sick and suffering alcoholics ...our primary purpose.

However, my higher power had other plans for me. And my service below the group level has been another spiritual awakening. My vision is many times smaller than what my higher power has planned for me. Serving at the district and county levels has added a richness to my sober journey. Learning about AA and how it functions is fascinating. Serving with other alcoholics from our county and area is so rewarding. It has provided many joy-filled hours, learning, growing, and being useful. And I found out I was mistaken. You don't need to take a commitment that requires more time than you can devote. Many positions have alternates who help carry out responsibilities. Also, you don't have to take a chair commitment, each committee chair needs support. The other thing I got wrong was that I needed to have a certain skill set. Alcoholics Anonymous is a wonderful organization - you don't need to know anything about the commitment you are interested in - we will help you. And by the time you rotate out, you can pass on your experience to the new person.

Queens County has an initiative, to guide and assist General Service Representatives (GSRs) who serve in inactive districts, organize and activate their districts. The inactive districts are 303, 306, 307, and 308 (see Queens County General Service Assembly - QCGSA - website for district map [Queens County District Map](http://www.qcgsa.org) (www.qcgsa.org)). Are you an AA member in one of the inactive districts? Are you a Queens County AA member willing to provide service in assisting a district to become active? All levels of experience are welcome!

My journey in service below the group level began at the district level. It was very gratifying serving in my AA community. I still attend my District 301 monthly Concept / Business meeting - great stuff! I want to mention that District 301 was inactive for 10 years and to also express my gratitude to the folks who dedicated their time to restart our district. They are available to answer our questions - just saying.

Please contact me at registrar@queens.aaseny.org if you are interested in being a part of activating a district meeting in your area. You will not only be helping your AA community, you will be helping yourself - that's how AA works ... but you already know that - please join us, share your talents, and have some fun.

In Love and Gratitude,

Maura Z.

Queens County Registrar



to other newsletters:

General Service Office of A.A
Box 459 Summer 2021

SENY Area 49
The Link

New York Intergroup
Sober News



7th Tradition Addresses

Queens County General Service Assembly (QCGSA) P.O. Box 670533 Flushing, N.Y. 11367	General Service Office (GSO) Box 459 Grand Central Station New York, N.Y. 10163	Area 49 of AA (South Eastern New York - SENY) PO Box 571 New York, N.Y. 10116	Queens Intergroup (QIAA) P.O. Box 754088 Forest Hills Station Forest Hills, N.Y. 11375-9088	New York Intergroup 307 Seventh Avenue Suite 201 New York, N.Y. 10001
QUEENS SHARE A DAY (QSAD) Same address. Please be sure to mark envelope and check for QSAD				