

31st Annual NYS Informational Workshop is Part of SENY History

The 31st Annual NYS Informational Workshop is now a part of SENY history. Early in the morning of Friday, August 6th, 2010, a few members of the NYS Informational Committee began putting up direction signs along the road toward the Graymoor Spiritual Life Center where the workshop was being held for the weekend. Over the course of the day and into the evening, GSRs, DCMs, DCMCs, Committee Chair people, Area Chair people and Delegates from Areas 47, 48, 49 and 50 began arriving and immediately got down to the business at hand; sharing information about their area committee work with their counterparts from the other areas. The Money and Spirituality panel on Friday night set the bar for the rest of the weekend. The presenters were knowledgeable on the topic and their presentations were incredible. The question and answer session that followed set the stage for meaningful discussion of a very serious subject that affects AA today.

While Friday night seemed to be a great success, the NYS Informational Committee could not have foreseen what Saturday was going to bring. We were expecting the 28 people who had already registered, but it became clear very early in the morning that we were going to exceed that number well before noon, and we did! In all, we had 76 people attend on Saturday! Combined with the 80 people who were staying for the weekend, this meant a total of 156 people who attended the 31st Annual NYS Informational Workshop hosted by SENY!

With the bar set high, each of the Saturday panels, beginning with Corrections and followed by Public Information, continued to provide valuable information to the attendees who may be doing these service commitments now or have an interest in doing them in the future. After lunch, the panels began with Accessibility/Special Needs, followed by Treatment Facilities and ending Cooperation with the Professional Community. Once again, each panel was exceptional, with presenters who provided accurate information that highlighted the issues many of the committees face in carrying the message to the alcoholic. The final panel, Technology exemplified the advances that AA is making in reaching out to alcoholics everywhere. At the end of each panel, the body engaged in Q&A sessions that were focused on the topic and enabled the “audience” to participate in the discussion. Many of the Q&A sessions provided additional, valuable information about the various panel topics, thus increasing everyone’s knowledge about each service commitment.

Sunday morning, with the weekend winding down, it was quite amazing to recognize the change in the atmosphere. Strangers on Friday night were now friends making plans to meet at meetings; nervous presenters were enthusiastically exchanging contact information with others to continue a topic of discussion brought up during a panel, and the committee members who'd been working non-stop for months found that there was nothing that urgently needed to be done. The last gathering for the weekend was the Wrap-Up business meeting, which provided great suggestions for the next NYS Informational Workshop committee to consider during their planning. The 32nd Annual NYS Informational Workshop will be hosted by Area 48 (HMB) in Aug. 2011.

The 31st Annual NYS Informational Workshop had one primary goal: to bring members of AA from throughout NYS together to share their experience and ideas about service with each other so that the alcoholics in all of NYS would benefit from this shared information. We achieved this goal because the committee did an incredible job. Without the dedication and unique talents that each committee member brought to the commitment, the 31st NYS Informational Workshop would not have been the successful event that it was. I also know that their humility will never allow them to stand up and take credit for their efforts, but you guys know who you are: Dean J., Kathy K., Jane E., Jim W., Larry K., Bill C., Susan B., and Kevin McH. Thank you so much for your service.

I would also like to thank Brenda P., SENY Area Chair, for asking me to serve on this committee. It has been a great experience that has given me the opportunity to grow, both in service and spiritually.

Cyndy F.
31st Annual NYS Informational Workshop Chair