Issue No. 652



JUNE 2025
WE AREN'T A GLUM LOT—
COMMUNITY & FRIENDSHIP
THROUGH SERVICE



# If You're Having Fun Doing Service, Tell Your Face

Yes, the General Service Conference is about A.A. business, but I want to share a few of the joys of service and fellowship that I experienced outside of that work.

I kept the same front-row seat all week (service nerd alert!). The faces around me changed daily, and that seat became my window into all the different conference members' personalities, love and commitment to service, and humor.

Inside my Conference committee room, we had discussions, sometimes tough debates, and substantial unanimity. By the end of sessions, our group had created an acronym we'd say to each other like a code. It meant we did the work.

Another delegate and I became unofficial chocolate-éclair scouts. The pastries didn't

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A.A. SERVICE CLASSIFIEDS EVENT FLYERS & CARTOON UPCOMING GENERAL SERVICE MEETINGS appear every day, so when they did, it felt like a mini gift. I'd spot them and call out, "The éclairs!" and he'd respond, "I got 'em!" It became our running bit, a sweet reminder not to take ourselves too seriously.

There was even a spontaneous dance break before one full Conference session that, if you've seen me at our SENY Conventions, you know is right up my alley. I also got looped into the long-running joke of Bob, our GSO General Manager and Conference Co-Chair, unveiling his themed socks each day.

My point in sharing all this is to let you know that joy is not only in the service work we do, but also in the shared smiles, laughter, and éclairs. The hallway conversations, the walks outside, the snippets of life people shared with each other. It reminds me that this structure doesn't just hold our principles. It holds space for joy, too. One of my favorite one-liners sums it up best: "If you're having fun doing service, tell your face."

#### Nisaa A. | SENY Delegate | Panel 75

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# Real Laughter—And a Real Education

When I was new in A.A., I was missing teeth and embarrassed to smile. I'd only made it to the fifth grade, and my self-esteem was somewhere between "nonexistent" and "actively hiding." I lived on the streets and had the social skills of a raccoon caught in a dumpster. So naturally, when someone said, "We're not a glum lot," I figured I'd wandered into a cult with suspiciously cheerful people.

But they weren't faking it. They were laughing. Like, really laughing. In between stories about DUIs, lost weekends, and "accidental" tattoos, they found the humor. And they let me laugh, too—even when I felt like a walking disaster. One guy said, "Stick around, your life will get so weird, you'll have no choice but to laugh." He wasn't wrong.

I didn't need a PhD or a Hollywood smile to belong.

I just had to be willing. Willing to sit down, shut up, and let the coffee (and the honesty) kick in.

And here's the kicker: doing A.A. service taught me more than school ever did. I learned structure, responsibility, and how to be part of something without destroying it. Chairing meetings, reading the Big Book, and helping newcomers gave me confidence and a real education, not in traditional textbooks, but in life. The kind that sticks.

Somewhere along the line, I stopped just surviving and started living and laughing. And now I know: we're not a glum lot. We've seen dark stuff, sure, but joy isn't reserved for the polished. It's for the ones who keep showing up, toothless grin and all.

James D. | Rockland County DCMC & a grateful member of the SENY Archives Committee

# An Indescribably Wonderful Experience

I may be the last person in the fellowship who would ever be described as a Big Book thumper. But when I heard the theme for this edition of *The Link*, "We Aren't a Glum Lot – Community & Friendship Through Service," I immediately thought of this passage from "There Is a Solution": "We are people who normally would not mix. But there exists among us a fellowship, a friendliness, and an understanding which is indescribably wonderful." (*Alcoholics Anonymous*, p. 17) I can't think of a better way to describe my experience in General Service.

I got involved in General Service because I knew that I needed to do something more to actively express the gratitude I have for the life that A.A. has given me. I dithered for a long time, letting fear and ego slow me down. I thought, what do I know

about General Service? Who do I think I am? What if I do a terrible job? But eventually I raised my hand, became a GSR, and never looked back. I am having the time of my life. How could I have ever forgotten that we don't do ANYTHING alone in A.A. And General Service is no exception.

Like everything else in A.A., General Service has been a wonderful paradox. I have gotten so much more than I have given. Every service position has only strengthened my program and widened my fellowship. I am awestruck at the friends that I have made and the powers of example I get to see in the people I am lucky enough to do service with. It's been indescribably wonderful.

Shawn K. | Bronx/UM County DCMC

# ANYTHING BUT GLUM



"But why shouldn't we laugh? We have recovered, and have been given the power to help others."



"Make service fun!" I heard that from a past delegate at the SENY Archives workshop in the Bronx last fall.

Now what did he mean by that? Could service really be fun?

Many years ago, I walked into a crowded A.A. room late. There was laughter and loud talk abounding. I wanted to run. They might have been laughing, but I was crying inside. Masked by my scowl. I just wasn't ready for this. I saw nothing to be happy about. The thought of spending time without drinking in these rooms depressed me. I was not ready to receive the gift of Alcoholics Anonymous until I was ready to surrender.

When the time came for me to accept my alcoholism, I came back. They were still laughing; I still could not. Don't you get it? This is serious! Why are they laughing at personal disasters?

"So we think cheerfulness and laughter make for usefulness." (Alcoholics Anonymous, p. 132)

Despite myself, I made a bunch of A.A. friends. They took me along to diners, and cookouts, and A.A. softball leagues. Slowly but surely, I began to feel a part of. I identified! These were my people! And I joined in on the laughter.

"But why shouldn't we laugh? We have recovered, and have been given the power to help others." (Alcoholics Anonymous, p. 132)

Today, I love the laughter all about our fellowship. I take my disease seriously, but I don't always take myself seriously anymore. I belong to an A.A. group that has a sense of humor. My service commitments are anything but glum.

So how do we make service fun? Between the business of A.A. are the car rides, the lunch breaks, the texting, the side conversations. It's not just all business. Maybe we can add a little fun with a trivia game. With frequent breaks from the business at hand. Making service fun makes people want to come back. Find the joy in service!

Hank G. | Putnam County DCMC

# From the Archives: Notable June Dates in A.A. History



#### June 10, 1935

June 10th is Founder's Day! On that date, in 1935, Dr. Bob had his last drink which marked the beginning of Alcoholics Anonymous. Happy 90th Anniversary!

#### June 16, 1938

Jim B., an A.A. pioneer and author of the story "The Vicious Cycle" (which appeared in the 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>, and 4<sup>th</sup> editions of the Big Book) had his last drink.

#### June 28, 1935

Dr. Bob and Bill W. visit Bill D. at Akron's City Hospital. Famously nicknamed the "Man on the Bed," Bill D. becomes A.A. #3. He left the hospital on July 4, 1935, and never drank again.

#### June 25, 1939

The <u>New York Times Book Review</u> stated that Alcoholics Anonymous "is more soundly based psychologically than any other treatment of the subject I have ever come upon." The original article is on display and preserved at New York Intergroup.

#### June 18, 1940

The 24th Street Clubhouse held its first meeting at the now-defunct address of 334½ West 24th Street, in Chelsea. It was the first New York clubhouse. For a while, Bill and Lois lived in a room in the building before they moved to Westchester County, and Father Ed Dowling met Bill there. The clubhouse began to serve as more than a meeting place and to function as a de facto central committee for over 20

A.A. groups, with two paid clubhouse secretaries who answered phones and manned the desk 12-14 hours a day. These were some of A.A.'s first "special workers." The building was torn down in 1960, and our SENY archivists have preserved original newspaper accounts of this event.

#### June 30, 1941

Ruth Hock showed Bill W. a copy of the Serenity Prayer, which she had seen printed in the *New York Herald Tribune*. She immediately felt this prayer's relevancy to A.A. principles. The Serenity Prayer was soon printed on cards and passed out to A.A. members everywhere. Ruth was A.A.'s first secretary, and she typed the original manuscript of the Big Book as Bill dictated it to her. Though not an alcoholic, she was a central figure during A.A.'s creation.

#### June 1, 1949

Anne Smith, Dr. Bob's wife, died. Often called the "mother of A.A." by Bill W. and other A.A. pioneers, Anne attended Oxford Group meetings from 1933 (two years before her husband's recovery) until 1939, during which she kept a "spiritual journal." Her thoughts and writings on Oxford Group principles reveal her underappreciated yet vital influence on the spiritual recovery principles of A.A. and the language and expressions that later appeared the Big Book. Anne wrote of an Oxford Group prayer: "O Lord, manage me, for I cannot manage myself." She also wrote in her journal: "We can't give away what we haven't got."

#### Here are the answers to the trivia question that appeared in the May issue of The Link:

#### WHO IS LEONARD STRONG? WHERE IS HE BURIED?

Leonard Strong was the husband of Bill W.'s younger sister, Dorothy. He paid for and admitted Bill to Towns Hospital. He helped arrange for Clarence S. to be referred to Dr. Bob for his "cure." Dr. Leonard introduced A.A. to the Rockefeller Foundation. He was a Trustee for the Alcoholic Foundation as well as the General Service Board. A key figure in our pioneering days, he is buried in East Dorset, Vermont, in the same cemetery as Bill and Lois Wilson.

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Your SENY Archives Committee is working hard to sort through mountains of documents and to preserve, scan, and display them physically and digitally. If you have updates for your county, you can email: <a href="mailto:archives@aaseny.org">archives@aaseny.org</a>.

Here's a trivia question from the Archives Committee that will be answered in the next issue of *The Link*. Can you guess the correct answers before then?

During World War I, the men in Bill W.'s battery gave him a "token of appreciation." What was it? Where is it now?

Email your answers to: <u>archives2aaseny.org</u>. Last month Kingsley from the Bronx was the first person to answer correctly!





QR code to SENY Archives: aasenyhistory.org

QR code to our newly updated 2025 SENY History

Book



### A.A. Service Classifieds

Send a brief description to link@aaseny.org of the available service position, minimum sober time or other requirements, and a contact email, and we'll post your "ad" here where other A.A.'s eager to do service can find it!

Open Service Position in Your District, County, or Area? Our Service Classifieds Can Help!

#### **Bronx County General Service**

- Treatment/Facilities Chair
- Spanish Liaison
- Brush Editor

Contact: dcmc@bxum.aaseny.org

### **Humor the Sixth Sense**

I can't go back and change the past. So what do I do with all the junk from my past? The Twelve Steps deal with just this predicament: moving from regret to a sincere attempt to avoid repeating my harmful behavior, with honesty being the driving force.

Following this was the journey of forgiveness that began to infiltrate my life of sobriety after I admitted and took responsibility for my wrongs by doing the Fifth Step. As a result, I was granted a brand new outlook on the wreckage of my past. This puts my junk to work; I help others by telling my story. As the months go by, my story gets more humorous as it gets more honest. As a good friend of mine in AA says: "You can't make this stuff up!"

This new perspective on my past is a gift I call the sixth sense—the sense of humor. It is a healer of wounds. It's a light at the end of the tunnel. It's the tie that binds me to other alcoholics. It transforms tears of sorrow to tears of gratitude. The newfound capacity to laugh at myself is the antidote A.A. has given me to counteract the

poison called resentment that kills so many alcoholics. I believe this sixth sense is part of the psychic change Dr. Silkworth talks about at the beginning of the Big Book.

Now when I sit listening to another's story of what it was like, I can laugh along with the others, not at the storyteller, but at the Larry, Curly, and Moe inside of me. Without this gift of humor, my sobriety would surely regress into a bone-dry desert, bristling with restlessness, irritability, and discontentment.

A genuine sense of humor touches, tastes, hears, sees, and even smells the world in a unique way, a kind and colorful way. This new sixth sense A.A. meetings have given me is a blend of awe, wonder, and gratitude—a magic potion, you could say. Behind this glow of laughter and acceptance is the light of forgiveness. A sense of humor transforms restless, irritable, and discontented sobriety into quality sobriety. "We aren't a glum lot," the Big Book says. Now I know why.

Ed C. (Bowling Green, KY) | Excerpted from *The Grapevine*, <u>December 2008 issue</u>

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**Putnam County General Services presents:** 

# 

Unity - Service - Recovery



AA's 90th Anniversary

Saturday, June 7th | Fellowship, Sharing, 4PM-8PM | & Potluck Dinner!

Meeting ID: 832 0606 0941 Passcode: 90YFARS

4:00 to 5:00 : Unity & Service in AA - Danielle, Connor, Kendall 5:15 to 6:00:90 Years Of Unity - Betty, John W., Gregg S. 6:00 to 7:00 : Potluck Dinner

7:00 to 8:00: History Of AA - James

Mount Carmel Baptist Church 76 Gleneida Ave., Carmel, NY 10512

FOR MORE INFORMATION OR TO VOLUNTEER PLEASE CONTACT April 845-391-9175
Or Laura 914-645-7704 OR VISIT putnamcountynyaa.org **Nassau General Service Group Unity Breakfast** 

A Celebration of AA and

# **Working Together Increasing Trust**



Tickets \$44

Sunday June 8, 2025

9am - 1pm

**Grand Ballroom Marriott Hotel** 101 James Doolittle Blvd. Uniondale, NY

For more information see your GSR, DCM or dcmc@nassau.aasenv.org

Fran T. 917 538-9532 or Mary R 516 220-1819

Join Us for a Buffett Breakfast, Great Speakers and AA Service Tables

SOUTHEAST NEW YORK AREA 49

Please Foin Us!

ARCHIVES COMMITEE PRESENTS: VARIETIES OF SPONSORSHIP WORKSHOP

A Historical Perspective On Our Primary Purpose

SATURDAY JUNE 21ST 9AM-2PM

ST. CAMILLUS CHURCH SPRINGMAN HALL 185 BEACH 99TH ST. ROCKAWAY PARK, NY PARKING IN REAR

MORNING & AFTERNOON REFRESHMENTS WILL BE SERVED

Ask Questions & Share Your Own Experiences!













SHARE-A-DAY

2025

**Working Together** Increasing Trust

With Al-Anon/Alateen participation

ALL ARE WELCOME!

Service positions available!

Presented by MANHATTAN COUNTY **GENERAL SERVICE** 

Planning Meetings

(C) 5:00pm - 6:00pm

First Sunday of the Month

Meeting ID: 889 1351 2831

Password: MSAD2025 msad@manhattan.aasenv.org





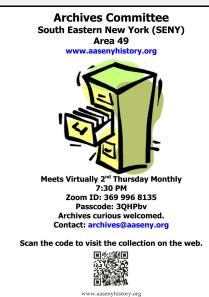
### **UPCOMING GENERAL SERVICE MEETINGS**



#### To add or update an event, please email: agenda@aaseny.org

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Staten Island General Service Meeting and New GSR Orientation	6/1	6:30pm	Immanuel Lutheran, 2018 Richmond Avenue, Staten Island, NY 10314		
Nassau General Service Unity Breakfast	6/8	9:00am	Marriott Grand Ballroom, 101 James Doolittle Blvd, Uniondale, NY		
Sullivan County General Service Meeting	6/8	3:15pm	St. John's Church, 15 St John Street, Monticello, NY 12701		
SENY Corrections Committee Meeting	6/9	8:00pm	Zoom ID: 856 7793 0152, Passcode: Service		
Putnam County General Service Meeting (HYBRID)	6/10	7:00pm	Zoom ID: 641 949 4122, No Passcode 2nd Tuesday of every at Mt Carmel Baptist Church		
BXUM County Meeting (HYBRID)	6/12	7:00pm	Hybrid information TBD		
Grapevine Committee Meeting	6/12	7:00pm	Zoom ID: 998 938 7641, Passcode: A49P75		
Archives Committee Meeting	6/12	7:30pm	Zoom ID: 369 996 8135, Passcode: 3QHPbv		
SENY & SIA Joint Bridging the Gap Meeting (HYBRID)	6/13	6:00pm	Zoom ID: 941 2170 5886, Passcode: service NEW SIA Offfice, 33 Comac Loop, Suite 1A-1, Ronkonkoma, NY 11779		
Post Conference Assembly (HYBRID)	6/14	9:00am	Zoom ID: 873 6681 5219, Passcode: 713104 Dial-in #: (646) 931-3860 Westchester Community College, 75 Grasslands Road, Valhalla, New York 10595		
Reunión de MCD y comités hispanos (Hispanic DCM and committees meeting)	6/14	8:00pm	Sótano (Basement), 145 Mount Vernon Ave. (Se entra por el estacionamiento en S West St por la última puerta. / The entrance is through the parking lot on S West St through the last door). Mount Vernon, NY 10550		
Asamblea de Distritos Hispanos (Hispanic Districts Assembly)	6/15	9:30am	Venue TBA		
Nassau General Service Meeting (HYBRID)	6/16	7:30pm	Zoom ID: 922 8787 8377, Passcode 12345 Nassau Intergroup of AA, 361 Hempstead Turnpike, West Hempstead, NY 11552		
Orange County General Service Meeting (HYBRID)	6/17	7:00pm	Zoom ID: 999 6809 5777, Passcode: Acceptance First Presbyterian Church Sullivan, 4907 NY-52, Jeffersonville, NY 12748		
Westchester GSA Meetings (HYBRID)	6/18	7:00pm	Zoom ID: 868 370 8260, Passcode: WGSA Memorial United Methodist Church, 250 Bryant Avenue, Fellowship Room, White Plains, NY 10605		
Rockland General Service	6/18	7:30pm	Clarkstown Reformed Church, 107 Strawtown Road, West Nyack, NY 10994		
PI Committee Meeting	6/19	7:30pm	Meeting ID: 830 6480 3071, Passcode: 386471		
Suffolk General Service Meeting & New GSR Orientation (HYBRID)	6/20	7:00pm	Meeting ID: 932 6450 5176, Passcode: 713704		
SENY Archives Presents: Varieties of Sponsorship Workshop	6/21	9:00am	St. Camillus Church, 185 Beach 99th Street, Springman Hall, Rockaway Park, NY 11694		
SENY Technology Committee Meeting	6/24	7:30pm	Meeting ID: 894 0024 2856, Passcode: 033597 Dial-In #: (646) 558-8656		
Technology and Communications Office Hour	6/26	7:00pm	Google Meet with Ray, our TCO Meeting ID: <u>meet.google.com/ouq-pfqn-kuq</u>		
Queens General Service Assembly	6/30	7:30pm	Entrance is on 103rd Street and 101st Avenue in the basement: Mary of Gate Heaven, 103-12 101st Avenue, Ozone Park, NY 11416		









### Let's LINK Up!

We are actively looking for more people to contribute to SENY's newsletter, which has been in print since 1961! Please email <code>link@aaseny.org</code> if you're interested in writing an article about your experience, strength, and hope in A.A. service., and we'll let you know the due dates and themes for upcoming issues. Article can run between 275 and 350 words. We welcome your articles and creativity, and professional writing experience is <a href="MOIT">NOT</a> necessary at all.

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\*Special committees (neither standing nor ad hoc committees)