

# QUEENS INTERGROUP OF ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS NEWSLETTER

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2020 3RD QUARTER/(JULY/AUGUST/SEPTEMBER) NEWSLETTER

## The Passing of Antonio

It is with sadness that I must report the passing of our Late Queens Intergroup Chairperson, Antonio Gooding, who left this earth on June 20, 2020. I got to know Antonio in the last year and a half after I became the Queens Intergroup Newsletter Chair. Antonio always seemed to be upbeat and encouraging to all the members of the Steering committee. He had a tremendous enthusiasm for Service in AA and went about it with a great sense of humor. I attended Antonio's wake which was held on Sunday, June 28th at Leo F. Kearns Funeral Home in South Richmond Hill. While at the wake, I was struck by all the pictures showing Antonio at various AA events over the years. He will be missed by his family, friends, and AA as a whole.

Here are some memories of Antonio submitted by some of the members of the Queens Intergroup Steering Committee.

I met this handsome, witty man outside of Broadway-Steinway, at Sunday twilight, about 25 years ago. Lots to talk about – the arts, music, life in NYC and, of course, sobriety. We ran into each other rather infrequently during our 1st 20 years, but as I began to expand my A.A. service beyond the Group level, our mutual contact grew as well. Antonio was a kind but firm “GSR Bootcamp” drill sergeant, a hard-working and hopeful Public Information liaison – and a tireless Queens Intergroup Chair, always ready to build bridges between Intergroups and A.A.s in general.

Two memories I cherish most. The first is we had a great luncheon last September at a newly opened steak house in Astoria. The service was an abomination but leave it to Antonio to strike up a conversation with the couple at the next table – we talked and laughed and exchanged numbers. What a wonderful time! And that day, I said “Yes” to Antonio's request that I take the position as Vice Chair of Queens Intergroup.

The second is the 2018 Bill W. Dinner – Antonio was my “date” and our place was on the dais in the Grand Ballroom of the NY Hilton. So glad that he had the chance to be there, to gaze out at the virtual sea of sober, happy faces. Antonio loved A.A. and was always ready to be of service. May we all follow his example! - Written by Stephanie P.

I met Antonio during his 25<sup>th</sup> year of sobriety. He had been living in Astoria and I found out later he moved to Ozone Park. Antonio, like many others, knew little about service outside of his homegroup. He talked about his ignorance to service and got busy playing catch up. He asked a boat load of questions and picked my brain daily. As he began to learn about all the service opportunities, the excitement in him escalated. The word enthusiast does not do him justice. He wanted to be involved in everything going on. He became a sponge and talked about wishing he had known about this stuff a long time before. I had many conversations with him reminding him about HALT and burnout. I was afraid for him because you can burn out quickly if you do too much of anything. That did not stop him and at one point he told me he was GSR for three groups in addition to being PI Chair for the county. He did have ulterior motives though. He wanted every group possible to be represented to some degree and get involved with the processes that go on in A.A. Most importantly, he wanted every group to have a voice and have an informed group conscience. As the Chair for Queens Intergroup, all Antonio wanted was a better Intergroup who puts principles before personalities. He wanted Queens County to do it's best to be of maximum service to the alcoholic who still suffers. I will certainly miss Antonio and his in your face attitude. He really left his mark in the short time that I knew him. - Written by JoAnn M.

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### **The First Virtual Exchange Meeting**

The first Virtual Exchange meeting was scheduled to be on Saturday, June 25th at 9 am. With excitement and some apprehension, I wondered how it would fare out? I did not know what to expect. I had registered my homegroup Elm Heights and along with Nick T. we signed on to the event. Much to my surprise, it went exceedingly smooth. That can be directly attributed to the tireless efforts of Sequoia K. from NY Intergroup, Emily, Rosalyn, and JoAnn of Queens Intergroup. One of the reasons why it went so well was the gathering of information for the various groups prior to the event. This included the name of the group, meeting day, meeting time, meeting ID, meeting password, type of meeting and contact information. With the data collected, the facilitators could pair off group representatives into various break rooms. In many cases, the groups were able to complete their exchanges in the first break room. For the representatives of the groups who could not, they were instructed to return to the main room and the process would continue until all groups were able to achieve their objective. Groups that completed all their exchanges could leave the exchange meeting. The event took approximately an hour.

## **Extension of NY Intergroup Free Zoom Accounts**

In spite of the fact that we are in the midst of a pandemic, my homegroup, Elm Heights, among many other groups have been able to continue to carry the message of AA thanks to the efforts of NY Intergroup. They have provided free Zoom accounts so that we may keep the virtual doors open. Even though many in-person meetings are no longer being attended, many AA entities like QIAA, GSO, and NY Intergroup still have running expenses (rent, utilities, etc.). Treasurers of respective homegroups may consider making contributions on behalf of their homegroups to the various AA entities. Individual contributions are also welcome. NY Intergroup has informed us that they will keep the free Zoom accounts through March 2021.

## **The Reopening of In-Person Meetings**

With New York City entering Phase 4, many groups are starting to reopen in-person meetings. Whether or not Groups decide to open or not, the links below can serve as guides for each Homegroup in making an informed group conscience.

<https://www.aaseny.org/from-the-delegate>

The below link is a presentation by delegate Jane E. of the Eye Opener Group District 108 SENY.

<https://static1.squarespace.com/static/559f240ce4b07a4915495c39/t/5f1b02c5c8c86d515c1f8b2f/1595605702506/FTD+Eye+Opener+Talk++F2F+July+19%2C+2020+8-30+.pdf>

If you are interested in attending an In-Person meeting, some groups have reopened. There is a list of in-person meetings on the QIAA website homepage.

(Disclaimer: QIAA has no opinion or involvement with the re-opening of any meeting).

This next member of AA, I have had the pleasure to have known for the past 20 years. He has been a tireless servant of AA. He has done innumerable service in Queens Intergroup, General Service and NY Intergroup. His encouragement along with his knowledge has helped me tremendously in my tenure as the Newsletter Chair for Queens Intergroup. Presently he is the QIAA Junior Advisor. He is also my AA Service Sponsor and his name is John Francis who was kind enough to submit the following article regarding AA service.

## Service Outside the Homegroup by John Francis

It is the middle of a steamy, hot summer and most likely you are cooped up due to the Corona Virus situation. You miss your AA friends, other than those you might call, or check in with on a Zoom Meeting. Still, you are grateful to be sober. You have a sane life, a place to live, possibly a job (although remotely), and perhaps a significant other (who is glad you are sober). Everything is more or less A-OK.

This could be a good time for an AA member to strongly consider a service commitment outside (below) the group level. This commitment could be for Queens Intergruop, or for The Queens County Service Structure. A few suggestions: Take a phone answering shift for The Queens Intergruop Hot Line (calls get forwarded to your personal phone), you can bring a meeting into an institution, become your groups Meeting Exchange Person or Queens Intergruop Rep. and attend the QIAA Quarterly Meeting. You can become a GSR at Queens General Service, or just go to the Queens County Meeting and find out where help is needed. From my personal perspective, since I did Intergruop Service first, I understood better what was going on when I later did service in General Service. Of course, all service to fellowship is valued and appreciated.

Many with a year or two in AA might say "I am not ready!" This is not so. An AA Member learns and grows by taking on a new challenge in their recovery. The saying is, "you become an expert at a commitment when you are ready to rotate out". Plus, you will always get help and support from those who did a certain service commitment before you arrived. From a practical standpoint, you are needed. Queens intergruop and Queens County General Service do not run themselves. In the "spirit of rotation", we always need new AA Members to get involved. For myself, it has meant 25 years of spiritual growth, learning patience and tolerance, and watching others grow through service. I have met hundreds of AA Members in 14 counties and beyond because of commitments I have taken.

Over the years, it has kept me connected to AA during good times and challenging times. The relationships that I have made through AA Service have helped me ask for help when I needed it. Please feel free to ask me about a role you might want to try. You are a winner if you take on anything to help the AA Fellowship and the sick and suffering.

John Francis / QIAA Junior Advisor

One of the gifts I have found to be very useful in sobriety is the ability to appreciate humor. It has certainly helped to sustain me in difficult times. Like it says on page 132 of the Big Book, "We aren't a glum lot."

### **"Alcoholic Prayer"**

Murphy was staggering home with a pint of booze in his back pocket when he slipped and fell heavily. Struggling to his feet, he felt something wet running down his leg. "Please Lord," he implored, "let it be blood."

### **Good News, Bad News**

A long time AA member named Joe R has lived to a very old age and one morning God appears to him, as Joe lies in bed.

Joe: What have you come for God?

God: Well Joe, I've come with some good news and some bad news, what do you want first?

Joe (being an optimist): I like to start the morning with good news

God: I have come to tell you that we have AA meetings in heaven

Joe: Alright - that's great! So, what's the bad news?

God: You're chairing tonight's meeting....

Special thanks to JoAnn M., John Francis B., Deborah (Treasurer), my sponsee Atif C., and The Entire QIAA Steering Committee. If you have any articles that you would like to submit, you may email me at [shearseddie@gmail.com](mailto:shearseddie@gmail.com).(Limit 2,000 words or 2 pages.)