



Suffolk Intergroup Association

BULLETIN



November 2005

Volume 32, Number 7

PATCHOGUE, NY

Reps Vote to 'Clean-up' Meeting List

Every month, the Intergroup office receives letters or emails like the following:

"The Sunday 7:00 PM meeting at St. Martin of Tours in Amityville no longer exists and hasn't in 3-4 years according to the pastor. Last night two little old ladies came up to my car as I was waiting for 7:30 PM mass. I had a meeting list and I helped them as best as I could. What if it was a newcomer in dire straits? I myself went looking for that meeting a couple of months ago and thankfully I knew where else to find a meeting isn't it important that we keep the meeting lists up to date, both printed and on-line?"

There are roughly 360 groups listed in the Suffolk County Meeting list. SIA is in contact (at least occasionally) with about 180 of these, as to the rest, they may or may not still be meeting, but we're not sure. In the past, we have asked reps from neighboring groups to deliver postage-paid post cards to these "silent" groups, to be returned to the office to confirm their meeting schedule; we have asked members of other groups to check up on groups in their neighborhoods and report back to us on their continuing existence. We have never gotten a response from more than a dozen groups as a result of any of these efforts.

At the October Intergroup meeting, the group reps decided to take a more serious step in our efforts to keep the meeting list accurate. All the groups in Suffolk County have one year to contact Intergroup to confirm their existence and the accuracy of their schedule as published in the meeting list. Any group

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Meetings and Events In December

- SIA, Officers and Chairpersons Meeting
December 6th, 7:30 PM at the SIA Office
- SIA Group Representatives Monthly Meeting
December 13th, 8 PM at Cleary School Ronkonkoma.
- SIA New Reps Orientation Meeting,
December 13th, 7 PM at Cleary School Ronkonkoma.
- Suffolk General Service Monthly Meeting
December 16th, 8 PM Trinity Lutheran Church, Rocky Point
- SIA/GSO Public Information Committee Meeting
December 21st, 7:30 PM, the SIA Office.
- SIA Treatment Facilities Monthly Meeting
December 28th, 7:30 PM at the SIA Office.
- SIA Sponsorship Workshop, December 8th
at 7:00 PM at the Intergroup Office
- "Speaking to Non-AA Groups" Seminar
November 18th, 7:00 PM at the office.

DO YOU HAVE SERVICE EXPERIENCE?

The Bulletin Would like to publish your first person story of what service work has meant to your sobriety. Tell us (and newcomers) how carrying the message through sponsorship, being a Trusted Servant of your Group, or working with Intergroup or General Service has enhanced your personal recovery.

WOULD YOU LIKE TO SEE YOUR ARTICLE HERE?

The Bulletin would love nothing more than to print your article, message, group announcement or experience, strength and hope! So please mail it, fax it, or call it in to your SIA Office no later than the 2nd Tuesday of the month.

Or, make our lives easier and save us a lot of typing by submitting your article by email to bulletin@suffolkny-aa.org

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'We're IT' of Islip Terrace

Second in a Series of Articles about
the History of AA in Suffolk County

In February of 1999, Bob R. of the Hauppauge Group and Linda S. of Terryville were looking for a Saturday afternoon meeting and came across a listing for a meeting called Pathfinders in Islip Terrace. The meeting was listed for 1:00 and off they went to check it out. They arrived about 10 minutes early and found an almost empty parking lot. As 1:00 came and went, no cars showed up, so they decided to investigate.

They walked into the Mercy Haven Agency on Connetquot Ave., the address listed for the meeting. They met a woman who identified herself as the director, who told them that there was no meeting at this address and that she had no idea who had listed it. The director continued to say that people showed up all the time looking for the meeting and added that the agency would love to host an AA meeting. Bob and Linda thanked her and said they would pass this information on to Suffolk Intergroup. They never did pass that information on. Over the course of the weekend, they decided to start a meeting themselves. They recruited Chris O. also of Hauppauge and set up some conditions: ~~the meeting would be a closed~~ discussion meeting and the starting time was 4:00 in the afternoon, a time which did not conflict with any other existing meetings. The Director agreed and the first meeting was on April 3, 1999.

The name "WE'RE IT" comes from two sources: when Bob detoxed in 1984 at Freeport Hospital, he had his version of a spiritual awakening. His moment of truth came as he observed people from A.A. come in to lead their

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Mail: P.O. Box 659 Patchogue, NY

CLASSIFIED AS SERVICE

MARK THE CALENDAR

The SENY Intergroup Liaison meeting will be held at the SIA office on November 12th, Saturday, at 11:30 AM. All are invited to attend and observe.

Schools, PI and CPC Speakers Take Note

The Third Legacy Committee will be holding seminars on "Guidelines for Speaking at Non-AA Meetings" at the SIA office November 18th at 7:00. Learn to carry the message accurately. No one will be scheduled to speak for the PI and Schools committees who has not attended this seminar. Seating is limited, so call Ed W. at the SIA office to confirm.

ARCHIVES HELP WANTED

"ARCHIVES BOB" IS LOOKING FOR WILLING VOLUNTEERS TO HELP WITH THE ORGANIZATION OF 30 YEARS OF AA MATERIAL. IF YOU ARE INTERESTED IN HELPING, **EVEN FOR AN HOUR** PLEASE CONTACT BOB AT THE INTERGROUP OFFICE: 654-1150

24 HOUR HOT LINE 631-669-1124

Phone volunteers are needed to fill in when the assigned Group cannot muster enough people to fill a week's commitment. You will have several days' notice. Volunteers are also needed to fill in during emergencies and last minute cancellations without much advance notice. We need both people who can take a 12 hour shift, and people who are available for only a few hours. Call Dave F., Answering Service Chair at the SIA office.

Suffolk Intergroup and Suffolk General Service combine their resources to form the Public Information Committee. The Public Information Committee meets on the third Wednesday of the month at the Intergroup office at 7:30 PM. Please come help in this important work

WHO'S ON THE PHONES

10/30 TO 11/05
SMITHTOWN AFTERNOON

11/06 TO 11/12
ROCKY POINT FELLOWSHIP
OF THE SPIRIT

11/13 TO 11/19
EAST NORTHPORT SERENTIY

11/20 TO 11/26
NORTHPORT GROUP

11/27 TO 12/03
WYANDANCH GROUP

12/04 TO 12/10
PORT JEFFERSON GROUP

Office Volunteers Needed

People are needed to take shifts at the SIA office. Volunteers are needed both to take regular shifts, between 9:00PM and 3:00 PM, except Sundays, and to fill-in in emergencies. Office work involves answering the phones and light paperwork. Volunteers also help with committee work. Anyone who is interested contact office manager, Walter S., at 654-1150.

Holiday Marathon Meetings

QUEENS HOLIDAY SEASON SHARATHONS

OUR SAVIOR LUTHERAN SCHOOL

64-33 Woodhaven Boulevard, Rego Park, New York 11374

Thanksgiving Holiday Sharathon:

6:00pm Wednesday, November 23 through 10pm Sunday,
November 27

Holiday Season Sharathon:

4:00pm Friday, December 23 through 10:00pm Sunday,
January 1, 2006

Meetings start every hour on the hour.

SOUTHAMPTON HOSPITAL PARISH HALL

Corner of Herricks Rd. and Lewis Street

Doors open at 11:00 AM on Thanksgiving Day

Meetings at Noon, 2:00, 4:00, 6:00 and 8:00 PM

Food and Beverages will be served.

Notes from the Groups

The Intergroup Office has been informed by a member of the Babylon Off Main Group that the church where they meet experienced severe flooding during last month's heavy rains and that the damage will not be repaired until late December or early January. As a result, the AA meetings usually held there are being cancelled by the church. The following meetings are affected:

Babylon Off Main - Wednesday, 8:00 PM meeting

Babylon Off Main - Saturday, 2:00 PM meeting

Babylon Bridge to Sobriety- Tuesday, 7:00 AM meeting

Babylon Big Book - Tuesday, 7:30 PM meeting

We have confirmed this information with the secretary of Christ Episcopal Church in Babylon. If the concerned groups are moving their meetings elsewhere, please call the SIA office with the information and we will distribute it in the Bulletin and Meeting List for you.

Thanks!!!

Kim Y., Intergroups indefatigable, one-woman Literature Committee, tells us we owe the Groups a message of thanks for their increasing support of her efforts. Literature sales at the office are up to between \$1000 and \$1500 a month. More important than the money (SIA does not put a mark-up on literature), is the increase in the number of people who are visiting the office and becoming more familiar with SIA and what we do.

Thirty Years of Sharing

The Thirtieth Annual Suffolk County Share-a-Thon was a great success. Over 600 people attended more than 30 AA workshops and many Alanon and Alateen workshops. Committee, Archives and Literature displays were presented. A hot lunch was enjoyed by more than 350 people. See the complete report in next month's Bulletin.

Sponsorship Workshop

Many people believe that the lack of interest in service work and other problems that are prevalent in AA today are the result of a failure of sponsorship. We at Intergroup are acting on this suggestion.

On Thursday, December 8th, at 7:00 PM the Third Legacy Committee will be holding the first in a series of workshops on Sponsorship. The workshop will be held at the Intergroup office in Patchogue and will be moved to a larger venue if attendance requires. For further information contact Ed W. or Liz T. at the Intergroup office.

"We're IT..." (continued from page 2)

meetings and he saw something in their eyes that he wanted and called "it" So "WE'RE IT" honors that experience and not coincidentally is the initials for the town the meeting is in: Islip Terrace.

WE'RE IT was designed to be an emergency meeting for people in need of a place to soak up recovery on a Saturday afternoon. In that respect, it has succeeded. Week after week a different collection of people show up. Invariably someone comments about needing a meeting and seeing WE'RE IT listed in the meeting list. Usually that person doesn't return---or does return next time another Saturday type crisis appears. They had a place to go for that crisis that might have been going on in their lives. A local sober house has also provided many attendees over the years.

After a few months, the time was changed to 3:30 and has remained so since. In fact, it's the only 3:30 meeting in Suffolk County. It runs for 1 hour fifteen minutes without a break. IT prides itself on offering variety to those who attend. A different speaker each week and over the six plus years something like 330 different speakers have shown up. This has allowed those attending to sample a wide range of recovery experiences.

WE'RE IT - 859 Connetquot Ave., Islip Terrace: Saturday afternoon at 3:30

Does anyone remember a meeting called Pathfinders in Islip Terrace? Please contact the Archives. Our ongoing project to write the history of Alcoholics Anonymous in Suffolk County continues. If you can provide background information on any meeting it would help this important work.

Cleaning the Meeting List (continued from page 1)

that fails to contact Intergroup before next November will be removed from the meeting list. A group may be returned to the meeting list simply by contacting SIA and verifying the group's information any time before the next meeting list is printed. It is important to note: the reps did not vote to require any monetary support from a group; did not vote to require any level of participation in Intergroup or Twelfth Step activities; did not set any requirement on the groups, except that they keep their information accurate for the sake of the newcomer who, the reps felt, might be lost if he or she is directed to a non-existent group.

The groups are being given a year to comply with the decision of the Group reps, although, it is certainly hoped that they won't wait that long to confirm their information. The implementation of the decision was left to the discretion of the SIA officers. The Corresponding Secretary currently maintains a database of groups which have submitted group information forms. We will be expanding this to include a folder for each group listed in the meeting list. Anytime a group contacts Intergroup, whether to make a donation, to buy books, or what-have-you, a notation will be made in the database that we have been contacted by that group. We will be encouraging groups to leave us a contact name and phone, so we can call them before deleting them from the list if we haven't heard from them, but no group will be required to leave a number. To be sure that all groups have every opportunity to be made aware of this decision, it will be printed on the front of the meeting list for the coming year. Notices will also appear in the Bulletin and in mailings to group secretaries.

Secretary Please Read at Business Meeting

To All Groups:

At the October meeting of Intergroup, the reps voted to adopt the following motion:

"In the coming year, between now and November 2006, each group listed in the meeting list must contact Intergroup to confirm their existence and meeting schedule. Any group that does not do so will be eliminated from the meeting list effective November 2006. Any Group so eliminated can be reinstated simply by contacting Intergroup; the group will then be included in the next regularly published meeting list. In each year thereafter, each group must contact Intergroup at least once or be eliminated from the meeting list."

The Group Reps, in taking this action, were motivated by a growing concern that the Suffolk County meeting list is inaccurate, and that we are likely to be directing newcomers and first timers to groups that don't exist or have changed their meeting times or locations. We receive at least one or two reports each month that someone has gone to a meeting and found that it wasn't there (and, in some cases, hadn't been meeting for years.) Of the roughly 370 groups that are listed in the meeting list, we have contact information for only about 180: that leaves a lot of room for error. Over the past few years, Intergroup has tried several different approaches to get groups to confirm their meeting data regularly. We have sent prepaid postcards. We have sent informational packages out with group reps from neighboring groups. We have put notices in the Bulletin. We have never gotten a response from more than 10 to 12 groups. The reps have decided that a stronger inducement to cooperation is needed.

The implementation of the reps decision has been left to the officers of Intergroup. No one at Intergroup really wants to take any groups off the meeting list, so we are trying to make this as easy as possible:

If your group is already registered with Intergroup, you don't need to do anything. A registered group is one for which Intergroup has contact information. Generally, we get this when your group fills out the group officer information form after your group elections. If you are not sure if your group is registered, you can contact Intergroup's Corresponding Secretary and ask. Generally, if you got this notice in the mail, you're registered.

The reps have specifically stated that a group does not have to register with Intergroup in order to be in the meeting list. We are asking for only the absolute minimum cooperation that we need from you. So, if you make a donation to Intergroup, add a note to the envelope that confirms that your group still meets and when. Same thing if you stop by the office and pick up books or meeting lists – just leave a note. Or call the office and leave your confirmation with the office volunteer. For your convenience, we'll be printing a form each month in the Bulletin: mail it. Any means that you use to contact us is fine, but you need to tell us you are confirming your group's information. We are going to ask for a phone number where the Meeting List Chairperson can reach someone from your group to confirm your information, but we ask that of any one who contacts us about group listings. We don't want someone who is angry at your group to call up and tell us it's disbanded. We will also ask if you have a mailing address where you'd like us to send copies of the Bulletin and so on. The reps have said that your group need not give us this information, so feel free to say, "No." We are not trying to force your group to be active in Intergroup, but we want to offer you the option. You have until October 15th, 2006 to contact us.

Thank you for your help in better serving the newcomer,

Brian C.
Chairperson, Suffolk Intergroup

Third Legacy Committee

Guidelines for Speaking
At Non-A.A. Meetings

Learn the Do's and Don'ts
"BE PREPARED"

Information will be available to take with you when speaking.

Date: November 18, 2005
Time: 7 P.M.
Intergroup Office
113-8 Bay Avenue
Patchogue, NY

Space IS LIMITED.

Please call if you are planning to attend this meeting.

Contact Ed W., Third Legacy Chairman
(631)-271-7546

Coffee and refreshments will be served.

Brian C. opened the meeting at 8:05. Emmi from the Smithtown Afternoon Group read the 11th Tradition and Sara from the West Islip Group read the 11th Step. Six new reps introduced themselves and were advised to attend the New Rep Orientation meeting.

Recording Secretary Tracey B. was unexpectedly absent, so the minutes of the September meeting were read by Corresponding Secretary Cathy S. Minutes were accepted unanimously.

Fred (Treasurer) reported that donations improved in October and that we are now approximately even with last year. The Treasurer's report was accepted as read.

Chairperson Brian C. reported that SIA will host the quarterly meeting of the SENY Intergroup Liaison on November 12th at the office in Patchogue. The meeting will start at 11:30. All interested are invited to attend. We have been invited by Alanon to participate in their Share-a-thon in April. Brian was asked to address Suffolk General Service on the need for a conference approved pamphlet describing the place of Intergroups in the AA service structure. He also answered questions on SIA's plans for implementing stricter controls on the meeting list.

Absent Committees: Patti, Jails Cathy, Special Events. Webmaster, Jim.

Reporting, but not attending: Bulletin: We have a new editor.
Office Manager: All functioning; volunteers needed.

Deanna for the Answering Service: The new 12th Step Books were distributed to the captains. Participation in Share-a-thon went well with several requests to speak at groups and a few new volunteers. The chairperson and coordinators are rotating out in December, volunteers are needed.

Rick (Public Info): Looking for volunteers with experience in radio and TV public service announcements. Trying to build participation at PI meeting on 3rd Wednesday of every month. Had outreach table at Share-a-thon. Has sent out mailings to colleges. Is working on printing a new open meeting list.

Richard (Share-a-thon): 674 attended the Share-a-thon on Oct. 29th. 363 lunches were served. Wrap up meeting suggested writing a schedule of when different parts of planning, etc., need to be completed as guide to future committees. Alanon sends thanks for being invited to share our day.

Kim (Literature): Sales at office continue very high.

Alan (Meeting Lists): We will be mailing BRM postcards to groups to ask they verify listing info. New meeting list has warning on first page that all groups must contact SIA within the next year to confirm their existence and schedule or they will be dropped from the November 2006 meeting list. Asked reps to inform any meetings they attend that the groups check their meeting list info and call the office to confirm it. Alan pointed out that groups currently registered with Intergroup need not do anything new in order to stay current on the meeting list. In response to a question from the floor, Brian explained that registered groups are those for which SIA has contact information, and who submit a Chairpersons/Secretary contact form twice a year or at election of group officers. The easiest way to find out if your group is registered is to ask the Corresponding Secretary if she has information on you, or check the list of group addresses that is distributed at the SIA meeting.

The November meeting list contains 40 changes to the July list. Deadline for changes to the March list is Feb 15th.

Ed W. (Third Legacy): The first Sponsorship Workshop to be held December 8th at 7:00 PM at the SIA office. Response so far looks good. The next Informational Seminar for those interested in speaking at non-AA meetings will be held November 18th at the SIA office at 7:00 PM. A request was made from the floor that the meeting times and days be varied more in the future. (Brian reminded reps that no one would be allowed to speak for PI or at Schools who had not attended this course.) More such courses will be scheduled as needed. Ed is trying to compile a list of people willing to speak on service. He is also asking groups to invite 3rd Legacy speakers to business and regular meetings.

Bob (Archives): Meeting first Thursday of month at SIA office at 7:00 PM. Desperately seeking group histories, pictures of meeting places and HELP. Has been invited to participate in SENY archives workshop on Nov. 19th.

Lynn (Grapevine): Calendars (\$7) and pocket planners (\$4) are in for 2006. Catalogs available at office and to groups. \$300 worth of Grapevine material sold at Share-a-thon. Encouraged others to become GvRs.

John T. (Ad Hoc Committee on Phones): Trying to put database together to use to improve phone services. Still investigating tech improvements. Invited volunteers to help.

Joe C. (Treatment Facilities): Meeting 4th Wednesday of every month for exchange and coordination of meetings. Open commitments are available. Working on keeping meetings chaired. Volunteers needed.

Matt G. (Schools): Needs speakers for 2 high schools, Nov. 29th and Dec 6th. Reminded everyone to take Ed's "Speaking at Non-AA Meetings" seminar if they want to volunteer. One commitment last month at Brentwood High.

Bulletin: New editor, 'E' from Sayville Group, taking over in December.

Glen B. (Nominating): Asked people to step forward to volunteer. Elections next month.

Tim (SGS liaison): Thanked Brian for speaking at Rocky Point. Assembly is Nov. 13th in Manhattan. Bus service starts in Riverhead at 8:15 AM. Schedule is available.

Old business:

Dennis of Babylon Nuts and Bolts moved that the 2006 Budget be accepted as presented at last meeting, seconded by John from Bay Shore. Treasurer Fred H. asked to amend original budget to move \$3000 from "Buy out of copier lease" (which we had had to do last month as per contract, and paid from this year's office budget) to "Office Rent" in anticipation of rent increase. Amendment seconded by Dennis of Babylon Nuts and Bolts. Budget unanimously accepted as amended.

New business: None.

Meeting closed at 9:10 PM