

The Northeast Ohio Recorder

July, Aug, Sept 2017

<http://www.area54.org>

Volume XXV, Issue 3

"Let us remember that great legion who still suffer from alcoholism and who are still without hope. Let us, at any cost or sacrifice, so improve our communication with all these that they may find what we have found - a new life of freedom under God."

A.A. Co-Founder, Bill W., February 1961, From: "The Shape of Things to Come", *I Am Responsible: The Hand of A.A.*, © A. A. Grapevine, Reprinted with permission

A Word From Our Delegate

Hello to all in Area 54:

The 67th General Service Conference was truly a learning experience. I arrived at the hotel in Ryebrook Friday evening around 7:00 pm. (It took about 2 ½ hours from the LaGuardia Airport to the hotel!) My conference buddy Linda J. from Maryland called to see if I had checked in my room. She wanted to bring me the water and juices she brought for me. It was great to finally meet her in person after having talked with her on the phone for several weeks prior to the conference. We began with a meet and greet Saturday mid-morning. It was such a pleasure seeing our delegates from the East Central Region (ECR) and being introduced to delegates from the rest of the US and Canada! I met Diana L. and Patrick C. the two new GSO staff members that began in March and April. Diana looked very familiar to me, but I thought how could that be possible? Well after sharing my thoughts with her, I discovered I had actually met her at the 53rd Women's International Conference we hosted in downtown Cleveland this past February; she was the speaker for Saturday. Derek T. (delegate from Area 74 WI/Upper Pen. MI, which is in our ECR) opened the session Sunday morning. Greg T. the general manager of GSO did the roll call. That for me was the high spot of the conference, when my name was called and I said "present", tears came to my eyes, I felt so humble and blessed!



My conference committee was Report and Charter, which was one of the committees that began meeting Sunday afternoon. Sunday evening was the Opening Dinner which had five speakers. Jeff W. (GSO staff) was one of the speakers; he wrote the skit we used at our Mini-Conference in April.

I was able to attend a Serenity AA meeting at 7:30 each morning before beginning our conference committee meetings. This was the best way for me to begin my day. After dinner on Monday David M., GSB Treasurer gave a Finance presentation.

Tuesday began with conference committee meetings; Panel 67 delegate area highlights; then there was a presentation/discussion on Participation. Three Panel 66 delegates each had a presentation. After a general sharing session we attended an assigned workshop session.

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I was scheduled to give my Area 54 highlights on Wednesday morning. Wednesday afternoon we had Regional luncheons - in which two regions voted for the candidates standing for East Central Region Trustee and US Trustee at large. Mark E. (Area 56) was our candidate for ECR and he was elected, as our own William (Bill) F. rotated out. The ECR (which consists of areas in Ohio,

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From the Editor...

THE KEYES TO SUCCESS—COOPERATION AND SPONSORSHIP

A guest editorial by James B.

THE KEY seldom recognized in the success of AA in Cleveland was the organizing of a central committee. With the committee they were able to get the drunks to come to AA instead of having to search them out one by one.

Bill W, estimated the success of Cleveland A.A. in letters to be 70% vs 20% in New York. The first forerunner to today's Intergroup / Central Offices, the Central Committee, was established in Cleveland Ohio in October 1939, four years after AA's co-founders Bill W. and Dr. Bob met. At that time a committee of seven – five men and two women – began meeting in Cleveland once a month. In addition to being the first Central Committee, this is said to be the first example of rotation in AA since one man and one woman dropped off each month to be replaced by the next in line according to seniority.

Cleveland's **Central Committee** was established only five months after Cleveland's first AA group started on May 11, 1939. This AA group is considered group number three, forming as an offshoot of AA group number one in Akron (AA group number two was in New York). Clarence S., along with his wife Dorothy, and a group of about 11 others had previously been traveling regularly to Akron to attend the meetings of AA group number one. This group of 13 began meeting in the home of Abby G. and his wife Grace and by September membership had grown to 38, at which point the Central Committee was formed. "It's really functioning," Dorothy noted in her October 1939 letter to New York. "They appoint leaders, discuss tendencies, and arrange social affairs, and they are thinking of a masked dance for Halloween," she said. (Dr. Bob and the Good Old-Timers , Chapter 15)

At this point, Clarence S. came across Elrick B. Davis, a reporter for the Cleveland Plain Dealer and persuaded him to write a five-part series of articles about AA, which appeared in the latter part of October 1939. The articles were printed in the middle of the Plain Dealer's editorial page, along with additional positive articles by the editors themselves every three to four days. The newspaper's switchboard was deluged by requests for information about AA. The requests were relayed to Clarence S and his wife Dorothy and from them to members of their AA group. The volume of 12th step calls was tremendous, and the small group of AA's scrambled to meet the demand.

It was soon evident that a scheme of **personal sponsorship** would have to be devised for the new people. Each prospect was assigned an older AA, who visited him at this home or in the hospital, instructed him on AA principles and conducted him to his first meeting. But in the face of many hundreds of pleas for help, the supply of elders could not possibly match the demand. Brand-new AAs sober only a month or even a week, had to sponsor alcoholics still drying up in the hospitals. (Alcoholics Anonymous Comes of Age, pp. 20-21).

The Central Committee was utilized "to coordinate efforts regarding hospitalizations and sponsorship," according to Clarence S. "We met once a month, and then we decided to open an office," Clarence said in later years. "Up to then, we had a post office box and telephone." As Dorothy recalled, "When those articles hit Cleveland, people simply besieged the place. Our phone never quit ringing for about a month, and I did nothing but sit by the telephone and take inquiries." (Dr. Bob and the Good Old-Timers , Chapter 15).

Cleveland's response over the next year was the first example of how a **service structure** can be effectively utilized when it's impossible for individual groups in an area to handle all aspects of twelfth-step work alone. It also started the shift from individual A.A's seeking out alcoholics one-by-one, as was previously the case in Akron and New York, to one where alcoholics seek out AA in large numbers. The number of Cleveland AA members quickly grew and their meetings multiplied rapidly. In contrast, the membership numbers in New York and Akron remained relatively flat.

"We old-timers in New York and Akron had regarded this fantastic phenomenon with deep misgivings. Had it not taken us four whole years, littered with countless failures to produce even a hundred good recoveries? Yet there in Cleveland we saw about twenty members, not very experienced themselves, suddenly confronted by hundreds of newcomers as a result of the Plain Dealer articles. How could they possibly manage? We did not know. But a year later we did know; for by then Cleveland had about thirty groups and several hundred members. Growing pains and group problems had been terrifying, but no amount of squabbling could dampen the mass demand for sobriety. Yes, Cleveland's results were of the best. There results were in fact so good, and AAs membership elsewhere so small, that many a Clevelander really thought AA had started there in the first place. (Alcoholics Anonymous Comes of Age, pp. 21-22)

(This was part of a string of replies to AAHistoryLovers2 discussion group online concerning early methods of sponsorship, posted May 23, 2017, 6:58 pm by James B. I found it so enthralling that I chose to reprint it here in lieu of my usual rantings/ravings...)

~Your editor, Jeff

We welcome your service-related contributions, comments and questions. Send topic ideas or complaints to: newsletter@area54.org



AREA OFFICER REPORTS

Michigan, Indiana, Illinois and Wisconsin) trustee for the last two terms has been from Ohio. Cathy B. was elected Southeast Regional Trustee and Newton P. from N. Carolina was elected as our new US Trustee at large.

Wednesday afternoon we began the conference committee reports and discussions which continued until Friday before dinner.

Each day offered me a new awareness of the value of participating in General Service. The General Service Conference provided yet another level of how service and fellowship coincide with each other. The importance of attending the ECR Forum, the ECR Conference – and other AA events allows us to not only visit with each other but to actually work with one another. I will now view the traditions on another level. I am also getting a little better understanding of the reason for the development of the concepts.

There is so much more to learn about Alcoholics Anonymous which will help me to learn more about myself and continue to carry the message of Alcoholic Anonymous. I am so very grateful to have been a part of the 67th General Service Conference. I love Alcoholics Anonymous!!

Jamie B., Panel 67 Delegate Area 54 – Northeast Ohio

Spirituality and Money Mix

“The A.A. groups themselves ought to be fully supported by the voluntary contributions of their own members. We think that each group should soon achieve this ideal; that any public solicitation of funds using the name of Alcoholics Anonymous is highly dangerous, whether by groups, clubs, hospitals, or other outside agencies; that acceptance of large gifts from any source, or of contributions carrying

any obligation whatever, is unwise. Then, too, we view with much concern those A.A. treasuries which continue, beyond prudent reserves, to accumulate funds for no stated A.A. purpose. Experience has often warned us that nothing can so surely destroy our spiritual heritage as futile disputes over property, money, and authority.” — Tradition Seven (long form)

Page 3 Self-Support: Where Money and Spirituality Mix

“From its earliest beginnings, A.A. has always incurred expenses — whether it be the cost of a pot of coffee or the price of a place to meet. In the early days, these costs were often absorbed by individual A.A.s or nonalcoholic friends who offered their parlors and living rooms for A.A.s to meet in. However, as A.A. outgrew the generosity of these early friends and members, the Fellowship’s need for income became more and more apparent.”

Page 4 Self-Support: Where Money and Spirituality Mix

“With the realization that A.A. must steer clear of outside contributions in order to maintain its autonomy and independence came the understanding that the money necessary for A.A.’s survival would have to come from individual A.A. members and groups. As Bill W. put it in 1957, “Our spiritual way of life is safe for future generations if, as a Society, we resist the temptation to receive money from the outside world. But this leaves us with a responsibility — one that every member ought to understand. We cannot skimp when the treasurer of our group passes the hat. Our groups, our areas, and A.A. as a whole will not function unless our services are sufficient and their bills are paid.”

Page 5 Self-Support: Where Money and Spirituality Mix

“Self-support begins with me, because I am part of us — the group. We pay our rent and

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AREA OFFICER REPORTS

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utility bills, buy coffee, snacks and A.A. literature. We support our central office, our area committee, and our General Service Office. If it were not for those entities, many new people would never discover the miracles of A.A.”

Self-Support starts with each individual AA member and that starts with footing the bill of our service work, on page 5, 12 step work is the “lifeblood” of AA.

How can groups participate?

“To help support A.A.’s essential services, the General Service Conference suggests that individual groups, through an informed group conscience, adopt a specific contribution plan tailored to meet the group’s financial situation. Once the basic group expenses have been taken care of, for example: (rent, refreshments, A.A. literature, Grapevine literature, local meeting lists, G.S.R. travel expenses to attend service functions), and a “prudent reserve” has been set aside to cover any emergency contingencies that might arise, the group may decide to further carry the message by sending money to the following A.A. service entities. Local District /Area District /Central Office /GSO”

In the back of the pamphlet, there is a suggested break down of how groups can contribute. Regardless of which sample group contribution plan you choose or create, it is important for our groups to donate to keep our primary purpose active and that is carry the message.

“Money has never been a requirement for A.A. membership, and to keep it that way all of A.A.’s trusted servants have an ongoing obligation to inform groups and individuals about the value of self-support and the need for voluntary contributions throughout the Fellowship. Many groups in reaching an informed group conscience look to their general service representatives (G.S.R.s) for specific

information about A.A. finances, or to their intergroup representatives or group treasurer. Many find that participation in local, area, and regional A.A. service events provides a good source of information about A.A.’s financial needs. And at the General Service Office, A.A.’s financial affairs are an open book, with financial summaries published quarterly and a full accounting printed each year in the Final Conference Report.”

“While the Fellowship has always faced problems of money, property, and prestige in one form or another, through the wisdom of the Seventh Tradition we have never been diverted from our primary purpose of carrying the message to the alcoholic who still suffers — wherever he or she may be. This is the fundamental work of Alcoholics Anonymous, and to ensure that the hand of A.A. will always remain outstretched, money and spirituality must continue to mix. And for that, we are all responsible.”

The majority of this information came from the service pamphlet, “Self-Support: Where Money and Spirituality Mix.” Copyright 1995. This pamphlet can also be downloaded from the AA website www.aa.org.

Love and Service,

Shyrl B., Area 54 Panel 67 Alternate Delegate

ANOTHER LEVEL OF LEARNING

The program tells us to always have Honesty be Open Minded and have a Willingness. These are so important in my program to continue my growth. Having these attributes in my life has enabled me to experience awesome joys and opportunities I couldn’t of dreamed possible. This program has already given me so much in my life and has aided me in the ability to do so much in my personal life as well. So many rewards have been provided to me due to AA. I couldn’t do any of it without my support system both in the fellowship

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AREA OFFICER REPORTS

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and outside it. I could never imagine being of service in the levels that I currently serve AA and then the membership surprises me once again.

While at the State Convention Planning Meeting after regular business was conducted and we were in new business our newly elected East Central Regional Trustee Mark E advised the attendees that he would need to step down as State Archivist due to his new responsibilities will have him very busy effective immediately if possible. The room went quiet, so I spoke up and asked Mark E, for a brief explanation of the position which he did. As I was sitting there I looked at Henry C. from Area 55 and thinking he was going to nominate Christopher C. from his area for the position and I would second it, but when he spoke it wasn't what I had thought at all. He said my name and all I could do was hyperventilate. It was quickly stated to me that I could do this as well as my area position. Once my question was answered and I was reassured by those with me that I could do this, because I really wasn't sure at all. I accepted the position and became the Ohio State Archivist. This is my Higher Power showing me he is there because when I doubt my abilities he steps in with those who see in me what I don't and puts opportunities in my

life that I wouldn't normally think I could do. This opportunity/position is going to take me to a whole other level of service work that I never imagined I could do nor did I think it possible. All Thanks and praise goes to my Higher Power and the fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous.

Love and Service,

Tina C., Area 54 Panel 67 Chairperson

The longer I stay here, sometimes I can catch a glimpse of the fact that I am finally growing up. Recently, there has been a lot of loss within my family and as I go about performing my duties as Area 54 treasurer, I am astonished that I have been able to trudge the road of happy destiny despite my sadness. Being in general service has taught me discipline and consistency which has transcended into being responsible in my personal life, in ways I couldn't possibly have conceived. "Having had a spiritual awakening as result of these steps...we practice these principles in all our affairs". AA has opened my world up to being of maximum service to anyone that is in need and taken away the opportunity to wallow in doubt and self-pity. I have heard countless other alcoholics talk about such difficulties and witnessed them walk through these situations with a sense of calmness and peace. A

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Let's Go Green!

Area 54 General Service is inviting you to Go Green! Get your Area flyers, information, and an EXPANDED web-only version of the Northeast Ohio Recorder. All the information that comes to your USPS mailbox now can come to your inbox.

The NEOH Recorder you're reading now is 8 pages long—that's the page limit to keep postage weight within our budget and so that it can be folded to fit in an envelop. But we have so much more Area 54 news for you! The web version of this issue of NEOHR is packed with lots more experience, strength, and hope.

Let Justin S., your Area 54 Mailing Secretary, know that you would like to save a tree or three (and save the area some \$Green\$) with a message at mailingsecretary@area54.org

Please note: if you do nothing, you will still get your Area mail by USPS and by email (if we have your email address) as you always have.

Expanded Content (16 pages!) and a Color-Enhanced version of this newsletter is now online at <http://area54.org/NEOHRecorder.html>

AREA OFFICER and COMMITTEE REPORTS

peace that had surpassed my understanding.... until now. Thank God for AA and Thank God for all of you.

In Love and Service,

Dawn J., Area 54 Treasurer

I am starting to get a handle on my position as recording secretary. It is however not getting easier but I am figuring out all the particulars. Having said that I did confuse myself greatly at the Mini-conference. I wasn't sure when or where to record or if I needed to take notes or not. I never realized how much was involved with this position. I have heard it said that by the time I figure it out it will be time to rotate. I truly believe that. I think the panel I got chosen to sit on is the best. They are always there to help me when I have questions and tell me when I am not quite doing it right. I am so grateful for the people that my HP has blessed me with. I hope I can continue to grow within myself and be of service to the fellowship.

Love and Service,

Rea J R., Area Secretary

DOING A GROUP INVENTORY

I've been around the rooms a few 24 hours. I have also visited a lot of groups in my travels as a DCM. I've been asked a lot of off-the-wall questions and I have gotten a lot of serious ones too. My go-to answer when I can't find one is "All groups are autonomous." A group can do whatever it wants to do, and no AA police will show up to tell them to stop. In the rare case that a group may come to the conclusion that it may or may not be sending the right message to the newcomer there are precise instructions on how to take a look at exactly what a group's message may look like to someone on the outside in the

pamphlet "The AA Group: Where it all begins" on page 29.

I bring all this up because I have a home group that is starting to ask some questions related to principles before personalities and I was in a position to suggest doing a Group Inventory. I've never done one, nor had I talked to anyone who had. So I decided it's time to blaze a trail. The group has already consented to doing this so the hard part is done. Next I called the literature chair for a bunch of copies of "The AA Group: Where it all begins". Now I figured I'll get out of the way and see what a group conscience can do. By next publication we should be done and I will share our experience on this matter.

Dustin S., Area Mailing Secretary

Imagine \$7.84 from each member of A A... which would help AA as a whole to become self-supporting. When I think about how to express my gratitude, I express it by helping another sick and suffering alcoholic, which helps me stay sober too. I can take all that God is restoring in me to help keep the doors of AA, open through my contribution. Continue to listen to a God of your understanding.

With Gratitude,

Beverly F., Area 54 Finance Chair



UPCOMING DATES FOR THE AREA AND BEYOND

NOTE THE DATE

July 16
Area Assembly

GV Lit sales
2:00 pm

July 21-23 – Merrillville, IN
East Central Regional Conference

July 28-30—Columbus, OH
61st Ohio State Convention

August 20
GSR/DCM Workshop

2:00 pm

September 17
Area Assembly

2:00 pm

October 15
Area Assembly

GV Lit sales
2:00 pm

November 4 — Columbus, OH
Ohio State Convention Planning Meeting

11:00 am

November 12
Gratitude Sunday

GV Lit sales
TBA

November 17-19 —
East Central Regional Forum, hosted by GSO
and Area 21 (Springfield, IL)

November 20
sales
Gratitude Sunday
TBA

GV Lit

January 14, 2018
Area Assembly

GV Lit sales
2:00 pm

January 28 and February 25
Mini Conference planning meetings
Holiday Inn Strongsville

2:00 pm

February 9-11 —
Conference of Delegates Past and Present

February 18
GSR School Workshop



2:00 pm

March 18
Area Assembly
(and MC planning snow date)

2:00 pm

July 2020 — Detroit, MI
85th Anniversary International Convention



Unless otherwise noted, Area Assemblies & Workshops are held at The 12 Step Recovery Club, 1480 Pearl Rd., Brunswick, OH (on  about 1/4 mile south of route 
Phone: (330) 273-7216

RECOVERY, UNITY AND SERVICE

These are the Three Legacies of our A.A. experience. Our leaders are but trusted servants, they do not govern. God, expressed through our group conscience, is our sole authority. World Service is the heart of our Third Legacy. Our meetings are informative and educational. They are held so that the Committee Members, GSRs, and all interested members may be better equipped to carry the message of World Service back to their home groups and individual members, thus giving a better understanding to our purpose, our hopes, and our work.

Confidential Contact List

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 Visit us at <http://www.area54.org>

This reprint is the second in a series of five feature articles published in the Cleveland Plain Dealer, resulting in the early growth of AA in this area. The first article was published in the prior issue of the Northeast Ohio Recorder.

October 23, 1939

In a previous installment, Mr. Davis outlined the plan of Alcoholics Anonymous, an organization of former drinkers who have found a solution to liquor in association for mutual aid.

Religion

There is no blinking the fact that Alcoholics Anonymous, the amazing society of ex-drunks who have cured each other of an incurable disease, is religious. Its members have cured each other frankly with the help of God. Every cured member of the Cleveland Fellowship of the society, like every cured member of the other chapters now established in Akron, New York, and elsewhere in the country, is cured with the admission that he submitted his plight wholeheartedly to a Power Greater than Himself.

He has admitted his conviction that science cannot cure him, that he cannot control his pathological craving for alcohol himself, and that he cannot be cured by the prayers, threats, or pleas of his family, employers, or friends. His cure is a religious experience. He had to have God's aid. He had to submit to a spiritual housecleaning.

Alcoholics Anonymous is a completely informal society, wholly latitudinarian in every respect but one. It prescribes a simple spiritual discipline, which must be followed rigidly every day. The discipline is fully explained in a book published by the society.

Discipline

That is what makes the notion of the

cure hard for the usual alcoholic to take, at first glance, no matter how complete his despair. He wants to join no cult. He has lost faith, if he ever had it, in the power of religion to help him. But each of the cures accomplished by Alcoholics Anonymous is a spiritual awakening. The ex-drunk has adopted what the society calls "a spiritual way of life."

How, then, does Alcoholics Anonymous differ from the other great religious movements which have changed social history in America? Wherein does the yielding to God that saves a member of this society from his fatal disease, differ from that which brought the Great Awakening that Jonathan Edwards preached, or the New Light revival of a century ago, or the flowering of Christian Science, or the camp-meeting evangelism of the old Kentucky-Ohio frontier, or the Oxford Group successes nowadays?

Every member of Alcoholics Anonymous may define God to suit himself. God to him may be the Christian God defined by the Thomism of the Roman Catholic Church. Or the stern Father of the Calvinist. Or the Great Manitou of the American Indian. Or the Implicit Good assumed in the logical morality of Confucius. Or Allah, or Buddha, or the Jehovah of the Jews. Or Christ the Scientist. Or no more than the Kindly Spirit implicitly assumed in the "atheism" of a Col. Robert Ingersoll.

Aid

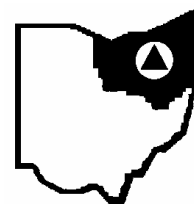
If the alcoholic who comes to the fellowship for help believes in God, in the specific way of any religion or sect, the job of cure is easier. But if all that the pathological drunk can do is to say, with honesty, in his heart: "Supreme Something, I am done for without more-than-human help," that is enough for Alcoholics Anonymous to work on. The noble prayers, the great literatures, and the time-proved disciplines of the established religions are a great

help. But as far as the Fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous is concerned, a pathological drunk can call God "It" if he wants to, and is willing to accept its aid. If he'll do that, he can be cured.

Poll of "incurable" alcoholics who now, cured, are members of the Cleveland Fellowship of the society, shows that this has made literally life-saving religious experience possible to men and women who, otherwise, could not have accepted spiritual help. Poll shows also that collectively their religious experience has covered every variety known to religious psychology. Some have had an experience as blindingly bright as that which struck down Saul on the road to Damascus. Some are not even yet intellectually convinced except to the degree that they see that living their lives on a spiritual basis has cured them of a fatal disease. Drunk for years because they couldn't help it, now it never occurs to them to want a drink. Whatever accounts for that, they are willing to call "God."

Some find more help in formal religion than do others. A good many of the Akron chapter find help in the practices of the Oxford Group. The Cleveland chapter includes a number of Catholics and several Jews, and at least one man to whom "God" is "Nature." Some practice family devotions. Some simply cogitate about "It" in the silence of their minds. But that the Great Healer cured them with only the help of their fellow ex-drunks, they all admit.

Source — By Elrick B. Davis, Cleveland Plain Dealer
- See more at: <http://www.aacleve.org/alcoholics-anonymous-series-1939-plain-dealer-articles/>



ADVISORY ACTIONS OF 67th GENERAL SERVICE CONFERENCE

The following recommendations were approved by the 67th General Service Conference:

Floor Actions

It was recommended that:

1. In the spirit of unity and inclusiveness, the General Service Office strive to provide Conference background materials in English by February 15 and Spanish and French by the first week in March, beginning with the 68th General Service Conference.
2. The pamphlet “Too Young?” be revised to reflect more current collective experiences of young alcoholics and their welcome to A.A.
3. A.A. Grapevine create a Google for Nonprofits account, with use of the account limited to the YouTube Nonprofit Program and with a guarantee that comments not be shown on the A.A. Grapevine YouTube pages. The A.A. Grapevine Board will track its effectiveness through website metrics.

Agenda

It was recommended that:

4. The theme for the 2018 General Service Conference be: “A.A. – A Solution for All Generations.”
5. The following be presentation/discussion topics for the 2018 General Service Conference:
 - a. Today’s Alcoholic: Inclusion, Not Exclusion
 - b. Participation in All of A.A. – Is My Triangle Balanced?
 - c. A.A. Technology: Where Innovation Meets the Traditions
 - d. Attraction Not Promotion: A.A.’s Relation to the World
 - e. Group Conscience: The Guiding Force
6. The following be the workshop topic for the 2018 General Service Conference: “Getting the A.A. Message Out...”

Archives

It was recommended that:

7. A draft or a progress report of Unity in Action: Bill W.’s General Service Conference Talks, 1951 – 1970 (working title) be brought back to the 2018 Conference Committee on Archives for review.

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ADVISORY ACTIONS OF 67th GENERAL SERVICE CONFERENCE

(Continued from page 10)

Cooperation with the Professional Community

It was recommended that:

8. The pamphlet “Three Talks to Medical Societies by Bill W.” be retired.

9. A footnote with the following text be added to the pamphlet “Problems Other Than Alcohol” at the bottom of page one: *“This pamphlet is derived from an article written by A.A. co-founder Bill W. in 1958. Therefore, some of the language may be dated, but the issues addressed are prevalent today.”*

10. The title of the pamphlet “Is There an Alcoholic in the Workplace?” be changed to “Is There a Problem Drinker in the Workplace?”

11. The trustees’ Committee on Cooperation with the Professional Community review the pamphlet “If You Are a Professional,” develop text to include information for professionals who come in contact with veterans and active members of the Armed Services, including information on how to contact A.A. worldwide, and bring back a report or draft text to the 2018 Conference Committee on Cooperation with the Professional Community for review.

12. The trustees’ Committee on Cooperation with the Professional Community review the pamphlet “Members of the Clergy Ask About Alcoholics Anonymous,” develop text to include information for professionals who come in contact with veterans and active members of the Armed Services, including information on how to contact A.A. worldwide, and bring back a report or draft text to the 2018 Conference Committee on Cooperation with the Professional Community for review.

13. The trustees’ Committee on Cooperation with the Professional Community review the pamphlet “A.A. as a Resource for the Health Care Professional,” develop text to include information for professionals who come in contact with veterans and active members of the Armed Services, including information on how to contact A.A. worldwide, and bring back a report or draft text to the 2018 Conference Committee on Cooperation with the Professional Community for review.

Finance

It was recommended that:

14. The suggested area contribution for delegate expense for the Conference be increased from \$1,600 to \$1,800.

15. Review of the suggested Area contribution for delegates’ expenses to the Conference be every other year. The next review will take place in 2019.

16. Review of the Conference-approved level for bequests to the General Service Board from A.A. members be every other year. The next review will take place in 2019.

17. Review of the Conference-approved maximum annual contribution to the General Service Board from an individual A.A. member be every other year. The next review will take place in

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2019.

18. The following text be added to the pamphlet: “Self-Support: Where Money and Spirituality Mix”: *“Question: Can an individual or group make a recurring online contribution? Answer: Yes, online at aa.org.”*

Literature

It was recommended that:

19. The following two bullet points in the section “What procedures can a group set up to sponsor new members?” in the pamphlet “Questions and Answers on Sponsorship” be removed:

- A file of names, addresses, and phone numbers of newcomers (who wish to volunteer the information), with notations showing sponsor or sponsors for each one.
- Review of newcomers list by steering committee (or Twelfth Step or sponsorship committee) – with follow-up activity where it seems needed.

20. The revised plan for the annual review of recovery literature be implemented, with the first report to be delivered to the 2018 Conference Committee on Literature.

21. The following text about young people’s conferences be added to the pamphlet “Young People and A.A.” in the section “Where do I find A.A.?”:

Young people’s conferences are held in the United States and Canada and around the world. For information, consult your local A.A. area, intergroup office, or search online for YPAA.

22. Question 10 in the pamphlet “The A.A. Group” in the section “A.A. Group Inventory” that currently reads, “Are we doing all we can to provide an attractive and accessible meeting place?” be revised to read: *“Are we doing all we can to provide a safe, attractive and accessible meeting place?”*

23. The pamphlet “The A.A. Group” be revised to add the following text from “Safety and A.A.: Our Common Welfare” to the section “Principles Before Personalities”:

Safety and A.A.: Suggestions to Consider

“Safety is an important issue within A.A. – one that all groups and members can address to develop workable solutions and help keep our meetings safe based on the fundamental principles of the Fellowship.

“Each member of Alcoholics Anonymous is but a small part of a great whole. A.A. must continue to live or most of us will surely die. Hence our common welfare comes first. But individual welfare follows close afterward. (Tradition One, Long Form)”

“A.A. groups are spiritual entities made up of alcoholics who gather for the sole purpose of staying sober and helping other alcoholics to achieve sobriety. Yet, we are not immune to

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the difficulties that affect the rest of humanity.

“Alcoholics Anonymous is a microcosm of the larger society within which we exist. Problems found in the outside world can also make their way into the rooms of A.A. As we strive to share in a spirit of trust, both at meetings and individually with sponsors and friends, it is reasonable for each member to expect a meaningful level of safety. Those attending A.A. meetings derive a benefit by providing a safe environment in which alcoholics can focus on gaining and maintaining sobriety. The group can then fulfill its primary purpose – to carry the

A.A. message to the alcoholic who still suffers. For this reason, groups and members discuss the topic of safety.”

For more information see “Safety and A.A.: Our Common Welfare” (SMF-209) www.aa.org.
24. The trustees’ Literature Committee develop language regarding safety to be incorporated in current and new recovery literature, where appropriate, along with a plan for implementation. The committee requested that the draft language and proposed plan or progress report be brought back to the 2018 General Service Conference.

Policy/Admissions

It was recommended that:

25. The 2018 General Service Conference move ahead with electronic voting to be used for all Conference voting, with the exception of elections for regional trustees and trustees-at-large, which are conducted by ballot.

26. The trustees’ Committee on the General Service Conference develop a plan for the equitable distribution of the workload of Conference committees by combining and/or creating committees for review by the 2018 Conference Committee on Policy/Admissions.

27. Starting with the 67th General Service Conference, an anonymity-protected, digital Final Conference Report be published in addition to the current print version.

28. The 70th General Service Conference be held April 19-25, 2020 since these dates do not conflict with any significant holiday or hotel availability.

29. Starting at the 2018 General Service Conference, the proposed dates of future General Service Conferences be considered as an Additional Committee Consideration rather than requiring an Advisory Action.

30. General Service Office management submit a report on the process, implementation and status on the site selection of the General Service Conference for review by the 2018 Conference Committee on Policy/Admissions.

Public Information

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It was recommended that:

31. A new video public service announcement be developed for a cost not to exceed \$40,000.
32. The pamphlet “Understanding Anonymity” be rewritten to include material from G.S.O. literature covering Tradition Eleven and to expand the discussion of humility in Tradition Twelve as it relates to anonymity and that a progress report or draft language be brought back to the 2018 Conference Committee on Public Information.
33. A.A. World Services, Inc. create a Google for Nonprofits account, with use of the account limited to the YouTube Nonprofit Program and with a guarantee that comments not be shown on A.A.W.S. YouTube pages. The committee requested that a report including information from website analytics and the usefulness and effectiveness of the A.A.W.S. YouTube account be brought back to the 2018 Conference Committee on Public Information.

Report and Charter

It was recommended that:

34. The following text be added to Chapter Four of The A.A. Service Manual.

Area Websites

Many A.A. entities now use websites as a way to communicate meeting and service information within the Fellowship. An A.A. website can serve as a public information tool, providing information about A.A. to the public as well. As with newsletters, it has been found prudent for a committee (rather than one or two individuals) to be responsible for the format, planning, and content of the website.

As anonymity is the “spiritual foundation of all our Traditions,” we practice anonymity on A.A. websites at all times. An A.A. website is a public medium, which has the potential for reaching the broadest possible audience and, therefore, requires the same safeguards that we use at the level of press, radio and film. Some areas have included password protected sections of the website, which can limit access to members only, and where full names may be used. Not all A.A. websites contain the same information. For instance, in places where an active intergroup or central office provides meeting information, general service websites may not need to duplicate this effort, and may link to them instead.

A.A. websites may feature brief excerpts from A.A. literature using the same guidelines as newsletters. If a site wishes to include items that are currently available on the G.S.O. or Grapevine websites, they may link to the appropriate pages of those sites. Area websites may copy a thumbnail of a pamphlet, book or video from these sites and use it on the site as a link to the material on the G.S.O. or A.A. Grapevine site. Because public service an-

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nouncements are intended to be widely shared, they may be posted directly on local A.A. sites. For more information, see the “FAQ on A.A. Websites” and the A.A. Guidelines on the Internet.

35. The bylaws of A.A. World Services, Inc. and A.A. Grapevine, Inc. be included in The A.A. Service Manual as appendices.

36. A new section on the General Service Board’s “Mission-Vision-Action Statement” be added to Chapter 9 of The A.A. Service Manual.

37. The G.S.O. Department reports which are shared at Conference be included in the Final Conference Report.

38. Brief bios for non-trustee directors, similar to those for trustees, be included in the Final Conference Report.

Treatment and Accessibilities

It was recommended that:

39. The pamphlet “A.A. for the Alcoholic with Special Needs” be approved with suggested editorial changes and be retitled “Accessibility for All Alcoholics.”

Trustees

It was recommended that:

40. The following slate of trustees be elected at the annual meeting of the members of the General Service Board in April 2017, following presentation at the 2017 General Service Conference for disapproval, if any:

Class A Trustees

Leslie S. Backus, B.A.
Hon. Christine Carpenter
Michele Grinberg, J.D.
Hon. Ivan L.R. Lemelle
Peter Luongo, Ph.D., LCSW-C
Nancy J. McCarthy
David M. Morris, C.P.A.

Class B Trustees

Thomas A.
Cathy B.
Richard B.
Carole B.
Joel C.
Mark E.
Yolanda F.
Scott H.
Vacancy

David N
Newton P
Richard P.
Ginger R.B.
Cate W.
vacancy

41. The following slate of officers of the General Service Board be elected at the annual meet-

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ing of the members of the General Service Board in April 2017, following presentation at the 2017 General Service Conference for disapproval, if any:

Chairperson - Michele Grinberg, J.D.

First vice-chairperson - Joel C.

Second vice-chairperson - Scott H.

Treasurer - David M. Morris, C.P.A.

Secretary - Yolanda F.

Assistant treasurer - Bob S.

Assistant secretary - Eva S.

42. The January 2017 appointment of the following officers by the chair of the General Service Board be approved at the annual meeting of the members of the General Service Board in April 2017:

Assistant treasurer Bob S. Assistant secretary Eva S.

This appointment process is in accordance with the General Service Board Bylaws.

43. The following slate of directors be elected at the annual meeting of the members of the A.A. World Services Corporate Board in April 2017, following presentation at the 2017 General Service Conference for disapproval, if any:

Tom A., David N., Deborah A., Richard P., Richard B., Eva S., Beau B., Greg T., Homer M.

44. The following slate of directors be elected at the annual meeting of the members of the A.A. Grapevine Corporate Board in April 2017, following presentation at the 2017 General Service Conference for disapproval, if any:

Carole B., Ivan L., Ami B., Paz P., Josh E., Ginger R.B., Yolanda F., Cate W., Tommi H.

45. The Bylaws of the General Service Board of Alcoholics Anonymous, Inc., as revised, be approved at the annual meeting of the General Service Board in April 2017.

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